

# KOL MEVASSER

## From Darkness to Light: Lessons of Iyar

By Rabbi Hagay Batzri

We have just entered the month of Iyar. In front of us are the Shabbat with a Torah portion entitled "Tazria," Yom Haatzmaut, & Lag Baomer. The role of the month of Iyar is to create a connection and the right balance between the supreme spiritual radiance given in the month of Nissan and the physical, material environment.

Several names are given for the month of Iyar:

- 1) **Iyar** is explained by Kabbalah as an acronym: Alef(א) - Yud(י) - Resh(ר) The acronym is an abbreviation for the phrase "I am G-d Your healer" or in Hebrew, "Ani Hashem Rofekha"
- 2) **The Second Month** This reference to Iyar appears in the Torah since Iyar follows the month Nissan, the first month.
- 3) **Ziv** This name conveys the outstanding light and glow of this month, when the buds flower.

The month of Iyar contains Lag Ba'Omer. Among other events, Lag Baomer marks the yearzeit of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, author of the Zohar. Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai brought the light of Kabbalah into this world and shared much of his knowledge on the very day when he passed away. So Iyar marks the coming to fruition and the sharing of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai's wisdom and knowledge.



Also occurring during the month of Iyar is Israel's Independence Day, Yom Haatzmaut, which we will celebrate at Kahal Joseph this Monday. Following the Holocaust, a dark, depressed time in Jewish history when the Jewish spirit was buried and forced underground, the Jewish people experienced the birth of a dream, the modern state of Israel.

The energy of Iyar is a healing, transformative energy that affects the emotional part of us. The emotional, middle part of the body connects and governs the exchange between the spiritual, upper part and the physical, lower part of our beings.

The month of Iyar is also called the "month of the bull" by our sages. The symbol for the month of Iyar is the bull. This name reveals the

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## KJ Schedule

### Erev Shabbat / Friday, April 12th

|                                  |         |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| Shaharit .....                   | 6:30 am |
| Shir Hashirim .....              | 6:45 pm |
| Candle Lighting.....             | 7:04 pm |
| Minha & Arbit .....              | 7:00 pm |
| Sefirat Ha'Omer Eighteenth Night |         |

### Shabbat / Saturday, April 13th

|                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Shaharit .....                   | 8:30 am         |
| Rabbi Seidenfeld Talk .....      | during services |
| Class with Rabbi Batzri .....    | 6:00 pm         |
| Ladies Tehillim .....            | 6:00 pm         |
| Minha/Arbit .....                | 6:30 pm         |
| Shabbat Havdallah .....          | 7:50 pm         |
| Sefirat Ha'Omer Nineteenth Night |                 |

### Erev Yom HaZikaron / Sunday, April 14th

|                                 |          |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Shaharit .....                  | 7:30 am  |
| Talmud Torah .....              | 9:30 am  |
| KJ Youth Choir .....            | 11:00 am |
| Sefirat Ha'Omer Twentieth Night |          |

### Erev Yom Haatzmaut Monday, April 15th

|                                       |                |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Shaharit .....                        | 6:30 am        |
| <b>Yom Haatzmaut Celebration.....</b> | <b>7:00 pm</b> |
| Sefirat Ha'Omer Twenty-First Night    |                |

### Weekdays

#### Monday to Friday, April 15th to 19th

|                                 |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Shaharit .....                  | 6:30 am |
| Sefirat Ha'Omer Nights 21 to 25 |         |

### Erev Shabbat / Friday, April 19th

|                      |         |
|----------------------|---------|
| Shaharit .....       | 6:30 am |
| Shir Hashirim .....  | 6:45 pm |
| Candle Lighting..... | 7:09 pm |
| Minha & Arbit .....  | 7:00 pm |



Calling all  
Kahal Joseph  
Members  
with

## KIDS in Public School

Fun Classes for FREE at KJ's  
Norma & Sam Dabby Talmud Torah  
April 18th to June 6th 2013  
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For information call 310.474.0559 or  
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## KJ YOUTH CHOIR

Directed by Rabbi Hagay Batzri  
Sunday, April 14th@11 am

## Women's Tehillim

with Orly Batzri, Shabbat Afternoon  
Saturdays at 6:00 pm before Mincha

## KJ Kids Birthday Club

Send birthday info for member kids  
who were born during April, May & June by  
April 22 to [dafna@kahaljoseph.org](mailto:dafna@kahaljoseph.org) for fun  
treats and surprises!



