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The Akeda is unquestionably one of the most challenging and troubling episodes of the Torah. And its centrality to Rosh HaShana makes it even more challenging and troubling. The questions are obvious, but the answers less so. Why does God command Avraham to sacrifice his son, after having told him that he would, through Yitzhak, become a great and numerous nation? What sort of God would test a man in so seemingly horrible, cruel, and unfeeling a fashion? Why does Avraham, who earlier in this same parsha has resisted God, silently do God's bidding? In what way is Avraham's response to God's request/command a model for our own relationship to the divine and to the middah of din/mishpat (the quality of law)? What, finally, does the episode of the akeda tell us about the human condition?

We read the Akeda tomorrow, and it is by carefully exploring the Akeda that we can gain insight into the central themes of Rosh HaShana. References to the Akeda appear in all three of the additional sections of the musaf service (M, Z, Sh). How are we to relate to God's dominion? What precisely do we want God to remember about the Akeda for our zekhut? When the ayil, the ram, is presented to Avraham to offer in place of Yitzhak, the ayil that the midrash tells us had been assigned its role and had been waiting ever since creation, when we sound that ayil's shofar to beseech God for mercy during this period when we rightfully should be judged purely according to din, what merits of Avraham are we invoking?

What I am going to offer today is a less-than conventional re-reading of the Akeda.¹ It runs directly counter to the way we've all been taught to read the Akeda. But it is also the only way that I've been able to come to terms with the narrative and its place in our tradition and our liturgy.

Before I go any further, it only makes sense that I should present the traditional reading. This appear in many many sources. It is the reading of the Akedah as a narrative of utter and unquestioning obedience. At the very beginning of the episode, immediately after God has issued his command to Avraham, we are told (22: 3), "VaYashkem Avraham baboker"—that Avraham got up early in the morning and saddled his donkey himself, so eager was he to perform the mitzvah. Rashi's comment on the verse, citing Mesekhet Pesachim, is "nizdarez l' mitzva"—that from here we can learn the general principle that we should rush to do mitzvot [or perhaps, as one midrash puts it, he gets up at the crack of dawn simply so Sarah, the reasonable one in the family, won't find out and prevent him from going]. He saddled his own donkey, the midrash tells us, because "ahava mekalkalet et hashura," that Avraham's love for God, his eagerness to fulfill God's command, upset the usual order of things.² The Sifre on Devarim suggests that: "Had the Kadosh Baruch Hu asked Avraham Avinu for even the apple of his eye, Avraham would have given it to Him, indeed would have given Him not only the apple of his eye—would have given him his very soul."³

¹ See, for a related reading, Lippmann Bodoff, "The Real Test of the Akedah: Blind Obedience versus Moral Choice," *Judaism*, 42:1 (winter 1993) 72-84.

² BR 55, 8.

³ Trans. from Book of Legends, p. 39

Why does Avraham obey God? Because he is, the philosopher Soren Kierkegaard famously wrote, “a knight of faith” and his act was a “leap of faith.”⁴ Avraham is ultimately rewarded, as the liturgy tells us in the Zikhronot section of musaf, because he “bound his son Yitzhak to the altar and suppressed his mercy so as to do Your bidding wholeheartedly. So may Your mercy suppress your anger from striking us.” Why does God ask this of Avraham? To test him, as the opening pasuk of the episode suggests, but also to publicize Avraham’s greatness, to lay out a model for behavior. The word “nisa”—to test—is related to the word “nes”—which can mean either a miracle, which of course suggests the deus ex machina with which the episode concludes, or, less familiarly, a banner or flag. Avraham’s obedience is a banner publicizing, announcing, his greatness, his worthiness of God’s blessing, but also publicizing, announcing, how we should obey God, no matter how great a sacrifice God demands. As the midrash puts it, the purpose of the Akeda was to raise Avraham’s stature in the world much like the flag of a ship that can be seen at great distances.⁵

