



Congregation Spanish & Portuguese

שָׂרִית יִשְׂרָאֵל

בְּרֵאשִׁית

Parashat Toldot

פְּרַשַׁת תּוֹלְדוֹת

WHY DID ISAAC LOVE ESAU



Dear friends, as we are all still grieving the loss of Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z"l, I submit to you a sermon that he presented last year on this week's Torah portion – *Toledot*. I hope that his words will bring you comfort and inspiration. May his memory bring blessing to all of us, amen.

Even before they were born, Jacob and Esau struggled in the womb. They were destined, it seems, to be eternal adversaries. Not only were they different in character and appearance - they also held different places in their parents' affections:

The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was a quiet man, staying among the tents. Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebecca loved Jacob.

We know why Rebecca loved Jacob. Before the twins were born, the pains Rebecca felt were so great that "she went to inquire of the Lord." This is what she was told:

*"Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples from within you will be separated;
one people will be stronger than the other,
and the older will serve the younger."*

It seemed as if G-d were saying that the younger would prevail and carry forward the burden of history, so it was the younger, Jacob, whom she loved.

But why, in that case, did Isaac love Esau? Did he not know about Rebecca's oracle? Had she not told him about it? Besides, did he not know that Esau was wild and impetuous? Can we really take literally the proposition that Isaac loved Esau because "he had a taste for wild game," as if his affections were determined by his stomach, by the fact that his elder son brought him food he loved? Surely not, when the very future of the covenant was at stake.

The classic answer, given by Rashi, listens closely to the literal text. Esau, says the Torah, "knew how to trap [yode'a tzayid]." Isaac loved him "because entrapment was in his mouth [ki tzayid befi]." Esau, says Rashi, trapped Isaac by his mouth. Here is Rashi's comment on the phrase "knew how to trap:"

He knew how to trap and deceive his father with his mouth. He would ask him, "Father, how should one tithe salt and straw?" Consequently, his father believed him to

be strict in observing the commands.

Esau knew full well that salt and straw do not require tithes, but he asked to give the impression that he was strictly religious. And here it is Rashi's comment on the phrase that Isaac loved him "because entrapment was in his mouth":

"The midrashic explanation is that there was entrapment in the mouth of Esau, who trapped his father and deceived him by his words."

The Maggid of Dubnow adds a perceptive comment as to why Isaac, but not Rebecca, was deceived. Rebecca grew up with the wily Laban. She knew deception when she saw it. Isaac, by contrast, had grown up with Abraham and Sarah. He only knew total honesty and was thus easily deceived. (Bertrand Russell once commented on the philosopher G. E. Moore, that he only once heard Moore tell a lie, when he asked Moore if he had ever told a lie, and Moore replied, "Yes").

So, the classic answer is that Isaac loved Esau because he simply did not know who or what Esau was. But there is another possible answer: that Isaac loved Esau precisely because he did know what Esau was.

In the early twentieth century someone brought to the great Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Kook, first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of pre-state Israel, the following dilemma. He had given his son a good Jewish education. He had always kept the commands at home. Now however the son had drifted far from Judaism. He no longer kept the commandments. He did not even identify as a Jew. What should the father do?

"Did you love him when he was religious?" asked Rav Kook. "Of course," replied the father. "Well then," Rav Kook replied, "Now love him even more."

Sometimes love can do what rebuke cannot. It may be that the Torah is telling us that Isaac was anything but blind as to his elder son's true nature. But if you have two children, one well behaved, the other liable to turn out badly, to whom should you devote greater attention? With whom should you spend more time?

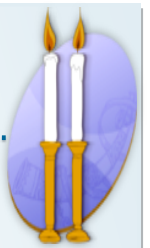
It may be that Isaac loved Esau not blindly but with open eyes, knowing that there would be times when his elder son would give him grief, but knowing too that the moral responsibility of parenthood demands that we do not despair of, or disown, a wayward son. (Cont'd. top of page 4)

Shabbat Shalom

Start/Début 4:00 pm.

End/Fin 5:07 pm.

Havdalah



Services Schedule

Horaire des Offices

Our Week Day Services

SERVICES SCHEDULE IS AS FOLLOWS:

SHAHRI: 7:30 a.m.

Everyday Monday through Friday

Sunday: 8:30 a.m.

Afternoon/Evening Services:

Minha/Arvit 3:25

Join on Zoom ID: 914-650-9809

SHABBAT SERVICES (RSVP)

MASHAAL SANCTUARY - 9:00 a.m.

