

Sheepfold Gleanings

CHAYEI SARAH - SARAH'S LIFETIME

Genesis 23:1 to 25:18

1 Kings 1:1-31

2 Timothy 2:15

Continued from the last study: Vayeira - Genesis 18:1 to 22:24

In the last lesson, Abraham returned to Beersheba after the test of his faith by Yahweh and the miraculous appearance of a ram as the substitute sacrifice for Isaac. We do not see Isaac again until his bride is revealed to him.

The previous Torah reading ended with news that Abraham's brother, Nahor, had eight sons. In Hebrew gamatria 'eight' signifies life beyond and new beginnings. The youngest son, Bethuel, (in Hebrew means *dweller in God*), had a daughter and her name was Rebekah.

With this, the stage is set for *Sarah/Chayei*.

Genesis 23:1- 2 "Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah. So Sarah died in Kirjath Arba [*that is, Hebron*] in the land of Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her."

Tradition suggests that Sarah was so grieved for the loss of Isaac that she died. We do not know if Abraham was still on route from *the place* as we see he came from Beersheba to mourn for his wife and to weep for her. What a great loss her death was to him.

Abraham made plans for Sarah's burial and set out to *purchase* a parcel of land for a burial site from the Hittites. Notice in Genesis 23: 4, that when Abraham speaks to them, he refers to himself as "*an alien and a stranger*" among them. Abraham's approach was very humble, even though Yahweh had pronounced that all the land was for him and his descendants. Abraham's humility showed he never assumed ownership, knowing that the land belonged to Yahweh and that he and his descendants would be tenants at Yahweh's appointed time. It was true he was an alien and a stranger among the Hittites but Abraham's lifestyle and beliefs were not of an earthly nature (*Olam Hazei*) as were the Hittites and the inhabitants of the earth at that time. His walk on earth was of Yahweh's kingdom and that was unknown to the inhabitants of the earth (pagans) at that time. He understood that the land he inherited came with a heavenly connection and that Yahweh's Covenant given to him and his succeeding descendants was yet to unfold called in Hebrew the *Olam Haba*. Such was Abraham's faith.

Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the *substance* of things hoped for, the *evidence* of things not seen."

The Hittites offered to give the land that Abraham desired for the burial site to him without cost. Abraham, however, did not want to be indebted to this people and very humbly asked for the price of the land. It has been said that the price suggested by the Hittites was grossly exaggerated. Despite this, Abraham met their terms and Sarah was buried in a cave in the field of Machpelah near Mamre (which was at Hebron) in the land of Canaan, the place she loved so much (Genesis 23:3-20).

A Bride for Isaac - The Mission

Genesis 24 Scripture now goes on to reveal a living parable of the Messiah and His Bride. Abraham represented Yahweh, Isaac represented Yahweh's son, Yeshua the Messiah/*HaMashiach* and the servant represented the Spirit of Yahweh/ *Ruach HaKodesh*.

Abraham was approaching old age and it was time for Isaac to have a wife. After all, Yahweh did promise many heirs! It was the father's duty to provide the bride for his son. Isaac was thirty-seven years old when his mother died and had waited upon his father to see when a bride would appear. Notice Isaac did not take charge of his own life by going about seeking his own bride. It was the responsibility of the father.

John 15:16 Yeshua said, "You did not choose Me, but I chose you."

The Ambassador

Abraham chose his most loyal and trusted servant for this very delicate task of finding a bride for Isaac. Even though the servant's name was not mentioned in this whole story, it has always been understood the servant was Eliezer (Genesis 15:2). Abraham had his servant swear an oath not to choose a bride from among the Canaanites but to go to his extended family to find her. As was the custom when swearing an oath, the servant placed his hand under Abraham's thigh, thus validating his oath to him. The thigh represented the *seed* of that person. If an oath were broken or violated, then the issued children from that seed would avenge the act of disloyalty (Genesis 24:2-9).

With this pledge of allegiance to Abraham, the servant gathered ten camels from the herd of his master, loaded them with goods and left for the region of Aram Naharaim (Mesopotamia), a journey of approximately five hundred miles.

