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Shavuot 2015 Sermon Slam

So there I was, on a cold January day, ten weeks pregnant with our third child, driving in my car with my 16 month old son who was sleeping in the back seat; my husband and five year old had been away several days already at a family Bar Mitzvah on the West Coast; we had decided I should stay home with our second child; it just felt too hard to contemplate making that east-west flight with a toddler; and so, there I was, just having left my parents' home where we had spent the past few days; it was quiet in the car, our son was sleeping; I was driving, thinking, driving....two young children, a third on the way....my husband and young son way across the country.....I was young, 33 years old, healthy, just having undergone a serious surgery four months prior; it was, to date, the longest time I had been away from my husband and oldest son, it was also the first time I was parenting solo.

And as I was driving, all of a sudden, I saw a blue curtain rising in front of me.....I knew this wasn't real, it wasn't a visual hallucination, but rather a curious phenomenon of a blue curtain rising in front of me.....and as it rose, I felt that it revealed something special..... somehow, some way, I felt that it was revealing to me the vision that at one time, I had been standing at Sinai, that I was a part of the people standing ready to receive the words of G-d, that I was present at Revelation. Before this unusual experience, I had experienced myself as Sarah, our Matriach, did, observing, listening but never participating "Petach HaOhel, at the opening of the tent, but not *in* the tent, ever, except for my father's Pesach Seder, when I sang loud and long!!! But this was different, or perhaps, I was different now, receptive, to having it be different, and so..... I became a Rivkah, a Rebecca, also our Matriach, who, as my Torah teacher describes her, is a version of Abraham, she is the woman who "Carries the vital Energy of Continuity" by approaching Isaac on her camel, by actually falling off of the camel when she sees how "wounded" he is from his near death experience at the hands of his father, Abraham. And yet, despite this "falling off", she finds a way to go forward.....She is the woman who turns to G-d while pregnant with twins, and in great pain, asks, "why should I suffer so?" and God speaks to HER directly....she is given her mission....one of continuity. Lihavdil, in contrast, my experience of the blue curtain rising, so pales by comparison.....

But it was my experience, as a young mother, as I uncovered my distinct path of my Jewish journey, over the years, I began chanting Torah, and Haftorah, leading services, participating in weekly Torah study groups, being a part of a Rosh Chodesh group and on and on...

Once that curtain rose, I realized that Revelation included me in it.....and there was no going back.....once that curtain rose, my world opened up in ways I never imagined. Yes, I lost that third pregnancy two months later, but I have never lost that sense that I am *Hineini*, ready, so present in this moment....so present in Revelation, and for this I am very grateful.