



SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

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Each year as we read *Parshat Vayeira* and recall *Avraham Avinu's* incredible legacy of total faith and trust in *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, I am particularly drawn to three *pesukim* in the midst of the account of the *Akeidat Yitzchak*.

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם אֶת־עֵצִי הָעֹלָה וַיִּשֶׂם עַל־יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיִּקַּח בְּיָדוֹ אֶת־הָאֵשׁ וְאֶת־הַמַּאֲכָלִת וַיֵּלֶכְוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו: וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל־אַבְרָהָם אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִי בָנִי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה הָאֵשׁ וְהָעֵצִים וְאַיִה הַשֶּׁהָ לָעֹלָה: וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־יִצְחָק יְרֵאָה לֹא הִשָּׁה לָעֹלָה בָנִי וַיֵּלֶכְוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו

Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and put it on his son Isaac. He himself took the firestone and the knife; and the two walked off together. Then Isaac said to his father Abraham, “Father!” And he answered, “Yes, my son.” And he said, “Here are the firestone and the wood; but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?” And Abraham said, “God will see to the sheep for His burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them walked on together. (*B’reishit 22:6-8*)

Yitzchak Avinu, sensing what is about to transpire, turns to his father, and asks where is the animal which will be offered unto the *Ribono Shel Olam*. *Avraham Avinu* replies with these powerful words:

“*Elokim yireh lo HaSeh, Bni.... G-d will reveal to us the sheep, Bni-my son.*” One possible understanding of *Avraham's* reply is that Hashem will reveal to us

whether the offering will indeed be a sheep, or if you, B’ni-my son is to be that offering. As stunning as this reading of the statement may be in and of itself, perhaps as stunning is the verse’s conclusion- *vayeilchu shneihem yachdav, and the two of them walked together.*

Rashi explains that even upon hearing his father confirm that which he already may have intuited, that indeed he is to be the offering, *Yitzchak Avinu* walks together with his father, *vayeilchu shneihem yachdav, and the two of them walked together- with equal intent in their hearts.*

Each of these giants of faith were willing and ready for this inconceivable test, indeed they were ready to face this ultimate challenge, together.

During the past many months, as we have been forced to distance ourselves from one another, nonetheless, our OU Israel family has worked diligently to heed the powerful message of the *Akeida*- and to faithfully face these challenging circumstances **together.** We have

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pivoted to provide many hundreds of opportunities for *Limud Torah*, for *chizuk* and for community interaction, all while utilizing the various virtual platforms that this challenging period has dictated. It is our pledge to you, our dear friends, that we will continue to find ways for us to be there for one another, and to strengthen and support one another, so that we may indeed traverse these trying times, together.

Yehi Ratson, that we may learn this powerful lesson, find ways to strengthen one another even as we remain physically distant from one another, and *B'Ezrat Hashem* soon return to a normal routine, inspired to build an even more vibrant, united community here in *Artzeinu HaKedosha*. ■



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