



YAFIT ATLAS

BEIT SHEMESH DIRECTOR
REVEALED BEAUTY

As Avraham and Sarah embark on their journey to a new land, one filled with uncertainty, they are immediately confronted with famine. Their next step is clear: they must descend to Egypt in search of food. As they journey together toward Egypt, we encounter one of my favourite moments between Avraham and Sarah—a moment that is so easy to miss if we do not stop to pay attention. Along the way, they stop for a drink of water, and Avraham says to Sarah, “הִנֵּה-נָא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אִשָּׁה יְפִת־מַרְאָה אַתָּ.” (“Behold, now I know what a beautiful woman you are”).

At first glance, you do not need to be a marriage expert to recognise that this is not exactly the most romantic comment. Now you know? After all these years? Why is Avraham suddenly so struck by Sarah’s beauty? The question becomes even more intriguing when we consider the many sources that describe the extraordinary extent of Sarah’s beauty. Surely, her physical beauty would have been the first thing Avraham noticed about her!

Of course, Avraham had always known that Sarah was beautiful. Her beauty was undeniable. But perhaps the key to understanding this moment lies in the way Avraham saw the world. Avraham lived with an awareness of the spiritual reality beneath the physical one.

When he looked at Sarah, he saw far more than her outward appearance; he saw her soul. Her physical beauty was another expression of the spiritual beauty that radiated from within her.

As they approached Egypt, a land associated with immorality, something changed. Avraham suddenly became aware of Sarah’s physical beauty, too. It is almost as if he was seeing another dimension of her for the first time: “I always knew you were beautiful on the inside, but now I am struck by just how beautiful you are on the outside, too.”

Now we have come to the point of why I love this mini-story within the larger story. As we live our lives trying to emulate our forefathers and foremothers, we can see how much love they expressed. This gives us a roadmap not only for navigating our own relationships, but also for understanding the important place that love has in our everyday lives.

Shabbat Shalom



AVIGAYIL COHEN

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TRUE EMUNAH

In Parshat Lech Lecha, Hashem tells Avraham, לך לך מארצך וממולדתך ומבית אביך - leave your country, your birthplace, and your father’s home.

Why does Hashem repeat these different descriptions? Wouldn’t it have been enough to simply tell Avraham to leave his country?

The Ramban explains that these words teach us about the difficulty of Avraham’s

nisayon. Hashem lists the places Avraham must leave, from the easiest to the hardest. Leaving his country was difficult; leaving the place where he grew up was even harder; and leaving his father's home, where his family lived, was the hardest of all. By listing each one separately, the Torah emphasises just how great Avraham's challenge was.

The Radak adds another idea to this nisayon. Hashem does not tell Avraham where he is going. Avraham must leave everything familiar behind without knowing his destination. This shows us how strong his emunah was and how completely he trusted Hashem.

Later, the Torah says, ואת הנפש אשר עשו בחרן. Rashi explains that Avraham converted the men to Judaism, while Sarah converted the women. They brought people closer to Hashem and taught them about emunah.

According to the simple meaning (פשוט), בחרן refers to the people and wealth that Avraham and Sarah acquired in Charan, showing that they became wealthy and had servants who travelled with them.

Avraham teaches us that true emunah means trusting Hashem, even when we cannot see where the journey will lead. ■

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