בס"ד
Fill Your Own Cup – Year Four
Midrash – Session Four
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Fill Your Own Cup – Fall Series – Reading the Parsha Through the Eyes of the Midrash

Session Four – Vayera

1) Genesis 17:15 – 22

15) And God said to Abraham, "As for your wife Sarai, you shall not call her Sarai, but her name shall be Sarah.
16) I will bless her; indeed, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she shall give rise to nations; rulers of peoples shall issue from her."
17) **Abraham threw himself on his face and laughed,** as he said to himself, "Can a child be born to a man a hundred years old, or can Sarah bear a child at ninety?"
18) And Abraham said to God, "O that Ishmael might live by your favor!"
19) God said, "Nevertheless, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and **you shall name him Isaac**; and I will maintain My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring to come.
20) As for Ishmael, I have heeded you. I hereby bless him. I will make him fertile and exceedingly numerous. He shall be the father of twelve chieftains, and I will make of him a great nation.
21) But My covenant I will maintain with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year."
22) And when [God] was done speaking with him, God was gone from Abraham.

בראשית יז:טו – כב

טו) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם שָׂרַי אִשְׁתְּךָ
לֹא־תִקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָהּ שָׂרָי כִּי שָׂרָה שְׁמָהּ׃
טז) וּבֵרַכְתִּי אֹתָהּ וְגַם נָתַתִּי מִמֶּנָּה לְךָ בֵּן
וּבֵרַכְתִּיהָ וְהָיְתָה לְגוֹיִם מַלְכֵי עַמִּים מִמֶּנָּה
יִהְיוּ׃
יז) וַיִּפֹּל אַבְרָהָם עַל־פָּנָיו וַיִּצְחָק וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלִבּוֹ
הַלְבֶן מֵאָה־שָׁנָה יִוָּלֵד וְאִם־שָׂרָה הֲבַת־תִּשְׁעִים
שָׁנָה תֵּלֵד׃
יח) וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים לוּ יִשְׁמָעֵאל
יִחְיֶה לְפָנֶיךָ׃
יט) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֲבָל שָׂרָה אִשְׁתְּךָ יֹלֶדֶת לְךָ
בֵּן וְקָרָאתָ אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יִצְחָק וַהֲקִמֹתִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי
אִתּוֹ לִבְרִית עוֹלָם לְזַרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו׃
כ) וּלְיִשְׁמָעֵאל שְׁמַעְתִּיךָ הִנֵּה בֵּרַכְתִּי אֹתוֹ
וְהִפְרֵיתִי אֹתוֹ וְהִרְבֵּיתִי אֹתוֹ בִּמְאֹד מְאֹד
שְׁנֵים־עָשָׂר נְשִׂיאִם יוֹלִיד וּנְתַתִּיו לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל׃
כא) וְאֶת־בְּרִיתִי אָקִים אֶת־יִצְחָק אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵד
לְךָ שָׂרָה לַמּוֹעֵד הַזֶּה בַּשָּׁנָה הָאַחֶרֶת׃
כב) וַיְכַל לְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ וַיַּעַל אֱלֹהִים מֵעַל
אַבְרָהָם׃

2) Genesis 18:9 – 15

9) They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he replied, "There, in the tent."
10) Then one said, "I will return to you when life is due, and your wife Sarah shall have a son!" Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind him.
11) Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years; Sarah had stopped having the periods of women.
12) **And Sarah laughed to herself,** saying, "Now that I am withered, am I to have enjoyment—**with my husband so old?**"
13) Then God said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I in truth bear a child, **old as I am?**'
14) Is anything too wondrous for God? I will return to you at the time that life is due, and Sarah shall have a son."
15) **Sarah lied, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was frightened.** The reply came: "You did laugh."

