**Brooklyn torah gazette**

**For parshas Chaya sarah 5781**

Volume 5, Issue 9 (Whole Number 209) 27 Cheshvan 5781/ November 14, 2020

**Printed L’illuy nishmas Nechama bas R’ Noach, a”h**

**Harav Dovid Feinstein, 91, Zt”l, Leading Halachic Authority**

**By Anash.org Reporter**



Harav Dovid Feinstein, son of renowned possek Harav Moshe Feinstein, Rosh Yeshiva of Mesivta Tifereth Yerushalayim in New York, and considered by many as the leading halachic authority in the United States, passed on away of Friday, 19 Cheshvan.

He was 91 years old.

Harav Feinstein was born to his parents, Harav **Moshe**and **Shima Feinstein** in the city of Lyuban in the Soviet Union (currently Belarus). His parents called him Dovid after Rav Moshe’s father, Rav Dovid, who was a renowned Talmid Chacham and a descendant of Rabbi Avraham, the brother of the Gaon of Vilna. At the age of eight the family immigrated to USA and settled in [the Lower East Side of] Manhattan with his parents and lived there for the rest of his life.

In USA, his father Harav Moshe Feinstein became Rosh Yeshiva of Mesivta Tifereth Yerushalayim. Over the years, he gained the reputation as one of the foremost Halachic authorities of his generation.

Upon his father’s passing in 5746, Harav Dovid took over the Manhattan branch of the yeashiva, while his brother, Harav Reuven Feinstein, stood at the helm of the Staten Island branch of Mesivta Tifereth Yerushalayim.

Harav Dovid Feinstein was considered by many as the leading halachic authority in the United States, and was known to have his phone busy at all hours of the day and night, with calls from around the world on all areas of Halacha.

He was also a member of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah of Agudath Israel of America, and authored at least nine books on Torah Law (Halacha), Torah, and the subject of the Jewish Calendar, in addition to the Haggadah.

*Reprinted from the November 8, 2020 website of Anash.org*

**UK’s Former Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Passes Away at 72**

**By Times of Israel Staff and Jewish Telegraphic Agency**

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, the former chief rabbi of the United Kingdom whose extensive writings and frequent media appearances commanded a global following among Jews and non-Jews alike, died Saturday morning (Novermber 7, 2020).

Sacks, 72, was in the midst of a third bout of cancer, which he had announced in October.

Sacks was among the world’s leading exponents of Orthodox Judaism for a global audience. In his 22 years as chief rabbi, he emerged as the most visible Jewish leader in the United Kingdom and one of the European continent’s leading Jewish voices, offering Jewish wisdom to the masses through a regular segment he produced for the BBC.

He had a close relationship with former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who called Sacks “an intellectual giant” and presented him with a lifetime achievement award in 2018.

Sacks was also an immensely prolific author, addressing pressing social and political issues in a succession of well received books. His popular commentary on the prayer book, published by Koren, helped to dethrone the more traditionalist Artscroll Siddur as the preeminent prayer book in American Modern Orthodox synagogues.



**Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, zal**

**Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times**

His most recent book, “Morality: Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times,” was published in September.

Sacks’ office had not specified what type of cancer he had, saying in October that “he remains positive and upbeat and will now spend a period of time focused on the treatment he is receiving from his excellent medical team,” the statement said.

Sacks had been treated for cancer twice before, in his 30s and again in his 50s, a fact that wasn’t widely known until it was disclosed in a 2012 book.

Sacks taught at Yeshiva University and New York University as well as at King’s College London and several other top schools. He was a Senior Fellow at Canada’s Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights.

Sacks, who was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 2005 and awarded a Life Peerage in the British House of Lords in 2009, was an outspoken advocate of religious and social tolerance throughout his career.

He was also an advocate for the compatibility of science and religion, which some people see as mutually exclusive.

Sacks was normally averse to mixing religion and politics. But he did take public stances on two topics that were often ensnared with European politics: Israel and anti-Semitism.

