Parshat Chayei Sara (חיי שרה): satisfied, and still thirsty

Helping Phriendly Book · Parshat Chayei Sara 5787 · 6 November 2026

Sarah is buried in the cave of Machpelah. Avraham weighs out four hundred shekels of silver at the town gate, in front of everybody, for a cave at the edge of a field… and buries his wife.

Then one line:

"v'Avraham zaken ba bayamim" - "וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים" - "and Avraham was old, come into days."

> 🎶 ***'And the days turn to years'***
> 🎶 ***'This all should get easier'***

(Trey wrote **Miss You** for his sister. It belongs at this cave.)

Old. Widowed. And the same verse ends "וַה׳ בֵּרַךְ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם בַּכֹּל" - "and Hashem blessed Avraham with EVERYTHING."

Everything? He just buried his wife.

The Ramban says "everything" means riches, honor, long life, children, all of it. Avraham was missing just one thing: he wanted to see children from his son. "וְלָכֵן הִתְאַוָּה לָזֶה" - "and so he longed for it." That longing is about to send a servant to a well.

But Rav Mordechai Yosef of Izhbitz, in the Mei HaShiloach, hears something deeper in "old, come into days, blessed with everything." To find it, he goes to another old man who had everything.

Shlomo HaMelech.

The Gemara in Sanhedrin tells his story as one long slide. Reish Lakish says: at first Shlomo ruled over the upper worlds. Then over the whole world. Then only Israel. Then only Yerushalayim. Then only his own bed. And at the end, "לֹא מָלַךְ אֶלָּא עַל מַקְלוֹ" - "he ruled over nothing but his STAFF." (Rashi: Ashmedai, king of the demons, threw him off his own throne.)

> 🎶 ***'Beside him was an empty throne'***

And the Gemara hears it in Shlomo's own words, in Kohelet: "וְזֶה הָיָה חֶלְקִי מִכָּל עֲמָלִי" - "and THIS was my portion from all my toil."

This? What's "this"?

Rav and Shmuel argue. One says his staff. The other says גּוּנְדּוֹ. Rashi explains that as his cloak, and then brings Rav Hai Gaon: it's a clay cup you drink water from. The Izhbitzer goes with the cup and says it plainly: "כַּדּוֹ" - his JUG.

So picture it. The richest, wisest king who ever lived… down to a stick and a cup.

You'd think Kohelet is crying here. The Izhbitzer says Shlomo was BRAGGING.

Why would he brag? Because the pleasures of this world "לֹא הָיָה נֶחְשָׁב אֶצְלוֹ לִמְאוּמָה" - "counted for nothing to him." What he's telling us is: it looks like everything was taken from me, but "הַתַּמְצִית הָעוֹלֶה מִכָּל חַיֵּי עוֹלָם הַזֶּה נִשְׁאַר אֶצְלוֹ" - "the extract of all of life in this world stayed with me."

The extract. Picture a big pot of soup cooking down on the fire all day, until all that's left is the concentrate, the part that holds all the flavor. Shlomo's whole life got cooked down like that... and what was left in his hands was a stick and a jug.

The staff, says the Izhbitzer, is "כֹּחַ הַחַיִּים" - "the power of life" - still in his hand. His proof is the prophet Zechariah, who promises that old men and women will sit in the streets of Yerushalayim again, "וְאִישׁ מִשְׁעַנְתּוֹ בְּיָדוֹ מֵרֹב יָמִים" - "each with his staff in his hand, from their many days."

Many days. Sound familiar? That's our Avraham, *ba bayamim*. The staff is what you hold when you've lived a lot of days and you're still on your feet.

And the jug? "כְּלִי קִבּוּל" - "a vessel for receiving." You carry a jug for water you don't have yet.

So a king who still has his jug at the end is "מוּכָן וּמְשְׁתּוֹקֵק עוֹד לְהוֹסָפָה" - "ready, and still yearning for more." That was his delight, says the Izhbitzer, because "זֹאת הִיא הָעִיקָּר בְּחַיֵּי עוֹלָם הַזֶּה" - "this is the main thing in the life of this world."

The main thing? More than the wisdom, more than the throne?

You can't fill a jug that's already full. You can't fill one with the lid on. The only jug that can still take something in is an open one, held out... and Shlomo is still holding his out.

'I'm up and I can take what you give'

More of what, though? Shlomo already told us he doesn't care about the stuff.

So the Izhbitzer goes back to our pasuk and says exactly what Avraham was thirsty for. "Come into days" means "שֶׁבָּא אֶל שָׁרְשֵׁי הַחַיִּים" - "he came to the roots of life," "וְהָיָה כְּלִי לְקַבֵּל וְהִשְׁתּוֹקֵק לְהוֹסָפוֹת חַיִּים מֵאֵת ה' בְּכָל פַּעַם יוֹתֵר" - "and he was a vessel to receive, and he yearned for more LIFE from Hashem, more every time."

The roots of life. At a hundred and forty, Avraham has gone all the way down to the place life comes from... and he's standing there holding out his jug.

Old. Blessed with everything. And THIRSTY.

'There must be something more than this'

Now back to the Ramban, and the one thing Avraham still longed for. He sends his servant to find Yitzchak a wife... and the servant ends up at a well.

Ten camels kneel outside the city of Nachor at evening.

🎶 *'Camel walk!'*

(Sorry. Somebody had to.)

A girl comes down "וְכַדָּהּ עַל־שִׁכְמָהּ" - "with her jug on her shoulder."

Her jug. *Kadah*. The same jug the Izhbitzer just put in Shlomo's hand, *kado*.

The servant runs toward her, and Rashi tells us why: "שֶׁרָאָה שֶׁעָלוּ הַמַּיִם לִקְרָאתָהּ" - "because he saw the water RISE to meet her."

A girl walks down to the spring with an empty jug... and the water comes up to fill it.

The servant asks for a sip. She gives it. And then:

"vatemaher vate'ar kadah el hashoket vatarotz od el habe'er lishov" - "וַתְּמַהֵר וַתְּעַר כַּדָּהּ אֶל־הַשֹּׁקֶת וַתָּרָץ עוֹד אֶל־הַבְּאֵר לִשְׁאֹב" - "she hurried and EMPTIED her jug into the trough, and ran again to the well to draw."

Od (עוֹד), again. The same word as the Izhbitzer's "עוֹד לְהוֹסָפָה," still more.

