

**Parsha Plug: Parshat Chayei Sarah**

<b>Bereshit 23:17-20, 24:1-4</b>	<b>בראשית כג:א-ד, כד:א-ד</b>
<p><b>17</b> And so the field of Ephron which was in Machpelah, facing Mamre, was established (as Avraham's possession). [This included] the field and the cave that was in it, and all the trees that were in the field, which were within its entire border around. <b>18</b> [It was] to Avraham as a possession before the eyes of the sons of Chet, in the presence of all who had come within the gate of his city. <b>19</b> And afterwards, Avraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, facing Mamre, which is Chevron, in the land of Canaan. <b>20</b> And the field and the cave within it were established to Avraham as burial property, [purchased] from the sons of Chet. <b>1</b> And Avraham was old, advanced in days, and the Lord had blessed Avraham with everything. <b>2</b> And Avraham said to his servant, the elder of his house, who ruled over all that was his, "Please place your hand under my thigh. <b>3</b> And I will adjure you by the Lord, the God of the heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose midst I dwell. <b>4</b> But you shall go to my land and to my birthplace, and you shall take a wife for my son, for Yitzchak."</p>	<p>(יז) וַיִּקְמוּ שָׂדֵה עֶפְרָיִם וְאֶשֶׁר בְּמַכְפֵּלָה אֲשֶׁר לְפָנֵי מַמְרֵא הַשְּׂדֵה וְהַמְעָרָה אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ וְכָל-הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בַּשְּׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר בְּכָל-גְּבוּלֵי סָבִיב: (יח) לְאַבְרָהָם לְמִקְנָה לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי-חֵת בְּכָל בְּאֵי שְׁעַר-עִירוֹ: (יט) וְאַחֲרֵיכֵן קָבַר אַבְרָהָם אֶת-שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ אֶל-מְעָרַת שְׂדֵה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה עַל-פְּנֵי מַמְרֵא הוּא חֶבְרוֹן בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: (כ) וַיִּקְמוּ הַשְּׂדֵה וְהַמְעָרָה אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ לְאַבְרָהָם לְאַחֲזַת-קָבֵר מֵאֵת בְּנֵי-חֵת: (א) וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים וַיִּקְוֶה בְּרַךְ אֶת-אַבְרָהָם בְּכָל: (ב) וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל-עֲבָדָיו זָקֵן בֵּיתוֹ הַמְּשָׁל בְּכָל-אֲשֶׁר-לּוֹ שְׁיִמְנָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יָרְכִי: (ג) וְאַשְׁבִּיעֶנְךָ בְּיָקוֹק אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֱלֹהֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לְבְנִי מִבְּנוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּקִרְבָּו: (ד) כִּי אֶל-אֶרֶץ וְאֶל-מוֹלַדְתִּי תֵלֵךְ וְלִקַּחְתָּ אִשָּׁה לְבְנִי לְיִצְחָק:</p>

<b>Seichel Tov on Bereshit 24:1</b>	<b>שכל טוב (בובר) בראשית כד:א</b>
<p>With everything: With every type of abundant blessing, for he had servants and assets, so he was able to send many messengers.</p>	<p>וה' בירך את אברהם בכל. בכל מיני ברכה הרבה, שהיו לו עבדים ונכסים, ויכול לשלוח שלוחים הרבה.</p>

<b>Rashi on Bereshit 24:1</b>	<b>רש"י בראשית כד:א</b>
<p>The gematria of כל equals that of בן. After he had a son, he needed to find him a wife.</p>	<p>ברך את אברהם בכל - בכל עולה בגימטריא בן, ומאחר שהיה לו בן היה צריך להשיאו אשה.</p>

