

AKEIDAS YITZCHAK: THE ANATOMY OF A NISAYON

Background

Avrohom Avinu is being called upon to sacrifice his son. The *posukim* are describing his actions while he is headed towards the journey to kill his only son. Rashi describes that he “saddled the donkey himself,” even though it wasn’t appropriate for a man of his stature to do that. After all, he had many slaves and servants to do such menial tasks. Yet he did it himself because “love blinds.” He had such love for the activity that he was being called upon to perform that he acted in a manner that was inappropriate for a man of his position.

Questions

- 1 How is it possible that man can have that attitude when going to kill his son?
- 2 Is it a correct attitude for a man to have when he is asked to murder his own child?
- 3 What is so great about the *Akeidah* that we are still reading about it over 3,000 years after the fact? Especially in light of recent history, where we see many people willing to blow themselves or their children up in the name of their beliefs?

ספר בראשית פרק כב

ג וַיִּשְׁכֶּם אַבְרָהָם בְּבֹקֶר וַיַּחְבֵּשׁ אֶת חֲמֹרוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת שְׁנֵי נַעֲרָיו אֹתוֹ וְאֶת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיִּבְקַע עֵצִי עֲלָהּ וַיִּקְּם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָמַר לוֹ הָאֱלֹהִים

And Abraham got up in the morning, he saddled his donkey, and he took his two lads and Yitzchak his son with him, and he split wood for a sacrifice, and he got up and went to the place that HASHEM told him.

רשיי על בראשית פרק כב פסוק ג

(ג) וישכם - נזדרז למצוה (פסחים ד)

ויחבש - הוא בעצמו ולא צוה לאחד מעבדיו שהאבהה מקלקלת השורה

And he saddled – He himself. He didn’t tell one of his servants to do it because love blinds.