

TORAH THOUGHTS – TIGER WINS THE MASTERS

The Masters, played in Augusta, Georgia, is one of professional golf's four major annual tournaments. Tiger Woods' triumph is one of the greatest comeback stories in sports history.

In the late 1990's and early 2000's, Tiger was a phenomenon, racking up dozens of victories. But in 2009, it was revealed that he had multiple affairs; he and his wife Elin Nordegren divorced in 2010. Health issues impacted his game as well, and he struggled mightily. It reminded me of the iconic words of David, "How the mighty have fallen." (Second Samuel 1:25)

But Woods made peace with Nordegren. And after four back surgeries and grueling physical therapy, and countless hours of practice, he regained his championship form and grit.

On Passover we celebrate our freedom from Pharaoh's tyranny. Like Tiger, we suffered through adversity and eventually rose to the top. The Psalmist considered this when he wrote the verse, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone." (118:22) As slaves we were abused and derided, but we won; we will sing this verse as part of Hallel during the holiday.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT Thomas Friedman wrote an op-ed in the Times this week about Tiger, and he compared golf to life. "The biggest takeaway for me is the reminder of the truism that golf is the sport most like life, because it is played on an uneven surface. Good and bad bounces are built into the game, and so much of success in golf is about how you react to those good and bad bounces." (NYT 4/16/19) Do you agree?

Shabbat shalom and chag sameach (happy holiday)!

Rabbi Pont