<b>Rashbam on Bereshit 24:1</b>	<b>רשב"ם בראשית כד:א</b>
<p>God blessed Avraham: This informs us that Avraham did not send his servant to take a wife for Yitzchak due to a lack of women in Canaan or because no one wanted Yitzchak. Avraham had been blessed with everything and the entire world desired Yitzchak! Rather, he wanted a spouse for him from his family. This is why Eliezer said: "God blessed my master very much and he has become wealthy." And so, the text needed to explain first that God had blessed Avraham 'with everything'.</p>	<p>ברך את אברהם - להודיע האמור לפנינו שלא שלח עבדיו לקחת אשה ממשפחתו מחמת חוסר נשים בארץ כנען שלא יהו רוצין להזדווג לו, שהרי נתברך בכל וכל העולם מתאווים להזדווג לו, אבל הוא לא רצה כי אם ממשפחתו. וזהו שאמר העבד וי"י ברך את אדוני מאד ויגדל, ולכך הוצרך לפרש תחילה ברך את אברהם בכל.</p>

<b>Pesikta Zutarta on Bereshit 24:1</b>	<b>פסיקתא זוטרתא (לקח טוב) בראשית כד:א</b>
<p>Avraham was old, advanced in days: Some become advanced in days and not old, while others become old and not advanced in days. But Avraham was old and advanced in days. Until Avraham, no one became old in the world. Then Avraham came and asked for mercy, and therefore it says, 'Avraham was old, advanced in days'... And God blessed him with everything: Rebbe Levi taught in the name of Rebbe Chama bar Chanina that God no longer tested Avraham...</p>	<p>ואברהם זקן בא בימים. יש אדם שבא בימים ואין לו זקנה, ויש אדם שיש לו זקנה ואינו בא בימים, אבל אברהם אבינו זקן בא בימים, ארז"ל עד שבא אברהם לא היה זקנה בעולם, בא אברהם אבינו וביקש רחמים עליה, לכך נאמר ואברהם זקן בא בימים...וה' ברך את אברהם בכל. ר' לוי בש"ר חמא בר חנינא אמר שלא חזר ונסה אותו...</p>

<b>Midrash Tanchuma on Chayei Sarah Siman 2</b>	<b>מדרש תנחומא (ורשא) חיי שרה סימן ב</b>
<p>And Avraham was old: Rebbe Yehoshua bar Nachmani said: Men become old prematurely because of four things: fear, grief caused by children, a wicked wife, and wars...We read about what transpires because of a wicked wife, in the verse: 'It came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods' (I Kings 11:4). However, Avraham's wife honored him and called him 'my lord', as is said: 'And my lord is old' (Gen. 18:12). Concerning her Scripture states: 'A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband' (Prov. 12:4). Hence, it is written of him: 'And God blessed Avraham in all things'.</p>	<p>ואברהם זקן, א"ר יהושע בר נחמני מפני ארבעה דברים הזקנה קופצת על אדם מפני היראה, ומפני כעס בנים, ומפני אשה רעה, ומפני המלחמות...ומפני אשה רעה דכתיב (מלכים א יא) ויהי לעת זקנת שלמה נשיו הטו את לבבו אחרי אלהים אחרים אבל אברהם אשתו מכבדתו וקוראתו אדני שנא' ואדני זקן, ועליה נאמר אשת חיל עטרת בעלה (משלי יב) לפיכך כתיב ביה וה' ברך את אברהם בכל.</p>

<b>Masechet Berachot 54b</b>	<b>מסכת ברכות נד:</b>
<p>And God blessed Avraham with everything: What does 'bakol' mean? Rabbi Meir says: The blessing is that he did not have a daughter. Rabbi Yehuda says: On the contrary, the blessing was that he had a daughter. Others say: Avraham had a daughter and her name was Bakkol. Rabbi Elazar HaModa'i says: Avraham our forefather was so knowledgeable in astrology that all the kings of the East and the West would come early to his door due to his wisdom. Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai says: A precious stone hung around the neck of Avraham our forefather; any sick person who looked at it would immediately be healed. When Avraham died, God hung this stone from the sphere of the sun, which from that point on brought healing to the sick. Abaye said: This explains the adage that people say: As the day progresses, sickness is lifted. Alternatively, what is the blessing of 'bakol'? That Esav did not rebel in Avraham's lifetime, that is to say, as long as Avraham lived Esav did not sin. Or it is that Yishmael repented in Avraham's lifetime.</p>	<p>וה' ברך את אברהם בכל מאי בכל רבי מאיר אומר שלא היתה לו בת רבי יהודה אומר שהיתה לו בת אחרים אומרים בת היתה לו לאברהם ובכל שמה רבי אלעזר המודעי אומר איצטגנינות היתה בלבו של אברהם אבינו שכל מלכי מזרח ומערב משכימין לפתחו רבי שמעון בן יוחי אומר אבן טובה היתה תלויה בצוארו של אברהם אבינו שכל חולה הרואה אותו מיד מתרפא ובשעה שנפטר אברהם אבינו מן העולם תלאה הקדוש ברוך הוא בגלגל חמה אמר אביי היינו דאמרי אינשי אידלי יומא אידלי קצירא דבר אחר שלא מרד עשו בימיו דבר אחר שעשה ישמעאל תשובה בימיו.</p>

