



## **Parasha Chayei Sarah**

November 19, 2022

*Torah:* Genesis 23:1-25:18

*Haftarah:* 1Kings 1:1-31

*K'tuvim Shlichim:* 1Corinthians 15:50-57

*Shabbat shalom mishpocha.* Our *parasha* today is *Chayei Sarah*, the life of Sarah. It begins with her death at 127 years old and her burial in the cave *Machpelah* in *Hevron* which Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite. The longest event of the *parasha* is Abraham's sending of his servant to find a wife for Isaac from his family in *Padan Aram* and the details of the servant's journey in his mission. He met *Rivkah*, Rebecca, and she agreed to return with him and become Isaac's wife. When they returned, Isaac took her into his mother's tent and Rebecca became his wife.

Our *haftarah* is related, not the choosing of a wife, but the choosing of a king. The thread that connects them together is the principle of ADONAI's divine choice. When Abraham's servant reached *Padan Aram*, he said: *14 Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please tip your jar so that I may drink,' and she will say, 'Drink—and I'll also water your camels'—let her be the one You have appointed for your servant Isaac. So by this I'll know that You have shown graciousness to my master.* (Genesis 24:14 TLV). The one who came and did these things was Rebecca, ADONAI's divine choice as a wife for Isaac. The divine choice in our *haftarah* reading today is Solomon as we will see in a moment. But, before that time, the people of Israel clamored for a king, rejecting ADONAI as their king. *Sha'ul*, Saul, was given to them as king, ADONAI's choice for the first king, but one that He knew would fail. After, *Sha'ul*, ADONAI's divine choice was David. ADONAI saw both *Sha'ul's* and David's hearts. *Sha'ul* was a man after his own heart, *Sha'ul's* heart, while David was a man after ADONAI's heart.

Some six hundred years after the time of Abraham and Isaac, King David is old and must be attended to. It is time for him to be replaced as king. His older sons were not good choices because of their terrible character and evil acts. Amnon, David's eldest son, raped his half sister, Tamar, the sister of his brother Absalom. Two years later, Absalom killed Amnon. (2Samuel 13). Kileab, also known as Daniel was David's second born. Nothing else is known about him. After that, Absalom, the third born son, planned a coup against his father David, but it failed and after a chase, he rode under an oak tree and was caught, suspended in the air, by his long hair. His cousin Joab ran him through with a sword. (2Samuel 15-18). Adonijah, David's fourth born son, then believed that he was the natural heir. He did not wait upon his father, but proclaimed himself king before his brothers and his fathers officials. But, he did not invite Nathan the Prophet or Solomon. Nathan heard about it and informed David who then had him to anoint Solomon as king. (1Kings 1). Several years later, Adonijah was put to death by King Solomon. (1Kings 2).

David told Nathan to anoint Solomon king, but David did not choose him, ADONAI did. David had fifteen sons by wives other than Bathsheba and including the one that died, he had five with her. They were the unnamed child who died, Solomon, Shimea, Shobab, and Nathan. Solomon was David's second born son by Bathsheba and was ADONAI's divine choice. After David and Bathsheba's first son died we read this: *24 Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba. He went to her and lay with her, and she bore a son and called his name Solomon. Adonai loved him, 25 and He sent word by the hand of the prophet Nathan. So he called his name Jedidiah, for Adonai's sake.* (2Samuel 12:24-25 TLV). That last sentence means that Solomon was also named *Ye'didyah*, Jedidiah. He was named by ADONAI with a name meaning "loved by G-d." This was the divine choice of Solomon. You may find conflicting information on the web regarding the order of David's sons by Bathsheba because of what it says in the Book of Chronicles: *5 These were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan and Solomon. These four were from Bath-shua the daughter of Ammiel;...* (1Chronicles 3:5 TLV). There was no requirement to list sons in order of their birth. Solomon came before Shimea.

In the reading of our *haftarah* portion, we might think that David chose Solomon to be king after him. *Batsheva* said to David: *17 ...: "My lord, you swore by Adonai your God to your handmaid: 'Surely, Solomon your son will be king after me, and he will sit on my throne.'"* (1Kings 1:17b TLV). That is true. David did swear to her that Solomon would be king, but only after ADONAI revealed it to him. Years before, before David ever met *Batsheva*, when he had wanted to build a house for ADONAI, he was told through Nathan the Prophet that he would not be allowed to build it. *12 "When your days are done and you sleep with your fathers, I will raise up your seed, who will come forth from you after you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He will build a house for My Name, and I will establish his royal throne forever."* (2Samuel 7:12-13 TLV). ADONAI said that He would build a house for David, a house for his descendants to rule, and his son would build a house for Him, the Temple. *10 ... "Moreover, I declare to you that Adonai will build you a house. 11 It will be that when your days are fulfilled to go with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. 12 He will build a house for Me and I will establish his throne forever. 13 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me, I will not withdraw My lovingkindness from him, as I withdrew it from the one who ruled before you. 14 I will appoint him over My House and My kingdom forever, and his throne will be established forever."* (1Chronicles 17:10b-14 TLV). As we know, Solomon did build the house for ADONAI and ADONAI also built a house for David, a house of his descendants on the throne and it began with Solomon.

