



## ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY

RABBI REUVEN TRADBURKS  
RCA ISRAEL REGION

In memory of **Evelyn Rivers a"h**  
חיה פעסא בת אהרן זלמן הכהן ע"ה  
Mother of Reuven Tradburks

### CHAYEI SARA

Our Parsha is the transition from Avraham and Sarah to Yitzchak and Rivka; Sarah dies at the beginning of the parsha, Avraham toward the end. Avraham buys Maarat Hamachpela where Sarah is buried. Avraham directs his servant to travel to Avraham's Land to bring a wife for Yitzchak. Upon arrival, the servant asks G-d to show him the right one, the one who will give drink to he and his animals. Rivka appears, does what he had hoped. He tells the story to her family. They agree that she is the one. Yitzchak greets them on their arrival and marries Rivka. Avraham's other children are listed. Avraham dies. Yishmael's descendants are listed.



#### 1ST ALIYA (23:1-16)

Sarah dies at age 127 in Kiryat Arba, Chevron. Avraham needs to buy a burial plot. He is treated with nobility and respect. The people want to give him a plot, while he insists on purchasing it. He is successful in buying Maarat Hamachpela.

Avraham is treated like a king. It appears that the entire city has come to comfort him in Sarah's death. The people bow to him and he to them.

Avraham was given 3 promises in Lech Lecha when he was told to journey to the Land of Israel: fame, fortune and family. All

have been granted. He clearly is famous. He has great wealth. And Yitzchak has been born.

The conspicuous exception is the 4th promise, repeated numerous times, that he would inherit the Land of Israel. He does not even have a place to bury Sarah.

Avraham says to the people, "I am a ger v'toshav, a foreigner albeit a resident". This is taken as a rich description of the persistent state of the Jew – we are never fully at home in exile, we are always foreigners, even in our home country.

However, the simply meaning of this statement is Avraham's explanation to the people as to why he has no burial plot. Burial was done by family. People would be buried and then their bones would be gathered to a family crypt.

But, Avraham says, I am not from here. I have no family crypt. We are just getting started in this Land; this is the first death in the family. So, I need a place that will become our family crypt.

This is an expression of Avraham's confidence in that fourth promise. Although Sarah has died with that promise of the Land unfulfilled. And I most likely will also die with the promise of the Land unfulfilled, knowing the prophecy that my children will be strangers in a strange Land. But, nonetheless, I want to express the confidence that this is the beginning of a long presence of my family in the Land. I have confidence in that Divine promise that we will be here for

a long time. So, I want a permanent burial site for my family.

Avraham insists on paying full price. This is not the first time he has refused gifts; he refused gifts from the King of Sodom when he rescued Lot.

What a lesson to the famous. Fame (and power) does not give license to gifts. There is no free lunch. This gift will come with some reciprocity or other. No. Not for me, says Avraham. I am not beholden to anyone.



### 2ND ALIYA (23:17-24:9)

Sarah is buried. Avraham requests from his chief of staff to swear to not have Yitzchak marry a Canaanite. Rather, “go to my Land, my birthplace” to find a wife for Yitzchak. Do not take Yitzchak there. If she refuses to come, you have done all you can.

These are the last words of Avraham in the Torah. Though he will live many more years, we do not hear anything else from him. And as such, it serves as a poetic bookend. The first thing said by G-d to him: go from your Land, your birthplace. And the last thing said by Avraham to his servant: go to my Land, my birthplace to find a wife for Yitzchak.

Avraham is insistent that Yitzchak’s wife not be from the people of the Land. This may be, as in his insistence to pay full price to Efron, in order to avoid any confusion that the future settling of the Land of Israel by the Jewish people is due to some marriage of power. By marrying some woman of the Land, Yitzchak will gain influence in the Land. No. The Jewish people will possess the Land of Israel exclusively by Divine fiat.

Avraham seeks a woman who will need to leave her Land and her birthplace and come here. She will walk in my footsteps.

Following in the footsteps will animate Yitzchak and Rivka’s life. Yitzchak will do many of the things that Avraham did – digging the wells, going to Gerar. Rivka will walk in the footsteps of Sarah; Sarah sent Yishmael away, Rivka will in effect cause Esau to be sent away from the Jewish people.

Perhaps Avraham insists on choosing a wife for Yitzchak who not only follows in their footsteps in journeying to the Land, but experiences the experience of upheaval that moving to a new place entail.

All of the Torah is the story of moving to the Land of Israel from elsewhere. Avraham and Sarah journey to the Land. Rivka too. Yaakov leaves the Land, returning with his entire family, all newcomers to the Land. And the entire Jewish people leave Egypt to journey to the Land.

Journey to the Land is the story of the Torah. Except for Yitzchak. Yitzchak is the sole figure in the Torah to be born in and never leave Israel.



### 3RD ALIYA (24:10-26)

The servant arrives in Nachor’s city. He asks G-d for a sign; the woman who gives me and my camels to drink, she is the one. Rivka appears and does just that. She tells him she is from the family of

**BROTHERS  
MOVING CO.**

**THE STRONGEST... THE MOST GENTLE**

054-216-0087 • brothersmovingisrael@gmail.com

Nachor. And there is food for the camels and room for him to stay. The man bows to G-d.

