

# 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(see [www.sheepfoldgleanings.com](http://www.sheepfoldgleanings.com) )*

In the last lesson, just after the miraculous appearance of the ram at the sacrifice of Isaac, Abraham returned to Beersheba. 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. Eight signifies life beyond and new beginnings. The youngest son, Bethuel, meaning dweller in God, had a daughter and her name was Rebekah. With this, the stage is set for *Chayei Sarah*, our reading.

**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."

Does scripture suggest that Abraham had not yet returned from Beersheba when Sarah died? We do not know, but Abraham came to mourn over his wife and wept 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 YHVH had said to him that all the land was for him and his descendants. Abraham's humility showed he never assumed ownership, knowing that the land belonged to YHVH and that he and his descendants would be tenants at YHVH's appointed time. Abraham understood the Covenant that was given him and his succeeding descendants, the reality of which was yet to unfold. 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. 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).

**Genesis 24 A Bride For Isaac**

Scripture now goes on to reveal a living parable of the Messiah and His Bride. Abraham represented YHVH, Isaac represented YHVH's son, Yeshua Ha Mashiach/the Messiah, and the servant represented the Spirit of YHVH, the Ruach HaKodesh.

### **The Mission**

Abraham was approaching old age and it was time for Isaac to have a wife. After all, YHVH 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."

Abraham chose his eldest servant for this very delicate job 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 on oath not to choose a bride from among the Canaanites but only a bride from his relatives in the land he originally came from. 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 500 miles.

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**

The servant 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 YHVH for a safe arrival at his destination, before continuing to pray for the purpose of his mission, a 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 the servant finished praying, Rebekah approached with her 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?

Rebekah quickly served this total stranger with a light heart and then 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 with a light heart 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 (YHVH's messengers) without knowing it.”

Eliezer did not seem to need help yet Rebekah willingly offered warmth and generosity to this stranger. Her character reflected 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, not based on conditions, motives or complaints as Rebekah did, will elevate and help us be overcomers in YHVH. Our attitude comes from within, not by what affects us from the outside. Our attitude will reveal if we are walking in a heavenly/fruit of the spirit nature (Tree of Life) or an earthly/sinful nature (Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil).

**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 by setting about her task eagerly and earnestly. Her evangelism was in the very act of her service of hospitality that was reflective of her everyday life. Her testimony set her apart and was the witness that elevated her to a whole new life. If we are waiting for a breakthrough in our lives – consider Rebekah's service of honor to others. YHVH is pleased by people with obedient hearts that are yielded to Him, who love their neighbor as themselves, and take the initiative to offer **hospitality** to others as the Ruach HaKodesh/Holy Spirit directs them. This may be the key to the growth that many seek in their spiritual walks.

**2 Timothy 2:15** “Do your best to present yourself to YHVH 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*. In a sense, this *well* was a source of “living water,” for this well represented the Living Word. Wells are pictures of salvation, redemption, holiness, righteousness, sanctification, faith and grace. 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 lies the heart of Torah and the heart of Rebekah.

The ten camels in the story represent the Word of YHVH, 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 YHVH took the servant of YHVH 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 YHVH), 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 (the bride to be) by Eliezer (the Holy Spirit), represented Rebekah’s half-shekel offering to YHVH 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, one for each arm, 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 YHVH, which will later be inscribed on the heart of the Bride of the Messiah (Genesis 24:22).

Eliezer asked, “Whose daughter are you?” Rebekah revealed her identity to Eliezer and confirmed 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 YHVH.

*Straw* is *teben* (Strong's # 1129/ TWOT 2493 from TWOT 255), Hebrew for: to build, rebuild, establish, pattern and build up as in construction. The idiomatic meaning is to bring about/ increase in offspring. YHVH is the builder. Through Rebekah's offspring would come the whole House of Israel.

*Fodder* is *mispo* (Strong's # 4554) from the Hebrew root meaning feed for animals. Animals in the Bible often symbolize people. In her father's house were straw and feed, representing how in *YHVH's House* there is feed for *His* people. The feed is the teaching and instruction of YHVH. This food 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 first, before looking after his own needs. Rebekah's father and brother confirmed that she could go with Eliezer to be a wife to Isaac as YHVH 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 who walks in obedience to the teaching and instruction of YHVH (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 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 care (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 leave, the family blessed Rebekah, saying to her, "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 Erev Shabbat over the daughters as a blessing.

### **Genesis 24:62-67 A Bride For Isaac**

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 (John 14:2). For I tell you, you will not see me again until you

say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of YHVH' ” (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 #7742/ TWOT 2255 meaning he went out to grow and develop, pray, express his thoughts, and experience spiritual growth). When he looked up, he saw camels approaching. 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 will 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, one might say, has covered the heart of the Bride. This unveiling happens when the bride draws close to the Bridegroom. Hearts that are circumcised at the lifting of the veil will be delivered from all that previously hindered the Bride's love for her Bridegroom.

The servant reported to Isaac everything that took place foregoing the completion of his assignment (Genesis 24:66). The Ruach HaKodesh/Holy Spirit will deliver the Bride to her Bridegroom. The Bride will be found scattered among the nations. She is one who has crossed over. She is not recognized among the peoples of the foreign lands she inhabits but has not gone unnoticed by YHVH. He sends for her. She is the one who has made herself ready in the Wilderness. The Bride will be drawn from the body of believers. She has kept the Word of YHVH in her heart and walked faithfully in His ways being obedient to His instructions. The Spirit of YHVH woos her from 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 Sarah, the matriarch of the family. Isaac invited Rebekah to be his equal by bringing her into the tent of Sarah and marrying her. In doing this, she inherited the blessing YHVH 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). In marrying Isaac, Rebekah inherited the honored position of becoming the mother of myriads of descendants. Isaac found great consolation in this and was comforted after his mother's death. Rebekah became his wife and Isaac loved her.

### **Genesis 25 Abraham Dies**

Abraham lived thirty-five more years after Isaac married Rebekah and took another wife, Keturah, who provided him with six more sons. The Midianites are from her offspring. When Abraham died, everything was left to Isaac, as he was his only son, the son of the promise. Abraham gave gifts to all his children but only one, Isaac, received the birthright inheritance. The seed of Isaac retains the Covenant and the birthright. 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 Ishmael. He 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.

Shabbat Shalom  
Carl and Julie Parker

**Reference:**

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*Sheepfold Gleanings* written by Carl and Julie Parker

*Mail:* 6655 Royal Avenue; P.O. Box 94014; West Vancouver, BC; V7W 2B0 CANADA

*Website:* [www.sheepfoldgleanings.com](http://www.sheepfoldgleanings.com)

*Email:* [sheephear@yahoo.ca](mailto:sheephear@yahoo.ca)

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