**Calling out Labor Party Leader as an Anti-Semite**

He spoke out publicly as Britain’s Labour Party was engulfed in an anti-Semitism scandal under its previous leader Jeremy Corbyn, calling Corbyn an anti-Semite.

“We have an anti-Semite as the leader of the Labour Party and her majesty’s opposition. That is why Jews feel so threatened by Mr. Corbyn and those who support him,” Sacks said in 2018 during an interview with the New Statesman.

That judgment paved the way for the current British Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis to harshly condemn the Labour Party, a precedent-setting event in British Jewish life.

Corbyn was replaced in April by centrist Keir Starmer, who has apologized for how anti-Semitism was allowed to flourish in Labour’s ranks under Corbyn. Starmer, who is married to a Jewish woman, expressed his condolences to “the entire Jewish world” in a tweet on Saturday.

“He was a towering intellect whose eloquence, insights and kindness reached well beyond the Jewish community. I have no doubt that his legacy will live on for many generations,” Starmer wrote.

**Praised as a Man of Words…and of Creativity**

Israeli President Reuven Rivlin mourned Sacks’s passing, who he called “a man of words… and of creativity, a man of truth, whose generosity and compassion built bridges between people.”

He said Sacks “bravely faced difficult questions and always found the right words to illuminate the Torah and explain its paths. We will always remember his warnings against violence in the name of God, and his belief that we have the power to heal a fractured world.”

Marie van der Zyl, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, said Sacks was “a giant of both the Jewish community and wider society. His astounding intellect and courageous moral voice were a blessing to all who encountered him in person, in writing or in broadcast.”

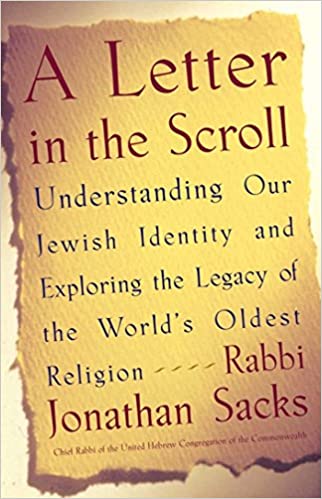
**A Giant of World Jewry**

Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, president of the Conference of European Rabbis, also called Sacks “a giant of world Jewry” who “will be truly missed.”

Israel’s chief rabbis also eulogized Sacks.

Sephardi Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef said: “The people of Israel have lost a unique voice that will be sorely missed.”

Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi David Lau said Sacks was “a man of spirit who championed the word of Torah-keeping Judaism and was a staunch guardian of tradition from generation to generation.”



World Jewish Congress President Ronald S. Lauder said the WJC “and the entire Jewish world are profoundly saddened by the passing of former British Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks,” who he called “a theologian of extraordinary intellectual depth and moral conviction.

“He was also a pillar of integrity who inspired Jews and non-Jews alike… We extend our deepest condolences to Lord Sacks’s wife Elaine and their family.”

In 2017, in a [widely circulated YouTube video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3UAcYn4uUbs), Sacks called anti-Zionism a new form of anti-Semitism, arguing that it denies Jews the “right to exist collectively with the same rights as everyone else.”

The video was based on a 2016 speech Sacks delivered in Brussels, which is widely seen as having paved the way to Britain’s adoption later that year of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s definition of anti-Semitism.

**An Ability to Reach Mainstream Audiences**

But the video went far beyond political and academic circles, and became symbolic of Sacks’ ability to reach mainstream audiences. Rachel Riley, a famous British Jewish game show television host, last year [shared the video](https://twitter.com/RachelRileyRR/status/1089499537549508610), telling her over 600,000 Twitter followers that it is “the best explanation of antisemitism I’ve seen.”

Sacks branched out beyond religious and Jewish cultural thought as well. In 2017 he [delivered a Ted Talk](https://www.ted.com/talks/rabbi_lord_jonathan_sacks_how_we_can_face_the_future_without_fear_together?language=en) about “facing the future without fear” and what he called a “fateful moment” in Western history after the election of Donald Trump as U.S. president, citing Thomas Paine and anthropologists to make an argument about returning a culture of togetherness.

