

Rabbi David Debow for Torah in Motion Part IV – Fords, Ferarris and Pharoahs

Source Sheet

Genesis 12:10 - 20

There was a famine in the land, and Avram descended to Egypt to sojourn there because the famine was heavy in the land. (11) When he approached Egypt, he said to his wife, Sarai, "Behold, please, I know that you are a beautiful woman. (12) When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' They will kill me, but you, they will keep alive. (13) Please, say that you are my sister, that it may be well with me on account of you, and that I may live because of you." (14) When Avram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. (15) The officials of Paroh saw her and praised her to Paroh, and the woman was taken to Paroh's house. (16) And he dealt well with Avram on her account and he had sheep, cattle, male donkeys, servants, maidservants, female donkeys, and camels. (17) Hashem plagued Paroh and his household with great plagues because of Avram's wife, Sarai. (18) Paroh called Avram and said, "What is this that you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she is your wife? (19) Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her to me as a wife? Now, here is your wife. Take her, and go!" (20) Paroh commanded men over him, and they cast him out along with his wife and all that was his.

Rashi: Paroh was smitten with the plague of *Raatan* which made sex difficult.

Rashi: Why now? Because now we are traveling among black and ugly people, related to the Cushites.

Genesis 20:1 – 18

(1) Avraham traveled from there to the land of the Negev and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur and he sojourned in Gerar. (2) Avraham said of his wife, Sarah, "she is my sister," and Avimelekh, the king of Gerar, sent and took Sarah. (3) Hashem came to Avimelekh in a dream at night and said to him, "You are to die because of the woman you took, as she is married to a man." (4) But Avimelekh had not approached her, and he said, "My Master, will you kill even an innocent nation? (5) Did he not say to me, 'she is my sister' and she also said, 'he is my brother'. I did this with an innocent heart and clean hands!" (6) God said to him in the dream, "Also I know that you did this with an innocent heart. And, I also restrained you from sinning against me. Therefore, I did not allow you to touch her. (7) Now, return the man's wife, as he is a prophet and will pray for you, and you shall live. But if you do not return her, know that you will surely die, you and all that is yours." (8) Avimelekh rose early in the morning and called all his servants. He spoke all these things in their hearing, and the people were very frightened. (9) Avimelekh called Avraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? How have I sinned against you that you brought upon me and my kingdom such great sin?! Deeds that are not done you have done to me!" (10) Avimelekh said to Avraham, "What did you see that you did this thing!?" (11) Avraham said, "Because I thought, 'surely there is no fear of God in this place and they will kill me on account of my wife.' (12) In addition, she is in truth my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife. (13) When God had me wander from my father's house, I told her, 'this is the kindness you can do for me. Any place we go, say of me that he is my brother.'" (14) Avimelekh took sheep, cattle, servants, and maidservants, and gave them to Avraham, and he gave him back his wife, Sarah. (15) Avimelekh said, "Here, my land is before you. Dwell where you see fit." (16) And to Sarah, he said, "Here, I have given

one thousand pieces of silver to your brother. Here, it is for you a covering of the eyes for all who are with you; before all you are vindicated." (17) Avraham prayed to God and God healed Avimelekh, his wife, and his handmaids and they gave birth. (18) For God had closed tight every womb in Avimelekh's house on account of Sarah, Avraham's wife.

Genesis 26:6 - 12

(6) Yitzchak dwelled in Gerar. (7) The people of the place asked about his wife, and he said, "She is my sister" because he feared to say, 'my wife,' "lest the people of the place kill me on account of Rivka because she is beautiful." (8) As his days there stretched on, Avimelekh, king of the Philistines, looked out the window and saw, and there was Yitzchak playfully interacting with his wife, Rivka! (9) Avimelekh called Yitzchak, and said, "But, behold, she is your wife! How did you say, 'she is my sister!'" Yitzchak said to him, "because I thought, 'lest I die on her account.'" (10) Avimelekh said, "What have you done to us! One of the people might have easily lain with your wife and you would have brought guilt upon us!" (11) Avimelekh commanded all the people saying, "Whoever touches this man or his wife will surely be put to death!" (12) Yitzchak sowed in that land, and he reaped in that year one hundredfold because Hashem had blessed him.

Genesis 30:9 - 18

(9) Leah saw that she had stopped giving birth and she took Zilpah, her maidservant, and gave her to Yaakov as a wife. . . (14) Reuven went out in the time of the wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field and brought them to his mother, Leah. Rachel said to Leah, "Please, give me from the mandrakes of your son." (15) She said to her, "Is it not enough that you took my husband that you would take also my son's mandrakes?" Rachel said, "Therefore, he will sleep with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes." (16) Yaakov came from the field in the evening, and Leah went out to greet him and said, "To me you will come, because I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes"; and he slept with her that night. (17) Hashem listened to Leah and she conceived and bore Yaakov a fifth son. (18) Leah said, "Hashem has given me my reward because I gave my maidservant to my husband"; she named him Yissachar.

Joshua 2:1, 2:9 - 13

And Joshua, the son of Nun, sent out of Shittim two spies secretly, saying, "Go view the land, and Jericho." And they went, and they came into the house of a harlot whose name was Rachav and lay there.

(9) and she said to the men, "I know that Hashem has given you the land, and that your terror has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. (10) For we have heard how Hashem dried up the water of the Red Sea before you, when you came out of Egypt; and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and to Og, whom you utterly destroyed. (11) And as soon as we had heard it, our hearts melted, and there did not remain any more spirit in any man because of you; for Hashem your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

Tractate Megilla 14b – 15a

Rachav converted and married Joshua.

The midrash includes Rachav among the four most beautiful women the world has ever known: Sarah, Rachav, Abigail, and Esther. Anyone who mentioned her name, saying, “Rachav, Rachav,” immediately lusted after her. R. Nahman responded to this: “But I say ‘Rachav, Rachav,’ and nothing happens to me!”, and was answered: “This refers to one who knows her and recognizes her”

Ezekiel 16

(5) No eye pitied you, to do any of these things to you, to have compassion on you; but you were cast out in the open field, for your person was abhorred on the day that you were born. (6) When I passed by you, and saw you weltering in your blood, I said to you, 'in your blood, live'; yes, I said to you, 'in your blood, live'. (7) I caused you to multiply as that which grows in the field, and you increased and grew great, and you attained to excellent ornament; your breasts were fashioned, and your hair was grown; yet you were naked and bare. (8) Now when I passed by you, and looked at you, behold, your time was the time of love; and I spread My skirt over you, and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore to you, and entered into a covenant with you,' says Adonai Elohim, 'and you became Mine. (9) Then I washed you with water; yes, I thoroughly washed away your blood from you, and I anointed you with oil. (10) I clothed you also with embroidered work, and shod you with sealskin, and I girded you about with fine linen, and covered you with silk.

(24) 'that you have built for yourself a vaulted place, and have made yourself a lofty place in every street. (25) You have built your lofty place at the head of every way, and have made your beauty an abomination, and have opened your feet to everyone who passed by, and multiplied your prostitution.

Mishna Sota 9:9

From the time when adulterers proliferated, the performance of the ritual of the bitter waters was nullified

Mishna Sota 9:13

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says: Since then, the lost purity has removed the taste and the aroma from fruit; the tithes that were not separated have removed the fat of the grain. And the Sages say: Promiscuity and witchcraft have consumed it all.