חסידות

From the Chassidic Courts

UJHELY · YISMACH MOSHE, CHAYEI SARA

Passing the halfway point of life guards against future sin

Yismach Moshe

Once a person passes the midpoint of the years allotted to them (here illustrated through the repeated, seemingly superfluous numbers in "a hundred and twenty and seven years") without having sinned, they are presumed to be secure from further sin, so that the latter portion of life stands on an equal, elevated footing of good. The repetition in Sarah's lifespan—"a hundred and twenty and seven years, the years of the life of Sarah"—thus hints that from the midpoint of her years onward, all were accounted equally for the good. AI SUMMARY

All chatter is bad except for the chatter of Torah: "And the life of Sarah was a hundred years and twenty years and seven years, the years of the life of Sarah" (Genesis 23:1). I have a new riddle on this verse, and it is this: "a hundred and seven" is superfluous, for one cannot have a hundred without eighty, and still "twenty-seven" is superfluous. Rather, it comes to teach that all are equal for the good from fifty-one until sixty-four.

The explanation of this riddle is based on what is found in Gittin (28a), that when one leaves behind an old man, he gives to her on the presumption that he is still alive. And it says there, this applies only when he has not yet reached old age (gevurot), etc. But one who is a hundred years old, since he has passed the midpoint, he is presumed to be alive. And further, our Rabbis of blessed memory said (Yoma 38b) that once the majority of a person's years have passed and he has not sinned, he will no longer sin. And consider this well. End of quote.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)