Ten camels after a desert crossing, and one girl with one jug. Pour it out, run down to the water, fill it, haul it up, pour it out. Run again.

Her jug is never full for long. That's the girl Hashem picked to be Imeinu: the one who keeps emptying her jug and running back.

And Avraham himself? A chapter later: "וַיֹּסֶף אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה" - "and Avraham ADDED, and took a wife." *Vayosef*, from the same root as *hosafa* (הוֹסָפָה), more.

The Midrash Tanchuma says a pasuk in Tehillim is about Avraham right here: "וַאֲנִי תָּמִיד אֲיַחֵל וְהוֹסַפְתִּי עַל כָּל תְּהִלָּתֶךָ" - "as for me, I will always hope, and I will add to all Your praise."

The old man is still adding.

When he finally dies, the Torah calls him "זָקֵן וְשָׂבֵעַ" - "old and satisfied."

Wait. Satisfied? I thought he was thirsty???

The Ramban explains "satisfied": he saw every wish of his heart come true (grandchildren included), "וְלֹא יִתְאַוֶּה שֶׁיְּחַדְּשׁוּ בּוֹ הַיָּמִים דָּבָר" - "and he didn't crave for the days to bring him anything new." Tzaddikim, he says, don't crave luxuries. Everybody else is like the Midrash he brings: "יֵשׁ בְּיָדוֹ מָנֶה מִתְאַוֶּה מָאתַיִם" - "he has a hundred, he wants two hundred."

So there are two kinds of thirst.

One is the thirst for more stuff, and it never ends. Avraham was done with that one. On that, he was satisfied.

The other is the jug, the thirst for more life from Hashem. That one Avraham carried all the way to a hundred and seventy-five.

Satisfied with the world... and still thirsty for Hashem.

We figure the thirst belongs to the kid at his first show, phriends, screaming every word like it was written for him that morning.

> 🎶 ***'Can't I live while I'm young?'***

Ten feet away, a vet somewhere past show two hundred stands with his arms crossed. "Eh. I've got forty of these." (Most of us have been both. Some of us in the same weekend.)

Year after year the jug fills up... and somewhere in there the lid goes on.

> 🎶 ***'The binding belt enclosing me, a sample in a jar'***

But the Izhbitzer puts the jug in the hands of an old king who lost everything, and the Torah puts it in the hands of an old man who had everything.

Where does the lid go on in your week? Maybe Friday night, fifth verse of Lecha Dodi, and your head is already thinking of being in bed and finally getting that much needed rest.

Or the Shemoneh Esrei you've recited ten thousand times. You could say it in your sleep... and some mornings you do...

It's sweet and it's important... but it's a sign that the jug is closed...

So take the lid off. Say one line, one word even - with kavanah! And when that fifth verse of Lecha Dodi comes around, allow yourself to feel the relief, calm, and sweetness of Shabbat to ease your bones, not "getting through davening and dinner" just to crash in bed...

Lastly, listen to this: the Midrash says that Hashem spoke to Rivka at that well, and He told her: "אַתְּ סִימָן לְבָנַיִךְ" - "you are a sign for your children." You hear that, phriends? We are Rivka's children, mamesh. Come to Ribono Shel Olam with an empty jug, and the water will always rise to meet you.

May Hashem keep our thirst for Him alive, and fill our jugs every time we come running back to Him... satisfied with what we have, and still thirsty for Him, all the days of our lives.

Good Shabbos, phriends.

Sources

- Mei HaShiloach: https://www.sefaria.org/Mei_HaShiloach,_Volume_I,_Genesis,_Chayei_Sara.3
- Sanhedrin 20b: https://www.sefaria.org/Sanhedrin.20b.15-18
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- Ramban on Bereishit 24:1: https://www.sefaria.org/Ramban_on_Genesis.24.1

- Rashi on Bereishit 24:17: https://www.sefaria.org/Rashi_on_Genesis.24.17
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- Midrash Tanchuma, Chayei Sara 7: https://www.sefaria.org/Midrash_Tanchuma,_Chayei_Sara.7
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Best versions to listen to

- Miss You — 2016-10-18 (Ascend Amphitheater, Nashville, TN)
  https://phish.in/2016-10-18/miss-you
- My Friend, My Friend — 2017-07-25 (Madison Square Garden, New York, NY)
  https://phish.in/2017-07-25/my-friend-my-friend
- Taste — 1997-08-17 (Loring Commerce Centre, Limestone, ME)
  https://phish.in/1997-08-17/taste
- More — 2017-07-23 (Madison Square Garden, New York, NY)
  https://phish.in/2017-07-23/more
- Camel Walk — 2018-10-21 (Hampton Coliseum, Hampton, VA)
  https://phish.in/2018-10-21/camel-walk
- Chalk Dust Torture — 1999-07-10 (E Centre, Camden, NJ)
  https://phish.in/1999-07-10/chalk-dust-torture
- Sample in a Jar — 2017-07-25 (Madison Square Garden, New York, NY)
  https://phish.in/2017-07-25/sample-in-a-jar

Study guide: the staff and the jug

The Hebrew is from Sefaria. Hashem's names are written in printable form (ה', אלקים, א-ל) and the cantillation marks are removed, so this page is not *sheimos*. English translations are Sefaria's (JPS for the pesukim, Steinsaltz for the Gemara), with "G-d" and "Hashem" substituted; the Rashi on Sanhedrin translation and the summary of Mei HaShiloach Vol. II are mine. Where the dvar gives its own reading rather than a source's (the jug in Shlomo's hand and the jug on Rivka's shoulder being the same word; Zechariah's "many days" echoing *ba bayamim*), the connection is ours, not the commentator's.

I. The pesukim

Read them straight through before the commentaries. Watch for the jug (כַּד) every time it appears, and for the word עוֹד.

Bereshit 24:1-4

[1] וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים וַה׳ בֵּרַךְ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם בַּכֹּל

Abraham was now old, advanced in years, and Hashem had blessed Abraham in all things.

[2] וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־עַבְדּוֹ זְקַן בֵּיתוֹ הַמֹּשֵׁל בְּכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ שִׂים־נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יָרֵכִי

And Abraham said to the senior servant of his household, who had charge of all that he owned, “Put your hand under my thigh

[3] וְאַשְׁבִּיעֲךָ בַּה׳ אֱלֹקֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וֵאלֹקֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לִבְנִי מִבְּנוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּקִרְבּוֹ

and I will make you swear by Hashem, the G-d of heaven and the G-d of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell,

[4] כִּי אֶל־אַרְצִי וְאֶל־מוֹלַדְתִּי תֵּלֵךְ וְלָקַחְתָּ אִשָּׁה לִבְנִי לְיִצְחָק

but will go to the land of my birth and get a wife for my son Isaac.”