The commentary of the Radak (Rabbi David Kimchi of France, 12th-13th c.) puts all this together succinctly. *The Radak struggles to understand why God tested Avraham. Surely the omniscient God knew how Avraham would respond to his request. And certainly the Akeda could not have literally been publicized, since no one was present but Avraham and Yitzhak (the “ne’arim”—midrashically understood to be Eliezer and Yishmael—had been left at the bottom of the mountain), and, as Radak rhetorically asks, “had he [Avraham] told anyone, who would have believed him?” But, says the Radak,*⁶ “The truth,” the Radak writes, “is that Avraham was tested so as to show all mankind his total love for God, and he was tested not for his own generation but for future generations who would believe in the Torah ... and who would learn from Avraham to love God with all their heart and all their soul.” The test, the Radak and others observe, was so difficult because Avraham loved Yitzhak so and Yitzhak had not yet enjoyed the pleasures of life—which the Radak enumerates as a wife and children; Yitzhak was his “ben zekunim”—the child of his old age. And so, the Radak continues, “when God asked Avraham to sacrifice Yitzhak as an ‘olah’ all his love and affection was like nothing in his eyes and he did not question God ... and did not beseech God, but rather he immediately got up early and quickly went to fulfill God’s will.” Today, Radak writes, “some years after idol worship has disappeared, most of the world believes in the Torah of Moshe ... and only disagrees with us regarding the mitzvot that they say were given only as a sort of parable, and so most of the world believes in this great story, and it is a remarkable testimony on Avraham our father who loved with a full and wonderful love, and it is appropriate for man to learn from him how to love God.” (And the Radak must be given points for consistency. Later, at the end of the episode, when the angel stops Avraham and tells him, “I know that you fear God,” the Radak comments, oddly, “such fear is love.”)

The Rambam, in the Moreh Nevuchim (the Guide), states that it is nearly blasphemous, and certainly wrong, to treat the Akedah truly as a test of Avraham, since that would raise severe questions about the quality of divine justice.⁷ He even implies, but does not explicitly state, that

⁴ Kierkegaard, Fear and Trembling.

⁵ BR 55, 6.

⁶ STRICKEN MATERIAL WAS WRITTEN BUT NOT DELIVERED.

⁷ “What is generally accepted among people regarding the subject of trial is this: God sends down calamities upon an individual, without their having been preceded by a sin, in order that his reward be increased. However, this principle is not at all mentioned in the Torah in an explicit text. ... The principle of the Law that runs counter to this opinion, is that contained in His dictum, may He be exalted: A God of faithfulness and without iniquity (Dev. 32:4). ... [Quoting BT Shabbat, 55a] ‘There is no death without sin and no sufferings without transgression. And this is the

the trial of the Akedah is a homiletic story, designed to teach moral lessons. The trial may well never have occurred, for the Torah is a book of instruction, not a history book. What matters is how the targets of God's request responded. And the homiletic lesson of the Akedah is that we must respond to our own personal trials with the commitment and self-sacrifice of Avraham.

A midrash expresses the homiletic lesson of the Akeda powerfully, commenting on 22:3, "And rose up and went": "On the way, Satan ran ahead of Avraham, appeared before him in the guise of an old man, and asked, 'Where are you going?' Avraham said, 'To pray.' Satan: 'Why should one going to pray have fire and a knife in his hand, and kindling wood on his shoulder?' Avraham: 'We may abide there a day or two, and we will have to slaughter an animal, bake bread, and eat.' Satan: 'Old man, do you think I was not there when the Holy One said to you, 'Take now your son'? Old man, you are out of your mind. A son who was given you at the age of one hundred—and you are setting out to kill him!' Avraham: 'Even so.' Satan: 'And should He test you even more severely, will you stand firm?' Avraham: 'Yes, even more and more severely.' Satan: 'But tomorrow He will call you murderer for shedding the blood of your son.' Avraham: 'Even so.'"⁸

Many alternative readings have been offered. One suggests that the purpose of the Akedah was to teach Avraham, whose entire personality and personal sense of mission were wrapped up in hesed, according to the kabbalistic and midrashic literature, that man can go beyond his own nature. By commanding Avraham to engage in an act that was the antithesis of chesed, by requiring him to uphold din, the strict letter of the law, mercilessly, God taught Avraham what he was capable of. The test was not for God's sake, but for Avraham's.⁹ This reading is, however, perfectly consistent with the traditional reading. It too understands Avraham as utterly obedient, and it treats that response as exemplary. One certainly then understands why we would read the akeda on Rosh HaShana.