Born in London in 1948, Sacks studied at Cambridge University. While a student there in the 60s, he visited Rabbi Menachem Schneerson — the spiritual leader who is credited with turning the Hasidic Chabad-Lubatvitch movement into a powerful organizing force of Jewry around the world — in New York City. Sacks credits that meeting with inspiring him to get involved with Jewish studies, as he detailed in a [series of videos](https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/video_cdo/aid/1690783/jewish/A-Story-in-Three-Acts.htm) for Chabad.org in 2011.

He became the rabbi of the Golders Green synagogue in London’s most Orthodox neighborhood in the late 70s and then rabbi of the Marble Arch synagogue in central London, before becoming the UK’s chief rabbi in 1991, a position he held until 2013.

*Sacks is survived by his wife Elaine, three children and several grandchildren.*

**A Rich Man’s Strategy**

**For Olam Haba**



Rabbeinu Nissim Gaon (Sefer Masiyos ד״ה אמרו חכמינו אמרו (tells the following story: A wealthy Yid thought to himself, "A person doesn’t live forever. One day I will be in the grave, and I won't take a penny with me. What can I do with my wealth so it can help me even then?" His advisors told him, "Help the poor, and that merit will be taken with you in Olam HaBa."

The wealthy Yid decided to give his money to a pauper who is wholly in yeush, without any trace of hope. When he finds such a person, he will give him a lot of money, and make him wealthy in a moment. He began speaking with paupers, asking them how they manage, and none of them had lost hope.

One is relying on a wealthy uncle who might help him. Another is planning to find a job, etc. He became frustrated. "Can't I find someone who has lost hope?" Then he saw someone dressed in rags, sitting on top of a garbage heap, rummaging for something to eat.

**Can There Be Anyone Poorer than Him?**

"Can there be anyone poorer than him?" he thought. "This person has certainly lost all hope" and he gave him a hundred silver coins.

The pauper asked, "Why did you give me so much money?"

"I made a vow that I will give a lot of money to the pauper who has lost all hope," the wealthy man replied.

The pauper replied, "Only a fool loses hope. I didn’t lose hope. I trust in Hashem who is (Tehillim 113:7) raises the poor out of the garbage heap. If Hashem wills it, nothing can prevent Hashem from making me wealthy."

The wealthy man realized that he will never find a person who lost all hope, so he dug a pit in the cemetery and hid his money there. The wheel of fortune turned. Eventually this wealthy man became very poor, and he went from door to door, collecting food and money.

He reminded himself that he once buried a large sum of money in the cemetery. So, he went to the cemetery and started digging, but then the police arrived. He was arrested and brought before the mayor.

**Discussing His Past with the Mayor**

He explained to the mayor that he was once wealthy, and now he is poor, he goes collecting from door to door. He remembered that he hid in the cemetery, and he was digging there to retrieve it.

The mayor asked, "Don't you remember me? Years ago, you found me in the garbage heap, rummaging around for food. I told you that I trust in Hashem. I told you that if He wills it, He can make me wealthy. Now look at where my bitachon brought me!"

*Reprinted from the Parshas Vayeira 5781 email of Torah Thoughts: Collected Insights of Rabb Eli Biderman.*

**Yonoson’s Unfortunate Mistake**

Yonoson told Dovid to escape from his father, Shaul. The Gemara says, If, "Yonoson would have given Dovid two loaves of bread, Nov, the city of kohanim, wouldn't have been murdered, Doeg HaAdomi wouldn't have lost his portion in Olam HaBa, and Shaul with his three sons wouldn't have been killed."

This is because Dovid escaped without food. So he went to the home of the Kohen Gadol Achimelech in Nov and asked for a meal. Doeg found out about this, and he told Shaul that Nov was rebelling against him, for they were helping Shaul's enemy.