Ramban on Bereshit 24:1	רמב"ן בראשית כד:א
<p>Our rabbis have a beautiful insight into this (Bava Batra 16b)...‘the others’ established a new interpretation on the verse, a very profound matter, and they explained with it one of the secrets of the Torah. Thus they said that the word ‘bakol’ hints at a great matter, namely, that God has an attribute called ‘kol’ (all) so called because it is the foundation of everything. It is with reference to this attribute that it says, ‘I am the Eternal Who makes ‘kol’...It is the eighth attribute of the thirteen attributes. And there is another attribute called ‘bat’ that emanates from it and with it He moves everything...[‘The others’ therefore] say that Avraham was blessed with an attribute called ‘bat’ which is contained in the attribute of ‘kol’ and is therefore also called ‘kol’ being analogous to the expression, ‘For My name is in him’.</p>	<p>ולרבותינו בזה ענין נפלא. אמרו (ב"ב טז ב) ... אחרים חדשו בפירוש הכתוב הזה ענין עמוק מאד ודרשו בזה סוד מסודות התורה, ואמרו כי "בכל" תרמוז על ענין גדול, והוא שיש להקב"ה מדה תקרא "כל", מפני שהיא יסוד הכל, ובה נאמר (ישעיה מד כד) אנכי ה' עושה כל...והיא המדה השמינית מ"ג מדות, ומדה אחרת תקרא בת נאצלת ממנה, ובה הוא מנהיג את הכל...היא רומזת ענין גדול שברך אותו במדה שהיא בתוך מדת הכל ולכן תקרא גם היא כל, כלשון כי שמי בקרבו (שמות כג כא).</p>

Midrash Aggadah on Bereshit 24:1	מדרש אגדה (בובר) בראשית כד:א
<p>Avraham was old, advanced in days: ‘Old’ means he acquired wisdom. ‘Advanced in days’ means that God allowed him to taste the world to come. There are three who tasted the world to come: Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. What’s the proof? Avraham: ‘God blessed Avraham with ‘kol’’. Yitzchak: ‘He ate from ‘kol’’. Yaakov: either ‘‘kol’ that You give me, I will surely tithe’ or ‘for I have ‘kol’’(note: there it is ‘I have been made small ‘mikol’).</p>	<p>ואברהם זקן בא בימים. זקן זה קנה חכמה: בא בימים. שהטעימו הקדוש ברוך הוא מעין העוה"ב, והם ג' שטעמו מעין העוה"ב, ואלו הם אברהם ויצחק ויעקב, באברהם נאמר וה' ברך את אברהם בכל, ביצחק נאמר ואוכל מכל, (בראשית כז לג), וביעקב נאמר וכל אשר תתן לי עשר אעשרנו לך (שם כח כב): ד"א וכי יש לי כל (שם לג יא):</p>

