



We astronauts are human beings and when we travel, like all explorers we bring with us parts of our culture, our history, our traditions” .

Dr. Jeff Hoffman

SPACE TORAH

NASA astronaut Dr. Jeff Hoffman participated in five space missions. In 1996, on his last mission he brought with him a small Torah scroll on board Space Shuttle Columbia. On Shabbat, while orbiting Earth, he read from the book of Genesis, “In the beginning God created heaven and the earth.”

This is a story about inspiration, communities, and a man’s journey. A story of how families, educators, scientific and religious communities achieve great things and bring our identity to new realms.



Bring the Space Torah film and program to your community

The story and the film have inspired communities around the globe

The 25 min long film was selected for 40 film festivals in 10 countries and won several awards

Choose from a variety of programs, each one designed for a specific audience: children ages 8 and up, educators, care givers, clergy, lay leaders and the wider community

THE SPACE TORAH PROJECT

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A film by Verissima Productions
Director, Rob Cooper

More about Dr. Hoffman:



Dr. Hoffman received a BA in Astronomy (summa cum laude) from Amherst College (1966); a PhD in Astrophysics from Harvard University (1971); and an MSc in Materials Science from Rice University (1988). As a NASA astronaut (1978-1997) he made five space flights, becoming the first astronaut to log 1000 hours of flight time aboard the Space Shuttle. Dr. Hoffman was Payload Commander of STS-46, the first flight of the US-Italian Tethered Satellite System. He has performed four spacewalks, including the first unplanned, contingency spacewalk in NASA's history (STS 51D; April, 1985) and the initial repair/rescue mission for the Hubble Space Telescope (STS 61; December, 1993). As the Astronaut Office representative for EVA, he helped develop and carry out tests of advanced high-pressure space suit designs and of new tools and procedures needed for the assembly of the International Space Station.

Following his astronaut career, Dr. Hoffman spent four years as NASA's European Representative, working at the U.S. Embassy in Paris. In August 2001, Dr. Hoffman joined the MIT faculty, where he teaches courses on space operations and space systems design. His primary research interests are in improving the technology of space suits and designing innovative space systems for human and robotic space exploration. He is currently Deputy Principal Investigator of the MOXIE experiment on NASA's Mars 2020 Perseverance rover. MOXIE, for the first time ever, produce oxygen on the surface of Mars using local Martian resources, a critical step in the future of human space exploration. In 2007, Dr. Hoffman was elected to the US Astronaut Hall of Fame.

Over five space missions, he chose to bring numerous Jewish objects, the highlight was a small and light Torah scroll that he took with him on his fifth and last mission. Jeff saw the act of bringing religious objects into space as part of bringing his own tradition with him, but bringing the Torah into space had the added symbolic meaning and significance of bringing the holiness of human life into space.



"Having brought the Torah here, for me, makes space something special; it brings the holiness of human life into space"

Dr. Jeff Hoffman
NASA astronaut

