

We celebrate the return of the live hostages on Hoshana Raba and pray for the return of the remains of all the hostages still in Gaza. May we now enjoy a period of healing and rebuilding for Am Yisrael. **בס"ד**

22 NOVEMBER 2025 | 2 KISLEV 5786 VOLUME 39 | #11

DAF HASHAVUA

תולדות | TOLEDOT

SHABBAT ENDS:

- London: 4.55pm
- Birmingham: 4.59pm
- Bournemouth: 5.08pm
- Cardiff: 5.10pm
- Dublin: 5.13pm
- Edinburgh: 4.54pm
- Glasgow: 4.59pm
- Hull: 4.54pm
- Leeds: 4.53pm
- Liverpool: 5.04pm
- Manchester: 4.58pm
- Nottingham: 4.58pm
- Sheffield: 4.58pm
- Southend: 4.51pm
- Southport: 5.04pm
- Jerusalem: 5.16pm

"May God give you of the dew of the heavens and the cream of the land, and abundant grain and wine"
(Bereishit 27:28)



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תּוֹלֵדוֹת
TOLEDOT

6th Sidra in:
בְּרֵאשִׁית
BEREISHIT

By Numbers:
106 VERSES
1,432 WORDS
5,426 LETTERS

Headlines:
JACOB
AND ESAU

TOLEDOT:
Artscroll p.124
Hertz p.93
Koren Sacks p.161
Soncino p.140

HAFTARAH:
Artscroll p.1137
Hertz p.102
Koren Sacks p.1427
Soncino p.159

Sidra Summary

1ST ALIYA (KOHEN) – BEREISHIT 25:19-26:5

Yitzchak (Isaac), aged 60, prays for his wife Rivka (Rebecca) to have a child. Rivka conceives twins and is told prophetically that the two children will father two separate nations. Esav (Esau) is born first, red and hairy. Yaakov (Jacob) then emerges, holding on to Esav's heel. As they grow up, Esav becomes a hunter, whereas Yaakov dwells in tents of Torah study (Rashi). Yitzchak loves Esav, whereas Rivka prefers Yaakov. One day Yaakov prepares a red lentil stew. Esav returns exhausted from the fields, demanding that Yaakov give him some of the stew. Yaakov agrees, but in return for Esav selling the first-born rights to him. Esav agrees, taking an oath in return for the food.

Famine hits the Land of Canaan (later Israel). God tells Yitzchak not to go down to Egypt for food and assures him that he will be a forefather of a great nation.

***Point to Consider:** Why did God insist on Yitzchak not leaving the Land? (see Rashi to 26:2)*

2ND ALIYA (LEVI) – 26:6-12

Yitzchak lives amongst the Plishtim (Philistines) in Gerar. Afraid to reveal that Rivka is his wife, lest harm befall them from jealous men, Yitzchak tells the locals that she is his sister. However, the ruler Avimelech discovers that they are actually married. He accuses Yitzchak of deceiving him, but warns the people not to harm Yitzchak and Rivka. Yitzchak sows the land and becomes very prosperous.

3RD ALIYA (SHLISHI) – 26:13-22

The Plishtim, jealous of Yitzchak's prosperity, stop up his wells. Yitzchak carries on digging wells; the arguments eventually end.

4TH ALIYA (REVI'Y) – 26:23-29

Yitzchak moves to Beersheva. God appears to him in

the night, telling him that He will bless him. Yitzchak builds an altar. Avimelech brings an entourage from Gerar, offering Yitzchak a new peace treaty.

5TH ALIYA (CHAMISHI) – 26:30-27:27

Yitzchak agrees to the peace proposal. Esav marries two Hittite women. This pains his parents, as both women worship idols (Rashi). The ageing Yitzchak, almost blind, asks Esav to go and hunt some game for him to eat, after which he will bless Esav. Rivka overhears and instructs the reluctant Yaakov to go to Yitzchak disguised as Esav, with two cooked goats, so as to receive the blessings instead of Esav.

