



The Chabad Weekly

Vol. 24 Issue 6



Candlelighting
(Los Angeles)

4:29 PM

Friday Mincha:

4:45 PM

LATEST SHEMA: 9:03 AM

SHABBAT SCHEDULE

- **Shacharis** 7:30 AM
9:30 AM
- **Mincha** 4:25 PM
followed
by class
- **Maariv** 5:25 PM
- **Shabbat ends** 5:29 PM

Please see attached
email for complete
Shabbos schedule and
conditions.

Announcements:

Happy Birthday to
Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok
Shusterman, Michael
Moradian, Rachel Rina
Mishael and Lazer
Shusterman.

Yartzheits: Gerti
Sussman - Kislev 4, Yechiel
Greenberg - Kislev 5,
Albert Peymani - Kislev 6,
Samuel Ruja - Kislev 6,
Moe Brodsky - Kislev -10,
Elisha Mahtaban - Kislev
10.

Mazal Tov to the
Davidpour Family on
engagement of Simcha to
Moshe Coleman.

Good Shabbos!

Parshas Toldos

4 Kislev, 5781 / November 20, 2020

Keep Laughing

By Menachem Feldman

It's a strange name to give a child.

The child of Abraham and Sarah, the first child to be born to a Jewish family, was named Yitzchok, or Isaac, which means "laughter."

Why would Abraham and Sarah choose the name "laughter" for their child, who was destined to be a deeply spiritual person and a patriarch of the Jewish people?

The name Isaac is even more ironic when we consider that the nature and character of Isaac seems to be the polar opposite of laughter and joy. While Abraham was an outgoing extrovert, Isaac kept to himself; while Abraham is characterized in the Torah as the lover of G-d, Isaac is characterized as being in awe of G-d. While Abraham represents the attribute of kindness and giving, Isaac embodies strength and discipline. The name Isaac seems out of character with his identity and spiritual path.

But where does laughter stem from? A person may feel happy due to some goodness in his life, yet for the happiness to overflow from his heart and express itself in laughter, he must experience more than the expected measure of joy. Happiness becomes laughter when the joyous event surpasses all expectations, when one is confronted with the unpredictable.

The Torah describes Sarah's reac-

tion to the birth of her son:

And Sarah said, "God has made joy for me; whoever hears will rejoice over me." And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children, for I have borne a son to his old age!"²

Sarah's giving birth to a child in her old age was more than just a happy event; it was an event that defied all expectations. Every time Sarah held her son in her arms, she was overwhelmed with joy—thus the name Isaac/"laughter."

Sarah knew that, just as his birth was unexpected, Isaac would father a people whose destiny would defy predictions and expectations. Their very survival would be a miracle. Sarah understood that while Isaac might not be the most charismatic of the Patriarchs, he would possess the ability to create an unpredictable transformation by finding goodness in the most unlikely of places.

Indeed, this was a central theme of Isaac's life. While the Torah tells us precious little about the life of Isaac, the Torah does elaborate on Isaac's success as a well digger. The Kabbalists explain that Isaac's wells represent a departure from his father Abraham's approach. Abraham influenced people by "bringing the water to them." Abraham was a superb teacher and a charismatic communicator. He showered his listeners with love and, by the force of his character, compelled them to be influenced by his message of G-d and morality. Isaac, by contrast, did not bring the water to the people. Instead he helped people find the wellspring of G-dliness within themselves. Abraham would teach through sharing and enlightening; Isaac, by contrast, displayed discipline. He empowered the student to believe in his own ability to dig within himself, to remove the psychological barriers

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ers and discover the truth on his own.

Which is why Isaac loved Esau.

Esau was the child who seemed completely uninterested in the ideas of his father and grandfather. He loved the thrill of hunting more than the excitement of ideas. On the surface, he seemed to be in a spiritual desert, devoid of water. Yet Isaac understood that every creation has a spark within it, that every child has a reservoir of pure water within himself. The job of the parent and educator is to dig the well, remove the dirt and discover the water.

Thus, Isaac embodied laughter. Isaac mastered the skill of seeing the good in unexpected places. He had the ability to mine the holiness that lay in the heart of every person and in the soul of every activity.

As the children of our Patriarchs and Matriarchs, we are heirs to the qualities and characteristics they embodied. From Isaac we inherit the ability to be joyous in the face of great challenge. From Isaac we learn to expect the unexpected, to believe in ourselves and in the people around us. From Isaac we inherit the power to create laughter, to discover the deeper truth of reality that is not always noticeable to the naked eye. From Isaac we learn to dig beneath the surface and find the holiness in every person and the good in every experience.

chabad.org

The Shul wishes its
condolences to
Avraham Moradian
on the loss of his father,
Tzefania Ben Michael
May he know of no more
sorrow.

Hayom Yom - Kislev 4

With mayim Acharonim,
wash the fingertips and,
while they are still moist,
pass them over the lips.

ZOOM CLASSES:

Monday 8:00 PM
Parshas Hashavua

Wednesday 8:00 PM
Halacha & Tanya

Daily Mon.- Fri: 6:45 AM
Torah Ohr (In Shul)

Please visit

www.rabbishusterman.com
where you can access over
2100 of Rabbi Shusterman's
classes in Halacha, Tanya,
Gemara, Torah Ohr, Likutei
Torah and more

Daily Minyonim

Weekday Shacharis:
6:00 AM & 7:30 AM

Sunday Shacharis:
7:00 AM & 9:00 AM

Thurs., Thanksgiving
Shacharis:
7:30 AM & 9:00 AM
Mincha/Maariv:
4:45 PM

**G-d chose to
sustain the
Israelites in the
dessert with the
Manna, and He
chooses to
sustain you
through your
occupation. Its
all a Divine
miracle, just the
packaging is
different.**

Rabbe Maharash
Gatesoftrust.org

Story of the Week:

Necessary Repairs

A number of years ago in Israel, two yeshiva students decided to take a trip to the north in order to visit a number of the gravesites of the righteous that are situated in the Tsfat area. It was a nice day, and they were able to get hold of a decent car, so they decided to drive.

