

Lizzie Rubin



## Lessons From Our Forefathers and Mothers

If there is one thing we have learned from Covid-19, it's that we have no idea what will happen next. It is the uncertainty of it all that makes us feel so uneasy and feeling like we have no control.

Following the original Pesach, *Am Yisrael* were just beginning to trust and put faith in G-d and Moshe. They too were uncertain about what was going to happen next. Sure, the plagues were open miracles and their slave mentality was beginning to wane. But could they leave their homes in Egypt and jump into a dry river bed with two walls of water imminently waiting to come crashing down upon them?

How did the Jews cope? Where did they possess a roadmap to enable this grand exodus so successfully? Surely, they must have looked towards their ancestors for guidance.

In my initial therapy session with couples, I typically ask them who their role models are. What did the role models do that the couple seeks to emulate? This establishes a roadmap for finding the good qualities they would like to incorporate into their marriage.

Some of my personal role models are the *Avot* and the *Imahot*. Pesach is intertwined throughout significant times in the lives of our forefathers and mothers. What is the connection between the *Avot*, our role models, and Pesach?

Avraham Avinu greets the angels in Chevron on *Erev* Pesach, in pain but with great excitement. He runs to Sarah

and asks her to bake *matzot* for their guests. He doesn't even know who they are. Sarah fulfills his wish with no complaints because, after all, they share the same mindset. A husband and wife may be different, but the closer they agree on common goals, the greater the *shalom bayit*. Hosting guests was Avraham and Sarah's mutual dream. Avraham and Sarah worked in unison. They shared that value. Certainly being unified and sharing a dream enabled *Am Yisrael* to cross the Red Sea.

The day Yitzchak gave the blessing to Ya'akov was the day of Avraham's passing. Rivka asks Ya'akov to fetch two goats, so she can make food that tasted like the venison Yitzchak requested from Esav. Rashi says it was Pesach. On that day, Rivka realized that Esav could not be the guide for generations in the physical world. Yitzchak was hoping it would give Esav the opportunity to change and lead the world in the proper way but Rivka knew this was not going to work. How could she achieve this without disrespecting her husband, the *gadol hador*? Eventually, Yitzchak understood that Rivka had the correct approach, and we never hear a word of anger from him. By not embarrassing her husband, she merited being a key factor in enabling *Am Yisrael* to receive the *berachot* they deserved. This could only have been done without hurting or embarrassing her esteemed husband. They gave each other respect. Three million Jews left Egypt. There were certainly differences of opinion, yet

they listened to Moshe and respected his guidance.

Exactly 14 years later, on Pesach, Ya'akov leaves the *yeshiva* of Shem and Ever and meets Rachel. Ya'akov falls in love with her and realizes this is the beginning of the *geula*. This was the seed that became *Am Yisrael* many years after, on this exact same day, Pesach. Rachel came with 70 goats, alluding to the 70 souls who would eventually head down to Egypt. When Ya'akov saw her, he cried. Rashi says he saw that they would not be buried together. And yet Ya'akov loved her and worked tirelessly for seven years until she became his wife. Love and commitment are a basis for marriage. It is a model for what couples should aspire to. *Am Yisrael* were learning to love and commit to G-d because they saw that He would do anything for them.

The *Avot* and *Imahot* teach us that Pesach, the beginning of the year, is the time to renew our relationships by sharing goals and showing respect with an abundance of love and commitment. With these traits incorporated in our marriages, we too, *BeEzrat Hashem*, can become the role models for our children, bringing us closer to the final redemption. May we see the *geula* very soon!

Lizzie Rubin is an individual, couples and intimacy therapist. [lizzierubin1@gmail.com](mailto:lizzierubin1@gmail.com)