

**RaYBaSH's Weekly Way**  
**Parashah #5 Chayei Sarah: "Life of Sarah"**  
**B'reshit/Genesis: 23:1-25:18**  
**Haftarah: Aleph Malakhim/ I Kings 1:1-31**  
**Brit Chadasha: I Cor. 15:50-57**  
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The righteous are not spared the undesirable and unsavory drama in life and this Torah Portion sounds like a sorted soap opera of a dysfunctional family. Sarah dies, according to tradition, due to the shock of finding out Abraham's intentions to sacrifice Isaac. Abraham is grieving and has to negotiate the purchase of a burial plot for Sarah, find a wife for his son Isaac while Abraham himself remarries. According to Jewish tradition it is Hagar who converts and takes the name Keturah. Abraham dies and Isaac and Ishmael reconcile as they bury their father next to Sarah in the first plot of land in the Promised Land which Abraham purchased for himself which became the family burial cave.

Gen. 23:1 tells us Sarah was 127 years old, but the Hebrew says Sarah was 127 years alive! Meaning that Sarah truly lived; that she focused on life, not age and made the most out of these years.

Sarah's life; not a tremendous amount of detail is given from the Scripture regarding her life but what we do know from Scripture is that she was a beautiful woman desired by kings! She was infertile and either logical or cynical depending on how you read the Scriptures when she laughed at the prophecy that she was going to have a baby. But what the Scriptures doesn't spell out, but we can glean collectively from the text is that Sarah would have made Tammy Wynette proud for she "Stood by her man" and was faithful. Most women wouldn't put up with a man who was an eccentric or social oddity because when literally everyone was a polytheist, Abraham was a monotheist. When everyone else believed their gods had territory and limitations of power, Abraham's G-d was omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. When most were content to stay around the land of their birth or at least have a set annual nomadic circuit, Abraham took off in one direction via G-d's command and when Sarah asked, Honey, where are we going?" Abraham responded, "I don't know dear, we'll find out when we get there." Most would have left such a man and nowadays take out a restraining order because they thought he was crazy!

Also in Hebraic culture, if a woman was infertile and did not conceive by a certain time or did not have a maid to give to her husband as a concubine and the man did not issue a divorce, the woman would leave, making the man free to marry a fertile woman and produce heirs.

No question about it, Sarah was faithful and believed in Abraham when no one else did.

In our Haftarah Portion David dies and his life was just as dysfunctional and sorted as Abraham and Sarah's. Just as Sarah was faithful to Abraham; David was faithful to God. Sarah stepped out as Rebecca stepped in as successor and Matriarch and as David passed away his son Solomon ascended the throne.

The Brit Chadashah encourages us that mortal death isn't the end of such faithful believers.

**I Cor. 15:50-58 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.**

And yet in the records of one's death the focus nonetheless still is on what a person does until they get there and by the examples given to us in our texts this week we can take away these nuggets of truth.

- Sarah teaches us to trust and support those in spiritual authority over us and to believe and trust in the God they serve.
- David teaches us to choose wisely who we will pass our torch to and make sure all business is taken care of before one's death.

- Rav Sha'ul (Paul) teaches us that death isn't the end but the birth of new and eternal life.

Shabbat Shalom and Shavuah Tov!

-- Yehudah ben Shomeyr