

**RaYBaSH's The Weekly Way**  
**Parashah #4 Vayera: "And Appeared"**  
**B'reshit/Genesis: 18:1-22:24**  
**Haftarah: Bet Malakhim/ II Kings 4:1-37**  
**Brit Chadasha: Heb. 11:17-19**  
**By: Yehudah ben Shomeyr – Kris Shoemaker**

Promises are a ray of hope that have names. Sometimes promises that bare such hope is as vital and valuable as water or salt is in the desert. And the promise of a son was just such a life giving promise that was worth a family fortune. Back in Abraham's day a son was like a fountain of youth, it meant you could in a sense; live on, for your son, especially an only son carried on his father's business and trade. This is not of much importance in this westernized society nowadays where few are brought up in a trade and where individuality is prized over family identity and honor. A son was also an inheritor of not only possessions, but sometimes covenants. At times men of wealth like Abraham made pacts with Kings and such pacts on both parties carried over from one generation to the other.

The narrative of the Tanak is one cliffhanger after the other, one slim chance after another, where God comes through making the existence of the Hebrew people nothing short of a miracle. From fertility problems with the Patriarchs and Matriarchs to all the struggles with the Exodus and settlement of the Promised Land, right up to recent history of the Holocaust, Israel being recognized as a country by the UN, to the Yom Kippur and Six Day war and terrorist attacks by Hamas and Palestinians. Almost always Israel was out gunned and out manned, yet always survived.

With the birth of Isaac, the string miracles begin.

It seems the tested are asked to do the impossible. The recipient is asked if they desire the gift or the Giver more, at the cost of the gift; but in the end gets both the gift to boot.

Imagine being sterile and childless and therefore as good as if you never existed when you die and all of a sudden you are given an heir and then asked to kill him and burn him to ash! Is God serious or Abraham insane!? But to truly call a gift yours, to own it is to never fear losing it. If one reads carefully the Torah Portion and Heb. 11:17-19, Abraham never believed he'd lose Isaac, but believed if he gave him back to God, therefore desiring God more than his own son, the Giver more than the gift, He'd get both, Isaac and God forever!

Amazingly this is the same stout faith revealed in our Haftarah Portion where the Shunamite woman who was promised her by God through Elisha that she would have a boy who ends up dying from what seems like heat stroke and or an aneurism and as she goes to tell Elisha what happened she's asked:

**II Kings 4:26b Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well:**

She knew it was going to be alright. And it was:

**II Kings 4:34-37 And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.**

For a dream, vision, a calling to come to fruition you must be willing to let it go. It shows it's not about you, but all about God. It reveals your priorities, loyalty, character and true desires.

Today we may not live in the midst of civil war or deal with bouts of infertility; in the monotony of the normalcy of everyday we win battles out gunned and out manned against creditors, repo-men and backstabbing eager corporate ladder jockeys. Battles are still won and miracles still happen. God still favors and provides for His people. He still tests His people and makes them stronger by bringing them through the impossible, and if they desire Him above all else, they see their dreams rise like a glorious fiery eternal Phoenix.

**Matt. 22:32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.**

He's still a God of miracles. Do you believe it!?

**Mark 9:24b, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.**

Shabbat Shalom and Shavuah Tov!

-- Rabbi Yehudah