

For I Know Him

כִּי יֵדַעְתִּיו

*“And יהוה appeared unto him... And יהוה said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? **For I know him**, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of יהוה, to do justice and judgment; that יהוה may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. (Gen 18:1, 17-19)*

Abraham had an amazing knowledge of his G-d. He used the names: אֱלֹהִים, Elohim (G-d), יהוה (YHVH I Am That I AM), אֲדֹנָי, Adonai (my L-rd), אֵל שַׁדַּי, El Shadai (The Almighty), and אֵל עֶלְיוֹן, El Elyon (the Most High). But even though he had this much knowledge, this was not enough—Abraham had to have a personal encounter with יהוה.

A Personal Encounter

Have you ever seen the Holy One of Israel? With your own eyes? In your spirit as a vision? Well, if you have either heard or seen Him, you undoubtedly have an indelible image of either the voice or vision imprinted on your mind. If you realize it was the Holy One of Israel communicating personally with you, it will change your life forever. Thankfully, it did change the lives of יהוה’s chosen patriarchs.

6 Yeshua said, "I AM the Way - and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through me.

7 Because you have known me, you will also know my Father; from now on, you do know him - in fact, you have seen him."

8 Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it will be enough for us."

9 Yeshua replied to him, "Have I been with you so long without your knowing me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

10 Don't you believe that I am united with the Father, and the Father united with me? What I am telling you, I am not saying on my own initiative; the Father living in me is doing his own works.

11 Trust me, that I am united with the Father, and the Father united with me. But if you can't, then trust because of the works themselves. (John 14:7-11)

The men and women whom יהוה chose to be the Fathers of our faith each had personal, one-on-one encounters, with the G-d of Creation. These experiences are recorded for their progeny in the pages of the Holy Writ. So it was with Moses and the rest of the inspired authors who had the challenge of penning the *Torah* (Tanakh). What a blessing to our generation! Now our instructional manual for cleaning our life up from all the impediments is in these writings. Now the key is: how do we want the instructions to apply to our life? How much do you want to hear His voice? How much do you want to see His face?

[Look at the usage of the word *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי) by Abraham in referring to יהוה in Bereshit 18:1-3. It is clear from the text that Abraham was speaking to יהוה. Abraham used the term *Adonai* and יהוה and *Moshe* (the writer of *Bereshit*) evidently did not think this was a term of disrespect. The Jewish people use the term *Adonai* only when referring to יהוה and not in any other context for any other G-d. In fact, Jews will substitute *Hashem* (and not *Adonai*) in any usage outside the synagogue. This is why you hear in *chassidic* music such things as “*Lechu Neranenah Lashem*” instead of the proper “*Lechu Neranenah La-Adonai*.” In Kol Simcha, we use the term *Adonai* like Abraham, when referring to יהוה exclusively. If it was good enough for father Abraham, it is good enough for me.

“And יהוה appeared unto him in the plains of...And said, My Lord (Adonai אֲדֹנָי in Hebrew), if now I have found favour in thy sight...” (Gen 18:1a,3a)

A Spiritual Leader—For I know him (Abraham), that he will command... (כִּי יָדַעְתִּי לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יִצְנֶה)

And יהוה said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of יהוה, to do justice and judgment; that יהוה may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. (Gen 18:13; 17-19)

What was it that compelled יהוה to give the revelation of His plans to Avraham Avinu? “Ki Yeda-ativ” because “I (the Almighty) know (this means that intimacy exists) him—that he will command his children and his household after him—that he will demonstrate and lead by example his family in the way (Y’shua is THE WAY) of the L-rd and to do justice and judgment! The same thing obliges Him today—He is not a respecter of persons. You and I fathers and parents (which are heads of households) will receive a great revelation from the Almighty directly if we assume the spiritual leadership of our families and make it the number one priority in our lives.

The Hebrew word translated “command” in the authorized version is the root word צוה (Tzevah) which Strong’s translates as (intensively) to constitute, enjoin: appoint, (for-) bid, (give a) charge, (give a, give in, send with) command (-er, -ment), send a messenger, put, (set) in order. We recognize the word when we put a mem in front of it, obtaining מצוה, i.e., mitzvah. The yod in front makes it a future tense—Abraham will mitzvah his family after him. Using the translations above we can also obtain that Abraham will: constitute, enjoin, appoint, or set in order his children and family after him. Can you see the implication? Abraham will intensively constitute his children and family with the mitzvot of Torah! The result is וְשָׁמְרוּ דֶרֶךְ יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט (veshamru derech Adonai la-asot tzedakah u-mishpat) that they will keep (from shomer guard) The WAY of יהוה to do righteousness (Hebrew tzedakah which also means works of charity, love) and exercise good judgment (they will judge righteously).

