Chayei Sarah Life of Sarah

Genesis 23.1—25.18 / 1 Kings 1.1—31 / Matthew 11-12

L'Chaim! To Life! This portion actually begins with Sarah’s death. Yet shortly after her death comes the marriage of her son Isaac to Rivkah, then Jacob and the twelve tribes of יسرائيل Israel, and ultimately, ישוע Jesus/salvation. Sarah dies, but she and Abraham bring קייו khaya life (root קהee living/alive) life to the world.

Marital Discord? Genesis 22.19 shows Abraham moving after the near-sacrifice of Isaac to Beersheba, but Genesis 23 begins with Sarah dying in Kiriatharba/Hebron, about 25 miles from Beersheba as the crow flies. Abraham travels to mourn Sarah in Hebron. It’s possible that Sarah was not on the same page with Abraham when he attempted to sacrifice their only son, and they lived in different cities.

Strangers on Earth, Citizens of Heaven Abraham goes (verse 3) to the sons of חתי Heth terror to intercede with Ephron (verse 10) a חתי Chittite Hittite, for purchasing a burial site for Sarah. Abraham calls himself (verse 4) a גר ger sojourner/temporary inhabitant/a newcomer lacking inherited rights and a תושב towshab sojourner/stranger in the Land. And so it is today. יسرائيل is treated by the world as a גר and a תושב and bargains with “sons of חתי” its own Land of יسرائيل just to own property.

Hebrews 11.13-16 says that people of faith alive before ישוע are aliens and strangers on earth, always looking forward to the promise being fulfilled but never seeing it. So God is not ashamed to be called their God. Paul says in Ephesians 2.11-22 that ישוע fulfills the promises of God, destroyed the dividing wall of hostility between Jew and Gentile, and we are no longer foreigners and aliens, but citizens with יسرائيل.

Unprofitable Profit In Genesis 23.10-18, עפרון Ephron sells the land to Abraham, but apparently stiffs him on the price. How do we know that? Follow all the appearances of עפרון in this passage. Only one time is it misspelled עפרן, missing the 1 vav nail/symbolically establish and 6 = man, the 2nd occurrence in verse 16, as Abraham pays. עפרון made a nice profit, but he is known as less of a man and less established for it.
A Bride for Isaac  After his life is spared in Genesis 22, Isaac in Genesis 24 marries the beautiful Rebekah. Here we find many parallels. Pictured is a stairway down into a well—water for Eliezer and his camels was a lot of work for Rebekah!

Abraham
- Seeks a bride for Isaac from a far land
- Sends his servant with gifts to woo her
- Insists that the bride come to Isaac

Eliezer
- Is Abraham’s ambassador to seek bride
- Is accompanied by an angel
- Is single-minded in his mission
- Goes to the well and waits and prays
- Tests the woman who arrives

Isaac
- Almost sacrificed in obedience to God
- Must not go to the distant land
- Will inherit Abraham’s estate, authority
- Waits for his bride to come to him

Rebekah
- Lives in a land foreign to Canaan
- Shares humanity with Isaac
- Virgin ready to become a bride
- Will be pleasing to Isaac
- Willing to please and do hard work
- Free to refuse the gifts and inheritance
- Says, “Yes!”
- Fulfilled with Isaac

Rivkah’s Family
- Excited about the change for Rivkah
- Receives blessings also
- Tries to keep Rivkah from following
- Asks if this is what Rivkah wants
- Will cause trouble later (Laban/Jacob)
- God blesses Jacob regardless

God
- Seeks a bride for His Son from earth
- Sends John the Baptist to woo her
- Insists that the bride come to ישוע

John the Baptist
- Is God’s ambassador to seek bride
- Is accompanied by the Holy Spirit
- Is single-minded in his mission
- Goes to the Jordan and waits and prays
- Tests to see if those who come repent

ישוע
- Sacrificed in obedience to God
- Goes to earth, but brings His Kingdom
- Inherits God’s estate (Earth), authority
- Waits for His bride to come to him

Believer
- Lives on earth, foreign to heaven
- Shares humanity with ישוע
- Made clean by Holy Spirit to be a bride
- Will be pleasing to ישוע
- Willing to please and do hard work
- Free to refuse the gifts and inheritance
- Says, “Yes!”
- Fulfilled with ישוע

The World
- Excited about the change in the believer
- Receives blessings also
- Tries to keep believer from following
- Asks if this is what believer wants
- Will cause trouble later
- God blesses the believer regardless
Kneel and Bless  

בָּרַך barak

bless/kneel is used in Genesis 24.11, when Eliezer makes his camels בָּרַך, and in Psalm 95.6, “Let us בָּרַך before YHVH the LORD our Maker.” In Numbers 6.24, “The LORD בָּרַך you and keep you.” בָּרַך here is translated bless, but still carries the meaning kneel. God is saying He will bless us, and the picture is He is kneeling! יושע demonstrates this in kneeling to wash His disciples’ feet, John 13.1-17, adding that we should do the same for others.

The Woman at the Well  

Eliezer’s camels kneel at the well and he prays and waits for God to send the right woman, who turns out to be רבקה. About 2,000 years later, God sends a different woman to meet ישוע at a different well, John 4. As Eliezer brings good news from a distant country, so ישוע brings good news from a distant Country.

