

PARSHA SUMMARY FOR PARSHAS CHAYEI SARAH

by Rabbi Aron Tendler

Note: The Shabbos Torah Reading is divided into 7 sections. Each section is called an Aliya [literally: Go up] since for each Aliya, one person "goes up" to make a bracha [blessing] on the Torah Reading.

1st Aliya: Avraham negotiates with Ephron the Hitite to purchase the Cave of Machpelah as a burial place for Sarah. Tradition says that this is also the burial place of Adam and Chava.

2nd Aliya: Avraham sends Eliezar, his trusted servant, to Aram Naharayim, (between the Tigris and the Euphrates) to find Yitzchak a shiduch - a bride.

3rd Aliya: Leading a caravan of supplies and riches, Eliezar arrives in Nachor. While resting by "the well", he devises a test to ascertain the worthiness of a potential mate for Yitzchak. Rivkah (Yitzchak's 1st cousin once removed) meets all the criteria and Eliezar presents her with the appropriate gifts.

4th Aliya: Eliezar is invited into Bisuel's home (Rivkah's father) and he relates the entire story of his mission and his encounter with Rivkah. Eliezar asks for her hand in marriage to Yitzchak. Bisuel and Lavan (Rivka's brother) agree.

5th Aliya: Rivkah express her desire to depart immediately. Her family blesses her, and Eliezar brings her to Canaan. Yitzchak marries Rivka in the year 2090.

6th & 7th Aliyot: Avraham marries Keturah (some say she was Hagar) and has 6 more sons. Avraham dies in 2125 - 1636 b.c.e. at the age of 175. His two sons Yitzchak and Yishmael bury him in the Cave of Machpelah. Yishmael's 12 sons are listed and Yishmael dies at 137.