## SHABBAT READINGS

Torah Portion 460 to 470  
Haftara 477 to 479

## Happy 80th Birthday

### Benjamin H. Elias

We wish a happy 80th birthday  
to Benjamin H. Elias, Past President of  
Kahal. May Hashem grant him many  
years of peace, happiness, and health.

## Shabbat Kiddush

Is sponsored in memory of  
Shimon ben Faraj Iny, z"l

by The Iny Family

Welcome Rabbi Shlomo Seidenfeld  
who will speak this Shabbat on the topic of  
"Judaism: Israel's First Start-Up"

## Refuah Shlemah

Yocheved bat Rachel, Mazal bat Malka, Dan Her-  
doon, Mazal Tov bat Salha Matana, Moshe ben  
Ezra, Sasson ben Rahel/Sassoon Moses, Penina  
bat Henia, Dov Ber ben Sonia, Maurice Ovadia /  
Moshe ben Noosha, Pnina bat Esther, Vera Levi

## Condolences

We send our deepest condolences to the  
family and friends of Wendy Joseph, z"l.  
May Hashem comfort them together  
with all the mourners of Tzion

## In Memoriam

We remember these yahrzeit anniversaries for  
April 13th to 20th, 2013. It is customary to light a  
memorial candle, donate tzedaka, and attend  
services the preceding Shabbat.

### 3 Iyar / Shabbat, April 13th

Hanina Cohen *Hanina bat Chahla*  
Nedat Joshua Farahi *Yehoshua ben Yehezkel*  
Sassoon Benjamin Gemal *Sassoon ben Binyamin*

### 4 Iyar / Sunday, April 14th

Binyamin Sheff *Binyamin ben Hasia*

### 5 Iyar / Monday, April 15th

Simon Faraj Iny *Shimon ben Faraj*  
Louise Mendel *Aziza bat Nouna*

### 6 Iyar / Tuesday, April 16th

Jane Ester Feldman  
Sophie Moses *Tifaha bat Mazal*

### 7 Iyar / Wednesday, April 17th

Ezra Baruch *Ezra ben Yaacov Baruch*  
Aaron A. David *Aharon Sasson ben Avraham Haim*  
Ellis Levi *Eliyahu ben Ezra Kadoori Halevi*  
Rachel Moses *Rahel bat Mazal Tov*

### 8 Iyar / Thursday, April 18th

Toba Mussry *Toba bat Aziza*  
Salim Ezra A. Haim

### 9 Iyar / Friday, April 19th

Menashi Jiji  
Haim Moche *Moshi Haim ben Yehoshua*  
Sima Sassoon *Simcha bat Hannah*

### 10 Iyar / Shabbat, April 20th

Ramah Ezra *Rahmah bat Lulu Khatoon*  
Abraham Shaye *Avraham Amir Saeed Zoghee*  
*ben Asher Michael*

*Shabbat Shalom U'Mevorach*

*Wishing You a Peaceful Shabbat of Blessings*

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characteristics of this month and some say, of people born in this month: heaviness, intense physicality, stubbornness, willing to fight, constancy, persistence, a preference for routine.

Historically, bulls were used by farmers to plough the ground and turn over the earth which is a very physical, material process involving hard work for the body. Bulls also prefer to work in company, with someone next to them, which is why farmers pair them in teams. This is just like people who need a friend next to them to feel motivated and to apply themselves. Depression and sadness are also associated with a bullish personality in a person who may have difficulty talking about what's in his heart.

Every one of us has some of these characteristics in ourselves. During Iyar we can take the heavier, inflexible parts of ourselves, the bull-like parts, and use those qualities to fill ourselves with life and the light of Torah, and to bring ourselves to a higher spiritual place.

How can this happen? How can we apply the lessons of Iyar to our lives? Can we really help ourselves rise above depression, the need for constant companionship, a certain heaviness and free ourselves?

The work before us during Iyar, the opportunity to right ourselves relates to the depression that occurs when our outlook is trapped in the physical world alone. The energy of Iyar tells us to get out of that mindset and to turn this heaviness and depression into something positive. We can use these very characteristics to improve, to turn things around.

