

Lucas

*Lavie ben Berel v'Teva*

*Parashat Vayera*

October 25, 2018

<https://www.sefaria.org/Genesis.18.1-14?lang=bi>

#### **SUMMARY**

This week's Torah portion is *Parashat Vayera*. It opens with Avraham sitting in the opening of his tent. He looks up to see three men. Avraham does not know right away that these men are messengers of God, but he offers them great hospitality. He runs to greet them, invites them to stay, and prepares a great meal for them. After they are appropriately welcomed and settled, they announce to Sarah and Avraham that a son will be born to them.

God tells Avraham that God will destroy the two cities of S'dom and Amorrhah because of their wickedness and injustice. Avraham argues with God, asking if God would destroy people who behave well along with those who behave badly. The conversation between God and Avraham ends with God telling Avraham that God would not destroy the cities if 10 people who behave well could be found there. In the end, though, God cannot find even 10 people who behave well and the cities are destroyed. Avraham's nephew, Lot, and his family are saved. Unfortunately, as she was leaving, Lot's wife looked back towards the cities--even though warned against it--and she turned into a pillar of salt.

Sarah becomes uncomfortable with the way that *Yishma'el* is playing with *Yitzhak* and tells *Avraham*. *Avraham* then sends *Hagar* and their son *Yishma'el* away. *Avraham* later hears God's command to bring his son, *Yitzhak*, as an offering, but he is stopped just in time before he actually sacrifices *Yitzhak*, and he sacrifices a ram instead.

## Questions

**1) I was most interested in studying the part of the *parasha* where God tells Avraham to bring his son Yitzchak to the Land of Moriah and then offer him as a sacrifice on a mountain there. Avraham and Yitzchak and some servants and a donkey make the trip, but along the way Avraham never tells Yitzchak what is happening. As Avraham and Yitzchak are climbing up the mountain, Yitzchak sees that his father Avraham has fire and a knife, but no animal to sacrifice. Yitzchak asks Avraham, “Where is the animal for the sacrifice.” Avraham answers that God will provide the sacrifice. What do you think Yitzchak might have been feeling when he asked his father about the sacrifice, and do you think Avraham gave him a good answer?**

**<<pick 3>>**

I think he might have been curious. He noticed things that could be used to make a sacrifice but also that something important was missing. I think Avraham’s answer to Yitzchak was a good one. It showed Avraham’s faith in God and probably calmed Yitzchak down.

**2) At the beginning of this story God tells Avraham to take his son Yitzchak to a mountain in Moriah that God will show him and then to sacrifice his son there. At the last moment God sends a messenger--an angel--to stop Avraham from sacrificing Yitzchak. I noticed that God gave the first message to sacrifice, and an angel gave the second message to stop. Why do you think the first message came directly from God and the second message, to stop the sacrifice, came from an angel? <<Pick 3>>**

I think that God chose to give Avraham the first message directly because it had so many parts--what to do, who to take, and where to go. It was more complicated. God wanted to make sure that Avraham fully understood the message. The second message was a lot simpler, so maybe God felt more comfortable sending a messenger to just say “Stop.”

**3) Why do you think Avraham didn't argue with God or ask God any questions? Should he have? <<Pick 3>>**

Maybe Avraham was so grateful to God for all that God had given him and promised to give him that he didn't want to argue. I think he *should* have argued with God in a respectful way, because God was asking Avraham to do something terrible to his son. Maybe if Avraham had argued with God or asked God some questions, they could have come up with a different solution, like another kind of sacrifice.

and then they might not have had to wait for an angel to stop things at the last minute.

**Avraham answers that God will provide the sacrifice. where tells Yitzchak that goes with Avraham How do you know when to trust and when to argue with a parent?**

A red flag--if there is danger at the beach. Why would we have to leave? So we had to.

Argue about what you want to do, but sometimes parent know what you have to do for your

We will return to you--why would he say that?

Maybe it was

**When Abraham was told to sacrifice his son, it's God's voice, but when he's told to stop it's an angel?**

God had to get the message right because it was complicated and tough to hear and wants to make sure Abraham gets the directions right. Maybe angels bring news that's less complicated and easier to hear.

Angel to