

Talk given by student rabbi Sue Morningstar, Rosh Hashanah 2006.

Good yontif everyone! Chag sameach!

Today, we read Genesis, Chapter 21:1-24, which tells how G-d remembered Sarah, she became pregnant (at the age of 90) and gave birth to Isaac, he grows up alongside Ishmael, the son of Hagar who is Abrahams concubine. Sarah tells Avraham to banish Hagar and Ishmael, he is reluctant but God tells him to listen to Sarah. They are sent to the desert with bread and water, Hagar leaves the boy under a tree so she won't have to see him die, cries out to God, God hears the cries of Ishmael, promises to make him a great nation, opens Hagar's eyes to a well and she gives water to the youth.

What is the reason we read this parasha on rosh hashana??

The midrash says that the day that **Sarah conceived** was Rosh Hashanah, which is why we read this portion today.

IT WAS A DAY OF MIRACLES: (BRAISHIT RABBAH 53:8,9).

בשעה שנפקדה אמנו שרה הרבה עקרות נפקדו עמה,

at the time that Sarah was remembered, many barren women were remembered along with her,

הרבה חרשים נתפקחו הרבה סומים נפתחו,

the deaf regained their hearing, the blind regained their sight,

הרבה שנטיים נפתחו,

and the insane regained their sanity

Rashi says, many sick were healed, many prayers were answered, there was great rejoicing in the world. Even the **sun and moon shone brighter** on this day.

We read this on Rosh Hashana to remind us of the Sarah force, what David Wolfe-Blank of blessed memory, calls **MIRACULOUS CREATIVITY**.

Sarah is the human personification of a natural force in the universe which gives birth just when everyone else assumes that no further creativity is possible 90 years old
.... **MANIFESTING GOD'S MIRACLES ON THE PHYSICAL PLANE**.

But there is even more to the Sarah force.

In Chapter 21, verse7: **ותאמר מי מלל לאברהם היניקה בנים שרה**

And she said: "who even thought to mention to Avraham that Sarah would be suckling children?"

היניקה בנים שרה HAYNEEKA BANEEM SARAH—why “baneem” in the plural?

Because Sarah was so old, no one believed she had given birth, they thought she had adopted Yitzchak. Sarah invited all the noble princesses of the area to a party, they brought their babies with them, and she nursed them all, **many hundreds** of babes were nursed by Sarah.

אמר לה אבינו אברהם אין זו שעת הצניות!
and Avraham our father said to her, This is not the time for modesty!!

אלא גלי את דדיך כדי שידעו הכל
Reveal your breasts so all will know that G-d has begun to do miracles.

שהתחיל הקב"ה לעשות נסים.

גלתה את דדיה והיו נובעות חלב כשני מעינות.
She revealed her breasts, and
THEY Poured FORTH MILK LIKE 2 FOUNTAINS

והיו מטרוניות באות ומניקות את בניהם ממנה.
and the matrons came and nursed their babies from her.

The Ishbitzer Rebbe in Sod Yesharim says that all you philosemites, people who were not born Jewish but feel drawn to Judaism or have converted, or who are just plain crazy about Jews, psychosemitic, your great greatgrandparent may have been one of those babes who nursed at the breast of Sarah Imaynu, our foremother

So, maybe the teaching is that we are meant to be open to the Sarah energy on Rosh Hashana, not the God with a beard sitting on the throne and judging us, but the face of **El Shaddai, El Rachum, God the Nurturer**, the force of miraculous creativity, healing and holiness, **ABUNDANT NOURISHMENT, and OVERFLOWING COMPASSION.**

May we open to God's grace which pours forth upon all of us like two fountains, and may the new year be a year of peace for us, our families, our community, our country, for Israel and for the whole planet. Amen, Shanah tovah