



Congregation Spanish & Portuguese שארית ישראל



Parashat Yitro

פרשת יתרו

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Haftarah Isaiah: Hertz 302

Parashat Yitro - Rabbi Maimon Pinto MOMENT OF CHOICE

This week, we read parshat Yitro which contains the Giving of the Torah and the Ten Commandments. The revelation of G-d at Mount Sinai is definitely the central event in the history of the Jewish people throughout the generations. It is the historic turning point that transformed us from a nation of liberated slaves into an eternal people.

Let us stop a moment to think. What exactly changed at Mattan Torah (giving of the Torah)? What happened when the Jewish people stood at the foot of Sinai? Weren't we connected to Hashem before this happened? Didn't our unique relationship with Hashem begin in the era of the patriarch: Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov?

An inner connection between two people can exist on many levels. The stronger their bond, the more substantive, significant and eternal it becomes. For example, you cannot compare the relationship between a teacher and student and a father and son. You don't relate to a work colleague the way you do to a child or spouse. Each of our relationships has a certain place in our heart and soul, depending on how significant it is to us.

Until Mattan Torah, the relationship between Hashem and the Jewish people was like the bond between a father and son. At Mattan Torah, something new occurred. Hashem chose the Jewish people and they, in return, chose Hashem for eternity!

What makes the act of choosing that took place at Mattan Torah superior to the father-son relationship that existed since the era of the patriarch? Jewish tradition explains that true choice means choosing without a reason, beyond any rationale. It is not a choice associated with anything in particular. It is not based on logic which limits choice. When man wants something and chooses it with true choice

that is beyond any reason, that means that the desire for that thing emanates from the innermost, deepest part of the soul. That is why this desire is stronger than anything else and is unlimited in its intensity. Since it does not derive from any defining categorization or inclination, there is nothing to limit it and there is nothing that can determine the measure of its power. This is the deepest, most powerful desire in creation. This is why the love that derives from free choice is a completely essential love, an absolutely unlimited love.

The relationship between father and son is in fact a very deep bond, a bond is generally associated with a lot of love, a strong bond, but one that can be undermined. The son can become alienated from his father and the father can ignore his son.

LONG-TERM CHOICE

This difference between the before and after Mattan Torah also explains an interesting fact about the difference between the redemption of Egypt and the future redemption. The Medrash (Shemos Rabba 14,3) says that there were Jews in Egypt who refused to leave. They were comfortable in exile and they decided to stay. Sadly, those Jews died during the three days of Darkness.

In the future redemption, every single Jew will be redeemed! The Yalkut Shimoni (Yeshaya 60, remez 499) describes a dialogue that will take place between Hashem and Mashiach in which the latter will strongly demand that Hashem redeem every single Jew, leaving no one behind. Hashem warns him that this will cost him dearly, "With their sins, in the future your tongue will cleave to your palate, do you want this?" Mashiach responds to the challenge, "Master of the universe, I joyfully accept it so that not one Jew is lost."

This is similar to the famous explanation of the Rabbis in response to the Wicked Son on the night

**Shabbat
Shalom**
Start/Début 5:01 pm
End/Fin 6:06 pm



Services Schedule

Horaire des Offices

SHABBAT, FEBRUARY 15TH, 2020

SHAHRIT: 8:30

Afternoon/Evening Services:

Minha 4:45
Seudah 5:15
Arvit 5:45

Havdalah 6:06

Week Day Services February 16 - 21, 2020

	Shahrit (שחרית)	Minha/ Arvit
Sunday/Dimanche	8:00	5:15
Monday/Lundi	7:00	5:15
Tuesday/Mardi	7:00	5:15
Wednesday/Mercredi	7:00	5:15
Thursday/Jendredi	7:00	5:15
Friday/Vendredi	7:00	5:15

**KIDS'
PROGRAM**
EVERY SHABBAT
10 - 12 NOON



No Cell Phones

Quote of the Week

My concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for He is always right.