Of interest: A camel is called "the ship of the desert." Its body is beautifully designed to handle almost any desert condition with relative ease and was the perfect vehicle for the journey. The camel can survive with little water and food and can travel comfortably twenty-five miles a day. Fully-grown they can weigh up to 1,500 pounds.

Servant of All

Abraham's servant Eliezer arrived at the town of Nahor in the evening just as the women came to draw water from the well. The servant had the camels kneel down near the well and thanked Yahweh for a safe arrival at his destination and prayed for the success of his mission, to find

Yahweh's bride for Isaac. "Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,' and she says, 'Drink, *and I will also give your camels a drink – let her be the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac*'"(Genesis 24:14).

Before Eliezer finished praying, Rebekah approached with her water jar on her shoulder. The servant hurried to meet her and set the stage by saying, "Please give me a little water from your jar." So she said, "Drink, my lord." Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink. And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "*I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking*" (Genesis 24:18-19).

Can we imagine what the servant must have felt like? These were the exact words he was waiting to hear. He did not reveal himself yet, but waited to see which family she was from and her characteristics. Would her characteristics be like Sarah's, whose matriarchal position Rebekah would inherit?

With warmth and generosity Rebekah quickly served this total stranger; and she also took the initiative to water his camels. Rebekah may have had only one jar to fill the drinking trough. It is said a single camel can drink up to 20-30 gallons of water, so for ten camels we are looking at over 200-300 gallons of water! Rebekah offered this service unconditionally from her heart with no motive or intention of reward for her hard work. She did all this while the stranger whom she served stood aside and watched.

Hebrews 13:1-2 "Keep on loving each other as brothers. Do not forget to entertain strangers, for be so doing some people have entertained angels [*Yahweh's messengers*] without knowing it."

Eliezer did not seem to need help, yet Rebekah's willingness to help him revealed her character and her heart attitude. Does our attitude present a good witness to others? How we serve our families, friends and even strangers with our very best as Rebekah did, will elevate and help us be overcomers in Yahweh. Our attitude will reveal if we are walking in a heavenly/fruit of the spirit nature (*Tree of Life – Olam Haba*) or an earthly nature (*Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil – Olam Hazeh*).

Mark 7:15 "Yeshua said, '*Nothing* outside a man can make him unclean by going into him. Rather, *it is what comes out of a man that makes him unclean.*'"

Notice Rebekah did not say a word; rather she respected and showed honor to this stranger and her evangelism was in the very act of her service that was reflective of her everyday life. Her testimony set her apart and was the witness that elevated her to a whole new life in the *Olam Haba* – Heavenly nature. If we are waiting for a breakthrough in our lives – consider Rebekah's heart attitude towards others, as she was a living example of Yahweh's principle that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves, and offer *hospitality* to others as the Holy Spirit/*Ruach HaKodesh* directs them. This may be a key to the growth that many seek in their spiritual walks.

2 Timothy 2:15 "Do your best to present yourself to Yahweh as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."

Rebekah was obviously accustomed to drawing from the *well*. It was a source of strength and life to her and she offered this life-giving source to others freely with no conditions attached. It was a gift! The care of everything, including animals, was evident in Rebekah. She knew how much effort she would need to exert to water these camels. Rebekah was taught to delight in her service, and knew the importance of serving in such a way with joy and obedience that it would bring honor, respect and elevate others. Therein lays the heart of Torah and the heart of Rebekah. In a sense, this *well* was a source of “living water,” for this *well* represented the Living Word. ‘Wells’ in scripture are pictures of salvation, redemption, holiness, righteousness, sanctification, faith and grace.

The ten camels in the story represent the Word of Yahweh, for there are Ten Commandments that sum up the Torah. The camels also represent the ten tribes who would assimilate into the Nations or “wilderness” to later be called back to life through the Living Word of Torah, Yeshua. The Word of Yahweh took the servant of Yahweh to the Bride and will later bring the Bride to her Bridegroom. (Ephesians 5:26-27; John 14:15-18, 26; Matthew 28:18-20; Exodus 20:6)

Only after all the camels had finished drinking did the servant Eliezer reveal his true mission and identity. He first placed gifts upon Rebekah, a golden nose ring weighing a beka and *two* gold bracelets weighing *ten* shekels (Genesis 24:22).