I love this emphasis early in Scripture about the important role of proper spiritual leadership. It is the one thing that brings revelation about the future. It impels the L-rd to come on the scene and reveal His plans. Notice what happens afterwards in this week’s sidra:

The Messiah Visited Abraham

And יהוה said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before יהוה. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? And יהוה said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto Adonai (אֲדֹנָי), which am but dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. And he said unto him, Oh let not Adonai be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto Adonai: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not Adonai be angry, and I will

Speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. And יהוה went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place. (Gen 18:20-33)

Notice at the conclusion of chapter 18 how *Avram Avinu* interceded face to face with *Adonai* (a revelation of a personal, that is, a close-by G-d) about the fate and upcoming judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham spoke face-to-face with the Word Made Flesh (Y'shua, the only Revelation of יהוה). Abraham was concerned with his own family (Lot lived in Sodom) and this was nothing new. While Abraham may have cared for the people of Sodom in general, he quit the intercession when the number finally reached ten. How big was Lot's family? David Lovelace shared with me in 2001 that it was 10! That is, יהוה would not have destroyed Sodom for those 10 relatives of Abraham, had they embraced the things of G-d! This is an awesome realization—our children's families count, and they count for everything!

The Tenth Trial

Abraham was given four exams in this Parashat and then at the end a final exam. In fact, according to *Avot* 5:3, Abraham was given a total of ten trials (exams.) The L-rd will test everyone and correct those whom He loves. According to Rambam these ten trials were:

1. Abraham's exile from his family and homeland.
 2. The hunger in Canaan after G-d had assured him that he would become a great nation there.
 3. The corruption in Egypt that resulted in the abduction of Sarah.
 4. The war with the four kings.
 5. His marriage to Hagar after having despaired that Sarah would ever give birth.
 6. The commandment of circumcision (at an advanced age).
 7. Abimelech's abduction of Sarah.
 8. Driving away Hagar after she had given birth.
 9. The very distasteful command to drive away Ishmael (his oldest and a circumcised male)
 10. The binding of Isaac on the altar.
- Exam 2: Is Abraham truly my friend? (Shall I hide from Abraham that which I am doing?) Is Abraham concerned enough about his family to intercede?
 - Exam 3: Another encounter with someone who wants to take away his wife, will Abraham lie again?
 - Exam 4: Sarah, but Ishmael is also my son! How can I send him off?
 - Final Exam: The Akeidah

Notice that at the end of the Parashat the Torah reveals the origin and birth of Rivka, the wife-to-be of Yitzchak and one of the mothers of Yisrael. There is always a reward at the end of the tests, and in this case the greatest reward for a father of a son is a godly, G-d-chosen wife for our sons. Hand in there parents! At the end of the trials the L-rd will reveal and bring the mates our children desire and want. Not only that, but the godly seed is assured and revealed, for Abraham and Yitzchak, and for us!

Father, Give Us Strong Men!

Many years ago it was true that the strongest motivation of a man was his protective instinct. If someone threatened to invade his home and ravage his wife or children, he would defend them with his life. Is this true today? Is it true in Kol Simcha?

I still believe this to be true today, but something is tragically wrong. Walls that were protecting our sons and daughters are being broken down in ways that fathers should have foreseen, and families are being plun-

dered at will. There is no question that attacks against bright, wholesome, committed young people are increasing especially in Believer families. Satan knows that they have the potential to do great damage to his kingdom, and that as a result, they have unprecedented opportunities to advance God's kingdom.

On Spiritual Leaders and Fathers

Our great need today is for fathers who have the heart of David. He developed skills to protect his flock, so that not even a lion or a bear could rob him of one of his sheep. The following "skills" have been identified through the painful lessons learned by other fathers.

Conquer the spirit of anger.

Many fathers pride themselves in the fact that they "blow up" only once in a while. But how would you like to live next to a volcano that erupted only once in a while? More than any other cause, anger destroys marriages and families!

Redeem the time because the days are evil.

We have always assumed that the word *time* in Ephesians 5:16 referred to the hours of the day ("*Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*" (KJV); "*Use your time well, for these are evil days*" (NASB); "*making the most of your time, because the days are evil.*" (CJB)), but it does not. It refers to opportunities. A paraphrase would be, "*Do not let opportunities go to waste, or the forces of evil will overcome you.*" Romans 12:21 puts it this way, "*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*"

Having talked with distraught fathers about a wayward son or daughter, we have quickly discovered that most of them did not take advantage of training or ministry opportunities, and therefore, many painful tragedies were not avoided. We must continue to lay down our lives for our sons and daughters!