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, <i>Faith in the Future (The World’s Oldest Man: Chayei Sarah 5778)</i>
<p>On 11 August 2017, the world’s oldest man passed away, just a month short of his 114th birthday – making him one of the ten longest-lived men since modern record-keeping began. If you knew nothing else about him than this, you would be justified in thinking that he had led a peaceful life, spared of fear, grief and danger. The actual truth is the opposite. The man in question was Yisrael Kristal, Holocaust survivor. Born in Poland in 1903, he survived four years in the Lodz ghetto, and was then transported to Auschwitz. In the ghetto, his two children died. In Auschwitz, his wife was killed. When Auschwitz was liberated, he was a walking skeleton weighing a mere 37 kilos. He was the only member of his family to survive. He was raised as a religious Jew and stayed so all his life. When the war was over and his entire world destroyed, he married again, this time to another Holocaust survivor. They had children. They made aliyah to Haifa. There he began again in the confectionery business, as he had done in Poland before the war. He made sweets and chocolate. He became an innovator. If you have ever had Israeli orange peel covered in chocolate, or liqueur chocolates shaped like little bottles and covered with silver foil, you are enjoying one of the products he originated. Those who knew him said he was a man with no bitterness in his soul. He wanted people to taste sweetness...His life sheds light on one of the most tantalising verses in the Torah. Describing the death of Abraham, our parsha says that he “breathed his last and died in good old age, old and satisfied” (Gen. 25:8). His is the most serene death in the Torah. Yet consider his life, fraught as it was with trial after trial...[His] was a life of disappointed hopes and delayed fulfillments. What kind of man was this that the</p>

Torah can say that he died “in good old age, old and satisfied”? I learned the answer to this question through a series of life-changing encounters with Holocaust survivors. They were among the strongest, most life-affirming people I have ever met. For years I wondered how they were able to survive at all, having seen what they saw and known what they knew. They had lived through the deepest darkness ever to have descended on a civilisation. Eventually I realised what they had done. Almost without exception, when the war was over...strangers in a strange land, they built homes and careers, married and had children and brought new life into the world...That is what Abraham did in this week’s parsha. He had received three promises from God: children, a land, and the assurance that he would be the father, not of one nation but of many nations (Gen. 17:4-5). At the age of 137, he had one unmarried son, no land, and had fathered no nations. He uttered not a single word of complaint. It seems that he realised that God wanted him to act, not to wait for God to do the work for him...That is what the Jewish people did collectively when, a mere three years after standing eyeball-to-eyeball with the angel of death at Auschwitz, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the Jewish State in our people’s ancient homeland, the land of Israel. Had world Jewry sat passively and wept from then till now for the murdered generations of European Jewry, it would have been an understandable reaction. But it did not. It was as if the Jewish people had said collectively, in the words of King David, “I will not die but live” (Ps. 118:17), thereby giving testimony to the God of life.

<b>Kedushat Levi Chayei Sarah 7</b>	<b>קדושת לוי חיי שרה ז</b>
<p>‘And God blessed Avraham with everything’ is based on the fact that there are two types of tzaddikim. One type concentrates all his efforts in life on being of service to the community, whereas another type of tzaddik concentrates on perfecting his personal character traits. Avraham was of the former category, all his efforts being directed outward, for the benefit of his peers. God was with Avraham on account of his concern “for all”. The word את in the line is to be understood as עם, “with.” God supported him in all his endeavours.</p>	<p>וה' ברך את אברהם בכל, כי יש צדיק אשר כל מבוקשו בשביל הכלל ויש צדיק אשר מבוקשו על עצמו ואברהם היה מבוקשו על הכלל. וזהו וה' ברך את אברהם, כלומר עם אברהם. בכל, כי את הוא כמו עם ברך ה' אותו בכל כאשר היה מבוקשתו.</p>

<b>Birkat Hamazon</b>	<b>ברכת המזון</b>
<p>...as our fathers Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov were blessed each with ‘bakol mikol kol’; even thus may He bless all of us together with a perfect blessing, and let us say: Amen.</p>	<p>כְּמוֹ שֶׁנִּבְרַךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב בְּכֹל מִכֹּל קוֹל – כֵּן יְבָרֶךְ אֹתָנוּ כָּלְנוּ יַחַד בְּבִרְכָה שְׁלֵמָה. וְנֹאמֵר: אָמֵן.</p>