

And he was sitting in front of the tent – Rashi explains that Avraham wanted to stand but Hashem told him that you are like a Beis Din and in the future they will sit. What is the connection to Din? **Rav Schachter Shlita quoted Rav Soloveitchik ztl.** who explained that the Malachim were heading to destroy Sodom and that Avraham was Michayev the Reshaim of Sodom because he was nice when they were not. They couldn't blame the circumstances. There are many times in life that people claim that life circumstances prevented them from doing the right thing. Those that do it, are Michayeiv those who fail, for their failings.

And Sarah laughed internally (18:11) – Why is it so important to focus on Sarah's laughter? And why embarrass her so – forever? **Chaver Kneset Rav Chanan Porat** suggested that Sarah's laughter was so hidden inside her that only Hashem who is Chofeis Kol Chadrei Baten was able to know it. Perhaps Sarah herself didn't realize it – Ki Yireiah – for she was a Yireiyah Shomayim! So why did Hashem call her out on the momentary unconscious laughter? Rav Porat suggests that even unconscious destructive mockery can make a person decide s/he won't try. Hashem didn't want to castigate Sarah, he wanted her to fix the middah – and she does! She turns the Tzichok into a positive force of belief in Hashem and into her raison d'etra.

Please do not be angry with me (18:30) – Why would Avraham think Hashem would be angry? Doesn't Hashem love the Tefillos of Tzaddikim? **Rav Aharon Shteinman Shlita** explains in the name of the Gra that one must be careful to limit his words in front of Hashem. In other words, in front of Hashem, even one's Tefillos should be focused and direct.

And he made a party for them and baked Matzos and they ate (19:3) – Rashi explains that they ate because it was Pesach. Yet, how could they eat Matzos if the reason we eat Matzos had not applied as yet? The **Beis HaLevi (Bo)** explains that contrary to man's understanding that the Mitzvos effect a reminder of the events, the events actually give rise to the Mitzvos that preceded them. As **Rav Gifter ztl.** explained, the events happened because of the Mitzvos. For this reason we do not make a Sh'asa Nissim on the Seder since it is a biblical obligation. For Biblical Mitzvos, the Mitzva was there long before the story that backs it up.

And the child grew up and he was weaned (21:8) – Rashi cites the Midrash which notes that when Avraham made the party, he invited the Gedolei HaDor Avimelech and Ever to join him. When was the party held? There is debate among the Rishonim as to this point. Rashi notes that it was at 24 months. The Midrash says it was at the Bar Mitzvah and Daas Zekanim says that it was at his bris. **Rav Mordechai Eliyahu ztl.** explains the Simcha at each of these stages. He notes that according to the **Baalei HaTosafos** the simcha was the Simcha Shel Mitzva of performing the Bris. But according to Rashi that it was at the end of 24 months, what Mitzva was celebrated then? Rav Eliyahu ztl. explains that when Sarah had the baby Yitzchak, it was only SHE who was capable of nursing all of the other children including her own. In celebration of the Nes and in appreciation of the completion of the Chessed, Avraham had a party to thank Hashem. The third opinion – that of Bar Mitzva understands that the completion of the stages of growth are achieved, not when the person is done with nursing or Milah but when one is done with the chinuch process and the punishments are no longer the father's. Hence the party at the bar Mitzva—in celebration of the completion of the work of Avraham.

And she cast off the child under one of the thornbushes. And she went and sat opposite him (21:15-16) – The movements of Hagar are most interesting as they are intriguing. Did she want to leave? How could she? After all, she IS a mother? Why did she cast the child if she was going to sit by and watch? **Rav Binyomin Eisenberger Shlita** explains that the practices of Hagar were a lesson in Tefillah. She cast the child refers to the comment made by the Chozeh of Lublin who explains that when we are in peril we need to cast our lot on Hashem. Thus she put him Tachas Achat HaSichin – in the context of one of the conversations with Hashem, but in order to effectively daven she needed the distance in order to attain some degree of Kavana in the mission she had without going to check on him constantly in the middle. The same can be said of our power of prayer. We too, need to remove impediments to our connecting to Hashem in Tefillah when we daven.

The Philistines (21:26) – Rabbi Hayyim Angel notes that the characterization of the Plishtim is in sharp contrast to that of Yishmael. Although warlike the latter eventually makes a piece with Yitzchak and the Jewish nation while the Philistines walk the line of being on the brink of war and plundering the Jewish nation at every turn.

Haftorah: I know that the Ish Elokim is a holy man (Melachim II:4:9) – Rashi explains that she saw that there was never a fly on his table. Why is that a sign? **Rav Nosson Gestetner ztl.** explains that the Yetzer HaRa is like a fly – always interfering with a person and his life. To the Tzaddik, the flies do not interfere with his ability to remain focused on his mission of following Hashem's plan for him in life.