

## And G-d tested Avraham. (22:1)

Was it only Avraham Avinu's *nisayon*, test? One would think that Yitzchak Avinu, the *korban*, sacrifice-elect, was playing a leading role in this *nisayon*. Why is our Patriarch Avraham singled out – as opposed to Yitzchak? *Horav Moshe Neriyah*, *zl*, offers an insightful explanation which underscores the significance of Torah *chinuch*, especially that which is taught at home from parent to child. Avraham taught his son, Yitzchak, to fear Hashem. He taught him well – to the point that our second Patriarch was prepared to become an *olah*, offering, to Hashem.

*Va'yeilchu shneihem yachdav*, "And the two of them (father and son) went together" (Ibid 22:6). They walked together as one: Avraham, who knew that he was about to sacrifice his son, went with the same *zerizus*, alacrity, as did Yitzchak, who thought that he was accompanying his father on the way to slaughter an animal. In *pasuk* 8, the same phrase is repeated. Now Yitzchak was acutely aware that no lamb was being sacrificed. Indeed, he was the sacrifice. Yet, he walked with the same alacrity, same cadence as did his father. Why? Because he was raised by his father and mother to love and fear Hashem. The *Akeidah* was the fruit of thirty-seven years of Torah *chinuch* in Avraham and Sarah's home. This was the pinnacle of their *chinuch*. The *Akeidah* was Avraham's test, because, ultimately, it all comes back to the parents.

We try – we stay up nights – we provide the best *rebbeim* – and we say *Tehillim* that our children grow up to be a *nachas* to Hashem and to us. Some fall through the cracks. Most make it – when the parents do their job. In those rare instances in which parents do everything right, and, nonetheless, it does not work, it is due to a *g'zar din*, Heavenly decree. It is not always the result of cracks in the system. Sometimes we do everything right, and it still fails. Why? Hashem wanted it that way.

Speaking of raising children in the proper environment, we revert back to Avraham Avinu and Sarah *Imeinu* who raised their son Yitzchak to be Avinu, our second Patriarch. We derive a powerful educational lesson from Sarah *Imeinu*'s banishing Yishmael from her home. She felt that Yishmael would have an adverse spiritual effect on her Yitzchak. Is this right? Sodom and Amorah were so morally and ethically corrupt that their evil led to their total annihilation. Concerning them, Avraham pleaded with Hashem: Have compassion; please allow them to live; Pray for them – give them another chance. What about Yishmael? He is only a child. Does he not also deserve a chance to live? Is he worse than the Sodomites?

There is a difference. In Avraham and Sarah's home,

they were in the midst of raising an *olah temimah*, perfect sacrifice. Yitzchak was no ordinary child. He was being primed for the seminal sacrifice. Yishmael was *metzacheck*, mocking, scoffing. A mocker could not be in the same environment as a Yitzchak. Sodom and Amorah were evil, but their evil was contained. They despised *chesed*, acts of kindness; they drove away the poor; they did not care to help others. They were certainly a reprehensible people, but they did not mock

Hashem; they did not scoff and deride belief in the Almighty. One usually becomes turned off to the evil of a Sodomite, because it disgusts. Mockery, on the other hand, squirms its way into a person's mind and corrupts it. Our child should never be in the same environment as one who mocks our beliefs.