Because ADONAI is omniscient, He has known all of these things from before the foundation of the earth. Regarding our discussion today, He made divine choices of Abraham, Isaac, Rebecca, David and Solomon. And, He also chose each of us, we who have trusted Yeshua. He even chose those who have not yet trusted Yeshua. It is they who have not chosen ADONAI because each of us has been given free will, the right to choose ADONAI or reject Him. And, the names of those who have chosen Yeshua were written in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the earth. After speaking of His coming judgment and the separation of the sheep from the goats, Yeshua said: *34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world'"* (Matthew 25:34 TLV). The names of the sheep were written before the foundation of the earth because ADONAI has complete knowledge and sees past, present and future.

Everyone knows the story about Solomon asking for wisdom rather than riches and that ADONAI granted it. *9 God gave Solomon wisdom and discernment in great measure, and a breadth of understanding as vast as the sand on the seashore. 10 Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. 11 For he was wiser than all men—* (1Kings 5:9-11a TLV). Solomon, who was selected by ADONAI's divine choice, was a great king; at first. As he grew older, he departed from strictly following ADONAI. *1 Now King Solomon loved so many foreign women, besides the daughter of Pharaoh—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites— 2 from the nations of whom Adonai had said to the children of Israel: "You shall not associate with them nor they associate with you, for surely they would turn your heart away after their gods." Solomon clung to them for love. 3 So he had 700 wives as princesses and 300 concubines—and his women led his heart astray.* (1Kings 11:1-3 TLV). It's always sad when someone who starts out so strongly serving ADONAI turns away. Solomon was a great king in so many ways, but he violated ADONAI's command to have nothing to do with those who worshipped other gods, false gods, and they turned his heart away.

I think we would be safe in saying that it was ADONAI's plan to raise up Abraham so that salvation could come through one of his descendants. But first, other descendants had to be raised up for his descendant Yeshua, to come from. Abraham's descendant Yeshua is called Son of David and He is, a physical descendant, the seed of David. This is shown both in His genealogy in Matthew 1 and also His genealogy in Luke 3. *6 and Jesse fathered David the king. David fathered Solomon by the wife of Uriah,...* (Matthew 1:6 TLV). *31 the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David,...* (Luke 3:31 TLV).

The genealogy in Matthew is Yeshua's by His adopted and legal father Yosef and in Luke by His birth mother, *Miryam*. Luke 3 also gives the name of Yeshua's real Father: *38 the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.* (Luke 3:38 TLV). In Matthew, we see that Joseph was descended from David's son Solomon and in Luke that Miriam was descended from David's son Nathan. This is something to think about. We know that Yeshua is Son of David regardless of whether He came from Solomon by adoption or through Nathan by birth. In either case, He is Son of David. But, why do we have *Miryam's* genealogy? Is it to show that she, herself, was a descendant of David or is there something more there?

In addition to taking his foreign wives, Solomon did something much worse: *7 At that time Solomon also built a high place for Chemosh, the detested thing of Moab, on the mountain near Jerusalem, as well as for Molech the detested thing of the children of Ammon.* (1Kings 11:7 TLV). According to 1Kings 11:5, Solomon also worshipped two other false gods, Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. The place which Solomon built to sacrifice to Molech was called Tophet and was in the Hinnom Valley outside Jerusalem. It was the place later called Gehenna by Yeshua. Two of Solomon's descendants, King Ahaz (2Chronicles 28:3) and King Manasseh (2Kings 21:6), sacrificed their children there. There is no evidence that Solomon sacrificed any children, but his wives may have. The shrine to Molech remained in use for around 355 years, sacrificing children, until King Josiah destroyed it (2Kings 23:10). It was there through part of Solomon's reign, through Rehoboam's, Abijah's, Asa's, Jehosaphat's, Jehoram's Ahaziah's, Athaliah's and was then destroyed by Josiah. This abomination present for 355 years was provided by the world's wisest man, but a man who could not control his sexual appetite.

