

Hevron's 'parallel universe'

The power of Hevron is beyond the imagination. Why did Abraham choose the Me'arat Hamachpelah for the burial of his beloved Sarah?

Abraham said to the sons of Chet, "I am a foreigner and a resident among you. Grant me the possession of a grave site with you so that I may bury my dead from my presence." The Mearat Hamachpelah obviously had special significance, otherwise he would not have wanted to bury his righteous wife among the Bnei Chet.

Abraham was careful to say, "the Me'arat Hamachpelah which belongs to him, which is at the end of his field" to create a clear separation for his righteous wife and the rest of the area belonging to Reshaim at that time (Kitvei Ramad Vali).

The Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer says on this Parsha that Abraham was directed to the Mearat Hamachpelah when the three Angels came to visit him after his circumcision.

In Parshat Vayera when the Posuk says "Abraham ran to the cattle" for the Angels, it implies he was running after a wayward calf. This calf was apparently found by Abraham in the Mearat Hamachpelah.

At that time Abraham discovered the graves of Adam and Chava there and smelled the sweet aroma of Gan Eden. This is why Abraham was so determined to purchase the Me'arat Hamachpelah.

The Yalkut Reuveni quoting the Zohar HaChodosh says that the Me'arat Hamachpelah is the Gateway to Gan Eden. Abraham obviously discovered this and wanted to secure the location for Sarah and his Family. The Megaleh Amukot also quoting the Zohar Hachodosh says that all Jewish Souls who leave this world must first go through the Mearat Hamachpelah-the Doorway to Gan Eden.

Adam and Chava are buried in the Mearat Hamachpelah based upon our Kabbalah. It is brought down in the Yalkut Reuveni that when Chava died, Adam (who was familiar with the smell) smelled Gan Eden in that "Cave" and

buried her there. He started digging in the "cave" to try to reach Gan Eden for the sake of Chava but a Bat Kol told him to stop. Adam's son Seth buried Adam in the Me'arat Hamachpelah.

The Me'arat Hamachpelah is not only a direct gateway to Gan Eden but acts as a "router" for our prayers according to the Megaleh Amukot in the name of the Zohar Hachodosh. Just as Jewish Souls who leave this earth go through the Me'arat Hamachpelah so do our prayers. Gan Eden can be construed to be a "parallel universe".

The connection between this world and Gan Eden is through the Me'arat Hamachpelah. This is my understanding of the Yalkut Reuveni and the Megaleh Amukot. The Souls of our loved ones who have perished from this Earth live in a "parallel universe" in Gan Eden. Although there are a number of reasons why the word Machpelah ("double") is used to characterize the Cave of the Patriarchs, another might be this concept of a "parallel universe" to our own. Thus, it is a "doubled" cave not only because it has an upper and lower chamber in this world but corresponds to the "parallel universe" of Gan Eden. Even the Megaleh Amukot speaks about an upper and lower portion to Gan Eden because of this duality and parallelism.

In 1996 in a meeting in New York with newly elected Prime Minister Netanyahu, I along with a few others including Jay Schottenstein, and Albert Reichman asked the Prime Minister to make sure not to give 80% of Hevron to Arafat. David Bar Ilan z"l who was the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff was in the room at the time. He tried to help us convince the Prime Minister not to surrender the 80% of Hevron that was agreed upon in the Oslo accords.

The Prime Minister heard us. Unfortunately, he felt obligated to follow through on carrying out the Oslo Plans for Hevron despite many breaches of the agreement by Arafat.

This year Arafat's heir Mahmoud Abbas without one word of thanks to Israel but only with scorn and derision did away with these very same Oslo Accords that Israel went overboard to try to protect in every shape and form.

The grave of Israel's first Judge, Otniel Ben Kenaz was surrendered along with the 80% of Hevron given to Arafat. The terrorism that emanates daily from Arab's in Hevron could potentially have been lessened had all of Hevron remained under Israeli Control.

There is no greater duty than for Israel to protect the Gateway to Gan Eden.

