



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

TORAH WEEKLY

T"01

2 - 8 December, 2018
24 - 30 Kislev, 5779

Torah 1:

Genesis 41:1 - 44:17

Torah 2 (Chanukah):

Numbers 28:9-15

Torah 3 (Rosh Chodesh):

Numbers 7:42-47

Haftarah:

Zachariah 2:14 - 4:7;

Isaiah 66:1; Isaiah

66:23-24; Isaiah 66:23;

Samuel I 20:18; Samuel

I 20:42

■ FAMILY PROGRAMS

Do you have family on the outside who are struggling, please contact or have them contact our office to learn more about our family programs. You and they are not alone, we are here to help.

■ 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.

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SHEPHERDS AND STATESMEN

Is isolationism the only way to live as faithful Jews, or can we scale the ghetto walls and still remain devout? This is, of course, an ongoing debate among different schools of thought in our community. Some look down on those who insist on insulating themselves as being too tentative, too insecure in their own Jewish identity. Otherwise, why should they fear the outside world? Whereas those who have opted to shelter themselves inside the ghetto would argue that engaging a hedonistic, morally corrupt society is nothing less than spiritual suicide.

And then there are those who took the risk and lived to tell the tale.

Our Parshah recounts the dramatic episode of Joseph and his brothers. The young boy sold into slavery has since catapulted to prominence and is now viceroy of Egypt. The brothers come down from Canaan seeking sustenance during a famine. They encounter the viceroy face to face but do not realize that it is their own long lost brother.

"And Joseph recognized his brothers but they did not recognize him" (Genesis 42:8). Rashi explains that when they had last seen each other the brothers, being older, were mature and bearded while Joseph was still young and without a beard. Thus, it was easier for him to recognize them than vice versa.

Applying a more ho-

miletic interpretation, the Lubavitcher Rebbe understands the brothers' lack of recognition not on the facial level but on the spiritual. The brothers were shepherds. It suited their spiritual lifestyle to be alone in the meadows, surrounded by nature and unchallenged by a society that might be hostile to their beliefs. The sheep they tended to didn't give them a hard time on religious issues. That Joseph could remain a devoted son of Jacob, faithful to his father's way of life while working in the hub of the mightiest superpower on earth was totally beyond their comprehension. They could not fathom or recognize such a thing. Indeed, later we will read how Jacob himself is deeply gratified to learn that the son he had given up for dead was not only alive but that he was my son, i.e. faithful to Jacob's traditions.

There is no question that it is easier to be Jewish among your own. Without a shadow of a doubt, it is much tougher and far more testing to practice your faith as a minority. Nobody enjoys sticking out like a sore thumb. So sequestering yourself in your own little comfort zone makes perfect sense. Unless, of course, you believe that you have a responsibility to the world around you. When you believe that G-d expects nothing less from you than to change the world, then simply treading water is not enough. Then you have no option but to go out and take on the world, engage it and make it a more G-dly place.

All Jacob's sons were righteous men. But Joseph was the greatest. He is known

as Yosef HaTzadik, Joseph the Righteous. Because it is one thing to be righteous in the fields and the forests. It is another to be righteous among men; especially men and women steeped in moral depravity, as were the Egyptians.

The viceroy of Egypt then must be roughly equivalent to the President of the United States, or at least the Secretary of State, today. Imagine that the person holding such high office is a committed, practicing Jew. He is successful in the fulfillment of his governmental duties, brings stature to the position, while at the very same time living the life of a devout Jew. Quite mind-boggling, but Joseph achieved it. And it was in this spirit that he raised his children, Ephraim and Menashe.

That's why Joseph is an important role model for our generation. Most of us find ourselves in a socially integrated society. We mix in many different circles. We live in a wall-less, even wireless community. Will we maintain our Jewishness with dignity and integrity despite the challenges thrust upon us by a wide open society? This is the question that Joseph answers. It may not be easy but it can be done.

So whether we are head honchos in the corporate hierarchy or diplomats in high office, let the viceroy of Egypt, Joseph the faithful son of Jacob the Jew, inspire us by his example.

10 TEVES

12/18/2018 is the Fast of Teves, request bag lunch.

HIS GREATEST WEAKNESS

Mordechai was sitting in the cockpit, looking over the instrument panel. It wasn't easy to be a commercial pilot and a religious Jew at the same time, but Mordechai somehow managed. He was familiar with at least one rabbi in each city on his route, and tried his best to help them out, bringing kosher supplies and even Torah scrolls to isolated congregations. Tonight he was looking forward to seeing Rabbi Engel in Adelaide, Australia, who had invited him to a Chanukah event that fortunately fit right into his flight schedule.