For example, take the attribute of physical heaviness associated with the bull. The negative aspect of heaviness is a lack of flexibility. However, the positive side of heaviness is that it allows a person to stay in one place, to look inward and examine his emotions, to just contemplate his inner self without the need to move around or to be influenced by what is around him. When this opportunity is used, a person can learn about his inner nature and what influences his emotions. While the body is still, heavy, the emotions and mind have the opportunity to be active.

One instance of a person who had this experience is Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, whose *yahrzeit* we celebrate on Lag Baomer, one holiday that occurs in Iyar. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was on such a high spiritual plane that he chose to die on Lag Baomer and he used this day to transmit knowledge of the Zohar, the light of the kabbalah, to us.

There are different kinds of light in the world. Some disperse and fade in the distance; others concentrate their energy and focus. The light of the Zohar is that focused energy, like a laser, that helps us move through things inside the body, revealing what is behind the physical, behind the surface that we see. The Zohar helps us discover what is hidden behind our immediate, physical reality.

When did Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai uncover the secrets of the Zohar? He took the opportunity when he was physically trapped in a cave, escaping Roman persecution with his son. Instead of complaining about the situation, instead of devoting their energy to making their life as comfortable as possible, they chose to be satisfied with what they had.



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For years they subsisted on water and fruit from a carob tree that grew near the opening of the cave. Because they knew they would have to hide for many years, and feared their clothes would wear out, they would spend much of their time buried in the dirt, with just their head and neck sticking out of the ground. In the midst of all this, their main focus was how they could create light in this dark, depressed place where they were literally buried in the earth at times, nearly in the grave.

They recognized that they were choosing to voluntarily go underground. They knew that, in fact, the ground that covered their bodies was saving them from the Romans. And they chose to bring

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light out of their experience. The light they brought came from being underground, from living in the dark, under the earth, physically trapped. The light they brought out was the light of the Torah, which they studied and explored during all those years of seclusion.

At first, when they emerged from the cave, they were so filled with spiritual light that they could not stand being around people engaged in ordinary, day to day activities. They couldn't handle it. These tasks seemed foolish to them, a waste of time. But the world, and the people in it, were Hashem's creation; they were as Hashem intended them to be. So Hashem sent Shimon bar Yochai and his son back to the cave for many additional years.

Uncovering the light of the Torah in itself was not enough. They needed the extra time to integrate this higher, spiritual knowledge through their emotions with their physical reality. They had to go back to the cave to restore the balance between body, spirit, and soul and to be able to interact with the people in the world that Hashem created.

Only in this way could the light of the Torah that they had unearthed be shared and spread to the world around them. For people to see and understand, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai had to be able to communicate on all levels and integrate the spiritual, emotional and physical within himself and others.

The experience of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai is a direct lesson to us in the month of Iyar. He shows us that a person can be in the lowest place physically and still reach the highest

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area spiritually. A person can be in a place of heaviness, darkness, unable to express himself, but by turning inward and exploring inner things, he can use the physical limitations, and even emotional depression, as a place to grow, much as a baby grows in the womb, or as a seed grows in the ground.

Then we can bring something out of our experience, bring something to the world that helps others and provides for this world, that fulfills this world.

On a personal level, the lessons and themes of this month are especially important for those of us who are stuck in the physical world, who are stubborn or depressed. When we are stuck in depression we are spiritually deprived and malnourished. We are not getting the right nutrients for our soul. We feel the absence of Hashem, and the absence of Hashem causes sickness of the soul and the body.

If we fill ourselves with the light and energy of Hashem we will get the emotional and spiritual nutrition that we need. How do we do this?

We can take the heavy part of ourselves, the stubborn part of ourselves, and apply that persistence to examining ourselves. We need to sit down, and dig down deep inside ourselves. We need to excavate our hearts and emotions, understand our feelings and what causes them. Then, by working on our emotions we can begin to see and understand what keeps us trapped, and we can enlighten our souls.

When we seek and experience an inner understanding, when we welcome emotional

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clarity, when we learn the lessons of an inner Torah, we begin to feel the abundance Hashem has given us in this world. We have a feeling of fullness and begin to experience the shining light of Hashem.

Appropriately, Parashat Tazria is often read during the month of Iyar, as it will be this Shabbat. The word "tazria" refers to the creation of life when a woman becomes pregnant, then gestates and gives birth to a male child, a "zachar." The specific Hebrew word used to describe the male infant in the parasha, "zachar," is a word not used for just any male. "Zachar" refers to a male who, as a man, becomes a provider for the community.

