

KOL MEVASSER

Being Happy

rewritten by Dafna Ezran-Young
from Table Talks by Rabbi Tawil

This week's Torah portion teaches that we should be happy. How can we be happy? Happiness is achieved by realizing where we came from and by focusing on what we have. Appreciating the things we have rather than complaining about what we lack is a crucial first step on the road to happiness. We must model this type of appreciation for our children and for others around us. We must carefully contemplate our prosperity and recognize that it comes from Hashem. This is one way to help our children develop an appreciative attitude. Recounting our personal history, we should speak in a way that emphasizes what is good about our present situation. In this manner, we may generate happiness.

Our Torah portion begins with the commandment to bring the first (or prime) fruits from the land of Israel to the Kohen as an offering to Hashem. During Temple times, when a landowner would bring this offering, he would make a specific declaration. He would state that he has now entered the land Hashem promised to his forefathers. When the Kohen placed the farmer's basket of fruit in front of Hashem's altar, the farmer would review the Jewish people's history. As it reads:

"An Aramean astray was my ancestor; he went down to Egypt with meager numbers and

sojourned there; but there he became a great and very populous nation. The Egyptians dealt harshly with us and oppressed us; they imposed heavy labor upon us. We cried to Hashem, the God of our fathers, and Hashem heard our plea and saw our plight, our misery, and our oppression. Hashem freed us from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents. He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. Wherefore I now bring the first fruits of the soil which You, Hashem, have given me." You shall leave it before Hashem your God and bow low before Hashem your God. And you shall rejoice, together with the Levite and the stranger in your midst, for all the bounty that Hashem your God has bestowed upon you and your household. Deuteronomy 26:5-11

We are familiar with the beginning of this text from the Pesah Haggadah. It tersely recounts our history in a few sentences. These verses focus on our oppressive bondage in Egypt and Hashem's might in taking us out of slavery. The historical account is made personal by mentioning our entering the land of Israel and the farmer's action in bringing his first fruits.

The section begins "Arami oved avi...." The most familiar explanation of these words is the one known from the Haggadah (i.e., that Laban the Aramaean, Rebecca's brother and Jacob's uncle, tried to destroy Jacob by dealing with him unfairly). Yet, the more straightforward

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KJ Schedule

Parashat Ki Tetze

Friday, August 23rd

Selichot	5:30 am
Shaharit	6:30 am
Shir Hashirim	6:45 pm
Minha & Arbit.....	7:00 pm
Candle Lighting	7:12 pm

Shabbat

Saturday, August 24th

Shaharit	8:30 am
Ladies Tehillim	6:00 pm
Rabbi's Class.....	6:00 pm
Minha/Arbit	6:45 pm
Shabbat Havdallah	8:00 pm

Weekdays

Sunday, August 25th

Selichot	6:30 am
Shaharit	7:30 am
David Kelly Youth Choir.....	11:00 am

Monday to Friday, August 26 to 30

Selichot	5:30 am
Shaharit	6:30 am

Erev Shabbat / Friday, August 30th

Selichot	5:30 am
Shaharit	6:30 am
Shir Hashirim	6:45 pm
Minha & Arbit.....	7:00 pm
Candle Lighting	7:03 pm

Parashat Ki Tavo Weekly Torah Portion
Book of Deuteronomy / Devarim 859 to 873
Haftara from Isaiah/Yishayahu 874 to 877

Shabbat Kiddush

is sponsored in honor of
Ethan Tizabi's Bar Mitzvah
and
the birth of a daughter to
Ashley and Jonathan Tizabi

Mazal Tov

Ashley and Jonathan Tizabi
on the birth of
a beautiful daughter
Congratulations to grandparents
Laleh and Joseph
Laurie and Arvid



David S. Kelly Youth Choir
Starts this Sunday, August 25th
at 11:00 am

In Memoriam

We remember these yearzeit anniversaries for
August to 24th to 31st, 2013. It is customary to
light a memorial candle, donate tzedaka, and
attend services the preceding Shabbat.

18 Elul / Shabbat, August 24th
Rahel bat Rahma Khatoon

19 Elul / Sunday, August 25th
Malek Yehuda Malek bat Yehuda

20 Elul / Monday, August 26th
Jacob Samuel Azar Yaacov Shmuel
Sophie Solomon Simhah bat Khatoon

22 Elul / Wednesday, August 28th
Violet Ezra

Moselle Jacob Muzli bat Nuna

24 Elul / Friday, August 30th
Daisy Ezra Khazam bat Farha

25 Elul / Shabbat, August 31st
Yosef Acoca Yosef ben Nissim

Sidnay Jonah Sasson Ephraim Yonah
Marsel Kemareh Marsel bat Shaul v'Gazala Levi

Congratulations
from
Kahal Joseph's Board of Directors
to Simon's Caterers
and Special Events
on receiving the
Best of Beverly Hills
Golden Palm Award 2013

Mazal Tov

to Ethan Tizabi
on his Bar Mitzvah
Congratulations to his parents
Frank Tizabi
Jordan Levy



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our members support wonderful programs
for young and old. For information contact
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Family Membership