"Hi, Mordechai, looks like I'm co-piloting with you on this flight." Lou sat down next to Mordechai.

"Hi, Lou. Glad to have you here. We're supposed to come in to Adelaide just about sunset time, which I'm really happy about. You know about Chanukah, Lou? I've got my Chanukah candles in my flight bag, and by the time I land and settle into the overnight accommodation, it will be time to light the menorah." Mordechai paused and added, "You can join me if you'd like."

"I don't usually celebrate any Jewish holidays, but my daughter has started exploring Judaism. She'll probably light the Chanukah lights tonight. So, let me ask you: what is the purpose of lighting those candles, anyhow?"

"We light the menorah to remember a miracle that happened over two thousand years ago . . ."
"So how is that relevant today?"

"I suppose the message is that G-d is watching over us. Even when it's getting dark, He is there for us, ready to help. And what we have to do is to kindle a small light in that darkness, a light of Torah, a light of mitzvahs, and G-d will make that light grow way beyond our expectations."

They flew in silent contemplation for a while. As they approached Adelaide, they banked the aircraft to circle. The 180-degree view from the cockpit revealed a magnificent skyline, as light from the setting sun danced elegantly between the buildings, and the shadows sidestepped closer. The plane came around to the western side of the city, when an unexpected sight caught Mordechai's eye.

"Hey! Take a look at that! I don't know how the rabbi managed this one! Do you see that giant menorah!"

Lou looked up. On the facade of one of the tallest buildings in Adelaide, there were eight branches of light with a tall shamash in the middle.

"Wow, that's magnificent!"

The airplane continued past, as the sun slowly made its own circuit toward the western horizon. By the time the aircraft had come around in view of the tall building again, the menorah had disappeared.

It had been a mirage, a trick of light from the setting sun . . . or, perhaps, a reminder from Above, that even when it's getting dark, He is there for us.

All we need to do is to light that small flame.

By Rebbetzen Mina Gordon

15 Shevat - 1/21/2019

15 of Shevat is the new year for trees, please make arrangements to purchase dates or figs from the commissary.

In Jewish History

Sunday, 24 Kislev, 5779 - December 2, 2018

Construction of the Second Temple Resumes (353 BCE)

In the first year of rule of Cyrus, the King of Persia, Jews were given permission to return to Israel and rebuild the Holy Temple. A group of Jews led by Zerubavel set out for Jerusalem and began working on the second Temple. However, the Cutheans falsely accused the Jews of plotting a rebellion against King Cyrus and were successful in halting the construction of the Holy Temple for the remainder of his reign and throughout the reign of Ahasuerus, his successor. Construction resumed in the second year of the reign of Darius, Ahasuerus's son, on the 24th of Kislev.

Monday, 25 Kislev, 5779 - December 3, 2018

Cain Kills Abel (3720 BCE)

The first murder in history occurred on the 25th of Kislev in the year 41 from creation (3720 BCE), when Adam and Eve's eldest son, Cain, killed his younger brother, Abel, as recounted in the 4th chapter of Genesis.

Mishkan completed (1312 BCE)

The vessels, tapestries, wall sections and other components of the Mishkan (the portable sanctuary or "Tabernacle" built under Moses' direction to house the Divine Presence during the Israelites' journeys through the desert) were completed on the 25th of Kislev in the year 2449 from creation (1312 BCE). The Mishkan was not assembled, however, until 3 months later, when, beginning on Adar 25 of that year, it was erected and taken down daily for a 7-day "training" period prior to its dedication on the 1st of Nissan. Our Sages tell us that the day of Kislev 25 was compensated 12 centuries later, when the Maccabees dedicated the Holy Temple on Kislev 25, 3622 (139 BCE).

Chanukah Miracle (139 BCE)

On the 25th of Kislev in the year 3622 from creation, the Maccabees liberated the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, after defeating the vastly more numerous and powerful armies of the Syrian-Greek king Antiochus IV, who had tried to forcefully uproot the beliefs and practices of Judaism from the people of Israel. The victorious Jews repaired, cleansed and rededicated the Temple to the service of G-d. But all the Temple's oil had been defiled by the pagan invaders; when the Jews sought to light the Temple's menorah (candelabra), they found only one small cruse of ritually pure olive oil. Miraculously, the one-day supply burned for eight days, until new, pure oil could be obtained. In commemoration, the Sages instituted the 8-day festival of Chanukah, on which lights are kindled nightly to recall and publicize the miracle.

R. Chizkiah Medini (1904)

Kislev 25 is the yahrtzeit of Rabbi Chaim Chizkiah Medini (1832-1904), author of the *Sdei Chemed*.