

**Beresheit 23:1-2 Avraham Cries for Sarah and
Beresheit 23:19-20 – Avraham Buries Sarah in Hevron**

Sarah's lifetime—the span of Sarah's life—came to one hundred and twenty-seven years. Sarah died in Kiryat Arba—now Hebron—in the land of Canaan; and Abraham came **to eulogize Sarah and to bewail her....**

...And then Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave of the field of Machpelah, facing Mamre—now Hebron—in the land of Canaan. Thus the field with its cave passed from the Hittites to Abraham, as a burial site.

וַיְהִי־תַיִי שָׁרָה מָאָה שָׁנָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנִים שָׁנֵי תַיִי שָׁרָה: וַתָּמָת שָׁרָה בְּקִרְיַת אַרְבַּע הוּא חֶבְרוֹן בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיְבֹא אַבְרָהָם לִסְפֹּד לְשָׂרָה וּלְבַכְתָּהּ:

וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן קָבַר אַבְרָהָם אֶת־שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ אֶל־מְעֵרַת שְׂדֵה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה עַל־פְּנֵי מַמְרֵה הוּא חֶבְרוֹן בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: וַיָּקָם הַשְּׂדֵה וְהַמְעֵרָה אֲשֶׁר־בוֹ לְאַבְרָהָם לְאַחֲזֹת־קֶבֶר מֵאֵת בְּנֵי־חֵת:

Beresheit 25:9-10 Avraham Buried with Sarah

And Abraham breathed his last, dying at a good ripe age, old and contented; and he was gathered to his kin.

His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, facing Mamre, the field that Abraham had bought from the Hittites; **there Abraham was buried, and Sarah his wife.**

וַיָּגוּעַ וַיָּמָת אַבְרָהָם בְּשִׂיבָה טוֹבָה זָקֵן וְשִׂבְעַת וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמּוּיוֹ:

וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אֹתוֹ יִצְחָק וְיִשְׁמַעֵאל בְּנָיו אֶל־מְעֵרַת הַמַּכְפֵּלָה אֶל־שְׂדֵה עֶפְרוֹן בֶּן־צֹהַר הַחִתִּי אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי מַמְרֵה: הַשְּׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר־קָנָה אַבְרָהָם מֵאֵת בְּנֵי־חֵת שְׁמָה קָבַר אַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ:

Beresheit 12:2 Be a Blessing - a catalyst for ethical and spiritual change

The LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you.

I will make of you a great nation, And I will bless you; I will make your name great, **And you shall be a blessing.**

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם לֶךְ־לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ:

וְאֶעֱשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָדוֹל וְאַבְרַכְךָ וְאֶגְדְּלֶה שְׁמֶךָ וְהָיָה בְרָכָה:

Beresheit 24:6-8 – Avraham's Warnings and Blessing to Eliezer

And the servant said to him, "What if the woman does not consent to follow me to this land, shall I then take your son back to the land from which you came?" Abraham answered him, "**On no account must you take my son back there!**

The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from my native land, who promised me on oath, saying, 'I will assign this land to your offspring'—May He send His angel before you, and you will get a wife for my son from there.

And if the woman does not consent to follow you, you shall then be clear of this oath to me; but **do not take my son back there.**"

ה וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹיו, הַעֲבָד, אוֹלֵי לֹא־תֵאבְדָה הָאִשָּׁה, לְלָקֵת אַחֲרַי אֶל־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת; הַהֲשִׁיב אֲשִׁיב אֶת־בְּנִי, אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יָצֵאתָ מִשָּׁם. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹיו, אַבְרָהָם: הַשְׁמֵר לְךָ, פֶּן־תִּשְׁיֵב אֶת־בְּנִי שָׁמָּה .

ז יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם, אֲשֶׁר לָקַחְנִי מִבֵּית אָבִי וּמֵאֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתִּי, וְאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לִי וְאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע־לִי לֵאמֹר, לְזַרְעֲךָ אֶתֶּן אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת--הוּא, יִשְׁלַח מַלְאָכוֹ לְפָנֶיךָ, וְלָקַחְתָּ אִשָּׁה לְבְנִי, מִשָּׁם .

ח וְאִם לֹא תֵאבְדָה הָאִשָּׁה, לְלָקֵת אַחֲרַיךָ-- וְנִקִּיתָ, מִשְׁבַּעְתִּי זֹאת; רַק אֶת־בְּנִי, לֹא תִשְׁבַּח שָׁמָּה .

