

November 6, 2021

2 Kislev, 5782

Shabbat Toldot



*It has been told to you, what is good, and what Adonai requires of you
Only to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)*

Genesis 25 בראשית 25

ט וְאֵלֶּה תִּלְזַת יִצְחָק בָּרוּאֲבָרָהָם אֶבְרָהָם 19 This is the line of Isaac son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac.

כ וַיְהִי יִצְחָק בָּרוּאֲבָרָהָם שָׁנָה בְּקָרְבָּנוֹ 20 Isaac was 40 years old when he took as his wife Rebekah daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean.

כָּא וַיַּעֲתֵר יִצְחָק לִיהְוֹ לְנַכְחָ אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה עָקֵרָה 21 Isaac pleaded with the Eternal on behalf of his wife, for she was childless, and the Eternal acceded to his entreaty, so his wife Rebekah became pregnant.

כְּבָ וַיַּתְרַצֵּצִי הַבָּנִים בְּקֶרֶבֶת וַתֹּאמֶר אֶסְפֵּן לְפָמָה זוּ אָגָּבִי וַתֹּלֶךְ לְדַרְשָׁן אֶתְיְהֹוָה 22 The children pressed against each other inside her. She thought: “If this is so, why do I exist?” So she went to inquire of the Eternal.

כָּג וַיֹּאמֶר יְהֹוָה לָהּ שְׁנַיִן גּוֹיִם בְּבָطִינָךְ וְשְׁנַיִן לְאַפְּלִים מִפְּעֵיד יְפָרֹדוּ וְלֹאֵם מְלָאֵם יְאַמְּץ וְנַבְּעֵד צָעִיר 23 The Eternal One said to her: Two peoples are in your belly; two nations shall branch off from each other [as they emerge] from your womb. One people shall prevail over the other; the elder shall serve the younger.

Haftarah for Toldot: Proverbs 31: 10-31

Proverbs 31 contains the text of the song “Eshet Chayil,” “A Woman of Valor,” which in some families it is traditional for the husband to recite to his wife on Friday night. To many of us, this practice may seem sexist, and certainly the poem itself imagines a heterosexual couple. Yet, the poem itself (beginning in verse 10) describes an incredibly independent, capable woman! We bring it here to ask ourselves, can we admire this woman? Can we reclaim this poem?

While much of Parashat Toldot centers around conflict between Jacob and Esau, their mother Rebecca changes the future of their family’s destiny as she instructs Jacob to steal the birthright blessing from his brother. In what ways do we admire Rebecca? In what ways might we challenge her?

(א) דָבָרִי לְמוֹאֵל מֶלֶךְ מַשָּׁא אֲשֶׁר־יִסְגָּתָה
אָפָו : (ב) מַה־בָּרִי וּמַה־בָּרְבָּטִינִי יָמָה בָּרָ
נְדָרִי : (ג) אַל־תַּתְּנוּ לְנֶשֶׁים חִילָּךְ וְדָרְכִּיךְ
לְמִיחּוֹת מֶלֶכִין : (ד) אֶל לְמֶלֶכִים שְׂתֽׂזִין וּלְרוֹזִין אָו [אי]
שָׁכָר : (ח) פַּתְחַ-פִּיךְ לְאָלָן אַלְעִין כְּלִבְנִי
חַלוֹף : (ט) פַּתְחַ-פִּיךְ שְׁפַטִּצְדָּק וְדִין עֲנֵי
וְאָבִיו :

Proverbs 31

(1) The words of Lemuel, king of Massa,
with which his mother admonished him: (2) No, my son! No, O son of my womb! No, O son of my vows! (3) Do not give your strength to women, your vigor, to those who destroy kings. ... (8) Speak up for the dumb, for the rights of all the unfortunate. (9) Speak up, judge righteously, champion the poor and the needy.