What I'm about to talk about is just my wondering, something to consider and pray about. What Solomon did was a very grave sin. *11 So Adonai said to Solomon: "Since you have done this and did not keep My covenant and My statutes that I commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. 12 Nevertheless, I will not do it in your days for David your father's sake; but I will tear it away from the hand of your son. 13 Yet I will not tear away the whole kingdom, but will give one tribe to your son for My servant David 's sake, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."* (1Kings 11:11-13 TLV). ADONAI tore ten tribes out of the hand of Solomon's son Rehoboam and gave them to Jereboam because of Solomon's very grave sins. But, there is another admonition by ADONAI, one which He gave to Solomon right after the dedication of the Temple: *17 "As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, doing all that I have commanded you, keeping My statutes and My ordinances, 18 then I will establish your royal throne as I covenanted with your father David saying, 'You shall not lack a man to be ruler in Israel.' 19 But if you turn away and forsake My decrees and My mitzvot that I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, 20 then I will uproot them from My land which I gave them, and this House which I have consecrated for My Name I will cast out of My sight."* (2Chronicles 7:17-20a TLV). This is about the destruction of the Temple and the sending of Solomon's descendants into captivity. But, is it something more? This is my wondering. ADONAI said if you obey me and walk in my ways: *'You shall not lack a man to be ruler in Israel.'* Is it possible that because of his sins that the kingdom was torn from Solomon, that is, the right to have his sons sit on the throne of Israel, and given to Nathan? It was through Nathan that Yeshua descended through His mother *Miryam*. Was that the reason for her genealogy to be given? These are just musings. Don't make them to be anything else. But, we don't know where Solomon is now. He certainly did not make the faith chapter in Hebrews. What this shows us is that a person can be chosen by ADONAI, start faithfully following ADONAI, and then fail badly. Only ADONAI knows Solomon's present spiritual condition.

Salvation, life in the *olam haba*, the world to come, is not something that we get when we trust Yeshua. What we get is the promise of salvation. There are things we have to do before inheriting salvation. We have to run the race. *Sha'ul* gives us good advice as to how to run it. *24 Don't you know that in a stadium the runners all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win!* (1Corinthians 9:24 TLV). But, unlike a foot race, the race of life has many winners, but we all should run, that is, serve ADONAI, as though we are seeking first prize. Many people start out running well, but later slow their pace, maybe even to the point of losing their salvation. Some don't believe that can happen, but I do. Maybe, it's because of my Methodist upbringing, but I believe that a person can sincerely serve Yeshua, be saved, and then lose it.

Predestination is a related subject. My understanding of predestination is that each human being is ADONAI's divine choice. He chose us for salvation. Then, we used the free will that He gave us to choose Yeshua and ADONAI knew that from before the foundation of the earth. That's my understanding of predestination. He chose us so that we could choose Him. The other doctrine, the "doctrine of election" states that G-d chooses. He chooses some and doesn't choose others based on His own purposes. I don't agree with that. *Shimon Kefa* speaking on the day of *Shavuot* said: *21 And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of Adonai shall be saved.* (Acts 2:21 TLV). Later, *Sha'ul* expressed a similar thought: *4 He desires all men to be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth.* (1Timothy 2:4 TLV). Yeshua said: *4 "No one can come to Me unless My Father who sent Me draws him."* (John 6:44 TLV). But, this doesn't mean that He only draws some and not others, but that is the method

which the Father uses to gently woo us to Yeshua. Speaking of His death on the stake, Yeshua said: 32 *“And as I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all to Myself.”* (John 12:32 TLV). All these witnesses speak the same. Simon Peter said: *“everyone who calls upon the name of ADONAI shall be saved.”* *Sha’ul* said: *“He desires all men to be saved.”* And, Yeshua said: *“I will draw all to Myself.”* When we are drawn, we have a choice; either accept or reject Yeshua’s sacrifice as payment for our sins. The still, small voice of the *Ruach Kodesh* speaks to our spirit. But, we have to silence our own thoughts to be able to hear Him.

Can a person who has sincerely trusted in Yeshua and once followed Him fall from grace? The answer is yes. *Sha’ul* led the Galatians to a saving knowledge of Yeshua and they walked in it. But, some Messianic Jews who believed that faith was not enough approached them and convinced them that they must keep the whole *Torah* to be saved. They rejected the truth of trusting Yeshua by faith and replaced it with a works salvation; keeping the Law. *Sha’ul* said to them: 4 *You who are trying to be justified by Torah have been cut off from Messiah; you have fallen away from grace.* (Galatians 5:4 TLV). To be cut off from Messiah means that at one time they had Messiah, but now they don’t. They fell from grace, the grace of the promise of salvation.