Bereshit 24:10-20

[10] וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד עֲשָׂרָה גְמַלִּים מִגְּמַלֵּי אֲדֹנָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ וְכָל־טוּב אֲדֹנָיו בְּיָדוֹ וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־אֲרַם נַהֲרַיִם אֶל־עִיר נָחוֹר

Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and set out, taking with him all the bounty of his master; and he made his way to Aram-naharaim, to the city of Nahor.

[11] וַיַּבְרֵךְ הַגְּמַלִּים מִחוּץ לָעִיר אֶל־בְּאֵר הַמָּיִם לְעֵת עֶרֶב לְעֵת צֵאת הַשֹּׁאֲבֹת

He made the camels kneel down by the well outside the city, at evening time, the time when women come out to draw water.

[12] וַיֹּאמַר ה׳ אֱלֹקֵי אֲדֹנִי אַבְרָהָם הַקְרֵה־נָא לְפָנַי הַיּוֹם וַעֲשֵׂה־חֶסֶד עִם אֲדֹנִי אַבְרָהָם

And he said, “O Hashem, G-d of my master Abraham, grant me good fortune this day, and deal graciously with my master Abraham:

[13] הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי נִצָּב עַל־עֵין הַמָּיִם וּבְנוֹת אַנְשֵׁי הָעִיר יֹצְאוֹת לִשְׁאֹב מָיִם

Here I stand by the spring as the daughters of the townspeople come out to draw water;

[14] וְהָיָה הַנַּעֲרָ אֲשֶׁר אֹמַר אֵלֶיהָ הַטִּי־נָא כַדֵּךְ וְאֶשְׁתֶּה וְאָמְרָה שְׁתֵה וְגַם־גְּמַלֶּיךָ אַשְׁקֶה אֹתָהּ הֹכַחְתָּ לְעַבְדְּךָ לְיִצְחָק וּבָהּ אֵדַע כִּי־עָשִׂיתָ חֶסֶד עִם־אֲדֹנִי

let the maiden to whom I say, ‘Please, lower your jar that I may drink,’ and who replies, ‘Drink, and I will also water your camels’—let her be the one whom You have decreed for Your servant Isaac. Thereby shall I know that You have dealt graciously with my master.”

[15] וַיְהִי־הוּא טֶרֶם כִּלָּה לְדַבֵּר וְהִנֵּה רִבְקָה יֹצֵאת אֲשֶׁר יֻלְּדָה לִבְתוּאֵל בֶּן־מִלְכָּה אֵשֶׁת נָחוֹר אֲחִי אַבְרָהָם וְכַדָּהּ עַל־שִׁכְמָהּ

He had scarcely finished speaking, when Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, the son of Milcah the wife of Abraham’s brother Nahor, came out with her jar on her shoulder.

[16] וְהַנַּעֲרָ טֹבַת מַרְאֶה מְאֹד בְּתוּלָה וְאִישׁ לֹא יְדָעָהּ וַתֵּרֶד הָעַיְנָה וַתְּמַלֵּא כַדָּהּ וַתָּעַל

The maiden was very beautiful, a virgin whom no man had known. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and came up.

[17] וַיָּרָץ הָעֶבֶד לִקְרָאתָהּ וַיֹּאמֶר הַגְמִיאִינִי נָא מְעַט־מַיִם מִכַּדֵּךְ

The servant ran toward her and said, “Please, let me sip a little water from your jar.”

[18] וַתֹּאמֶר שְׁתֵה אֲדֹנִי וַתְּמַהֵר וַתֹּרֶד כַּדָּהּ עַל־יָדָהּ וַתַּשְׁקֵהוּ

“Drink, my lord,” she said, and she quickly lowered her jar upon her hand and let him drink.

[19] וַתְּכַל לְהַשְׁקֹתוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר גַּם לִגְמַלֶּיךָ אֶשְׁאָב עַד אִם־כִּלּוּ לִשְׁתּוֹת

When she had let him drink his fill, she said, “I will also draw for your camels, until they finish drinking.”

[20] וַתְּמַהֵר וַתְּעַר כַּדָּהּ אֶל־הַשֹּׁקֶת וַתָּרָץ עוֹד אֶל־הַבְּאֵר לִשְׁאֹב וַתִּשְׁאַב לְכָל־גְּמַלָּיו

Quickly emptying her jar into the trough, she ran back to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels.

Bereshit 25:1

[1] וַיֹּסֶף אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה וּשְׁמָהּ קְטוּרָה

Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah.

Bereshit 25:7-8

[7] וְאֵלֶּה יְמֵי שְׁנֵי־חַיֵּי אַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר־חָי מְאַת שָׁנָה וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים

This was the total span of Abraham's life: one hundred and seventy-five years.

[8] וַיִּגְוַע וַיָּמָת אַבְרָהָם בְּשֵׂיבָה טוֹבָה זָקֵן וְשָׂבֵע וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל־עַמָּיו

And Abraham breathed his last, dying at a good ripe age, old and contented; and he was gathered to his kin.

II. "Old, come into days" and "blessed with everything"

The Ramban reads *ba bayamim* as very old, past tense, and quotes the Midrash that this was old age without vitality. Then he explains *bakol*: Avraham had everything except one thing, and he longed for it. Rashi reads *bakol* as a hint to a son.

