

Parashat Chayei Sarah

פרשת חיי שרה

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32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d

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Being honest by remembering God's covenant

שבועות / This Week's Reading

תורה: Genesis 23:1-25:18

הפטרה: 1 Ki 1:1-31

הברית: Matthwe 1:1-17

החדשה: 1 Corinthians 15:50-57

In this week's reading from the Triennial cycle (*Bereshit / Genesis 23:1-24:9*) in Parashat Chayei Sarah (life of Sarah), there are two very important observations on the life of Avraham, (i) Avraham's dealing with the Hittites to purchase a piece of land in order to bury his wife Sarah, and (ii) that Avraham did not forget the covenant he had made with God. What can we learn about Avraham, his character and relationship with the Lord? How can we apply these things to our lives as believers in Yeshua the Messiah? In this week's study we will look at the importance of being honest and remembering the covenant God made with us in Yeshua the Messiah.

The first thing that jumped out at me while reading from this week's portion of scriptures was in *Bereshit / Genesis 23:12 And Abraham bowed before the people of the land. 23:13 He spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, 'If you will only please listen to me; I will give the price of the field, accept it from me that I may bury my dead there.'* (NASB)

בראשית 23:10-13

10 קָבַר: וְעֶפְרוֹן יָשָׁב בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי־חֵת וַיַּעַן עֶפְרוֹן הַחִתִּי
אֶת־אַבְרָהָם בְּאָזְנוֹ בְּנֵי־חֵת לְכֹל בָּאֵי שְׂעָרֵי־רוֹ לֵאמֹר:
11 לֹא־אֲדַנִּי שְׂמֵעֵנִי הַשָּׂדֶה נְתַתִּי לָךְ וְהַמְעָרָה אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ
לָךְ נְתַתִּיהָ לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי־עַמִּי נְתַתִּיהָ לָךְ קִבֵּר מֵתָךְ:
12 וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַבְרָהָם לִפְנֵי עַם־הָאָרֶץ: וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל־עֶפְרוֹן
13 בְּאָזְנוֹ עַם־הָאָרֶץ לֵאמֹר אֵךְ אִם־אֲתָתָהּ לוֹ שְׂמֵעֵנִי נְתַתִּי
14 כֶּסֶף הַשָּׂדֶה קַח מִמֶּנִּי וְאִקְבְּרָה אֶת־מֵתִי שָׁמָּה: וַיַּעַן

Bereshit / Genesis 23:10-13

23:10 Now Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the sons of Heth; even of all who went in at the gate of his city, saying, 23:11 'No, my lord, hear me; I give you the field, and I give you the cave that is in it. In the presence of the sons of my people I give it to you; bury your dead.' 23:12 And Abraham bowed before the people of the land. 23:13 He spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, 'If you will only please listen to me; I will give the price of the field, accept it from me that I may bury my dead there.' (NASB)

Avraham behaved righteously while dealing with the Hittite people to purchase the land. He paid the asking price. Now there is nothing wrong with looking for the best price or deal when making a purchase of some property or item, but have

35 you ever tried to cheat a little to get something at an even lower price? As
believers, we should follow the example of Avraham; we need to be honest,
honorable, and righteous with people when handling money. For example, there
is a church in Ohio that rents a building to hold their services (I won't mention
names). Before renting the building, the church leaders had an agreement with
the property owner that the parking lot would be repaired. Unfortunately, the
property owner is not holding up his end of the agreement and the parking lot is
not being repaired. As a result, the church leaders felt it is not necessary to pay
40 the rent since this agreement is not being kept by the owner. The church is
essentially squatting on the property by not paying the rent. This is a very
dishonest thing to do, the church is essentially stealing from the property owner
and I was shocked to learn how an entire church is not paying rent on the building
their services are being conducted in. This kind of behavior is not honest,
45 honorable, or righteous in any way. As a result, their testimony and witness for
Yeshua has become ineffective, they could have learned a lot from Avraham.

Avraham was a righteous man; righteousness refers to an important
theological concept. It is an attribute that implies that a person's actions are
justified and can have the connotation that a person has been "judged" or
50 "reckoned" as leading a life that is pleasing to God. Avraham understood his
relationship with God and realized that God is watching, reckoning his life.
Avraham lived righteously and God rewarded him according to *Bereshit / Genesis
24:1-9. (24:1 Now Abraham was old, advanced in age; and the Lord had blessed
Abraham in every way. (NASB))* If you were to take an account of your life
55 would your life be characterized as pleasing to God like Avraham?

In the second part of the reading from the Triennial Cycle, Avraham is
asking his servant to return to the land of his birth to find a wife for his son
Yitzchak (Isaac). He also warned not to take his son back there. *Bereshit /
Genesis 24:6-10 24:6 Then Abraham said to him, 'Beware that you do not take
60 my son back there! 24:7 'The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my
father's house and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me and who swore
to me, saying, 'To your descendants I will give this land,' He will send His angel
before you, and you will take a wife for my son from there. 24:8 'But if the
woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this my oath; only
65 do not take my son back there.' 24:9 So the servant placed his hand under the
thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter. (NASB)*
The reason Avraham did not want his son to return to the land of his birth was
because Avraham had not forgotten the covenant he had made with God and the
importance of remaining in the Promised Land God was giving his children.
70 Avraham lived his life by faith and it was counted as righteousness before God.
Earlier I asked that if you were to take an account of your life would it be
considered acceptable before God. During the Apostle Paul's exhortation to the
Corinthians on pride in *2 Corinthians* chapter 10 on pride, Paul says *10:18 For it
is not he who commends himself that is approved, but he whom the Lord
75 commends. (NASB)* This passage indicates that the standard we use to compare
ourselves matters. Whose standard are you using when taking an account of your
life? God's standard according to the Bible or man's standard based upon
personal opinion?

