

# NCYI Youth Groups Parshas Chayei Sara

## Parsha Outline

### Chayei Sarah

- Sarah dies
- The purchase of Machpelah
- Yitzchak and Rivkah
- Avraham dies
- Descendants of Yishmael

([http://www.headcoverings-by-devorah.com/HebEngTaNaKh\\_TorahSummary.htm](http://www.headcoverings-by-devorah.com/HebEngTaNaKh_TorahSummary.htm))

**Sefer Bereishit** is divided into twelve parashiyot (weekly readings). The first two parashiyot cover 1,948 years of history and twenty generations. The third and fourth parashiyot focus only on one hundred years of Avraham's life. The message is - what Avraham stood for is what Creation is all about - what Avraham represented is what concerns the Torah. The Torah therefore dwells on the lives of the forefathers.

The balance of Sefer Bereishit (eight week parashiyot) is devoted to following the course of Avraham's descendants - Yitzchak, Yaakov, and the Twelve Tribes - as they further develop the philosophy and approach to live of their ancestor, Avraham. The ideology developed by Avraham becomes the basis for a unique nation, the further evolution and progress of the nation is presented in the following sefer - Shemot.

*Sefer Bereishit* not only describes the origin of the Jewish people, but traces the origins of all peoples of mankind.

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# Parsha Summaries

Family Parshah

## Parshah Roundup

Chayei Sarah - The Life of Sarah

[http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article\\_cdo/aid/320918/jewish/Parshah-Roundup.htm](http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/320918/jewish/Parshah-Roundup.htm)

By [Chani Benjaminson](#)

This week's parshah begins with a sad event: Sarah dies at the age of 127. Abraham is very sad and mourns her passing. He buys a piece of land on which to bury her which is called the Cave of Machpelah in the city of Hebron. He pays 400 silver shekels. This is the place where all of our patriarchs (Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) and Matriarchs (Eve, Sarah, Rebecca and Leah) are buried.

Isaac is now forty years old and not married. Abraham asks his trusted servant Eliezer to go to Charan, Abraham's city of birth, and find a wife for Isaac. Eliezer brings lots of beautiful jewelry and gifts for the future wife. But how will he find her? There were many girls in Charan! So he asks G-d for a sign to let him know which girl is the right one for Isaac. The sign is that when he will ask a girl for water to drink from the well, she will offer to give water to the camels as well.

Well, along comes Rebecca (remember she was born in last week's parshah?) who offers water to Eliezer and the camels and invites him to her father's house. When Eliezer asks for her hand in marriage on behalf of Rebecca's great uncle Abraham, Rebecca says yes. She was happy to marry a righteous and kind person such as Isaac and get away from her family who were not very honest nor righteous.

Rebecca travels to the land of Canaan with Eliezer and marries Isaac. When Isaac marries her he understands that she is the right wife for him and feels a bit better after losing his mother Sarah. How is that? When Sarah was alive there were three great miracles which happened every week: the challah she baked for Shabbat stayed fresh from one week to the next; the candles she lit on Friday night stayed lit the whole week; and there was a cloud on her tent which was a sign that G-d was present all the time. When she passed away these miracles stopped; after Isaac and Rebecca got married they returned. That was Isaac's sign that she was the right one for him--that Rebecca was pious and righteous just like Sarah was!

Abraham also remarries Keturah who is actually Hagar, the wife Abraham married before he and Sarah had Isaac. Why the new name? Because she repented from her not good ways and started a new life as a better person. At the end of the Parshah we learn that Abraham dies at age 175 and is buried next to Sarah in the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron.

Chayei Sarah

## Chayei Sarah Aliya Summary

[http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article\\_cdo/aid/583868/jewish/Aliya-Summary.htm](http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/583868/jewish/Aliya-Summary.htm)

**General Overview:** In this week's Torah reading, *Chayei Sarah*, Sarah dies and Abraham purchases the Cave of Machpela as a burial plot for his wife. Abraham's servant travels to Aram to find a wife for Isaac. Isaac marries Rebecca. Abraham dies.

