



LeoBaeckTemple

Bubble Up: 2021-2022/5782

Heart and Soul:

A playful exploration pairing the insight of the podcast
Dolly Parton's America with selections from *Songs Ascending:
The Book of Psalms in a New Translation* by Rabbi Richard N. Levy, z"l

"Music is the way we accompany ourselves through space and time"

- Jad Abumrad, Co-Producer Dolly Parton's America Podcast

Heart & Soul created by: Elizabeth Levy & Rabbi Benjamin Ross

Blessing Before Studying Torah

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ-הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
וְצִוָּנוּ לְעַסֵּק בְּדִבְרֵי-תוֹרָה

*Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu la'asok b'divrei torah.*

Blessed are You, the Eternal our God, Sovereign of the Universe,
who sanctifies us with *mitzvot* and invites us to engage with words of *Torah*.

B'rit/Working Agreement for LBT Small Groups

ACCOUNTABILITY:

I will show up to our agreed upon times: I will let the group leader know the (good) reason I will be absent. I will also be punctual and respect everyone's time.

PRESENCE:

When we're together, I will be present and mindful. I will listen and share. Life (and our mobile devices) offers many distractions, but I will stay present and engaged.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

I will maintain complete confidentiality. What I hear and say stays here.

VULNERABILITY:

I will stretch myself to be as open and honest as possible with my perspectives and experiences in order to create a safe environment that might encourage others to take risks as well.

RESPECT:

I will remember that all of us are here for a common purpose and I will respect and acknowledge everyone in my group.

NO FIXING, ADVISING, SAVING OR SETTING STRAIGHT:

I will give each person the gift of true attention without trying to "solve their problem." No advice unless it's asked.

LISTENING:

I understand that some of us are talkers, while some of us are quieter. I will be aware not to dominate discussions and to balance how much I'm talking with how much I'm listening.

CURIOSITY:

Judaism is a religion of exploration; of big questions more than answers. I will get the most out of my group by being open to our discussions and the people around me.

OWNERSHIP:

This is our LBT Small Group. This is our community to create. While we have guidelines and suggestions, it is ours to shape and form. We will get out of it what we put into it.

**Language graciously borrowed from The Temple in Atlanta, Georgia*

LEO BAECK TEMPLE'S HEART AND SOUL: A BUBBLE UP PRODUCTION

A playful exploration pairing the insights from the "Dolly Parton's America" podcast with selections and commentary from *Songs Ascending: The Book of Psalms in a New Translation* by Rabbi Richard N. Levy, z"l

SESSION II: Finding Our Own Voice

PARTNER PODCAST: [Episode 2 - Dolly Parton's America](#) (I Will Always Leave You - Oct. 22, 2019)

I. READ SUMMARY & QUESTION (10 minutes): Dolly Parton's creative partnership with country music legend Porter Wagner brought Dolly fame and recognition. However, as Dolly's star power rose, tensions between the two singers escalated. This episode explores how Dolly and Wagner's often volatile partnership shaped Dolly as an artist, as well as what it took for her to ultimately leave. In doing so, she wrote three of her most famous songs, most importantly "I Will Always Love You," which was written as a love letter of sorts to Wagner himself. Dolly addresses how she ultimately forgave Wagner, an instrumental yet painful person in her life, and found her own independent voice. Psalm 92 offers guidance as to how to deal with those who have hurt us, find peace and strength within ourselves, and be mindful of the power of the words we speak.

OPENING QUESTION: When you find yourself wanting to break out of a routine/habit/rut, what are your sources of inspiration?

II. READ ALOUD PSALM AND RABBI RICHARD N. LEVY'S COMMENTARY (5-10 minutes)

Psalm 92:2-6, 13-14

It is good to offer thanks to Adonai
And to sing Your name, Most High,
To tell tales of Your covenantal love in the morning
And Your faithfulness in the nights
On a ten-string and on a lute,
On meditative strumming of a lyre.
For You have given me joy through Your acts;
Of the work of Your hands I shall sing:
"How great are Your works, Adonai,
How very deep your thoughts."

A just person sprouts up like the palm,
Growing tall like a cedar in the Lebanon,
Planted in the House of Adonai,
They will sprout nobly in the courts of our God.

"This psalm also encourages us to look at some phenomena of nature as teaching us about human beings: that while some grasses threaten to overtake other plantings in our gardens, eventually they will dry up, leaving the intentional plantings to thrive. Wickedness, too, does not last forever; and if we continue to nurture the plantings of beauty and rootedness, eventually it is in the natural order that enough of them will survive to ensure a harvest of beauty in the world.

But just as flowers need to be planted in the divine courts to fully take root, so do our actions. Are our words rooted in the language of love and caring, of gentle reproof and robust support? Are our actions rooted in God's mitzvot, in the Torah's understanding of right actions, and the demands of our consciences as well?"

- Rabbi Richard N. Levy, p. 357

(Option to briefly share reactions to the Psalm or commentary)

III. LISTEN TO [I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU](#) (5 minutes) (LYRICS ↓) - CONCLUDE W/ MINUTE OF SILENCE

IV. GROUP QUESTIONS: (30-35 minutes)

- a) **Dolly and the Psalmist both speak to how we communicate our hurt and/or anger so people can hear us.** How do you communicate your hurt and/or anger so people can hear you?

- b) Dolly says in this episode **“Forgiveness is all there is.”** Do you agree with this statement? Discuss!

- c) Dolly is beloved across the political divide. One might argue it is due to her message of **compassion** fused with **chutzpah!** Do you think of compassion and *chutzpah* as American values?

- d) **Share a moment you found your “voice,”** or like the Psalmist said, “sprouted up like the palm?” What did it take for you to arrive at that moment?

OPTIONAL CONCLUDING SONG: [Mizmor Shir](#) (Psalm 92), by Nava Tehila

I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU, BY DOLLY PARTON

If I should stay
I would only be in your way
So I'll go, but I know
I'll think of you each step of the way
And I will always love you
I will always love you
Bitter-sweet memories
That's all I am taking with me
Good-bye, please don't cry
We both know that I'm not
What you need
I will always love you
I will always love you

I hope life, treats you kind
And I hope that you have all
That you ever dreamed of
And I wish you joy
And happiness
But above all of this
I wish you love
And I will always love you
I will always love you
I will always love you