

# BS"D Parashat Chayei Sarah 5784

## Eliezer the Shad'chan

In the parasha, Avraham sends his servant Eliezer on a holy mission to find a suitable wife for his only son Yitzchak, a Tzadika (righteous woman) who would merit to be the second of our foremothers.

In the evening, just a few moments before sunset and following a supernatural geographical leap of a thousand kilometers, Eliezer arrives at the local well of Ur Kasdim – Avraham's birthplace. Eliezer petitions HaShem with a request:

*"O God, Lord of my master Avraham, be with me today, and grant a favor to my master Avraham" (Bereishiet 24:12)".*

Verses 15-20 recount the bizarre events that followed his prayer.

Verse 15:

*"He had not yet finished speaking [praying] when Rivka appeared. She had been born to Bethuel, the son of Milcah, the wife of Avraham's brother Nachor. Her jug was on her shoulder."*

From here we learn that before Eliezer finished uttering his request Rivka appears, who HaShem had destined to be Yitzchak's wife.

In verse 17, Eliezer runs toward her, ignoring the rules of etiquette for an older man approaching a young girl:

*“The servant ran toward her. ‘If you would, let me sip a little water from your jug.’”*

In verse 18, Rivka rushes to put down her jug:

*“Drink, Sir”, she replied. She quickly lowered her jug to her hand and gave him a drink.”*

In verse 20, once more Rivka runs:

*“She quickly emptied her jug into the trough and ran to the well again to draw water. She drew water for all his camels.”*

All told, Eliezer runs toward Rivka once and she runs three times.

What is behind this bizarre behavior?

Answer: Let’s return to verse 11 when Eliezer arrives at the city well:

*“When he arrived, he let the camels rest on their knees outside the city, beside the well. It was in the evening, the time when the women go out to draw water.”*

Eliezer arrived ‘in the evening’ near day’s end and prays: “O God, Lord of my master Avraham: Be with me today, and grant a favor to my master Avraham” (Bereishiet 24:12).

Eliezer did not just request for a courteous, good-hearted girl. He emphasized “Be with me today,” when day was just about to end.

Eliezer intended to “work according to the book” and go through the motions required in his mission, but with no intention to succeed because he wanted Yitzchak to take his own daughter for a wife.

So, Eliezer creates the conditions for mission impossible. Namely, the mission would have to end in the few minutes left until sunset. For that reason, God caused everything to happen in great haste.

Eliezer was astonished by what was occurring before his eyes. The impossible became reality!

## **How does one measure the intensity of a miracle?**

The circumstances involved in Rivka being selected are not unique in the history of our people. Quite the contrary! They provide a prototype for situations when HaShem draws us to the outer limits of human challenges, and moments before “the sun is setting” on our lives, He intervenes to save us from our enemies.

It began when Avraham was thrown into the fiery furnace by King Nimrod, and continued with the frightening episode when Avraham bound Yitzchak and was already holding the knife.

Ya’akov divided his family into two camps in preparedness for his tense encounter with his brother Esav, when Esav’s intended death bite suddenly turned into a brotherly kiss.

Yosef was thrown into a pit of snakes and scorpions, and eventually rose to the exalted post of viceroy to Pharaoh. On the shores of the Sea of Reeds, the Jewish People were saved moments before an attack by the Egyptian army.

And the phenomenon continues on during the days of the Prophets, the Judean Kings and onward to our own times.

In our own day, the State of Israel was established three short years after the end of the unspeakable Holocaust. In the War of Independence, our army (closer to a militia) consisted

of mainly untrained troops drafted from a tiny population of only 650,000 Jews. We fought against regular armies of seven Arab countries, who were supported by England. The Yishuv (residents of the country) were at the “cliff’s edge” and were saved miraculously by HaShem.

Then came the remarkable miracles of the Six Day War, when much of the world was certain that the sun was about to set on the Jewish State in the Land of Israel. Suddenly, in six days, we returned to the Temple Mount and to the entire Land of Israel west of the Jordan, as well as the Golan Heights and the entire Sinai Peninsula.

In Tractate Berachot 12b, the Talmud reveals that, in the future, miracles “greater” than those that occurred during the exodus from Egypt will be performed for the Jewish nation by HaShem Himself.

Now, how does one measure the intensity of a miracle?

They are measured in relation to the degree of danger that brought about the miracle – the greater the danger, the greater the miracle.

Today’s dangers can be measured in concentric circles.

In the Exodus experience, the existential danger that we faced was from the single nation of Egypt; whereas today, the closest circle of enemies is the Islamic Arabs who in 2022 numbered close to 465 million.

The next outer circle, numbering more than 24.1% of the world’s population, are the non-Arab Muslims estimated at around 1.8 billion.

The next outer circle consists of nations of Christians who in their eyes deserve an “A” for their 2000 years of intense efforts to destroy the Jewish nation, but an “F” grade for utterly failing in the attempt.

It is obvious that the dangers looming over our people today are unprecedented, for they are measured by a planetary yardstick. Notwithstanding these unprecedented dangers, the Prophets Yoel (3:5) and Ovadia (1:17) established that Jerusalem and the Land of Israel altogether “will be spared” in the future “war to end all wars:

ה' יוֹשֵׁה עָמָם יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁלַח מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם

*There will be salvation in Mount Zion (a euphemism for Eretz Yisrael)*

## People are asking, “where are the miracles?”

Answer: Just open your eyes – they are right in front of your face.

On the morning of Shmini Atzeret, thousands of Hamas murderers and Gazan riffraff stormed the border and entered 22 Jewish towns, kibbutzim, and army bases with the intention of continuing their murdering spree inland. The army was slow in reacting. The outnumbered soldiers and volunteers who were present at the time fought like lions to hold back the satanic murderers. We paid a price, but the murderous forward thrust was halted until Tzahal arrived. If not for our outgunned first responders, the murderers would have continued their forward thrust to join with the 350,000 Bedouins in the Negev; together they could have attacked more cities and even reach Yerushalayim. Without unnecessary drama, it could have been the end of Medinat Yisrael, with no Jewish survivors to describe the gory details. These few first responders were fighting with angels at their side.

We witnessed a similar miracle in the Yom Kippur War. The Syrians sent hundreds of tanks through the Golan Heights on the way to descending into the area of the Sea of Kinneret and from there to Haifa. The tanks reached Moshav El Al on the Golan and for some unknown reason stopped there when the way to Haifa was open.

Fortunately, HaShem wants live Jews. There have been too many of our murdered brothers and sisters during the last 2000 years. HaShem so clearly wants Medinat Yisrael to live that He did not allow Hezbollah in Lebanon, nor Iran to send their soldiers to join Hamas.

At the moment of this writing, our valiant soldiers are facing off against the Islamic Nazis in downtown Gaza City with miraculous stories of our military successes.

Now some heavy questions:

Will this war be contained within our land or will it spread out among nations who have reasons to kill each other?

Is the Mashiach waiting in the wings to appear?

Is this the time of "Gog King of Magog"?

Will the exponentially spreading anti-Semitism around the world force the Jews in the galut to come home?

Will our land see the exodus of millions of unwanted people – including millions of Arabs and the hundreds of thousands of gentiles who made Aliyah only by virtue of the "Jewish Grandparent" clause in the Law of Return?

If we merit to see astonishing miracles now, I will not be surprised. However, if HaShem consigns them to another generation, I will be disappointed.

In any event, we are HaShem's chosen people and He is

אבותינו אבותינו

*our Father our King.*

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Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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