

Do You Follow Your Convictions?

"Listen to her voice"



Gen. 21: 6-14

And Sara said, G-d has made me laugh, so that all who hear will laugh with me. And she said, who would have said to Abraham that Sara would suckle children? For I have born him a son in his old age. And the child grew and was weaned and Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned.

And Sara saw the son of Hagar, the Egyptian, who she had born to Abraham, mocking. And she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave and her son, for the son of this slave shall not be heir with my son, with Isaac."

And the matter was very grievous in Abraham's eyes because of his son.

And G-d said to Abraham, "Let it not be grievous in your eyes because of your slave. All that Sara has said to you, listen to her voice, for in Isaac shall your seed be called. And also of the son of the slave will I make a nation, because he is your seed."

And Abraham rose up early in the morning and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder and the child and sent her away, and she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

Rashi (Gen. 21:12)

Listen to her voice--Listen to the voice of the prophetic spirit within her. From this admonition, we deduce that Abraham's prophetic powers were secondary to Sara.

R' Hirsch

Abraham was not told to listen to the "kol", the voice of Sara, rather than "devar Sara" the words of Sara. True obedience is to the person, regardless of whether or not the listener understands the reason for the command or agrees with it. Abraham was told to rely on Sara's judgment because, as women generally do, she had a deeper insight into character than he did.

Kesef Mezugak (21:9)

Sara perceived that the mocking and playing of Ishmael towards Isaac was too intensive, unwholesome and consumed too much time. She feared the effect this would have on Isaac's spiritual development and was determined not to allow his negative influence to continue.

Let's Review:



- The one recorded dispute between Abraham and Sara is when she demands that Abraham banish Ishmael from their home.
- Sara understood from Ishmael's conduct that he would hurt Isaac, either physically or spiritually.
- Abraham was reluctant to follow Sara's demand until G-d commands him, Shema bekola, listen to Sara's voice.
- G-d told Abraham to listen to Sara's judgment whether or not he understood or agreed because her words were divinely inspired and her prophetic powers were greater than his.
- Sara was able to withhold her kindness and fearlessly take action. She was not swayed by what others would say, or what ramifications this would have on her public role. Her prime consideration was the physical and spiritual wellbeing of her child.
- Sara, whose name means ruler or leader, taught that to be a leader one must have moral nobility and courage to take action.

Something to Think About:

At various points in our own lives we each may face the difficult decision of doing what we know is best or conforming to what others expect.

How do you choose?

Video: www.chabad.org/2111871