Yet some commentators take Avraham to task for NOT protesting. For instance, the paytan Yohanan ha-Cohen, for example, who lived in Eretz Yisrael between the Byzantine and Arab conquests wrote a Kedushta (to be recited before kedusha) for Shavuot in which the Torah (the daughter) considers many candidates as grooms, and all are rejected. She finally settles on Moshe, but Avraham is rejected because, in the words of the daughter/Torah: "I knew that he was good and wholehearted/but for his favored one (Isaac) he did not seek mercy/rather sent forth his cruel hand to shed blood/So much did he wish to do your will wholeheartedly/trusting that you are good and merciful./But he ought to have entreated and begged for your mercy/to save his favored one from the burning coals./He would have shown no mercy, had You, O Merciful One, not had mercy."¹⁰ Yohanan ha-Cohen has hardly been lonely in the tradition, but his has certainly been a minority voice. *According to one source I've seen, similar views were expressed by the paytan Binyamin ben Shemuel in the generation before Rashi, the exegete and paytan Yosef Tev Elem (11th c.), the philosopher and commentator Yosef ibn Kaspi (13-14th c.), and Rabbi Meir Simhah Ha-Cohen of Dvinsk (19-20th c.), author of the Meshekh Hokhmah.¹¹*

And there may be good reason for that. While I too find, in the traditional narrative, Avraham's behavior hard to understand and even reprehensible, it runs directly counter to the

opinion that ought to be believed by every adherent of the Law who is endowed with intellect, for he should not ascribe injustice to God." Guide, III, 24.

⁸ Pirke D'Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 30/31

⁹ Ari D. Kahn, "The Trial," in Explorations. On Avraham and hesed, Zornberg, Beginning of Desire, 104-5.

¹⁰ quoted in 11/11/06 Bar Ilan dvar torah by Dr. Abraham Shafir

¹¹ see his commentary on Br 22:12

peshat, the plain meaning of the text. Avraham is rewarded by God for his response, he is seen as having fulfilled God's expectations. He is hardly criticized. What will prove even more important to us later on is that these critical commentators—like those who find Avraham's silence exemplary—treat Avraham as having complied wholeheartedly and willingly.

So why can I not accept this traditional, conventional interpretation of the narrative? For one, it is awfully hard to understand Avraham's silence and unquestioning obedience. Two episodes much earlier in Parshat VaYera suggest that Avraham was not at all God's obedient unthinking servant. First, the very opening of the parsha. God appears to Avraham at Elonei Mamre, according to Rashi to perform the mitzvah of bikkur cholim as Avraham is just recovering from his brit milah. And while God is performing this remarkable chesed, Avraham (apparently distracted) notices three men standing before him. And, without asking God's leave, he jumps up, runs to greet them, and performs the mitzvah of hachnasat orchim. But then Avraham thinks better of his behavior, and by one plausible interpretation, the third pasuk is addressed to God, not to the three visitors (read pasuk 3; driven by singular of ta'avor). And indeed ten psukim later (in pasuk 13), God continues his conversation with Avraham as if it had not been interrupted. Hardly the picture of God's unthinking servant. Second is of course the famous episode in which Avraham argues with God over the fate of Sodom and Amora and specifically over the righteous men who reside within these cities and do not deserve to die. How are we to reconcile these two images of Avraham, these two models for our own behavior, seemingly so at odds with each other? When are we to argue with God and when are we to obey unblinkingly even the most capricious of commands? Or, is there perhaps some way to understand the beginning or end of Parshat VaYera differently—so that they are more consistent with each other?

Second, the traditional interpretation of the Akeda is troubling because it seems to deprive man of agency, of his capacity for reasoned moral judgment—and thus of his humanity. That is what is so striking about the beginning of Parshat VaYera. Man stands in judgment of God and finds God's conception of justice wanting, and man does not hesitate to argue and bargain with God. I am morally troubled by the interpretation of the Akeda as a lesson and model of utter obedience. What I have always found most attractive about Judaism is the way in which man's interpretation takes precedence over the divine will. There is no absolute truth, residing in heaven alone. Truth is, to some degree, what we make of it. That is the lesson of the famous story of the Tanur Shel Achnai in Mesechet Bava Metzia.¹² At the conclusion of that halakhic disputation—the details of which need not concern us here—when the rabbi in the minority, Rabbi Eliezer, appeals to heaven, the bat kol, the heavenly voice replies, that Rabbi Eliezer is indeed correct, but that the halakha is according to the chachamim. Lo Bashamayim Hi—the law does not reside in heaven—says the heavenly voice, but rather in the will of the rabbinic majority. At the conclusion of this episode, God in fact seems pleased, gratified, that his creations have exercised their will: nitzchuni banai, nitzchuni banai, God says, in response to the triumph of the chachamim, as only a proud father can when bested by his child. An interpretation of the Akeda that does not leave space for human agency is simply too much at odds with the Judaism that I know and treasure.

