

N° 802

November 3, 2018
25 Cheshvan, 5779

Shabbat Shalom Newsletter
Shabbat Chaye Sarah

תִּי שָׁרָה

Genesis 23:1-25:18

NEWS

Let's Pray together
We pray every
week for the Jewish
Friendship Ministry.
I suggest our
partners to pray on
November 3-10, for
Cristiano Silva, who
is the pastor of the
Jewish Adventist
Friendship Ministry
in Florianópolis,
Brazil. Even though
Florianópolis has
a small Jewish
community, the
ministry of this
Jewish-Adventist
congregation is very
well appreciated.
Let's pray for pastor
Cristiano Silva, his
ministry and his
family.

Our Sincere Condolences to the family members, and the Jewish community of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

A Terrible Tragedy in Pittsburgh

As you are no doubt already sadly aware that on October 27, a gunman shouting "All Jews must die!" Opened fire on a Jewish congregation gathered to celebrate Shabbat at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. Media are reporting eleven people dead, multiple more injured in a scene of carnage being described as "horrific." Let's pray for the families and the survivors.

We, the members of the World Jewish-Adventist Friendship Center, wish to convey our sincerest condolences and deep sorrow to the family members, relatives and friends of the Jewish Community of Pittsburgh along with the law enforcement officers who paid the highest price while in the line of duty. We deeply regret that words are so inadequate to bring comfort and healing to broken hearts and wounded communities. And we deplore that words have so much power to incite such acts as violence and hate.

We are against every form of and all ethnic and anti-Semitic hate speech, attacks and/or violence.

We believe that all attacks on and in places of worship are outrages against conscience, faith, humanity and G-d Himself.

We stand firmly in solidarity with all who do not condone the acts of violence perpetrated upon all the victims in the horrific shootings on October 27, 2018, and we affirm our belief that our world needs more bridge-builders and fewer dividing walls between our communities.

In these troubling times we pray that G-d, the Creator of all mankind; the G-d of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob heal our wounded hearts and comfort the broken in spirit. We pray for the Pittsburgh community, in particular the Tree of Life Synagogue community. We pray the Shalom of the Almighty be upon you during this difficult time.

Antisemitism is growing everywhere in the world. Just in the United States of American, 1,986 Anti-Semitic acts have been recorded during the year 2017, when we compare this number to 2016 we see a growth of 57%.

We cannot accept any violation of religious liberty and violence against any religious group. As for the World Jewish Adventist Friendship Center, working to promote friendship and understanding with our Jewish brethren is terrified by this horrific shooting, which is not acceptable at all.

We call each Seventh-day Adventist in the world to stand firm against Antisemitism and to promote love. Antisemitism is a crime against humanity and a sin against G-d. The Hebrew Bible as well as the teaching of Yeshua invite us to love: "Hear O Israel, the L-RD our G-d, the L-RD is one. Love Hashem your G-d with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." And "love your neighbor as yourself. I am Hashem." (Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Leviticus 19:18; Mark 12:29-31). This statement is published in our websites: www.jewishadventist.org and <https://wjafc.globalmissioncenters.org/>

English Edition:
Richard-Amram Elofer

Russian Edition:
Alexandra Obrevko

French Edition:
Sabine Baris

Portuguese Edition:
Carlos Muniz

Dutch Edition:
Hubert Paulleta

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<https://wjafc.globalmissioncenters.org/>

Emails:

English: richard@elofer.com

Russian: sashok_l@mail.ru

French: sabinebaris@gmail.com

Portuguese: cdmuniz@gmail.com

Dutch: hpaulleta@hotmail.com



Richard-Amram Elofer
Editor



Hubert Paulleta
Deutch Translation



Sabine Baris
French Translation



Alexandra Obrevko
Russian Translation



Carlos Muniz
Portuguese Translation



Parasha for this Week

Chaye Sarah
חַיֵּי שָׂרָה

Parasha Overview: Genesis 23:1-25:18

Chaye Sarah

Sarah, Mother of the Jewish People, passes away on at age 127. Moses (the author of Genesis) says she lived “a hundred years, and twenty years, and seven years” as if her life was decomposed in three periods: 100 + 20 + 7. The sages of Israel have said first that her life was divided into three distinct age groups. These three age groups represent the entire course of a human life. Childhood = 7 years (innocence), Young adulthood = 20 years (strength) and complete Adult life = 100 years (wisdom).

