



**ALEPH
INSTITUTE**
No One Alone,
No One Forgotten.

TORAH WEEKLY

T"01

4 - 10 November, 2018
26 Cheshvan -
2 Kislev, 5779

Torah:
Genesis 25:19 - 28:9

Haftarah:
Malachi 1:1 - 2:7

■ CALENDARS

We have Jewish Calendars, if you would like one, please send us a letter and we will send you one, or ask the Rabbi / Chaplain to contact us.

■ TORAH STUDIES

We have many Judaic topics for you to study. We will provide the material and courses. Please write to us for more information.

■ GRAPE JUICE & MATZAH

Aleph offers free Grape Juice and Matzoh for you to be able to make the blessings every Shabbos. Please have your chaplain / Rabbi contact us to enroll, it is available to all prisons.

■ CHANUKAH GELT

Please ask the chaplain for the 'Chanukah Gelt Form'. Your children will receive Chanukah Gelt from you.

ALEPH INSTITUTE
Hyman & Martha Rogal
Center

5804 Beacon Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

412-421-0111

Fax: 412-521-5948

www.alephne.org
info@alephne.org

JUST KEEP DIGGING...

A man once came to his Rebbe for a blessing. "Rebbe," he said, "my daughter is growing up, thank God, and is ready to begin looking for a suitable husband. But my wife and I are flat broke, and don't have anything with which fee the family, nevermind pay for a wedding."

The Rebbe thought for a moment and then said, "In the city of Brod, under the big bridge, there is a buried treasure. This treasure has no owner, so go dig it up and use it for your family."

Delighted, the man went home, grabbed his shovel and began traveling to Brod. When he arrived he immediately began to dig under the bridge. He dug and he dug, but found nothing. Suddenly, another man approached him and asked, "What are you doing here? What are you digging for?"

He explained the whole story to the man. When he finished, the man said, "that's fascinating. You know, just last night I dreamt of a hidden treasure in someone's house. Under the brick fireplace." He then named the first man's exact hometown and address!

The first man couldn't believe his ears. "This must be what the Rebbe wanted me to come here and find out." Without a word, he dropped his shovel and ran home. As soon as he arrived back home he grabbed a large sledge hammer. Despite the protests of his wife and family, he demolished the furnace and,

sure enough, there was the buried treasure!

Meanwhile, back in Brod, the second man thought to himself, "the Rebbe would not send someone here to dig if there weren't actually some treasure." He picked up the shovel and continued to dig. Soon enough, he too found a buried treasure.

Now each of the men felt somewhat guilty. They felt that discovering this treasure was partially due to the other, so they each took a part of it and began traveling towards each other to give over what they each felt rightfully belonged to the other. When they met halfway and realized what had transpired, they decided the only thing to do with the jewels they carried was to give it to the one person truly responsible for their fortunate findings. They decided to give it to their Rebbe.

When they arrived in the Rebbe's study and explained their intentions, the Rebbe smiled and said, "I believe each of you has a child of marriageable age - you have a son, and you, a daughter. Let them marry one another and give this treasure to them as a dowry."

In this week's Torah reading we learn that Isaac spent a significant part of his life digging wells in the Holy Land. Now, the Torah does not recount every single action the forefathers took, but the ones which are mentioned in the Torah all have some special significance. The special meaning in digging wells is the idea of looking beneath the surface of things to find their essential Godly core.

Parshat Toldot

This was the lifestyle of Isaac, everything he did, he did with depth.

This idea was also brought out in the fact that Isaac was the only one of the patriarchs who never left the land of Israel. Sometimes we need to travel far and wide and search high and low to find what we are seeking. But sometimes, more often than we would imagine, we need only to search deeper within our own lives, within ourselves and our communities.

A Jewish woman once traveled to the mountains of India in search of meaning. She sat with the gurus day in and day out and really absorbed everything they taught. After several weeks the gurus announced that the participants had now successfully achieved spirituality. Excitedly, the Jewish woman asked, "Great! Now what do we do?"

"Well, now you are spiritual."

"Ok," she said, "but what do I do with that now?" For a moment the guru looked at her, and then asked, "are you Jewish?"

When she answered that she was indeed, the wise guru smiled and said, "In that case, you will find your purpose by delving deeper into and rediscovering your own Jewish heritage."

EACH TO HIS OWN

"Isaac loved Esau, for he ate from his trappings, and Rebecca loved Jacob." This seems like a very shallow reason for a righteous man like Isaac to favor the wicked

of his two sons. So, in the spirit of Isaac, let us look deeper into those words.

A middle aged couple once came to their Rabbi and said, "Rabbi we don't understand. You know that we have several children, all of whom give of tremendous Nachas - all, that is, besides one. Our middle son had been nothing but tzuris since he was a baby.

