

November 6-7, 2026 כ״ז חשון תשפ״ז

Candlelighting: 4:38 PM

Parashat Chaye Sarah חיי שרה Genesis 23:1-25:18
Stone – p 106 Hertz – p 80 Etz Hayim - p 127

Haftarah – First Kings 1:1-31 מלכים א
Stone – p 1136 Hertz – p 90 Etz Hayim - p 143

Kiddush following services is sponsored by the congregation

Shabbat ends: 5:37

TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION

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WEEKDAY AND *SHABBAT* SERVICES

Tuesday - 6:30 PM *Arvit*
Shabbat - 9:30 AM

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If you or someone you know would like to receive membership information,
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On This Week's Torah Portion - Chaye Sarah

In this week's parasha, parashat Chayei Sarah, we read of Abraham's determined efforts to find a wife for his beloved son Isaac, by sending his servant Eliezer back to Haran, Abraham's homeland.

It's hard to believe that Abraham entrusts this vital responsibility to his Damascan servant, given the difficulty of the mission. Isaac, the prospective groom, is not just another boy on the block! He is the pure and righteous son of the great Abraham. Furthermore, the bride-to-be is expected to assume the position of the late righteous matriarch Sarah.

Abraham does not offer Eliezer instructions or guidelines to help his servant identify the proper woman. The only thing that Abraham emphasizes is that under no circumstances is Eliezer to take a wife for Isaac from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom he dwells.

Despite these overwhelming obstacles, the resourceful Eliezer devises a strategy to identify a very special woman who is appropriate for his master's son.

Another major challenge that Eliezer faces, is the very question that Eliezer mentions even before setting out to Haran. Genesis 24:5: אוּלַי לֹא תֹאבֶה הָאִשָּׁה לָלֶכֶת אַחֲרַי אֶל הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת? "Perhaps the woman shall not wish to follow me to this land? Shall I take your son back to the land from which you departed?"

No way! responds Abraham emphatically. "If the woman will not follow you, you shall then be absolved of this oath of mine. However, do not return my son there!" (Genesis 24:8)

In our previous parasha studies, several reasons were suggested to explain why Abraham is insistent on finding a wife for Isaac in Haran rather than in Canaan, and what exactly was Eliezer's strategy in his efforts to find the qualities of a proper wife for Isaac. But why was Abraham so emphatic about not allowing Isaac to go with Eliezer to choose a wife for himself? The rabbis note that because Isaac was considered an עוֹלָה תְּמִימָה--"Olah Temimah," an "offering completely devoted to G-d," he was not permitted to depart from the land of Canaan that G-d had promised to the descendants of Abraham.

So, if Isaac could not leave Canaan, why didn't Abraham go to Haran himself to meet the prospective bride and her family?

Perhaps it was not so much the special sanctity and spirituality of Isaac, but rather it was more a test of Isaac's future bride.

Let us explore this possibility.

Abraham's entire life is bracketed by the two fateful words לֶךְ לְךָ, "go for yourself." In G-d's first revelation to Abraham, He says to him (Genesis 12:1), לֶךְ לְךָ, מֵאַרְצְךָ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ, אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַרְאֶךָּ, "Go for yourself from your land, from your birthplace, and from your father's home to the land that I will show you." In effect, the Al-mighty says to Abraham (whose name was then Abram), give up your entire *past*--your house, your car, your friends, all your comforts and conveniences, and move to a strange land, merely on My say-so! In parashat Vayeira (Genesis 22:2), G-d says to Abraham: קַח נָא, אֶת בִּנְךָ, אֶת יְחִידְךָ, אֲשֶׁר אָהַבְתָּ, אֶת יִצְחָק, וְלֶךְ לְךָ, אֶל אֶרֶץ הַמֹּרִיָּה, "Take your son, your only one, whom you love--Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and bring him up there as an offering on one of the mountains that I shall tell you." In effect, G-d now says to Abraham, give up your *future*, give up the only child who has absorbed your G-dly values, and has the ability to transmit them to future generations. Give up everything that you have worked for your entire life, and sacrifice this lad on the altar!

