

Chayay Sarah Genesis - Bereshit (23.1-25.18)

The life of Sarah, the mother of Isaac, ended when she was 127 in Hebron in God's promised land of Canaan. Her husband Abraham withdrew to weep for her, then rose up and bought land to bury her. Sarah was buried in the cave of Makhpelah.

Abraham felt his age now and God had blessed Abraham in everything. Abraham said to his oldest servant, "Isaac needs a wife. I will send you to find her. You must swear by the God of heaven and earth that you will not take a willing wife from among the Canaanite people. Go to my kinsmen. God will send an angel to help you find Isaac a wife."

Thereupon, Abraham's servant took 10 camels and many gifts and journeyed to Abraham's birthplace in the city of Nahor. The servant stopped near a well and prayed, "God of my master Abraham, please help me. Have the girl whom you want to be Isaac's wife give me water, and then offer a drink for my camels." He had hardly finished speaking when, lo! Rebecca came out to the well. He asked for a drink.

"Yes," she said. "Drink as much as you want and then I will give water to your camels."

The servant gazed upon her in wonder. "Who are you? Can you find us shelter for the night?"

She said, "I am Rebecca, daughter of Bethuel. Come and stay in my father's house." Abraham's servant accepted Rebecca's invitation to stay and gave her gold rings and two bracelets.

When Rebecca went to tell her family, the servant bowed his head and said, "Blessed be God, the God of my master Abraham, for his loving-kindness in finding a wife for Isaac from among his people." Then Rebecca's brother Laban comes to him and said, "You who are blessed by God, come, we have made a place to stay for you and your camels." When he meets her father Bethuel, he says, "I am a servant of Abraham. God has blessed my master greatly and he is rich. He asked me to find a wife for his son Isaac from among his people and God has led me to Rebecca."

Bethuel said, "The matter has come forth from God so take Rebecca and go as God has spoken." The servant brought out gifts and Rebecca came and they asked her if she would go. And she said, "I will go."

Isaac went out to meditate and pray in the fields towards evening and he raised his eyes and saw behold! camels were coming. And Rebecca raised her eyes and saw Isaac and covered herself with a veil.

Isaac married Rebecca and he loved her. At 175 Abraham died old and happy and was gathered to his peoples. His sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him in the cave of Makhpelah with his wife Sarah. Then God blessed Isaac to be the new father of God's nation and Ishmael settled in another city. Ishmael had twelve sons, princes of their nations. Ishmael at 137 was gathered to his people and over all his brothers he dwelt.

Questions: 1) How do you express love? 2) How are meditation and prayer similar and different? 3) How do you know if a matter has come forth from God? **Illustration ideas:** the cave of Makhpelah..The servant at the well...Rebecca giving water to the camels...Isaac in the fields...the brothers burying their father...