

Torah Weekly

ת"ב

October 31 - November 6, 2021

25 Cheshvan – 2 Kislev, 5782

Torah reading:

Toldot: Genesis 25:19 - 28:9

Haftarah: Malachi 1:1 - 2:7

PARSHAT TOLDOT

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.

Family Programs

Do you have family on the outside 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

We offer free Grape Juice and Matzah for you to be able to make the blessings every Shabbos. Please have your chaplain / Rabbi contact us to enroll (available to all prisons).

Hyman & Martha Rogal Center
5804 Beacon Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
412-421-0111
Fax: 412-521-5948
www.alephne.org
info@alephne.org



ALEPH INSTITUTE
No One Alone,
No One Forgotten.

Heroic Humility

Introversion and Extroversion in the Torah

Apparently, there are two types of people, introverts and extroverts, and these personality categories are seen in the archetypes of our forefathers, Abraham and Isaac. Abraham, the prototypical extrovert, is associated with the characteristic of chesed, which means “kindness.” As the father of outreach, Abraham’s kindness, which manifested as an outward expression of love and benevolence to humanity, was directed externally. On the other side of the scale is his son Isaac, the prototypical introvert, to whom is attributed the trait of gevurah, meaning “strength,” expressed as being inner-directed, reserved, self-disciplined and self-effaced.

As any child of a super charismatic parent knows, growing up in the shadows can be hard. Part of that is due to our worship of the extrovert. As Susan Cain, author of the book, *Quiet: The Power of an Introvert in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, notes: “A widely held, but rarely articulated, belief in our society is that the ideal self is bold, alpha, gregarious. Introversion is viewed somewhere between disappointment and pathology.”

Accordingly, following in a super-parent’s larger-

than-life footsteps is almost impossible. How many times does an innovative and groundbreaking venture fail because the next generation is unable to keep the vision alive? And yet, it is Isaac who held it all together, and who was responsible for transmitting and promulgating Judaism to the next generation.

The Legacy of Isaac

In the few stories we know about Isaac, he was never the driver of the tale. The only narrative where Isaac was the main active protagonist was in connection with Abraham. After Abraham died, the Philistines stopped up the wells Abraham had dug. Here, we read the story of Isaac digging up those old wells, and when the Philistines filled them in again, Isaac re-dug them yet again until he ultimately prevailed. Like that’s a big deal? Actually, yes it is.

Toldot, which means “generations,” starts out with the words: “These are the generations of Isaac.” And yet, the very next sentence is not about Isaac’s children, but about Isaac’s father, Abraham. Typically, toldot refers to progeny; sometimes, however, it means one’s legacy. In this case, the Torah directs us to look backward to understand

the import of Isaac’s lasting legacy.

When to Cultivate and When to Integrate

Isaac re-opened the wells that Abraham originally dug and followed in his footsteps by digging his own wells. He dug wells to keep his father’s vision alive. In doing so, he also ensured that Abraham’s vision was real—it had roots; it would survive. Isaac represents an inward journey involving humility, self-discipline and silent sacrifice. It takes great humility to focus your life on striking roots for a great idea that has been innovated by someone else. That humility is heroic.

In a society immersed in individualism, focused on the self and permeated with idealizing the extrovert, we would do well at times to emulate Isaac’s humility and value the quiet hero. When we dig wells, we turn inward to reveal that which is hidden. When we tap into our deepest meaning, our inner strengths and significant values, we can create the type of legacy that we would want to survive us.

Internalize & Actualize:

Building a well is the act of digging deep in the earth ultimately to find and expose the wellsprings

w

ithin. Write down five positive aspects of yourself that are not readily noticeable, but that one will find if they dig deep enough.

Would you like these parts of you to be more on the surface? If not, why do you keep them hidden? If so, how you can try to incorporate these qualities into what is most external about yourself?

Do you consider yourself an introvert or an extrovert? Or a combination of both? As both personality types have very positive attributes, what can you find in the other personality type that you can work on bringing into your more natural personality type? How do you think this will help round you out?

It needs Jacob. *By Hanna Perlberger*

Digging Wells

You knock at heaven's door, and give your name. They say they never heard of you. You have been gone for so long, you are not on their list. But the King remembers you. He had sent you on a mission, but you got lost in the abyss. The King says: "Make room for this man; he is bringing news." The entire court, all of them noble souls, makes way to form a corridor as you walk, breathless, toward the throne. You bless the King's Name with each step. You proclaim that everything written in the sacred books is true; that He is true and His Torah is true and the man Moses is true. You saw it with your own eyes down there in the recesses of the world. They bring out maps—the charts of Creation—to verify whether your journey corresponds to Heaven's design, whether you have fulfilled the King's dearest wish: to build a small dwelling for Him in the lower depths of the world.

Our duties in the world, is to dig wells, to make this world a dwelling place for G-d, by making this world G-dly, to bring light into this world, by doing another mitzvah – good deeds.

Chanukah

Please work with the Chaplain/Rabbi at your institution to ensure you are able to light the candles for Chanukah.

IN JEWISH HISTORY

Sunday, October 31, 2021 --- 25 Cheshvan, 5782

Passing of R. Efraim Eliezer Yolles (1988)

R. Efraim Eliezer was an influential rabbi in Philadelphia who enjoyed a close relationship with the Lubavitcher Rebbe, with whom he corresponded regularly. He would often pay a visit to the Rebbe in conjunction with Sukkot, Passover, and/or Shavuot, quoting the Talmudic passage, "One must greet his teacher during the holiday."

Monday, November 1, 2021 --- 26 Cheshvan, 5782

Passing of R. Refael of Hamburg (1803)

R. Refael was the chief rabbi of the three sister cities of Altona, Hamburg and Wandsbek in Germany for twenty-three years. These three important Jewish centers were known as *AHU*, after their Hebrew abbreviations, and were the residence of many famous scholars and personalities, such as R. Jonathan Eibeschutz, R. Tzvi Ashkenazi, R. Jacob Emden, and Glueckel of Hameln.

Tuesday, November 2, 2021 --- 27 Cheshvan, 5782

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.

Thursday, November 4, 2021

29 Cheshvan, 5782

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, November 5, 2021

1 Kislev, 5782

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.