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COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

This week's edition is sponsored
Lehatzlachat Yossef ben Raaya vechol
mishpachto

VAYEITZEI

9th KISLEV 5777

Shabbat begins: 15:37

Shabbat ends: 16:46



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
DIRECTOR, TAL

Moma Rachel!

Rachel was Yaakov's most beloved wife and was the principal of his household and thus the principal of the entire house of Israel. She passed away on the 11th of Cheshvan which is 41 days from Rosh Hashanah (the beginning of the year). 41 is the numerical value of the Hebrew word "Eim," which means "mother," thus the 11th of Cheshvan is truly the Jewish Mother's Day.

Yet on closer inspection we might ask, why is it that one of the most influential Mothers of our people is not buried together with the other great forbearers in the MeArat Hamachpela? Why is it that Rachel doesn't seem to merit being buried with her husband Yaakov?

The Torah tells us that when Yaakov first met Rachel he cried out.

Rashi explains that his cry was due to the fact that he realised that he would not be buried with her.

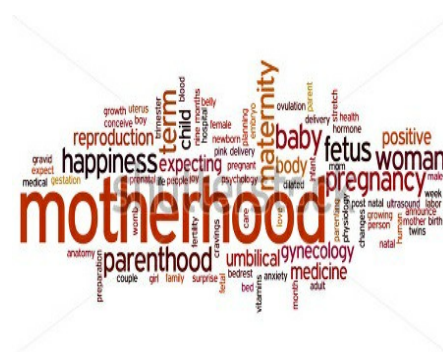
Married life is spent with the intention not only of building a physical world, but also of building a spiritual world together. Yaakov foresaw what seemed to him to be a future interruption to that spirituality, a cause for concern and distress.

Yet later on in life, when Yaakov was about to pass away, he called for his son Yosef - the Viceroy of Egypt, and asked that his body be transported to Eretz Yisrael and buried with his forefathers in MeArat Hamachpela.

Yaakov was worried that Yosef might be upset at the fact that Rachel (Yosef's mother) was buried on the way to Bet Lechem and not in the MeArat Hamachpela.

Yaakov calms Yosef's fears and tells him that the reason he buried her there, was as Rashi explains, Al Pi Hadibur - due to Hashem commanding that she be buried there.

In the future her merit would stand for the exiled Jews that would go through that location out of Israel. It was imperative that she be buried there, in order to help the future generations.



There seems to be a contradiction. Was Rachel buried on the way as a punishment, or as a reward?

Let us take a closer look into the Parasha.

One day Reuven came back from the field holding some Dudaim he had found.

The Ibn Ezra and others state that the Dudaim were known to be a fertility aid. Rachel saw this and asked Leah for the Dudaim. In exchange she offered that

Leah could spend that night (which was her designated night) with Yaakov.

Seforno comments that this transaction showed how much Rachel really wanted to have children. Her need wasn't like every mother's desire to have children, rather Rachel knew the destiny of Am Yisrael. She knew that 12 G-dly tribes were to descend from Yaakov. The question was, who would be the *Mother* of all, or some of these 12.

She tried hard to have children, but when she saw nothing was happening and Reuven came back with Dudaim, she saw this as a sign, perhaps this was the best Hishtadlut she should do.

Rashi (v15) comments that because Rachel 'Zilzela'- abused the ability to be with Yaakov, she never merited being buried alongside him.

Yet there is a deeper meaning to this Rashi.

The greatest connection in the world is between a husband and wife.

Her love for Yaakov was solid. She appreciated him, and enjoyed every moment with him. She knew that a person gains a great deal by being close to a Tsadik (Yaakov); every second spent in the vicinity of the Tsadik would enhance her personal spirituality. Nevertheless, when it came to the decision of whether to trade off the Dudaim for one night with Yaakov, she decided to go for the Dudaim. She gave up the personal element of being with Yaakov, in order to build the Shevatim.

She chose the future of *Klal Yisrael*, over her *personal* spiritual gain.

Contrary to the normal reading, therefore this seems to be a great deed.

When Rashi states Zilzela - this can be understood as abused, but it can also mean, she valued something else more than this. She placed the building of



1. Why did Rochel steal the terfoim, type of idol?

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Klal Yisrael above the spiritual enhancement of herself. Many years later when Yaakov, on his deathbed, related to Yosef that Rachel was buried on the way, he tells him it was Al Pi Hadibur – by the Will of Hashem, this was a reward for her zeal in ensuring Klal Yisrael's future.

The Midrash Eicha shows how at the time of the destruction of the first Bet Hamikdash, Yirmiyahu the prophet was told to summon the Avot and Moshe so that their tears might move Hashem (G-d) to be forgiving. Yirmiyahu did as he was told and Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, and Moshe presented their arguments on behalf of their wayward children. Alas none of them could change the decree. But then Rachel interceded, claiming that she had waited 7 years to marry Yaakov, only to be told that her father Lavan wished to put her sister Leah as the bride instead of her. Lavan had hatched a plan of deception that was aimed at deceiving Yaakov and ensuring that he marry Leah instead of Rachel. We

can imagine her pain, her anguish for waiting so long to marry, and to be told not only that it wasn't going to happen but that her sister was going to be the one. Yaakov knew that Lavan might try to trick him, so he gave Rachel some secret codes to identify her under the Chupah. However, when Rachel learned of Lavan's plan, she revealed these codes to Leah. She felt that she couldn't let her sister, who was older, be embarrassed under the Chupah. So Rachel, who had waited seven long years to marry Yaakov, risked her chance for happiness simply because she didn't want to see her sister embarrassed. She cries out to the Almighty, "Master of the Universe, if I, a mere mortal of flesh and blood, was not jealous of my sister and did not allow her to be shamed and embarrassed, how much more so should it be with You! As the Almighty and Eternal Master of the Universe, You should not be jealous of idols just as I was not jealous of Leah!" Immediately, G-d's mercy was aroused and He said to Rachel, 'Because of you I

will return the Jews to their rightful place; VeShavu Banim Ligvulam. Rachel in particular is known as our mother, for she showed the greatest traits a mother can have. She was selfless, she showed love to all those around, and she sacrificed her will for the future of Klal Yisrael.

