

# THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT CHAYEI SARAH

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



**RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL**  
*TAL Founder & Director*

## HAVE YOU FOUND OR DO YOU FIND?

The Talmud (Yevamot 63b) relates that it was customary in ancient Israel to ask a newlywed groom: "Have you found, or do you find?"

The question refers to an apparent contradiction between two statements of King Solomon, the wisest of men. In the book of Mishlei (18:22) he declares: "He who has found a woman has found good, and will elicit good will from G-d."

Yet in the book of Kohelet (7:26) he states: "And I find woman more bitter than death." Although these two verses seem to convey conflicting images of woman, if we examine them closely, we can detect some subtle grammatical differences. Rabbi Yosef Ades Z'l explained one of the main differences as follows:

The first verse (in Mishlei) implies a man's understanding of his marriage to be G-d ordained. It was orchestrated by G-d and G-d has enabled him to be in this relationship. Hence the mention of G-d at the end of the verse.

The second verse in Kohelet, however focuses on the individual. This man clearly has the focus on himself as he says "And I find;" it is all about him. He views his success in marrying as his own doing, it is down to his tactics, charm and greatness that he is married. Such a relationship is doomed to failure and will in the end be "more bitter than death."

The Gemara (Moed Kattan 18b) relates how Rav said in the name of Rabbi Reuven ben Itzterobili that there is a decree from G-d that a specific woman is destined to be married to a specific man. Our spouse is

destined by G-d before we were born. Our mission is to find and implement that relationship with G-d at the centre.

It is such a powerful message that this is hinted at from the Torah, from the Prophets, and from the Writings; It is written in the Torah in this week's Parasha: "Then Lavan and Betuel answered and said: The thing comes from G-d, we cannot speak to you either bad or good" (Bereishit 24:50). From the Prophets, as it is written: "But his father and his mother knew not that it was from G-d" (Judges 14:4). From the Writings, as it is written: "House and riches are the inheritance of fathers; but a prudent woman is from the G-d" (Proverbs 19:14).

When something is written throughout the Holy books the message is important.

We should all value our relationships and understand that our spouses are given to us by G-d. If we do, then our relationships will turn for the better.

We can see clearly from the Parasha how G-d caused Rivka to become Yitzchak's wife.

Eliezer sets off, he is unsure how things will turn out. He conjures up a plan, prays to G-d and is answered instantaneously. He is encouraged to know that Rivka is from Avraham's family (which was one of Avraham's requirements) and sets out to ask the family for their approval.

Yet the most important part is yet to come. When the family invite Eliezer in and listen to his accounting of what happened at the well and his request for Rivka to marry Yitzchak, both Lavan (Rivka's brother) and his father Betuel answer, "The matter has come forth from G-d." They straight away accepted that Rivka marry Yitzchak.

Now let us pause a minute. Lavan was the biggest hustler in the Middle East. How could he accept Eliezer's account straight



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27TH CHESHVAN 5784

SHABBAT BEGINS:

16:04pm

SHABBAT ENDS:

17:07pm

Join our weekly TAL Shabbat Minyan.

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- Followed by hot delicious Kiddush

*Shabbat Shalom*



**DVAR TORAH**

Have you found or do you find?  
By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil



**DVAR TORAH**

Parshat Chayei Sarah  
By Rabbi David Baadani



**DVAR TORAH**

Genuine Love  
By Rabbi Yehonatan Salem



**HALACHOT**

By Rabbi Eli Mansour



**KIDS ZONE**  
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away. Surely, he had to have something up his sleeve in order to gain from this matter.

Our sages explain that indeed the family did have an ulterior motive.

Whenever someone wealthy would pass by in some places the custom to steel the wealthy man's money was simple – feed and poison him.

This is in fact what happened. As Rashi points out (25:51) Betuel was evil and tried to prevent Rivka from going with Eliezer, and he tried to poison Eliezer.

Eliezer though did not want to eat until he had related all that happened. "Food was placed before him to eat, and he said: I will not eat until I have spoken my words. He said: Speak"

"He said: I am Abraham's servant" (Bereishit 23/24:34).