Minha Friday & Shabbat 4:00

LEARNING WITH RABBI PINTO

Dimanche, 22 novembre

10:00 - 10:30 A.M.

DÉCOUVRIR LE SIDDOUR

APPRENDRE, TRADUIRE & DÉVELOPPER

LES MOTS D'UNE PARTIE CHOISIE

DE LA PRIÈRE HEBDOMADAIRE

La bénédiction "Asher Yatzar"

2ème partie

Sunday December 13

10:30-11:30 A.M.

Wrap & Roll

With Rabbi Pinto & Hazzan Benlolo

Ongoing Classes with Rav. Maimon Pinto

Lundi au Vendredi 16h00

Cours de Talmud

Monday through Thursday

8:25AM. & 3:40PM.

RABBI'S DAILY THOUGHTS & HALAKHA

EVERY THURSDAY EVENING 6:00-7:00 P.M.

IN THE BEGINNING... WITH RABBI M. PINTO

Zoom Meeting ID 526 438 1158

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, November 22 1:00 p.m.

Join us, together with a world wide audience, at the *Sheba Virtual Gala* to watch a special presentation by Cantor Benlolo, representing S&P; Shira Haas from *Unorthodox* & an address by Israeli Defence Minister, Benny Gantz.

Tuesday, November 24 - 12 noon

Sisterhood Book Review "Where the Crawdads Sing"

Zoom ID: 821 3250 7547 SISBOOK

Wednesday, November 25 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Women's Learning Group (WLG) ~ Chazzan Daniel Benlolo

"A Musical Session With Our Cantor"

Thursday, Nov. 26 7 p.m. ~ 252nd Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, December 1 - 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Sisterhood Health Series: "The Power of Calm"

Guest Speaker, Marina Mashaal - Zoom ID: 814 3901 3488 SUPERSIS

Tuesday, December 8 - 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Sisterhood Health Series: "Relations of the Body & Soul"

Guest Speaker, Rabbi Maimon Pinto - Zoom ID: 871 7147 6312 SUPERSIS

Tuesday, December 15 - 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Sisterhood Hanukkah Cocktail - Inspiration by Rachel Gabbay

Zoom ID: 869 7901 6997 SUPERSIS

Beit Hamidrash Helwani

פֶּרַס הַכּוֹבֵד - Parnass Hakavod: Mayer & Muriel Sasson

PROGRAMME DU BEIT HAMIDRASH

שִׁיעוֹר יוֹמִי

PROGRAMME QUOTIDIEN - HOK LEISRAËL - DIM.-VEN. APRÈS SHAHRIT RABBI M. PINTO - ZOOM ID: 5264381158

PARNASS HAYOM פֶּרַס הַיּוֹם

Shabbat 5 Kislev - November 21, novembre

Sylvia Shahin Family, in memory of Menashi Yehoshua Shahin ז"ל.

Sunday/Dimanche 6 Kislev - November 22 novembre

Iris & Samuel & Vivienne Kairy, à la mémoire de Marco Kairy ז"ל.

Moussa Saad, à la mémoire de leur père, Nissim Moussa Saad ז"ל.

Fouad Haron Mashaal, in memory of his brother, Edward Haron Mashal ז"ל.

Monday/Lundi 7 Kislev - November 23 novembre

Ronald Reuben, in memory of his grandfather, Reuben ben Yaacov ז"ל.

Tuesday/Mardi 8 Kislev - November 24 novembre

Iny Family, in memory of their father, Eliyahou Iny ז"ל.

Shulamit Moulavi, in memory of her father, Jacob Sayegh ז"ל.

Wednesday/Mercredi 9 Kislev - November 25 novembre

Charles Lallouz, à la mémoire de Emmanuel Abouhadana ז"ל.