בראשית יח:ט – טו

ט) וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו אַיֵּה שָׂרָה אִשְׁתֶּךָ
וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה בָאֹהֶל׃
י) וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוֹב אָשׁוּב אֵלֶיךָ כָּעֵת חַיָּה
וְהִנֵּה־בֵן לְשָׂרָה אִשְׁתֶּךָ וְשָׂרָה שֹׁמַעַת
פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וְהוּא אַחֲרָיו׃
יא) וְאַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה זְקֵנִים בָּאִים
בַּיָּמִים חָדַל לִהְיוֹת לְשָׂרָה אֹרַח
כַּנָּשִׁים׃
יב) וַתִּצְחַק שָׂרָה בְּקִרְבָּהּ לֵאמֹר אַחֲרֵי
בְלֹתִי הָיְתָה־לִּי עֶדְנָה וַאדֹנִי זָקֵן׃
יג) וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָהָם לָמָּה זֶּה
צָחֲקָה שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר הַאַף אֻמְנָם אֵלֵד
וַאֲנִי זָקַנְתִּי׃
יד) הֲיִפָּלֵא מֵיְהוָה דָּבָר לַמּוֹעֵד אָשׁוּב
אֵלֶיךָ כָּעֵת חַיָּה וּלְשָׂרָה בֵּן׃
טו) וַתְּכַחֵשׁ שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר לֹא צָחַקְתִּי
כִּי יָרֵאָה וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא כִּי צָחָקְתְּ׃

3) Genesis Rabbah 48:18

"God said to Abraham: Why is it that Sarah laughed, saying: [Shall I indeed bear a child, and I have grown old?]" –
Bar Kappara said: **Great is peace** - **as even Scripture spoke untruths in order to establish peace between Abraham and Sarah.** "Sarah laughed to herself, saying: After my languishing, shall I have youth, **and my husband is old?**" But God did not say this to Abraham, but rather, "Why is it that Sarah laughed, saying: Shall I indeed bear a child, **and I have grown old?**" The verse does not say as Sarah said: "My husband is old," but rather, "I have grown old."

בראשית רבה מח:יח

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל אַבְרָהָם לָמָּה זֶּה צָחֲקָה שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר (בראשית יח, יג), בַּר קַפָּרָא אָמַר **גָּדוֹל הַשָּׁלוֹם שֶׁאַף הַכְּתוּבִים דִּבְּרוּ בַּדָּאִית בִּשְׁבִיל לְהַטִּיל שָׁלוֹם בֵּין אַבְרָהָם לְשָׂרָה,** וַתִּצְחַק שָׂרָה בְּקִרְבָּהּ לֵאמֹר אַחֲרֵי בְלֹתִי הָיְתָה לִי עֶדְנָה **וַאדֹנִי זָקֵן,** לְאַבְרָהָם אֵינוֹ אוֹמֵר כֵּן אֶלָּא לָמָּה זֶּה צָחֲקָה שָׂרָה לֵאמֹר הַאַף אֻמְנָם אֵלֵד **וַאֲנִי זָקַנְתִּי,** לֹא דִּבֵּר הַכָּתוּב כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרָה שָׂרָה וַאדֹנִי זָקֵן, אֶלָּא וַאֲנִי זָקַנְתִּי.

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4) Babylonian Talmud, Yevamot 65b

And Rabbi Ile'a said in the name of Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Shimon: **A person is permitted to alter [the truth] for the sake of peace,** as it is stated: "Your father commanded before his death, saying: So shall you say to Joseph: Forgive, I pray you, the transgression of your brothers…" (Genesis 50:16–17).

Rabbi Natan says: **It is a mitzvah,** as it is stated: "And Samuel said: How can I go? If Saul hears, he will kill me. And God said: Take a heifer with you, and say: I have come to sacrifice to God" (I Samuel 16:2).

The school of Rabbi Yishmael taught: **Great is peace, for even the Holy Blessed One altered [the truth] for its sake.** For at first it is written: "with my husband so old" (Genesis 18:12), and in the end it is written: "old as I am" (Genesis 18:13).

תלמוד בבלי יבמות סה:

וְאָמַר רַבִּי אִילְעָא מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בְּנוֹ שֶׁל רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן: **מוּתָּר לוֹ לָאָדָם לְשַׁנּוֹת בְּדָבָר הַשָּׁלוֹם,** שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ״אָבִיךָ צִוָּה וגו׳ כֹּה תֹאמְרוּ לְיוֹסֵף אָנָּא שָׂא נָא וגו׳״.

רַבִּי נָתָן אוֹמֵר: **מִצְוָה,** שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ״וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֵיךְ אֵלֵךְ וְשָׁמַע שָׁאוּל וַהֲרָגָנִי וגו׳״.