As he began recounting the story of how he had met Rivka, emphasizing its divine providence, Lavan and Betuel showed little interest. Their primary focus was on him continuing with his meal, for they harboured ulterior motives, desiring his demise in the hope of acquiring his wealth. By the time he concluded his narrative, they impatiently urged him, "MeHashem

Yatsa Davar" – indeed, we concur, now please proceed with the meal.

Of course G-d had other ideas. The Targum Yonatan (24:33) says that in the end the dishes were switched and Betuel ended up eating his own poison. He died and that is the reason we never hear about him speaking again after this episode.

Divine intervention was evident throughout this episode. Furthermore, upon closer examination, one could speculate that with the change in circumstances – Eliezer alive, Betuel deceased, and Lavan assuming greater responsibility for his sister Rivka – Lavan might have had the opportunity to refuse Eliezer's request. However, this was not the reality.

Why didn't the assertive Lavan use the changed circumstances as a reason to decline? One might assume he had a legitimate excuse.

The answer lies in the fact that he had already committed to the proposal when he and his father Betuel responded together. In his haste to accommodate Eliezer, he had said what Eliezer wanted to hear and had already given his agreement.

Therefore, he could not retract his previous commitment.

Lavan's attempt to expedite the process, inadvertently became an instrument of G-d's plan, ensuring that Rivka would indeed marry Yitzchak.

In the end, Rivka accompanies Eliezer on the journey to wed Isaac. It becomes evident that the Divine hand played a significant role in uniting this couple, serving as a timeless lesson for future generations. The phrase "MeHashem Yatsa Davar" underscores the concept that we should recognize and internalize that our marriages are divinely orchestrated.

So in your relationship with your spouse, have you "found" or are you "find"?

Those that have found, have understood that G-d is at the centre of their relationship. In fact the numerical value of the Hebrew word for "found" "Matsah" is equal to that of the word for "humility" "anavah," reinforcing the idea that humility and self-nullification in front of G-d are prerequisites to success in finding one's true soul mate. May G-d bless us to be counted be among those that have found!



**RABBI DAVID BAADANI**  
*Director - TAL Chazanut Program*

## PARSHAT CHAYEI SARAH

After the passing of Sarah, Avraham went to Hebron to buy the cave of Machpelah and the field around it. He came to the Hittites and asked them to let Ephron sell his field and the cave that is inside the field. Ephron offered to give it for free but changes his mind and asks for a large sum of 400 silver shekels. Avraham gives him the money and buys what will be the burial place of our forefathers and mothers.

The question we should ask is, how did Avraham know that the price which Ephron asked for is the final offer? You see... a moment ago he offered to give everything for free. Suddenly he changed his mind and asked for 400 silver coins; this kind of person might change his mind again. So how did Avraham know that this sum would be

the final price Ephron would be happy with?

In last week's Parasha we learnt that ה' taught Avraham how to listen properly. In this week Parasha, which is around 25 years later, we see that Avraham already knows how to really listen to others.

Let's review the פסוקים with the simple translation and after that we will try to understand how Avraham heard them:

לֹא אֲדֹנִי שָׁמְעִי הַשָּׁדָה נְתַתִּי לָךְ וְהַמְעָרָה אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ לָךְ נְתַתִּיָּה לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי עַמִּי נְתַתִּיָּה לָךְ

"No, my lord, hear me: I give you the field and I give you the cave that is in it; I give it to you in the presence of my people..."

At first glance it looks like Ephron truly wants to give everything for free, but Avraham heard beyond the words. What Ephron was really saying is: לֹא אֲדֹנִי שָׁמְעִי. 'Please don't listen to what I say about giving you for free', לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי עַמִּי נְתַתִּיָּה לָךְ. The reason Ephron

initially suggests giving Avraham the land for free is because he was in the presence of his people and felt embarrassed to ask for money from Avraham.

Avraham understood and said to him: אַךְ אִם אַתָּה לֹא שָׁמְעִי, "If only you would hear me out! Let me pay the price of the land, I'm indeed willing to pay".

Ephron is satisfied that Avraham understands his 'language' so he continued. אֲדֹנִי שָׁמְעִי. "My lord, do hear me! אֶרְץ אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שֶׁקֶל כֶּסֶף בִּינִי וּבִינְךָ מָה הוּא A piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver—what is that between you and me? וָאֵת מְתֵךְ קָבֵר Go and bury your dead".