Beresheit 24:10-20 - Rivka's Empathy and Extreme Kindness

<p>Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and set out, taking with him all the bounty of his master; and he made his way to Aram-naharaim, to the city of Nahor.</p>	<p>וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד עֶשְׂרֵה גַמְלִים מִגְּמָלָי אֲדֹנָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ וְכָל-טוֹב אֲדֹנָיו בְּיָדוֹ וַיֵּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-אַרְם נְהָרַיִם אֶל-עִיר נְחוֹר:</p>
<p>He made the camels kneel down by the well outside the city, at evening time, the time when women come out to draw water.</p>	<p>וַיִּבְרַךְ הַגַּמְלִים מִחוּץ לְעֵיר אֶל-בְּאֵר הַמַּיִם לַעֵת עָרֵב לַעֵת צֵאת הַשָּׂאֲבֹת:</p>
<p>And he said, "O LORD, God of my master Abraham, grant me good fortune this day, and deal graciously with my master Abraham: Here I stand by the spring as the daughters of the townsmen come out to draw water; let the maiden to whom I say, 'Please, lower your jar that I may drink,' and who replies, 'Drink, and I will also water your camels'—let her be the one whom You have decreed for Your servant Isaac. Thereby shall I know that You have dealt graciously with my master."</p>	<p>וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲדֹנָי אֲבְרָהָם הַקָּרֵה-נָא לְפָנָי הַיּוֹם וַעֲשֵׂה-חֶסֶד עִם אֲדֹנָי אֲבְרָהָם: הֲגֵה אֲנֹכִי נָצֵב עַל-עֵין הַמַּיִם וּבְנוֹת אַנְשֵׁי הָעִיר יֵצְאֹת לְשָׂאֵב מַיִם:</p>
<p>He had scarcely finished speaking, when Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, the son of Milcah the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor, came out with her jar on her shoulder.</p>	<p>וְהִיא הַנְּעֻרָה אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֵלָיָה הַטִּי-נָא כַדָּךְ וְאֲשִׁתָּה וְאִמָּתָה שְׂתֵה וְגַם-גְּמְלֶיךָ אֲשַׁקֶּה אֹתָהּ הַלַּחֲתָ לְעֶבְדְּךָ לְיִצְחָק וְכֵּן אֲדַע כִּי-עָשִׂיתָ חֶסֶד עִם-אֲדֹנָי:</p>
<p>The maiden was very beautiful, a virgin whom no man had known. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and came up. The servant ran toward her and said, "Please, let me sip a little water from your jar."</p>	<p>וַיְהִי-הוּא טָרֵם כְּלָה לְדַבֵּר וְהִנֵּה רִבְקָה יֹצֵאת אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה לְבִתְוָאֵל בֶּן-מִלְכָּה אִשְׁתֵּי נְחוֹר אַחֵי אֲבְרָהָם וְכֵדָה עַל-שִׁכְמָה:</p>
<p>"Drink, my lord," she said, and she quickly lowered her jar upon her hand and let him drink. When she had let him drink his fill, she said, "I will also draw for your camels, until they finish drinking." Quickly emptying her jar into the trough, she ran back to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels.</p>	<p>וְהַנְּעֻרָה טִבַּת מְרֹאֶה מְאֹד בְּתוּלָהּ וְאִישׁ לֹא יָדָעָה וַתֵּרֶד הָעֵינָה וַתִּמְלֵא כַדָּהּ וַתַּעַל: וַיֵּרֶץ הָעֶבֶד לְקִרְאתָהּ וַיֹּאמֶר הַגְּמִיאֵינִי גַּא מֵעֵט-מַיִם מִכַּדְּךָ:</p> <p>וַתֹּאמֶר שְׂתֵה אֲדֹנָי וַתִּמְהַר וַתֵּרֶד כַּדָּהּ עַל-יָדָהּ וַתִּשְׁקֶהוּ: וַתְּכַל לְהַשְׁקִתוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר גַּם לְגְמְלֶיךָ אֲשַׁאֲבַ עַד אִם-כָּלוּ לְשִׁתָּת:</p> <p>וַתִּמְהַר וַתַּעַר כַּדָּהּ אֶל-הַשִּׁקָּת וַתֵּרֶץ עוֹד אֶל-הַבְּאֵר לְשָׂאֵב וַתִּשְׁאֲבַ לְכָל-גְּמְלָיו:</p>

Beresheit 24:67

<p>Isaac then brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he took Rebekah as his wife. Isaac then loved her, and thus found comfort after his mother's death.</p>	<p>וַיְבִיאָה יִצְחָק הָאֵלֶּהּ שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת-רִבְקָה וַתְּהִי-לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיֵּאֱהָבָהּ וַיִּנְחַם יִצְחָק אַחֲרֵי אִמּוֹ:</p>
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Beresheit 24:16 and Beresheit Raba

<p>The maiden was very beautiful, a virgin whom no man had known. Resh Lakish said: Because the daughters of idolaters would guard their feminine virginity but would not guard themselves from other sexual acts, but this one was an actual virgin and also no</p>	<p>הַנְּעֻרָה טִבַּת מְרֹאֶה מְאֹד בְּתוּלָהּ וְאִישׁ לֹא יָדָעָה... אָמַר רִישׁ לְקִישׁ לְפִי שְׂבֻנוֹתַן שֶׁל עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים מְשַׁמְרוֹת עֲצָמָן מִמְּקוֹם עָרוֹתַן וּמִמְּקוֹרוֹת עֲצָמָן מִמְּקוֹם אַחֵר, אָבַל זֹאת בְּתוּלָה מִמְּקוֹם בְּתוּלִים, וְאִישׁ לֹא יָדָעָה,</p>
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man was intimate with her in other sexual acts...	ממקום אחר...
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Midrash Shir Hashirim Raba 2:2 - Rivka – Rose Among the Thorns

