

SEASON 3



# OLAMI MENTORSHIP

## SESSION 1: TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS

# OLAMI MENTORSHIP

Dear Mentor and Mentee,

Congratulations on starting season three of mentorship!

It is both humbling and thrilling at the same time, that the two of you have found value in getting to know one another, and that you continue to benefit from your regular meetings. In conjunction with Sinai50, we are pleased to present you with amazing resources for season three.

We are grateful to Rabbi Raphael Butler; the mastermind of Sinai50; an initiative that is ensuring that Jews around the world have an opportunity to reclaim Torah wisdom and knowledge, and make it their own. The great news is that these resources are but a small component of the 50 sessions that Rabbi Butler and Sinai50 have curated. We would be thrilled to provide additional resources when you have completed these initial sessions.

You know, when you purchase a new car, typically there is an owner's manual in the glove compartment. If you are a savvy and responsible automobile owner, you will take the time to familiarize yourself with the content of the manual to ensure maximum output and productivity for your new vehicle.

And while an owner's manual for a new car is imperative in getting to understand the complexities of your ride, isn't life not infinitely more complex than a four-wheeled machine? If so, shouldn't life come with an owner's manual for life?!

The good news is that it 'does'. The manual is called the Torah, and through its retelling of our history, its many directives for moral living, and our studying and following the Torah, we can ensure optimal performance and elevated living.

In this season, through Sinai50, we endeavor to provide you with a "top 10" list of the Torah's wisdom for living, in an effort to share the beauty and richness of the Torah's narratives and experiences.

You will have an opportunity to examine the age-old issue of anti-Semitism from the conflict of Jacob and Esau, analyze dealing with trials - and then triumph - from Abraham, understand our unique mission as Jews, and so much more!

Mentorship that includes Torah wisdom and inspiration is taking mentorship to a whole new level, as studying and analyzing Torah together connects the soul of two Jews.

It is our hope that through this journey of practical Torah wisdom, the two of you will continue to thrive alongside one another and further enhance the special relationship that you have begun.

We are honored to provide personal guidance or assistance if necessary. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us directly. To reach the Director of Community Mentorship, Rabbi Shlomo Landau, please call 908.770.0056 or email [slandau@olami.org](mailto:slandau@olami.org). To reach the Associate Director of Community Mentorship, Jordana Baruchov, please call 973.370.0414 or email [jbaruchov@olami.org](mailto:jbaruchov@olami.org).

Wishing you the best of luck on this journey!

The OLM Team



# TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS

Imagine we are sitting in a banquet hall, enjoying a pleasant evening with friends when suddenly sirens blare, alarms and flashing lights disrupt the atmosphere. Panic sets in as security forces arrive, and we are instructed to calmly evacuate the hall. The tension and uncertainty overwhelm us as we swiftly follow the evacuation instructions, unsure of what awaits outside.

Then, as we exit the hall, we hear the words, “fear not—this was only a test.” A mix of emotions washes over us. At first, we feel an immense sense of relief, grateful that the alarming situation was not real and that we are safe. However, this relief quickly gives way to a bit of outrage as we realize the intensity of the test and the sudden disruption of our peaceful evening.

Nonetheless, as the dust settles, a deeper appreciation takes root within us. We come to understand the true value of the test. It served as a powerful reminder of our ability to respond in the face of unexpected challenges. The panic and uncertainty we experienced reflected the genuineness of our reactions, revealing both our vulnerabilities and strengths. This test provided an opportunity for self-discovery, showcasing our resilience and the way we pulled together as a community during a crisis.

In retrospect, we come to realize that passing the test was an achievement. It showed our ability to stay composed, follow instructions, and support one another in difficult circumstances. The test highlighted our capacity to handle adversity and maintain a sense of calm, even in the face of chaos.



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While the test momentarily disrupted our evening, it ultimately reinforced our collective preparedness and ability to handle unexpected situations. It became a transformative experience that deepened our sense of unity, reminding us of the importance of vigilance and cooperation in safeguarding our community.

## THE STORY

In a similar vein, Avraham's life was marked by a series of nisayonot, test after test. These trials molded him into the Av Hamone Goyim, the father of many nations, and the man of faith who introduced monotheism to the world. Each test he encountered became an opportunity for growth and deepened his connection with the Divine. His unwavering commitment to pass each test with faith and devotion elevated him to a spiritual level unmatched by many.

Avraham's journey of faith began with the test of "Lech Lecha" (Go forth), which required him to leave his homeland, his comfort zone, and embark on a journey to an unknown destination, following God's call with absolute trust. This initial test laid the foundation for his lifelong commitment to the Divine.

As he journeyed through various trials, Avraham demonstrated time and again his unyielding faith, love, and loyalty to God. Each test reinforced his bond with the Divine and revealed his profound understanding of the value of nisayon - the transformative power of trials and tribulations.