Avraham, the pillar of kindness, teaches us that the ultimate חסד we can give any human being is the feeling of being heard. To truly listen to what they have to say, to understand where they come from and what they want to express between the lines, beyond the words.





## RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM

### GENUINE LOVE

In this week's Parasha we read about the fascinating episode in which Avraham instructs his faithful servant, Eliezer, to find a spouse for his son, Yitzchak. After testing her level of kindness and thoughtfulness towards others, Rivkah was chosen to be Yitzchak's bride. The verse (Chaye Sarah 24:67) relates that Yitzchak "took her as a wife and loved her". Interestingly, the verse does not write that, firstly, Yitzchak loved her, and then he betrothed her. Rather, once she already was his wife, then he loved her. We are accustomed to thinking that love comes first and is the cause for a person to marry their respective spouse, yet the verse is teaching us the opposite. Why is this so? According to the Torah, the true definition of love between husband and wife is not merely physical attraction, but one much deeper than that. It is the type of love that exists between a man and a woman who are working towards a common goal. Their love is due to their partnership in building a home and raising generations

according to the Torah. The need for a partnership is because of their naturally different roles, whereby each one fills the gap that the other one cannot fill. The common ambition of this partnership binds them and generates genuine love between them.

Additionally, love is generated through the recognition and appreciation of the good that one's spouse has done for the other.

Sometimes, people avoid being appreciative of the good done for them, as this places them in a position of indebtedness, requiring them to say a verbal "thank you" or perhaps even more. However, when we contemplate and verbalise our appreciation for all the kindnesses that we receive from our spouse, even the most basic ones, this generates love. The biggest opponent to recognising and appreciating the good that is bestowed on us is routine, or thinking that "all women do this for their husbands"! We must train ourselves to appreciate even small acts of kindness and express our thanks in a warm and congenial way. What our spouse does for

us can be felt most keenly when they fall ill and are out of action. For certain men to do laundry, or for some women to take care of the finances, can be near to impossible.

Thirdly, genuine love is generated by the act of doing for or giving to one's spouse. This forms the basis for their relationship, and not vice versa, as is commonly thought, that we give to our spouse because we love them. We give in order to love, and we don't love first in order to give.

When the verse says that Yitzchak loved Rivkah after he was married to her, it is because the actions that bring genuine love between spouses can only occur after they are married. The Torah's perspective is that one can only attain true love by working on the correct attitudes within marriage.

Let us work together with our spouses towards a common goal of building a home based on Torah. Let us appreciate all the kindnesses bestowed upon us and verbalise it. Let us do more for each other and let our spouses become more dependent upon us, and our love for each other constantly grow.



## HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

### THE STATUS OF KOSHER WINE THAT WAS MIXED WITH NON-JEWISH WINE

If kosher wine was mixed with forbidden wine, what is the status of the mixture?

The Halacha in this case depends on which kind of forbidden wine was mixed with the kosher wine. If the wine was "Yayin Nesech," meaning, wine that had actually been used in a pagan ritual service, then the entire mixture is forbidden and must be discarded. Even if only a minuscule amount of "Yayin Nesech" is mixed with the kosher wine, the wine is forbidden, and one may not drink or derive any form of benefit whatsoever from the wine.

If, however, the wine was not used for a religious ritual, but was forbidden because it belonged to or was touched by a gentile, then the Halacha will depend on whether the non-Jew who owns or touched the wine is considered an idolater. Muslims

believe in and worship a single Creator, and thus are not considered idolaters. Therefore, the status of wine owned or touched by a Muslim is less strict than that of wine owned or touched by other non-Jews. If wine owned or touched by a Muslim mixes with kosher wine, then we may apply the rule of "Bittul Be'shishim," which means that the wine is permissible if the forbidden wine constitutes 1/60th or less of the mixture. So long as the proportion of kosher wine to forbidden wine is at least 60:1, the wine is permissible for drinking and all other forms of benefit.