Ramban on Bereshit 24:1

וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים חָזַר הַכָּתוּב לֵאמֹר כֵּן לְהוֹדִיעַ הַסִּבָּה שֶׁבַּעֲבוּרָהּ הִשְׁבִּיעַ אֶת עַבְדּוֹ, וְאָמַר כִּי רָאָה עַצְמוֹ זָקֵן מְאֹד וְחָשַׁב בְּלִבּוֹ שֶׁאִם יִשְׁלַח לְאֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתּוֹ אוּלַי טֶרֶם יַחְזֹר הַשָּׁלִיחַ יֵלֵךְ לוֹ אֶל בֵּית עוֹלָמוֹ, וְלָכֵן הִשְׁבִּיעַ אֶת עַבְדּוֹ אֲשֶׁר יֵלֵךְ יִצְחָק אַחֲרֵי עֲצָתוֹ, כִּי הוּא הַמֹּשֵׁל בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ, שֶׁלֹּא יִקַּח לוֹ אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת כְּנַעַן וּבִבְרֵאשִׁית רַבָּה (מ״ח :י״ט) אָמְרוּ כָּאן זְקֵנָה שֶׁיֵּשׁ בָּהּ לִכְלוּכִית וּלְהַלָּן זְקֵנָה שֶׁאֵין בָּהּ לִכְלוּכִית, יִרְצוּ לְפָרֵשׁ כִּי ״בָּאִים בַּיָּמִים״ מַתְחִילִים בִּימֵי הַזִּקֵּנָה, כִּי ״בָּאִים״ מוֹרֶה עַל זְמַן עוֹמֵד, כְּמוֹ ״הַבָּאִים בַּשְּׁעָרִים הָאֵלֶּה״ (ירמיהו ז ב), וְכָאן אָמַר שֶׁהָיָה זָקֵן מְאֹד, שֶׁכְּבָר בָּא בַּיָּמִים, כְּמוֹ ״בָּא אָחִיךָ בְּמִרְמָה״ (בראשית כ״ז :ל״ה) :

AND ABRAHAM WAS OLD, WELL STRICKEN IN AGE. Scripture reiterates [Abraham's old age although it has already mentioned it] in order to inform us of the reason that he adjured his servant. Thus Scripture says that because Abraham saw himself to be very old and he thought that if he will send the servant to the land of his origin, perhaps before the messenger would return, he will have gone to his long home, he therefore adjured his servant — whose counsel Isaac would follow since he ruled over all that he had — that he should not take for him a wife from the daughters of Canaan.In Bereshith Rabbah, the Rabbis said: "Here. it was old age combined with vitality; further on it was old age without vitality." By this the Rabbis wanted to explain that ba'im [literally: "coming" in days — mentioned above] — means the beginning of the days of old age, as the word ba'im indicates the present, just as, 'Haba'im' (those that come) in at these gates. But here it says that he was very old for already he was ba bayamim [literally: "he had come in days" — past tense], just as: Thy brother 'ba' (came) with subtlety.

Ramban on Bereshit 24:1, continued (excerpt)

בֵּרַךְ אֶת אַבְרָהָם בַּכֹּל בְּעֹשֶׁר וּנְכָסִים וְכָבוֹד אֹרֶךְ יָמִים וּבָנִים, וְזֹאת כָּל חֶמְדַּת הָאָדָם (אבן עזרא). וְהִזְכִּיר הַכָּתוּב זֶה לֵאמֹר כִּי הָיָה שָׁלֵם בַּכֹּל, לֹא חָסַר דָּבָר זוּלָתִי שֶׁיִּוָּרֵאֶה בָּנִים לִבְנוֹ שֶׁיִּנְחֲלוּ מַעֲלָתוֹ וּכְבוֹדוֹ, וְלָכֵן הִתְאַוָּה לָזֶה

AND HASHEM HAD BLESSED ABRAHAM IN ALL THINGS. I.e., with riches, possessions, honor, longevity and children, which are all the treasures of man. Scripture mentions this in order to say that Abraham was perfect in every detail, lacking in no respect save seeing his son have children who would inherit his superior position and his honor. This was why he desired it.

The Ramban goes on to bring the Gemara in Bava Batra 16b on *bakol* (a daughter, no daughter, or a daughter named Bakol) and explains it at length.

Rashi on Bereshit 24:1

> ברך את אברהם בכל. בַּכֹּל עוֹלֶה בְּגִימַטְרִיָּא בֵּן, וּמֵאַחַר שֶׁהָיָה לוֹ בֵּן הָיָה צָרִיךְ לְהַשִּׂיאוֹ אִשָּׁה׃

ברך את אברהם בכל [HASHEM HAD] BLESSED ABRAHAM IN ALL THINGS — The numerical value of the word בכל is equal to that of בן (a son) — suggesting that G-d had blessed Abraham with a son and since he had a son he had to find him a wife.

III. Shlomo's long slide

The Gemara the Izhbitzer starts from. Note what Rashi says גוּנְדּוֹ is: his cloak, and only then Rav Hai Gaon's cup. The Izhbitzer quotes the word as כַּדּוֹ, his jug.

Sanhedrin 20b

> אָמַר רֵישׁ לָקִישׁ: בַּתְּחִילָּה מָלַךְ שְׁלֹמֹה עַל הָעֶלְיוֹנִים, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ״וַיֵּשֶׁב שְׁלֹמֹה עַל כִּסֵּא ה׳״, וּלְבַסּוֹף מָלַךְ עַל הַתַּחְתּוֹנִים, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ״כִּי הוּא רֹדֶה בְּכָל עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר מִתִּפְסַח וְעַד עַזָּה״.

§ The Gemara cites another tradition about Solomon’s kingdom. Reish Lakish says: Initially, Solomon ruled even over the supernal worlds, as it is stated: “Then Solomon sat on the throne of Hashem” (I Chronicles 29:23), indicating that his kingdom was like Hashem’s kingdom, reigning over all worlds. But ultimately, after he married foreign wives, he ruled over only the lower worlds, as it is stated: “For he had dominion over all the region on this side of the river, from Tiphsah even to Gaza” (I Kings 5:4).

Sanhedrin 20b, continued

> רַב וּשְׁמוּאֵל: חַד אָמַר, ״תִּפְסַח בְּסוֹף הָעוֹלָם וְעַזָּה בְּסוֹף הָעוֹלָם״, וְחַד אָמַר, ״תִּפְסַח וְעַזָּה בַּהֲדֵי הֲדָדֵי הֲווֹ יָתְבִי״, וּכְשֵׁם שֶׁמָּלַךְ עַל תִּפְסַח וְעַל עַזָּה כָּךְ מָלַךְ עַל כָּל הָעוֹלָם כּוּלּוֹ.

Rav and Shmuel disagreed with regard to the meaning of this verse: One says that Tiphsah is a name of a place at the end of the world, at one end of Solomon’s kingdom, and Gaza is at the other end of the world. And one says that Tiphsah and Gaza sat next to each other, and the verse serves to teach that just as he ruled over Tiphsah and over Gaza, so he ruled over the whole world.

