

Torah Tidbits from Rabbi Larry Moldo

Arranged Marriage

This week, there are a lot of verses devoted to the topic. Isaac and Rebecca get married without ever having met each other. No courtship, no dates, no huge engagement time (at least, there is none that is mentioned).

On the one hand, this is a problem for us modern folk. How should two people be able to make a life together if they can't find out about each other first? Why should the parents be in charge of something this important?

On the other hand, as it turns out, they do love each other. Isaac loves her, and next week we see exactly how much, as he does for his wife what neither his father nor his sons do for theirs. From the moment she first sees Isaac, he makes a profound impression upon her. From a distance, she is literally blown away, and falls off her camel. She empathizes with him to the extent that he is finally comforted after his mother's death.

The song in Fiddler on the Roof verifies that this kind of thing can work; a different song in the same play indicates the many ways it might not. It all depends on the people involved.

When I think about it, all of our relationships depend upon the people involved. Let us all strive to be people whose relationships with others are closer to Isaac and Rebecca's early years in terms of the good we do for others and ourselves.

As you might know, my wife is from Kansas. Today is a day of celebration. From my perspective, it is not only that a particular team won, but that the finale of the season involved two good teams that were playing well, against each other. A weird Americanism is that we remain good friends with our friends who are Mets fans. May the nation learn from how we treat being sports fans and consistently apply that to politics. When you win, be gracious. When you lose, resolve to do better the next time. Don't cheat, ever. Strive always to improve your game, and the game - and never demonize the players on the opposing team, because someday you might be playing under the same manager.