Rivka is not only going to walk in Sarah's footsteps, leaving her home to go to the Land of Israel. She also follows in the footsteps of kindness. In the story of Avraham and Sarah's generosity to the 3 men at the beginning of Vayera, there are 2 "ratz – run" and 2 "maher – fast"; they served their guests enthusiastically. Rivka has 2 *maher's* and 1 *ratz* here and then another when she runs home.

And – Avraham offered his guests "a little water". Here too the servant asks for "a little water". Not sure that drawing water for 10 camels would be called a little – a camel can drink up to 100 liters. And she is drawing the water with the jug that she carries on her shoulder. But nary a peep of objection from Rivka. She is an enthusiastic and magnanimous woman of enormous generosity, just like the family of Avraham.



#### 4TH ALIYA (24:27-52)

Rivka runs to tell her mother. Her brother Lavan greets the man, welcomes him in. But before he eats, the man insists on relating what just happened. He relates that he is Avraham's servant. And that Avraham has been blessed. And is insistent on bringing a wife for Yitzchak from his family. And of his own deal with G-d: that if the woman did as he had said, he would see it as a sign. And his bowing to G-d. He finishes



**HANDYMAN**  
Repairs • Painting • Electricity  
Plumbing  
Jerusalem & surrounding areas  
058-799-7833

by asking them if Rivka shall join him. They respond yes; he bows to G-d.

This long narrative has many lessons. But one thing does jump out: the G-d talk. There is a lot of G-d talk by this servant. But not just the servant; Lavan and Betuel respond "this has come from G-d", "she will go as G-d spoke".

Perhaps this is one reason for this very long recounting of the story. Rivka is stepping into a story of Divine partnership. She is stepping into the Jewish story. The Jewish story is the story of walking as partners with G-d, guided by Him. She has to know this. And want it.



#### 5TH ALIYA (24:53-67)

The servant is ready to leave.

When Rivka's mother and brother ask for a little more time, the servant presses them. They ask Rivka her wish; she will go. They bless her. Upon their arrival in the Negev, Yitzchak is coming from Beer L'chai Roi. He sees the camels; she sees him. Yitzchak is told of all that occurred. Yitzchak and Rivka marry.

With the mission to find a wife for Yitzchak successful, someone is missing from this return: Avraham. They travel right to Yitzchak. Rivka and he marry. And Avraham is not heard from again. A true passing of the baton.

Why is it necessary to tell us Yitzchak was in Beer L'chai Roi? In fact, he returns there and resides there after Avraham's death. Why?

That is the place where Yishmael was saved from near death after being banished by Sarah and the place in which Yishmael settles. Perhaps Yitzchak regrets Yishmael's banishment and seeks to make peace with his brother. We will see that he does the same

later with his own sons; he seems to want both Yaakov and Esav to continue his legacy.

Yitzchak is the reconciler, the includer.

The men seem to want reconciliation; the women see the need to exclude when excluding is necessary. Sarah banishes Yishmael. Rivka banishes Esav.

Yet, Avraham is reluctant to send Yishmael away and Yitzchak seeks reconciliation with Yishmael and seeks to bless Esav.

The women prevail. The Torah sides with the women; Yitzchak and not Yishmael, Yaakov and not Esav are the forefathers, the bearers of the legacy of Avraham.



#### 6TH ALIYA (25:1-11)

Avraham marries Keturah; they have 6 sons. All that Avraham has he gives to Yitzchak; these are sent eastward with gifts. Avraham dies at age 175; he is buried by Yitzchak and Yishmael in Maarat Hamachpelah. Yitzchak is blessed by G-d: he lives in Beer L'chai Roi.

The transition from Avraham to Yitzchak is complete. While G-d has been a silent partner in this parsha, here He completes the generational transfer – He blesses Yitzchak. The Jewish people receive the Divine blessing; Yitzchak and not Yishmael.



#### 7TH ALIYA (25:12-18)

The generations of Yishmael are enumerated. Yishmael dies. His progeny dwell from Egypt to Assyria.

Yishmael's story is brief. He has numerous and powerful offspring. But the genealogy here is intriguing. The last aliya last week enumerated Nachor's children: 12. This last aliya this week enumerates Yishmael's children: 12. In a few weeks we will enumerate Yaakov's. 12.

Perhaps, this nags at Yaakov. Why am I

following in the footsteps of those excluded from the Jewish people? Nachor had 12 children and was excluded from the Jewish people. Yishmael had 12 children and was excluded from the Jewish people. I have 12. Shall I choose just one, Yosef, and exclude the others, so I won't be amongst the excluded?

---

## 1 MELACHIM 1: 1-31

---

The theme of this week's *haftorah* echoes the theme in our parsha which mentions both the death of Sarah and Avraham.

King David was an older man and a woman was assigned to him to serve him and provide warmth.

Adoniyahu, one of King David's sons, began to prepare for ascension to his father's throne. This was despite the fact that King David expressed his wishes that his son Shlomo succeed him.

Adoniyahu convinces two very significant personalities - the High Priest and the commander of King David's armies - to champion his cause.

Adoniyahu arranged to be transported in a chariot with fifty people running before him. He then invited supporters to a festive party to promote his aspirations to attain the royalty.

At this time Natan communicates with Bat-sheva, mother of Shlomo, and conveys to her the importance of approaching King David and pleading with him that he articulate his choice of Shlomo to be the next king.

King David responds positively to this request. He says the following: "Indeed, as I swore to you by the Lord God of Israel saying, 'Surely Shlomo, your son, shall reign after me and he shall sit on my throne in my stead, surely, so will I swear this day.'" ■