After mourning and eulogizing her, Avraham seeks to bury her in the Cave of Makhpellah.

The Jewish people have the deep feeling that Abraham was inspired to buy the field where the cave of Makhpellah is located close to Hebron. And Abraham bought it even though the price asked for it was extremely high, 400 shekels (measurement of weight) of silver was a very high price. In comparison Jeremiah will buy later a field for 17 shekels of silver (Jeremiah 32:9).

Abraham accepted to buy this field and its cave because according to the Jewish tradition Sarah was not the first to be buried in this cave. Adam and Chavah (Adam and Eve) already rested there (Eruvim 53a). The first

parents of mankind were the first to be buried in this place and they were to be joined by Abraham, Yitzchak, Rivka, Jacob and Lea, the patriarchs and matriarchs of the people of Israel, the spiritual parents of mankind.

Avraham sends his faithful servant Eliezer to find a suitable wife for his son, Yitzchak, making him swear to choose a wife only from among Avraham’s family. Eliezer travels to Aram Naharaim and prays for a sign. Providentially, Rivka appears.

Eliezer asks for water. Not only does she give him water, but she draws water for all 10 of his thirsty camels. (Some 140 gallons!)

This extreme kindness marks her as the right wife for Yitzchak and a suitable Mother of the Jewish People.

Negotiations with Rivka’s father and her brother Lavan result in her leaving with Eliezer.

Yitzchak brings Rivka into his mother Sarah’s tent, marries her and loves her. He is then consoled for the loss of his mother.

Avraham marries a third wife, Keturah and six children are born to them. After giving them gifts, Avraham sends them to the East.

Avraham passes away at the age of 175 and is buried next to Sarah in the Cave of Makhpellah.

AVRAHAM & MACHPELAH

After the death of Sarah, Avraham wanted to buy a property in the land of Canaan. If this land is to be the land of G-d’s people, the descendants of Avraham, he must give example and started to buried his relative to this land. To buy this first ever property bought by G-d’s people in Canaan he went to the leaders of the *bnei Chet* the “son of Chet”, translated in our text as the “Hittites”.

The Torah states: “Avraham rose and bowed *Le’em ha’aretz libnei-chet* which is translated “to the Hittites, the people of the land or *Am Ha’aretz* does not refers to the common people, as Rabbi Hirsch put it, but to the people’s representatives, who are authorized and duty-bound to punish those who violate the law. Who are authorized to grant aliens the right to acquire land in perpetuity. Accordingly, the *bnei Chet* would means “for the sons of Chet,” the council that represents the whole population.

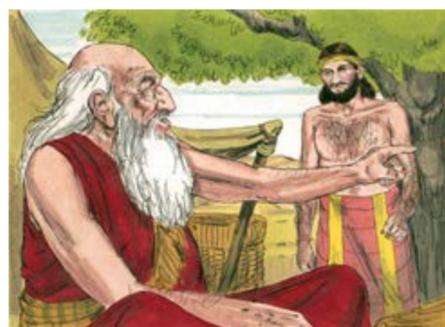
HAGAR’S BIOGRAPHY

Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai said: “Hagar was Pharaoh’s daughter. When Pharaoh saw what was done on Sarah’s behalf in his own house, he took his daughter and gave her to Sarah, saying, ‘Better let my daughter be a handmaid in this house than a mistress in another house’” [Midrash Rabbah, Genesis 45:1]

Rabbi Ari Kahn from the Aish center says, Hagar was royalty. She was an aristocrat. When it became apparent to Sarah that she would be unable to bear children, she saw Hagar as an appropriate partner for Avraham, one with the most illustrious lineage that she could find. A lesser woman than Sarah might have been afraid to bring in such “competition,” but Sarah hoped that if Avraham was to have a child, that child must be the greatest child possible. As chapter 16 of the Book of Genesis relates, in an act of complete self-sacrifice, Sarah invites the beautiful Egyptian princess to become a second wife to her husband. “So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife.” (Genesis 16:3)

