

Portion Chayay Sarah -Genesis - Bereshit (23.1-25.18)

After Abraham proved his faith to God by circumcising all the males in his household, Abraham proved his faith in God again by being willing to let his own son be made as an offering to God. For listening to God, God blessed Abraham as the father of a new great nation and brought him to God's Promised Land of Canaan. The life of Sarah ended in Hebron and Abraham withdrew to weep for her. Then Abraham rose up to buy land to bury Sarah and so she was buried in the cave of Makhpaleh, Abraham had become old and God had blessed Abraham in everything. Abraham to his oldest servant, "Isaac needs a wife. You must swear by the God of heaven and earth that you will not take a wife from among the Canaanite people. Go to my kinsmen. God will send an angel to help you find a wife for Isaac."

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, then asked. "Who are you? Can you find us a place to stay tonight?" "I am Rebecca, daughter of Bethuel. Come and stay in my father's house." Only after the camels had finished drinking did the servant accept Rebecca's invitation to stay and he gave her gold rings and two bracelets.

Rebecca went to tell her family as Abraham's 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."

Rebecca's brother, Laban, comes first to greet the servant. "You who are blessed by God, come we have made a place to stay for you and your camels." The servant goes with Laban to meet Rebecca's father, Bethuel and says to them, "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. "I will go," she said.

Isaac married Rebecca and he loved her. At 175 Abraham died. His sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him in the cave of Makhpelah where his wife Sarah was buried. Then God blessed Isaac to be the new father of God's nation and also blessed Ishmael to start a great nation. Ishmael died at 137 years old.

Questions: 1) Why is it important to bury the dead? 2) Does God help bring the right people to you? Who? 3) Describe the God of Abraham.

Illustration ideas: The cave where Sarah is buried... The servant at the well... Rebecca giving water to the camels... Isaac and Ishmael burying Abraham...