בס״ד

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Parshat Chayei Sarah

כו׳ בחשון ה׳תשפ״ז

Feel It All

Last year on Shabbat Chayei Sarah, I stood in Me'arat HaMachpelah in Chevron, where most of the Avot and Imahot are buried. It's also where Avraham buried Sarah in the parsha. I saw so many Jews from all walks of life there on Shabbat, all celebrating the lives of our forefathers and foremothers even in death. It's a surreal experience spending Shabbat in Chevron, and I hope to see the same surrealness there again this year.

This week's parsha is called "Chayei Sarah," the life of Sarah. It opens with the years of her life and then her death, and a little bit later her son's wedding. The Torah is telling us that grief isn't separate from life. Rather, it's part of it.

That's exactly what *Inside Out* is about. Joy spends the entirety of the movie trying to make sure sadness doesn't affect Riley. Riley's family just moved across America and Joy thinks that if she keeps the memories yellow Riley will be okay. She thinks happiness and sadness can't share the same space. Then she realizes that Sadness is finally how Riley is able to let her parents comfort her. And by the end, Joy and Sadness work together, and the new memory that forms is blue and yellow.

After the years of her life are counted, "Sarah died in Kiryat Arba, which is Chevron, and Avraham came to mourn for Sarah and weep for her." (Bereishit 23:2) Avraham is a man of immense faith, and the Torah shows him crying. He is in tune with what he feels. He doesn't hide it, nor does he rush it.

Then he "rose from before his dead" and went to buy a burial place. (Bereishit 23:3) First he cries, then he acts. The Torah shows grief as a step. He feels it fully, which allows him to

move forward. His rising doesn't mean his sadness is gone, just that it isn't the only emotion there.

It's written in Tehillim (100:2) that we should serve Hashem b'simcha and Rebbe Nachman teaches in Likutei Moharan that it is a great mitzvah to always be happy. It sounds like that leaves no room for grief. But happiness and sadness aren't opposites. Happiness is the standard, and other emotions can sit on top of it. It says in Kohelet (7:3) that sorrow is better than laughter, because a sad face is good for the heart. The Rambam (Hilchot Avel 13:12) even says that someone who doesn't mourn like the sages instituted is lacking in sensitivity. Not feeling other emotions than happiness is an unhealthy way of life. Avraham Avinu shows this as a man who completely devotes himself to Hashem b'simcha and still weeps for his wife.

When Yitzchak marries Rivka, the Torah says he loved her and was comforted after his mother. Like Riley in *Inside Out*, he allowed himself to be comforted by another person.

Letting yourself feel sad doesn't mean you've lost your joy or faith. Like I saw in Chevron and like Riley's memory, you can touch both colors at once. And if someone around you is sad, sit with them and comfort them. Show them that it's okay to feel it all.

Shabbat Shalom!