

PARSHAT CHAYEI SARA
GENESIS 23:1-25:18
HAFTARAH I KINGS 1:1-31
20 CHESHVAN 5785/21 NOVEMBER 2024



The Railway
Oil on canvass by Edouard Manet

TO BLUNT THE ABSOLUTE

1. Sarah dies. (Genesis 23:2)
Abraham buries her in the cave of Machpelah. (Genesis 23:19)
Abraham seeks a wife for Isaac. (Genesis 24:4)
Rebecca appears at the well. (Genesis 24:15)
Isaac brings Rebecca into Sarah's tent. (Genesis 24:67)
Abraham remarries. (Genesis 25:1)
Abraham fathers more children. (Genesis 25:2)
Isaac and Ishamel bury Abraham. (Genesis 25:9)
Ayleh toldot Yishmael/This is the line of Ishmael. (Genesis 25:12)
2. "They say, 'Our bones are dried up, our hope is gone; we are doomed.'...You shall know, O My people, that I am Yud Hei Vav Hei, when I have opened your graves and lifted you out of your graves. I will put My breath into you and you shall live again, and I will set you upon your own soil. (Ezekiel 37:11-13)
3. רבץ - v., be vast, mighty, numerous
4. עצם - n., bone; substance; self

5. Death speaks of absence. The dead themselves harbor no more hope of being alive. Because they feel hopeless and utterly despairing – in that subjective sense they are dead. Death means a degradation to a lower state. As the Zohar says, the dead are humbled – that is, one cannot comprehend the hope of returning to live again. Truly, though, the “breath of the bones” never dies. All those days when it looked as if one was dead and gone, so in the future, when the dead live again, all of them will know themselves. They will recall all the experiences of their lives and the days they rested/died. Now they will see that it is they themselves who have risen to live again. (Rabbi Ya’akov Leiner, quoted in *Wisdom of the Heart* by Ora Wiskind-Elper.)

6. “I will make my way slowly, at the pace of the cattle before me and at the pace of the children...” (Genesis 33:14). I must attune myself to each and every one who is with me; I cannot ignore even one lamb for even a moment. (Rabbi Ya’akov Leiner, *Beit Ya’akov*)