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Bat Mitzvah Scrapbook Belonging to Sarah Leavitt

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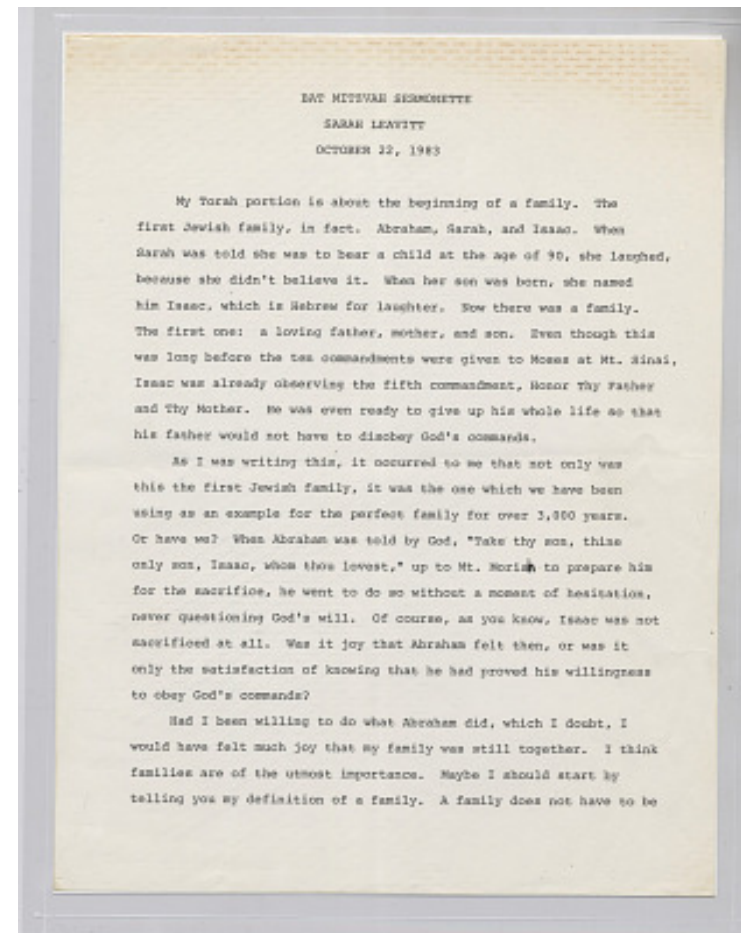
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BAT MITZVAH SERMONETTE
SARAH LEAVITT
OCTOBER 22, 1983

My Torah portion is about the beginning of a family. The first Jewish family, in fact. Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac. When Sarah was told she was to bear a child at the age of 90, she laughed, because she didn't believe it. When her son was born, she named him Isaac, which is Hebrew for laughter. Now there was a family. The first one: a loving father, mother, and son. Even though this was long before the ten commandments were given to Moses at Mt. Sinai, Isaac was already observing the fifth commandment, Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother. He was even ready to give up his whole life so that his father would not have to disobey God's commands.

As I was writing this, it occurred to me that not only was this the first Jewish family, it was the one which we have been using as an example for the perfect family for over 3,000 years. Or have we? When Abraham was told by God, "Take thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest," up to to Mt. Moriah to prepare him for the sacrifice, he went to do so without a moment of hesitation, never questioning God's will. Of course, as you know, Isaac was not sacrificed at all. Was it joy that Abraham felt then, or was it only the satisfaction of knowing that he had proved his willingness to obey God's commands?

Had I been willing to do what Abraham did, which I doubt, I would have felt much joy that my family was still together. I think families are of the utmost importance. Maybe I should start by telling you my definition of a family. A family does not have to be



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