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**First Aliyah:** Sarah died at the age of 127, and her grieving husband Abraham identified a plot in the city of Hebron that he wished to procure for use as a family burial ground. This plot, a cave situated in the Machpela field, belonged to Ephron the Hittite, so Abraham approached the Hittite tribe and asked for permission to purchase the parcel of land. Originally Ephron wished to give the plot to Abraham as a gift, but after Abraham insisted on paying full price the acquisition was concluded with Abraham paying 400 premium silver coins.

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**Second Aliyah:** Having acquired the land, Abraham buried Sarah in the Cave of Machpela. At this point, Abraham summoned his servant and charged him with the mission of finding a suitable wife for his son Isaac. Abraham had his servant swear that he would not take a wife for Isaac from the local Canaanite women. Instead, he asked him to travel to Aram, his native land, and find a wife for Isaac there.

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**Third Aliyah:** The servant set out for his master's homeland and evening time found him beside the city well. He prayed for success in his mission, and asked for a heavenly sign to confirm his choice of a girl for Isaac. He would ask a maiden for a drink of water, and the one who would answer: "Certainly, and I'll also give your camels to drink as well," would be the proper choice for Isaac. Immediately a young lady approached and in response to the servant's request for a drink, she offered to give his camels to drink too. Upon questioning her, he discovered that she was Abraham's great-niece, Rebecca.

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**Fourth Aliyah:** Rebecca ran to tell her family about the man at the well, and her brother, Laban, went out, greeted the servant, and invited him to spend the night. The servant told Rebecca's family the purpose of his mission to the city, and recounted the heavenly sign that designated Rebecca as his master's son's wife. Rebecca's family agreed that the match was divinely ordained, and consented to the proposed match.

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**Fifth Aliyah:** Rebecca's family celebrates the engagement together with Abraham's servant. Next morning, the servant insisted on immediately returning to his master with the maiden in hand, and after Rebecca agreed, the two set out for Canaan. Isaac married Rebecca, loved her, and finally found consolation for the loss of his mother.

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**Sixth Aliyah:** Abraham remarried and fathered several more children. Before his death, however, Abraham gave gifts to his other children and sent them all away, and bequeathed all the rest of his possessions to Isaac. Abraham died at the age of 175, and was buried by Isaac and Ishmael in the cave of Machpela beside his wife, Sarah.

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**Seventh Aliyah:** Ishmael's progeny are detailed in this section. Ishmael passed away at the age of 137.

## Overview

[http://ohr.edu/this\\_week/torah\\_weekly/4072](http://ohr.edu/this_week/torah_weekly/4072)

By Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair

Sarah, 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.

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## Parsha Songs

[The lyrics are supplied here. For the tunes, please click on the link]

[http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article\\_cdo/aid/573566/jewish/Parshah-Song.htm](http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/573566/jewish/Parshah-Song.htm)

**Lyrics:** By Cheryl Knobel and Rivkah Neuman

Now it was time for Yitzchok to marry  
Hashem's bracha, his children would carry  
Eliezer was sent a wife to find  
She must be good and kind

He took camels and jewelry the best  
On his way, he sat down to rest  
"Please Hashem", he said with all his might  
"Help me find the girl that is just right."

Then he saw Rivkah, B'suel's daughter  
May I give you and your camels some water  
At the moment the good deed was done  
Eliezer knew that she was the one

Eliezer and Rivkah to k'naan did ride  
Yitzchok took Rivkah, for his bride  
Now Yitzchok at last was sure  
The anan hakavod, was back at his door

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## Parsha Questions & Answers

Selected from the following website:

<http://chinuch.org>

### Parshas Chayei Sarah Questions by Rabbi Shlomo Spiro

Name \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) How old was Sarah when she died? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Where did Avraham want to bury Sarah? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Who else was buried in this place? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Who was the owned of this property? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) How much did the owner originally want? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Why did Avraham pay the full amount? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 7) Who was Eliezer? \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Where and why did Avraham send him there? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 9) What did Avraham make Eliezer swear and why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10) Eliezer came to the place and asked Hashem to show him a sign. What was the sign? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11) When Rivka came to the well what happened to the water and why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12) Who did Rivka give water to? \_\_\_\_\_

