

Isaac: Bound and Unbound | Parshat Toldot 5785 | Rabbi Panitz

Genesis 22:16-18

ַניּאמֶר בִּי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי נְאָם־ה' כִּי יַעֲן אֲשֶׁר עִשִּיׁתָ אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַנָּה וְלָא חָשַׂרָתָּ אֶת־בִּנְךְּ אֶת־יִחִידְךְּ: כְּי־בָרֵךְ <mark>אֲבָרֶכְךְּ וְהַרְבָּה אַרְבֶּה אָת־זַרְעֵךְ כְּכוֹרְבֵיְי הַשְׁמַיִּם</mark> וְכַחוֹל אֲשֶׁר עַל־שְׁפַת הַיֶּם וְיִרָשׁ זַרְעֲךְ אֱת שַעַר אִיִּבִיו: <mark>וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְזַרְעַךְּ כִּלֹ גּוֹזֵי הָאֶרְץ</mark> עֵּקָב אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתִּ בְּקֹלִי:

[The messenger of God] said to Avraham, "Because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your favored one, I will bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sands on the seashore; and your descendants shall seize the gates of their foes. All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants, because you have obeyed My command."

Genesis 26:2-5

וַיֵּרֶא אֵלָיוֹ ה' וַיֹּאמֶר אַלּ־תֵּרֵד מִצְרֵיִמָה שְׁכֹן בָּאֶׁרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֹמֵר אֵלֶיך: גוּר בָּאָרֶץ הַזָּאת <mark>וְאָהְיֶה עִמְּדְ וַאְבְרַכֶּךְ</mark> כִּיּ־לְדְּ וְּלְזַרְעֵךְ אֶתֵּוֹ אֶת־כָּל־הָאֵרְצֹת הָאֵל וַהַקְמֹתִי אֶת־הַשְּׁבָעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבֵּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם אָבִיךְ: <mark>וְהַרְבֵּיתִי אָת־זְרְעַךְּ</mark> הְּכִּוֹרְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנָתַתִּי לְזַרְעֵךְ אֵתְ כָּל־הָאֵרְצֹת הָאֵל הָהִתְּבָּרְכוַ בְזִרְעֵךְ כִּלֹ גַּוֹיִי הָאָרֶץ: מֵּצֶוֹתֵי חֶקוֹתֵי וְתוֹרֹתִי: אַבְרָהָם בִּלֹלִי וִיִּשְׁמִר מִשִׁמַרְתִּי מִצְוֹתֵי חֶקוֹתֵי וְתוֹרֹתִי:

God appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land which I point out to you. Reside in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; I will assign all these lands to you and to your descendants, fulfilling the oath that I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven, and assign to your descendants all these lands, so that all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants—because Abraham obeyed My command and kept My charge: My commandments, My laws, and My teachings."

Bereshit Rabbah 56:8

ָּוְיָהִי בִּי־זָקֵן יִצְּחָׁק וַתִּכְהֶיִן עֵינָיו מֵרְאֻתְ...

ֹמִיָּד וַיִּּשְׁלֵחֹ אַבְרָהָם אֶתֹ יֻּדוֹ, הוֹא שׁוֹלֵחַ יָד לִטֹל אֶת הַסַּכִּין וְעֵינָיו מוֹרִידוֹת דְמָעוֹת וְנוֹפְלוֹת דְּמָעוֹת לְעֵינָיו שֶׁל יצחק...

When Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see... (Gen. 27:1)

Immediately, "Abraham extended his hand." As he extended his hand to take the knife, his eyes were emitting tears and the tears were falling into Isaac's eyes [presumably causing the dimness in Isaac's eyes].

Genesis 22:7

וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָקׁ אֶל־אַבְרָהָם אָבִיוֹ <mark>וַיֹּאמֶר אַבִּׁי וַיֹּאמֶר הָנֶנְיּ</mark> <mark>בְגֵיַ</mark> וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֶּה הָאֵשׁ וְהָעֵצִים וְאַיֵּה הַשֶּׂה לְעֹלְה:

Then Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "I'm here, my son." And he said, "Here are the firestone and the wood; but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?"

Genesis 27:18

וַיָּבֹא אֶל־אָבִיו <mark>וַיּאָמֶר אָבִי וַיּאָמֶר הָנֶּנִּי מְיִ אַתְּה</mark> בּיִיי

He went to his father and said, "My father."

