



Sarah: The First Jewish Mom

The mothers in the Torah pave the way for Jewish mothers today, and the values Jewish mothers hold dear and relay to their children. One story that embodies what it means to be a woman is the story of Sarah learning she will become a mother.

In the story, Sarah's husband Abraham sees three strangers walking by his tent. He runs into the tent and tells her to quickly bake bread (Genesis 18:6) for these three men. Sarah prepares their food as Abraham invites them into their tent.

Abraham and Sarah valued welcoming guests and making them feel comfortable, so much that they wanted to whip up fresh food for the strangers to eat. Abraham and Sarah didn't invite these men to simply come and eat whatever food was lying around. Instead, they tried to make the guests feel as comfortable and honored as possible. They baked fresh bread as a gift for them to enjoy the spirit of Godliness that Abraham and Sarah represented.

Although Sarah and Abraham didn't have children (yet), they wanted to spread Jewish values and the spirit of G-d with every person around them. They invited every person they saw into their tent. By showing these strangers hospitality and grace they were able to pass down Jewish values onto others, if not their own children then G-d's children.

Later in the story, it is revealed that the three strangers are really angels sent by God to deliver prophecies. One angel is sent to tell Abraham that Sarah will have a child at the age of 90. When Sarah overhears this, she laughs about the situation but ultimately welcomes the baby as a blessing. Sarah not only hosts everyone and tries to inspire everyone she meets, but she also takes G-d's gifts and challenges



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in stride. To have a baby at the age of 90 is outrageous in our modern mind. But instead of complaining that she would've wanted a baby earlier, Sarah takes the prophecy with excitement. Sarah laughs so hard that she decides to name her son Yitzchak (Isaac) from the root word *tzochek* - צוּחֵק, which means laughter, showing a bit of that Jewish humor we know and love.

Sarah's strength is inspiring. She lives her life bestowing Jewish values by serving everyone around her. Sarah then uses these acts of service to teach Jewish values, and then G-d makes her a mother. A mother of not only Yitzchak (Isaac) but of all the Jewish people.

We see from Sarah that the Torah wants moms to bring holiness into their families' lives in every possible way. We also know that even in the act of baking challah she found a way to demonstrate her faith. We see from Sarah that even in the smallest moments we can teach and inspire Godliness. By blessing this small piece of challah Sarah is able to bless and serve God while blessing and serving her family with sustenance. This practice of blessing a small piece of challah from your dough, and not eating it, is still done today known as *hafrashat challah*, הפרשת חלה.

Sarah fulfills her role as a wife and mother with a full heart. She is proud to provide sustenance for the souls and the stomachs of her beloved family, while teaching and exhibiting important values. We can all be a Sarah, and we can help other women to feel empowered in their Jewish motherhood.

SOS MOM is here to help you be a mother like Sarah and give you the resources to bring Judaism into all aspects of motherhood. Give today to this meaningful effort.



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Food For Thought:

- How would you react to Sarah's situation? Would you laugh too, or would you be scared, or excited?
- Do you think that inviting guests over is important? How does it add to our family life?
- How do you think we can make our guests as comfortable as possible?
- Have you ever had to do something at the last minute for guests? How did it make you feel? Were you able to turn the stressful situation into something positive?
- Are there any general activities that you feel have a religious or Jewish connection to them? How do you try to incorporate this into your home life? What's one thing your mom did/does that you feel brings a sense of spirituality to an otherwise mundane task?

**Open these discussions with your children,
so that they learn these important values.**

**When it's not Shabbat, you can also have your
children create a painting of their image of Sarah
welcoming her guests or making challot.**

**And of course, get your hands into the dough
and make some of our blessed bread together!**