13) What did Eliezer give Rivka and why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14) How was Rivka related to Avraham? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

15) Who was Rivka's father? \_\_\_\_\_

16) Who was Rivka's brother? \_\_\_\_\_

17) What Bracha did Rivka's family give her? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

18) What happened when Rivka saw Yitzchak for the first time? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

19) Fill in the blanks:

**“AVRAHAM ALSO GOT MARRIED TO \_\_\_\_\_ WHO WAS REALLY  
HAGAR. THEY HAD \_\_\_\_\_ CHILDREN. AVRAHAM GAVE THEM  
\_\_\_\_\_, AND SENT THEM TO THE \_\_\_\_\_.”**

20) How old was Avraham when he died and where was he buried?  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Questions By Rabbi Normie Lowenthal

פרשת שבוע \_\_\_\_\_ שם

The Pitgam Hashavua is...

רש"י מגילה דף ו' עמוד ב' ד"ה אין מצוה מעבירין הבאה לידן אל תחמיצנה

"When the opportunity to do a good deed comes your way, do not delay!"

How long did אַמִּינוּ שָׂרָה live?

127 years

Where was אַמִּינוּ שָׂרָה buried? Who else was later buried there?

Avrohom bought המכפלה מערת עפרון, buried Sara there, and the זוגות (pairs) were also buried there: Adam and Chava, Avrohom and Sara, Yitzchok and Rivka, and Yaakov and Leah.

What did Avrohom ask Eliezer, his servant, to do after Sara's death?

To go to חָרוֹן (Choron), his old land, and find a wife for Yitzchok.

What did Avrohom make him swear not to do?

1) Find Yitzchok a wife from כְּנָעַן (Knaan), and 2) Take Yitzchok out of כְּנָעַן, since he had been a קָרְבָּן (offering)

What sign did Eliezer ask Hashem for, in order to know if he'd found the right girl?

When he asks her for water, she'd offer to bring him water for his camels too, displaying the מִיֵּדָה (character trait) of חֶסֶד (loving-kindness and generosity).

After giving Rivka gifts, what two questions did Eliezer ask her?

1) From whose family are you? 2) Is there room for me to stay in your home?

Who were Rivka's family members, and what were they interested in?

בְּתוּאֵל was Rivka's father, and לָבָן was her brother, who cleaned their house of idols before inviting Eliezer in, since they wanted his riches.

When בְּתוּאֵל died, Rivka's mother wanted her to stay home a while. What did they decide to

do?

They asked Rivka what she wanted to do.

Which תְּפִילָּה (prayer) did Yitzchok establish?

מִנְחָה (Mincha)

What did Rivka do when she saw Yitzchok coming?

*She let herself down from the camel and she covered her face (which is why brides now cover their faces).*

What three נִסִּים (miracles) that happened when Sara was alive returned when Rivka came?

*1) The candles burned from Shabbos to Shabbos, lighting up the house brightly, 2) There was Brocho in the dough, and 3) There was an עָנָן (cloud) over the אֹהֶל (tent)*

Whom did Avrohom marry after Sara died?

*קְטוּרָה (Ketura). Some say this was Hagar who had been sent away.*

How long did Avrohom live?

*175 years (he should have lived to 180, but his life was shortened so that he wouldn't see his grandson עִשָּׂו (Aisav) when he began to behave like a רָשָׁע (sinner).*

דְּבַר תּוֹרָה

After saying "The life of Sara was one hundred years and twenty years and seven years," the Passuk ends with, "These are the years of the life of Sara." Rashi says that this repetition was to show that all these years were equally for the good. The Or Hanefesh asks: how could all these years have been good -- wasn't Sara forced to wander from place to place, through fear and hunger, and wasn't she childless until the age of ninety?

He answers that Sara recognized that all the events in one's life are tests to develop a person, and that one must connect his own will to Hashem's. If one does this, then all his trials and suffering become "sweet", since they purify the soul, and everything becomes truly for the good. This made all of Sara's years 'equally' for the good. This is when the proper attitude is used.