Hagar, who had been the primary disciple of Sarah, becomes pregnant and bears a child. As a result, she concludes that G-d has now chosen her over Sarah and that Sarah is an unworthy partner for Avraham. She begins to conduct herself as the first wife. The Midrash paints the picture:

Hagar would tell (other women): “My mistress Sarah is not inwardly what she is outwardly; she appears to be a righteous woman, but she is not. For had she been a righteous woman, (she would have conceived) see how many years have passed without her conceiving, where-



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as I conceived in one night.” [Midrash Rabbah 45:4] One can understand, and perhaps even sympathize with the position of Hagar. She believed that she was born to lead, but that the search for truth had led her away from her father’s pagan world. Avraham’s genius enraptured her, and she came to believe that it was better for her to serve in that house than to rule Egypt. But now she was given the opportunity to rule in Avraham’s house; she believed that she had received a divine sign that she, who was born to be queen, would indeed be the queen — of Avraham’s nascent movement. Hagar’s mistake was in assuming that Avraham alone led the people, that he alone was a spiritual giant. What she failed to recognize was that it was a partnership, the combination of G-d, Avraham and Sarah, which was the basis for the great spiritual movement she herself had become a part of.

Avraham continues to love Hagar even after she had to leave Avraham’s house. That is why the Jewish tradition says that Avraham took back his wife Hagar/Ketura after the death of Sarah, Keturah was her new name and they had six more children. That means Avraham had altogether eight children.

AVRAHAM’S SPIRITUAL PERFECTION

The Torah states: “Now Avraham was old [*zaken*], well advanced in years. And the L-rd had blessed Avraham in all things.” (Genesis 24:1), the Torah used the word *Zaken* to say that Avraham was “old” in our Hebrew congregations, we use the same word to designate an “Elder.” This word *Zaken* is very interesting and bears rich meaning. This word denotes one who has become wise through the experience of life as opposed to a *Na’ar* who still “shakes off” impressions, does not absorb impressions permanently, does not learn from life, but seeks to shape his words out of himself.

Zaken is to be distinguished from *Yashan* from which we get the verb *lishon* to sleep. and denotes, as rabbi Hirsch states: “a state of depleted energy, where one’s energies are so spent that one has become weary and dull.”

Zaken denotes what has been gained in the course of doing life’s work, the maturation of the personality. Hence the saying of the Sages of Israel: “*Zaken* is the one who bought wisdom (*Kiddushim* 32b) or “*Zaken* is the one who has conquered both worlds” (*Bereshit Rab-*

“G-d, the L-rd of heaven, took me away from my father’s house and the land of my birth. He spoke to me and made an oath. ‘To your offspring I will give this land.’ He will send His angel before you, and you will indeed find a wife there for my son.” (Genesis 24:7)

bab 59:9) both world, that means the world of today and the *Olam Haba’a* the “world-to-come”.

For the Jewish tradition this world is full of values and it always recognizes the value of this world besides that of the next. The sages of Israel declare “One hour of repentance and good deeds in this world is worth more than the whole life in the world-to-come, not willing to diminish the value of the world-to-come, it adds that one hour of spiritual bliss in the world-to-come is worth more than the whole life in this world” (*Pirke Avot* 4:17).

Zaken in the Jewish tradition, is the one who has impressed this world with the stamp of G-dliness. It is said also “The righteous prepare the world to be the home of the Divine” (*Yalcut Shimoni, Bereshit*, 27). Rabbi Hirsch comparing Avraham to Eliezer, said: “Just as Avraham had become *zaken* and had attained spiritual perfection by G-d’s guidance, so had Eliezer become wise and uplifted by life in Avraham’s household.”

The biblical text says: “*VeAvraham Zaken Ba’ Bayamin*” and is understood in the Jewish tradition that Avraham had attained both worlds, the earthly and the G-dly, the days of his life were for him a passageway leading directly to the life of the world-to-come. He was not overcome by his days; rather, he strode through them; each one was a milestone for him on his way to eternity. We can be sure that Avraham will be raised on the day of the resurrection.

