Chomer Lidrush

Some ideas to turn your gears heading into Parshas Chayei Sarah.

Arriving With All His Days

"*V'Avraham zakein ba bayamim*" (24:1) is usually translated "advanced in years," but the Zohar (I:224a) reads it as "he came with all his days": every one of Avraham's days was full of mitzvos and *ma'asim tovim*, and when he left the world he came before Hashem together with all of them. Rav Moshe Wolfson zt"l, in *Wellsprings of Faith*, builds a Jewish concept of time around this. A day is not an empty stretch of hours but a creation of its own; the Zohar teaches that each day comes down to a person like a blank parchment, records whatever he does, and goes back up when it ends. That is why each unit of time has a window for *teshuvah* just before it leaves us: *Krias Shema* at the close of the day, *erev Shabbos*, *erev Rosh Chodesh* (Yom Kippur Katan) and *erev Rosh Hashanah*. On a person's last day all his days return to escort him upward, and for a *tzaddik* an entire lifetime is suddenly present at once. Citing the *Agra D'Kala*, Rav Wolfson hears this in Moshe's "*ben mei'ah v'esrim shanah anochi hayom*": today, all 120 years are with me. Each of us is writing, one day at a time, the days we will someday come home with.