Third, and finally, what sort of God would make such a demand, would order such a test, and desire utter obedience to it? This makes God seem awfully capricious and unjust. This is not just a modern post-Enlightenment concern. Traditional commentators struggled with this as well:

¹² Bava Metzia 59b.

- The Rambam, in the Moreh Nevuchim, thought such a portrait of God as imposing a punishment on an innocent individual nearly blasphemous.
- One midrash suggests, in a remarkably tortured interpretation, that God did not in fact command Avraham to sacrifice Yitzhak; that is why Avraham is told “haalehu” not “sh’chatehu”: God wanted Avraham only to bring Yitzhak up the mountain, not to sacrifice him.
- Seemingly for this same reason, a midrash suggests that God tests only tzaddikim who are sure to pass with flying colors and whose tests do not add to their sins but in fact subtract from them.¹³ Everything that occurred in the episode—even the very drawn-out way in which Avraham is commanded and the three-day journey that is required—is intended merely to increase Avraham’s reward. In other words, this is not a real test, since God sets Avraham up for success, and thus God remains just.
- A final example: a wonderful midrash implies that the Satan essentially tricked God into testing Avraham in this way: God, who is just, would certainly not have done it on his own. Rashi relates this midrash in a very brief form. Let me quote the Midrash Tanhuma at some length: “After what things?” Following the feast given upon Yitzhak’s weaning... “Satan spoke to the Holy One, ‘Master of the Universe out of the entire feast that this old man, upon whom You bestowed the fruit of the womb at the age of one hundred—out of the entire feast he prepared, could he not have spared, say, one turtledove, one fledgling, as an offering to You?’ The Holy One replied, ‘Is it not true that Avraham prepared the feast in honor of his son? Still, if I say to him, ‘Sacrifice your son to Me,’ he will sacrifice him at once.’ Satan said, ‘Try him.’ At once ‘God tried Avraham.’”¹⁴

Shiv'im panim laTorah. There are seventy—that is to say, many—faces to the Torah. Elu va'elu divrei elokim chayyim. These and these are the words of the living God. In Judaism’s traditional spirit of interpretive pluralism, nowhere better captured than in midrash, allow me to suggest an alternative interpretation that I think does a better job addressing these concerns. The command to sacrifice Yitzhak is a test that Avraham passes, but not because he is utterly obedient but rather because he, in subtle ways, resists God’s will. God wants Avraham to resist injustice, not to perform it. Presented with a direct command, Avraham, frail mortal that he is, cannot *openly* resist God, but he can delay, drag his feet, find ways to intentionally misunderstand—perhaps because this is all he can do to register his protest, perhaps because he hopes that by playing for a time a solution will emerge that will get him off the hook. Avraham uses what the Yale political scientist James Scott has called the “weapons of the weak” to resist the divine will. In Scott’s classic work of that title, poor Malay villagers used such weapons to prevent upper-class villagers from exploiting their superior wealth to always and everywhere get their way. Countless studies by historians have shown that slaves in the Deep South and Jews under Nazi repression found ways to counter overwhelming coercive authority—even when they did not join Nat Turner’s rebellion or the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

In a moment, I’ll provide some textual evidence to support this interpretation of the Akeda. But recognize what such an interpretation does. Avraham remains, even during the akeda, a moral agent, capable of independent moral reasoning, not some unthinking automaton who acts on the basis of blind faith. The difference from the beginning of the Parsha is that Avraham was

¹³ Br. Rabb. 55, 2.

¹⁴ Tanhuma, trans. from Book of Legends, p. 39.

not, in either of the other two episodes I mentioned earlier, issued a direct command by God. In fact, when it comes to Sedom and Amora, God seems to want Avraham's input: (22:17) "Shall I hide from Avraham what I am about to do?" God seems in fact again to be testing Avraham, to make sure that Avraham has a moral bone in his body and is worthy of the promises God has made: I have to tell Avraham because he, God says in 22:18, will be a great nation, recognized by all the nations of the world, and (v. 19) "he should know so that he will command his sons and his household to observe the ways of God, to do righteousness and justice." What sort of God would make such a demand? One who does not want man ultimately to follow through, who desires resistance rather than obedience.