Shaul ordered all the kohanim in Nov killed. The result was: Doeg lost his portion in Olam HaBa because of the lashon hara he spoke. Shaul was punished for killing the kohanim of Nov. His punishment was that Shaul and three of his children were killed in war. And the Gemara holds Yonoson responsible for all this because he didn't give two loaves of bread to Dovid.

This means, if one doesn't provide food to those who need it, he is held responsible for everything wrong that happens due to this error.

*Reprinted from the Parshas Vayeira 5781 email of Torah Thoughts: Collected Insights of Rabb Eli Biderman.*

**Rabbi Berel Wein on**

**Parshat Chaya Sarah 5781**



Jewish tradition teaches us that the house of our mother Sarah had unique qualities. I have written about this often but add the following nuance to my previous writings. We are taught that in the tent of Sarah there were three outstanding qualities: the blessing of bountiful bread that is the quality of hospitality, the cloud of spirituality that always hovered over her home and the fact that the candle lit for the Sabbath burned throughout the entire week until the entrance of the next Sabbath.

This idea of that candle contains within it the great message that every day of the week is only a prelude to the great day of the Sabbath. We say so in our prayers when we count our days according to the upcoming Sabbath. This is the Jewish soul that constantly yearns for the Sabbath throughout the mundane activities of the weekday world. The Jew cannot believe that somehow the troubles, travails, distractions, and challenges of ordinary life which are omnipresent are really the basic issues of our existence and define our purpose in life.

Those who think that way are hardly removed from the rest of the animal kingdom that exists only in the moment, for the present, without any great vision as to what life should be and what one's purpose in existence is. It is only the Sabbath day that puts the whole week into perspective and enables us to see the greatness that the creator intended for all of us.

**Jews are Defined in Terms of the Sabbath**

Throughout the ages, Jews always defined themselves in terms of the Sabbath. The criterion for Jewish legitimacy always was that one was a Sabbath observer. Jews took the Sabbath and made it their given name and, later in history, even their surname. They always wanted to be identified with the Sabbath, because they realized that the candle of life burns from one Sabbath to the next, and is never extinguished, thereby giving one the glimpse and goal of eternity in an otherwise finite world.

There have been many great works written about the Sabbath: halachic, philosophical, fanciful, inspirational, and psychological. All of them deal with special facets of the Sabbath, which is like a diamond that sheds light in all directions, no matter which way it is turned. The Sabbath became the object of love and endearment, and not only of identity and Jewish pride. Jews understood that the destruction of the Sabbath, G-d forbid, would mean the eventual destruction of the nation and its purpose as being a holy people.

**The Connection Between Sarah**

**And Our Sabbath Today**

This is the treasure that our mother Sarah bequeathed to us – a flame from a lonely candle that lights our way through an often dark and dangerous weekday world. We are witness to the tragedy that engulfs individuals and entire sections of the Jewish people who are devoid of the Sabbath and do not possess that candle of light that only the Sabbath can provide. That is why this week's Torah reading is entitled "The Life of Sarah", because as long as the Sabbath lives within the Jewish world, our mother Sarah is with us, to comfort and guide us, and to help raise us to eternal greatness.

*Reprinted from this week’s website of rabbiwein.com*

**The Significance of**

**Yitzchak’s Marriage to Rivka**

**From the Talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe**

**Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, Zt”l**



In this week's Torah portion, Chayei Sarah, Abraham sends his servant Eliezer to find a wife for his son Isaac.

"And [Eliezer] departed, having all goodly things of his master in his hand." Our Sages explain that Abraham entrusted Eliezer with all of his substantial wealth in order to impress the family of the prospective bride and obtain their agreement to the match.

This in itself was an unusual occurrence. While it is not at all extraordinary for a father to share his riches with his children during his lifetime, why was it necessary for Abraham to put all of his wealth at Isaac's disposal?