שם

## Parsha Quiz

The Pitgam Hashavua is...

מִצְוַת הַבְּאֵה לְיַדְךָ אֶל תַּחְמִיּוֹצְוָה

"

\_\_\_!"

1. Where was אַמְיִנוּ שָׂרָה buried? Who else was later buried there?
2. What two things did Avrohom make Eliezer swear not to do?
3. Who were Rivka's family members, and what were they interested in?
4. Which תְּפִילָּה (prayer) did Yitzchok establish?
5. What **three** נִסִּים (miracles) used to happen in Sara's home when she was alive, which returned when Rivka came?

*Extra credit*

6. How long did Avrohom live?

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## Parsha Stories

**Family Parshah**

### Chayei Sara Family Parshah Lesson

[http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article\\_cdo/aid/321731/jewish/Chayei-Sara-Family-Parshah-Lesson.htm](http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/321731/jewish/Chayei-Sara-Family-Parshah-Lesson.htm)

By Rebbetzin [Malka Touger](#)

In this week's parshah, Chayei Sarah, we read that Isaac married Rebecca. Sarah had passed away, and Isaac was still mourning the death of his great mother. But soon after he married Rebecca, he was comforted, because he saw how special she was.

How did Isaac know?

There were three signs. When Rebecca entered Isaac's tent, a cloud of glory hovered above. Isaac said, "While my mother was alive, a cloud of glory always rested upon her tent. But it disappeared when she died." Isaac watched for other signs. They came very soon.

As Rebecca baked the challah for Shabbat, she modestly told Isaac: “There seems to have been a special blessing in the dough, it rose so well.”

Isaac was overjoyed. He recalled that his mother’s dough had the same blessing.

By the end of the week the third sign was clear. Rebecca’s Shabbat candles burned all week long, just as Sarah’s had. During the entire week, Isaac and Rebecca felt the holiness which came from the light of the Shabbat candles.

Every mitzvah which we perform brings light into the world. But we don’t always see or feel this light. The Shabbat candles are special, because we can actually see their light, the light of the mitzvah, shining in our homes. When we watch the peaceful flickering of the Shabbat candles, we understand and feel the special holiness that comes with this mitzvah.

Can you imagine how wonderful it would be if this holiness could last the whole week? Well, that’s what Sarah and Rebecca felt. This happens in our homes too.

The Shabbat candles bring us feelings of joy and peace. Although we may be very rushed and busy on some Fridays, our homes suddenly become calm as soon as we light the Shabbat candles. And this light remains even after the Shabbat ends. Even though we can’t actually see their light throughout the following week, as Sarah and Rebecca did, it’s still there, making our homes peaceful and happy.

Rebecca’s Shabbat candles brought this holiness when she was only three years old! This set an example for all Jewish girls.

As soon as a little girl reaches the age of three or as soon as she understands the meaning of lighting candles she should light her own Shabbat candle. This will bring light and holiness into her home and into the entire world.

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## LESSONS FROM THE PARSHA

[http://ohr.edu/this\\_week/kinder\\_torah/4080](http://ohr.edu/this_week/kinder_torah/4080)

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Parashas Chaye Sara

## Shidduchim

**M**azel tov! Did you hear the good news Avi?"

"No, what happened Abba?"

"Our neighbor's son, Yitzchak, became a chosson."

"Mazel tov! That is wonderful. Who is the kallah?"

"A wonderful girl named Rivka."

"Yitzchak and Rivka, what a shidduch! It sounds like this week's parasha, Abba."

"Actually, it is similar to the shidduch of our holy forefather."

"Really? In what way Abba?"

"First and foremost, Hashem was the shadchan. He guided Rivka to Eliezer, who then took her to be Yitzchak's wife. To this very day, the Almighty guides the events of every shidduch, bringing the husband and wife together."

"We are in good hands."

"Definitely, Avi. Secondly, the requirements for a good spouse have not changed over the centuries. Avraham Avinu's home was founded on good middos. He and Sara were the epitome of gemilus chassodim (loving kindness). A daughter-in-law who was to enter this home had to be crowned with this good middah. To this very day, we are all descendants of Avraham Avinu, and our homes are still built upon gemilus chassodim. Therefore, this middah has to be the first criteria when looking for a spouse."

