

# חַיֵי שָׂרָה

## Chayyei Sarah

(life of Sarah)

### B'reshit [Genesis] 23:1-25:18

#### The Glitter of Gold

***B'reshit (Genesis) 24:29-30***

***29 And Rivkah had a brother, and his name was Lavan; and Lavan ran out to the man, to the fountain.  
30 And it came to pass, when he saw the ring, and the bracelets upon his sister's hands, and he heard the words of Rivkah his sister, saying, "Thus spoke the man to me," he rushed to the man. And, behold, he was standing by the camels at the fountain.***

The first thing that we learn about Lavan (Laban) from Scripture is about his attraction to wealth and material gain. This should not be too surprising to us if we remember that where Avram came from was the Ur of the Chaldees, which was an integral part of Babylon.

***B'reshit (Genesis) 24:10***

***Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and all kinds of gifts from his master, got up and went to Aram-Naharayim, to Nachor's city.***

The name of the place that this servant went to was Aram-Naharayim, which literally means "the place between the rivers". In this case these two rivers would be the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers. The city of Ur was located on the Euphrates River. It is quite likely that Avram's relatives did not live too far from this location. What we want to understand here is that Lavan lived in the midst of Babylon. He thought and lived as a Babylonian. So let us examine this Babylonian mindset of seeking after wealth (materialism) a little closer.

***Yochanan (John) 18:36***

***Yeshua answered, "My kingdom is not of this world; if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Yehudim; but as it is My kingdom is not from here."***

In order to put this mindset in its proper perspective, let us keep in mind that the Kingdom that Yeshua stands at the head of is not of this world. In order to function properly in His Kingdom, we need to have

our mindset upon that kingdom. If one has his mind set upon this world and the things in this world, then he will end up pursuing the wrong things and have a Babylonian mindset.

***Romans 8:5***

***For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.***

When a person sets his mind on the things of this world and seeks those things it is a mindset that is the very antithesis of our Master's kingdom. In Lavan's case, what grabbed and held his attention was the gold ring and gold bracelets that Avraham's servant had given to his sister. They had grabbed his attention to the extent that he rushed to the man who had given these gold items to his sister. Scripture tells us that these bracelets weighed ten shekels each. In today's world these bracelets would have been worth somewhere around \$4000 a piece. Then to add in the ring, these three gifts would have been worth in our world today, somewhere in the neighborhood of \$10,000. Avraham's servant had just met this young lady and didn't even know what her answer was yet and he gave these kinds of gifts! It sure got the attention of her brother.

At first glance it seems that he ran out to see to the needs of this man. Perhaps Lavan was thinking that if his sister had received that much for just watering his camels, then he might be able to cash in on this deal as well if he fed and provided bedding for this man's camels. In verse 31 Lavan tells Avraham's servant to come in for he has prepared a place for both him and his camels. In verse 53 we learn that the servant of Avraham did indeed give gifts to both Rivkah's mother and her brother Lavan. But this is where we need to have understanding. It is not wrong to have things. We need to have certain things to be able to live in this world. However, it is the motivation behind what we are seeking that is the key to determining which kingdom one is a part of.

***Ivrim (Hebrews) 4:12***

***For the word of YHWH is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.***

It is the seeking after wealth or the seeking after material possessions that will get a person into spiritual hot water.

***Mishle [Proverbs] 28:22***

***A man with an evil eye hastens after wealth,  
And does not know that want will come upon him.***

Yeshua also taught us the truth that seeking after wealth was having an evil eye (see Matt. 6:19-24). If one has an evil eye, this simply means that his master is wealth or money and he is not serving YHWH. And for a person not to serve YHWH is evil.

So what we see is that on the surface what Lavan was doing seemed to be a good thing. He went out to see to the needs of this man. He even spoke words of blessing to him in the name of YHWH. And as is often the case, the one walking in the flesh will often be able to seem pious because he will have all the right sounding words. However, if we listen carefully to his words and then measure those words as well as his actions with His Torah, then we will be able to properly discern the master a person is serving, whether that is YHWH or money. For Yeshua taught us that a man cannot serve both money and YHWH, for he will serve one or the other, but not both!

