



Shabbat T'shuvah/2 Tishri 5778
September 22, 2017

Dear Shir Tikvah:

Shanah Tovah! As the first Shabbat of 5778 arrives, I share a beautiful Midrash from Elie Wiesel (z"l) with you to read and reflect upon.

Isaac: A Survivor's Story | Elie Wiesel

Isaac survived. He had no choice. He had to make something of his memories, his experience, in order to force us to hope. Isaac represents defiance. He defied death. Logically, he should have pursued oblivion. Instead he settled on his land, married, had children, refusing to let fate turn him into a bitter man.

He felt neither hatred nor anger toward his contemporaries who did not share his experience. On the contrary, he liked them and showed concern for their well-being. After Moriah, he devoted his life and his right to immortality to the defense of his people. He will be entitled to say anything he likes to God, ask anything of Him.

Because he suffered? No. Suffering confers no privileges. Rather Isaac knew how to transform his suffering into prayer and love rather than into rancor and malediction. This is what gives him rights and powers no other man possesses.

And as the first survivor, he had to teach us, the future survivors of Jewish history, that it is possible to suffer and despair an entire lifetime and still not give up the art of laughter.

Here's to a 5778 we pray knows more laughter than suffering, more joy than tears, more hope than despair.

Shabbat Shalom & Shanah Tovah~Wishing you and your loved ones abundant sweetness in the year ahead,

Michael

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