Class #7 - Parshat Vayetze - Why were the Matriarchs very beautiful women?

Advanced Fellowship Parsha Class - Sponsored in memory of Alice Toby Barbanel Z”l

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<https://youtu.be/H2g3AxkO1ws>

1. What is a trophy wife?
2. Why do old rich men want them?
3. What is the role of physical attraction in a healthy marriage?
4. Do these trophy marriages typically last?
5. What does Torah have to say about the virtue of physical beauty?

שֶׁ֣קֶר הַ֭חֵן וְהֶ֣בֶל הַיֹּ֑פִי אִשָּׁ֥ה יִרְאַת־יְ֝ה-וָ֗ה הִ֣יא תִתְהַלָּֽל׃

Grace is deceptive, Beauty is illusory; It is for her fear of the LORD That a woman is to be praised.

Hashem sends the Prophet Samuel to anoint one of Yishai’s sons as the next King of Israel…

[I Samuel 16:6-7](/I%20Samuel%2016:6-7)

(6) When they arrived and he saw Eliab, he thought: “Surely the LORD’s anointed stands before Him.” (7) But the LORD said to Samuel, “**Pay no attention to his appearance or his stature, for I have rejected him.** For not as man sees [does the LORD see]; man sees only what is visible, but the LORD sees into the heart.”

Yet!

Sarah

12:14 When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that his wife was very beautiful.

12:15 Pharaoh's officials saw her, and spoke highly of her to Pharaoh. The woman was taken to Pharaoh's palace.

Rivka

24:15 He had not yet finished speaking, when Rebecca appeared. She had been born to Bethuel, the son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham's brother Nachor. Her jug was on her shoulder.

24:16 The girl was extremely good-looking, [and] she was a virgin untouched by any man. The girl went down, filled her jug, and then came up again.

Rachel

29:16 Laban had two daughters. The older one's name was Leah, and the younger one's name was Rachel.

29:17 Leah had lovely eyes, while Rachel was shapely and beautiful.

1. If physical beauty is not a virtue, why are the wives of the Patriarchs so very amazingly beautiful!?
2. If the Patriarchs were prophets and thus the most perfected men who walked the earth, why are they ALL married to these “model” level looking wives?

12:10 There was a famine in the land. Abram headed south to Egypt to stay there for a while, since the famine had grown very severe in the land.

12:11 As they approached Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, 'I realize that you are a good-looking woman.

12:12 When the Egyptians see you, they will assume that you are my wife and kill me, allowing you to live.

1. How did Avraham relate to Sarah’s beauty?

Wife for Isaac

24:1 Abraham was old, well advanced in years, and God had blessed Abraham with everything.

24:2 He said to the senior servant of his household, who was in charge of all that he owned, 'Place your hand under my thigh.

24:3 I will bind you by an oath to God, Lord of heaven and earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I live.

24:4 Instead, you must go to my native land, to my birthplace, and obtain a wife for my son Isaac.'

1. What criteria for marriage is important for Avraham for his son Yitzchak?

24:14 If I say to a girl, 'Tip over your jug and let me have a drink,' and she replies, 'Drink, and I will also water your camels,' she will be the one whom You have designated for Your servant Isaac. [If there is such a girl,] I will know that You have granted a favor for my master.'

1. What criteria is important to Avraham’s servant in selecting a wife for Rivka?

27:46 Rebecca said to Isaac, 'I am disgusted with life because of those Hittite women. If Jacob marries such a Hittite girl, from the daughters of this land, why should I go on living?' 28:1 Isaac summoned Jacob and gave him a blessing and a charge. 'Do not marry a Canaanite girl,' he said. 28:2 'Set out and go to Padan Aram, to the house of your maternal grandfather Bethuel. Marry a daughter of your uncle Laban.

1. What criteria is important for Rivka and Yitzchak for selecting a wife for Yaakov?

29:15 Laban said to Jacob, “Just because you are a kinsman, should you serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?”

16Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older one was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

17Leah had weak eyes; Rachel was shapely and beautiful.

18Jacob loved Rachel; so he answered, “I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.”

19Laban said, “Better that I give her to you than that I should give her to an outsider. Stay with me.”

20So Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her.

1. How old was Yaakov when he got married – roughly? [Yaakov was 130 years old when he arrived in Egypt and Yosef was 39 years old. Yaakov spent 20 years with Lavan]
2. Why did he not get married sooner? [His brother Eisav got married to two Hittite women when he was 40 years old.] Hint: “He was a dweller of tents”.
3. How important was Rachel’s looks to Yaakov?
4. What is paradoxical about Yaakov’s seven years of working for Rachel was like a few days?!?
5. Why were the Matriarchs very beautiful women?