

## A Rabbinic Perspective *By Rabbi Seymour Rosenbloom*

Reprinted from the April/May 2006 Adath Jeshurun Newsletter

### **The Twenty-Fifth Annual Passover Gathering: Thursday Morning, April 13, 2006**



**T**his year is a milestone. The Twenty-Fifth Annual Passover Gathering will be held on the first day of *Pesah*, Thursday morning, April 13, with festive holiday services beginning at 9:30 AM.

I remember well when we initiated the "Passover Gathering." I was discouraged by the poor attendance at services on *Pesah*. While the seder is one of the most universally observed Jewish rites, *Yom Tov* services went begging for worshippers.

Yet, in Biblical times, Passover was the beginning of the new year. Passover celebrates our freedom as a people. Indeed, Passover celebrates being a people, a proud people. So, I mused, would it be too much for us to come together on *Pesah* in a great assembly, just as we do on *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur*? Semi-annually we would rededicate ourselves to Jewish living and our people.

Now I am a realist, too. I was content to challenge the congregation to come in numbers sufficient to fill the Sanctuary on the first day of Passover. With each succeeding year, I saw the numbers grow. It was heartening to see how many members made the effort to be in *shul* on the first day of *Yom Tov*, even when it was normally a weekday.

Colleagues from all over the country asked me about this great congregational success. It was a source of great pride to me, and to the congregation. In recent years, though still strong, the numbers have slacked off. So this year, on the Twenty-Fifth Annual Passover Gathering, I am asking for your help in revitalizing this AJ original and infusing it with new energy. Let us fill the Sanctuary. Each person doing his or her part, one person at a time, family by family.

Come to this year's Passover Gathering. It will be a brief period of spiritual peace — a time of healing and rejuvenation, a time of joy and spirit, a time to recall our liberation as a people in ancient times, and a time to thank God for the freedoms we enjoy today.

The *Talmud* says "When a large crowd of Jews comes together, God is glorified." Let us come together for God's glory, for our own spiritual well-being, for our nation and for our people.

Cindy and I, our children, and all the members of the synagogue professional staff join in extending to you our heartfelt best wishes that this festival season will be filled with joy and peace. May it be a time for expressing love to those who are dearest, and achieving reconciliation among those who have been estranged. During this season, when we remember our exodus from Egypt, the most formative event in the history of our people, may we rededicate ourselves to living full, intense, and productive lives as Jews and as human beings.

May God bring peace to our hearts and homes, to our nation, to our homeland of Israel, and to the whole world.

Thursday, April 13—put it on your Calendar— The Twenty-Fifth Annual Passover Gathering.

*Hag Kasher V'Sameach!* A kosher and happy *Pesah* to one and all.

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