



*Yeshivat Ma'alot*  
*Parashat Chaye Sara*  
*Rav Yehoshua Weitzman shlit"a*

ישיבת מעלות  
 פרשת חיי שרה  
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### *Simple Words*

This week's parasha, Chaye Sara, describes at great length how Eliezer, Avraham Avinu's servant, found a wife for Yitzchak. After recording the death of Sara, the Torah tells the story of how Avraham sent Eliezer to Aram Nahariyim to take a wife for Yitzchak from his family's town. The Torah expounds in great detail how Eliezer asked from Hashem to send a worthy wife for Yitzchak, one who is a woman of chesed, loving-kindness. Immediately afterwards, Rivka came to draw water for Eliezer and his camels, thereby proving herself to be a suitable wife. Rivka thereafter invited Eliezer to her father Betuel's home. The Torah then goes to account, word for word, Eliezer's conversation with Rivka's family, and retells his narrative of how he found her beside the well.

Chazal in Bereshit Rabbah<sup>1</sup> learn a profound lesson from the fact that the Torah went out of its way to describe Eliezer's journey, and then to record it once again when Eliezer retold the story to Betuel. They say that the simple conversations of the Fathers servants, *sichatan shel avdei avot*, are superior to the Torah of their sons. Why is this so? The Midrash goes on to explain that the Torah elaborately describes the story of Eliezer, yet the laws regarding reptiles and other such animals, which are fundamental halachot in Torah, are only derived from what is inferred in the p'sukim, yet not what is clearly stated.

It is also possible to explain that Chazal didn't intend that the conversations of Eliezer were better or on a higher level than the Torah of Bnei Yisrael, but rather that *through* the Torah of Bnei Yisrael, one can see exactly how exalted and how holy every word of Eliezer's conversations exactly were.

Harav Kook in Orot<sup>2</sup> relates to these words of Chazal. "A small remnant of a great thing is better than having something that is complete yet small. A small spark from the brilliant light of our Forefathers is more exalted and lofty than all of the holiness that is revealed to us through faith and awe, Torah and Mitzvot; these conversations of our Father's servants, *sichatan shel Avdei Avot*, are what will revive the final generations with hidden love. The righteous of this generation will recognize this concealed holiness; in their great sanctity they will reconnect the Torah of the sons, of Am Yisrael, to the words of our Fathers and their servants."

<sup>1</sup> Bereshit Rabbah 60,8

<sup>2</sup> Orot, Orot HaTehiya 14, p.66

The relationship between the Avot and the future generations of Am Yisrael is similar to the relationship between a tree's roots and its branches. Any minute or small detail that appears in the tree's roots will be manifested in much greater proportion in the tree's branches. So too, the lives of the Avot serve as a "blueprint" for the upcoming generations of Am Yisrael. Even what would seem like a relatively unimportant detailed story in the lives of our Fathers has great influence on us today. Therefore we can understand why the Torah goes into such great detail about Eliezer and finding a wife for Yitzchak.

A similar idea is found in Pirkei Avot<sup>3</sup>. The Mishnah states that "one should be a tail of lions rather than to be a head of foxes." Despite the fact that he would be a tail, he would be a tail of a lion, the greatest of all animals. So too the opposite; even though one can be a head, it is only of the fox, a deceiving and sly animal. When a person sees the tail of a lion he flees, for although it is only the tail, he knows exactly what that tail is connected to. Harav Kook speaks of the same concept. Being "a small remnant of a great thing", being a tail of lions, being a servant in the house of Avraham Avinu is higher than being "something complete yet small." Basking in the light and Torah of the Avot, the founders of our nation, is something that is unparalleled in its value.

Harav Kook applies this simple conversation, "sichatan shel avdei avot" to the generation of Redemption. These words will "revive the final generations with a hidden love." When there are generations in which Torah cannot be found in a revealed manner, these generations will turn to the words of these conversations, and from within these conversations, they will reveal the meaning and value of the life of Am Yisrael; this too is Torah.

The Avot, in their exalted holiness, lived their lives walking before Hashem. This light of holiness, the light of Torah, was not condensed to a certain time or place in their lives, rather it was part of their essence. Everything they did and everyone around them was therefore permeated with holiness, to such a great extent that even the words of their servants are imbued with sanctity and serve for us as a lesson and an inspiration.

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<sup>3</sup> 4, 16