(10) What a rare find is a capable wife! Her worth is far beyond that of rubies. (11) Her spouse puts confidence in her, and lacks no good thing. (12) She is good to him, never bad, all the days of her life. (13) She looks for wool and flax, And sets her hand to them with a will. (14) She is like a merchant fleet, bringing her food from afar. (15) She rises while it is still night, and supplies provisions for her household, the daily fare of her maids. (16) She sets her mind on an estate and acquires it; she plants a vineyard by her own labors. (17) She girds herself with strength, and performs her tasks with vigor. (18) She sees that her business thrives; her lamp never goes out at night. (19) She sets her hand to the distaff; her fingers work the spindle. (20) She gives generously to the poor; her hands are stretched out to the needy. (21) She is not worried for her household because of snow, for her whole household is dressed in crimson. (22) She makes covers for herself; her clothing is linen and purple. (23) Her husband is prominent in the gates, as he sits among the elders of the land. (24) She makes cloth and sells it, and offers a girdle to the merchant. (25) She is clothed with strength and splendor; she looks to the future cheerfully. (26) Her mouth is full of wisdom, her tongue with kindly teaching. (27) She oversees the activities of her household and never eats the bread of idleness. (28) Her children declare her happy; her husband praises her, (29) "Many women have done well, but you surpass them all." (30) Grace is deceptive, Beauty is illusory; It is for her fear of the Eternal that a woman is to be praised. (31) Extol her for the fruit of her hand, and let her works praise her in the gates.

(י) אֲשֶׁת־חִיל מֵי יָמָא וַרְחָק מִפְנִינִים
מִכְרָה : (יא) בְּטִיחַ בָּה לְבָב עַלְלָה וְשָׁלָל לְאָ
יְחָסָר : (יב) גַּמְלַתָּהוּ טֻוב וְלְאָרָעָבָל יָמִי
חַיָּה : (יג) דָרְשָׁה אָמָר וּפְשָׁתִים וּפְעָשָׁ
בְּחַפְץ בְּפִיה : (יד) חִיתָה כְּאַנְיוֹת סַוחַר
מְמַרְחָק תְּבִיא לְחַמָּה : (טו) וְתַקְמָם | בְּעוֹז
לְיִלָּה וְתַתְנוּ טָרָף לְבִיתָה וְתַחַק לְנַעֲרָתִיהָ :
(טז) זָמָמָה שְׂדָה וְתַקְחָה מְפַרִּי כְּפִיה נְטָע
[גַּטְעָה] בְּרָם : (יז) חִגָּרָה בְּעוֹז מִתְנִיהָ
וְתַאֲמָץ זָרָעָתִיהָ : (יח) טָעָמָה כִּיטּוֹב
סְחָרָה לְאִיכְבָּה בְּלִיל [בְּלִילָה] גְּרָה :
(יט) יְדִיכָה שְׁלִיחָה בְּכִישָׁוֹר וּכְפִיה תַּמְכוֹ
פָּלָך : (כ) בְּפִיה פְּרָשָׁה לְעֲנֵי וַיְדִיכָה שְׁלִיחָה
לְאָבִיו : (כא) לְאִתְירָא לְבִיתָה מְשָׁלָג כַּי
כְּלִבְנִיתָה לְבָשׁ שְׁנִים : (כב) מְרַבְּדִים
עַשְׂתָה-לָלה שָׁשׁ וְאַרְגָּמָן לְבוֹשָׁה :
(כג) נֹזֵע בְּשָׁעַרִים בְּעַלְלָה בְּשַׁבְּתוֹ עַם-זָקָנִי
אָרֶץ : (כד) סְגִינָה עַשְׂתָה וְתַמְכָר וְחַגּוֹר
נְתִינָה לְפָנָעִי : (כה) עַזְוֹנָה לְבוֹשָׁה
וְתַשְׁלִיק לִיּוֹם אַחֲרָוֹן : (כו) פִיה פְּתַחָה
בְּחַכְמָה וְתַזְוְתִנְחָסֶד עַלְלָשָׁונָה :
(כז) צַוְפִיה הַלִּיכּוֹת בִּיתָה וְלִחְםָן עַצְלִוָת
לֹא תַאֲכֵל : (כח) קָמוּגָנִית נְיַאשְׁרוֹת
בְּעַלְלָה וְיִהְלָלה : (כט) רְבּוֹת בְּנוֹת עַשְׂוֵי חִיל
וְאַתְּ עַלְלִית עַלְפְּלָנָה : (ל) שְׁקָר הַמּוֹ וְתַבְלִיל
הַיְמִינִי אָשָׁה יְרָא תִּיהְוָה הִיא תַּהְלָל :
(לא) תַּנוּלָה מְפַרִּי יְדִיכָה וַיְהִלָּוִת בְּשָׁעַרִים
מְעַשְׁיָה :

Rubies

Music and lyrics by Alicia Jo Rabins/Girls in Trouble

Like a merchant ship, strong and wide,
gold and oranges deep inside
more than rubies, more than pearls,
the one I love.