AN ARAMEAN WOMAN

The Torah states about the relationship between Avraham and Eliezer: “Then Avraham said to his servant [*avedo*], the oldest [*zakan*] of his household who managed [*mosbel*] everything that belonged to him, “Now put your hand under my thigh,” (Genesis 24:2). Eliezer is presented as ‘*avedo* “his servant,” he was subservient to him, was legally bound to carefully carry out the will of his master. And *zakan*, word from the same root as *zkn* or *zaken* we have

“Rebecca set off with her girls, and they rode on the camels, following the stranger. The servant thus took Rebecca and left.” (Genesis 24:61)

spoken about this word in our previous comment. It does not mean only “old” but “wise,” “uplifted,” “very experienced.” Eliezer is also presented as *Mosbel*, in our translation it is written “managed” but a *mosbel* is much more than a “manager,” it is a “ruler,” a “governor,” “L-rd,” “suzerain.” He really was the ruler or governor of all the possession of Avraham. Eliezer was the servant that Avraham could trust the most. No one was trusted as Eliezer was.

Avraham instructed Eliezer: “so that I may make you take an oath by Adonai, the G-d of heaven and the G-d of earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from among the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I am dwelling.” (Genesis 24:3). Avraham, in his deep wisdom understood that children inherit certain characteristics from their parents, rejected the daughters of Canaan, preferring an Aramean woman for his son. Even though the Canaanites were idolaters, it was not the first reason for Avraham’s decision, but much more for their moral degeneracy. Avraham wanted for Ytzchak a wife who would be fitting as a mother of all Israel. The nation whose prominent characteristics are mercy, righteousness and *Chesed* (love). Idolatry is an intellectual error, and can be corrected, but moral degeneracy “takes hold of the whole individual, heart and soul.” Even someone as Avraham could not find among the Canaanites a modest, morally pure woman as a wife for his son, a woman who would bring with her a nobility of spirit and the purity of morality, as a pearl for his home.

FREEDOM

Eliezer said to Avraham: “But the servant said to him, “Suppose the woman were unwilling to follow after me to this land?” (Genesis 24:5) Avraham answered: “If the woman is not willing to follow after you, then you will be free from this oath of mine.” (Genesis 24:8). G-d forces no one to act against his freedom of will. That is why Avraham gives freedom to his servant, and he asks Eliezer not to contrary G-d’s will. It is more important not to do anything that is contrary to G-d’s will. We can discover that someone is going in a wrong direction, not willing to correct his way of life, but it is not our work to force him/her, just we must trust G-d, pray, and put everything in G-d’s hand. Rectification is in G-d’s hand not in ours.



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APOSTOLIC WRITINGS

Mark 11:1-14

We continue to read the Besorah of Mark in connection with the Parasha. In this Parasha *Chayei Sa-rab* we have several stories, but mainly the death of Sarah, the burying of Sarah in the Cave of Machpellah, the sending of Eliezer to find a wife for Isaac and Isaac's wedding. And in this portion or the Besorah of Mark we have the sending of the disciples by Yeshua to get a colt.

We read the beginning of the Besorah saying: "Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, 'Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' Say, 'The L-rd has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'" (Mark 11:1-3).

Bethphage and Bethany are both on the Mont of Olive, to go from or to Jerusalem from these villages we must cross the Mont of Olive, which is very significant for Yeshua, it is from the Mont of Olive that he will give his great prophecy, and it is from the Mont of Olive that he will ascend to heaven and it is on the Mont of Olive that he will definitely come back with the heavenly Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:4 & Revelation 21:2)

In the last Parasha, *Uyera*, Abraham was in Jerusalem for the *Akeidah*, now he is coming back to Beer Sheva, his living place. But on his road he heard that Sarah was coming to him, according to the Jewish tradition, she heard about G-d's order to sacrifice Isaac, she could not imagine that Abraham has accepted to do it, that is why she decided to join her husband in Mont Moriah in order to stop him to do this unimaginable and crazy action. However, arriving in Hebron, her pain was so strong that she died on her way to Jerusalem. She died prematurely, at the age of 127, much younger than Abraham. Abraham was "near Jerusalem" when he arrived in Hebron to discover that his dear wife had died there. Thus he decided to bury her in this city where she died and bought the cave of *Machpellah*. In the Besorah, Yeshua too was "near Jerusalem" when he decided to send two disciples to prepare his glorious entry to Jerusalem. This procession in Jerusalem occurred a few days before his death, that is why there is another parallel here between these two texts, the death of heroes (Sarah and Yeshua) are hovering the two stories.

