

Bringing the Farbrengen Home

NOT JUST ANOTHER CARBON FOOTPRINT

by Tzipah Wertheimer

There are many reasons not to have children; carbon footprints, career goals, large expenses ...just to name a few. Olympic volley ball player Kerri Walsh Jennings made headlines when she said, "I was born to have babies [and play volleyball]." Children are a blessing. Though often regarded as a "choice," reproduction is obviously part of our genetic makeup.

Sarah, the first mother of the Jewish people, did not have a child until she was 90 years old. Her husband Avraham was 100. At their son Yitzchak's bris, the women of the town mocked Sarah. "Such an old lady," they jeered, "she must have taken home an orphan from the market." In proud defiance to their sneering she nursed her baby in front of their eyes. Indeed her body had gone through the entire process of bringing life into the world and now her milk was flowing. Then she nursed their babies as well! She put an end to the questioning.

It's true that children are expensive. It's true that parenting is hard. In the short term, the challenges are many and the rewards are few. It's also true that there is no longing like the longing to have a child. Sarah knew well this pain, perhaps she carried it with her as she raised her son in the light of her entire life's mission.



Yitzchak was not just another carbon footprint, he was the next generation that held promise for the future.

It's rather odd that the portion of the Torah titled "The life of Sarah" actually speaks of her death and the details how her loved ones were comforted and moved on. Obviously, the "Life of Sarah" is much more than her burial.

Sarah was the partner of the greatest non-conformist to ever live. Together, with her husband Avraham, they left behind everything they had ever know and began the journey called monotheism. They suffered much but they didn't look back. They taught the pagans, gratitude towards and belief in the One Above.

Sarah left a legacy behind that was realized through the next generation. Her life was totally bund up with her mission, and as her son and daughter in law continued in that path the quality of the life she had lived became realized to an even greater degree.

Sarah didn't choose to have Yitzchak, she was blessed with him and ultimately the once barren woman became the first mother of the Jewish people. So while at first glance there may seem to be numerous reasons not to have children, in reality there is every reason to have children and raise them to make the world a better place. 

Just Me שו"ת A Question

Q: When did HaShem instruct the world against idolatry?

A: Rambam writes that Adam, the first man, was commanded with six commandments: 1) idolatry, 2) cursing the Name (of G-d), 3) murder, 4) illicit sexual relations, 5) thievery and, 6) establishing a system of justice. A seventh commandment forbidding the eating of a limb torn from a live animal was added for Noah, as it says, "Even flesh, life is in the blood, do not eat of it" (Genesis 9:4). These commandments are universally applicable. (Source: Rambam, Laws of Kings 9:1).

Q: Are men allowed to have more than one wife?

A: Although the Torah discusses men having more than one wife, around the year 1000, Rabbeinu Gershom instituted some decrees that became widely accepted, known as *Cherem d'Rabbeinu Gershom*.

The three main laws that are discussed in halacha are: 1. Not to marry more than one woman (at the same time); 2. A man cannot divorce his wife against her will; and 3. One may not read someone else's mail without permission.

Some reasons for the prohibition of having more than one wife include:

- to deter men from abusing their wives, since they might not act decently to their wives, if they could simply marry another wife if desired (Rashba);
- To maintain marital and family harmony (Mordechai);
- It will be too difficult to earn enough money to properly support all of one's wives (Maharam Padawa). Other reasons are given, as well.

The First Jewish-Owned Real Estate in Israel

The Life of Sarah

by Rabbi Shaul Wertheimer

One might expect that a parsha called Chayei Sara, the life of Sarah, would discuss our matriarch's life. Why, then, does the parsha recount the story of her passing and subsequent events?

One approach is that the two main topics contained within the parsha are actually a perfect fit to illustrate her enduring legacy.

But it's not just a spiritual legacy; Sarah was all about impacting the world in a tangible way, and we therefore read first about the purchase of the Cave in Chevron for her burial plot, followed by the story of the marriage of her son Isaac to Rebecca.

After Sarah dies, Avraham looks for a suitable place to bury her. He strikes a deal with Ephron the Hittite to purchase a cave.

Even after Hashem promised the Land of the Jewish people, and even though Avraham had spent time walking the Land of Israel as a means of acquisition, others didn't really know about it.

Only as a direct result of Sarah's passing did Avraham purchase a portion in the Land, demonstrating to all – out in the open – that the Land of Israel belongs to the Jewish people.

Moreover, even though Ephron offers the Cave for free, Avraham insists on paying full market value, a sum of 400 silver sheqels.

We thus see that the burial of Sarah emphasizes her enduring impact in a tangible way.



Following that, we read how Avraham sends his servant Eliezer to find a bride for Isaac. This marriage leads to the establishment of the Jewish Nation for all time.

It is specifically in the story of her passing and the marriage of Isaac that we see what Sarah was really all about. Sarah didn't just wax poetic; she endeavored to translate her vision into something tangible.

As the first of the Matriarchs, Sarah's leadership encourages us to make sure that even when we have great thoughts, great ideas and intentions, we need to ensure that they are expressed in a practical manner.

And that is the life of Sarah. 

Hayom Yom

Cheshvan 24

In material matters one should always look at he whose situation is lower than one's own, and thank the good G-d for His kindness to him.

In spiritual matters one should always look at he who is higher than oneself, and plead with G-d to grant him the intelligence to learn from the other, and the ability and strength to rise higher.

Chassidic Story

(Continued from last week) last week: Nosson the merchant tried to help a Jew whose horse & wagon got stuck in the mud. He was unable to help but got covered in mud ruined his clothes and ended up coming late to Shul.

Meanwhile, Nosson's coachman, Peisha had also gotten ready for Shabbos, when he heard about the coach that was stuck in he mud, he figured someone else would surely help.

Piesha came to the bais medresh quite early and met many of the poor wandering Jews who were also spending Shabbos in the village. Suddenly he realized that since he was unknown in these parts he would get the opportunity to host these poor & needy Jews for the Shabbos meals. The was normally a privilege that only the wealthy enjoyed. Normally the richer members of the community would cast lots to see who merited hosting guests - a poor driver like himself never got a chance.

This week Peisha took all the guests much to the disappointment of everyone else. He hosted the meal at the inn but had barely enough food for everyone. The wandering Jews were a bit upset as they had been looking forward to a proper meal. Meanwhile the wealthy Nosson sat, miserable and tired alone in his room.

After 120 years when both of these souls made their finally journey to Shamayim the Heavenly Court declared that they were misguided souls! Nosson should have hosted the guests while Piesha should have dug out the wagon. Each did what the other should have done and nobody benefited. It was decided the these 2 souls must descend back into the world again and each would be tasked with doing his own unique duties. 

To sponsor an issue of
QUEENS FARBRENGEN
visit www.qChabad.org/QF

Sponsored by:
Yerachmiel & Shoshana Render
in honour of the
birth of their daughter
BRACHA CHANA
25 Tishrei 5786

**לזכות רפואה שלימה
לשמואל חיים בן מרים
ושמחה בן תמרה**