Sanhedrin 20b, continued

וּלְבַסּוֹף לֹא מָלַךְ אֶלָּא עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ״אֲנִי קֹהֶלֶת הָיִיתִי מֶלֶךְ עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגוֹ׳״. וּלְבַסּוֹף לֹא מָלַךְ אֶלָּא עַל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ״דִּבְרֵי קֹהֶלֶת בֶּן דָּוִד מֶלֶךְ בִּירוּשָׁלָיִם״. וּלְבַסּוֹף, לֹא מָלַךְ אֶלָּא עַל מִטָּתוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ״הִנֵּה מִטָּתוֹ שֶׁלִּשְׁלֹמֹה וְגוֹ׳״.

Reish Lakish continues: And ultimately, Solomon declined further still in that he ruled only over Israel, as it is stated: "I, Koheleth, have been king over Israel in Jerusalem" (Ecclesiastes 1:12). And ultimately, he ruled over only Jerusalem, as it is stated: "The words of Koheleth, the son of David, king in Jerusalem" (Ecclesiastes 1:1). And ultimately, he ruled over only his bed, as it is stated: "Behold, it is the bed of Solomon; threescore mighty men are about it, of the mighty men of Israel" (Song of Songs 3:7).

Sanhedrin 20b, continued

וּלְבַסּוֹף לֹא מָלַךְ אֶלָּא עַל מַקְלוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ״זֶה הָיָה חֶלְקִי מִכָּל עֲמָלִי״. רַב וּשְׁמוּאֵל: חַד אָמַר מַקְלוֹ, וְחַד אָמַר גּוּנְדּוֹ.

And ultimately, he declined so much that he ruled over only his staff, as it is stated: "And this was my portion from all of my labor" (Ecclesiastes 2:10). Rav and Shmuel disagreed with regard to the meaning of this latter verse as well. One says that the term "this" is a reference to his staff, and one says that it is a reference to his cloak.

Rashi on Sanhedrin 20b

על מקלו - שהשליכו אשמדאי מכסאו כדאמרינן במסכת גיטין (דף סח:): גונדו - טליתו ובסדר טהרות (כלים פרק טז) פירש רב האיי מקידה הוא מקידה של חרש ודומה לו חד אמר קודו וחד אמר מקלו (ויקרא רבה פרשה אחרי) והוא מקידה ששותה בה מים:

My translation: "'Over his staff': because Ashmedai threw him off his throne, as we say in Gittin 68b. 'His gunda': his cloak. And in Seder Taharot (Kelim chapter 16), Rav Hai Gaon explained it as a clay cup, and similarly (Vayikra Rabbah, Acharei) one says his kud and one says his staff, and it is a cup you drink water from."

Kohelet 2:10

[10] וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר שָׁאֲלוּ עֵינַי לֹא אָצַלְתִּי מֵהֶם לֹא־מָנַעְתִּי אֶת־לִבִּי מִכָּל־שִׂמְחָה כִּי־לִבִּי שָׂמֵחַ מִכָּל־עֲמָלִי וְזֶה־הָיָה חֶלְקִי מִכָּל־עֲמָלִי

I withheld from my eyes nothing they asked for, and denied myself no enjoyment; rather, I got enjoyment out of all my wealth. And that was all I got out of my wealth.

Kohelet 2:11

[11] וּפָנִיתִי אֲנִי בְּכָל־מַעֲשַׂי שֶׁעָשׂוּ יָדַי וּבֶעָמָל שֶׁעָמַלְתִּי לַעֲשׂוֹת וְהִנֵּה הַכֹּל הֶבֶל וּרְעוּת רוּחַ וְאֵין יִתְרוֹן תַּחַת הַשָּׁמֶשׁ

Then my thoughts turned to all the fortune my hands had built up, to the wealth I had acquired and won—and oh, it was all futile and pursuit of wind; there was no real value under the sun!

IV. The Mei HaShiloach, in full

One paragraph. Mark the moves: Shlomo was not complaining, he was boasting; the *tamtzit*, the extract, of all of life stayed with him; the staff is the power of life; the jug is a vessel for receiving, ready and yearning for more; and that is what *ba bayamim* means for Avraham.

Mei HaShiloach, Vol. I, Chayei Sara 3

> וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים וַה׳ בֵּרַךְ אֶת אַבְרָהָם בַּכֹּל. כְּתִיב (קהלת ב׳,י׳) ״וְזֶה הָיָה חֶלְקִי מִכָּל עֲמָלִי״ וְאִיתָא בַּגְּמָרָא (סנהדרין כ׳:) רַב וּשְׁמוּאֵל חַד אָמַר מַקְלוֹ וְחַד אָמַר כַּדּוֹ. וּבֶטַח שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ עָלָיו הַשָּׁלוֹם לֹא הָיָה מִתְאוֹנֵן חַס וְשָׁלוֹם עַל אָבְדַן שַׁעֲשׁוּעֵי עוֹלָם הַזֶּה מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי כָּל זֶה לֹא הָיָה נֶחְשָׁב אֶצְלוֹ לִמְאוּמָה, אַךְ הִתְפָּאֵר בְּעַצְמוֹ וְאָמַר שֶׁאַף שֶׁנִּגְרְאָה שֶׁנִּלְקַח מִמֶּנּוּ כֹּל, עִם כָּל זֶה הַתַּמְצִית הָעוֹלֶה מִכָּל חַיֵּי עוֹלָם הַזֶּה נִשְׁאַר אֶצְלוֹ וּבְאֵלּוּ הַשְּׁנַיִם נִמְצָא הַתַּמְצִית מִכָּל חַיֵּי עוֹלָם הַזֶּה, וְזֶה שֶׁאָמַר זֶה חֶלְקִי מִכָּל עֲמָלִי, חַד אָמַר מַקְלוֹ, מַקֵּל רוֹמֵז עַל חַיִּים הַיְינוּ כֹּחַ הַחַיִּים נִשְׁאַר לוֹ, וּמָצִינוּ שֶׁמַּקֵּל רוֹמֵז עַל חַיִּים כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב [זכריה ח׳,ד׳] ״וְאִישׁ מִשְׁעַנְתּוֹ בְּיָדוֹ״. וְחַד אָמַר כַּדּוֹ, כַּדּוֹ הַיְינוּ כְּלִי קִבּוּל הַיְינוּ מוּכָן וּמִשְׁתּוֹקֵק עוֹד לְהוֹסָפָה וּבָזֶה הָיָה שַׁעֲשׁוּעָיו, כִּי זֹאת הִיא הָעִיקָּר בְּחַיֵּי עוֹלָם הַזֶּה, וְזֶה פֵּירוּשׁ הַפָּסוּק ״וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים״, שֶׁבָּא אֶל שָׁרְשֵׁי הַחַיִּים וְהָיָה כְּלִי לְקַבֵּל וְהִשְׁתּוֹקֵק לְהוֹסָפוֹת חַיִּים מֵאֵת ה׳ בְּכָל פַּעַם יוֹתֵר.

