

# A GOOD LIFE

*by Rabbi Label Lam*

In this weeks parsha we read that at the age of one hundred and twenty seven, Sarah Imeinu died. It seems strange that right after we read of her death, it is added that Sarah had a good life. One might think that though she had a long life, a life full of good deeds, it was anything but a good life. Anyone can see from reading the basic text, all the troubles Sarah had. First she had to travel far away, then there was a famine. She was kidnapped twice, and experienced years of childlessness. Finally Sarah gave birth to a boy. Not long after that however, Yishmael, the son of the concubine Hagar, began to have a bad influence on her son. Both Yishmael and Hagar had to be sent away. Now I would call that a hard and troublesome life, full of sadness and hardships.

The reason why it says she had a good life, is because of the way **she**, Sarah, looked at life.

Five years ago I was asked to help an elderly friend with a ride to the doctor to have some stitches removed. I noted my friend's pleasant demeanor and asked how she felt. "I'm fine, thank G-d" was her seemingly simple answer. Her reply was so calm that I ventured to ask what her surgery had been for. "Oh, I had a mastectomy" she said as if she was telling me how she had a splinter removed. Thankfully, I kept my eyes on the road. I was floored by her outlook on the whole thing. "I'm so sorry, I didn't know" was all I could say. Then, in her hallmark style she proceeded to comfort me! "That's alright" she said. "Don't take it so hard". "They found no indication that any further treatment is necessary". My friend had prepared a positive attitude before she was faced with adversity. She'll tell you herself that the strength to heal and go on with her (inspiring) life came from the knowledge that one's limited view of what it's all about is just that, limited and that there is a higher goal.

The negative things that occur in ones life can be a devastation or an opportunity to grow. As one tries to believe that life has a higher purpose than the here and now, we can strive to cultivate a life like that of Sarah Imeinu as my friend did and continues to do, may she live and be well. This week we are being told the way Sarah saw her troubles, how she reacted to the hardships. In her perspective, everything was for the best, and it was a good life.

The story portion of this Dvartorah was contributed by Mrs. M. Green

Good Shabbos!

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