

In the last two chapters of this week's parashah, Vayera, Abraham almost sacrifices both of his children. He first sends away his older son Ishmael, into the wilderness with his mother, the handmaiden Hagar, in Chapter 21. And then in Chapter 22, he brings his son Isaac to the mountain for a burnt offering. Abraham gets as far as tying Isaac up on the altar and raising a knife over him, before a last minute divine call stays his hand.

As a new parent, on the one hand, I cannot imagine how Abraham could have done what he did to either of his sons. It is horrifying, yes. But it also makes me consider the ways in which we continue to sacrifice our children.

I am enjoying motherhood immensely, *kinehora*, as my grandmother would say. But I am also terrified for Adar's future. I am terrified about pollution, climate change, waste generation; all of the ways we are literally sacrificing our children's future on this planet, to serve much shorter-term agendas, whether our own comfort or the bottom-line of multi-national corporations.

Because of my fear – and my hopes for my daughter – this morning I testified before Oregon's Environmental Quality Commission, requesting that they deny permits for a proposed Pacific Connector Pipeline through southern Oregon, culminating in a Liquid Natural Gas terminal near Coos Bay. Sending fracked gas over hundreds of miles of pipe would increase the risk of wildfires, carcinogenic chemical exposure, and disruption to local habitats and livelihoods, not mention greenhouse gas emissions.

Perhaps for those reasons, this project was denied twice under the previous federal administration. But those factors have not stopped the current administration from fast-tracking this project. This is not as dramatic as Abraham standing over his son, knife in hand, but the consequences for the next generation are potentially just as terrifying.

Of course, in the end, Isaac was not sacrificed. But I can imagine him asking Abraham, "what on earth were you *thinking?*" once he was unbound. And so might our children ask us. That's why the Tikkun Olam/Social Justice committee is sponsoring a letter writing campaign on Sunday, Nov. 12th, to Oregon officials who still have the power to stop this project from going forward. I hope you will stop by the synagogue that Sunday to send a letter of your own. Our children are not lost yet. There is still time to stay the knife.