It is clear that between these two texts we have another parallel, it is the theme of the "sending": Abraham "sends" Eliezer for a special mission exactly as Yeshua

"sends" two disciples for a special mission. The success of the mission of Eliezer, to find a wife for Isaac, depends on the blessing of G-d. Eliezer has to go to a city that he does not know, to a family he does not know, and only the G-d of Abraham would help him to find the right woman. In the same way the success of the mission of the two disciples, to find a colt, depends on the blessing of G-d. The disciples have to go to a city they don't know, to a family and men they don't know, and only G-d would help them find the right colt. Abraham said to Eliezer: "to my land and to my relatives you must go and get a wife for my son Isaac." (Genesis 24:4). Yeshua said to the disciples: "If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' Say, 'The Master needs it.' And right away he will send it back here." (Mark 11:3). This "colt" or young donkey is important in the story of Yeshua, because it is part of the Messianic prophecy; indeed, in Zechariah it is written: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." (Zechariah 9:9). In this portion of the Besorah, Zechariah's prophecy is fulfilled by Yeshua: "And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the L-rd! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!'" (Mark 11:7-10). We have here direct quotation from the book of Psalms 118: 25-26. Yeshua is acclaimed by his people, the Jewish people, we see here that the common people were not against Yeshua, but only the leaders. This day was a great day for Yeshua and the disciples, it was a day of rejoicing, similar to a great wedding day, and everyone in the city shouted: 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the L-rd!' This day of joy reminds us the day of joy for Abraham who was happy to see the wedding of Isaac and Rivka.

Yeshua entered Jerusalem and the Temple on the evening, he wanted to see and to know what happen in the house of G-d. He saw, and went back to Bethany, to the house of Marthe, Marie and Lazarus his dear friends. On the day after, Yeshua made a new miracle upon a fig tree, the disciples were surprised, but the only reaction they had was: "And His disciples were listening." (Mark 11:14). Are we listening to the miraculous acts of G-d, and to his teaching to us.

Haftara

1Kings 1: 1-31

As we have the last days of Sarah in the Parasha we have the last days of king David in this haftara, he is old now, and in a poor health situation, but even in this difficult situation, he is steal dedicated to the L-rd and the protection of his kingdom and his people. That is why as soon as he heard that the chosen by the L-rd to be his successor was in danger of loosing the kingdom he, according to Abarbanel, "acted firmly and vigorously."

According to the second book of Samuel, David reigns for a long time "David was 30 years old when he began to reign and he reigned 40 years." (2 Samuel 5:4). That is why he is now 70 years old. According to *Beer Moshe*, "David brought all of his days with him into his old age, non of them wasted, all of them filled with Torah study obedience to G-d, and accomplishment for his people."

Let's remember that Jerusalem, the city of King David is on the top of the hills, Jerusalem could be very cold on winter time, and living in Jerusalem for fifteen years we can affirm that winter could be cold with from time to time snow. Thus we understand that being seventy, David was lacking of natural body heat and needed to be warmed.

The garments were not enough to warm David, that is why the servants of David made a suggestion: "Let them seek a young virgin for my lord the king, and let her attend the king and be his nurse; and let her lie by your side, so my lord the king may keep warm." (1 Kings 1:2). Malbim said that Abishag who was found to be the best candidate for this function was in fact David's physicians, and the suggestion come from her.

Then a rebellion came from Adonijah: "Now Adonijah son of Haggith exalted himself, saying: 'I'll be king!' So he prepared for himself chariots, horsemen and 50 men to run before him." (1 Kings 1:5). Many people among G-d's people followed Adonijah, even though they knew that Solomon was David's chosen successor, he still was young, only twelve years old, and according to the Midrash there were people, among the most powerful and influential people in the realm who felt that Solomon was influenced by David's behavior with Bathsheba while she was still married to Uriah. These people were unhappy with the nomination of Solomon as king. Adonijah exalted himself saying "I will reign" speaking in the future, Adonijah was patiently waiting for his time, but prepared the most powerful people of the kingdom (Joab and Abiathar) to make him king at the death of David.