"Now, we consider ourselves to be good parents, but we can't figure out what went wrong with our dear son. We raised all of the children exactly the same, why is he so different?"

At this point, the Rabbi held up his hand. "Therein," he explained, "lies your mistake." He then went on to explain to them that to think that all children can be raised in the exact same way, cookie-cutter if you will, is a mistake. Each and every child needs to have his parenting his education personalized to his or her own strengths, weaknesses, interests, etc.

In Hebrew the wording in "Ki Tzayid b'Fiv" -which could be translated literally as, "For the trapping is in his mouth." Isaac was a parent who knew that each of his children needs a different approach in their parenting. He knew that Esau committed sins and acted cruelly to people and animals, but he knew that under it all beneath the layers of tough, rough persona, there was a spark of goodness, of Godliness.

The issue was that that goodness was "Tzayid," it was trapped beneath Esau's outer layers. And Isaac say felt that the only way to bring it to the surface was "b'Fiv," with his mouth. He felt that if he could develop a good rapport with Esau, if he could just have an open line of communication with his son, he would be able to bring him closer to his core values of goodness and kindness.

At the end of his life, Isaac even wanted to give God's blessings to Esau. He sent him out to hunt one last meal for him, again creating a situation where Esau felt wanted and meaningful in the life of his father. Until his last days Isaac kept the faith that Esau would one day turn around and act upon the truth in the deepest recesses of his soul.

But it was not to be until generations later, with the help of Isaac's other descendants, those of Jacob, that Esau's descendants will repent and return to the path of God.

By Rabbi Nissan Aizek.

ROSH CHODESH OBSERVANCES

Today is the first of the two Rosh Chodesh ("Head of the Month") days for the month of Kislev (when a month has 30 days, both the last day of the month and the first day of the following month serve as the following month's Rosh Chodesh).

Special portions are added to the daily prayers: Hallel (Psalms 113-118) is recited -- in its "partial" form -- following the Shacharit morning prayer, and the Yaaleh V'yavo prayer is added to the Amidah and to Grace After Meals; the additional Musaf prayer is said (when Rosh Chodesh is Shabbat, special additions are made to the Shabbat Musaf). Tachnun (confession of sins) and similar prayers are omitted.

Many have the custom to mark Rosh Chodesh with

a festive meal and reduced work activity. The latter custom is prevalent amongst women, who have a special affinity with Rosh Chodesh -- the month being the feminine asp of the Jewish Calendar.

PITTSBURGH MASSACRE

Our response to the "Pittsburgh Massacre" is to increase in lightness in this world, by creating more light, by learning Torah and performing Mitzvoth, we will eliminate the bitter darkness of evil, bigotry and hatred. Take upon yourself to do another good deed.

In Jewish History

Monday, 27 Cheshvan, 5779 -

November 5, 2018

Flood ends (2104 BCE)

On the 27th of Cheshvan of the year 1657 from creation (2104 BCE) "the earth dried" (Genesis 8:14) completing the 365-day duration of the great flood that wiped out all life on earth save for the eight human beings and the animals (two of each species) in Noah's ark; on this day G-d commanded Noah to "Come out of the ark" and repopulate, settle and civilize the earth..

Wednesday, 29 Cheshvan, 5779 -

November 7, 2018

Mumbai Terror Attacks (2008)

The city of Mumbai, India, was hit with a series of coordinated terror attacks, starting on Wednesday evening, the 29th of Cheshvan 5769, which left close to 200 dead and scores more injured.

One of the terrorists' chosen targets was the local Chabad House, known as the "Nariman House," operated by Chabad-Lubavitch emissaries Rabbi Gavriel Noach (Gabi) and Rivkah (Rivki) Holtzberg.

In the subsequent standoff, which continued until Friday afternoon, Gabi and Rivki and several other Jews in the Chabad House -- Rabbis Bentzion Chroman and Leibish Teitelbaum, Norma Schwartzblatt-Rabinowitz and Yocheved Orpaz -- were killed in cold blood. May G-d avenge their murders.

Miraculously, the Holtzbergs' two-year-old child, Moshe, was saved by his nanny.

Friday, 1 Kislev, 5779 -

November 9, 2018

Winter

As per the Talmud, the month of Kislev marks the onset of the winter season in the Holy Land and is the third month of the "Season of the Rains."

Rebbe's Recovery (1977)

For the first time since suffering a major heart attack five weeks earlier, on the eve of Shemini Atzeret, the Rebbe left his office in 770 Eastern Parkway and returned to his home, signaling his recovery. Chassidim all over rejoiced at the good news.

From that day on, the Rebbe redoubled his efforts on behalf of the Jewish nation and all of humanity, and for the dissemination of Torah and chassidism. From then on, the first of Kislev is celebrated as a day of thanksgiving and rejoicing.