"How did Avraham and Eliezer go about finding a baalas chessed for Yitzchak?"

**F**irst of all, they began their search in the right place. The Keli Yakar (on Bereshis 24:3) relates that middos are passed down from parents to children.

Therefore, one should look for a spouse from a family with good middos. Avraham made Eliezer swear that he would not take a wife for Yitzchak from the daughters of Canaan (24:3). Why? Because this family had an evil nature. We see this from the previous parasha about the Efron HaChiti, a descendant of Canaan. The Keli Yakar (on 24:14) explains that a person's monetary matters reveal his true nature. Efron extorted an exorbitant sum of money from Avraham Avinu for Maaras HaMachpela. A daughter from such a cruel family could not marry Yitzchak. Therefore, Avraham sent Eliezer to his birthplace, Ur Kasdim, to look for a wife from Avraham's family."

"I see, Abba. Eliezer looked for a girl from a good family. However, lineage is not the whole story. Not every child from a good family has proper middos. The girl herself must be a baalas chessed. How would Eliezer check this out?"

"Excellent question, Avi. The verse itself (along with Rashi's commentary) details how Eliezer asked Hashem to show him the middos of Yitzchak's future wife. If she gave drinking water to both him and his camels, she would prove that she was a fitting baalas chessed for Avraham Avinu's family (Bereshis 24:12-14). Just as Eliezer finished speaking to Hashem, Rivka appeared at the well."

"What happened, Abba?"

**S**he rushed to serve the water to Eliezer. She ran to the well to bring more water for the camels. Her quickness was reminiscent of Avraham Avinu's running to serve the

angels who came to visit him in Mamre (Bereshis 18:6-8). The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh (24:17) describes all of the details of the many acts of chessed Rivka did in serving the water. Firstly, the well water came up to meet her. This miracle was reserved only for those families who were holy and blessed like Avraham Avinu. She herself brought the water pitcher to Eliezer, lowered it, and brought it to his mouth for him to drink. She only mentioned watering the camels after he had finished drinking. This allowed Eliezer to drink slowly, not feeling that he was making the camels wait. She held the pitcher for him the entire time that he was drinking. He did not have to lift it or move it at all. It is worthwhile to look up the Ohr HaChaim, Avi, and see the other acts of chessed that Rivka performed.”

“Wow! What consideration! What a tsadekes! What a baalas chessed!”

“Yes, a true mate for our holy forefather Yitzchak. That is how that shidduch went, and that is how shidduchim go to this very day. We should look for spouses with good middos, who will build homes and lives based on loving kindness. And so, Avraham Avinu’s tradition of chessed will continue in Klal Yisrael.”

“May everyone merit building a bayis ne’eman biYisrael (home faithful to Jewish values).”

“Amen!”

*Kinderlach . . .*

*Choosing whom to marry is the most important decision of your life. Avraham and Eliezer showed us the way. Look in the right place - a family with good middos. Pray to Hashem for Siyata Di’Shmaya (Heavenly Assistance) to send the right one to you, and to make the decision clear and easy. Do your hishtadlus (preparatory action) and watch Hashem do His work. Kinderlach we hope to hear many “mazel tov’s”; each one in the right time.*

## Who’s In Charge Here?

**H**e ruled over all that was his” (Bereshis 24:2). This verse is referring to Eliezer, Avraham Avinu’s senior servant, who was entrusted with running his entire household. Avraham sent him to find a wife for Yitzchak. Perhaps someone would try to bribe Eliezer to accept an unsuitable woman as a wife. Avraham was not concerned. Eliezer was so trustworthy, that he surely would not take a bribe for an unsuitable woman. The Keli Yakar explains that Eliezer also ruled over all of his own possessions. Sometimes a person’s belongings can rule over him. They take so much time and care, that the person is not free to pursue important things. Worse than that, one can get caught up in acquiring things. The desire for money can overtake him. There is no end to this, and he will have time for nothing. Eliezer ruled over his property, it did not rule over him. He kept it in perspective.

