

Our Actions Today Empower the Future

Haftorah Va'era

Yechezkiel 28:22- 29:21

I have always been amazed when discovering in the Torah how our actions have such powerful effect on people and things that happens many generations later. Sarah our Mother not only rectified Chava's relationship with the Serpent, she ensured the purity of the Jewish women in the Egyptian exile, and brought about our redemption. We too can walk in the path of Sarah and link ourselves to her redemptive energy!

Sarah's Merit Empowered the Jewish Women in Egypt to Withstand Pharaoh the Serpent

"...Thus says Hashem G-d; behold I am against you, Pharaoh King of Egypt, the great serpent that crouches in the midst of his streams, who has said, My River is my own, and I have made it for myself" (*Yechezkiel 29:3*).

According to the Kabbalah, we learn from this verse, that Pharaoh is the incarnation of the Primordial Serpent (*Ariza"l, Beshalach 14*). It was Sarah, our Mother, who empowered the women in Egypt to stand up against this Pharaoh many generations later. In her merit, the Jewish women were able to guard themselves from being defiled by the Egyptians, throughout the entire two hundred and ten years of the Egyptian exile. In the *Eishet Chail* we sing, "Her husband's heart trusted in her" (*Mishlei 31:11*). This verse applies to Sarah (*Midrash Tanchuma, Chayei Sarah 4*). Avraham not only trusted her, as they were going down to Egypt, when he told her, "Please say that you are my sister." He, moreover, trusted in her righteousness, and understood that through her merit, she would be able to withstand the impurity of Pharaoh and enact great rectifications. Avraham foresaw that Sarah's greatness would have repercussions for her descendants, who in the future would be exiled in Egypt under Pharaoh's rule.

Extracting the Sparks of Holiness Stuck in the Abyss of Egypt

When Sarah was taken captive by Pharaoh and brought into his castle of impurity, she made a holy path within the spiritual impurity that was pervading his place. Unlike Chava, the first woman, who succumbed to the great Serpent and was injected with spiritual pollution, Sarah succeeded to avoid becoming defiled by Pharaoh – the great Serpent. She not only rectified Chava's sin, but, moreover, enabled her descendants – the Jewish women – during the Egyptian exile, to guard their purity from Egyptian penetration. Avraham trusted so strongly in Sarah's merit that "...he lacked no booty" (*Mishlei 31:11*), for she was able to extract the holy sparks stuck in Pharaoh's palace. This is why the following verse of the *Eishet Chail* reads, "She bestowed him good and not bad..." (*Ibid. 31:12*). Contrary to the scheme of the Serpent, who planned to use Sarah as a medium to trap Avraham with his evil powers, the same way that he used Chava to bring Adam down; the exact opposite happened. Through Sarah, sparks of holiness from the abyss of Egypt, were drawn to Avraham. For this reason it states "To Avraham he did good for her [Sarah's] sake..." (*Bereishit 12:16*).

Sarah, Our Mother Paved the Way for Israel's Redemption

Just as Sarah's holiness caused all the goodness buried within Egypt to be released for Avraham, likewise, during the Egyptian exile, Israel was able to empty Egypt of the remaining sparks embedded there (*Shemot* 12:36), (*Shem MiShemuel, Chayei Sarah*). There are numerous parallels between Sarah's experience in Egypt and Israel's experience during the redemption from Egypt. In the merit of Sarah's modesty, and great righteousness, she had a host of angels at her fingertips. Each time Pharaoh tried to touch her, she commanded the angels to hit him with harsh plagues (Rashi, *Bereishit* 12:17). These plagues, that Sarah enacted, brought about the plagues that Hashem brought upon Pharaoh and his people six generation later. Avraham trusted that Sarah had to be taken captive by Pharaoh in order to pave the way for the future redemption of the Jewish people from Egypt. Sarah propelled the accumulative force of righteous women in every generation that engender the redemption process. May we merit tapping into her redemptive energy and bringing about the final redemption!