Furthermore, Abraham was an extremely wealthy man; surely sending Eliezer on his mission with just a portion of his riches would have been enough to sufficiently impress Rebecca's family.

The answer lies in the fact that this was not to be just any marriage of two individuals. Rather, the union of Isaac and Rebecca was the first Jewish marriage after the mitzva of circumcision was given. Thus, their union represented the perpetuation of the Jewish people in holiness for all time.

By committing all of his wealth to this end, Abraham thus underscored the tremendous import and significance of this marriage. For not only were all his material assets involved; Abraham, the Patriarch of the Jewish people, invested his very essence in finding the ideal wife for his son.

Chasidut explains that the marriage of Isaac and Rebecca is symbolic of the union between the soul and the physical body.

Geographically, Isaac was in the holy land of Israel; moreover, he himself had acquired an additional measure of holiness when he demonstrated his willingness to be offered as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Rebecca, on the other hand, lived outside the boundaries of the Holy Land, and indeed spent the first three years of her life among evil people, as our Sages put it, "like a rose among thorns." Thus their marriage exemplified the very objective of the creation itself: the joining of the spiritual and physical realms, thereby transforming our material world into a dwelling for G-d.

It is for this reason that the Torah is so explicit and provides so many details about Eliezer's mission, for indeed, it is the mission of us all. In truth, G-d gives every Jew "all goodly things of his Master" to ensure our success.

Every subsequent generation represents another step toward our ultimate goal - the long-awaited Redemption. May we merit this immediately.

*Reprinted from the Parshat Chaya Sarah 5756 edition of the L’Chaim Weekly, a publication of the Lubavitch Youth Organization. Adapted from Sefer HaSichot 5752, Vol. I of the [Lubavitcher] Rebbe*

**Rabbi Yisrael of Shklov**

R’ Yisrael of Shklov z”l (1770-1839) was a student of the Vilna Gaon at the end of the latter’s life. He was one of the leaders of the Aliyah to Eretz Yisrael by students of the Gaon of Vilna and their families.

R’ Yisrael wrote several Torah works of his own, including Pe’at Ha’shulchan on the Halachot specific to Eretz Yisrael. In the following excerpt from R’ Yisrael’s introduction to the latter work, he describes the Gaon’s opinion about what it means to “know” a Masechet of Gemara:

A certain great rabbi in our country told me that, in his youth, he was a regular visitor in the Gaon’s home. Once, before Sukkot, the Gaon reprimanded those around him, saying that it is obligatory for every student to know at least one tractate fluently by heart so that he will be able to fulfill the Mitzvah of Torah study even when he is traveling or if he finds himself in a house with no lights. This rabbi heard these words coming from the holy mouth of our teacher, and he immediately strengthened himself to review Tractate Sukkah many times until he knew it by heart. He used to test himself by asking people around him to listen to him reciting the Gemara.

On Chol Ha’mo’ed, this rabbi came before our teacher [the Gaon]. . . and told him, “I have studied Tractate Sukkah and I know it by heart.

”Our teacher replied, “Would you like me to ask you something about this Masechet?”



The rabbi replied, “Certainly! I said that I know it by heart.”

Our teacher asked the rabbi one question, and he could not answer it: “How many times in the tractate are there disagreements between Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Yehuda, between Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Tarfon, between Rabbah and Rav Yosef, between Abaye and Rava, and between Rav Pappa and Rav Huna?”

So, our teacher listed them, like someone who was counting pearls. . . He then listed all the times that the tractate, the Tosefta, and the Yerushalmi describe Sukkot that are not kosher, noting that the number of cases mentioned is the Gematria of the word Sukkah, spelled “lacking” a Vav [i.e., Samech-Kaf-Heh]. Then he listed all the kosher Sukkot mentioned in the tractate, the Tosefta, and the Yerushalmi, noting that the number of cases mentioned is the Gematria of the word Sukkah spelled with a Vav. Such was his fluency in the Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi and the whole Torah. [Hamaayan]

