**Questions for Understanding and Reflection**

1. From all the readings for this Shabbat which verse or verses impressed your heart and fired your imagination?

I was greatly impressed with the final statement of the commentary: **For if Israel’s sin created Rome’s power, then Israel’s repentance will bring Rome’s downfall**.

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 21:1?

**And the Lord remembered Sarah, etc.** – Why is this section juxtaposed with the previous section?

**remembered Sarah** – Why was she remembered?

**as He had spoken** – What did this word concern?

**and the Lord did to Sarah as He had spoken** – To whom did He speak this?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 21:2?

**at the time of which [He] had spoken** – What does this teach us?

**at the time of which God had spoken** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: אֽתוֹ ?

**in his old age** – What does this mean?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 21:9?

**making merry** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: מְצַחֵק?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 21:14?

**bread and a leather pouch of water** – Why are these mentioned?

**and the child** – Why is the child mentioned?

**and she went and wandered** – How did she wander?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 21:17?

**the lad’s voice** – What do we learn from this?

**where he is** – How is this to be understood?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 21:23?

**or to my son or to my grandson** – Why were these the only descendents mentioned?

**according to the kindness that I have done with you** – What kindness was this?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 21:30?

**in order that it be to me** – What was the focus of this statement?

**for a witness** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: לְעֵדָה?

**that I dug this well** – How would it be known?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 21:33?

**an eishel** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: אֵשֶׁל?

**and he called there, etc** – How did he call?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 21:34?

**for many days** – Relative to what other place?

1. Why does Rashi translates “And G-d remembered” but the Ramban has “And G-d visited”?

Rashi sees the peshat and sees pregnancy, while Ramban sees the remez and sees HaShem’s attention to the one being remembered.

1. According to the Ramban what is the meaning of the words in the Torah: “AND HE CALLED THERE IN THE NAME OF THE ETERNAL, 'E-IL OLAM' (THE EVERLASTING ‎G-D)‎"?

Abraham called out and ‎informed people of the secret of the leadership of the entire world, namely, that it is in the name of the Eternal, the Mighty One in strength, ‎Supreme in power over all.

1. Which are the eleven cardinal principles of observance which David stressed and taught‎?
2. *He that walks uprightly, and*
3. *works righteousness/generosity, and*
4. *speaks truth in his heart; that*
5. *has no slander upon his tongue,*
6. *nor does evil to his fellow,*
7. *nor takes up a reproach against his neighbour,*
8. *in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but*
9. *he honours them that fear the LORD,[[1]](#footnote-1)*
10. *He swears to his own hurt and changes not,*
11. *He puts not out his money on interest,*
12. *nor takes a bribe against the innocent.*
13. From where and how do the Sages derive the principle that "whoever serves before a Torah scholar, is considered as though he had served before the Divine ‎Presence”?

**Rashi’s Commentary for: I Sam 2:21-28 + 3:19-20: 11 was serving the Lord before Eli the priest**: (The Talmud asks, “Did Samuel actually serve the Lord?” Didn’t he serve before Eli? [He was too young to serve the Lord!] **We therefore deduce) from here that whoever serves before a Torah scholar, is considered as though he had served before the Divine Presence.**

1. Why are the “Soferim” and “P’rushim” present in our pericope?

They had an halachic question that needed to be answered by a great Torah scholar. The answer to their question was: To demonstrate that Levi ben Chalfai and the Am HaAretz - "the people of Land" i.e. uneducated Jews in the Torah) had made Teshuba and followed the Masters Mesorah.

1. What did the Master **“see”** in Levi ‎ ben Chalfai ‎, and what principle can we deduce from this?

That he had the ability and desire to study the Midrashic perspective. He saw his potential to immediately grasp Torah on a midrashic level. He “SAW” the essence of a man rather than the vehicle or shell which contained the soul. From this we can understand that we should choose people according to their “bend”. Those with this ability react immediately.

1. What does it mean for a congregation to be **“of one heart and one soul”**?

Being genuinely concerned for the necessities of those who were needy.

1. What are the implications of the statement: **“The world of prophetic vision depends on the immediate action of imaginative power."**?

This is because the reception of such spiritual vision is but a fleeting glimmer of light. The amount of data transmitted in a vision of spiritual character is so great that it must be broken down layer by layer. While the reception is instantaneous the digestion is a slow methodical process.

1. What is the “rebuke” that G-d has for all of us this week, and what is the remedy?

The special Ashlamata for this first shabbat of rebuke should contain the rebuke that HaShem has for us this week. It appears that the rebuke is in: ***Targum to*** ***Yirm’yahu (Jeremiah) 1:16*** *They have forsaken my worship and have offered up incense to the idols of the nations and have become enslaved to the works of their hands.*

The remedy, I believe, is found in: ***Targum to*** ***Yirm’yahu (Jeremiah) 2:2-3 2*** *“Go, and prophesy before the people who are in Jerusalem, saying: Thus says HaShem. I remember in your favor the good things of the days of old, the love of your fathers who believed in My Memra and followed My two messengers. Moses and Aaron, in the wilderness for forty years without provisions in a land not sown. The house of Israel are holy before HaShem - in respect of those who plunder them - like fruits of heave-offering of harvest of which whoever eats is guilty of death; and like firstlings of harvest, the sheaf of the heave-offering, of which everyone who eats, before the priests the sons of Aaron offer it as a sacrifice upon the altar is guilty. {P}*

Thus the remedy is to return and follow Him into the wilderness; depending on Him for everything.

1. ‎Taking into consideration all the readings for this Shabbat what is the prophetic statement for this ‎week?‎

Be diligent to master the 11 qualities that David mentioned in our psalm as a beginning of our response to HaShem’s rebuke.

Adon Ezra: Continue to mourn for the scattering of the stones and look for ways to be a part of the gathering process (self correction).

Giberet laurie: Because a person is not keeping the law doesn’t mean that person does not have potential. We should reach out to those who are ignorant and teach them because they may turn away from their ignorant ways.

Dr. Elisheva Oakley: Allow the yetzer ha tov to rule your life so that you reach your fullest potential to be able to use your imagination immediately to perceive.

HH Adon Eliyahu: Be like G-d visit those in need and look at the true essence of a man Count the souls to see who is missing.

1. King Yehoshafat illustrates this. When he would see a Hakham, he would rise from his throne, kiss him and say 'Avi Avi Rebbi... ' [↑](#footnote-ref-1)