He was happy with his lot. He had no desire for money that was not his. Therefore, he was not subject to bribery.

*Kinderlach . . .*

*Possessions can help you or hurt you. It depends upon how you use them. You should only ask for what you need. More is not better. As the Mishna says (Pirkei Avos 2:8), "More property means more worries." Only use what you need and only use it when you need it. Modern technology can be a great tool. However, it can also eat up lots of time and ruin your peace of mind. You must control it, and not let it control you. Be like Eliezer. Rule your things. Do not let them rule you.*

Parasha Questions:

- How was Rivka related to Avraham? (24:15)
- What did Eliezer do when he found out that Rivka was from Avraham's family? (24:26,27)
- When speaking to your heart, with Whom are you speaking? (24:45)

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## **Family Parsha Chayei Sarah**

by [Nesanel Yoel Safran](#)

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This article can also be read at: <http://www.aish.com/tp/pak/fp/48894382.html>

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### ***Chayei Sarah(Genesis 23:1-25:18)***

**True Kindness**

## **From this week's Torah Portion**

It is important to be kind, but what if being kind in one way will end up causing us to be dishonest in another?

This week's Torah Portion teaches that for kindness to be real, it also has to go hand in hand with truthfulness and integrity (Genesis, 24:27,49). It's a challenging but worthwhile goal to learn how to be kind, yet remain committed to truth at the same time.

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## Story

*In our story, some kids work out a way to bring together two opposites.*

### "PERFECT HARMONY"

Good music can make you feel like you're flying high. And that's just how me and the other kids in our after-school choral group were feeling as our voices blended together in beautiful harmony, when a knock on the rehearsal room door brought us back down to earth. I reluctantly walked over to open the door, hoping that our singing hadn't disturbed one of the teachers or anything, and was relieved to see that it was just Jill, one of the kids from our class.

"I'm really sorry to interrupt you guys" she said, "but the singing just sounded so nice, so I, um, wondered if I could maybe join up with the group, too. I'm not a pro or anything, but I do really love singing."

Jill was our friend, and a really nice kid, so we figured it wouldn't hurt to let her try. After all, one more talented voice could only add to the harmony, right?

We gave her a short piece of music to sing as sort of a try-out, and I don't know quite how to describe it, but the kid's singing voice sounded something like a cross between a cat getting its tail stepped on and fingernails scraping a blackboard. I mean she was awful! We struggled to keep ourselves from laughing as she squealed and screeched her way through the musical piece. She came to a crashing stop at the final note.

"Um... thank you very much, Jill," I managed to say with a straight face. "We'll let you know our decision by tomorrow."

The door had hardly closed behind her when our once harmonious group burst out into a very un-harmonious debate. "Forget it. ForGET it!" said Hilary, one of our best soloists. "Face it, the kid can't sing to save her life. If we let her in the group, it's all over."

Some of the kids nodded in agreement and it seemed the girl's fate was sealed, until Leah, another star singer, spoke up. "Okay, it may be true that she's not the best singer in the world, but she is our *friend*, and that's what counts. It would be so mean to not let her join us, and she'll feel so hurt. I say let her in. It won't be so terrible, and who knows, maybe she'll get better at it."

Some of the kids mumbled in agreement.

But Hillary and her crowd weren't buying. "Friend or no friend, the truth is the truth. And I'm sorry to say the truth is she CANNOT sing. She will destroy the music if she sings with us - not to mention make a fool out of herself. If you decide to take her in, then I quit!"

"And / say," Leah responded, "that this whole group isn't worth anything if it is going to turn us into a bunch of snobs who don't care about people's feelings! If we *don't* take her in, then / quit."

I knew I had to think fast or else this group that we've all been working on so hard for so long was going to split in half and sink to the bottom of the ocean. But what could I say? Hillary was right - it wouldn't work for Jill to join us. But Leah was also right - rejecting her would be very hurtful.

Then, with all the stomping and shouting going on, one of the equipment racks got pushed and a tambourine fell to the floor. I felt like it fell from heaven because it gave me just the idea I needed, and maybe the only chance to save the group.