— **Abraham Lincoln**
Aish HaTorah

THIS SHABBAT'S HAFTARAH READING BY:

JULIO DAHAN

Parashat Yitro - Cont'd.

of the Seder, "If he would have been there, he would not have been redeemed" - there, in Egypt (in the period before Mattan Torah), he would not have been redeemed, but in the future redemption, after Mattan Torah, he will also be redeemed. Why? The bond between father and son that existed before Mattan Torah could recede to a latent state so that it was possible for a real rift between them. The desire of many of the Jewish people to remain in Egypt was an obstruction to this bond. It displayed the desire to disconnect, a desire to be freed from the burdens of this relationship. "Man's desire is his honor" - they got what they wanted and remained behind.

After Mattan Torah, after there was a mutual bond of free "essential" choice between the two parties, it is impossible to separate them. No thing, event, feeling or alienation can separate between the two choosers. They are united in an eternal bond which is expressed in infinite love, which does not allow for any interference as a result of sins! This is why, in the future re-

demption, every Jew, as he is, will be redeemed!

This is also the reason why, the future redemption is called the *true* and *complete*. Jewish philosophy explains that the word "emet - truth" does not just mean "not a lie." Even something correct and true, which is limited to a certain situation and time, is not complete truth. Only something which is stable and correct under all circumstances is utterly true! Based on this, we understand that as long as the redemption is limited to one part of the nation, it is not true and complete. Only the future redemption is called "true and complete" because it will be the redemption of all the Jewish people, without exception.

In life, there are many situations in which we need to choose. Let us make the right choice, the eternal choice, the choice which we already made at Mount Sinai, and choose Hashem, His Torah and mitzvot!

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Dietitian & Nutritionist



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Deadline to register is Tuesday April 21st 2020

Sisterhood Events

IT'S THIS SATURDAY NIGHT!

...THAT'S
HOW THE
LIGHT GETS
IN

Morgane Clément-Gagnon
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by Leonard Cohen

02.15.20

8 PM @ The Spanish &
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Event

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for Young Adults in their 20s and 30s

The Global Nação: Spanish & Portuguese Global Jewish Community



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The ASF Institute of Jewish Experience's 3rd annual conference will focus on Western Sephardi (Spanish & Portuguese) traditions in their historical & modern-day contexts through an examination of the history, religious leaders, customs, liturgy, literature, arts and material culture.

- Day 1 | Liturgical concert - Congregation Shearith Israel
- Day 2 | Academic sessions & performance
- Day 3 | Academic sessions & Tour of Shearith Israel's cemetery

For those interested, contact Rabbi Maimon Pinto at:
rabbimpinto@thespanish.org who will direct you to the
right person & register directly.

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In Honour of Rabbi Cantor Yehuda Abittan

PROGRAMME DU BEIT HAMIDRASH

שיעור יומי

PROGRAMME QUOTIDIEN - HOK LEISRAËL

COURS DE TORAH

DIM.-VEN. APRÈS SHAHRIT - 45 MIN.-RABBI MAIMON PINTO

MERCREDI SOIR 19H30 - RABBI MAIMON PINTO

PARNASS HAYOM פרנס היום

Shabbat 20 Shevat - 15 février

Armand Mamane en l'honneur de sa Famille.

Sunday 21 Shevat - February 16

Dr. Joshua Haimovici, in memory of Yehoshua ben Yossef ז"ל.

Tuesday 23 Shevat - February 18

Yaacov Haimovici, in honour of his mother, Adele Haimovici bat Garraz.

Wednesday 24 Shevat - February 19

Richard Saleh, in memory of his mother, Rosa Saleh ז"ל.

Jendredi 25 Shevat - 20 février

Famille Abitbol à la mémoire de leur père Haim Abitbol ז"ל.

Albert Abitbol à la mémoire de son père Haim Abitbol ז"ל.

Friday 26 Shevat - February 21

Joseph Ovadia & Family, in memory of his father, Sasson Ovadia ז"ל.



HALAKHA

הלכה

Question: Is one able to annul harsh edicts decreed upon himself with the power of his prayers?