With purple silk and tapestry,
she weaves a blanket to cover me
more than rubies, more than pearls,
the one I love.

The world is woven through us
and I cannot forget
how her fingers hold the thread.

She buys a field, she plants a vine
come the autumn she makes her wine

more than rubies, more than pearls,
the one I love.

Let it rain, let it storm
she keeps her babies safe and warm
more than rubies, more than pearls,
the one I love.

Grace can lie and beauty's vain
oh but she calls me by my name
more than rubies, more than pearls,
the one I love.

The world is woven through us
I swear I won't forget
how her fingers hold the thread

Refuah Shleimah

Emily Alpern-Fisch, Alan Appel, Ronni Behar, Ira Berlin, Ellen Buckley, Barbara Cleveland, Netanel Felber, Chelo Fournier, Golda bat Yaakova uVelvel, Richard Greenfield, David Hahn, Andrea Hamos, Judy Hurvitz, Jennifer Jaye, Joan Kupferberg, Philip Levine, Stu Levine, Sam Levinson, Sharonette Leonard, Dan Lutenegger, Mildred Marin, Barbara McConagha, Stephanie Mendez, Sophie Meyers, Robin Parry, Rachel bat Chava, Lois Rosen, Eric Rosenberg, Rabbi Steve Sager, Saguee Saraf, Shevach Saraf, Zipora Saraf, Sarah Golde bat Shifrah, David Scheever, Charles Schussheim, Cynthia Seymour, Harry Silver, Betty Ustun, Heather Weisman, Ze'ev Chaim ben Golda v'Brian

We Remember a Few of Far Too Many Lives Lost to COVID-19

Moloy Roy, 84, labor organizer and lifelong civil servant, Kolkata, India

Jake Dunlap, 29, mechanic, Pokemon enthusiast, and coin collector, Missoula, Montana

James Summers, 37, father of nine, Baltimore, Maryland

We Remember Those Lost to Violence in Washington, DC

Cynthia Barringer, 32, SE DC; Eric Cooper; Cecil Morris, 28, no fixed address;

Donnell Myers, 31, SE DC; Chatia Taylor, 28, SE DC

Condolences

Blanche Levin, aunt of Stuart Brown

Shiva

Sarah Bennajma, friend of Alison Litvin

Shloshim

Janice Berlin, Charles Davisson, David Wilson

Yahrzeit

Edith Hartley Aaron, A.K. "Skip" Allender, Gilbert Altschul, Betty Arkin, FloAnn Bina, Jerome Brawer, Robert Brotzman, George J. Brown, Benson Caplan, Alberta Corno, Julie Ann Effros, Lester Ellin, Jay W. Fidler, Evelyn Fingerman, Paul Goldenberg, Richard Goldman, Donald Gregory, Sam Heftman, Henry Kaufman, Bob Ketroser, Morris Levin, David Levy, Anne Lewis, Andrew Lurie, Marcel Malgoire, Jeanne Mallett, Victor Margolin, Robert Metz, Lawrence Nussdorf, Larry Nussdorf, Bruce Rinaldi, Phyllis Rockower, Harvey Salkovitz, Max Salzman, Helen Spencer, Shana E. Greatman Swers, Carolyn Wolf

Temple Micah acknowledges our synagogue was built on the traditional territory of the Piscataway and Pamunkey peoples. We pay respect to their elders past and present and recognize their stewardship of this land and the vital contribution of indigenous peoples to this nation we share.

DANIEL G. ZEMEL, Rabbi

JOSHUA BERAHA, Associate Rabbi | **STEPHANIE CRAWLEY**, Associate Rabbi

BETH WERLIN, Executive Director | **DEBRA WINTER**, Director of Spiritual Arts

SHARON TASH, Education Director

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