דְּבֵי רַבִּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל תָּנָא: **גָּדוֹל הַשָּׁלוֹם, שֶׁאַף הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא שִׁינָּה בּוֹ,** דְּמֵעִיקָּרָא כְּתִיב: ״וַאדנִי זָקֵן״, וּלְבַסּוֹף כְּתִיב: ״וַאֲנִי זָקַנְתִּי״.

5) Leviticus Rabbah 9:9

"This is the law of the peace offering that one sacrifices to the Lord" (Leviticus 7:11)

Bar Kappara said: Great is peace, as the verses presented matters of falsehood in the Torah in order to institute peace between Abraham and Sarah. That is what is written: "After my withering, will I have youth, and my lord is old?" (Genesis 18:12). But to Abraham He did not say so, but rather: "And I have grown old" (Genesis 18:13).

…Rabbi Yishmael taught: **Great is peace, as the Holy Blessed One said that the great name that is written in sanctity should be erased in water in order to institute peace between a man and his wife.**

Rabbi Meir would sit and lecture on Shabbat at night. There was a certain woman who would stand there and listen to him teaching the lecture, and she would wait until he concluded the lecture. [Once,] she went home and found the lamps extinguished. Her husband said to her: 'Where were you?' She said to him: 'I was sitting and listening to the voice of the lecturer.' He said to her: 'Such and such shall befall me; **you will not enter here until you go and spit in the face of that lecturer.**'

She remained outside the first, second, and third weeks. Her neighbors said to her: 'Are you still angry with one another? We will come with you to the lecturer.' When Rabbi Meir saw them, he saw through the Divine Spirit. He said to them: 'Is there a woman among you who is proficient in chanting to heal the eye?' Her neighbors said to her: 'Go now and spit in his face and release your husband of his vow.'

When she sat before him, she feared him. She said to him: 'Rabbi, I am not proficient in chanting to heal the eye.' He said to her: 'Even so, **spit in my face seven times,** and I will be relieved.' She did so. He said to her: 'Go say to your husband: You said one time, but I spat seven times.'

His students said to him: 'Rabbi, should the Torah be demeaned in this way? Should you not have said to one of us to chant for you?' He said to them: '**Is it not sufficient for Meir to be like his Maker,** as Rabbi Yishmael taught: Great is peace, as the Holy Blessed One said that the great name that is written in sanctity should be erased in water in order to institute peace between a man and his wife.'

ויקרא רבה ט:ט

וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת זֶבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים אֲשֶׁר יַקְרִיב לַה׳

בַּר קַפָּרָא אָמַר גָּדוֹל שָׁלוֹם שֶׁדִּבְּרוּ הַכְּתוּבִים דִּבְרֵי בַדָּאוּת בַּתּוֹרָה בִּשְׁבִיל לְהַטִּיל שָׁלוֹם בֵּין אַבְרָהָם לְשָׂרָה, הֲדָא הוּא דִכְתִיב (בראשית יח, יב): אַחֲרֵי בְלֹתִי הָיְתָה לִי עֶדְנָה וַאדֹנִי זָקֵן, אֲבָל לְאַבְרָהָם לֹא אָמַר כֵּן אֶלָּא (בראשית יח, יג): וַאֲנִי זָקַנְתִּי.

…תָּנֵי רַבִּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל **גָּדוֹל שָׁלוֹם שֶׁשֵּׁם הַגָּדוֹל שֶׁנִּכְתַּב בִּקְדֻשָּׁה אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא יִמָּחֶה בַּמַּיִם כְּדֵי לְהַטִּיל שָׁלוֹם בֵּין אִישׁ לְאִשְׁתּוֹ.**

רַבִּי מֵאִיר הֲוָה יָתִיב וְדָרִישׁ בְּלֵילֵי שַׁבַּתָּא הֲוָה תַּמָּן חָדָא אִתְּתָא יַצִיבָא וְשָׁמְעָה לֵיהּ תְּנָתָא מִדְרָשָׁא, אַמְתִּינַת עַד דְּיִסַּל מִמְּדְרָשׁ, אָזְלָה לְבֵיתָהּ אַשְׁכְּחָהּ בּוּצִינָא טָפֵי, אֲמַר לָהּ בַּעְלָהּ אָן הֲוַית, אֲמְרָה לֵיהּ אֲנָא יָתִיבָא וְשָׁמְעָה קָלֵיהּ דְּרוֹשָׁה, אֲמַר לָהּ כֵּן וְכֵן **לָא אֵעַיְלִתְּ לְהָכָא עַד דַּאֲזָלְתְּ וְרוֹקַת בְּאַנְפֵּי דְּרוֹשָׁה,**

