

SHABBAT SHIRA

KOIL MEVASSER

KAHAL JOSEPH CONGREGATION • 10505 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD, LOS ANGELES, CA 90025 • 310.474.0559 • WWW.KAHALJOSEPH.ORG

Freedom, or...Shabbat Shalom

*Rabbi Daniel Bouskila
SEC Director Special Projects*

This week's "Torah Thoughts" are dedicated to the good health & refuah shlemah of SEC Board Chairman Ron Nessim.

The journey to freedom was long and difficult. For 210 years, the Jewish people were an enslaved population in Egypt, living under the sting of the Egyptian taskmaster's whip. They never enjoyed a moment of freedom, nor did they really understand the concept of freedom. Finally, the moment of liberation came, and it happened in grand fashion.

Parashat B'Shalach describes the dramatic exodus from Egypt, climaxed by the miracle of the splitting of the Yam Suf ("Sea of Reeds" popularly known as the "Red Sea"). This great miracle not only allowed safe passage for the Jewish people, but it also marked the defeat of Pharaoh's army. In a last ditched effort to bring the Jewish slaves back to Egypt, Pharaoh and his army chased the Jewish people all the way to the Yam Suf, where the Jewish people were encamped. When



God performed the miracle of splitting the Yam Suf, and the Jewish people crossed through, the Egyptians continued to chase them, not realizing that they had entered God's trap: "The waters turned back and covered the chariots and the horsemen, Pharaoh's entire army that followed them into the sea; not one of them remained"(Exodus 14:28). Right before their eyes, the Jewish people watched with amazement, awe and a sense of relief as the Egyptian taskmasters and their whips drowned in the Yam Suf. With 210 years of slavery washing away into the sea, the Jewish people erupted into a simultaneous song of thanks and praise to God: *Az Yashir Moshe u-vnei Yisrael et ha-shira hazot l'Hashem* - Then Moses and the Jewish people sang this song to God...

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Prayer Schedule

SHABBAT SHIRA PARASHA B'SHALAKH

Friday, January 14th
Minhah & Arbit 4:40 pm
Candle Lighting 4:47 pm
SEC Classes 4 the Masses

Saturday, January 15th
Shaharit 8:30 am
Tehillim *before Minhah*
Minhah & Arbit 4:15 pm
Motzei Shabbat 5:52 pm

WEEKDAYS

Sunday, January 16th
Shaharit 7:30 am

Monday to Friday
Shaharit 6:30 am

Talmud Torah Classes
Tuesday & Thursday 4:00 pm

TU B'SHVAT

Wednesday, January 19, 2011
Tu B'Shvat Seder 6:30 PM

Thursday, January 20th
Tu B'Shvat Day

EREV SHABBAT PARASHA YITRO

Friday, January 21st
Minhah & Arbit 4:45 pm
Candle Lighting 4:54 pm

(Continued from page 1)

With Egyptian slavery washed away, it was now time to move on. It was time for the Jewish people to turn away from the Yam Suf, put Egypt and its slavery behind them, and march forward in pursuit of true freedom. Easier said than done, for as the Jewish people began their new journey as a liberated people, they were confronted by a punishing hot desert where the water was bitter and food was scarce. By the grace of God, the water was sweetened and food (called Manna) rained down to them from heaven on a daily basis. God provided physical sustenance for His people, but the greatest act of Divine love was to come.

When people are accustomed to a way of life, it's difficult to ask them to suddenly change. For 210 years, the Jewish people knew nothing but slavery. This was their way of life, and watching Pharaoh's army wash away was not about to instantly transform them. A slave is a slave, and unless he/she is taught how to live a free life, they will continue to live with the mentality of a slave.

It is for this reason that the very first mitzvah given to the Jewish people as they turned away from the sea is the mitzvah of Shabbat. In the

very place where they encountered bitter waters, the Torah says "There God made for them a fixed rule" (Exodus 15:25). The commentator Rashi says that the "fixed rule" God made for them was Shabbat: *At Marah (The Place of Bitter Waters) God gave them some sections of the Torah to begin studying, starting with Shabbat* (Rashi on Exodus 15:25).

Rashi concludes this based on the following episode, when God provides Manna from heaven. As the people gather their portions of Manna from the fields, the Torah describes: "So they gathered it every morning, each as much as he needed to eat...on the sixth day they gathered double the amount of food" (Exodus 16:21-22). When this was reported to Moses, he said: "This is what the Lord meant: Tomorrow is a day of rest, a holy Sabbath of the Lord.



Bake what you would bake and boil what you would boil...six days you shall gather it; on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will be none" (Exodus 16:23-26). From Moses' words "This is

what the Lord meant," Rashi concludes that Moses was explaining what God meant in the portion of Torah given to them by God at Marah. To Rashi, this portion must have been about Shabbat, otherwise what does Moses mean by "This is what the Lord meant"?

It is both logical and symbolic that the first piece of Torah study and the first mitzvah given to the Jewish people after the exodus from slavery is all about Shabbat. A band of slaves need instruction on how to live in freedom, and the Jewish people had never heard of a "day off." They only knew of work, work, work, seven days of week. Suddenly, God comes with this radical, revolutionary concept called "Shabbat," sending a message to the Jewish people that when God takes them from slavery to "freedom," it wasn't so that they could continue to work 24/7. They are now instructed - and commanded - to rest one day out of seven. This was their first taste of freedom on the other side of the Yam Suf. By the time they arrived at Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments (next week's Torah portion), the Jewish people already knew what Shabbat was all about, which is why in the Ten Commandments they are told

to "Remember Shabbat." The language Zachor (remember) implies familiarity with the concept.

