

VAYEIRA – 5769

Rabbi Aharon Ziegler

No two people are identical in this world. We each have our own different looks, fingerprints, DNA, and personality. We were created that way so that each of us could fulfill our own mission and purpose in life. By the same token, HaShem expects different things from each of us and we are all judged on a different level and different yardstick. This week's parsha is a perfect example.

When Sara hears the news about her having a child, the Torah states: (18:12) VAITZ-CHAK SARA B'KIRBAH, Sara laughed (in disbelief) to herself. Then a few psukim further (18:15) when Sara is confronted by her supposedly lack of faith in what she overheard, it states: VA-TEH-CHACHESH SARA LEIMOR, LO TZA-CHAK-TI, Sara denied it saying, "I did not laugh".

The Ramban asks, how could the righteous Sara Imeinu have denied something she did in fact do? A very good and solid question. I once heard an answer in the name of Rav Yerucham Gorelick, a"h, that Sara laughed sub-consciously, in her mind.

To ordinary people, like us, this would not be considered a maaseh aveira, a sin. Just merely thinking about doing something or reacting to something is MACHASHAVA, a thought. V'EIN HAKADOSH- BARUCH – HU MITZTAREF MACHASHAVA L'MAASEH, G-d does not consider a wrongful thought as if a deed had been done. But to a Tzaddeket like Sara, she had to heed even her subconscious thoughts; even her Machshva had to be pure.

Lesson, the more Torah knowledge we have, the more we know, the more HaShem expects of us. Someone who once a year "drops in" to shul for a yearzeit observance and talks during Chazarat HaShatz, just doesn't know any better. But one who knows how to open and read a Shulchan Aruch the severity of the talking is different. HaShem uses a different yardstick for each and every one of us.