יְתִיבָא שַׁבַּתָּא קַמָּיְיתָא תִּנְיָנָא וּתְלִיתָאָה, אֲמָרִין לָהּ מְגִירָתָא כַּדּוּ אִתּוּן צְהֵיבִין, אֲתַיְנָן עִמָּךְ לְגַבֵּי דְּרוֹשָׁה, כֵּיוָן דְּחָמֵי יַתְהוֹן רַבִּי מֵאִיר צָפָה בְּרוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, אֲמַר לְהוֹן אִית מִנְכוֹן אִתְּתָא דְּחַכִּימָא לְמִלְחַשׁ בְּעֵינָא, אֲמָרִין לָהּ מְגִירָתָא כַּדּוּ אַתְּ אָזְלַת וְרוֹקַת בְּאַנְפֵּיהּ וְתִשְׁרֵי לְבַעְלָךְ,

כֵּיוָן דְּיָתְבָא קַמֵּי אִידְחֵילַת מִינֵיהּ, אֲמָרָה לֵיהּ רַבִּי לֵית אֲנָא חַכִּימָא לְמִילְחַשׁ עֵינָא, אֲמַר לָהּ אֲפִלּוּ הָכֵי **רוֹקִי בְּאַנְפִּי שְׁבַע זִמְנִין** וַאֲנָא מִינְשֵׁים, עָבְדָה הָכֵין. אֲמַר לָהּ אִיזִילִי אִמְרִי לְבַעְלִיךְ אַתְּ אֲמַרְתְּ חָדָא זִימְנָא וַאֲנָא רָקִית שְׁבַע זִימְנִין.

אָמְרוּ לוֹ תַּלְמִידָיו רַבִּי כָּךְ מְבַזִּין אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, לָא הֲוָה לָךְ לְמֵימַר לְחַד מִינָּן לְמִלְחַשׁ לָךְ, אֲמַר לְהוֹן **לָא דַּיּוֹ לְמֵאִיר לִהְיוֹת שֶׁוֶה לְקוֹנוֹ,** דְּתָנֵי רַבִּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל גָּדוֹל שָׁלוֹם שֶׁשֵּׁם הַגָּדוֹל שֶׁנִּכְתַּב בִּקְדֻשָּׁה אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא יִמָּחֶה עַל הַמַּיִם בִּשְׁבִיל לְהַטִּיל שָׁלוֹם בֵּין אִישׁ לְאִשְׁתּוֹ.

6) Rashi on Genesis 17:17	**רש"י בראשית יז:יז**
And Abraham Fell Upon His Face And Laughed — This word ויצחק Onkelos translates by וחדי which signifies joy ("and he rejoiced") but the similar verb in the case of Sarah (ותצחק Genesis 18:12) he translates as meaning laughter. From this you may understand that Abraham had faith and rejoiced, and that Sarah had no faith and sneered, and that is why God was angry with Sarah (when she laughed) but was not angry with Abraham.	**ויפל אברהם על פניו ויצחק.** זֶה תִּ"א, לְשׁוֹן שִׂמְחָה, וַחֲדִי, וְשֶׁל שָׂרָה לְשׁוֹן מָחוֹךְ; לָמַדְתָּ שֶׁאַבְרָהָם הֶאֱמִין וְשָׂמַח וְשָׂרָה לֹא הֶאֱמִינָה וְלִגְלְגָה, וְזֶהוּ שֶׁהִקְפִּיד הַקָּבָ"ה עַל שָׂרָה וְלֹא הִקְפִּיד עַל אַבְרָהָם:

7) Bekhor Shor on Genesis 18:15 *(12th C. France)*	**בכור שור על בראשית יח:טו**
"And he said"—Abraham. "No"—it isn't as you say. **"For you laughed**"—for the Holy One is more trustworthy than you.	**ויאמר – אברהם.** לא – כמה שאת אומרת. **כי צחקת** – כי הקב"ה נאמן יותר ממך.