6TH ALIYA (SHISHI) – 27:28-28:4

Rivka's plan is successful; Yaakov receives the blessings. Esav returns from the field, realises what has happened and lets out a loud and bitter cry. Yitzchak also gives Esav a blessing, but it includes his future subservience to Yaakov. Esav plans to kill Yaakov. Rivka realises this, and tells Yaakov to escape to her brother Lavan in Charan. Yitzchak instructs Yaakov to marry one of Lavan's daughters. Before Yitzchak sends Yaakov away, he blesses him with the blessing first bestowed upon Avraham, including, specifically, the blessing of the Land of Israel. From this we can see that Yitzchak had always intended that the real legacy was to go to Yaakov, not Esav.

7TH ALIYA (SHEVI'Y) – 28:5-9

Yaakov sets off to Charan. Esav marries a third wife, Machalat, the daughter of his uncle Yishmael.

HAFTARAH

The prophet Malachi speaks of God's love for Yaakov and His rejection of Esav. However, Yaakov's nation has to justify God's favour; the prophet rebukes them for being lax and insincere in their Temple service.



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Editor-in-Chief: Rabbi Baruch Davis

Editorial and Production Team:

Rabbi Daniel Sturgess
Rebbetzen Nechama Davis
Laurie Maurer
Jennifer Dorling
Tatiana von Beelen

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COVENANT AND CONVERSATION

A FATHER'S LOVE

This essay is adapted from a Covenant & Conversation essay last published in 2022, marking the recent 5th yahrzeit of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt"l. Learn more from Rabbi Sacks at www.rabbisacks.org

Yaakov and Eisav were twins, wildly different. We can easily understand why Rivka loved Yaakov our forefather, but why did Yitzchak love Eisav, who was not a scholar or a man of God, but one who rebelled from Judaism, was rough and wild, and married out?

The answer is simple. Yitzchak loved Eisav because Eisav was his son, and that is what parents do. They love their children no matter what. This does not mean that Yitzchak thought Eisav was the right person to continue the covenant, or that he was happy with Eisav marrying Hittite women. The text explicitly says this troubled him. Yitzchak could see Eisav's true character. But he also knew that a parent must love their child because this is their child. They can still reproach them for their actions. But a parent does not disown their child, even when they are disappointed in them. Yitzchak was teaching us a fundamental lesson in parenthood.

Yitzchak knew that his father had sent his brother Yishmael away. He may have known that it pained Avraham and injured Yishmael. There is a series of *Midrashim* that suggest that Avraham visited Yishmael even after he sent him away; others that say it was Yitzchak who brought about the reunion. Yitzchak was determined not to inflict the same fate on Eisav.

Likewise, he knew the emotional trauma he and his father had suffered from the trial of the Binding. The trial was surely necessary, otherwise God would not have commanded it. But it left wounds, psychological scars, and left Yitzchak determined not to sacrifice Eisav. In some way, Yitzchak's unconditional love of Eisav was a *tikkun* (repair) for the rupture in the father-son relationship caused by the Binding.

We could even go further. In a way, Yitzchak's gift of paternal love helped prepare the next generation, in which all of Yaakov's children remained within the fold.

There is a fascinating argument in the *Mishnah* on the meaning of *Devarim* 14:1, the verse saying, "You are children of the Lord your

God." Rabbi Yehudah said this applied only when Jews behave in a way worthy of children of God. But Rabbi Meir said it was unconditional: whether Jews behave like God's children or not, they are still called the children of God.

The Jewish idea of *Avinu Malkeinu*, that our God, our King, is first and foremost our Parent, is to instill profound emotions into our relationship with God. There is bound to be conflict, as all children sometimes conflict with their parents. The relationship can be fraught, even painful, yet what gives it depth is the knowledge that it is unbreakable. Whatever happens, a parent is still a parent, and a child is still a child. The bond may be deeply damaged, but it is never broken beyond repair.

