מדרש

Midrash

ON GENESIS 25:1

How Rebecca showed she could fill Sarah's role

Bereshit Rabbah 60:16

Rebecca's arrival restored the miraculous signs that had accompanied Sarah—the protective cloud over the tent, the open doors of hospitality, the blessing in the dough, and the Shabbat lamp—showing that she was a true successor to Sarah's piety and virtue, conducting herself in purity just as Sarah had. Seeing this, Isaac drew her into his mother's tent, recognizing her as a worthy continuation of Sarah's legacy. Rabbi Yudan derives an additional lesson from the sequence of events: a parent should first ensure that his grown children are married before remarrying himself, as Abraham did by waiting until after Isaac's marriage to Rebecca before he himself took Ketura as a wife. AI SUMMARY

“Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah; he took Rebecca, she became his wife, and he loved her, and Isaac was comforted after his mother” (Genesis 24:67). “Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah” – all the days that Sarah was alive, there was a cloud suspended over the entrance to her tent. When she died, that cloud ceased. When Rebecca came, the cloud returned. All the days that Sarah was alive, the doors were kept wide open [for guests]. When Sarah died, that opening ceased. When Rebecca came, the opening returned. All the days that Sarah was alive, there was [divine] blessing bestowed upon her dough. When Sarah died, that blessing ceased. When Rebecca came, it returned. All the days that Sarah was alive, there was a lamp kindled from Shabbat night until Shabbat night. When Sarah died, that lamp ceased. When Rebecca came, it returned. When he saw that she was acting just like his mother, separating ḥalla in purity, and shaping loaves from her dough in purity, immediately, he “brought her into the tent.”

Rabbi Yudan said: The Torah teaches you that if an [unmarried] person has adult children, he should see to marrying them off first and then take a wife for himself. From whom do you learn it? From Abraham. First, “Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah” and then, “Abraham took another wife, and her name was Ketura” (Genesis 25:1).

