

## שליחותו של העבד The Slave's Mission

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(א) וְאַבְרָהָם זָקֵן בָּא בַּיָּמִים וְה' בֵּרַךְ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם בְּכָל: (ב) וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־עַבְדּוֹ זֶקֶן בֵּיתוֹ הַמְּשָׁל בְּכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ שֵׁם־נָא יִדְדִן תַּחַת יָדִי: (ג) וְאֲשָׁבִיעֶךָ בְּה' אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֱלֹהֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לְבָנִי מִבְּנוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּקִרְבּוֹ: (ד) כִּי אֶל־אֶרֶצִי וְאֶל־מוֹלַדְתִּי תֵלֵךְ וְלִקְחָתָהּ אִשָּׁה לְבָנִי לְיִצְחָק: (ה) וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הָעֶבֶד אוֹלִי לֹא־תֵאבְדָה הָאִשָּׁה לְלֶכֶת אַחֲרֵי אֶל־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת הִהָשֵׁב אֲשִׁיב אֶת־בְּנֶךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵאתָ מִשָּׁם: (ו) וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אַבְרָהָם הֲשָׁמַר לְךָ פֶּן־תִּשָּׁיב אֶת־בְּנִי שָׁמָּה: (ז) ה' אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם אֲשֶׁר לְקֻחְנִי מִבֵּית אָבִי וּמֵאָרֶץ מוֹלַדְתִּי וְאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לִי וְאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע־לִי לֵאמֹר לִזְדַּעַךְ אֶתֶּן אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת הוּא יִשְׁלַח מַלְאָכּוֹ לִפְנֶיךָ וְלִקְחָתָהּ אִשָּׁה לְבָנִי מִשָּׁם: (ח) וְאִם־לֹא תֵאבְדָה הָאִשָּׁה לְלֶכֶת אַחֲרֶיךָ וְנָמְרִית מִשְׁבַּעְתִּי זֹאת רַק אֶת־בְּנִי לֹא תִשָּׁב שָׁמָּה: (ט) וַיֵּשֶׁם הָעֶבֶד אֶת־יָדוֹ תַּחַת יָדֵךְ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּשְׁבַּע לוֹ עַל־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה: (י) וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד עֲשָׂרָה גִּמְלוֹת מִגִּמְלוֹת אֲדֹנָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ וְכָל־טוֹב אֲדֹנָיו בִּידּוֹ וַיָּקֶם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־אֶרֶס נְהָדִים אֶל־עִיר נַחוּר: (יא) וַיְבַרֵךְ הַגִּמְלוֹת מִחוּץ לָעִיר אֶל־בָּאָר הַמַּיִם לַעֵת עֶרֶב לַעֲת צֹאת הַשָּׁאֲבָת: (יב) וַיֹּאמְרוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵי אֲדֹנֵי אַבְרָהָם הִקְדֵּה־נָא לָפָנֵינוּ וַעֲשֵׂה־חֶסֶד עִם אֲדֹנֵי אַבְרָהָם: (יג) הִנֵּה אֲנִכִּי נֹצֵב עַל־עֵין הַמַּיִם וּבְנוֹת אֲנָשֵׁי הָעִיר יֵצְאוּ לְשָׂאֵב מַיִם: (יד) וְהִיא הַנְּעוּרָה אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהֵי הַטִּי־נָא כְּדֹךְ וְאִשְׁתָּהּ וְאָמְרָהּ שְׁתֵּה וְגַם־גִּמְלֶיךָ אִשְׁקָה אֶתָּה הִכָּחָת לְעַבְדְּךָ לְיִצְחָק וְבָהּ אֲדַע כִּי־עָשִׂיתָ חֶסֶד עִם־אֲדֹנִי:

- 1) Why didn't אברהם see to the matter himself?
- 2) Why did אברהם have the slave place his hand under his master's thigh before taking the oath?
- 3) Why wasn't יצחק engaged in finding his own wife?
- 4) Why was אברהם convinced that the only place for the slave to go for a wife for יצחק would be his family homestead?
- 5) Why didn't the slave pray for a girl to come out who would be willing to follow him etc. – as per אברהם's conditions?

1 And Abraham was old, well stricken in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. 2 And Abraham said unto his servant, the elder of his house, that ruled over all that he had: 'Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh. 3 And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell. 4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son, even for Isaac.' 5 And the servant said unto him: 'Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land; must I needs bring thy son back unto the land from whence thou camest?' 6 And Abraham said unto him: 'Beware thou that thou bring not my son back thither. 7 The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my nativity, and who spoke unto me, and who swore unto me, saying: Unto thy seed will I give this land; He will send His angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife for my son from thence. 8 And if the woman be not willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath; only thou shalt not bring my son back thither.' 9 And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter. 10 And the servant took ten camels, of the camels of his master, and departed; having all goodly things of his master's in his hand; and he arose, and went to Aram-naharaim, unto the city of Nahor. 11 And he made the camels to kneel down without the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time that women go out to draw water. 12 And he said: 'O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, send me, I pray Thee, good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. 13 Behold, I stand by the fountain of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water. 14 So let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say: Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say: Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also; let the same be she that Thou hast appointed for Thy servant, even for Isaac; and thereby shall I know that Thou hast shown kindness unto my master.'