



## MORDEKAI'S DRASH — VAYERA

**Torah:** *Vayera* (And He appeared), *B'reshet* (Genesis) 18.1-22.24

**Haftarah:** *M'lakhim Bet* (2 Kings) 4.1-37




Suggested **Messianic Writings** reading: Luke 1.26-38; 24.36-53

Shalom,

You may be aware that the ancient Scriptural writings did not have chapter and verse breaks, and so the sages connect the beginning of chapter 18 with the end of chapter 17, thus 17.26 through 18.1 reads, “That very day Avraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. And all the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him. And ADONAI appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day.” This is partly deduced because the Hebrew in 18.1 says that ADONAI appeared *to him*; it does not say ADONAI appeared to Avraham, as if introducing a new thought. It's more a continuation of thought – “Avraham and Ishmael were circumcised, and all the men of his house..., and ADONAI appeared to him”. Thus it is very probable that at this time Avraham was resting up from his circumcision.

Of course, there is no time frame given, but we have a few small hints that a few days must have passed, for 18.2 says that Avraham *ran* from his tent to greet his visitors. Although this was a relatively minor surgery, one does not necessarily dash about right away following such. In *B'reshet* 34.25, following the violation of their sister, two sons of Ya'akov, Shi'mon and Levi, slaughtered the men of the city “on the third day... when they were in pain.” Plus Avraham was getting up in years, as we know.

Some commentators have tried to make a separation between 18.1 and 18.2 with the idea that Avraham was in prayer, and the visitors were intruding upon that time, but the context has to be juggled a lot to make that thought stand.

Of note is the phrase that Avraham was sitting in the entrance to his tent “in the heat of the day”. The Ancient Hebrew Lexicon notes that the word חֶמֶם *khom*, translated “heat,” denotes the “action root” of the word, but the “concrete definition” is “cheese,” (don't ask me how or why) and the ancient pictograph is : “The pictograph  is a picture of a wall meaning ‘to separate’. The  is a picture of water. Combined these mean ‘[to] separate water’. Cheese was made by placing milk in a bag made out of an animal skin. The bag was hung out in the sun and pushed back and forth. The skin of the bag contained an enzyme that when heated and shaken caused the milk to sour and separate into its two parts, fat (curds or cheese) and water (whey). The whey could be drunk and the curds eaten or stored for future consumption.” So possibly Avraham was sitting at the entrance to his tent, shaking the bag of milk, separating the curds and the whey. (No little Miss Muffet puns here, please.) Thus he had curds ready when it was time to feed any potential guests. It was probably a reasonable way to pass the time, at least.

We should note here that Avraham ויקח חמאה וחלב ובן־הבקר *va-ye-kakh khem-ah v'kha-lahv oo-bayn-ha-bakhar* “and took the curds *and* the milk *and* the son of the herd (the calf)” and served them all to *the men*. The rabbis have worked hard to explain this away, because of the later ruling to “not boil a kid in its mother's milk,” explaining that dairy and meat are not to be served together. However, the later commandment to not boil a kid in its mother's milk, from *Sh'mot* (Exodus) 23.19, was to dissuade Israel from falling into a pagan practice common for the time, wherein a boiled milk and meat mixture was sprinkled over fields of crops in a form of witchcraft, trying to instill fertility in the hoped-for harvest. Maimonides concurred with this fact. This is an area where rabbinical law (concerning *kashrut*, kosher food practices) has displaced Biblical law in much of Judaism. But in Biblical *kashrut*, you should know that it is “kosher” to eat meat and cheese together – only, of course, if they are both from kosher animals.

From all appearances it seems the three “men” were two angels and ADONAI, for the Hebrew states that “ADONAI appeared to Avraham”. And they did indeed eat the meat and cheese together, as they were appearing in a bodily form to Avraham. This was more than a vision. And certainly is it not possible for the Creator of everything to take on a bodily form at will? Whether this was true flesh and blood remains a mystery. Regarding the eating, we know that Yeshua, after His resurrection, ate fish, walked through walls, and appeared and disappeared in front of His disciples.

Basically, all of these incidentals aside, we have some lessons to learn from Avraham: 1) When ADONAI appeared to Avraham, “On seeing them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, *prostrated himself on the ground*, and said, ‘My lord, if I have found favor in your sight, please don't leave your servant.’” Avraham was *humble in his worship*. 2) When it came time to display his heart and concern for others, “Avraham remained standing before ADONAI.” Avraham was *bold in his intercession*. Hebrews 4.16 says, “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” That is exactly what Avraham did.

Many believe that the One who was speaking with Avraham was the pre-incarnate Yeshua. Here are some possible proofs. In 18.25, Avraham called Him *הַשֹּׁפֵט כָּל־הָאָרֶץ* *ha-sho-phet kol ha-aretz* “the judge of all the earth”. In the book of *Ya'akov* (James), speaking of the return of Yeshua, Ya'akov declares in 5.9 that “the Judge is standing at the door”. 1 *Kefa* (Peter) 4.5 speaks of “him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead”. And in *Yokhanan* (John) 5.22, Yeshua Himself states that, “The Father does not judge anyone but has entrusted all judgment to the Son”.

B'reshet 18.33 gives us another lesson to be learned from Avraham: We read here that “ADONAI went on his way” after He and Avraham were finished. The root for “went his way” is walk. The Hebrew of *walk* is *הלך*, *hah-lahk*. The Ancient Hebrew lexicon for *hah-lahk* pictures the palm of a hand and a shepherd's staff, *שׁוּב*. The definition of this pictograph is of a traveler on foot, with his staff in hand, which provided not only support when walking, but also served as a weapon to defend against predators and thieves. The last part of the verse says that Avraham “returned to his place - *שׁוּב לְמִקְוֹ* *shoov leem'kho-mu*”. That can be taken as “returned to his tent,” but another understanding is Avraham “returned to the condition of his body or mind”. So a possible reading we can get from this final verse in chapter 18 is, “ADONAI went back to His place of being the protection and support for Avraham, and 3) Avraham went back to his position, or condition, of being *a worshipper* of ADONAI.”

The model prayer that Yeshua gave us truly exemplifies the same three themes: 1) Worship – Our Father in Heaven, Holy is Your Name; 2) Intercession – give (provide for) *us*, forgive *us*, lead *us* not, deliver *us*; and, 3) Worship again – Yours is the kingdom, Yours is the power, and Yours is the glory forever.

A father is intended to be an example, and *Avraham avinu*, our father Avraham, while certainly having his human faults, as we all do, was an example for all of us in our faith journey.

**שְׁאַלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם** – *Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim* – Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! May Israel turn to recognize their Messiah, and see him just as Avraham did (*Yokhanan/John 8.56*).

**B'rakhot v'todah rabbah**  
(Blessings & thank you very much)

## Mordekhi

This Yeshua, who has been taken away from you into heaven, will come back to you in just the same way as you saw him go into heaven.  
(Acts 1.11 CJB)