Avraham is indeed silent in response to God's request to sacrifice his son. A theme of many midrashim is what Avraham could, and perhaps should, have said to God, but did not. According to one midrash, Avraham tells God that when the commandment to sacrifice Yitzhak is issued, "I had an answer for You... But I suppressed myself in order to do Your will." Only, Aviva Zornberg notes, after the Akedah can he return, according to Rashi, to the mode of *siha*, of language and articulation.¹⁵ But language, explicit articulation, is not the only means of resistance, the only means of carving out individuality. There must also be room for inarticulate resistance—perhaps the only form of resistance possible when confronted with overwhelming power. And indeed Avraham is faced with the God who had just over 30 years before, but far fewer perakim before, destroyed Sedom and Amora. The midrash makes a point of noting that God says to Avraham, "*please* take your son" (22:2), and this is, I believe, the only time God says "na -- please" to anyone. But too much can be, and sometimes is, made of this—portraying Avraham as residing in the realm of choice. For when the big boss says please, what choice does one *really* have?

Very interesting you might say. But what evidence is there of Avraham's resistance?

- Consider the famous midrash on 22:2 (read pasuk). Rashi presents one version of the midrash; read Rashi (on asher ahavta – it tchumin b'me'aya: are there limits to the loins, to the love a father has for his son). The midrash explains that God did not reveal to Avraham the commandment all at once partly so as not to shock him and partly to increase Avraham's reward.¹⁶ But a different reading of the midrash is that Avraham is resisting God's command, by being coy and playing dumb. Avraham knew full well which son God was referring to: according to the peshat, Yishmael had already been banished; God could only have meant Yitzhak. Avraham was playing word games, playing for time, hoping against all hope.
- Consider 22:3 (read the pasuk). This is often seen as a sign of Avraham's eagerness to perform the mitzvah (he got up early). But pay attention to the remarkable level of detail, the repeated series of action-oriented verbs (review pasuk again). As if the Torah, often noted for its economy of language, were trying to tell us that Avraham was conscientious to a fault. Perhaps this was just Avraham being careful (maybe he took trips like Mitt Romney, and planned out bathroom breaks). But sometimes excessive carefulness is also a way of avoiding action and of delaying.
- Six psukim later (22:9-10; read), once Avraham and Yitzhak have reached the top of the mountain, there is again an unusual level of detail, with every act, every step in

¹⁵ Rashi, 22:12; Zornberg, *Beginning of Desire*, 117-18

¹⁶ BR 55, 7.

the process, specified. It is almost as if Avraham is taking his sweet time, to give the angel an opportunity to intervene.

- The final indication, 22:12 (repeated in v. 16). Notice what the angel says. You have not spared from me your son, your only one. Notice what the angel does not say: the one you love, Yitzhak. The language is parallel to the command, but hardly identical. Oddly, none of the rishonim in the mikraot gedolot pick up on this. But this obvious omission clearly suggests that Avraham has not entirely fulfilled God's command. He has brought his son, his only one, to be sacrificed, but he has employed his "weapons of the weak" to withhold from God the one he loves, Yitzhak. Avraham does not obey God unflinchingly. He does not, contrary to the Radak, show that, compared to his love for God, his love for Yitzhak was as nothing. Rather, it was his love for Yitzhak—"asher ahavta"—that led Avraham to resist God as he could.

In what way is Avraham then a "y're elohim"—one who fears God? In what way has his behavior during the Akeda displayed his fear of God? Because Avraham remained true to the ultimate divine mission, encapsulated in the broad command "v'asita hayashar v'hatov" (which we read just a few weeks ago in P. VaEt'hanan)—that you, Am Yisrael, should do what is right and what is good. It was Avraham's dedication to this larger moral principle that was being tested. And to uphold it is to display an allegiance to God's vision of man's purpose in the world. And to man's responsibility to reflect, and to judge, and thereby to acquire a measure of godliness.