Perhaps that is what Yitzchak was signalling to us by his continuing love for Eisav, who was so unlike him, so different in character and destiny, yet never rejected by him – just as the *Midrash* says that Avraham never rejected Yishmael and found ways of communicating his love. Unconditional love is not uncritical, but it is unbreakable. That is how we should love our children – for it is how God loves us.





BRINGING GOD INTO THE ROOM: **PART 20**

ILLUMINATING THE HOME

BY: **SHIRA JACKSON**
US Education



In Eli Sharabi's book, *Hostage*, he describes how it felt to make Kiddush and sing Shabbat songs, together with some of the other hostages.

"I feel a connection. To my people. To our tradition. To my identity. It connects me to my family. To my childhood. To my roots. It reminds me why I must survive. Who I'm surviving for. What I'm surviving for. It brings back glowing memories of childhood. Of my father. Of my mother. Of a white *tallit* during Shabbat prayers. Wine in a goblet. Candles on the windowsill..."

As the week draws to a close and Shabbat approaches, small flames are kindled. Hands are waved. Eyes are covered. In that moment, the world shifts—from weekday to sacred time, from routine to radiance.

The mitzvah of candle lighting (*hadlakat nerot*) is found in the Talmud (*Shabbat* 25b), where the Sages teach that lighting candles before Shabbat ensures *shalom bayit*—peace in the home. Each flame we kindle echoes the Divine act of creation. Just as God said, "Let there be light", we become partners in bringing light into the world.

After lighting, we recite the blessing:

ברוך אתה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר
שַׁבָּת.

"Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the universe, who sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to light the Shabbat candle."

Many women add a personal prayer immediately after:

May it be Your will, Hashem, my God and God of my ancestors, that You show favour to me and to all my relatives.

Grant us—and all of Israel—good and long lives.

Remember us with a remembrance of goodness and blessing.

Recall us with a remembrance of salvation and compassion, and bless us with great blessings.

Complete our homes.

Cause Your Divine Presence to dwell among us.

Grant me the merit to raise children and grandchildren who are wise and discerning, lovers of Hashem, God-fearing, people of truth, holy offspring connected to Hashem, who illuminate the world with Torah and good deeds and with all forms of service to the Creator.

Please, hear my plea at this time, in the merit of Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel and Leah, our foremothers.

*May You illuminate our light so that it is never extinguished, and shine Your face upon us so that we may be saved.
Amen.*

In *Parashat Chayei Sarah*, we learn of Avraham's quest to find an appropriate wife for his son Yitzchak (Isaac), to continue the Jewish dynasty. When Rivkah (Rebecca) was chosen, Rashi (11th century commentator) explains that Yitzchak recognised that she was indeed the right woman for him, as, when she entered the tent of his mother Sarah, the three blessings that manifested during Sarah's lifetime were reinstated. A cloud of Divine protection hovered over the tent, her Challa would be abundant, and her Shabbat candles would illuminate her home throughout the entire week (*Bereishit* 24:67).

This prayer is not just a hope—it is a vision. It reminds us that the light we kindle is not only for the moment, it is for generations. The same lights our holy matriarchs ignited thousands of years ago pass through us, to all future generations. The children watch us, absorb the rhythm of Jewish life, learning that holiness begins at home.

Jewish artists you want to (re)discover

BY: **TATIANA VON BEELEN**

Senior Graphic Designer and Brand Lead
at the United Synagogue



MAURICIO LASANSKY

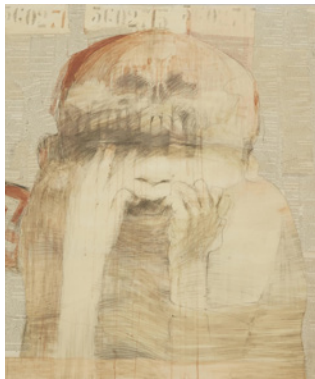
1914–2012
Buenos Aires, Argentina – Iowa City, Iowa, US

Mauricio Lasansky was born in 1914 in Buenos Aires to Jewish parents who had emigrated from Lithuania. He showed artistic talent from a young age, and printmaking became his preferred medium, influenced by his father, who worked as a printer of banknote engravings. After finishing school, he studied printmaking at the Superior School of Fine Arts and, after only three years, was appointed director of the Free School of Fine Arts in Córdoba.