Things were going smoothly until they noticed that their thermostat was running a bit higher than it should. Fearing that the car would overheat, they pulled over on the side of the road to see what was wrong. Neither one of these students was well-versed in auto-mechanics, so they attempted to wave down anyone who could help them. A number of motorists pulled over and attempted to solve their problem, to no avail. Apparently, they would need the services of a qualified mechanic. In other words they were stuck.

Suddenly, a car pulled up and out came a man adorned with beard, peyot and black kippah, and dressed in full chasidic garb. He asked, "What seems to be the problem?"

"Our car is overheating, and we have no idea what is wrong," they replied.

"Let me see what I can do," he man said.

He promptly removed his long frock robe and lay down on the ground beneath the car, searching for the trouble spot. After a few minutes, he emerged and said, "I see the problem. Your fan belt tore and must be replaced."

"What should we do?" the yeshiva boys asked.

"Not to worry," the man answered, as he returned to his car and brought out a giant tool chest with car repair tools. He then opened his trunk and took out a brand new fan belt. After completing the repair, he packed up his car and was prepared to leave.

"How much do we owe you?" the boys asked.

"Nothing," he replied. "I did it as a kindness. I enjoy helping people out."

"Well, we cannot force you to take money for the time that you invested, but what about the part? That is an expensive part - why should you pay for it?"

"It's not a problem. I must do this my way," he replied.

"Let me tell you my story and you will understand why."

"I grew up in a totally secular environment, shunning the religious way of life. I was a highly successful car mechanic with a thriving business. Since I knew cars inside-out, I would diagnose a problem which the owner had no clue existed, or I would charge inflated prices for the repairs that I performed."

"One day, I decided to abandon my life of pursuit of money and pleasure. Seeking meaning and purpose, I decided to return to my true Jewish roots. I prepared myself to live a life completely committed to Torah and mitzvah observance."

"As I advanced in commitment, one thing kept gnawing at me. During my years as a mechanic I had been running a lucrative business, but not in a very honest way. I was cheating my customers with exorbitant prices, often for work that was unnecessary. How could my teshuva ('return') become complete until I repaired all of the petty and often not-so-petty theft?"

"I went to my Rebbe, who was guiding me on my journey of return to Torah and asked his advice. He told me that since there was no way of identifying my victims, my teshuva would have to be of a general, all-encompassing nature."

He advised that I should offer my expertise to whomever was in need, free of charge. "So this is what I do. Twice a week, I cruise the highways, looking for people in trouble. I carry with me a complete set of tools and many vital parts. Whenever I notice someone in need, I offer my services."

This is my teshuva. Today, you have enabled me to draw one step closer to the One above. Thank you!"

Source: Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from *Peninim on the Torah*, as printed in the *Jersey Shore Torah Bulletin* and circulated in *Shabbos Stories for the Parsha*.

Ascentofsafed.com

Parsha Insights

Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebecca . . . as a wife (25:20)

For three years, from the Binding of Isaac at age 37 to his marriage at age 40, Isaac was in the Garden of Eden.

(Asarah Maamarot)

Marriage is a time of increased enmeshment in the material. It is a time when one begins to engage in the most physical of human drives; it is also a time when one is forced to begin, in earnest, the business of earning a livelihood, often at the expense of loftier and more idealistic pursuits. Thus the Zohar refers to marriage as a person's second birth: first the soul enters into the body and assumes a physical existence; then, at a later point in life, it further "descends" into the physical state by marrying.

Therein lies the lesson to be derived from the fact that prior to his marriage Isaac spent three years in the Garden of Eden, abandoning the physical state for a wholly spiritual existence. In order to ensure the success of the most physical phase of a person's life, it must be prefaced by a period of spiritual preparation. Although the primary objective of our mission in life is the development and sanctification of the physical world, one must enter that world well equipped with the spiritual vision of the divine purpose and with the spiritual fortitude to carry it out.

(The Lubavitcher Rebbe) - chabad.org

Esau and Jacob

The name Esau is derived from the Hebrew word meaning done or completed. Esau felt whole, satisfied and comfortable with his spiritual status, and was thus lacking any desire to elevate himself. Jacob, by contrast, is derived from the word meaning heel. No matter how high a spiritual level Jacob achieved he considered it as nothing, and was consistently motivated to elevate himself further. (Shem MiShmuel)

And these are the generations of Isaac...and the first came out...and they called his name Esau (Gen. 25:19;25)

Esau is symbolic of the forces of evil and impurity, which were created for the purpose of the Jew transforming them into goodness and light. (In fact, it is due to this inner, positive reason that the Torah refers to Esau as "the generations of Isaac.") The Hebrew name Isaac is related to the word for laughter. When "Esau" is successfully changed into good, G-d "laughs," as it were, and derives great pleasure from the transformation. (Sefer HaMaamarim 5738)

And the children struggled together with in her (Gen. 26:22)

The struggle between Jacob and Esau began before birth, and ever since, there has been no peace. Indeed, it is a perpetual war that continues till this very day.

(Be'er Yitzchak) From: L'Chaim #1449 -
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