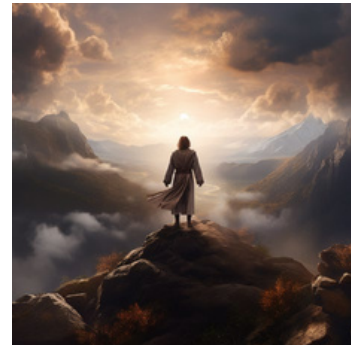


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In that critical moment, as Avraham stood ready to carry out the unthinkable act, God intervened, sparing Isaac's life, and revealing that it was all a test. After all, God specifically commanded Avraham to prepare Isaac for sacrifice— not to actually sacrifice him. This test became the pinnacle of Avraham's journey of faith, showcasing his unwavering commitment to God, even in the face of the most challenging and emotionally taxing circumstances.

Through Akeidat Yitzchak, Avraham taught us a profound lesson about the nature of tests. The alarms and sirens that sounded during this trial were not signals of danger but rather opportunities for growth, self-discovery, and a deeper connection with the Divine. The test served as a reminder that God's ways may be beyond human comprehension, and yet, it is through unwavering devotion and trust that we can navigate life's challenges with grace and resilience.

Avraham's commitment to God, from his first test of "Lech Lecha" to his final one of Akeidat Yitzchak, set an enduring example for all those who would follow in his footsteps. His legacy as the first Jew and the Father of Faith stands as a testament to the boundless possibilities that lie in embracing tests and trials with steadfast devotion, even when the path may seem unclear. As we face our own tests in life, we can draw strength and inspiration from Avraham's story, knowing that through faith and unwavering commitment, we can navigate the alarms of life's challenges and emerge triumphant in our devotion to the Divine.



However, it was the final test of Akeidat Yitzchak (the Binding of Isaac) that sounded the most shrill of alarms. This ultimate trial challenged Avraham's devotion and obedience to God at the core.

# RELEVANCE OF NISYAON TO OUR LIVES?

## NAVIGATING LIFE'S CHALLENGES:

Life is replete with trials and tribulations, and the stories of nisayon remind us that encountering difficulties is an inherent part of the human experience. These narratives serve as a testament that even the most remarkable individuals among us are not exempt from life's challenges.



Navigating Life's Challenges:  
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Resilience in the Face of the Unknown: The stories of nisayon inspire us to foster resilience and adaptability in confronting the unknown. As life presents unexpected challenges, the capacity to respond with grace and inner strength becomes a valuable skill.

## **FAITH BEYOND UNDERSTANDING:**

The stories of nisayon underscore the significance of faith and devotion to a higher power. These tales inspire us to cultivate humility and develop an unwavering trust. They remind us that in moments of uncertainty, the Divine's plan may extend beyond the boundaries of our comprehension.

## **THE POWER OF PERSEVERANCE:**

Avraham's journey of faith through a series of trials imparts the lesson of perseverance. The ability to endure and stand firm in the face of adversity is a vital attribute for personal growth and spiritual development.

## **FINDING PURPOSE AND MEANING:**

Avraham's tests illustrate that the quest for purpose and meaning often entails persevering through challenges. These stories convey the notion that in overcoming trials, we can attain a deeper understanding of our life's purpose.

## **RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF THE UNKNOWN:**

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# POINTS TO PONDER:

## THE NATURE OF GOD'S TESTS:

Why does God test individuals, and what purpose do these trials serve? How can we reconcile the concept of a benevolent God with the idea of subjecting His creation to challenging circumstances?

## PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION:

How do nisayonot serve as catalysts for personal growth and transformation? How can challenges shape our character and propel us toward self-improvement?

## BALANCING REASON AND FAITH:

How can we reconcile the rational aspects of our nature with matters of faith and spirituality when facing nisayonot? How do we strike a balance between seeking understanding and accepting that which we can't comprehend?

## LESSONS FOR DAILY LIFE:

How can the lessons from nisayonot be applied to our daily lives? How do they inform our decision-making, relationships, and approach to challenges?



Personal Transformation:  
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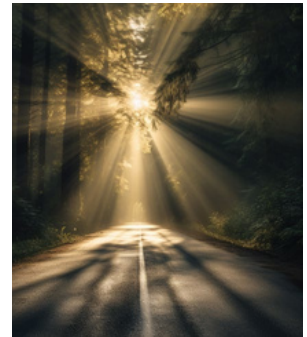


## **LONG-TERM IMPACT:**

What lasting impact do nisayonot have on the characters involved? How can we draw on their experiences to shape our own journey and leave a positive legacy?

## **THE ETHICAL AND MORAL NISYONOT:**

Our values are tested daily. Can you share a recent nisayon?



Long-Term Impact:

What lasting impact do nisayonot have on the characters involved? How can we draw on their experiences to shape our own journey and leave a positive legacy?



# SINAI 50

## 50 VITAL JEWISH TEXTS THAT EVERY JEW SHOULD KNOW

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חיה בת יוסף אייזיק ע"ה

# SINAI50

The Sinai50 Project comprises a collection of 50 vital Jewish texts that every Jew should know and that are of immense significance for our daily lives. These texts have been carefully selected to provide clarity and understanding to all those who read them. With the texts being made accessible both online and offline, this project ensures that these invaluable resources are readily available to Jews worldwide, fostering a deeper connection to their heritage and offering relevant insights for navigating everyday challenges.

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