

# THE Kibbitzer

Issue 29



## Ma'arat Hamachpela is where Sarah's grave is, as her burial was serious.

You get it? Grave means serious, and it's also where you bury people. Avraham buries Sarah in the cave in Chevron.

### RABBI ANSWERS HIS PUPILS

**O**ur home doesn't look religious (frum) right now, as we have a wooden camel that we bought in Israel, in our living room. How can we make our home look more frum?

My Dear Pupil. The camel is an embarrassment. If you want your children to grow up frum, get rid of it. If anybody sees the wooden Israeli souvenir, your child will never get a decent shidduch. Here are some things you can do to redecorate your house into frumness:

- *A Lot of Kids* This may take time, but you have to have this for it to be a frum home. You can't hang them up, but they are the perfect artifact for your frum home.
- *Toys on the Floor* You're learning Torah. You don't have time to clean. If any guest walks into your home and doesn't hurt their foot, it's not frum.
- *A Tablecloth* How else are you going to cover the TV?
- *Plastic* Plastic tablecloth. Plastic forks. Plastic knives. Plastic plates. Plastic handwasher, Natlan. Plastic anything is good. Plastic and tin are the key. Remember. The less you care about the environment, the frumer it is. It

It shows trust in Gd. There's nothing more rewarding than a plastic fork not breaking in a piece of chicken. I went a whole Shabbat without a break. The pleasure felt from such an achievement is hard to express. The only thing you can't do with plastic is cover your TV.

- *A Picture Showing You East* So, you can pray to Jerusalem or Mecca. Whichever you hit.
- *A Rebbe on the Wall* If you have a grandfather with a long beard, that suffices.
- *A Tallit Bag* You don't need a Tallis, just the bag. The four cornered shawl is not necessary, unless if you can't find a tablecloth for the TV.
- *My Living Room Is My Dining Room* I'm not trying to show off. I'm just frum. Where do you really live? Exactly. The living room should be the dining room. You're not eating choolante and then not trying to find a couch. What is the use of the old dining room? That's where you put the kids table and the toys on the floor.

There's more you can do to frumify your house. See what they do the next time you eat out for Shabbis. They may find it weird to see their grandma on your wall, but it's frum.

### SERMON OF REBUKE- CHAYEI SARAH

**S**habbat Shalom My Congregants, We had a Minyin this week. The JCC was closed. It's too cold for golf. People came to shul... It's either physical activity or caring about Gd. Can't do both... Then do them both... It takes the closing of the JCC... I wanted to start a weekly dodgeball game in the social hall... First dibs on the Chazin... (*Bereishit 23:1*) 'And it was, the life of Sarah...' Sarah lived. She didn't just mope all day like Rachel. She lived... I walk into this shul, I feel death. It's like a whiff of fresh death every time I see the back left of the shul. It's so depressing... Let's see how Sarah lived. Did she go to workout or connect with Gd?... She did both, Rachel. You can't serve Gd and breathing like Benjamin who can't sing anymore. How do you get too out of shape to sing?... Fish cakes?! What happened to fried fish? Sarah was an excellent cook... To live, you have to eat healthy... Who eats fish for dessert?... Gummy fish are a dessert side dish. (*Bereishit 23:2*) 'And Sarah died in Kiryat Arba, which is Chevron.' Which is quite convenient... How did she pass away by Ma'arat HaMachpela, where she is buried? Convenience, as H' has shown again and again... Why does the Torah have to tell us all of this? Because none of you study your geography. The Torah has to spend its time telling you where Kiryat Arba is... Then visit Israel every once in a while. And where was Chevron?... In Canaan! It was not in Palestine. A little lesson in geography, from your rabbi... What's with Palestine and this congregation? CNN teaching Jewish History at day school?... It talks of Sarah's life. Not her death. 'Chayei

Sarah.' Sarah's life. And what have you to show of your life?... She mothered a nation, Rachel. A whole people... You have two kids... Benjamin is out of shape... Couldn't even play freeze tag with Bayla...

Why did she pass away? There was no biopsy, so we are not sure. *Rashi quotes Genesis Rabbah saying that the death of Sarah is reported right after the almost sacrifice of Yitzchak to teach that it's the news of the sacrifice that caused the death.* Have you seen the news? It's always murder. It scares you. It's a shocker. News is never good... When Bernie says 'I have good news,' I'm very skeptical... It's always bad, Bernie... It's death or Israel is moving someplace... Congregants come up with new locations... This shul is too out of shape to hear bad news...

But Sarah lived. It was the shock of her son doing something crazy... Not doing anything with your life is crazy, Benjamin. Her son was willing to be sacrificed... No, Benjamin. I don't know which one is crazier. Her son was willing to have himself sacrificed. You do nothing. A mother cannot bear to hear either... The sacrifices I make for this shul... When my mother heard I took the job for this shul, she was shocked. She knew I would never make good money with congregants who don't pay their dues...

Do you care if your parents are living? They can't live with you at home. You're 32 Ben...

*Rivka's Notes on Rabbi Mendelchem's Drasha:*  
How the rabbi turned Yitzchak's sacrifices and Sarah's death into an appeal for him to get a raise is brilliance that can only be seen from Rabbi Mendelchem. He can do anything with a Dvar Torah. It's an art. The rabbi went off on how being healthy is important. So, he started a walking group to shul every day. Then the JCC opened a week later and that stopped. Yet, they did walk that whole week. The people of Topeka were confused. They thought the Jews were keeping Shabbis all week. Since the JCC reopened, the members haven't gone back. They just didn't want to exercise. With all the out of shape members, the rabbi insisted that everybody go into the halls and play freeze tag with the little kids, during the Chazin's repetition of the Amidah. The rabbi is mad about the change of calling fish patties to fish cake



Rav Boren dancing in an Israeli Army Simchat Torah celebration in 1969. You can see how shocked he is that somebody is taking a picture on the flag. He didn't realize that his non-religious relatives followed him to Israel. (Photo: I.P.P.A. Dan Hadani)

Dedicate the Weekly Kibbitzer IN Honor, Memory or Refuah of Your Loved One, and share Laughs in their Merit.  
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