"And Avraham waxed old, coming in age, and G-d blessed Avraham with everything." (Bereshit, 24:1)It is written (Kohollet, 2:10), "and this is my portion from all my toil," and of this the Gemara says (Sanhedrin, 20b), "Rav and Shmuel [differ on the interpretation of what 'this' is in the verse], one says it is his staff, one says it is his water jug." Certainly King Shlomo was not complaining, G-d forbid, about loosing the delights of the world, for they were considered as nothing before him, yet he praised himself and said that even though it seems that everything was taken from him, still the concentration of all the life of this world remained with him. In these two matters we find the concentration of all the life of this world, in that he said, "this is my portion from all my toil." "One says his staff," for a staff hints at life, meaning that the power of life remained with him, as it is written (Zechariya, 8:4), "[thus shall the old men and women dwell in Jerusalem], and each man his staff in hand." "One says his water jug," for a jug is a vessel of reception, meaning, ready and still longing to add to it. This was his delight, for this is the main point of the life of this world. And this is the meaning of the verse, "and Avraham was old, coming in days," that he came to the roots of life, and he himself became a vessel of reception, yearning for G-d to increase his life at each moment.

The English is Sefaria's translation, left as it is.

Zechariah 8:4: the Izhbitzer's proof that a staff means life

> [4] כֹּה אָמַר ה׳ צְבָאוֹת עֹד יֵשְׁבוּ זְקֵנִים וּזְקֵנוֹת בִּרְחֹבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָם וְאִישׁ מִשְׁעַנְתּוֹ בְּיָדוֹ מֵרֹב יָמִים

Thus said Hashem of Hosts: There shall yet be elderly men and women in the squares of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of their great age.

V. Rivka at the well

Rashi on Bereshit 24:17

וירץ העבד לקראתה. לְפִי שֶׁרָאָה שֶׁעָלוּ הַמַּיִם לִקְרָאתָהּ (בראשית רבה):

וירץ העבד לקראתה AND THE SERVANT RAN TOWARDS HER — because he saw that the waters rose in the well when she approached it (Genesis Rabbah 60:5).

Bereshit Rabbah 60:5 (excerpt): Rashi's source, and the line the dvar closes on

וַתֵּרֶד הָעַיְנָה וַתְּמַלֵּא כַדָּהּ וַתָּעַל, כָּל הַנָּשִׁים יוֹרְדוֹת וּמְמַלְּאוֹת מִן הָעַיִן, וְזוֹ כֵּיוָן שֶׁרָאוּ אוֹתָהּ הַמַּיִם מִיָּד עָלוּ, אָמַר לָהּ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא אַתְּ סִימָן לְבָנַיִךְ, מָה אַתְּ כֵּיוָן שֶׁרָאוּ אוֹתָךְ הַמַּיִם מִיָּד עָלוּ, אַף בָּנַיִךְ כֵּיוָן שֶׁהַבְּאֵר רוֹאָה אוֹתָן מִיָּד תִּהְיֶה עוֹלָה, הֲדָא הוּא דִכְתִיב (במדבר כא, יז): אָז יָשִׁיר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת עֲלִי בְאֵר

"She went down to the spring, she filled her jug, and came up" – all the women were going down and drawing water from the spring, but this one, when the water saw her it immediately rose up [towards her]. The Holy One blessed be He said to her: 'You are a precursor for your descendants; just as you, when the water saw you it immediately rose up, so, too, your descendants, when the well will see them, it will immediately rise up.' That is what is written: "Then Israel sang this song: Rise up, well; give voice for it"

Bamidbar 21:17

[17] אָז יָשִׁיר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת עֲלִי בְאֵר עֱנוּ־לָהּ

Then Israel sang this song:Spring up, O well—sing to it—

Rashi on Bereshit 24:20

ותער. לְשׁוֹן נְפִיצָה, וְהַרְבֵּה יֵשׁ בִּלְשׁוֹן מִשְׁנָה הַמְעָרֶה מִכְּלִי אֶל כֶּלִי, וּבַמִּקְרָא יֵשׁ לוֹ דּוֹמֶה אַל תְּעַר נַפְשִׁי (תהילים קמא), אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱרָה לַמָּוֶת נַפְשׁוֹ (ישעיהו נ״ג): השקת. אֶבֶן חֲלוּלָה שֶׁשּׁוֹתִים בָּהּ הַגְּמַלִּים:

ותער AND SHE EMPTIED — It means "pouring out". It occurs in this sense many times in the Mishna; e. g., (Avodah Zarah 72a), "He who pours (הטערה) from one vessel into another", and we find it again in a similar sense in Biblical Hebrew: (Psalms 141:8) "O pour not out (תער) my soul", and (Isaiah 53:12) "Because he poured forth (הערה) his soul unto death" השקת THE TROUGH — a hollowed-out stone from which the camels drink.

Tehillim 141:8 (the same verb: pouring out)

[8] כִּי אֵלֶיךָ ה׳ אֲדֹנָי עֵינָי בְּכָה חָסִיתִי אַל־תְּעַר נַפְשִׁי

My eyes are fixed upon You, O Hashem my Sovereign;I seek refuge in You, do not put me in jeopardy.

VI. Vayosef: the old man still adding

Midrash Tanchuma, Chayei Sara 7

> וַיֹּסֶף אַבְרָהָם. זֶה שֶׁאָמַר הַכָּתוּב: וַאֲנִי תָּמִיד אְיַחֵל וְהוֹסַפְתִּי עַל כָּל תְּהִלָּתֶךָ (תהלים עא, יד). אָמַר רַבִּי יוּדָן, כְּתִיב: לֹא יַרְבֶּה לּוֹ סוּסִים (דברים יז, טז). וּשְׁלֹמֹה כְּשֶׁמָּלַךְ, אֲפִלּוּ אֶחָד לֹא הָיָה לוֹ, אֶלָּא עַל הַפִּרְדָּה רָכַב וְהוֹסִיף עוֹד.

