April-June 2014 קול מבשר Kol MevaSer

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We Dig Israel! (Or, How to Enjoy an Archaeological Dig in Half-a-Day)

by David Loshin and Kira Loshin

s Zionist Jews, we feel a strong bond to the land of Israel. We are encouraged to visit Israel, traverse the land, and even sponsor its reforestation through planting trees, thereby both literally and figuratively establishing roots in the land. At the same time, there is an opportunity to establish a connection to our heritage





and the land of Israel by taking things out of the land through archaeology. During our recent family trip to Israel, we were able to participate in a half-day program run by the Archaeological Seminars Institute (http://www.archesem.com) called Dig for a Day. The program, which operates daily tours at the Beit Guvrin National Park, provides a full hands-on overview of an archaeological dig.



The program started with a discussion of the formation of a tel, or an archaeological mound created by sequences of occupation, settlement, destruction, and then repopulation of a geographical location. This was followed by an introduction to the history of the area, long valued as a central point along trade routes in the ancient Middle East.

The park, which encompasses over 1200 acres of land southwest of Beit Shemesh, includes approximately 2000 caves dug into the chalky ground, as well as Tel Maresha, a mound hiding the biblical city of Maresha. The city of Maresha is mentioned in Tanach (Divrei Hayamim 2, 11:5-8) as being fortified by King Rehoboam, son of King Solomon, as part of the defenses against the Egyptian king Shishak:

5. And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and he built cities for fortification in Judah.

6. And he built Bethlehem and Etam and Tekoa.

7. And Beth-Zur and Socho and Adullam.

8. And Gath and Maresha and Ziph.

:ה וַיֵּשֶׁב רְחַבְעָם בִּירוּשָׁלָם וַיִּבֶן עָרִים לְמָצוֹר בִּיהוּדָה: ו וַיָּבֶן אֵת בֵּית לֶחֶם וְאֵת עֵיטֵם וְאֵת תִּקוֹעַ: ז וְאֶת בֵּית צוּר וְאֶת שׁוֹכוֹ וְאֶת צַדַּלַם: :ח ואָת גַּת ואָת **מָרֵשָׁה** ואָת זיף:

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A Community That Serves Kiddush Together . . .

by Rebekah Rasooly

asechet Eruvin deals explicitly with the task of delimiting spaces into private domains. There are several types of "eruvs." One involves creating a defined domain to allow carrying on Shabbat, which is the familiar kind of eruy, the one to which we donate money annually. That's called an Eruv Techumim. There is a second kind, called Eruv Chatzerot, which is established to allow people living in a common courtyard to share that space on Shabbat. An Eruv Chatzerot is created by sharing a loaf of bread. The act of eating together and sharing the responsibilities of a meal symbolically creates a common shared space on Shabbat.

Sociologists theorize that communities can also be constructed simply by cooperation among people or groups of people, often termed "building social capital." We become more connected to each other through acts of service maybe because such service demonstrates our sense of mutual equality, or perhaps because it allows us to build

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From the Rabbi

Pesach and Shir HaShirim

by R. Yaakov Bieler, Pesach 5774



Moshe Isserles (RaMA) writes in his addendum to Shulchan Aruch, Orech Chayim 490:9, "And it is customary to recite Shir HaShirim on Shabbat Cholo Shel Moed [of Pesach]." The rationale of the association of this Megilla with Pesach

is the subject of much discussion among the commentators. Some understand particular verses in the Megilla as references to the Exodus:

Machzor Vitri; Pri Megadim #8 d.h. Shir HaShirim; Mishna Berura #17 d.h. VeNohagim Lomar Shir HaShirim... Because there is explicitly referenced within (Shir HaShirim) the Exodus from Egypt.³

Vilna Gaon on Shir HaShirim 2:84

This verse refers to the promise made by Moshe that HaShem will Come to Redeem us from the Egyptian servitude.⁵ Others identify the overall theme of Shir HaShirim with the

events culminating with the Pesach experience: What we should be brought to ask

Akeidat Yitzchak⁶

The story of Shir HaShirim, where a shepherd girl is enamored with a lover, only to lose him due to her indiscretions, but eventually

succeeds in reestablishing her relationship with him, is a parable of biblical Jewish history. "This parallels the experience of the Jewish people, starting with God's Manifestation in the tents of our fore-mothers through the saga of Yoseph and his brothers, the enslavement in Egypt, the redemption, the receiving of the Torah, and the [atonement for the sin of worshipping the] Golden Calf, finishing with the building of the Mishkan and God Resting His Presence in it...."

task?"