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In essence, Abraham's entire life is predicated on astounding leaps of faith that he has been asked to make. Give up your entire past, because G-d says that there is a brighter future awaiting you in Canaan. Give up your entire future, simply because G-d says so, and after all, G-d would never ask you to do anything wrong or hurtful. Show Me that your love for G-d is unconditional, by placing your fate in My hand!

Only a woman ready to commit herself to live a life predicated on making similar leaps of faith, is worthy of marrying Abraham's son, Isaac. After all, Isaac too was prepared to place his fate in the hands of G-d when he went with Abraham to Mt. Moriah to the place of the would-be akeidah. Only such a woman is worthy of bearing Isaac's children and of following in Mother Sarah's footsteps.



There was however one slight hitch in the process. Despite Abraham's attempt to make an impression upon the woman and her family with his great wealth by sending ten camels ("stretch limousines") filled with all sorts of precious silver, gold jewelry and beautiful garments, Rebecca's family was reluctant to allow her to leave.

When Rebecca's family rises the next morning, Eliezer says to them (Genesis 24:54), "Send me to my master [Abraham]." But Rebecca's brother, Laban, and her mother, both say (Genesis 24:55), "Let the girl remain with us a year or ten months, and then she will go." Eliezer begs them not to delay him, since G-d has made his journey successful, and he wishes to return to his master. Having great confidence that the girl will decline to go with the stranger from Canaan, the family members again intervene and say (Genesis 24:57): נִקְרָא לַנַּעֲרָ, וְנִשְׁאֲלָה אֶת פִּיהָ, "Let us call the maiden [Rebecca] and ask her opinion."

When Rebecca is called and is asked whether she wishes to go with this man, she responds emphatically (Genesis 24:58), אֵלֵךְ! "I will go!" Without any hesitancy, without any qualifications, Rebecca says, "I will go," proving that she has the makings to become a great future mother of Israel.

Rebecca's unqualified faith in G-d's mission, shows how suitable she is to become the wife of Isaac, the "Olah Temimah," the offering completely devoted to G-d.

Rebecca thus becomes the first חֲלוּצָה, the first female pioneer to have the strength, faith and fortitude to leave everything behind, so that she could play the crucial role in determining the fate of Israel, the land of Israel, and the people of Israel.

May you be blessed.

Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Ephraim Z. Buchwald

(The main ideas suggested in this Torah analysis are those of my late student, Ruth Jacobi, wife of the great Jewish actor, Lou Jacobi. When she presented these insights many years ago during my Shabbat afternoon parasha class, I was so impressed that I asked her to send them to me in writing. Our sages say (Taanit 7a), "Much have I learned from my teachers, and even more from my friends, but most of all from my students." This Dvar Torah serves as a powerful confirmation of that idea.
May her memory be blessed.)

"Everything You Need to Know **BEFORE** *Your Loved One Passes Away"*



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followed by the presentation

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PRAYER

Throughout the ages you blessed us, God,
With women who tended the altars of our faith.

Through these noble women Israel was redeemed;
Because of them Israel survived.

They have inspired and guided our youth;
They have preserved and transmitted Your word.

The women in our generation, like those in the past,
Keep Israel an eternal witness to You.

They, like Sarah, zealously guide their young,
Keeping them constant and steadfast in faith.

And thus our children remain ever devoted to You.

Like Rebecca, plucked from hearth and home
To take up the baton of Sarah's journey,

They join the knowledge of the past with the understanding of the present,
Transforming it into the vision and hope of the future.

Like Rachel, they are deeply concerned
For the children of Israel wherever they dwell,

Sharing their glory, feeling their pain,
Providing succor and safety for those in need.

They, like Hannah, who joyfully brought
Her young Samuel to *Shiloh* for service to God,

Bring their children also in the tender years,
For guidance and light to this House of God.

To learn the traditions, the teachings, the law;
To learn of prophets and sages, of martyrdom and nobility.

Through such noble women shall Israel be redeemed;
Through the merits of their children shall Israel survive.

Unknown

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

True love does not come by finding the perfect person, but by learning to see an imperfect person perfectly.

Jason Jordan