And Abraham took another wife (Gen. 25:1). Scripture states elsewhere in allusion to this verse: But as for me, I will hope continually and will praise Thee, yet more and more (Ps. 71:14). R. Yudan stated: It is written: Only he shall not multiply horses to himself (Deut. 17:16). When Solomon was crowned king, he did not possess a single horse, and was compelled to ride upon an ass, but later on he obtained numerous horses.

Midrash Tanchuma, Chayei Sara 7, continued

> אָמַר רַבִּי חוֹנְיָא, כְּתִיב: וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי יִמּוֹל בְּשַׂר עָרְלָתוֹ (ויקרא יב, ג). כְּשֶׁמָּל בְּנוֹ, אֲפִלּוּ אָדָם מְמַשְׁכֵּן עַצְמוֹ מְשַׂמֵּחַ אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם. הֱוֵי אוֹמֵר, וְהוֹסַפְתִּי עַל כָּל תְּהִלָּתֶךָ. וְרַבָּנָן אָמְרֵי, מְדַבֵּר בְּאַבְרָהָם. אָמַר לִפְנֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא כָּךְ אָמַרְתָּ לִי, כִּי בְיִצְחָק יִקָּרֵא לְךָ זָרַע (בראשית כא, יב), הֲרֵי הוֹסַפְתָּ לִי מִבִּרְכָתְךָ וַאֲנִי מוֹלִיד כַּמָּה בָּנִים. לְכָךְ נֶאֱמַר: וַיֹּסֶף אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה.

R. Hunya said: It is written: And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised (Lev. 12:3). This indicates that a man should even go into debt in order to make the circumcision a day of rejoicing. Hence it says: And will praise Thee, yet more and more (Ps. 71:14). The rabbis maintained that this verse speaks of Abraham. He said to the Holy One, blessed be He: "You told me: For in Isaac shall seed be called unto thee (Gen. 21:12). You have multiplied Your blessings upon me, and I have borne many sons." Hence it is said: And Abraham took another wife.

Tehillim 71:9

> [9] אַל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי לְעֵת זִקְנָה כִּכְלוֹת כֹּחִי אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי

Do not cast me off in old age;when my strength fails, do not forsake me!

Tehillim 71:14

> [14] וַאֲנִי תָּמִיד אְיַחֵל וְהוֹסַפְתִּי עַל־כָּל־תְּהִלָּתֶךָ

As for me, I will hope always,and add to the many praises of You.

Tehillim 71:18

> [18] וְגַם עַד־זִקְנָה וְשֵׂיבָה אֱלֹקִים אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי עַד־אַגִּיד זְרוֹעֲךָ לְדוֹר לְכָל־יָבוֹא גְּבוּרָתֶךָ

and even in hoary old age do not forsake me, G-d,until I proclaim Your strength to the next generation,Your mighty acts, to all who are to come,

Rashi on Bereshit 25:1

> קטורה. זוֹ הָגָר, וְנִקְרֵאת קְטוּרָה עַל שֵׁם מַעֲשֶׂיהָ כְּקְטֹרֶת (בראשית רבה), וְשֶׁקְּשְׁרָה פִּתְחָהּ, שֶׁלֹּא נִזְדַּוְּגָה לְאָדָם מִיּוֹם שֶׁפֵּרְשָׁה מֵאַבְרָהָם׃

קטורה KETURAH — This is Hagar. She was named Keturah because her deeds were as beautiful (sweet) as incense (Ketoreth) (Genesis Rabbah 61). And since she closed her 'opening,' as she did not mate with anyone from the time she separated from Avraham (Genesis Rabbah 61:4).

Mei HaShiloach, Vol. II, Chayei Sara 2

> וַיֹּסֶף אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה וּשְׁמָהּ קְטוּרָה. בַּמִּדְרָשׁ (תנחומא חיי ז׳) זֶה שֶׁאָמַר הַכָּתוּב (תהלים ע״א,י״ד) ״וַאֲנִי תָּמִיד אֲיַחֵל וְהוֹסַפְתִּי עַל כָּל תְּהִלָּתֶךָ״ כוּ׳ אָמַר רַבִּי חוּנָיָא כְּתִיב ״בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי יִמּוֹל כָּל בְּשַׂר עָרְלָתוֹ״ כוּ׳ הֵיוֵי אוֹמֵר ״וְהוֹסַפְתִּי עַל כָּל תְּהִלָּתֶךָ״. הַיְינוּ כִּי אַבְרָהָם בְּהִתְבּוֹנְנוֹ כַּמָּה דּוֹרוֹת גְּדוֹלִים וּגְבוֹהִים מֵעַל גְּבוֹהִים יַעַמְדוּ מִמֶּנּוּ, אֲזַי נָפַל בְּדַעְתּוֹ אוּלַי הוּא לֹא יִהְיֶה נֶחְשָׁב נֶגְדָּם, וְהֵאִיר לוֹ הַשי״ת שֶׁכֻּלָּם יִהְיוּ צְרִיכִים לְהַתְחִיל בְּהַשַּׁעַר וְהַהוֹסָפָה שֶׁהוֹסִיף אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ, כִּי מִצְוַת מִילָה רוֹמֵז עַל זֶה, שֶׁהָאָדָם מוֹסִיף וְעוֹשֶׂה חוֹתָם בִּבְשַׂר הַגּוּף שֶׁעַל יָדוֹ יִקָּבַע בְּגוּפוֹ קְדֻשָּׁה בְּקִבְיעוּת שֶׁיִּהְיֶה גַּם בְּהַגּוּף רְשִׁימָה שֶׁהוּא לְחֶלְקוֹ שֶׁל הַשי״ת.

In short: the Izhbitzer reads the same Tanchuma. Avraham, seeing the great generations that would come from him, worried he would count for nothing next to them. Hashem showed him that all of them would have to start at the gate he opened and the *hosafa*, the addition, he added: the mila, a mark added to the body so that the body itself carries holiness.