Thursday/Jeu 10 Kislev - November 26 novembre

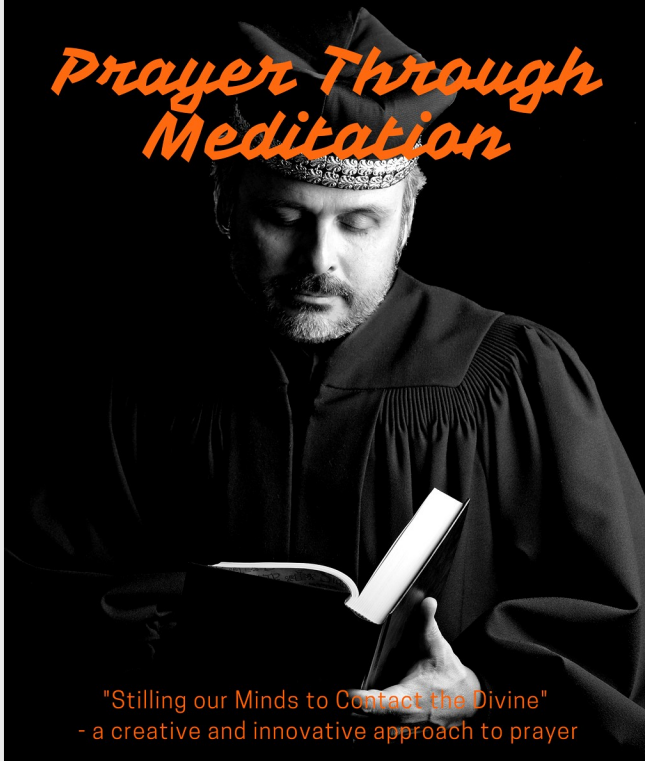
Famille Dana, à la mémoire de leur mère, Fortunée Dana ז"ל.

Friday/Vendredi 11 Kislev - November 27 novembre

Albert Mann, en l'honneur de son Anniversaire.

THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE SYNAGOGUE AND
HAZZAN DANIEL BENLOLO PRESENT

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cantorbenlolo@thespanish.org



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SHEVET ACHIM
CHAVERIM KOL YISRAEL
D'BET ABRAHAM
CONGREGATION

SHABBOS, NOVEMBER 21st

FOR TIMES OF WEEKDAY SERVICES, PLEASE
FOLLOW WITH SPANISH & PORTUGUESE

WE HAVE MOVED THE STARTING TIME OF SHABBAT
MORNING SERVICES IN CS HALL TO 9:30 A.M.

WORDS FROM RABBI WHITE
TOLEDOT 5781

This past Monday, the 29th of MarHeshvan, was the holiday of Sigd. Now, I must admit: I had never heard of Sigd when I was in high school, nor in college, nor in Rabbinical school, nor in graduate school. However, in Chevra Shaas, we have had the honour and pleasure of having several members of the Ethiopian community (known as Beta Israel) as valued members and as participants in our services.

This was a great holiday among the Beta Israel. Occurring 50 days after Yom Kippur (reminiscent of Shavuot, 50 days after Pesach) it was a time of rededication to the Torah. According to my friend Rabbi Sharon Shalom (an Ethiopian-Israeli rabbi who teaches at Bar Ilan) it was a time of unity and forgiveness (similar to Yom Kippur.)

If so, we have an appropriate idea connected with this week's parasha, Toledot. For we read of a brother (Esau) who was plotting to kill his brother Jacob, causing Jacob to run away to another country. Indeed, the theme of siblings not getting along is common in Genesis: besides Esau and Jacob, we have Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Joseph and his brothers.

Yet, how does the Book of Genesis conclude? Answer: we see the conciliation of the brothers, as Judah is willing to put himself into servitude in order to rescue Benjamin! And how does the Book of Exodus begin? Answer: with Aaron's joy in reuniting with Moses, thus leading to the redemption from Egypt!

May the lesson of love and unity as taught by the Sigd be an inspiration for all of us.

Shabbat Shalom



שבת שלום

Major Donors Program

The Spanish & Portuguese has recently begun a fundraising program whereby our goal is to raise \$1.5 Million over 3 years to help fund our activities, programs, and events.

We are pleased to announce the following congregants who have made very generous 3-year donations:

Edward & Gertrude Mashaal & Family

Sam & Ann Aintabi & Family

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Mayer & Roberta Lawee & Family

Alfred & Martha Lawee

Friends of the Congregation

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SPANISH & PORTUGUESE ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

With deep gratitude, we acknowledge the following generous donors who are supporting the operations, activities, and welfare of our synagogue.

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Joseph & Niddam Amzallag

David & Lyson Haccoun

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Maurice Douek

Robert Fattal

Rabbi Howard & Norma Joseph

Jim & Ruth Nabi

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Did Isaac's love influence Esau? Yes and no. There was a special bond of connection between Esau and Isaac. This was recognized by the sages:

Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel said: No man ever honoured his father as I honoured my father, but I found that Esau honoured his father even more.