If the forbidden wine that mixed with the kosher wine was owned or touched by other non-Jews, who are considered idolaters, then the wine may not be drunk regardless of the proportion of the kosher wine. Even if only a small amount of forbidden wine mixed with the kosher wine, the wine is forbidden for drinking. One may, however, sell the mixture to a non-Jew, and then destroy the amount of money equal to the value of the forbidden wine in the mixture. For example, if the

forbidden wine constituted 1/15th of the mixture, and the Jew received \$15 for the wine, he must destroy \$1 by burning it, throwing it into the ocean, or the like, so that no one derives benefit from the forbidden wine. The rest of the money, however, is permissible and may be used. (Based on Ben Ish Hai, Parashat Balak, 12)

**Summary:** If even a small amount of non-Jewish wine mixed with kosher wine, the entire mixture is forbidden for drinking. One may, however, sell the mixture, and then destroy the portion of the money received that is equal to the value of the forbidden wine in the mixture. There are, however, two exceptions to this rule. If the non-Jewish wine in the mixture was forbidden because it was owned or touched by a Muslim, then the mixture is permissible for drinking, assuming the forbidden wine constitutes 1/60th or less of the mixture. Secondly, if the forbidden wine had been used in pagan worship, then the entire mixture is forbidden for any purpose, regardless of the proportion of kosher wine against the non-kosher wine.





# WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

## Parshat Chayei Sorah

Sarah the mother of the Jewish People, passes on at age 127. After mourning and eulogizing her, Avraham seeks to bury her in the Cave of Machpela. As this is the burial place of Adam and Chava, Avraham pays its owner, Ephron the Hittite, an exorbitant sum. Avraham sends his faithful servant Eliezer to find a suitable wife for his son, Yitzchak, making him swear to choose a wife only from among Avraham's family. Eliezer

travels to Aram Naharaim and prays for a sign. Providentially, Rivka appears. Eliezer asks for water. Not only does she give him water, but she draws water for all 10 of his thirsty camels (some 140 gallons)! This extreme kindness marks her as the right wife for Yitzchak and a suitable mother of the Jewish People. Negotiations with Rivka's father and her brother, Lavan, result in her leaving with Eliezer. Yitzchak brings Rivka into his mother Sarah's tent,

marries her and loves her. He is then consoled for the loss of his mother. Avraham remarries Hagar, who is renamed Ketura to indicate her improved ways. Six children are born to them. After giving them gifts, Avraham sends them to the East. Avraham passes away at the age of 175 and is buried next to Sarah in the Cave of Machpela.

Rabbi Sinclair, Seasonsofthemoon.com



1

Name the four couples buried in Kiryat Arba.

23:2 - Adam and Chava, Avraham and Sara, Yitzchak and Rivka, Yaakov and Leah.

2

What did Sara hear that caused her death?

23:2 - That Yitzchak was almost slaughtered.

3

Where was Avraham born?

24:7 - Ur Kasdim.

4

What special character trait did Eliezer seek when choosing a wife for Yitzchak?

24:14 - He sought someone who excelled in performing acts of kindness.

5

Who was Ketura?

25:1 - Hagar.

6

How old was Avraham when he died?

25:7 - One hundred and seventy five years old.



"... and her name was Ketura ..." (Bereishis 25:1)

Because her deeds were pleasant like Ketoreth (sweet smelling incense) (Rashi)

## SNEAK PEEK INTO NOVEMBER



### SUNDAYS

10am Bat Mitzvah Program

10am Girls Leadership Program

5:45pm Chazanut Program Boys

### MONDAYS

10am Yoga with Talia

7pm Girls Learning Program 6th Form

11am Caffeine For The Soul with Ruthie

7pm Girls Learning Program

### TUESDAYS

1pm UCL 1-2-1 Boys Learning Program

8pm Young Professionals Evening

1pm Business Lunch & Learn

8pm Young Professionals Girls Shur

### WEDNESDAYS

10am Mother & Baby Program

1pm Girls Lunch & Learn Immanuel College

7pm Lads Chavruta

### THURSDAYS

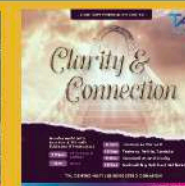
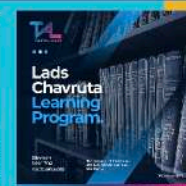
4:30pm After School Boys Program

### FRIDAYS

Friday Night Dinners

### SHABBAT

Minyan & Shabbat Kiddush



Calling all University students to join us for the 'United We Stand' Friday Night Dinner on 10th November. Sign up on our website.

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