

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center
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16 Tevet 5777

Vayechi

January 14, 2017

Achievement vs. Caring By Tali Loewenthal

There have been many attempts to characterize the essential difference between men and women. Some have been absurd male chauvinist inventions; others have sounded more acceptable and meaningful. Are there any Jewish views?

Obviously, every single individual, male or female, is created with the primary goal to connect with G-d in the details of their daily lives, and through this to fulfill the purpose of their existence, which means also helping the world as a whole to fulfill its purpose.

In this task, each person has their own unique situation in life. Does one live now, or a thousand years ago? Is one in a time of war, or of peace? Is one poor or rich? A man or a woman? Artist or scientist? In each situation one has specific challenges, privileges and duties, as defined by the Torah. Wherever one is, and in whatever circumstances, there is a unique task which only you can achieve.

Within this, there might still be a general characterization of the distinctive natures of man and woman. A discussion of a point in this week's Torah portion brings this out, as regards our great forebears Jacob and Rachel, and perhaps for everyone.

Jacob, who has been living for the last seventeen years in Egypt, feeling that soon he will leave the world, asks his son Joseph to make sure that he will be buried in the Holy Land, in the Machpelah Cave in Hebron where Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, and Isaac and Rebecca were buried. Joseph agrees at once, but Jacob asks him to take an oath that he will do so, which Joseph does willingly.

Then, a moment later, Jacob speaks about the fact that when his wife Rachel, the mother of Joseph, passed away, he did not transport her to the Cave in Hebron, but buried her at the wayside. He did not even carry her to the nearby town of Bethlehem.

The great commenter, Rashi comments that Jacob felt that Joseph might feel upset that his father was asking him to make sure he would be buried in the ancestral burying place in Hebron, while he had not done the same for Joseph's mother.

Nonetheless, Rashi says, Jacob had acted according to G-d's Will, and hence, Rachel's own will. For many years later, when the Jews would be led into exile by the Babylonians, they would pass near Rachel's grave, where they would take courage, for they knew that she was imploring G-d on their behalf. The prophet Jeremiah, who lived through those events, said that "Rachel is weeping for her children" but also declared that G-d reassures her that they will be redeemed.

Here we see the difference between Jacob and Rachel. Jacob sought the highest level of holiness which could possibly be achieved. Hence he wanted to be buried in the sacred Machpelah Cave in Hebron. By contrast Rachel was concerned for her children. She was ready to forgo the sanctity of the Machpelah Cave, because instead she would have the chance to help her descendants who were going into exile.

Perhaps this distinction applies, among many other distinctions, to men and women in general. The male seeks achievement and fulfillment, through Torah study, many practical mitzvahs, and activity in the world. The woman seeks to care, to protect, to love and to help. It has been suggested that for this reason she has less mitzvahs to carry out. Of course, there is a certain level of feminine characteristic in every man, and a masculine quality in every woman. Yet in general, one represents achievement, the other caring: Jacob and Rachel. The combination of these two qualities builds a wholesome life and a wholesome world.

(Source: http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/335712/jewish/Achievement-vs-Caring.htm)

DAVENING SCHEDULE

Friday	January 13	16 Tevet	Shacharit7:00 a.m. Candles4:48 p.m. Mincha4:50 p.m.
Shabbat	January 14	17 Tevet	Shacharit9:00 a.m. Sof Z'man Kriat Shema9:48 a.m. Gemara Shiur4:05 p.m. Mincha & Seuda Shilishit ..4:35 p.m. Maariv5:50 p.m.
Sunday	January 15	18 Tevet	Shacharit8:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv4:50 p.m.
Monday	January 16	19 Tevet	Shacharit6:50 a.m. Maariv8:15 p.m.
Tuesday	January 17	20 Tevet	Shacharit7:00 a.m. Maariv8:15 p.m.
Wednesday	January 18	21 Tevet	Shacharit7:00 a.m. Maariv8:15 p.m.
Thursday	January 19	22 Tevet	Shacharit6:50 a.m. Maariv8:15 p.m.
Friday	January 20	23 Tevet	Shacharit7:00 a.m. Candles4:55 p.m. Mincha4:55 p.m.

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Thank-You

Shalosh Seudos was sponsored last Shabbos by Allan Berman in memory of his mother, Malka bas Avraham, whose Yahrtzeit was 9 Teves.



Kiddush

Yitzchak and Frannie Jakobi are sponsoring the Kiddush this week. The sponsorship is in honor of the occasion of their daughter Kayla receiving her Siddur in school.

FRIDAY NIGHT EVENTS ▾



The Rav's next "**Hashkafa Q&A Shiur for Men**" will take place **this Friday night**

(Vayechi, January 13th) at 8:00PM at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Moshe Berry, 2307 Baythorne Court (north of Smith).

Questions can be submitted in advance to rabbikaplan@chabadmd.com or anonymously in the shul mailbox.

(Please note: if you are coming from Ranchleigh, please feel free to cross at Baythorne and then cut-through the Frank's property at 2318 Smith Ave.)



Father/Son Learning

Weekly Father/Son learning Friday nights with chulent from O'Fishel. Time: 7:45 - 8:15, followed by a story. If anyone has any questions, please see Rabbi Eli Itzkowitz