15 Dangers That Require a Father's Protection

1. "Outsiders" Living In Your Home
2. Immoral "Guests" In Your Home
3. Things That Produce Addictions
4. *Jobs That Undermine Standards*
5. *Activities With Appearance Of Evil*
6. *Clothing That Imitates The World*
7. *Churches And Synagogues That Undermine The Family*
8. *Children Who Disrespect Mom*
9. *Guilt That Is Not Cleared Up*
10. *FRIENDS THAT PRODUCE PEER DEPENDENCE*
11. *Activities That Waste Resources*
12. *Presuppositions Contrary To Truth*
13. *Goals That Teach Taking Vs. Giving*
14. *Damage To The Family Name*
15. *Distractions That Hinder Priorities*

1. "OUTSIDERS" LIVING IN YOUR HOME

- ◆ *Lack of privacy breeds temptations*
- ◆ *Desire for 'heroes' influences children*
- ◆ *A 'listening ear' captures a wife's heart*
- ◆ *Meeting needs distracts from children*
- ◆ *Secret sin transfers loyalty to outsider*

2. IMMORAL "GUESTS" IN YOUR HOME

- ◆ *Godless people on TV and videos*
- ◆ *Carnal Christians (I Corinthians 5:9-11)*
- ◆ *Followers of false religions (II John 10)*

3. THINGS THAT PRODUCE ADDICTIONS

- ◆ *Worldly music (melody, rhythm, or chords)*
- ◆ *Alcohol, drugs, tobacco, gambling, etc.*
- ◆ *Pornography, video games, TV*

4. JOBS THAT UNDERMINE STANDARDS

- ◆ *Employers that erode family loyalty*
- ◆ *Employees that ridicule or steal affections*
- ◆ *Environments that encourage worldliness*
- ◆ *Paychecks that produce independence*
- ◆ *Excessive hours that override priorities*

5. ACTIVITIES WITH APPEARANCE OF EVIL

- ◆ *Movie theaters - "love not the world" (I Jo 2:15)*
- ◆ *Gambling games - "fools make a mock at sin" (Prov 14:9)*
- ◆ *Dating - in order to serve God "without distraction" (I Cor 7:35)*
- ◆ *Slumber parties - "a little folly" stinks (Ecclesiastes 10:1)*

6. CLOTHING THAT IMITATES THE WORLD

- ◆ *Sensual dress*
- ◆ *Clothing with wrong messages*
- ◆ *Fads and sloppy styles in hair or dress*
- ◆ *Clothing that implies a lack of care*

7. CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES THAT UNDERMINE THE FAMILY

- ◆ *Playing music that parents oppose (Eph. 6:1-3)*
- ◆ *Attracting evil youth with music (1 Thes. 2:3)*
- ◆ *Ridiculing Godly family standards (2 Pet. 2:1-2)*
- ◆ *Displacing the father's authority (Gal. 4:1-2)*

8. CHILDREN WHO DISRESPECT MOM

- ◆ *Overriding the mother's cautions*
- ◆ *Allowing children to talk disrespectfully*
- ◆ *Openly disagreeing over discipline*
- ◆ *Lack of affection between husband and wife*

9. GUILT THAT IS NOT CLEARED UP

- ◆ *Builds walls that hinder communication*
- ◆ *Produces a critical spirit*
- ◆ *Causes bitterness toward offended party*
- ◆ *Creates anger in future situations*

10. FRIENDS THAT PRODUCE PEER DEPENDENCE

- ◆ *Hinder learning from adults (genius training)*
- ◆ *Influence attitudes, desires, and goals*
- ◆ *Steal loyalty, affection, and time*
- ◆ *Damage leadership potential and self-esteem*

11. ACTIVITIES THAT WASTE RESOURCES

- ◆ *Failure to establish consistent meal times*
- ◆ *Lack of a wise daily schedule*
- ◆ *Continuing hobbies that are unproductive*
- ◆ *Unproductive conversations, Internet surfing*

12. PRESUPPOSITIONS CONTRARY TO TRUTH

- ◆ *Books that give truth out of balance*
 - ◆ *Advertisements that glamorize evil*
 - ◆ *Wrong conclusions for why things happen*
 - ◆ *Failure to relate life to God and character*
13. GOALS THAT TEACH TAKING VS. GIVING
- ◆ *Wanting to be rich or buy flashy things*
 - ◆ *Desire to be popular vs. respected (convictions)*
 - ◆ *Admiring heroes with worldly philosophies*

14. DAMAGE TO THE FAMILY NAME

- ◆ *Bills not paid on time*
- ◆ *Unwise sharing of family problems*
- ◆ *Critical spirit towards believers or others*
- ◆ *Failure to fulfill promises*
- ◆ *Borrowing things and not returning them*
- ◆ *Strife between family members*

15. DISTRACTIONS THAT HINDER PRIORITIES

- ◆ *Not maintaining our first love*
- ◆ *Not being a soul-winner*
- ◆ *Not disciplining those who come for help*
- ◆ *Failure to maintain daily disciplines*

Further Factors

-A father must be under God's protection in order to give protection to his family.

-Listening to the cautions of a wife is vital. -Spending time with each child with a listening ear and heart is a priority.