When a baby develops slowly day by day and grows in the womb, Hashem takes non-living elements and transforms them into a human being. Within the darkness and solitude of the womb, He creates life. During the month of Iyar, Hashem gives us the opportunity to transform ourselves in the same way.

When we work through the processes of the month of Iyar, we contribute to the well-being of those around us. Through introspection, we give birth to spiritual knowledge of Hashem and inner light, and we share this light with the community.

I wish that each one of us will be strong like a bull for this job we have ahead of us this month. And I hope that the state of Israel will also be strong and able to persist in the job it has to do to develop itself. May all the tools of the bull be used to bring out the light of Hashem in our world.

Shabbat Shalom

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## Israel, Israel

Written by Elsa Singman, Vocals by Rabbi Hagay Batzri  
Musical Coordination and Keyboards Lilo Fedida

Israel, Israel  
You have made your mind up  
To fight for freedom  
Yes freedom, all the way  
Israel, Israel  
You have fought for peace now  
For many years, the whole world knows it's true

Israel, Israel  
Little hands have joined together  
They say shalom, shalom must come to pass  
Always keep your spirit up  
For G-d has put you on the top  
Your tears and sorrow, He will see them stopped

Israel, Israel  
Our life and inspiration  
We want shalom, but we'll fight till freedom comes  
Lift high your heads and look into the skies now  
G-d is there, He'll guide you every day

Israel, Israel  
A nation strong together  
In song and prayer, united we will stand  
We're here to help you now  
For we too have made this vow  
To see your freedom  
Israel's freedom now

Proudly we will stand  
For Israel is our land  
Shalom, Israel  
Shalom

## A Prayer for the State of Israel

Our Father who is in heaven, Protector and Redeemer of Israel, bless the State of Israel, the beginning of the flowering of our redemption. Shield it beneath the wings of Your love; spread over it Your canopy of peace; send Your light and Your truth to its leaders, officers, and counselors, and direct them with Your good counsel. Strengthen the defenders of our Holy Land; grant them, our G-d, salvation and crown them with victory. Establish peace in the land, and everlasting joy for its inhabitants. Remember our brothers, the whole house of Israel, in all the lands of their dispersion. Speedily bring them to Zion, Your city, to Jerusalem Your dwelling-place, as it is written in the Torah of Your servant Moses: "Even if you are dispersed in the uttermost parts of the world, from there Hashem your G-d will gather and fetch you. Hashem your G-d will bring you into the land which your ancestors possessed, and you shall possess it; and G-d will make you more prosperous and more numerous than your ancestors."

Unite our hearts to love and revere Your name, and to observe all the precepts of Your Torah. Speedily send us Your righteous Messiah of the House of David, to redeem those waiting for Your salvation. Shine forth in Your glorious majesty over all the inhabitants of Your world. Let everything that breathes proclaim: "Hashem G-d of Israel is King; His majesty rules over all."

Amen. Selah.

אָבִינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמִים, צוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגוֹאֲלוֹ, בְּרַךְ אֶת מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, רֵאשִׁית  
צְמִיחַת גְּאֻלְתָּנוּ. הִגֵּן עָלֶיךָ בְּאֶבְרַת חֲסִדֶיךָ וּפְרֵשׁ עָלֶיךָ סֶפֶת שְׁלוֹמֶךָ וּשְׁלַח  
אוֹרְךָ וְאַמְתָּךְ לְרֵאשִׁיָּהּ, שְׂרִיָּה וְיוֹעֲצֵיָּהּ, וְתִקְנֶם בְּעֵצָה טוֹבָה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ.  
חִזַּק אֶת יְדֵי מַגְנֵי אֶרֶץ קְדֻשְׁנוּ, וְהַנְּחִילֵם אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְשׁוּעָה וְעֲטָרַת נִצְחוֹן  
תְּעַטְרֵם, וְנַתַּת שְׁלוֹם בְּאֶרֶץ וְשִׁמְחַת עוֹלָם לְיוֹשְׁבֵיהָ. וְאֶת אַחֵינוּ כָּל בֵּית  
יִשְׂרָאֵל, פְּקֹד-נָא בְּכָל אַרְצוֹת פְּזוּרֵיהֶם, וְתוֹלִיכֵם מִהֲרָה קוֹמְמִיּוֹת לְצִיּוֹן  
עִירָךְ וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם מְשֻׁכָּן שְׁמֶךָ, כִּפְתוּב בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עֲבָדֶךָ:  
אִם יִהְיֶה נִדְחָךְ בְּקִצֵּה הַשָּׁמַיִם, מִשָּׁם יִקְבְּצֶךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּמִשָּׁם יִקְחֶךָ: וְהִבִּיאֶךָ  
יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יָרְשׁוּ אֲבוֹתֶיךָ וִירְשָׁתָהּ, וְהִיטְבָהּ וְהִרְבָּהּ מֵאֲבוֹתֶיךָ:  
וַיַּחַד לְבַבְנוּ לְאַהֲבָה וּלְיִרְאָה אֶת שְׁמֶךָ, וְלִשְׁמֹר אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָתְךָ, וּשְׁלַח  
לָנוּ מִהֲרָה בְּנוֹ דָּוִד מְשִׁיחַ צִדְקָךָ, לְפָדוֹת מִחַפְּזֵי קִיץ יְשׁוּעָתְךָ.  
הוֹפֵעַ בַּהֲדָר גָּאוֹן עֲזָה עַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵּבֵל אֶרֶץְךָ, וַיֹּאמֶר כָּל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמָה  
בְּאִפּוֹ: יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מְלֹךְ וּמְלֻכוֹתוֹ בְּכָל מְשָׁלָה.  
אָמֵן סְלָה.

Chief Rabbis Rabbi Yitzhak Isaac Halevi Herzog and Rabbi Ben Zion Uziel with author Shai Agnon; Elul 5708 – September 1948



יום העצמאות

Come celebrate with Kahal Joseph at our

# Yom Haatzmaut Party

in honor of Israel's 65th Birthday as a modern state

Monday, April 15th at 7:00 pm

Live Music & Song "Israel at 65" Film David S. Kelly Youth Choir

Falafel & Delicious Israeli Food

## A Prayer for Members of the Israel Defense Forces

He Who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – may He bless the fighters of the Israel Defense Force, who stand guard over our land and the cities of our G-d from the border of the Lebanon to the desert of Egypt, and from the Great Sea unto the approach of the Aravah, on the land, in the air, and on the sea.

May Hashem cause the enemies who rise up against us to be struck down before them. May the Holy One, Blessed is He, preserve and rescue our fighting men from every trouble and distress and from every plague and illness, and may He send blessing and success in their every endeavour.

May He lead our enemies under their sway and may He grant them salvation and crown them with victory. And may there be fulfilled for them the verse: For it is Hashem, your G-d, Who goes with you to battle your enemies for you to save you.

Now let us respond: Amen.

מי שִׁבְרָךְ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֲבָרָהֶם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב הוּא יְבָרְךָ אֶת חַיְלֵי צְבָא הַגָּנָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, הָעוֹמְדִים עַל מִשְׁמַר אֶרְצֵנוּ וְעָרֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִגְּבוּל הַלְּבָנוֹן וְעַד מִדְּבַר מִצְרַיִם וּמִן הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל עַד לְבוֹא הָעֲרָבָה בִּיבְשָׁה בְּאוֹר וּבַיָּם.

יְתֵן יי אֶת אוֹיְבֵינוּ הַקּוֹמִים עָלֵינוּ נִגְפִים לְפָנֵיהֶם. הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא יִשְׁמַר וְיִצְּלֵל אֶת חַיְלֵינוּ מִכָּל צָרָה וְצוּקָה וּמִכָּל נֶגַע וּמַחֲלָה וְיִשְׁלַח בְּרָכָה וְהַצְלָחָה בְּכָל מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם.

יְדַבֵּר שׁוֹנְאֵינוּ תַחֲתֵיהֶם וְיַעֲטֶרם בְּכֶתֶר יִשׁוּעָה וּבַעֲטוּרַת נִצְחוֹן. וְיִקְיֵם בָּהֶם הַפְּתוּב: כִּי יי אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הֵהוּי עִמָּכֶם לְהִלָּחֵם לָכֶם עִם אִיְבֵיכֶם לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶתְכֶם:

וְנֹאמַר: אָמֵן:

*Prayer for the Israel Defense Forces, This version is according to the decision of the Chief Rabbinate of the State of Israel, 27th of Elul, 5764*