This interpretation is quite unusual, I will admit, but it is consistent with some traditional sources that do not portray Avraham as a knight of faith, as does Kierkegaard. Notably according to Rabbi Meir: when the children of Israel assembled at Har Sinai to receive the Torah, God asked them for guarantees that they would hold up their end of the bargain. They offered Him the avot as evidence of their trustworthiness. And God answers skeptically, "As for your patriarchs, I have claims against them. Avraham – I have a claim against him for he said, 'How shall I know?'" (Br. 15:8)¹⁷ {How shall I know that I will inherit the land, as you have promised → Brit Ben HaBetarim}

Even the knight of faith has his doubts.

But it is also important to note—particularly on Yom HaDin—that Avraham's resistance occurs within the context of obedience. Man is not an entirely *independent* creative agent. In the Jewish perspective, his is always a bounded creativity—pardon the pun. In fact, the very act of binding—from which we take the name of the Akeda—is itself an act of creativity on Avraham's part. He is not commanded to bind Yitzhak, yet he does. The midrash is sufficiently troubled by this that it spins a narrative in which Yitzhak turns to Avraham and requests that he be bound, since, Yitzhak says, he is only human and may flinch as the knife approaches and disqualify the offering (as if the rules of korbanot applied to him!). The midrash makes the act of binding not only a sign of Yitzhak's eagerness to fulfill God's command but also an act of extraordinary hesed on Avraham's part. By my interpretation, an act of hesed that also further delays the sacrifice of Yitzhak—a sort of win-win, if you will.

Aviva Zornberg observes, with regard to brit milah, that the father goes beyond what is commanded by turning the event into an expensive celebration. She insightfully concludes that

¹⁷ Song of Songs Rabbah 1:3.

“in order to obey a difficult law, in order to become responsive to a radical demand on his life, the father cannot simply submit. He must find the space between himself and his Creator-Commander, out of which he may generate a kind of godly human play. This is the transforming activity of the imagination.”¹⁸ Bounded creativity. This is parallel to Avraham’s binding of Yitzhak, and it is perhaps not accidental that we know the event by precisely such an uncommanded action. It is how Avraham made the act his own that matters more than his literal obedience to God’s command.

This, it seems to me, is the posture to which we must aspire. This is the lesson that we are drawn to on Rosh HaShana.

We must remain ever and always independent moral agents. Kedoshim Tihiyu, God commands at the beginning of parshat Kedoshim. And the Ramban observes, commenting on this broad mitzvah, that it is possible to be a naval bireshut haTorah, a moral degenerate who observes the letter of the law. This imperative to be Kadosh, it seems to me, is relevant as much to hesed as to din—if not more so. This imperative must inspire us to go beyond the letter of the law, sometimes requiring us to observe the law even when there might be a kula (a leniency or loophole), sometimes requiring us to act in ways contrary to the strict letter of the law so as to preserve the spirit that animates the larger legal system. Rav Aharon Lichtenstein, now the retired rosh yeshiva of Yeshivat Har Etzion, in a wonderful essay entitled “Is There an Ethics Independent of Halakha?”, concludes that there *is* a morality that lies outside din and that that morality lies at the heart of the halakhic system and, yes, sometimes requires us to act contrary to din, to explicit command.

Like Avraham, we are pledged to observe the law. Like Avraham, that pledge does not absolve us from independent moral reasoning. Like Avraham, we are compelled to obey, but we must always struggle against that which we find unjust. Injustice, even within our halakhic system, need not be explained away: as the midrash clearly indicates, when Avraham does finally speak to God after the angel has intervened, he upbraids God for having contradicted himself, for having issued a command contrary to his own promises. Avraham ultimately obeys, but he drags his feet and he does not obey happily. He even bears resentment toward the divine.

On this Rosh HaShana, let us take stock of ourselves. Have we followed Avraham’s model? Have we obeyed God’s command, yet resisted moral injustice? Have we engaged in the creative reasoning that renders those divine commands our own? Have we challenged injustice, yet within the boundaries of halakha?

To be a Jew, it is sometimes said, is to suffer. But to be an observant Jew is also, I believe, to struggle always with paradox and tension. May we, over this coming year, be true to the legacy of Avraham—not blind obedience, but a reflective and resistant obedience.

L’Shana Tova Tikatevu – May We All Be Inscribed in the Book of Life for a Good and Sweet Year.

¹⁸ Zornberg, *Beginning of Desire*, 106-7