With these gifts Abraham’s servant, a representation of the *Ruach HaKodesh* (the Spirit of Yahweh) bestowed gifts on the Bride. When we come and surrender our lives to Yeshua, asking Him to be Master of our lives, He bestows gifts of the Spirit on us called *fruits of the Spirit* (Galatians 5:22-23). A beka is a half-shekel. In Exodus, the children of Israel were each required to make payment of a half-shekel for atonement (Exodus 30:13). This beka of gold, present in the nose ring given Rebekah (Bride) by Eliezer (the Holy Spirit), represented Rebekah’s half-shekel offering to Yahweh for her atonement. In the Messiah our atonement was paid for.

1 Corinthians 6:20 “You were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”

The two gold bracelets weighing ten shekels each, represented the Two Houses of Israel that would come from the promised seed of Abraham. From Abraham’s descendants came the twelve tribes of Israel. The ten shekels represent the ten tribes – not lost – but returning to the Land, the Torah and the Messiah. The two bracelets also represented the receiving of the two stone tablets inscribed by the finger of Yahweh, which will later be inscribed on the heart of the Bride of the Messiah (Genesis 24:22).

Who’s Daughter are You?

Eliezer asked, “Whose daughter are you?” Rebekah revealed her identity to Eliezer and this confirmed to him that she was the one he sought. She was the daughter of Milcah and Nahor and her father was Bethuel, a relative of Abraham (Genesis 24:24).

The servant also asked Rebekah if there was room in her father’s *house* and if he and his camels might spend the night. Rebekah again offered hospitality, saying there was plenty of straw and

fodder, and room for him to spend the night. With this Eliezer bowed down and worshipped Yahweh.

- **Straw** is *teben* (Strong's H1129/ TWOT 2493 from 255), Hebrew for: to build, rebuild, establish, pattern and build up as in construction. The idiomatic meaning is to bring about increase in offspring. Yahweh is the builder. Through Rebekah's offspring would come the whole House of Israel.
- **Fodder** is *mispo* (Strong's H4554) from the Hebrew root meaning feed for animals. Animals in the Bible often symbolize people. In Rebekah's father's house was straw and feed, representing how in *Yahweh's House* there is provision, shelter and comfort for *His* people. This food is the teaching and instruction of Yahweh. His food (His Word) nurtures us when we walk in His ways, and is to be the pattern for our life (Ezekiel 43:10-12; 44:23-24).

Rebekah ran ahead of Eliezer and told her family the news about the imminent company of Abraham's servant. Her brother Laban hurried out to see this man who had blessed his sister and invited him home saying, "I have prepared the house [*representing Torah*] and a place for the camels." Eliezer was faithful to his master Abraham and shared the mission he was on before looking towards his own needs. Rebekah's father and brother confirmed that she could go with Eliezer to be a wife to Isaac as Yahweh had directed.

With this, Eliezer bows before them and brings out gifts of gold and silver jewelry for Rebekah, as well as new garments. In the book of Revelation, the bride is given new garments without spot or wrinkle, revealing the bride is one who walks in obedience to the teaching and instruction of Yahweh (Revelation 19:7-9).

Eliezer also brought out costly gifts for Rebekah's mother and brother, Laban. With this part of his mission complete, only then did Eliezer partake in the fellowship / meal offering (Genesis 24:54).

The Chosen Bride

The next morning Eliezer was ready to leave. That caused a stir in the family. They asked for a few more days with Rebekah, but realized Eliezer was committed to the fulfillment of his journey. In traditional Hebraic terms, the waiting period before a wedding was approximately a year. With no extra days for the bride to linger, the family turned to ask Rebekah, "Will you go with this man?" "I will go," she said. With not so much as having seen Isaac, Rebekah consented to being his wife. The journey ahead was through the wilderness, and by faith she put her life in Eliezer's (Holy Spirit's) care and walked toward her future (Genesis 24: 54- 59; 2 Corinthians 6:2).