In a recent Israeli book titled "Ha-Yom Ha-Shevi'i" (The Seventh Day), 35 Israelis from all walks of life write what Shabbat means to them. After reading through these various viewpoints, I found the following one most compelling:

Without Shabbat, the State of Israel will never be built, rather it will be destroyed, and all of our toil will be for naught. The Jewish people will never abandon their Shabbat, which is not only the basis of Jewish existence, but is, in fact, the basis of all human existence. Without Shabbat, there is no image of God in this world, nor is there an image of humanity. It is the Shabbat that preserved the existence of the Jewish people throughout our wanderings around the world.

Sound like a sermon by a rabbi in a synagogue? Think again. These words were written by the secular poet Chaim Nachman Bialik in 1933.

From Moses to Bialik - and to each of us today - Shabbat - a beautiful day entirely devoted to God, family, spirituality and intellect -- is our greatest blessing as Jews.

Shabbat Shalom

In Memoriam

It is customary to light a memorial candle in the evening and to donate tzedakah. Family members are encouraged to attend prayer services in honor of loved ones.

Shabbat / 10 Shevat

Naima bat Chahla

Sunday / 11 Shevat

Serah bat Simcha

Monday / 12 Shevat

Abraham Shalom Mordechai Yitzhak Hacohen

Matatehu ben Shmuel

Moshe ben Saleh Kadoorie

Rachel bat Masooda

Tuesday / 13 Shevat

Sheila Cohen

Nanejan bat Hacham Mola Rebbi*

Alex Sassoon

Wednesday / 14 Shevat

Shaul Saberi

Avdala ben Eliyahu Saltoon

Thursday / 15 Shevat

Yehezkel ben Abdullah Yehezkel*

Joseph Mussry

David ben Ezra*

Friday / 16 Shevat

Yehudah Hai Yehudah

Menashe ben Yousef Sarraf

Yehudah ben Mordechai

Shabbat / 17 Shevat

Shimon ben Eliyahu

Ashraf Nassi

Refuah Shlemah

Please include these individuals in your prayers:

Yonatan ben Alizah • Mazal Tov

bat Sulha Mitana • Matilda

Louisa • Yaheskel ben Regina •

Ayala bat Naomi • Khayyah Noa

bat Sara • Haim ben Mordechai •

Pnina bat Esther • Yosi ben

Esther • Victor ben Latif • Ramah

Regina bat Farha • Aziza bat Sara

Judith bat Malka • Ofek ben Yochai

• Efrayim Zev ben Fayga • Sulha

Matana bat Mozelle • Gershon ben

David • Farangis Miriam bat

Touran • David ben Leah •

Avraham Haim ben Miryam

Community News

SHABBAT KIDDUSH

is sponsored by
Laleh and Joseph Tizabi

in honor of the marriage
of Jonathan and Ashley

Congratulations
to both of the families

SPONSOR A KIDDUSH

If you would like to sponsor a Shabbat Kiddush or afternoon meal, known as Seudah Shlisheet, in honor of a special occasion for a family member or friend, please contact our office at 310.474.0559. We ask that sponsors notify us one to two weeks in advance of the date so that we may coordinate and announce your generous tribute.

Torah Readings

Parasha pp. 265 to 281

Haftara pp. 281 to 287

Learn to Chant The Haftarah Wouldn't you like to chant the final portion from the Torah on Shabbat—the portion known as the Haftarah? Reserve a Haftarah reading by calling Sarah in our office at 310.474. 0559. The Haftarah portion can be dedicated in honor of a family event such as a memorial, a bar/bat mitzvah, or a baby-naming. Then, schedule time with Hazzan Saeed Jalali & learn the authentic Baghdadi ta'amim, Iraqi melodies for singing portions from the Torah & Tanakh.

SHABBAT MITZVOT We offer for donation the following Mitzvot. **1. Petichat Hechal** opening of the ark; **2. Carrying of the Sefer Torah & Sefer Haftara**; **3. Hakamat Sefer** lifting of the Torah; **4. Mashlim*** The seventh aliya to the Torah who recites Kaddish; **5. Maftir***

The last aliya to the Torah which includes the Haftara (read by the clergy unless member reading is preapproved). We suggest a minimum donation of \$126 or multiples of \$18 or \$26. You will receive confirmation before Shabbat to confirm if you will receive the aliya. Members may reserve in advance by calling the office. Non-members reserving aliyyot should contact the office for availability at 310.474.0559. We appreciate your support.

CONDOLENCES

We send our heartfelt condolences to the family of our devoted member and friend

Sason Sony Mizrahi, z"l

to his wife, Celia

to his children

Victor, Vicki and Lulu

and to his entire family

May Hashem comfort them together with all the mourners of Tzion.

TEEN PROGRAM

SAVE THE DATE!

on Shabbat Day

February 5, 2011

Rabbi Shlomo Seidenfeld

will lead another

Teen Shabbat Program

Please Read Tehillim

We have a number of individuals in our community undergoing surgery or combating illness. They need our immediate prayers to support them in their recovery. Take a few minutes to pray and read from the Psalms, also known as Tehillim. In particular, Psalm 20 and Psalm 121 are meaningful during difficult times. Give a little of your day and have a big impact on the lives of friends and families in our Kahal community.

Tu B'Shvat

*Wednesday, January 19th
at 6:30 pm • Live Music
30 Fruits, Wine, Dessert*

*Organized by the
Sisterhood of
Kahal Joseph*

**An authentic, Iraqi
kabbalistic ritual
& blessings for a
meaningful life, love
and relationships**



RSVP to
Elsa Singman 323.934.3439
Louise Elias 818.884.0120
Rita Hanin 310.839.4206
Hannie Kelly 310.925.2123

\$26 Adults & \$10 Kids under 12

Kahal Joseph Congregation

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