

Chayei Sarah Nathan Edelstein

My parashah is called *Chayei Sarah* - the life of Sarah. This parashah begins with the death of Sarah in the land of Kiriath-Arba, which was known as Canaan. Sarah lived to be 127 years old. In my parashah, Abraham is looking for a wife for their son Isaac. Abraham sends out a servant and 10 camels to go look for someone to be his wife, but the test was, whoever stops to give water to not only the servant, but all ten camels, will be the person that he chooses.

The servant and the camels set out to go searching for a wife for Isaac. They stumbled upon a beautiful looking girl named Rebecca by a well. Rebecca said "Would you and your camels like some water"? The servant said "yes". Rebecca went up and down the well, most likely over 200 times, because each camel can drink 20 gallons of water. Rebecca provided water for these complete strangers. This must have taken a lot of effort as well as hard work and easily took many hours of Rebecca's time. She finally completed fetching water for all ten camels and the servant. The servant then told Rebecca that Isaac, his master, was looking for a wife. He asked Rebecca if she would be interested in being the wife of Isaac. He chose Rebecca because she was caring not only to the strangers but to animals and showed respect for them. Rebecca said "yes" to the servant's offer to marry Isaac and they all started their journey home.

When they finally got near, they saw a man outside of a tent and they stopped. Rebecca asked the servant "Is this who I am to marry"? And it was. They got married and stayed the rest of their lives together.

This story relates to me by the fact that I am like Rebecca because of the volunteering I do at the Hebrew Home for the elderly. I actually went there first because of a project at school but I enjoyed the fact I could help people in need and I volunteered all summer and in my free time during the school year. Even when they are just lonely and need a friend to talk to, I go up and take them outside or on a stroll around the perimeter of the building and talk with them. Rebecca stopped and went out of her way to fetch water and care for this servant and the 10 camels he tagged along with. I went out of my way to talk to this man I now know as James Minges, "the architect." He probably became my favorite resident there in just a short time. He would talk to me about his life when he was young and all of his awards and feats from his career of architecture and even designed many buildings that are still around today near us. I enjoyed talking to him and I thought he was pretty interesting. I'm glad I went out of my way to not only volunteer but to help him that day. He also showed me all of his pictures of buildings from a long time back and is now writing a book of architecture. He says he'd give me the very first signed copy.

Not only has the Hebrew Home helped me relate to my parashah but so has soccer in working together with my team. Even though I played goalie many times, I knew I had to take one for the team and I have actually gotten very many assists from my punts. Even though I didn't get to personally score the

goal, I knew I helped and made a difference to someone else on my team rather than myself.

In preparing for my Bar Mitzvah today, I would like to thank Rabbi Small, Cantor Cohn, Mrs. Fox, Ms. Holtman, Mrs. Mannheim and Mrs. Weingold. I would also like to thank all of my religious school teachers here at The Emanuel for teaching me throughout all of these years.