

Parashat Chaye Sarah

This torah story is called Chayei Sara - the "life of Sarah"- yet it begins not with her life but with her death and how her beloved Abraham purchases the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron as a place to bury her.

Abraham was a good husband and a good father. Abraham wants to make sure that his son Isaac will have a wife to take care of him so he sends Eliezer, his trusted servant to find a wife for Isaac. When Eliezer arrives at his destination, he rests by a well, and there he devises a test to make sure that this woman Rebecca will be a good woman, kind and Sarah-like. Rebecca passes the test and with permission and blessings from her family she is taken to Canaan where she immediately falls in love with Isaac, and they are married.

Years later, we learn that Abraham remarries. The woman he marries is Keturah - some say she was Hagar, the handmaiden. As the story closes, Abraham dies and his two sons, Isaac the son of Sarah and Ishmael, the son of Hagar together bury him in the Cave of Machpelah.

What do we learn from this Torah story? We learn that through Sarah's death, life continues. Sarah was kind, was a good wife and mother. Her husband Abraham made sure that she was buried with a place of honor and that her son Isaac would have a wife that was much like her. As time passed and healing occurred - did Sarah from above ok Abraham to be with Hagar? Abraham's two son's – estranged for many years - together give honor to their father and bury him at that place – the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron. Wow.