*Reprinted from the Parshat Chayei Sarah 5781 email of whY I Matter, the parsha sheet of the Young Israel of Midwood in Brooklyn edited by Reb Yedidye Hirtenfeld.*

**Parshas Chaya Sarah**

**Everyone Views Things**

**Just As I Do…**

**By Rabbi Bentzion Shafier**

**Founder of TheSmuz.com**



“*And I asked her and said: “Who is your father?” and she said, “I am the daughter of Bisuel…” and I placed the bracelet on her hands*.” — Bereishis 24:47

**Eliezer was given a mission**

Eliezer, the loyal servant of Avrohom, was charged with the mission of finding a wife for Yitzchak. Before sending him out, Avrohom Avinu cautioned him, “Only take a girl from my family and my father’s house.” Eliezer then asked HASHEM for a sign: “The girl who, when I ask her for water, responds, ‘Not only will I give you to drink, but your camels as well,’ is to be the girl that You have chosen for my master.” (Bereishis 24:14) Her response was to be the indication. If it happened exactly as he outlined, then it would mean that this was the woman intended for Yitzchak.

No sooner did Eliezer finish this request than Rivka appeared at the well. Eliezer said the words, “Please give me to drink,” and Rivka answered, “I will give your camels as well.” She then moved with such alacrity and enthusiasm that Eliezer was astounded. He was so certain that she was the right one that he immediately gave her the golden bracelets, formally engaging her to Yitzchak. Only later did he ask her name to find out that she was, in fact, from Avrohom’s family.

**When telling Lavan, Eliezer changes the order**

When Eliezer met Lavan and Besuel, he told over the events exactly as they transpired, but with one change. He said, “**First,** I asked her name **and then** I gave her the bracelets.”

**Rashi,** in explaining why Eliezer changed the order, explains that Eliezer was afraid that Lavan would never believe him if he said that he first gave the bracelets and then asked her name. He would assume Eliezer was lying. Therefore, Eliezer reversed the order, “First, I asked her name and then I gave her the bracelets.”

**Eliezer wasn’t afraid to say a miracle happened to him**

This becomes difficult to understand when we recall that just a few moments before this, Eliezer told Lavan of a striking miracle that had occurred to him. When he began telling over the events, he started with the expression, “Today I left, and today I arrived,” recounting a startling phenomenon.

Avrohom lived many days’ journey from Charan. Eliezer had said that he set out from Avrohom’s house that very morning and arrived the same day. It was physically impossible for Eliezer, who was traveling with ten camels laden with goods, to have covered that distance in such a short time. Chazal explain that he had a Kifitzas Ha’Derech. The land literally folded under him like an accordion so that his few steps took him over vast distances, something so supernatural that it is hard to imagine.

Apparently, he wasn’t afraid to tell this to Lavan. He didn’t assume that Lavan would call him a liar. Yet he was afraid to mention that he trusted that HASHEM had brought him to the right woman for Yitzchak. The question is — why? If Eliezer felt that Lavan could believe that HASHEM did miracles for him, why couldn’t Lavan believe that Eliezer trusted HASHEM?

**Seeing the whole world through my eyes only**

It would seem the answer is that Lavan lived by the golden rule: **Do onto others before they do you in**. Lavan was devious, deceitful, and lived a ruthless existence. Because he was untrustworthy, he didn’t trust anyone else, either.

Lavan assumed that since he was too smart to trust anyone, then anyone who “had brains in his head” would never be so foolish as to trust. He saw the whole world through his eyes. The idea that someone could trust HASHEM was something he couldn’t accept. Miracles, as unlikely as they may be, he knew could happen. But for someone intelligent to actually trust — that couldn’t be.

Lavan was engaging in what is known as **projection**: projecting his worldview onto others, assuming that the way he was, the way that he approached life, is the same way that all others do. He could never accept that someone would let his guard down and actually trust. Therefore, Eliezer was afraid to mention that he acted with complete trust in HASHEM. He knew Lavan wouldn’t believe him and would assume he was lying.

**The way we see the world**

This concept has great relevance to both the way that we relate to others as well as the way we relate to HASHEM.

If a person is a giving and caring individual, it is easy for him to see the good in man. If I am a giver, then intuitively I see that in others. I assume their motivating force sis generosity. However, if I am self-centered, then I tend to see that as the driving force in others, and the nature of man appears to me to be dark.

This concept applies to our relationship with HASHEM as well. Often times we find it difficult to discern the kindness of HASHEM. Where is the chessed? Where is the loving generosity that HASHEM is reported to exhibit throughout Creation?

The more that I practice doing for others without expecting anything in return, the more I can see that quality in the way that HASHEM created and runs this world. The more that I train myself to be a giver, the more accurately I learn to see giving in HASHEM.

Quite simply, my character traits and personal bias shape not only the way that I act towards others, but the very way that I view the world. My view of people, my view of those close to me, and ultimately my view of my Creator are based on my perception. My perception is based on me — who I am, how I act, and how I think. The more that I adopt the nature of a giver, the better a person I will become, and additionally, the more easily I will identify that same trait in others and in HASHEM. The whole world takes on a different view.

*Reprinted from this week’s website on TheShmuz.com This is an excerpt from the [Shmuz on the Parsha book](https://theshmuz.com/product/shmuz-on-the-parsha-book/).*

**Thoughts that Count for Parshas Chaya Sarah**

*And Abraham was old, well on in days* (Gen. 24:1)

In Hebrew, the phrase "well on in days" is "ba bayamim" -- literally, "he had come with his days."

Abraham's life was full, and he utilized every day to the fullest; he did not waste even one day. A hint as to how we can achieve this ourselves is found in the letters of the word "bayamim" -- "ba" and "yamim."

"Ba" is simply the Hebrew letter beit which has the numerical value of two; "yamim" means "days."

Abraham always had the image of two days in his mind--the day of birth and the day of death. To utilize every day to its fullest we must keep in mind why we are born and the fact that we will ultimately be accountable for our deeds after we die. *(Divrei Tzadikim)*

*G-d had blessed Abraham in all things.* (Gen. 24:1)

There are those righteous people whose main goal in life is to be whole and one with G-d. But this is not the way of the true tzadik. Indeed, the way of Abraham was to concern himself with "all things." He did not worry just about himself, but about others as well. And so he was blessed in a like manner. *(Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev)*

*The man took a gold earring, weighing a half-shekel and two bracelets.* (Gen 24:22)

The commentator Rashi explains that the half-shekel alludes to the half-shekel that each Jew donated to the Holy Temple, while the two bracelets allude to the two Tablets containing the Ten Commandments.

With these gifts, Eliezer implied that when establishing a Jewish home, Torah and the performance of mitzvot form its pillars. The half- shekel illustrates the mitzva of charity, while the two bracelets, symbolizing the two Tablets, allude to the Torah itself which is included in the Ten Commandments. *(Likutei Sichot)*

*And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebecca, and she became his wife; and he loved her.* (Gen. 24:67)

Rashi comments: "That is to say, 'And he brought her into the tent and, behold, she was like Sarah, his mother.' While Sarah was alive her Shabbat lights miraculously burnsed from one Friday to the next..." This exact same phenomenon happened with Rebecca's Shabbat lights.

Rebecca was a minor when she married Isaac. She was therefore not obligated to fulfill the mitzva of lighting the Shabbat candles, especially since Abraham had been doing it since Sarah's death. However, Rebecca was not satisfied participating in the candle- lighting of Abraham. She herself lit the Shabbat candles. This is a clear indication to us that before marriage, and even before bat mitzva -- from the age of three years -- Jewish girls should light their own Shabbat candle. *(The Lubavitcher Rebbe)*

*Reprinted from the Parshat Chaya Sarah 5756 edition of the L’Chaim Weekly, a publication of the Lubavitch Youth Organization.*