

contains within it the momentous episode of the עקדה. Each and every detail of the תורה has a מוסר השכל and a תורה that we can learn from, as with every פסוק in the תורה. This dramatic and enormous event has countless מפרשים, discussions, and even full ספרים written about it. There is one tiny קניטש about the עקדה which I hadn't seen before and thought was worth sharing here. It harkens back to an idea I once heard from Rabbi Noach Isaac Oelbaum, regarding מלפנינו ומאחרינו.

In שרה פרשת, as we discussed last year, we see how the שטן used the עקדה as an opportunity to take שרה's אמינו. נשמה אברהם passed that test. But even before that, the תורה gives us another deeply insightful example of פיינקייט and the wisdom and מוסר to be learned from the עקדה. At the end of the עקדה, the פסוק states (22:19), וַיֵּשֶׁב אַבְרָהָם אֶל נְעָרָיו וַיְקַמּוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ יַחְדָּו, a פסוק whose simplicity belies its depth.

יצחק explains on the beginning of the עקדה, in the פסוק וַיֵּלְכוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו (22:8), that אברהם and יצחק went together in precisely the same way. אברהם knew he was going to offer his son as a קרבן, yet he went בשמחה and ברצון, just as יצחק, who thought he was going to witness a קרבן, went בשמחה and ברצון. The יחדו there teaches us that both father and son went with the same exact שמחה, despite their vastly different understandings of what was to happen. Together, they were aligned in their commitment to fulfill הבורא.

Now, after the עקדה, the פסוק says וַיֵּלְכוּ יַחְדָּו וַיְקַמּוּ אֶל נְעָרָיו וַיְקַמּוּ וַיֵּלְכוּ יַחְדָּו. Here, we're not talking about just two people, but four: יצחק, אברהם, and the two נערים, אליעזר and ישמעאל.

יצחק and אברהם were completely transformed by the עקדה. Their hearts, minds, and perspectives on life and the future shifted profoundly. Meanwhile, the two נערים - אליעזר and ישמעאל - waited below, unchanged. They have no idea what has transpired. They don't inquire about what happened. The פסוק teaches us that, just as the נערים did not change in their attitudes, אברהם and יצחק also did not return with a holier-than-thou attitude. They did not emerge as בעלי גאווה, thinking, "Look at this מצוה we performed! We passed this tremendous test!" Instead, the פסוק says וַיֵּלְכוּ יַחְדָּו וַיְקַמּוּ, showing us that they retained the same ענוה, the same self-view as servants of Hashem, without any hint of superiority or feeling that they were now on a higher level. They did not look down on others or feel their "grass was greener." This underscores the greatness of these figures and their humility.

ר' יושע ר' ולוועל because I always call him ר' ולוועל בריסקער. (This beautiful insight comes from ר' יושע ר' ולוועל, whom I was privileged to hear, always called his uncle ר' ולוועל. No one else calls him that - except R' Hershel Schachter. To everyone else, he is ר' יצחק זאב בריסקער. But I call him ר' ולוועל, because that's how I heard his משפחה call him.)

This is classic תורה בריסקער, a tremendous insight that teaches us about the control and humility we must cultivate in ourselves. Both obstacles and successes present challenges, but success is the greater challenge. If we can overcome the ניסיון of success, we'll be all the better for it.