His work drew the attention of a director at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, who recommended him for a Guggenheim Fellowship. The award took him to New York City, where he worked at a renowned printmaking studio and, over two years, reportedly examined every single print by the old masters in the museum's collection, around 150,000 works!

In 1944, as the fellowship was ending, the University of Iowa invited him to serve as Printmaker in Residence. He accepted, planning to stay for "just a year", but remained for forty. During that time, he built one of the most respected printmaking workshops in the United States.

Given his reputation as a printmaker, it is striking that his best-known works are drawings.



No. 27 from *Nazi Drawings*, 1961–1966.
Courtesy of Lasansky Gallery

The *Nazi Drawings*, a series of 33 portraits of Nazis and other Holocaust perpetrators, convey the revulsion and grief he felt about the Holocaust and the horrors of the Second World War. "The Hitler years were in my belly, and I tried many times to do the drawings," he said. "But I was too worldly about them, too aesthetic. The trouble was, I thought of them as art. But then I decided, the hell with it. Why don't I just put down what I feel?"

Using simple materials, Lasansky created images thick with horror and sorrow. The drawings confront the viewer with raw depictions of human cruelty. Seeing a grotesque figure in a sketchbook is one thing, but these works are life-sized, forcing us to face them directly. They are



No. 19 from *Nazi Drawings*, 1961–1966.
Courtesy of Lasansky Gallery

profoundly unsettling.

Lasansky was also a devoted teacher. At the University of Iowa, he attracted many students and trained several generations of artists. Many went on to become successful in their own right; some founding print workshops at universities across the country. He retired in 1985 but continued working in his Iowa City studio until his death in 2012.



SEFER YESHAYAHU (ISAIAH) – PART 1

INTRODUCTION

BY: **PNINA SAVERY**

Ma'ayan and US Educator

We now begin *Sefer Yeshayahu* (Isaiah), which takes us into a new realm of biblical works. Up until now, we have studied narrative accounts, albeit with strong theological messages. As we enter *Yeshayahu*, the first book of the series named “the later prophets”, we find a more poetic and metaphorical style, focusing on prophetic messages rather than historical events.¹

It is important to note that, although this section is called “later prophets”, this does not mean we are chronologically later. In fact, we are going back in time from where we left off. We finished our study of *Sefer Melachim* (Kings) with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile (sixth century BCE). The prophet Yeshayahu actually lived before this, during the eighth century BCE. *Sefer Yeshayahu* therefore takes place alongside, rather than after, *Sefer Melachim*.

Spanning 66 chapters, *Yeshayahu* can be a difficult and daunting book to study. He was prophet to five different kings, necessitating an understanding of the changing context during his prophetic career. As a member of the royal family, Yeshayahu had

an important position within the royal court, arguably giving him more influence.

Yeshayahu is often referred to as the “prophet of peace”, or the “prophet of social justice”. These important themes come up again and again. However, the prophet also conveys many other important messages. These key themes are all expressed in chapter 1.

Rav Yoel ben Nun explains, following the commentary of Rashi and the Radak, that the opening chapter of *Sefer Yeshayahu* forms an introduction to the entire book.² When we read chapter 1 we see the main messages that are repeated throughout. Firstly, that the people have sinned, and Divine punishment will come (*Yeshayahu* 1:2-9). Secondly, the prophet urges the people to repent (*ibid.* 1:16-17). Rashi, on verse 16, notices ten different things the people need to do towards repentance, corresponding to the ten days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur.

Thirdly, the prophet emphasises the importance of genuine service of God. He criticises empty ritual.

