

Knesset Israel

Your Beverlywood Shul

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Parshat Toldot

By Rabbi Avraham Schefres

Have you ever seen someone do something so well that you wish you could do it too? Have you ever seen someone who had some great trait that you wish you could have the same trait? Be it fishing, cooking, fixing things, or being patient, strong, or kind, most people can see in others qualities that they wish they had. Now what? If a person decides that it is important to them, they would try to attain these skills and traits.

This was the same predicament that Yitzchak was in. He knew that he, being the son of Avraham, had a hard act to follow. He was the first one to continue the work of a pioneer, Avraham, and understood that what he does will be the cause of success or demise of what his father did. What did Yitzchak decide to do? First, he made a decision that his father's work was important enough to continue. Second, Yitzchak decided that he needed to be a strong conduit and advocate of his father's work. How did he actualize his goal? The special attribute of Yitzchak is gevurah, meaning 'strength' or 'strength of judgment,' based partially on the Akeidah (sacrifice) incident. Yitzchak implemented his goal using inner strength in three ways. He continued to listen and promote Hashem as evidenced by the Akeidah, he emulated his father's ways by continuing to build wells to grow the Jewish nation, and he made tough choices when he blessed Eisav even after Yaakov received the blessing of the first born.

In many ways, being the first person after the pioneer to carry on the traditions is difficult. To the pioneer, most of what he/she does is natural to them and they do it with much passion. The next person may not be a natural in the same way and/or the passion may not be there.

Yitzchak was able to make his father's avodah, lifelong mission, his own and transmit this way of life to the next generation. We can learn how to attain a trait or skill we like from Yitzchak. We need to be close to the one we would like to learn from. Listen to them, emulate their ways, and be courageous by looking for solutions. We may even surprise ourselves in what we can attain when we put our minds to it.

The same can be applied to our Yiddishkeit. If we are to carry on the traditions, we may consider wanting to be close to Hashem. We show HaShem our closeness to Him by learning Torah, we emulate Him through our observance, and we show our courage by seeing the perfection in the imperfect. May we have the same passion as Yitzchak in carrying out the work of our pioneer, Avraham.

Shabbat Times

Erev Shabbat Nov 13, 2015 / 1 Kislev, 5776

Candle Lighting.....3:45 pm to 4:33 pm
Mincha.....4:40 pm

Shabbat Day Nov 14, 2015 / 2 Kislev, 5776

Shacharit.....9:00 am
Kiddush.....11:20 am
Mincha.....4:25 pm
Havdalah / Shabbat Ends.....5:34 pm

Wanted: Room for rent

An acquaintance of Charlie's, a mature Jewish Orthodox gentleman, would like to rent a room in this area. If you or someone you know has a spare room for rent please call Charlie Brill to get more info at (310) 748-2604.