Rachel is buried on the way, not as a punishment, but as a reward for her dedication to her people. It is because she wished so much to build Klal Yisrael that she was granted the podium on the way out to exile, to save Klal Yisrael in the future and ensure its everlasting existence. Her presence and prayers have been felt throughout the ages, even until this very day. Let us take the example from our Mother Rachel and look not only to better our own spirituality, but also to better the spirituality of others, help connect them to Hashem and help build Klal Yisrael.



RABBI JOSEPH PEARLMAN
The Absence Of Any Breaks

One of the features of the Torah is the paragraphing system known as *Petuchot* and *Stumot*. A *Petucha* is where the whole of the remaining part of the line is left blank and the text resumes on the next line and its purpose is to create a break to give time for contemplation between one section of the Torah and another as Rashi explains at the beginning of VaYikra. A *Stuma* is where there is a gap of three three lettered words and its purpose is to give a short breathing space between two connected subjects. Altogether there are 290 *Petuchot* and 379 *Stumot* in the Torah and they are signified in the printed versions by the letters peh and Samach

VaYetze and Miketz are the only two sidrot which do not have a single such interruption, notwithstanding that they are long sidrot, VaYetze having 148 pessukim and Miketz 146". Eliyohu KiTov in Sefer HaParshiot suggests that the reason in each case is the same. Here is a rough paraphrase translation :-

"From the day when Yaacov left his father's house until his return (at the end of the sidro) to Machanayim on the border of Eretz Yisroel there was not a day in which he was safe from danger and renewed peril, so his life was one continuous prayer and uninterrupted caution. Moreover he had hardly a moment to relax as he was occupied in protecting himself from Lavan marrying the 4 matriarchs, producing the 12 shevatim and so forth. Hence it was considered inappropriate for us to stop at all. So too in Miketz when Yaacov's children left him for their first time during a period of constant danger no Hesech Hadaat or Hefsek was possible".

Paaneach Raza gives a different reason here namely because Yaacov was obliged to search for a wife and to work for another person which was not really

suitable for his station in life, which should have demanded that others pay homage to him and supply all his needs and an intelligent wife commensurate with his elevated status. Secondly because he was on the run like a fugitive. This second reason is also given slightly more graphically by Daat Zekenim M.Baalei Ha Tosafot, Chizkuni and Baal HaTurim that Yaacov departed secretly in order to flee and escape from Esav. Chizuni and Michah Belulah add that he went into hiding.

There is however an interesting difference between the two uninterrupted sidrot we have mentioned. VaYetze starts with a *stuma* and concludes with a *Petucha*, whereas Miketz is the opposite starting with a *Petucha* and finishing with a *Stuma*. This indicates that VaYetze is connected with the preceding end of Toldot but disconnected from the subsequent VaYishlach whereas Miketz is the other way round.

The reason for the *stuma* at the beginning of VaYetze is to indicate that Yaacov was concealing himself from Esav so it is connected with what preceded in Toldot. The end of VaYetze however finishes with



2. How could Yakov kiss Rochel when seeing her even before explaining who he was?

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Leah bat Sarah

a Petucha in the usual manner to show Yaacov had now finished his exile in Syrian land with Lavan and had now returned to Eretz Yisroel (Machanayim mentioned there being on the border see *Rashi* there Ch.32 V.2 and 3) and what follows is disconnected from his previous situation.

In Miketz it is the opposite. There is a great break at the beginning signified by

Pharaoh's dreams which would conclude Yoseph's incarceration, but at the end even after the sidra has been concluded there is no interruption of the subject at hand, so there is no Petucha at the commencement of YaYigash. There is only a Stumoh which teaches us that the previous subject is continuing without break. Indeed it continues through the whole of VaYigash.

VaYetze represents a Galut of deprivation and hardship. Miketz one of great success, honour and power. Both are fraught with the gravest danger for religious Jews and both are represented by the complete absence of Petuchot and Stumot so that we can avoid any delay in extricating ourselves from their inherent danger and reach our holy homeland of Israel as quickly as possible to be able to serve Hashem properly.



The question of whether and how Tefillot are answered is often raised. People frequently complain that although they daven fervently, their prayers do not seem to bear fruit. When presented with such observations, Rebbetzin Kanievsky would answer with a Dvar Torah: "We see in Parashat Vaetchanan that Moshe Rabbenu wanted so much to go to Eretz Yisrael. He davened so many times, yet Hashem didn't allow him to enter Eretz Yisrael. It is brought down that had Moshe Rabbenu davened just once more for his heart's

desire, Hashem would have acquiesced and Moshe would have gained entry. "This shows us that every single tefilla counts and one never knows which Tefilah will be answered and when it will be answered. I asked my husband the Rav what to tell people who say their prayers have not been answered. He said, 'if someone sees that he prayed and was not answered, he should pray again, as it says (Tehillim 27:14): Hope to Hashem, strengthen yourself and He will give you courage, and hope to Hashem.'"

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3. Where does the saying "the walls have ears" come from as seen in Parshas Vayeitsei?

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