King David had some supported who opposed to Adonijah, "Zadok the kohen, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei and David's mighty men, were not on Adonijah's side." (1 Kings 1:8). If Joab and Abiathar supported Adonijah, it was because they were sure that under Solomon reign they will not be maintained in their powerful position.

STORIES AND TRADITIONS

THIS TOO IS FOR GOOD

Rabbi Nachum, one of the Talmudic sages, was known as Nachum Ish Gam Zu, for no matter what happened to him, Rabbi Nachum would say, "Gam Zu L'Tovah" - "This too is for the good".

Once, the Romans made a harsh decree against the Jews in Israel. It was decided to send Rabbi Nachum to plead with the king, because "He is used to having miracles performed for him!" Rabbi Nachum went to Rome with a box full of gold and precious stones as a gift to the king. On the way, he stopped overnight at an inn. While Rabbi Nachum was asleep, the innkeeper stole the valuables and filled the box with earth instead.

In the morning, when Rabbi Nachum opened the box and saw the earth, he was puzzled, but said, "Gam Zu L'Tovah - this is also for the good." He took the box and continued on to Rome.

At the palace, Rabbi Nachum presented the king with the box, "This is a gift from the Jews," he told the king. When the king opened the box, he became very angry. "The Jews are mocking me! I will kill them all!" he cried. Rabbi Nachum didn't become frightened and said, "This is also for the good!"

Hashem then sent Eliyahu Hanavi (Elijah the prophet) disguised as one of the king's advisers. He said to the king, "The Jews wouldn't make fun of you. This earth must be special. I have heard that when their forefather Abraham fought against the mighty army of the four kings, he threw sand at them and G-d transformed the sand into arrows and therefore he won the war!

Maybe this earth is the same." The king, who was at war with a neighboring country, tested it and

G-d made a miracle and transformed the earth into arrows.

Not only did the king nullify his evil decree, he also had the box filled with precious stones and sent it back with Rabbi Nachum as a gift to the Jewish people.

On the way home, Rabbi Nachum stayed over at the same inn. When the innkeeper heard what happened, he said, "I had no idea that my earth was so valuable. I will fill a whole carriage full of earth and bring it to the king. He will surely reward me handsomely!" The innkeeper came to the king with his load of earth claiming that it was the same earth as the one Rabbi Nachum brought. The king tested it, but nothing happened. The innkeeper, naturally, was punished.

This is what our sages meant that, "all" her years were "L'Tovah" - for whatever happened to Sarah, she accepted it "L'Tovah - for the good". Living with this kind of philosophy, all her years were indeed "equally good!"

EVERYONE IS THE BEST

The quality of chesed (love) and concern for others is something we should search for when building our own families. A wealthy man once visited the Leipniker Rav and proposed a match between his son and the Rav's daughter. The rich man then noticed that the Rav was looking upset. "A child in this town is dangerously ill and I am worried about him" explained the Rav. "But why are you so worried about a strange child?" asked the visitor. Upon hearing this, the Rav decided that his daughter should not marry into this man's family. Any child of a man who showed so little concern for others was not a desirable match for his family.



Inspirational Corner

Isaac, trusting to his father's wisdom and affection, was satisfied to commit the matter to him, believing also that G-d Himself would direct in the choice made. The patriarch's thoughts turned to his father's kindred in the land of Mesopotamia. Though not free from idolatry, they cherished the knowledge and the worship of the true G-d. Isaac must not leave Canaan to go to them, but it might be that among them could be found one who would leave her home and unite with him in maintaining the pure worship of the living G-d. Abraham committed the important matter to "his eldest servant," a man of piety, experience, and sound judgment, who had rendered him long and faithful service. He required this servant to make a solemn oath before the L-rd, that he would not take a wife for Isaac of the Canaanites, but would choose a maiden from the family of Nahor in Mesopotamia. He charged him not to take Isaac thither. If a damsel could not be found who would leave her kindred, then the messenger would be released from his oath. The patriarch encouraged him in his difficult and delicate undertaking with the assurance that G-d would crown his mission with success. "The L-rd G-d of heaven," he said, "which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, ... He shall send His angel before thee."

(PP 171.3)