Rabbi Shimon derives this from the fact that usually people serve their parents wearing ordinary clothes while they reserve their best for going out. Esau, however, had kept his best clothes in readiness to serve his father the food he had gone out to hunt. That is why Jacob was able to wear them while Esau was still out hunting.

We find, much later in the Torah, that Gid forbids the Israelites to wage war against Esau's descendants. He tells Moses:

Give the people these orders: "You are about to pass through the territory of your brothers the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. They will be afraid of you but be

incredibly careful. Do not provoke them to war, for I will not give you any of their land, not even enough to put your foot on. I have given Esau the hill country of Seir as his own."

And later still Moses commands the Israelites: *Do not abhor an Edomite [i.e. a descendant of Esau], for he is your brother.*

The sages saw these provisions as an enduring reward to Esau for the way he honoured his father.

So, was Isaac right or wrong to love Esau? Esau reciprocated the love, but remained Esau, the hunter, the man of the field, not the man to carry forward the demanding covenant with the invisible Gid and the spiritual sacrifices it called for. Not all children follow the path of their parents. If it was Isaac's intent that Esau should do so, he failed. But there are some failures that are honourable. Loving your children, whatever they become, is one, for surely that is how Gid loves us.

Shabbat Shalom, Rabbi Maimon Pinto

HALAKHA הלכה

TRADITIONAL PLACE OF THE Bimah

Question: I just attended a synagogue for a bar mitzvah, and I was surprised to see that the podium where the Torah is read is in the center of the sanctuary, facing forward. In the synagogue where I grew up, it was in the front. Does it make a difference?

Response: The traditional place of the podium, known as the bimah, is indeed in the center of the sanctuary, facing toward the ark. Maimonides codifies this practice and supplies a practical reason: When the reader is in the center, everyone can hear the Torah reading clearly and easily.

In addition, Rabbi Moses Sofer, known as the Hatam Sofer, explains that the

bimah in the synagogue is representative of the altar that was in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. Just like the altar was positioned in the center of the Temple courtyard, we position the bimah in the center of the synagogue. He cites the Talmudic description of the great synagogue of Alexandria, which had such a bimah in the center of the synagogue, as evidence that the center of the synagogue has been the home of the bimah since antiquity.

For these reasons, tradition mandates that the bimah should be at the center of the synagogue, or at least behind a row of seats.

Shabbat Shalom, Rabbi Maimon Pinto



CONGREGATION ☆ MAGHEN ☆ ABRAHAM

THOUGHTS FROM MAYER SASSON ~ TOLDOT- ALLUSIONS TO THE MONTH OF KISLEV

"And G-d spoke: Let there be light..." "ויאמר אלקים יהי אור"

The letters of the month of Kislev hint to our lighting a sum of 36 candles throughout Chanukah (not including the shamesh).

ך"ס in numerology adds up to eighty – שמונים and alludes to the oils from which we light the 36 candles.

Likewise, we learn from the words "And G-d spoke: Let there be light..." "ויאמר אלקים יהי אור" – the word יהי adds up to 25 to allude to the 25th day of Kislev which is the time of the light of Torah.

In addition, the word "אור" is the 25th word from the beginning of the Torah "בראשית ברא אלקים ויהי אור.....ויאמר אלקים יהי אור".

We should know that the month of Kislev is a time of unity in Israel, as is

referred to in Megilat Esther "Go gather all the Jews" - "לך כנס את כל היהודים". Every fourth letter spells out Kislev כסלו to teach that only by keeping together in unity amongst Jews will they have additional years added to them, as it says in Mishlei "... ירבו ימך ויוסיפו לך שנות חיים" - every fourth letter spells out Kislev.

In summation we shall add that the name of the month Kislev alludes to two words – pocket – heart "כיס- לב" for a person must open his pocket for charity (especially during Chanukah) and his heart to do kindness – for this is true unity!

On the eight days of Chanukah a person should give a lot of charity to his fellow Jews.

Shabbat Shalom

Give a Hand is a Spanish & Portuguese initiative uniting people with acts of goodness & kindness...

COAT DRIVE

DROP OFF YOUR GENTLY USED WINTER COATS AND CLOTHING

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2020 FROM 10 A.M - 12 NOON

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020 FROM 9 A.M. - 4 P.M.

AT 4894 ST. KEVIN AVE.

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*Moussa Saad, in memory of his father,
Nissim Moussa Saad z'l.*



Quote Of The Week

Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves.

- Carl Jung - *Aish HaTorah*