VII. "Old and satisfied"

Ramban on Bereshit 25:8

> זָקֵן וְשָׂבֵעַ שֶׁרָאָה כָּל מִשְׁאֲלוֹת לִבּוֹ וְשָׂבַע כָּל טוֹבָה, וְכֵן ״וּשְׂבַע יָמִים״ (בראשית ל״ה׃כ״ט), שֶׁשָּׂבְעָה נַפְשׁוֹ בַּיָּמִים וְלֹא יִתְאַוֶּה שֶׁיִּחָדְּשׁוּ בּוֹ הַיָּמִים דָּבָר, וּכְעִנְיָן שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בְּדָוִד ״וַיָּמָת בְּשֵׂיבָה טוֹבָה שְׂבַע יָמִים עֹשֶׁר וְכָבוֹד״ (דהי״א כט כח), וְהוּא סִפּוּר חַסְדֵּי הַשֵּׁם בַּצַּדִּיקִים וּמִדָּה טוֹבָה בָּהֶם שֶׁלֹּא יִתְאַוּוּ בַּמּוֹתָרוֹת, כְּעִנְיָן שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בָּהֶם ״תַּאֲוַת לִבּוֹ נָתַתָּ לּוֹ״ (תהלים כא ג), וְלֹא כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בִּשְׁאָר הָאֲנָשִׁים ״אֹהֵב כֶּסֶף לֹא יִשְׂבַּע כֶּסֶף״ (קהלת ה ט) וְאָמְרוּ בּוֹ (קהלת רבה א יג), אֵין אָדָם יוֹצֵא מִן הָעוֹלָם וַחֲצִי תַּאֲוָתוֹ בְּיָדוֹ, יֵשׁ בְּיָדוֹ מָנָה מִתְאַוֶּה מָאתַיִם, הַשִּׂיגָה יָדוֹ לְמָאתַיִם מִתְאַוֶּה לַעֲשׂוֹת אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר ״אֹהֵב כֶּסֶף לֹא יִשְׂבַּע כֶּסֶף״ (בראשית רבה ס״ב׃א׳), אָמְרוּ הקב״ה מַרְאֶה לָהֶם לַצַּדִּיקִים מַתָּן שְׂכָרָן שֶׁהוּא עָתִיד לִתֵּן לָהֶם לָעוֹלָם הַבָּא, וְנַפְשָׁם שְׂבֵעָה וְהֵם יְשֵׁנִים. נִתְעוֹרְרוּ הַחֲכָמִים בָּזֶה וּפֵרְשׁוּ הַכָּתוּב שֶׁאוֹמֵר ״וְשָׂבֵעַ״ בַּמַּרְאָה הַזֹּאת׃

OLD AND FULL OF YEARS. He witnessed the fulfillment of all the desires of his heart and was sated with all good things. In a similar sense is [the verse written in connection with Isaac's life], and full of days, which means that his soul was sated with days, and he had no desire that the future days should bring something new. This is as it is said of David: And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches and honor. This is a story of the mercies of the Eternal towards the righteous ones, and of their attribute of goodness by virtue of which they do not desire luxuries, just as it is said of them, Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and not as it is said of other people, He that loveth money shall not be satisfied with money, and as the Rabbis have commented thereon: "No man leaves the world having amassed half of his desires. If he has a hundred, he desires two hundred. If he succeeds in acquiring two hundred, he desires to make of it four hundred, as it is said, He that loveth money shall not be satisfied with money." In Bereshith Rabbah the Rabbis have said: "The Holy One, blessed be He, shows the righteous in this world the reward He is destined to give them in the Coming World, and their souls become full and they fall asleep." The Sages were stirred by this and they explained the verse which says, and full of years, with this vision [of the reward that G-d shows the righteous before they die].

Kohelet 5:9

> ט אֹהֵב כֶּסֶף לֹא־יִשְׂבַּע כֶּסֶף וּמִי־אֹהֵב בָּהָמוֹן לֹא תְבוּאָה גַּם־זֶה הָבֶל

A lover of money is never satisfied with money, nor a lover of wealth, with income. That too is futile.

VIII. Questions to look into

1. **Two readings of "come into days."** The Ramban: very old, and (with the Midrash) old age without vitality. The Izhbitzer: he came to the roots of life. Can both be true of the same man in the same verse?
2. **What is "everything"?** Rashi: a son (gematria). The Ramban: wealth, honor, long life and children, with one thing still missing. Bava Batra 16b: a daughter, no daughter, or a daughter named Bakol. Which reading best explains why the next verse sends the servant?
3. **Staff, cloak or cup?** Rashi's first reading of גּוּנְדּוֹ is a cloak. What would the Izhbitzer's teaching look like if the second thing Shlomo kept were a cloak instead of a jug?
4. **Bragging or mourning?** Kohelet 2:11 follows straight on: וְהִנֵּה הַכֹּל הֶבֶל. Does the next verse support the Izhbitzer's "he was boasting," or push against it?
5. **The slide itself.** Rashi says Ashmedai threw Shlomo off his throne (Gittin 68b), and the Steinsaltz note in Sanhedrin ties the fall to his foreign wives. How can the end of that slide be "the extract of all of life"?
6. **Why a staff means life.** The Izhbitzer brings Zechariah 8:4. Read the next verse (8:5) too: who else is in those streets? What does it add?
7. **The water rose, and she still hauled.** If the water rose to meet Rivka (Rashi 24:17), why does 24:20 have her running back again and again to draw for the camels? When does the well rise for us, and when do we haul?

8. **Pouring out.** Rashi on וַתְּעַר brings Tehillim 141:8, "do not pour out my soul." What does emptying the jug for someone else have to do with a soul poured out?
9. **Two kinds of adding.** In the same Tanchuma, Rabbi Yudan uses *hosafa* for Shlomo adding horses, against the Torah's warning (Devarim 17:16). The Rabbis use it for Avraham adding praise. What separates a good "more" from a bad one? Compare the Ramban's two thirsts on 25:8.
10. **Who is Ketura?** Rashi says Hagar. If so, what is Avraham "adding"? Look at the Mei HaShiloach Vol. I, Chayei Sara 1, which calls this a matter of great depth.
11. **Satisfied and still yearning.** The Ramban says the righteous are satisfied and don't crave anything new; the Izhbitzer says the main thing in this world is to stay a vessel yearning for more. Do they disagree, or are they describing two different hungers?
12. **A psalm for an old man.** The Tanchuma says Tehillim 71:14 speaks of Avraham. Read all of Tehillim 71 (see verses 9 and 18) as his prayer. Which verse fits Chayei Sara best?