The reality is that many in our nation and in the world once trusted Jesus and as *Sha’ul* put it, had Messiah, or had Christ. This means that they were saved. But, for a variety of reasons, their love grew cold and they abandoned their first love, Yeshua. They fell from grace. We don’t know who they are and are not trying to identify them. But, our concern is for them, that they would return to Yeshua. Can they come back? Yes, many can, but some who have gone too far cannot. Only ADONAI knows who can and who can’t. Then, there’s an entirely different category of people. Those who thought they were saved but never were. Yeshua said of those people: 21 *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”* (Matthew 7:21 TLV). Lord, Lord, means that they called upon His name for salvation. He goes on to say that they have even prophesied, cast out demons and performed miracles in His name. But, Yeshua said that He never knew them. Their confession of Yeshua as Messiah was insincere. But, there is also hope for them before they stand before His judgment seat. They can sincerely repent and trust Yeshua. It’s not too late.

All of this discussion about “divine election” is about and leading up to the state of “the body of Messiah” today, especially in the United States. The condition of the body is something about which we should all be sincerely concerned. It has deteriorated badly in recent years with many leaving churches and even leaving their former confession that they believed in G-d. Many in Yeshua’s body today even believe that the Republican party will save our nation, make it into what G-d wants it to be. It is a false hope. Just this week, twelve Republican senators joined with Democrats to advance “The Respect For Marriage Act.” What is this act? Here is a description of it by those who favor it: *“The Respect for Marriage Act would guarantee legal protections for millions of marriages in the United States by repealing the discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act and ensuring that marriages entered into legally are given full faith and credit by every state and the federal government. Simply put, Americans should be free to marry the person they love, regardless of sexual orientation or race, without fear of discrimination or fear that their marriages will be invalidated.”* This act is being proposed by Democrats because the Supreme Court overturned “Roe v Wade” and they are afraid that they, the Supreme Court, will overturn the approval of “same sex marriage” made in 2015. The “Defense of Marriage Act” spoken of as being discriminatory is a federal law signed by President Clinton in 1996. It defines marriage for federal purposes

as the union of one man and one woman, and allows states to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages granted under the laws of other states. But, support for gay marriage is not just in the congress. A Gallup poll from June, 2021 found that 70% of Americans — including 55% of Republicans — support same-sex marriage. Many of that 55% are or claim to be a part of Yeshua's body. His word is clear. Homosexuality is an abomination.

All this is to show that we must be in dedicated prayer for the body of Messiah in the United States, that those who still can, will make *teshuvah*, repent, and return to Yeshua. And, not just return, but be deadly serious about their faith, as we all should. We are Yeshua's dedicated followers today for this purpose, among others. Yeshua wants none to be lost and that should also be our desire. We need revival badly, for the fire of G-d to fall upon us and to spread throughout the nation and the world.

Father, speak to our hearts and give us the fervent desire to intercede for our brothers and sisters who have backslidden and fallen away. May we make it a priority to pray daily for *teshuvah* and revival. May this revival be a great revival like the past "Great Awakenings," but may it be the Greatest Awakening, that none should be lost and that in it, all Israel will also be saved. May it begin with us! In Yeshua's name, Amen.

As I said earlier, ADONAI's divine choice was of Abraham, Isaac, Rebecca, David and Solomon. And, it is also His divine choice that all the men and women whom He created should serve Him. But, not all choose Him. ADONAI knows who is divinely secure, those who will run a good race to the end. Those are the names written in the Lamb's Book of Life. But, whether or not other names are written there may depend upon us, upon our prayers. *Yochanan* said: *14 Now this is the confidence we have before Him—that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have the requests we have asked from Him.* (1John 5:14-15 TLV). Our prayers must be according to ADONAI's will and we know his will. Speaking of "G-d our Savior," *Sha'ul* said: *4 He desires all men to be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth.* (1Timothy 2:4 TLV). ADONAI is calling us and the others in the faithful remnant in this nation today for this purpose, that our prayers would lead to a revival and the repentance of many. Prayer does change things. May each of us purpose in our hearts to pray daily for repentance and revival, and that it would begin right here in our community. There are others in our local community praying for the same thing. We, along with many other churches and ministries are a part of Community Transformation, itself a ministry which is praying for unity and revival. There are many others in our community who are actively praying and seeking revival. May we take this serious concern to heart and pray daily for repentance and revival. May our joint prayers, the prayers of the faithful remnant, cause many to turn from their sin and to return to their first love, Yeshua, a great awakening, that none would be lost. *Shabbat shalom!*