2 adult tickets & their children's tickets

Single Membership—1 adult ticket

Guest Adult Tickets—\$250

Student Tickets, 18 to 30—\$50 / \$100

Guest Kids, 0 to 17—\$50

Refuah Shlemah

Yocheved bat Rachel Mazal bat Malka,
Dan Herdoon Mazal Tov bat Salha Matana
Moshe ben Ezra Vera Levi
Sasson ben Rahel/Sassoon Moses
Penina bat Henia Dov Ber ben Sonia
Maurice Ovadia / Moshe ben Noosha,
Pnina bat Esther Yossef ben Jamila
Ruth bat Aliza Dina bat Simha
Shoshana Goury/ Shoshana bat Rahel
Gerry Meyers / Ezra ben Yosef Aharon
Yehoshua ben Channah
Chaim Aryeh Yehuda ben Yocheved

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explanation is that our ancestor was a wandering Aramean, as is translated above. Even though the history is well known, as the man is bringing his first fruits he must reflect upon it. This reflection creates an appreciation for his present situation—a situation that he might otherwise take for granted.

The section ends with the provision that “you shall enjoy... all the bounty that Hashem... has given you”. The point is that the man should contrast his present situation of owning land and bringing his first fruits to a situation of wandering and of oppressive bondage. This leads the farmer to appreciate his present situation.

Recounting our own history in this way increases the likelihood that we will also enjoy our present situation. When we consider how bad things have been at times for the Jewish people and for ourselves personally, we may begin to recognize the gift of the ordinary. We will be less likely to take for granted daily gifts such as food, clothing, shelter, nature or peace.

Over the Shabbat table this week, take some time to talk about your personal history and the history of your family in a way that highlights your present good condition. Speak about this with your children. You may even talk about the history of the community. Historical events such as Jewish survival of the Holocaust, the founding of Israel as a modern state, or the reunification of Jerusalem might be taken for granted by those born long after these events.

Rabbi Noah Weinberg of Aish Hatorah in Jerusalem teaches: “happiness is not a happening but an obligation.” Many people fall into the trap

of thinking, “I would be happy if only this or that happened to me.” Instead, Rabbi Noah reminds us of the Torah’s view: we are obligated to be happy; we must strive for it.

But how can happiness, an emotional state, be an obligation? It is because through our willpower and through choices we affect our thoughts and our actions. We can create the feeling of happiness in ourselves. By focusing on the many things that we have, we can cause ourselves to feel happy. The very ability to sit around the Shabbat table with family and friends, the physical ability to see, hear, talk and understand one another are things for which, upon reflection, we are grateful. Yet these are the very things which, without our conscious efforts, we may take for granted until they are gone.

Rav Noah suggests listing the things that we are happy to have and then prioritizing them. This exercise gets us to think about what is most important to us. This is a simple activity you could try with your guests, friends, and family around the Shabbat table.

As TV personality, Hugh Downs, expressed this idea: A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a person with a certain set of attitudes.

When we are happy about the abundance that Hashem has given us, we may effectively use this abundance to improve our world and the lives of those around us. This is one significant form of “avoda”—worshipping Hashem through the work of our lives. To put our Jewish ideals into action, we must begin with ourselves—our own attitudes, our own approach to life. L’chaim. To life.

Thank You

Thank you to the men and women who polished, cleaned, and cared for KJ's magnificent Torah Scroll Cases

Rachel Acoca, Ben & Sophie Elias, David & Louise Elias, Shoshana Goury, Baruch Isaac, Rebecca Kohan, Louise Nathan, Jackie Shalom, Diana Solomon, Soraya Vahedi, Anita Wozniak, & Rita Zakoo

Thank you to Shula Wyner for providing lunch for all those who came to help

Thank you to David Kohan for opening and closing the building and hechal, and to Penina Solomon for her support

Israeli Premiere of Shadow in Baghdad

I am happy to announce that *Shadow in Baghdad* was selected for competition of the Haifa International Film Festival during the Sukkot holiday.

Please let me know if you will be in Israel at that time & would like to attend this premiere.

As you may have witnessed in the last week the story of the Iraqi secret archive is making headline. We are now scheduling dates for events of *Shadow in Baghdad* in Washington DC in October and I will update you on oncoming events. Meanwhile, I ask you to share this link with your friends and family as we are still in need to raise more funds for promoting and distributing the film.

May you and your family have a happy new year!

Duki Dror Darwsih

Kahal Joseph Congregation
Norma & Sam Dabby Jewish Education Center
Dafna Ezran-Young, Educational Director

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THINK



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Out of the Box

The fun & learning start
Sunday, September 8th

For information contact
Dafna Ezran-Young,
our Educational Director
at 310.502.8548 or
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SEC presents

3rd Annual Soul Music Selihot Concert

Monday, September 9th, 2013

at Kahal Joseph Congregation

7:30 pm



Rabbi Hagay Batzri & Rabbi Daniel Bouskila

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featuring some of the world's leading Sephardic hazzanim
joining together for an uplifting evening of Selihot
\$20 suggested admission donation

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