<p>As a rose among the thorns so is my love among the maidens (daughters) (Song of Songs 2:2). Rabbi Yitzchak applied this reading to Rebekah, as it is said: "And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Betuel, the Aramean, from Paddan Aram, the sister of Laban, the Aramean (Genesis 25:20)". If it wants to teach that she was from Paddan Aram, why does the text say "sister of Laban the Aramean"? Rather, it is to tell us that her father was a trickster, her brother was a tricksters and the inhabitants of that place were tricksters and that this righteous one came from their midst. To what can she be compared? "Like a rose among the thorns".</p>	<p>רבי יצחק פתר קרא. כשושנה בין החוחים ברבקה, דכתיב רבקה בת בתואל הארמי מפרן ארם אחות לבן הארמי (ר"פ תולדות) אביה רמאי ואנשי מקומה רמאין^ט הארמים והצדקת. ידועים הם לרמאים עד היום הזה הזאת יצאה מביניהם, למה היא דומה, לשושנה בין החוחים^ז ר"ל כי במקום שמתגדלין חוחים שם האדמה איננה מוכשרת לגדל שושנים, ולכן אם נמצא שושנה גדילה בין חוחים הוא דבר פלא. כך המקום והבית שנוודה ונתגדלה רבקה לא היה מסוגל כלל שתתגדל בצדקתה, ואעפ"כ כך נתגדלה, ולכן היא דומה לשושנה בין החוחים...</p>
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Beresheit Raba 60:16 – Yitzhak marries Rivka and (then) Loves her

<p>Isaac then brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah... And Isaac brought her into the tent of Sarah, his mother-" All the days that Sarah was alive, a cloud was connected (lit. tied) to the entrance of her tent. When she died, the cloud stopped [resting at her tent.] And when Rebecca came, the cloud returned. All the days that Sarah was alive, the doors were open wide. When she died, the wideness stopped. And when Rebecca came, the wideness returned. And all the days that Sarah was alive, there was a blessing in her dough, and when Sarah died, that blessing ended. When Rebecca came, [the blessing] returned. All the days that Sarah was alive, there was a candle that would burn from Sabbath Eve to [the next] Sabbath Eve, and when she died, the candle stopped [burning for so long]. And when Rebecca came, [the week-long flame of the candle] returned.</p>	<p>ויבאה יצחק האהלה שרה אמו ...</p> <p>כל ימים שהיתה שרה קיימת היה ענן קשור על פתח אהלה, כיון שמתה פסק אותו ענן, וכיון שבאת רבקה חזר אותו ענן. כל ימים שהיתה שרה קיימת היו דלתות פתוחות לרוחה, וכיון שמתה שרה פסקה אותה הרוחה, וכיון שבאת רבקה חזרה אותה הרוחה. וכל ימים שהיתה שרה קיימת היה ברכה משלחת בעסה, וכיון שמתה שרה פסקה אותה הברכה, כיון שבאת רבקה חזרה. כל ימים שהיתה שרה קיימת היה נר דולק מלילי שבת ועד לילי שבת, וכיון שמתה פסק אותו הנר, וכיון שבאת רבקה חזר.</p>
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ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES of RIVKA's EVOLVING CONVICTION and PURPOSE

<p>Rivka evolves in the Torah as a person with deep conviction, a person of purpose. She is committed to a very particular vision. She didn't just leave her family to get away from her environment, to just anywhere. She chose Avraham's family.</p> <p>The Torah tells us Rivka was beautiful. But her beauty, as with real beauty, is an external manifestation of an internal beauty, a clarity, an empathy and a sense of purpose.</p>



When she is wrought with despair when she does not get pregnant – she wants a family, it not enough to be with a husband no matter how much he loves her. She wants a future, with children to pass on the values of the family she has chosen, the family of Sarah and Avraham..

She is so dedicated to this vision that she risks losing BOTH her husband (who could have disowned her) and her son YAKOV (who could have died, and who did leave for years on end) by setting Yakov up to receive his father's blessing. While choosing deception over communication is a pretty sure road to devastation in our relationships.

Nevertheless, in this one occasion, Rivka saw the decision as one of absolute necessity in order to preserve the future of the revolution that Avraham and Sarah had begun – going against the permissive and promiscuous, idolatrous and aggressive, often violent culture of the Ancient Near East that she knew. Rivka believed that only Yakov would be able to pull off the challenge of living with ethical monotheistic values that would eventually shape a new world culture.

For Reflection with a Friend:

What are the foundational values you share, or would like to share with your life partner?

Share a moment where you stood by your convictions and challenged your partner.

Share an example of empathy from your own life. When have you experienced an extraordinary – or simple – act of empathy and kindness in a way that impacted your life?

What small act of empathy and kindness have you done or can you do for your partner today?