בראשית 24:1-9

כד לאחותי קבר מאת בני חת: ואברהם ׀
 2 וקן בא בימים ויהוה ברכו את אברהם בכל: ויאמר
 אברהם אל עבדו וקן ביתו המשל בכל אשר לו
 3 שים נא ידך תחת ירכי: ואשביעך ביהוה אלהי
 השמים ואלהי הארץ אשר לא תקח אשה לבני מבנות
 4 הכנעני אשר אנכי יושב בקרבן: כי אל ארצי ואל
 5 מולדתי תקח ולקחת אשה לבני ליצחק: ויאמר אליו
 העבד אולי לא תאבה האשה ללכת אחרי אלהארץ
 הזאת ההשב אשוב את בנך אלהארץ אשר יצאת
 6 משם: ויאמר אליו אברהם השמר לך פן תשיב את
 7 בני שמה: יהוה ואלהי השמים אשר לקחני מבית
 אבי ומארץ מולדתי ואשר דבר לי ואשר נשבע לי
 לאמר לירעך אתן את הארץ הזאת הוא ישלח מלאכו
 8 לפניך ולקחת אשה לבני משם: ואם לא תאבה האשה
 ללכת אחריך ונפית משבעתי זאת רק את בני לא
 9 תשב שמה: וישם העבד את ידו תחת ירך אברהם
 10 אדניו וישבע לו על הדבר הזה: ויקח העבד עשרה

Bereshit / Genesis 24:1-9

24:1 Now Abraham was old, advanced in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in every way.
 24:2 Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he owned, 'Please place your hand under my thigh, 24:3 and I will make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live, 24:4 but you will go to my country and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son Isaac.' 24:5 The servant said to him, 'Suppose the woman is not willing to follow me to this land; should I take your son back to the land from where you came?' 24:6 Then Abraham said to him, 'Beware that you do not take my son back there! 24:7 'The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me and who swore to me, saying, 'To your descendants I will give this land,' He will send His angel before you, and you will take a wife for my son from there. 24:8 'But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this my oath; only do not take my son back there.' 24:9 So the servant placed his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter. (NASB)

85 According to man's standards, we judge ourselves by how we look, how smart we are, and how successful we deem ourselves. The point Paul is making is that we cannot be too careful when choosing the standard by which we judge ourselves especially in the area of our walk with the Lord. Paul says in *2 Corinthians 3:15* *But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; 3:16 but*
 90 *whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit. (NASB)* The manner in which we walk should be a consistent turning to the Lord and living by faith. Paul uses the imagery from the Torah on the veil of Moshe to contrast the differences, to the Corinthian people, on the cultural values in Corinth, the belief that eloquent speech and man's wisdom was what matters the most versus a biblical way of living. The issue for us today is that dishonesty and pride are the consequences of forgetting the covenant God made with us in Yeshua. Take the church that felt that they do not need to pay their rent based on man's wisdom. Their action boasts of their attitude of superiority and the lack of a humble and contrite spirit.
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105 The criticism that Paul gives to the believers in Corinth suggests that the
people had been deceived, and in fact they have deceived themselves by judging
themselves according to false worldly standards. Paul realized the erroneous
conclusions the believers had made and stated that they were not wise but fools (*2
Corinthians 12:11 I have become foolish; you yourselves compelled me . . .
NASB*). This is why Paul wrote that if they thought themselves to be wise they
110 needed to cling more closely to the foolish message of the cross and to Yeshua the
Messiah.

In this week's study we learned that Avraham remembered the covenant
he made with God which resulted in him living a righteous life before the Lord.
How Avraham approached life was based upon how he understood God working
on his behalf, which had a profound effect on his thinking and the way he
115 perceived God to work in his salvation. This kept Avraham on the straight and
narrow path of living righteously before God. Today there seems to be an attempt
to narrow down our theology to its simplest form and ignore the greater spectrum
of the entire Bible. Take for example God's grace gives salvation by faith to the
man who believes that Yeshua died and rose from the grave. The giving of
120 salvation contains many aspects of the work of God where God convicts, teaches,
strengthens, enlightens, and reveals himself to us. Some of the ways God works
in our lives may not be salvific in nature but are transformational in nature none
the less. All of these things are contained in the covenant relationship God has
made with us in Yeshua's blood. The covenant relationship Avraham had with
125 God was also salvific and transformational. Avraham demonstrated a humble
heart by the way he approached the Hittite people, *Bereshit / Genesis 23:12 And
Abraham bowed before the people of the land. (NASB)* The way Avraham
humbly approaches the Hittite people suggests that the covenant he made with
God was transformational. Avraham believed God and it was counted
130 righteousness to him. Do you believe God? Do you believe the Scriptures? Do
you believe that God has made a covenant with you by the faith in Yeshua the
Messiah? Has your life had a "transformational" aspect with respect to the way
you lived prior to believing in Yeshua the Messiah?

135
140
145 Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever