



#5 Chayei Sarah Genesis 23:1-25:18
Torah Study
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Names

Hevron – Hebron

Kefa – Peter

Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Christ in the Greek means to be smudged – anointed

Moshe – Moses

Rivkah – Rebecca

Shaul – Paul

Shlomo – Solomon

Yeshua – Jesus' real name

Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Exodus 3:15)

Yitz'chak – Isaac

Yochanan – John

Terms

Chayei Sarah – 5th Torah portion

Haftarah – reading from the prophets

Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible

Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible

Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the Torah

Chayei Sarah means, "life of Sarah." In this portion, Sarah dies at the age of 127 and Abraham asks to buy the cave of Makhpelâh in Hevrôn to bury her there.

First of all, let's begin by talking about staying connected to God. We need to do this over and over. Do not be sporadic in hearing from God. We need to be real with God and allow God to lead you. Just like we see the Old Testament believers hearing words from God, we are also to hear from God. It needs to be part of our daily lives.

I often talk about being mindful in our relationship with God and others. Being mindful means, we use our minds in a deliberate fashion or way. How should we relate to God and others? First, the Bible tells us how to best relate to God and others. The Bible tells us to love God by keeping His commandments. Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always." That is the primary way we are to stay connected to God. Also keeping God's commandments is the primary way we are to love others. God knows what is best, so His commandments are the best way to live and relate to others.

In addition to keeping God's commandments in the Old Testament portion, there are a few commandments that the New Testament portion tells us to keep. Most of the commandments in the New Testament are interpretations of the Torah or encouragement to believe in the Messiah. We are also told to receive the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38 NKJV says, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." In addition, desiring the associated gifts and evidences of the Holy Spirit are commandments of God. 1 Corinthians 14:1 NKJV says, "Desire spiritual gifts." And in the context it says in 1 Corinthians 14:37 NKJV, "The things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord."

There are so many things the Holy Spirit does for us. In addition to the gifts associated with

the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit helps produce virtue in our lives (see Galatians 5:22-23) and can even help us in the everyday things of life. Perhaps you just happen to think that something could be a problem or dangerous. Maybe that was the Holy Spirit. Just a couple of days ago I fixed my wife's car after thinking her car had a dangerous problem. I could have said to myself that her car would be okay, but I have learned that at least some of those things I have thought of in the past happened because I was not either listening to common sense, or it could have been the Holy Spirit speaking to me. In the Bible, God told a prophet not to stop anywhere on his mission for God, but he did and he got killed by a lion (see 1 Kings 13:14-30). Be careful to listen to God and consider the things that come to mind.

Be a flexible person of light and live in trust. Most of our lives are consumed by our day-to-day activities, but sometimes we need to be flexible in how we do things. Yesterday I would have much rather continued with my day-to-day activities, but I decided to take care of something I knew was important. We may need to change our plans for any number of reasons. We might have the opportunity to speak into someone's life, we might be able to help someone, we might need to take care of an important project, or we may have an opportunity to be kind. The chance to do these things may pass us by if we are not flexible in life. Being kind and caring is a way to keep God's commandment to love others. Leviticus 19:18 NKJV says, "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD."

Your life of goodness will bring God's light to people, and over time, they may sense God's care and love. Perhaps giving a minute of your time can be an important part of your day. This section of Romans gives us many good ideas on how to apply Leviticus 19:18. It appropriately begins by talking about love. That is what Leviticus 19:18 tells us to do.

Romans 12:9-21 NKJV

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. Therefore

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;

If he is thirsty, give him a drink;

For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

As you can see, there are a lot of ways you can apply Leviticus 19:18. The quote in these verses is from Proverbs 25:21-22. They used to have people who would walk around with coals on their head in the morning to provide people with something to start their fires. These

coals would warm them as they did their job. It has nothing to do with heaping fiery coals on someone like the Romans did in battle. This verse in Proverbs was written way before the Roman Empire existed. Again, this is another example of misunderstanding the original meaning of the scriptures. Not understanding the Bible in its original context is important in order to understand it properly.

Be a clean person spiritually and live your life above the ways of the world. What does it mean to be clean spiritually. It means that our thoughts and actions are to line up with the commandments of God. Sometimes we say a person has a dirty mind. We mean that they are thinking in a wrong and sinful way. Have a clean mind and live a pure life.

Psalms 19:7-11 NKJV

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.

God's commandments are perfect and make us a new people. They give us wisdom, the "how to" of life, and they bring joy to our lives. His commandments make us pure and make us see what is right. Have a deep respect for God and do what is right so that you are clean spiritually. God's ways are true and right. God's commandments are worth more than gold and can give us a sweet life. They bring great reward.

We should not think that their reward is limited to our time on earth, but in eternity. Doing what is right brings reward and doing what is wrong brings the wrong kind of reward. Make sure you are headed in the right direction in life.

Wrong doctrine results in a wrong direction.

Find truth and live right; get headed in the right direction. The Bible says about God's commandments, "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people;'" Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV. We need wisdom and understanding, especially the wisdom of an all-knowing God. Also, receive the Holy Spirit, seek the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and use them to bring more of God's goodness into your life.

Torah Study

Chayei Sarah means, "life of Sarah." In this portion, Sarah dies at the age of 127 and Abraham asks to buy the cave of Makhpeláh in Hevrōn to bury her there. Abraham pays Efron 400 silver shekels for the cave. It is evident that he finds this cave important; perhaps its past connections were meaningful to him. It was supposedly where Adam and Eve were buried.

Abraham says he is a sojourner and a foreigner. He is an alien living among them. He asks to purchase a burial site in Genesis 23:4 NKJV, "I am a foreigner and a visitor among you."

This is something that believers in the true God have been able to turn around and attach special meaning to. Just like Abraham, we are foreigners to this world as we live out our pilgrimage of life. As we have talked about in the past, Abraham was from the East where they were pagan.

The word, "Hebrew" was given to him by the people in Canaan or perhaps that is what he was where he came from. Being Hebrew essentially means Abraham came from the pagan East. The meaning "crossed over" was made up by the rabbis, it is an acronym formed from the Hebrew word for Hebrew (which is eevreet, עֵבְרִית). We are commanded to confess that we are pagans around the time of the Passover. We say that we are pagan Arameans on the day of first fruits which is right after Passover (Deuteronomy 26:5-10). I remember my dad saying this when I was little; we are what!?

We do this out of humility and we recognize our roots. God has made us His people; we have so much to be thankful for. Like I have said in past teachings, the story of Abraham was important in Jewish culture. Gentiles often do not understand this. They focus on one section of the Gospels where the leaders of Yeshua's times identify with Abraham and then the misguided teachers say how messed up the Jews were.

The Jewish culture was trying, even if it was misguided at times, to follow God. This misguided focus by some Christians about the Jews comes from a few people who are thinking wrong and do not see the obvious connections in the Bible in its original understanding. After talking about Abraham, in the book of Hebrews 11:13-16 NKJV it says:

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them."

The Jews properly came up with the understanding that we are no longer pagan foreigners, but we are now strangers or foreigners to this pagan world; we look forward to a new heaven and earth where we all do what is right. 2 Peter 3:13 NKJV says, "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells." It will be a wonderful and amazing time! Isaiah 64:3, 4 NKJV, "No one has ever heard, no ear perceived, no eye seen, any God but you. You work for him who waits for you. ... If we keep your ancient ways, we will be saved." God's work is beyond our ability to comprehend! If people want to be saved, it says we must keep God's ancient ways. So, the people who say that the Bible is old fashioned are wrong.

*The people who say we do not have
to follow God's commandments are wrong.*

Kefa writes to those who live outside of Jewish society and says, "Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your

conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God;" 1 Peter 2:11-12 NKJV.

"Sojourners" most certainly would have resonated with them. They were strangers even as Abraham was a stranger; and instead of living a life as a pagan evildoer by not keeping God's commandments, they were to keep God's commandments (good works refers to keeping God's commandments, see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). As a people who are on a pilgrimage like Abraham, they were to seek the future kingdom that God has prepared for them. If they take the right path and keep God's commandments, their walk culminates in the future kingdom of God.

Take some time to think this through. We are grateful that we are no longer pagans who have come from the East. We are now those who will live someday in a different world just as our father Abraham was not worldly. Therefore, we are children of Abraham by faith. Probably other scriptures come to mind as well. You can begin plugging them into this understanding the Jews had. Have fun with this instead of making up random studies on numbers and letters as some do in our era. Perhaps some of their studies are good applications. Yeshua said they were mostly just diversions that were off track (John 5:39).

Some were so off track with reading man-made ideas into the scriptures that they did not know the Messiah was here!

Explanation of What Shaul is talking about in Galatians 3 concerning Abraham.

We should take some time to understand what Shaul (Paul) is talking about in Galatians. First, we need to understand that there is a major departure from the truth of the Bible by Christianity that has occurred through man-made theology. This false doctrine had its beginnings in the pagan Roman Empire that made up its own doctrine and subverted the Bible to its own false doctrine. The Roman Empire positioned itself against Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus), His followers, and against biblical truth when they created their own version of Christianity.

Because of false doctrine and the inability of Christianity in general to understand Jewish cultural issues, the false doctrines that they have made up from the scriptures by the Roman Empire continue to be taught. Ya'akov said in James 3:1 NKJV, "Brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment." Those that teach people to not obey God and send people to the lake of fire will end up in the lake of fire. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." What does the Bible say about those who live in sin? Do not be deceived, they will not enter God's future kingdom. So, if someone tells you that God's commandments are done away with, do not listen to them.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV

Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19-21 NKJV

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies,

outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 6:7-8 NKJV

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

Revelation 21:8 NKJV

But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

Also, when we read from the Greek translation, there appears to be some deliberate muddling of the scriptures by the heretics of the Roman Empire. For example, Shaul quotes from Deuteronomy in Galatians 3:10 which says in Deuteronomy 27:26 NKJV, "A curse on anyone who does not confirm the words of this Torah by putting them into practice." **Those that do not keep the Torah are under a curse.** The translation from the Greek seems altered.

First, a little background before we get to Chapter 3. Shaul (Paul) was chosen by Yeshua to reach the Gentiles. In Chapter 2 of Galatians, Shaul (Paul) talks about an encounter with those who were adding extra stipulations on the Gentiles about receiving the Messiah Yeshua like adult circumcision and not eating with Gentiles and lots more laws. By the way, Shaul still teaches circumcision, Galatians 5:11 NKJV, "If I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution." Shaul does not teach adult circumcision which is dangerous. We are created in God's image and therefore we are to protect life. Not protecting life is against the Torah.

Shaul shares how Kefa (Peter) and others reacted and stopped eating with Gentiles when **those adding laws** to the Torah were present. Tension was created by a misapplication of the law about the Gentiles being accepted as believers from Exodus 34:14-16 which says they were not to eat with Gentile idolaters.

These Gentile believers were no longer idolaters and Kefa and others should not have stopped eating with them. This happened because of people back then who added laws to the Torah. Since these people were adding laws to the Torah, **they were Torah breakers.** Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV says, "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God."

Shaul makes a point from Galatians 3:6-9 that the Gentiles can have faith and live justly, the scriptures prophesied this, and all those who believe in the true God both Jew and Gentile are blessed through Abraham. Then in Galatians 3:10, Shaul quotes Deuteronomy 27:26 NKJV, "A curse on anyone who does not confirm the words of this Torah by putting them into practice." Again, **Those that don't keep the Torah are under a curse.** The Gentiles were to learn and keep the Torah according to Acts 15:21 NKJV, "For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every

Sabbath."

It is not the law that is a curse. It says cursed is anyone who does not keep the Torah, the law. That has been the issue all along. **The Torah breakers** who added the extra man-made laws **were not keeping the Torah right** and excluding the Gentiles from accepting the Messiah. Shaul made two points in Galatians 2:14-21. We have to have faith in God and not ritual without faith. He also says we do not want to build another system of man-made laws in Galatians 2:18.

Then Galatians 3:11 means that no one is made just by only doing laws without faith. A person who lives justly (justified means to live justly, namely a person who does what is right) requires that we also have faith in God. It says in Habakkuk 2:4 CJB, "The righteous will attain life through trusting faithfulness." Anyone can keep a law without their heart being in it. We must also have faith in God.

You might want to note. People who start interpreting the Bible wrong apply their wrong thinking to all the scriptures and develop their own false theology. God's word is not a curse. It is adding and subtracting from God's word that brings a curse. Just like Eve changed what God had said by adding to and subtracting to God's word, they change the meaning of the scriptures and bring a curse on themselves like it says in Deuteronomy 27:26, "A curse on anyone who does not confirm the words of this Torah."

It is our responsibility first to do what is right. Then, try to help others with humility to also begin doing what is right. Do not expect people to automatically change. It can take a while to unlearn false teaching; be loving, caring, and help them to understand little by little. Just like Eve was deceived, they are deceived and we need to help them in love (2 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 4:15).

Galatians 3:12 tells us that the law in itself doesn't require faith, but those who live by them will benefit from them, the law of God's commandments in the Torah. Shaul is quoting from Leviticus 18:4-5 NKJV where it says, "You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the Lord." Since he is quoting from this, he obviously does not mean the law is done away with. Anyone who keeps the law will benefit from them (also see Deuteronomy 4:6)

So, in Galatians 3:13, the Messiah has redeemed us from being cursed by the extra man-made laws. The Jews were living by misapplied laws and he came to set us free from these misapplied man-made laws **so we could observe the law, the Torah, properly.**

The Torah says that anyone hanged on a tree is cursed (see Deuteronomy 21:23), so Shaul sees that Yeshua dying on a tree has removed our curse, the curse of the extra man-made laws that were contrary to the Torah. Therefore, it also stands to make sense that Yeshua has removed the man-made laws that are keeping the Gentiles outside the community of believers – we can understand this from the context, namely the implied thinking that Shaul expects us to have.

Therefore, according to Galatians 3:14, since the man-made laws that are keeping the Gentiles outside the community of believers has been removed, the blessing of Abraham can be fully realized through the Messiah Yeshua, both Jew and Gentile can receive the promise of the Holy Spirit by our faith.

Continuing on with the portion.

Abraham then sends away his righteous servant Eliezer to find a wife for his son Isaac. Eliezer ruled Abraham's house for him (see Genesis 15:2 and Genesis 24:2). The name Eliezer means, God will help me. Eliezer is to find a wife for Yitz'chak in Nachor's city in Aram-Naharayim (namely, Mesopotamia). Nachor was Abraham's brother. Abraham does this because he does not want Yitz'chak to marry an unbeliever from the land of Canaan. Abraham says that God would send His angel before his servant. When his servant gets to the city it is evening and it was time for the women to draw water. Abraham's servant prays and asks God for a sign that the woman whom he asks water from will say yes and also offer to water his camels. Before he could finish asking God, Rivkah the daughter of Nachor came.

This is not just a funny story at a well, but a recording of God orchestrating events to make His will known. Abraham's servant then asks for a drink of water, and she complies and also offers to water his camels. He asked if they had room to stay and she said that they did. When he arrives at the home of Lavan, Rivkah's brother greets Abraham's servant in the name of yud-hey-vav-hey, (God's real name, Yě-hō-váh¹ – יהוה).

Yě-hō-váh, "This is My name forever" Exodus 3:15 NKJV

Before Abraham's servant eats, he explains why he is there and the events that God had orchestrated to bring them together. He lets them know why he is there and asks them if he needs to look elsewhere for a wife for Yitz'chak. They recognize that God has brought them together and he was able to return right away with Rivkah even though they asked him to stay. Rivkah and Yitz'chak end up seeing each other in a field when Rivkah was almost back. Yitz'chak then takes Rivkah as his wife. Abraham has another wife named Keturah after Sarah and she has six sons before Abraham dies at the age of 175, Yitz'chak inherits Abraham's possessions. The descendants of Yishmael are listed at the end of this portion; he dies at the age of 137.

This portion records the deaths of both Abraham and Sarah. The Jewish writings say that the cave of Makhpelah that Abraham bought for his family's burial is where Adam and Eve were buried. In this portion, the highlight of this portion is when God orchestrates the events to bring Rivkah back as Yitz'chak's wife. Abraham sends his servant trusting God that his servant will bring back a wife for Yitz'chak. Then God works out the details.

We see events like these happening to the prophets in the Tanakh and they also occurred frequently to Yeshua. Yeshua's disciples experienced miraculous events as they followed Yeshua wherever He went. In the case of Abraham's servant and also for Rivkah's family, it

¹ The name for God is Yě-hō-váh as seen in 2,363 manuscripts to date. Only once as Yehoveh; **never as Yahweh**. The name Yahweh was just made up by a Gentile theologian.

was apparent to them that the LORD - Yě-hō-váh, יהוה, orchestrated the events to bring back Rivkah as Yitz'chak's wife. After Yeshua ascended to heaven, his talmidim recalled many of the events they witnessed and saw how God had orchestrated the events to show them that Yeshua is indeed the Messiah. It should also be evidence to us that God is in control. I have witnessed events that were set up by God and they were very exciting.

Woe to him who strives with his Maker! ... Shall the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?' Isaiah 45:9 NKJV.

The Haftarah for Chayei Sarah is 1 Kings 1:1-31. This reading takes place just before the death of King David. King David is sick and one of his sons began to claim that he was king. Bat-Sheva asks King David if he hadn't told her that Shlomo would be king. Natan also comes in and asks King David about Adoniyah's claim to the throne. King David then orders Shlomo to be anointed king.

In the Torah portion we see Abraham sticking to what God told him to do about Yitz'chak being the heir of promise. Although men may think that they are the ones who are in power and they are the ones that know how to procure power, it was God who ultimately chose the line of people who would bless the earth and who would be the Messiah, namely Yeshua our Messiah.

Abraham gave his life to serve the true God and God gave him a blessed life; his life was not without trials, but he stood strong and through Abraham, the entire world has been blessed tremendously. We also can be a people who give our lives to God and bless this world. Never minimize your contribution as a follower of the creator God and our Messiah Yeshua.

Commandments and Implied Commandments in this Portion (We can understand commandments are being implied from other scriptures in the Bible.)

We should take time to grieve over the death of those close to us. This can be accomplished in many different ways, but not in a pagan way. Abraham put Sarah's body in a special cave in memory of her. Genesis 23

You can make agreements with trustworthy people. Genesis 24:3-4

We are to marry believers in the true God. Abraham went to extremes in order to ensure this for his son Isaac. Genesis 24:3

God will bring to pass miracles on behalf of His people at His discretion. Genesis 24:27

It was appropriate to use God's real name, Yěhōváh, and it still is. God's name is used over 6,200 times in the Tanakh. God says Exodus 3:15 NKJV, "This is My name forever." We see Nahor's son, Bethuel using God's real name. Genesis 24:50

A man and a woman are to get married and live together as husband and wife. Genesis 24:67

It is okay to marry again after the death of your spouse. Genesis 25:1