Please note the following verse concerning Lavan later in life.

***B'reshit (Genesis) 31:7***

***"And your father (Lavan) has deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but Elohim did not allow him to hurt me."***

Ya'aqov in speaking to Leah and Rachel describes how Lavan was a cheat. Lavan was only interested in one thing: getting more wealth. Furthermore, he didn't care how he got it. When one seeks after wealth, righteousness suffers. And the longer that one seeks after wealth, the more righteousness will suffer. If the seeking of wealth is not repented of, then righteousness will die completely in a person's life who walks such a path.

There is a question that we need to be asking ourselves often. "Why am I doing what I am doing?" Everything that we do we need to understand the motive behind. Be sure of this one thing, YHWH knows what our motives are! We can fool other people. We can even deceive ourselves. However, we cannot fool YHWH! We need to be very honest here at this point. We need to be able to answer this with the highest degree of righteousness and integrity. How do we do that? We use His word to measure ourselves with. But what often happens when a person goes after something other than YHWH is that he looks into the word of YHWH for proof texts to be able to support his unrighteous actions. What YHWH desires of us is the following.

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4-5***

***4 "Hear, Israel; YHWH our Elohim YHWH is one;***

***5 and you shall love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your being, and with all your might."***

This is the beginning of faith. This is the foundation of faith. If what we do and what we say and what we are is not built upon this foundation, then it will not stand! One of the saddest things about these verses is that those of us coming out of Christianity and learning of Yeshua and His Torah ways, learn to say or sing the Shema. However, do you realize that in the traditional way in which the Shema is said, the second line (verse 5) is taken out and a substitute is said in its place? Why? Should we not be saying the whole Shema? Should we not be saying this so that this truth will become an integral part of who and what we are? It would seem so. If one does not make a daily declaration of loving YHWH our Elohim with his whole being, then what good is knowing that YHWH is one? Perhaps we should also

point out that this word **אֶחָד** – “echad” can also mean “first” as well as “united.” And if YHWH is not first in a person’s life, then He is nothing at all; for YHWH will not take a second place in our lives. He is either first or nothing.

Yeshua taught us that this was the greatest commandment of all. Yet, it is at this exact point that we fall down. How many people do you know that love and serve YHWH with everything that they have? I mean truly? What about you; do you love and serve YHWH with all your heart? How about with all your life, every aspect, every nuance and second of every day? What about with all your physical possessions? Are we so wrapped up in our daily living of providing food, shelter and clothing for our families and for ourselves that YHWH is nothing more than an add-on to our lives? Consider these words of our Master.

***Matithyah (Matthew) 6:25***

***“Therefore I say to you, be not anxious for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor yet for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment?”***

Yeshua truly understood that the Babylonian mindset was a mindset upon the things of this world. It is a mindset that is easy to get caught up in.

***Matithyah (Matthew) 6:3-33***

***31 “Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat? Or, what shall we drink? Or, what shall we be clothed with?’***

***32 For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things.***

***33 But you seek first His kingdom, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.”***

Please take careful note of what Yeshua states in verse 32. We could substitute the word “Babylonian” in place of “Gentile” and it would give us a greater understanding of what it was that Yeshua was teaching us and exactly what it was that He was contrasting. Yeshua was simply teaching us that those with the mindset upon Babylon seek food, drink and clothes, first and foremost. However, He is teaching us that we should not seek those things first, but rather we are to seek YHWH and His righteousness, and He will then provide those things that we need. The question then becomes, do we have enough faith and trust in Him and in this promise to step out and live like we truly believe His word to us? Our life is a reflection of what we believe. What does your life reflect in this matter?

ABBA YHWH, we choose to seek You and Your righteousness. Give us practical wisdom in how to go about doing this in our everyday lives; in Yeshua our Mashiach’s name. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

[zerubbabel@townsqr.com](mailto:zerubbabel@townsqr.com)

[www.onetorahforall.org](http://www.onetorahforall.org)