Good news (in the New Testament, good news is εὐαγγελίον euaggelion Gospel) from a distant land, Proverbs 25.25 says, is like cold water to a weary soul. Need a drink?

רבקה

Not of God’s family—yet
At the well at evening with others
Very beautiful
A virgin
Moral
Provides water to Eliezer and camels
Interested to hear message from Eliezer
Gives water for temporary refreshing
Shares news with her family
Becomes a citizen of a new Land

ישוע

Not of God’s family—yet
At the well at noon by herself?
Not a virgin
Immoral
Refuses to give water to ישוע
Interested to hear message from ישוע
Gets water for eternal life
Shares news with her whole town
Becomes a citizen of Heaven

Initiative  

There are four types: 1) Spontaneous Initiative—the best—recognizing a problem and addressing it without prompting, as רבקה waters Eliezer’s camels even though he didn’t ask for that. 2) Prompted Initiative—accepting a suggestion as רבקה does when she responded to Eliezer’s request for water for himself. 3) Forced Initiative—doing something under duress. 4) Suppressed Initiative, not doing it at all—as the woman at the well never gets water for ישוע.
The Gates of Hell Shall Not Prevail Against the זרע of רבקה

- In Genesis 24.60, the mother and brother of רבקה bless her, that her זרע seed will possess the gates of their enemies.
- In Genesis 3.15, God says that He will put enmity between the serpent and the woman’s זרע. Women don’t have זרע, so it is often understood to be ישות, indicating the virgin birth and no contribution from a man.
- In Galatians 3.16, Paul refers to Genesis 12.7, when God promises to give the Land to Abraham’s זרע, and Paul says that this Seed means Christ.
- God promises Abraham in Genesis 21.12 that his זרע will be through Isaac. Abraham totally trusts God, Hebrews 11.17-19. In Genesis 22.18, God repeats his promise that Abraham’s זרע will bless all the nations of the earth.
- In Genesis 28.12-13, God promises Isaac’s son Jacob that his זרע will possess the Land, and in Jacob’s זרע will all the families of the earth be blessed.
- As he is dying, Jacob promises that the scepter will not depart from Judah until שילה comes (see the Gesenius lexicon: Messiah), Genesis 49.10.
- God promises Judah’s descendant King David in 2 Samuel 7.12 that He will establish David’s זרע and adds, “I will be His Father, and He shall be My Son.”
- Isaiah 9.6-7 builds on this promise to King David, “For unto us a Child is born…His name shall be called…The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father…”
- In Galatians 3.29, Paul says that we are Abraham’s seed, if we belong to Christ.
- The promised Seed is tracked by God’s promises from Eve through Abraham, Isaac, רבקה, Jacob, Judah, David, and ישוע, and finally to us.

ישוע promises Peter in Matthew 16.18 that the gates of Hades will not overcome the Church. ישوع can promise this because through His death He destroys the devil and the power of death (Hebrews 2.14), the last enemy to be destroyed is death (1 Corinthians 15.25-26), He has swallowed up death in victory (1 Corinthians 15.54-55), and He has abolished death through the Gospel (2 Timothy 1.10). ישוע is the Promised זרע!
**Isaac and ישוע** In *Genesis 22.19*, Abraham and Isaac return from the near-sacrifice of Isaac at Mount Moriah. Isaac isn’t mentioned again until *Genesis 24.4*, when Abraham arranges to get a bride for Isaac. And so it is with ישוע—the last we heard from Him, He had just been sacrificed. The next time we see Him, He will be coming for…us!

It’s a Match רבקה was excited to see Isaac for the first time. In fact, *Genesis 24.64* says that she נפל fell off her camel when she saw him! In contrast, Ishmael dies at the age of 137 and *Genesis 25.18* says that he נפל fell/died in the presence of all his brothers. רבקה sees the line of promised זרע and נפל into life. Ishmael sees the line of promised זרע and נפל into death.

**רבקה and Ruth** In *Genesis 24.47*, רבקה tells Eliezer that she is the daughter of Bethuel, Nahor’s son by Milcah. *Genesis 11.27* says that Lot is the son of Haran. Since Abram and Haran are brothers, Lot is Abram’s nephew. Two verses later, *Genesis 11.29* says that Nahor’s wife, Milcah, is the daughter of Haran. That makes Lot and Milcah brother and sister, and Lot and רבקה are related. About 1,000 years later, another relative of Lot, Ruth of the children of Moab, Lot’s son/grandson, will marry Boaz and become the great-grandmother of King David. Two outsiders are grafted in to Messiah’s זרע, the same blessing many גויים Gentiles hope for today.

As רבקה and Ruth left their homes to join the promised זרע, *Jeremiah 16.19* says the גויים will come to יהוה from the ends of the earth, leaving their fathers’ homes and realizing their fathers inherited “lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.”

*Matthew 12.28-21* quotes *Isaiah 42.1-4*, saying that ישוע fulfills the prophecy, “…He will proclaim justice to the גויים…in His name the גויים shall put their hope.”
Glossary, in order of appearance:

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