John 20:29 "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Just before Eliezer and Rebekah left her father's house, Rebekah's family blessed her saying "Our sister, may you increase to thousands upon thousands; May your offspring possess the gates

of their enemies" (Genesis 24:60). Today this prayer is still prayed on the eve of Sabbath/*Erev Shabbat* over the daughters as a blessing.

Isaac receives His Bride

Genesis 24:62-67

This is the first time we see Isaac reappear in Scripture since the account of his being a "living sacrifice." *Three* years have passed and Isaac had been away preparing a place for his bride.

Yeshua said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, '*Blessed is he who comes in the name of Yahweh*'" (John 14:2; Matthew 23:39; Psalm 118:26). These passages are of Yeshua, the Bridegroom, and foreshadow of the calling of the Bride to her wedding.

Isaac was living in the Negev region and came forth from Beer Lahai Roi. He went out to the field one evening to meditate (Strong's H7742/ TWOT 2255 meaning he went out to go over a matter in his mind, grow and develop, pray, express his thoughts, and experience spiritual growth). When he looked up, he saw camels approaching (prophetic of the ten tribes of Israel returning). Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. She alighted from her camel and asked Eliezer, "Who is that man in the field coming to meet us?" "He is my master." So she took her veil and covered herself.

Isaac, the bridegroom, is the one who would remove Rebekah's veil. Our Bridegroom, Yeshua, removed the veil at the Temple when He died. The veil was torn from top to bottom by the power of the shedding of His blood. Yeshua will be the one who removes the veil that has covered the heart of His Bride when she draws close to her Bridegroom. Hearts that are circumcised at the lifting of the veil (Yom Kippur) have been delivered from all that previously hindered the Bride's love for her Bridegroom.

The servant reported to Isaac everything that took place on his assignment (Genesis 24:66). The Holy Spirit/*Ruach HaKodesh* will deliver the Bride to her Bridegroom. The Bride will be found scattered among the nations. She is one who has crossed over as she has made herself ready in the Wilderness. He sends for her and draws her from the body of believers. She has kept the Word of Yahweh in her heart and walked faithfully in His ways. The Spirit of Yahweh woos her from the Twelve Tribes in all the Nations and brings her to the Bridegroom, dressed as a Bride in garments ready for her wedding.

Isaac found Rebekah worthy to step into the role of his mother Sarah, the matriarch of the family. Isaac brought Rebekah into the tent of Sarah and married her. In doing this, she inherited the blessing Yahweh gave to Sarah. "I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her" (Genesis 17:16). Isaac found great consolation in this and was comfort after his mother's death. Rebekah became his wife and Isaac loved her.

Abraham Dies

Genesis 25 Abraham lived thirty-five more years after Isaac married Rebekah and he took another wife named Keturah, who gave him six more sons. The Midianites are from her offspring.

When Abraham died, *his inheritance* was left to Isaac the son of the promise, as he was the firstborn and only son of Abraham and Sarah. Abraham gave *gifts* to all his children but only Isaac, received the *birthright inheritance*. The seed of Isaac retains the Covenant. Hagar and Keturah's children were also blessed and become fathers and princes of many nations (Genesis 25:16; 1 Chronicles 1:32). Abraham's whole family was with him at his death, including his son Ishmael. Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field of Ephron the Hittite (near Hebron), the field that Abraham had bought.

Abraham lived to see his third generation. Isaac's sons Jacob and Esau were fifteen when their grandfather passed away.

Shabbat Shalom
Julie Parker



Since its inception in 2003, *Sheepfold Gleanings* has been written under the pen name of *Carl and Julie Parker*. It will now be published under the authors name *Julie Parker*, with her husband Carl's continued support and covering.

Note: We are in the process of publishing the studies in soft spiral study format and soft bond format for prison ministry (an eBook format is coming!).

Genesis is the first book in a five part series: **Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers and Deuteronomy**. Each book is part of the yearly Torah cycle

starting in Genesis and is designed to be used each year for study purposes. To pre order please contact the information below.

Reference

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