For example, Yeshayahu cries out that God does not want their sacrifices and Shabbat observance when they have paganism in their hearts and are not creating a charitable society of justice and kindness to the needy and vulnerable (*ibid.* 1:11-17 and Rashi). Finally, he declares that Israel will be redeemed, hinting to the beautiful chapters of consolation that come later in the book, from chapter 40 onwards (*ibid.* 1:26-27).

In the 1940s, archaeologists made an incredible discovery of ancient scrolls, preserved for over 2000 years in Qumran (caves near the Dead Sea). *Sefer Yeshayahu* was present there in its entirety, the only biblical book to be discovered there in full. Today, this scroll is housed in the Shrine of the Book in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.



Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum, Jerusalem

¹ For this reason, our articles will change in style. Rather than dedicate each article to a different chapter, we will cover a number of chapters at a time focusing on context and message.

² Yoel ben Nun, *Isaiah: The Prophet of Righteousness and Justice*, p.xxiv.

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT TOLEDOT

21-22 NOVEMBER | 2 KISLEV

THE ROLE OF YITZCHAK



BY: **ALEX
LASSMAN**

Tribe Madrich

Compared to the other two forefathers, Yitzchak (Isaac) appears to be the least prominent, yet there is a great amount to say about him. Whilst his father Avraham was a pioneer, and his son Yaakov (Jacob) a fighter, Yitzchak seems to have been passive in contrast to them. At the *Akedah*, the Binding of Yitzchak, the verse states, "God tested Avraham" (*Bereishit* 22:1) and not Yitzchak. Additionally, his name was not changed like those of the other two forefathers.

Nevertheless, Yitzchak's role was equally important in a number of ways.

Yitzchak was a good follower of Avraham. His contribution to our forefathers was *gevurah* – strong commitment to the service of God – up to the very limit of being prepared to surrender his life at the *Akedah*.

Avraham's special distinction was *chesed*, kindness, but *chesed* needs *gevurah* to control it. For example: refusing a child's request to play with a sharp knife. Here the *gevurah* restrains the *chesed*, as the loving act of kindness is balanced by the necessary strength and boundaries of *gevurah* to prevent damage. Thus, *chesed* without *gevurah* leads to trouble and harm. Yitzchak

builds on the work of Avraham. Moreover, Yitzchak is an excellent example of perseverance.

The ownership of his first two wells, which were dug by Yitzchak's servants, were disputed, and became objects of conflict. Only the third one, the one he built himself, remained his possession. Even if Yitzchak was unsuccessful the first two times, he dug another well and succeeded. Obstacles are there to be overcome. It is true we need leaders, but followers are equally important, especially those who portray great perseverance. Yitzchak plays a vital role in highlighting the importance of being a good follower. His actions exemplify why one should always persevere when faced with a challenge.

Parasha Word Scramble

Unscramble these words from the *parasha*:

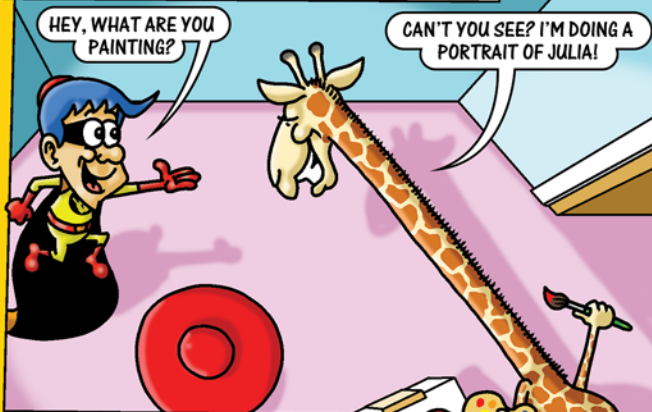
- A. EGRNASIOEN
- B. GANRPNEYC
- C. ITGHRBITTR
- D. ELHE
- E. BRISTNORF





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TOLEDOT: ANGLES!



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