"Whoa, time out!" I whistled. Everyone got quiet, suddenly remembering I was the group leader after all. "How about we let Jill into the group..." Hillary started stomping off, "Hey, Hilary, let me finish!"

Hillary stopped, waiting to hear the rest of my idea.

"We let Jill into the group, but not as a singer, but as a *tambourine player*..."

The kids were buzzing as I went on. "We had talked about wanting to add a little percussion to the singing, and this way we can keep our group and also keep our friend. What do you say?"

Well no one was walking off now, and in fact everyone was smiling, so I knew my idea was a hit. I called up Jill that night and explained to her how the group had enough singers for the time being, but how we all wanted her to be part of us, and would love to have her join us as the tambourine player. She was fine with that, and admitted that she liked listening to choral music more than actually singing herself, and this would be perfect.

At the next rehearsal our voices soared higher than ever and everyone realized that we had finally reached perfect harmony in more ways than one.

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## Discussion Questions

### Ages 3-5

Q. How did the kids feel when Jill tried out for their singing group?

A. They felt stuck. They had to either be nice and let her join them - which would ruin the music, or be honest, and keep her out - which hurt her feelings.

Q. How did they feel in the end?

A. They were relieved and happy to discover that they could somehow be both nice and honest, by letting her join them, but not sing.

### **Ages 6-9**

Q. Do you think the solution the kids came up with was a good one? Why or why not?

A. No solution is perfect, but this was definitely the best option available. Kindness dictated that they spare Jill's feelings, but in all truth and honesty they couldn't let her sing with them and ruin the group. By taking her in as a tambourine player, they made her feel wanted, without having to cause others to suffer.

Q. How do you know when it's more important to be kind, and when it's more important to be truthful?

A. It's never an easy call. If no one, including yourself, will suffer from doing the act of kindness that's usually a pretty clear green light. On the other hand, if doing it will hurt you or others more than it will help the one you're doing it for, that's usually a sign to hold off. Cases that fall in between are often best dealt with by compromise, like in the story.

### **Ages 10 and Up**

Q. Do you think it is an ideal to be unfailingly kind and giving, no matter what the price?

A. Giving and kindness are amongst the highest spiritual values, and by extending ourselves in these areas, we grow. However there are still limits that must be upheld for everyone's good. For example we may feel it's kind to let a poor, caged lion in a zoo out of its fenced in area so it can stretch its legs and romp around a bit - but no one in his right mind would do it. The example is extreme, but the point is that even acts of kindness must be balanced and keep the big picture in mind.

Q. Does one have the ethical right to say whatever he likes as long as it's true?

A. Definitely not. The fact that a hurtful statement is true makes it no less hurtful, and one should never speak hurtfully unless there is a very good reason to do so. The Torah teaches us the parameters of ethical speech in great detail, and by following them we will be sure our mouth never turns into a lethal weapon.

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**Parsha Games**

# Chayei Sara

## Thirsty Thirsty Camel



### Props:

-Plastic cups

-A camel

**Discussion:** This week, it's a really hot day again, and something else happens. Avraham's servant Eliezer is looking for a wife for Yitzchak. He's really thirsty, and he asks a random girl if he can have some water. And Rivka answers sure, you can have water, and I'll give all of your camels too! Can you imagine her doing all that work, on that hot day, so everyone else would have enough water?

**Activity:** Make two teams, and put the camel on the other side of the room. Each team gets a stack of cups, and when you say go, each team sends someone to bring a cup to place in front of the thirsty camel. The next member of each team cannot run to place their cup until they are tagged by the first person. Each cup must be placed right side up, and cannot tip over. Whichever team gets all the cups to the other side first wins.

**Younger groups:** Everyone gets a cup. When you say go, everyone runs to the other side, places their cup in front of the camel, and runs back. Repeat until all the cups are gone.

**Wrap up discussion:** Point out that Rivka had to do this all by herself, with heavy jugs, with water in them, on a hot day, for ten camels! And she didn't complain one bit!

*Courtesy of [parshaactivities.com](http://parshaactivities.com)*