And he said, "I'm here, who are you, my
son?"

Midrash Tanchuma, Toldot 13:1

וַיֶּחֲרֵד יִצְחָק חֲרָדָה גְּדֹלָה. אָמַר רַבִּי לֵוִי בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי חָמָא בַר חֲנִינָא, שְׁתֵּי חֲרָדוֹת חָרַד יִצְחָק, אַחַת עַל גַּבֵּי הַמִּזְבֵּח, וְאַחַת כְּשֶׁנְּכְנַס עֵשָׂו, וְאֵין אַתָּה יוֹדֵע אֵיזֶה מֵהֶן גְּדוֹלָה. אֶלָּא מִמַּה שֶׁאַתְּ קוֹרֵא כָּאן גְּדֹלָה עַד מְאֹד, אַתָּה יוֹדֵע שָׁזוֹ גְדוֹלָה.

And Isaac trembled very exceedingly (Gen. 27:33). R. Levi said in the name of R. Hama the son of Hanina: Isaac was terrified twice, once when he was bound upon the altar, and again when Esau entered. There is no way of knowing which event frightened him more, but since the word *exceedingly* is mentioned in this verse, you may presume that this was the more terrifying experience.

Genesis 25:11

וַיְהִיֹ אַחֲרֵי ׁמַוֹת אַבְרָהָּם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹקִים אֶת־יִצְחָק בְּנֵוֹ וַיַּשֶׁב יִצְחָׁק עִם־בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאִי: After the death of Abraham, *God blessed his son Isaac*. And Isaac settled near Beer-lahai-roi.

Bereshit Rabbah 61:6

בָּךְ אָמַר אַבְרָהָם, אָם מְבָרֵךְ אֲנִי אֶת יִצְחָק, עַכְשָׁו בְּנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל וּבְנֵי קְטוּרָה בִּכְלַל, וְאָם אֵין אֲנִי מְבָרֵךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׁמָעֵאל וּבְנֵי קְטוּרָה, הֵיךְ אֲנִי מְבָרֵךְ אֶת יִצְחָק, חָזַר וְאָמַר בָּשָׁר וָדָם אֲנִי, הַיּוֹם כָּאן וּמָחָר בַּקֶבֶר, כְּבָר עֲבֵידַת אֲנָא דִידִי, מִכָּאן וָאֵילָךְ מַה שֶׁהַקְּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא רוֹצֶה לַעֲשׁוֹת בְּעוֹלָמוֹ יַעֲשֶׁה, כֵּיוָן שֶׁמֵת אַבְרָהָם אַבִּינוּ גִּלָּה הַקְּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא עַל יִצְחָק וּבֵרָכוֹ, הֲדָא הוּא דְכְתִיב (בראשית כה, יֹא): וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי מוֹת אַבְרָהָם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹקִים אֶת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ.

Abraham said: 'If I bless Isaac, my son Ishmael and Ketura's sons will want to be included. If I do not bless Ishmael's sons and Ketura's sons, how can I bless Isaac?' He then said: 'I am flesh and blood, here today, in the grave tomorrow. I have already done my part; from here on, what the Holy One wishes to do in His world, let Him do.' When Abraham died, the Holy One revealed himself to Isaac and blessed him. That is what is written: "It was after the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac his son..." (Genesis 25:11).

Genesis 22:13

וַיִּלְאֹ אַבְרָהֶםׁ אֶת־עֵינִיו וַיַּרְאֹ וְהִנֵּה־אַׁיִל אַחֵּר נֶאֱחַז בַּסְבַךְ בְּקַרְנֶיו וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הָאַיִל וַיִּעֲלֶהוּ לְעלָה מַחַת בְּנִוֹ:

When Abraham lifted his eyes, he saw a ram, caught in the thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering in place of his son.

Genesis 27:38

וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו אֶל־אָבִיו הָבְרָכָה אַחַת הְוא־לְךּ´אָבִּי בָּרְכֵנִי גִם־אָנִי אָבִי <mark>וַיִּשָׂא עֵשָׂו קֹלְוֹ וַיְּבְדְּ</mark>:

And Esau said to his father, "Have you but one blessing, Father? Bless me too, Father!" And Esau lifted his voice and wept.