

Torah Study

Chaye Sarah

November 15, 2025

Genesis 25:1

וַיִּסַּף אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה וּשְׁמָהּ קְטוּרָה:

Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah.

Steinsaltz

Following the banishment of Ishmael to the desert with Hagar, the death of Sarah, and the marriage of Isaac, **Abraham**, who was left alone, took another wife, and her name was Ketura.

Tze'edah Ure'edah

“*Abraham took another wife*” [25:1]. *Bahya*, *Toldot Yizhak*, and *Hizkuni* write. From here we learn that when a person’s wife dies and he has children, he should not marry again until he marries off his children. If he would marry before he marries off his children, then his children will have to make bad *matches*. People will say that he will have children with the other wife and they will inherit everything. Therefore, Abraham first gave his son a wife, since it is not just that the old one should take a wife and the youth should be without a wife.

Rashi

קְטוּרָה 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).

Chizkuni

קְטוּרָה, “whose name was Keturah; Rashi comments on this that her name now was קְטוּרָה as her good deeds were comparable to the incense, קְטוּרָה later on offered twice daily in the Holy Temple. To your question that this appears to contradict what we have read in Rashi’s own commentary on Genesis 21,14 וְתִלְךָ וְתָתַע, that Hagar had returned to the idolatrous practices she had learned in her father’s house, you will have to say that in the many years since then (over 40 years) she had become a penitent, and on account of that her name had been changed by the Torah. According to the plain meaning of the text, Keturah is not identical with Hagar. (Rash’bam).

Kli Yakar

Avraham again took. The word *vayosef* — “again” — has connotations of continuing a previous relationship, hinting that this was the second time he married her. **Keturah.** See Rashi. Avraham named her in honor of the holy incense to make it known that she had repented fully after having lapsed into idolatry, so that now even her former deeds ascended to Heaven like the incense.

Bereishit Rabbah 61:2

“Planted in the House of the Lord, they blossom in the courts of our God. They will continue to yield fruit even in old age” (Psalms 92:14–15) – this refers to Abraham our patriarch. “They will remain full and fresh” (Psalms 92:15) – “Abraham took another [wife].”

61:3

Rabbi Yehoshua said: If a poor person comes to you in the morning, give him charity, [and if another comes] in the evening, give him [as well], as you do not know for which of them the Holy One blessed be He will record about you, for this one or for that one, “or whether they both alike will be good.”

Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer 30:7

Again after three years Abraham went to see his son Ishmael, having sworn to Sarah as on the first occasion that he would not descend from the camel in the place where Ishmael dwelt. He came there at midday, and found there Ishmael's wife. He said to her: Where is Ishmael? She replied to him: He has gone with his mother to feed the camels in the desert. He said to her: Give me a little bread and water, for my soul is faint after the journey of the desert. She fetched it and gave it to him. Abraham arose and prayed before the Holy One, blessed be He, for his son, and (thereupon) Ishmael's house was filled with all good things of the various blessings. ***When Ishmael came (home) his wife told him what had happened, and Ishmael knew that his father's love was still extended to him,*** as it is said, || “Like as a father pitieth his sons” (Ps. 103:13).

[Is this the reason he buried Abraham with Issac?] Genesis 25:9 *or see below*

After the death of Sarah, Abraham again took (Hagar) his divorced (wife), as it is said, “And Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah” (Gen. 25:1). Why does it say “And he *again*”? Because on the first occasion she was his wife, and he *again* betook himself to her. Her name was Keturah, because she was perfumed with all kinds of scents.

Genesis 25:8

וַיָּגַלַע וַיָּמָת אַבְרָהָם בְּשִׁיבָה טוֹבָה זָקֵן וְשָׂבַע וַיֵּאָסֶף אֶל-עַמּוּיוֹ:

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

Rabbeinu Bahya (14th c)

זקן ושבע ימים, “old and content.” Seeing that the Torah had told us previously that Avraham had been blessed by G’d in all that mattered, and that he had been the recipient of material wealth and honour of every conceivable kind, the Torah tells us that because of this he died without any regrets, did not feel that there were things he had not been able to achieve. This was in pronounced contrast to the fate of the average person of whom we are told in Kohelet Rabbah 1,34 that “when a person dies, half his aspirations in life for acquisitions went unfulfilled.” If he had once made the acquisition of say 1 million his objective, he had raised this objective as soon as he had realised it, so that when he died he had felt cheated by life. The author of Kohelet called this syndrome אהב כסף לא ישבע כסף, “he who loves silver will never get enough of it (Kohelet 5,9).”

Genesis 25:9

וַיִּקְבְּרוּ אוֹתוֹ יִצְחָק וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּנָיו אֶל-מַעְרַת הַמַּכְפֶּלֶה אֶל-שְׂדֵה עֶפְרֹן בֶּן-צֹחַר הַחִתִּי אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי מִמְרָא:

His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, facing Mamre,

Rashi

יִצְחָק וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל ISAAC AND ISHMAEL — From this we gather that Ishmael repented of his evil ways (cf. Bava Batra 16b) and yielded the precedence to Isaac. This is what is meant by the “good old age” mentioned in connection with Abraham (Genesis Rabbah 38:12).

“Our sages tell us that wicked people, “even when they are alive, they are considered dead.” The wicked have no continuity, no eternity. Righteous people (Tzaddikim), on the other hand, “even when they pass away, they are considered living.”