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THIS IS A WEEKLY LIST OF QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PORTIONS OF THE BIBLE READ BY JEWISH COMMUNITIES EVERY SABBATH, WITH COVER ART BY OUR FRIENDS. DO YOU LIKE OUR PROJECT? DO YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS OR ANOTHER PARSHA? SEND US YOUR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS AT: persnicketyfinicker@gmail.com

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GENESIS 23-25:18

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Q1: In the spirit of the famous ten trials of Abraham, I wonder if we can compile a ten trials of Sarah. What would you include?

Q2: Abraham has amassed a lot of wealth, but never, before now, any land. Why does this nomad need to buy land to honor the death of his wife? Why does he reject Efron's offer of free burial?

Q3: How does Abraham know what plot of land he wants, and who owns it?

Q4: Does he breach etiquette at any point during the negotiation process?

Q5: Why does Abraham wait until now to arrange marriage for his son? Is this related to Sarah's death?

Q6: Why can't Isaac leave the land of Canaan, even to secure a wife? What is Abraham afraid of?

Q7: How far, geographically, does the servant go to fulfill Abraham's request?

Q8: There is a controversial rabbinic opinion which suggests that the servant's method for choosing a woman might be a form of divination (action dependent on a sign).^{*} Why do you think he chooses this method? What are its advantages and dangers?

Q9: Why is the account of the servant's account of their meeting recorded in such detail? Does its redundancy have a literary function?

Q10: How does Rebecca's family feel about her departure? What do they gain by it?

Q11: After the extended drama of barrenness and miraculous fertility, how should we feel about Abraham's six sons to another woman in his old age? How does he feel about them, and why?

VERSE OF THE WEEK: 24:67

^{*}For more on this, see Chullin 95b; Rambam's Mishneh Torah, Laws of Idolatry 11:4, and Ra'abad's critique there.