

TO TELL THE TRUTH

Background

According to the Nachalas Yitzchak (brought in the Siftei Chachamim in the Mizrachi), Rashi is bothered by the following question: “What does the *posuk* mean by the words, “after these matters?” The answer is after the conversation between Yishmael and Yitzchak. Once Yitzchak had made the statement, “*If HASHEM would ask me to sacrifice my entire body, I wouldn’t resist,*” HASHEM could now go ahead and test Avraham. Now that Yitzchak had made this statement, surely he would not prevent his father from slaughtering him.

Questions

In a moment of passion, Yitzchak made a bold statement, “*If HASHEM would ask me to sacrifice my entire body, I wouldn’t resist.*” In what way does that guarantee that when it came to the real situation, Yitzchak would fulfil his words? Just as Avraham was being tested, so, too, Yitzchak was being tested. Granted he said he would sacrifice his life, but where is the proof that he had the fortitude to actually do it?

ספר בראשית פרק כב

וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַהֲאֵלֹהִים נִסָּה אֶת אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר
אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִי

And it was after these matters, and HASHEM tested Avraham...

רש"י על בראשית פרק כב פסוק א

א אחר הדברים האלה אחר דבריו של ישמעאל שהיה מתפאר על יצחק שמל בן י"ג שנה ולא מיחה אמר לו יצחק באבר אחד אתה מיראני אילו אמר לי הקב"ה זבח עצמך לפני לא הייתי מעכב

Rashi- After the matter of Yishmael: that he was bragging to Yitzchak saying, “You received your bris milah when you were eight days old, so of course you couldn’t complain. I willingly submitted myself to it when I was thirteen years old.” Yitzchak answered, “You are bragging about one limb that you were willing to sacrifice. If HASHEM would ask me to sacrifice my entire body, I wouldn’t resist.”

Siftei Chachamim – Nachalas Yitzchak – *Why couldn’t HASHEM test Avraham up until this point? Because Yitzchak might have prevented it and not have allowed himself to be slaughtered. But now that Yitzchak had made this statement, HASHEM could test Avraham. (And this also answers why Avraham is credited with being tested, but not Yitzchak.) Once Yitzchak gave his word, it is obvious that he would fulfil it and not object.*