

Chayei Sarah 5770

by Shayna

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Every
Girl's Dream

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Most of us grew up with the idea that one day our love story will play out. With this in the forefront of our minds, we have re-enacted this dream everyday of our lives by playing with plastic baby dolls and walking down the aisle with our brothers playing the "destined one." We have watched our mothers be wives and our siblings growing up under a parent's love. And now, we desperately long for that day when we will become mothers and wives-perfectly fulfilling one of the roles that HaShem created for us.

Many of the young girls in my life often ask me why I am not married yet. "After all," they say, "you are eighteen!!" One little friend was actually quite concerned for my older brother when she found out that he was nineteen and still unmarried. She proclaimed, "Eighteen was his only shot-and now he will never get married!"

I guess at one point or another we all once thought like that. For most of us, when we were younger, the thought of love was very "Hollywood." Unfortunately because of this viewpoint of fairytale love, we see

way too many hearts broken.

Left
Alone

In today's society, most of us are left to ourselves when it comes to dating or finding our future spouses. Today its pretty much known that when a child turns eighteen they are expected to become an adult and choose their own direction in life. I certainly do believe that this can and should be done in a healthy manner, but unfortunately the modern concept of "finding a spouse" is thrown into the mix of independence as well; this unfortunately has yielded pain for many people.

In this week's parsha, Chayei Sarah, we observe Avraham actively pursuing a wife for his son Isaac.

Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years. And the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh, that I may make you swear by the L-rd, the G-d of heaven and G-d of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, but will go to my country and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac." Genesis 24:1-5

And, reading into next week's parsha, we find that Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah!

These are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham fathered Isaac, and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife. Genesis 25:19-20

Could you imagine how this would work in today's society? A father finding a spouse for his forty-year-old son! An odd thought to think about, but back then it was totally normal and better yet, it worked. It always saddens me when I see young ladies my same age feeling totally lost in a world that was only ever imaginary. Sadly, many parents take a back seat in "match-making" and leave their children hopelessly lost and vulnerable to pain.

Finding Prince Charming

So, how do we find our Prince Charming? Surely he has to be out there somewhere! How can we find him without all the pain and suffering of the world?

It seemed pretty easy for Rebekah. If drawing water and being ourselves is all we have to do, then why are some of us still alone? How can we find him if we don't get out there and check out our options? Does finding a spouse have to be so difficult? Well, perhaps it all starts on the inside. How can we find that wonderful "someone" if we don't know the "some one" who is looking?

Knowing Ourselves

Knowing ourselves and being confident in who we are probably are the hardest things with which humans struggle. What made Sarah, Rebekah, and the other matriarchs so great was that they truly knew themselves and who they were. They were active in HaShem's plan for their lives, how that played out, and they also understood the "power" of feminine spirituality.

I am constantly amazed at the power of feminine spirituality. Of course everyone can, if they choose, be spiritual. But there is something in women that makes us very connected spiritually. As I have been warmly welcomed into the realm of womanhood, I have discovered the "power" of feminine spirituality.

We have the ability to tear down or to build up, to create something great or to bring ruin. We can become deeply connected with the world around us, yet at the same time remain very distant.

We have the power to change the course of a day, month or year. We are able to make a choice and have it greatly affect the people around us, especially those we love. Our very actions today-however simple or mundane they may seem-will dictate our futures.

She said, "Drink, my lord." And she quickly let down her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink. When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking." So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw water, and she drew for all his camels. The man gazed at her in silence ... Genesis 24:18-21

The Midrash teaches that the reason why Rebekah was able to draw many gallons of water was because she trusted in HaShem's will so strongly that she didn't need to lower her bucket into the well, but rather the water miraculously was filled each time her bucket was empty. Rebekah truly put her whole trust in HaShem. She was confident and content in who she was. She couldn't have done any of that without her trust and connection to HaShem.

Figuring out our spirituality can be a huge factor in discovering who we are. Rebekah was so confident in herself and in the trust she had in HaShem that she knew each moment was her moment to shine.

This is how we should be too: Rebekah trusted in HaShem so greatly that it set the stage for miracles to happen in her life. We need to know who we are and that HaShem will work miracles in helping us become who he wants us to be.

Getting to that place can mean many different things. Everyone has a different way of finding who they are, but once you are content in your own skin, you are on a path in G-d's service and plan for your life that will never end.

The
Triangle of Love

It is often taught that godly relationships are like a triangle: the girl, the boy, and HaShem. But, until we meet Mr. Right, it's just HaShem and you. I believe that it is vital for us to grow in our relationship with HaShem in order to be ready for the next step. How can you or I discover that "someone" who will complete the rest of our lives if we have not yet discovered ourselves and our relationship to our Creator?

Judaism teaches that HaShem sits in heaven as a matchmaker. Some might have to wait a little longer than others. So instead of sitting around aimlessly, we can take a hold of our spiritual capacities now and find ourselves: discover who we can really be and follow HaShem's will for our lives through keeping mitzvot. Before too long, Prince Charming and his white horse will be waiting.

Connect with the spiritual being that you are, grow in your education. Find the heritage that you belong to because knowing our heritage gives us a background of strength. We need more women today who truly know who they are. Tamar Frankel touches on this concept in self awareness:

For it is only by knowing and acting on our deep inner strength that we can, individually and collectively contribute to bringing the world to a higher level. We must affirm what comes naturally to us while we also grow in other areas.¹

Sarah lived 127 years of greatness. She converted many, many souls to the one true G-d. She understood her place as a spiritual vessel for HaShem, and she used it to change the tide of a great nation.

Rebekah, filling some big shoes, knew that the only way she could fulfill her calling was to be confident in herself. She used her trust in HaShem to create her future. She went on to mother two children that would play huge roles in the history of our people.

Let's get spiritually connected and become ready for what HaShem will have in store for us, whether that be higher education, marriage, taking the time to pursue dreams, or mindfully allowing HaShem to work in us through mitzvot.

Let us also love one another with a greater love, following in the light of our Master Yeshua the Messiah. Our paths will be made clear because, "We have the opportunity to refine our consciousness and at the same time transform the world through our actions and intentions."²

¹ Tamar Frankel, *The Voice of Sarah*, Harper Collins Publishers, New York, NY, 1990, p48.

2 Ibid, p51.