



SHABBAT ZEST

Parshat Chayei Sarah 25th Cheshvan 5777

Torah Reading / Haftara:

Artscroll – p.106/1136

Living Torah – p.100/1066

SHABBAT TIMES:

Candle Lighting:
3:39pm

Kabbalat Shabbat
Davening: 6:30pm

Shabbat Morning
Davening: 9:15am

Mincha: After Kiddush

Shabbat Ends 7:54pm

NEXT SHABBAT
TOLDOS

CANDLE LIGHTING
@ 3:34 PM

This week the
Haftorah will be
read by
Rev. Lorraine

Parsha In a Nutshell

Genesis 23:1-25:18

Sarah dies at age 127 and is buried in the Machpelah Cave in Hebron, which Abraham purchases from Ephron the Hittite for four hundred shekels of silver.

Abraham's servant Eliezer is sent, laden with gifts, to Charan, to find a wife for Isaac. At the village well, Eliezer asks G-d for a sign: when the maidens come to the well, he will ask for some water to drink; the woman who will offer to give his camels to drink as well shall be the one destined for his master's son.

Rebecca, the daughter of Abraham's nephew Bethuel, appears at the well and passes the "test." Eliezer is invited to their home, where he repeats the story of the day's events. Rebecca returns with Eliezer to the land of Canaan, where they encounter Isaac praying in the field. Isaac marries Rebecca, loves her, and is comforted over the loss of his mother.

Abraham takes a new wife, Keturah (Hagar), and father's six additional sons, but Isaac is designated as his only heir. Abraham dies at age 175 and is buried beside Sarah by his two eldest sons, Isaac and Ishmael.

Haftorah

I Kings 1:1-31

This week's Haftorah describes an aging King David, echoing this week's Torah reading, which mentions that "Abraham was was old, advanced in days."

King David was aging, and he was perpetually cold. A young maiden, Abishag of Shunam, was recruited to serve and provide warmth for the elderly monarch.

Seeing his father advancing in age, Adoniah, one of King David's sons, seized the opportunity to prepare the ground for his ascension to his father's throne upon the latter's passing -- despite King David's express wishes that his son Solomon succeed him. Adoniah recruited two influential individuals -- the High Priest and the commander of David's armies -- both of whom had fallen out of David's good graces, to champion his cause. He arranged to be transported in a chariot with fifty people running before him, and invited a number of his sympathizers to a festive party where he publicizing his royal ambitions.

The prophet Nathan encouraged Bat Sheva, mother of Solomon, to approach King David and plead with him to reaffirm his choice of Solomon as his successor. This she did, mentioning Adoniah's recent actions of which the king had been unaware. Nathan later joined the Bat Sheva and the king to express support for Bat Sheva's request. King David acceded to their request: "Indeed," he told Bat Sheva, "as I swore to you by the Lord G-d of Israel saying, 'Surely Solomon, your son, shall reign after me and he shall sit on my throne in my stead,' surely, so will I swear this day."

UPCOMING EVENTS

18th December – Chanukah Extravaganza – Loughton Synagogue.

December – Chanukah

Lightings – all 6.30pm

Doughnuts, hot drinks music and entertainment:

24th: Chigwell Green

25th: Buckhurst Hill, Queens Rd

26th: Loughton

28th: Fullwell Cross Roundabout

29th: Bell Hotel, Epping

31st: Gants Hill Roundabout

29th January 2017 - The return of Shir. The fabulous klezmer band are coming back for an encore. Reserve Tickets with the Office now.

Recurring Events

**Cheder OPEN
Mummy and Me**

**Yahrzeits for the coming week
25th Cheshvan to 2nd Kislev:**

28. Gillian Green – Father

28. Colin Wolfryd – Father

29. Mylene Perry – Father

1. Harry Glassar – Mother

1. Kay Osborne – Mother

2. Paul Sugarman – Father

2. Avril Trainis – Mother-in-law

A Little Deeper – The Measure of Life

The title of this week's Torah portion is "Chayei Sarah" - literally the "life of Sarah." Strangely, our parsha does not discuss the life of Sarah, but rather describes her death and burial. The parsha continues this theme and ends with the death of Abraham. If this parsha is all about death, why is it entitled "life"?

Life is like a boat. Typically a boat is christened upon its maiden voyage. We have hopes and expectations that the boat will travel safely and successfully. But what happens many years later when the boat, beaten and weathered, comes back to dock? Where are the cameras, the crowds and the champagne?

Judaism says that is precisely the time for celebration. Because that is when we can evaluate and appreciate the success of the vessel. Which explains why the Torah uses the deaths of Sarah and Abraham to trumpet the great value of their lives.

The growth spurts of a child can be measured in terms of months. For an adult, growth is detected over a period of years. But why should this be so? Just as we would not expect a 10-year-old to be acting as he did at age five, why should a 40-year-old act as he did at age 35?!

In describing Abraham's life, the Torah says: "These are the DAYS of the YEARS of Abraham's life" (Genesis 25:7). The Torah compares days to years to tell us that while the average person's growth can be measured in years, Abraham and Sarah's could be measured in days. They had daily growth spurts. They lived full days.

Sometimes we might think, "I could be growing more, if only my life weren't so difficult." This is a fallacy. Because our greatest growth comes not during the easy times, but in the difficult times. The Talmud says that "all of Sarah's years were equal in goodness." Yet Sarah suffered 90 years of barrenness and was kidnapped twice. Abraham, too, fought wars and was thrown into a fiery furnace.

Yet no matter what happened, Sarah saw every event as an opportunity to learn and to grow. There is no such thing as "standing still." Life is a constant state of entropy. If we're not growing, we're withering.

According to a survey carried out by Nutmeg, an investment management firm in 2014, London commuters spend more time than most other commuters in the country, enduring, on average an hour and 14 minutes travelling each day. That's 18 months, 13,097 hours on the move spanning the duration of ones working life. And what do we have to show for it? That we can recognize every hit song from the '60s and '70s 80s 90s!?! That we've listened to hours and hours of political analysis on LBC, 5 LIVE, talk-radio? Driving and daydreaming is throwing money out the window. Instead, learn something! Set a goal. Learn Hebrew. Go through a series on Jewish history. While eating lunch or while commuting, listen to audio classes. There is no shortage of opportunities, if we truly desire to make it a reality.

The clock is ticking,

Wishing you all a Good Shabbos