

KOL MEVASSER

Serving Hashem with Love: Chayim Borukh

By Rabbi Marc D. Angel

The Torah informs us that Aaron the High Priest lit the Menorah exactly in accord with God's command (Bemidbar 8:3). Our commentators wonder: why would the Torah need to state that Aaron followed the instructions? We would surely have expected him to heed God's command!

Rashi notes that Aaron is being praised for not having deviated from the rules. Although he may have had an inclination to be innovative or creative in his assignment, his virtue was that he fulfilled his task exactly to specification.

Ramban suggests that Aaron fulfilled this mitzvah himself, rather than assigning it to his sons who also were eligible to do the lighting. Aaron felt a personal joy and satisfaction in his performance of the kindling of the Menorah in fulfillment of God's command.

Perhaps there is another lesson to be derived from Aaron's faithfulness. He was serving as a religious role model for the people of Israel. Through his devotion and punctiliousness, he was demonstrating to the Israelites that their service to God

should be conducted with enthusiasm and with precision.

In his article, "Identification and Dislocation: The Breakdown of Worshipful Expression," (Conversations, Issue 19, Spring 2014) Michael Haruni discusses how we learn to pray—and generally how we learn to observe Mitzvoth. We watch our parents or teachers ...and we imitate them. Our imitation, though, goes beyond just mimicking their actions: we also come to internalize the sentiments that accompany the actions. By emulating spiritual role models, we have the urge "to emphatically identify the mental states of which these physical aspects are expression, to discover, that is, the mental states motivating their worshipful behavior" (p. 81).

We learn to pray not merely by learning how to read the words of the prayer book; and not merely by learning when to stand and when to sit and when to bow. We learn to pray by observing people who are spiritually alive at prayer. We imbue some of their holiness, their sentiments, their intimacy with God. Whether prayer role models are great sages or simple pious folk, when we are in their presence we internalize how to pray. By emulating their prayer, we ourselves become engaged in prayer, real prayer not just lip service.

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KJ Schedule Parashat Behaalotkha

Erev Shavuot

Tuesday, June 3rd

Shaharit/Morning Prayer	6:30 am
Minha & Arbit	7:00 pm
Candle Lighting	7:42 pm
Limud Lel Shavuot / Study Night	10 pm to 12

Shavuot, First Day

Wednesday, June 4th

Shaharit	9:00 am
Minha/Arbit	7:45 pm
Candle Lighting	after 8:46 pm

Shavuot, Second Day

Thursday, June 5th

Shaharit	9:00 am
Minha/Arbit	7:45 pm
Yom Tov Havdallah	8:46 pm

Erev Shabbat

Friday, June 6th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer	6:30 am
Minhah/Arbit	7:00 pm
Shabbat Candlelighting	7:43 pm

Shabbat Behaalotkha

Saturday, June 7th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer	8:30 am
Minha, Seudah Shlisheet, Arvit	7:00 pm
Motzei Shabbat / Havdallah	8:47 pm

Weekdays

Sunday, June 8th

Shaharit	7:30 am
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Monday to Friday, June 9th to 13th

Shaharit	6:30 am
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Erev Shabbat / Friday, June 13th

Shaharit/Morning Prayer	6:30 am
Minhah/Arbit	7:00 pm
Shabbat Candlelighting	7:47 pm

Thank You

The Religious Committee would like to thank Rabbi Avi Nava for his inspirational sermon during Shabbat services last week. We also thank Ravid Rahmani for his assistance in leading the Shabbat prayers. Yasher Koach.

Limud LeI Shavuot

Refreshments are sponsored
in memory of

Tahareh Hakimipour, z"l

by
The Hakimipour Family

In Memoriam

We remember these yahrzeit anniversaries for June 4 to 14, 2014. It is customary to light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka, & attend services the preceding Shabbat.

6 Sivan / Wednesday, June 4th

Tahereh Hakimipour *Tahereh bat Kokab*

7 Sivan / Thursday, June 5th

Geulah Khakshoor *Geulah ben Avraham*

8 Sivan / Friday, June 6th

Rivka Kohanzadeh *Rivka bat Shimon*

9 Sivan / Shabbat, June 7th

Aziza Judah *Aziza bat Rachel*

Ester Bekhore *Ester bat Amam*

Ester Ezekiel *Ester bat Amam*

10 Sivan / Sunday, June 8th

Mazli Hagooli *Mazli bat Rahel*

Massouda Kay *Massouda bat Khatoun*

Mozelle Lelah *Mazal Tov bat Ester*

12 Sivan / Tuesday, June 10th

Abraham Lurie *Avraham Lurie*

Abdullah Zekaria *Sion Abdullah Zekaria*

13 Sivan / Wednesday, June 11th

Florence Amron *Farha Hanah bat Garzi*

Sulman Soffer *Sulman Sion Soffer*

15 Sivan / Friday, June 13th

Dr. Isaac Bekhor *Itzhak ben Yaacov*

Shavuot



Shavuot Study Night Limud Erev Shavuot

Tuesday Evening, June 3rd
10 pm to 12 midnight
at Kahal Joseph Congregation

Shabbat Kiddush

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the Bnai Mitzvot of

Isaac & Michael

by
their parents
Mickey and Haim Kahtan

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on the occasion of
your Bar Mitzvah

Mazal Tov
to your parents, Mickey & Haim
your brother, Jacob
and your grandparents
Tikva and Yoel Iny
Najeba Kahtan

Hag Sameah & Shabbat Shalom

Refuah Shlemah

Rahel bat Marcel
Mordechai Cohen / Mordecai ben Avraham
Moselle Amron/Mazal Tov bat Salha Matana
Tilda Levy / Tilda bat Miriam
Joseph Sharaf / Yossef ben Jamila
Maurice Ovadia / Moshe ben Noosha
Pnina Herzbrun / Pnina bat Esther
Michael Herzbrun / Michael Baruch ben Sarah

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I have personally derived ineffable religious lessons from my parents, grandparents, teachers, and many other pious souls. These are gifts which cannot be bought with money. They are gifts of the soul that are transmitted with purity and love and that are received with purity and love. But along with these wonderful and powerful ongoing role models, I have also learned much from individuals who have passed in and out of my life, without even knowing how much of an impact they have had on me.

I want to refer to one such individual, Chayim Borukh Oklan, who passed away the first week of June, 2001. I am fairly sure that Chayim Borukh did not even know my name.

For many years, we have spent much time during the summer months in Long Beach, New York. We have been summer members of the Young Israel of Long Beach since 1991. When I attended services on weekdays and Shabbatot during the 1990s, one of the people I discovered was an old man, hunched over, a bit eccentric. He apparently had no family. I believe he lived in a senior citizen facility, and had no material wealth to speak of. I knew him simply as Mr. Chayim Borukh.

He had certain habits that tended to annoy congregants. For example, in the midst of the prayers he would suddenly shout out in a loud, high-pitched voice: "Almighty God!" As the congregation rose to pray the Amidah, Chaim Borukh often would scream:

"Pray with contrition! Pray with devotion!" His behavior was not in keeping with proper decorum. But it was...authentic! Chayim Borukh—whoever he was—knew how to pray, to really pray.

My son, Hayyim, and I developed a special reverence for Chayim Borukh. We always felt better and happier when we saw him at services. We felt uplifted—not annoyed—when he shouted his beseeching words. Hayyim and I imagined that if Elijah the Prophet were to appear on earth, he might well appear in the form of Chayim Borukh.

When Chayim Borukh passed away in June 2001, the Young Israel arranged his funeral and covered the expenses. They put a memorial plaque in his name on the memorial board in the sanctuary. While Chayim Borukh seems to have left no family or friends behind, he did leave an impact on the synagogue in which he prayed. And he left an impact on me, my son Hayyim, and others who experienced him as a role model in prayer.

Aaron the High Priest understood that he was a religious role model. When he lit the Menorah with devotion and punctiliousness, he set an example for the Israelites and inspired them to internalize their intimacy with the Almighty.

Chayim Borukh probably did not at all realize that he was a religious role model. Yet, when he prayed—and when he challenged us to pray with devotion—he was surely helping us to internalize our own spiritual potentials. His memory is a blessing.



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What is Shavuot and when do we celebrate it?

Shavuot is the second of the three Pilgrim Festivals. It is celebrated for 2 days outside Israel and for 1 day in Israel. The name 'Shavuot' means 'weeks' because it falls 7 weeks after the 2nd day of Pesach. It falls on the 6th day of Sivan. Shavuot marks the day that the Torah was given to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai. That day was a very unusual one, with lightning, thunder and the earth shaking. Moses came down from the Mountain, his face all red and glowing, and read the Ten Commandments to the Children of Israel.



The Story of Shavuot

In Biblical times, Shavuot was at the time when the Jewish people harvested their wheat crop and their last grain of the season, and began harvesting their fruit crops. An important part of the celebration of Shavuot in those times was the ceremony of bringing the "first fruits", or *bikkurim*, of the harvest to the Temple as an offering of thanks to God. The *bikkurim* were carried in beautifully decorated baskets. Families would gather together to walk to Jerusalem and they would sing, dance and have music playing whilst they walked. When they arrived at the Temple, they gave their offerings to the priests who would bless them.

Different Names for Shavuot

There are many different names for the festival of Shavuot. Some of them are: Zman Matan Torateinu or the 'Festival of Giving of the Torah'; Chag HaBikkurim or the 'Festival of the First Fruits'; Chag haKatzir or the 'Harvest Festival'; and Chag Matan Torah or 'Festival of the giving of the Torah'



How do we celebrate Shavuot?

Greenery

On Shavuot we decorate our synagogues and homes with greenery, flowers and even fruits. This reminds us that on the day the Jewish people received the Torah, Mount Sinai bloomed with flowers. Using greenery also reminds us of the harvests, another main idea of Shavuot.

Learning Torah All Night

Jewish adults spend the eve of Shavuot staying up all night learning Torah. This custom is called *Tikkun Leil Shavuot*, which means 'making ourselves better people on the night of Shavuot'. *Tikkun Leil Shavuot* is an extremely important *mitzvah* (commandment) because as the Talmud tells us, "the study of Torah is equal to all the other mitzvot added together." (Shabbat 127a)



Eating Dairy Foods

On Shavuot we eat dairy foods (foods made from milk). These can include cheesecake, cheese-filled pancakes (called blintzes) and quiches. Some people also bake tall cakes to remind us how tall Mount Sinai was. Other people eat fruit, in particular the seven species of Eretz Israel (including figs, pomegranates and dates).