Answer: The Mishnah in Pirkei Avot (Chapter 1, Mishnah 7) states: "Nittai of Arbel said: Distance yourself from an evil neighbor, do not befriend a wicked person, and do not give up during tribulations."

The Rambam explains that this Mishnah means to teach us that even when one is in the midst of trials and tribulations, one should not give up praying to Hashem on his own behalf, for Hashem's mercy is boundless as the verse states, "Indeed, Hashem's hand is not too short to save and Hashem's salvation comes at the blink of an eye."

In Melachim II (Chapter 20), the verse states regarding Chizkiyahu, King of Yehuda, who was an extremely righteous king who disseminated Torah among the Jewish nation in extraordinary ways: "In those days, Chizkiyahu became deathly ill; Yeshayahu son of Amotz came to him and said, 'So says Hashem: Prepare your household, for you shall die and you shall not live!'"

Yeshayahu the prophet was informing King Chizkiyahu that a death sentence was already decreed upon him from Above. The Gemara in Masechet Berachot (10a) explains that what Yeshayahu meant to tell him was, "For you shall die," referring to death in this world, "And you shall not live," referring to death in the World to Come. This means that Yeshayahu was telling him that not only was mortal death decreed upon him because of his actions, but he would be eternally punished in the World to Come as a result of his deeds.

King Chizkiyahu asked him, "Why was it decreed that I be punished to such an extent?" Yeshayahu replied, "Because you have not brought children to the world." This is because Chizkiyahu had not gotten married, for he did not wish to bear children since he saw a divine vision that he would bear wicked children. Yeshayahu scolded him, "Why are you involving yourself in what Hashem has concealed from you? Do what you were commanded to do!"

Chizkiyahu answered, "If so, allow me to marry your daughter so that our joint merits may enable us to bear righteous children." Yeshayahu the prophet told him, "The decree has already been sealed," meaning that anything you do now will be futile.

King Chizkiyahu replied, "Son of Amotz, finish your prophecy and leave! I have a tradition handed down from my ancestors that even if one has a sharp sword laying on his throat, he should not hold back from requesting Hashem's mercy!"

The verse continues: "He turned his face towards the wall and he prayed to Hashem: 'Please Hashem! Remember how I have walked before You truthfully and whole-heartedly and how I have done good in Your eyes!' Chizkiyahu wept a great weeping."

Immediately afterwards, Hashem reappeared to Yeshayahu the prophet and told him: "Return to Chizkiyahu, officer of my nation, and tell him: 'So says Hashem, G-d of your father David: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I shall heal you! On the third day ascend to the House of Hashem and I shall add fifteen years to your life.'"

Hagaon Harav Shmuel Yaffe explains (in his commentary Yeffe Mar'eh on Chapter 9 of Masechet Berachot in the Talmud Yerushalmi) when Chizkiyahu said that he has a tradition "from his ancestors," this refers to King Yehoshafat about whom the verse states (Melachim I, Chapter 22), "And Yehoshafat cried out and Hashem helped him." When Yehoshafat waged war against Aram, the enemy's cavalry had caught him and had already placed a sword at his throat (see Yerushalmi ibid.) at which point he cried out to Hashem and Hashem indeed saved him.

We can learn from here how much we must strengthen ourselves in prayer, for the power of prayer is extremely great and Hashem who hears all prayers shall not return one's prayer empty-handed.

SHABBAT SHALOM, RABBI MAIMON PINTO

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CHAVERIM KOL YISRAEL
D'BET ABRAHAM
CONGREGATION**

SHABBOS, FEBRUARY 15TH

Schachris 9:15

Afternoon / evening services:

Minchah 12:35

WEEKDAY SERVICES

February 16 - 21, 2020

	<u>Shachris</u>	<u>Minchah</u> <u>Maariv</u>
Sunday	8:00	5:15
Monday	6:45	5:15
Tuesday	6:45	5:15
Wednesday	6:45	5:15
Thursday	6:45	5:15
Friday	6:45	5:15

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Ann (Channah) Shapiro White z"l*



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