R. Yitzchak Hutner⁷

According to Shemot 40:17,8 the Mishkan was first erected on Rosh Chodesh Nissan, the same month during which the Exodus took place. Within the Kodesh HaKodashim, atop the Aron, as part of the Kaporet (the cover of the Aron) two Cheruvim stood. There are various accounts of how these objects appeared, with one source stating:

Yoma 54a

R. Kattina said: Whenever Israel came up to the Fes-

tival, the curtain would be removed for them and the Cheruvim were shown to them, whose bodies were intertwisted with one another, and they would be thus addressed: Look! You are beloved before God as the love between man and woman.

...The [Mishkan] embodies the romance of the Jews and [HaShem]. The [Mishkan] is where Shir HaShirim takes on its physical form.... [Redemption from Egypt] means leaving slavery as a means to enter God's embrace.... [See Yechezkel 16]

Modern Israeli commentators, as a result of their acute sensitivity to the natural seasons in the land of Israel, note the symbolism of the particular time of year in which Pesach and Shir HaShirim take place:

R. Rafael Weinberg9

"This Megilla which is in its entirety a paean to nature and its beauty, 10 is very appropriate for Pesach, the holi-

day of the spring, which begins during the period of flowering and germination, when nature comes to new life and is apparent in all of its beautiful glory.... The month of spring¹¹ [Nissan] that symbolizes the renewal of nature, symbolizes as well the renewal of the Jewish people and the spring of

the entire world....

R. Binyamin Lau¹²

The obvious connection between the holiday and the Megilla is the *seasonal climate* [i.e., springtime] in which the Megilla is written....

However, R. Lau then appears to depart from the theme of nature, and instead reflects upon the psychological dynamics between the lovers in Shir HaShirim, and by extension between

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Further Reading

Some of Rabbi Bieler's Divrei Torah, along with podcasts of some of his Shiurim, are available at the synagogue website. To access this material, go to www.kmsynagogue.org and move your cursor to "Rabbi" on the left-hand side of the home page.

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of ourselves on Shabbat Cholo Shel

Moed of Pesach when listening to

Shir HaShirim is, "Are we up to the

A Student Delegate Reflects on Her AIPAC Experience

Outside the Convention Center there were

non-Jews and Chassidim, joining together to

protest against AIPAC at its biggest world-wide

by Reena Wasserstein

alking along the sidewalk leading to the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, I witnessed a sight I had never seen before. Surrounding me stood packs of non-Jews and Chassidim, joining together to protest against the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) at its biggest world-wide annual policy conference, and against the state of Israel itself-for reasons ranging from claims of apartheid, to arguing that the state should not exist altogether.

A quick Google search for the word "AIPAC" shows that the fifth search response directs internet users to Al Jazeera, followed by a long list of anti-Israel and anti-AIPAC websites

after that-including occupyaipac.org and stopaipac. org—whose sole purpose is to publicize anti-Israel propaganda.

But sites like these, along annual policy conference, and against the with the various groups state of Israel itself—for reasons ranging from ference doors, were a stark should not exist altogether. contrast to what was happening inside the Convention Center.

Walking into the Center, my fellow student delegates and I witnessed an incredible sight. The multiple levels of both buildings were packed wall-to-wall with both Jews and non-Jews joining together to support Israel.

"More than 14,000 pro-Israel Americans, more than twothirds of Congress, more than 2,200 students from 491 campuses, 260 Geller Student Government Presidents from all 50 states, 50 national and state leaders of the College Democrats of America and College Republican National Committee, more than 250 Synagogue delegations," and something they highlighted the entire conference, "Jews, Christians, African Americans and Latinos from all 50 states," said aipac.org, when characterizing the AIPAC experience.

For us, as student delegates, witnessing the difference between the people outside the Convention Center, protesting against Israel, and the thousands more gathering together inside, from around the world and from so many different ethnic and religious groups, to support Israel, is awe-inspiring.

Throughout the conference, AIPAC leaders, understanding the power of this inspiration, made a point of highlighting the differences among people who support Israel, beginning with the first speech.

"I am AIPAC," were the first words heard at AIPAC 2014. Delivered in a range of voices, they displayed the variety of types of people who stand with and support Israel. A businessman from Detroit, an executive for the National Basketball Association and a White House aide, Republicans and Democrats, an Evangelical preacher from Kentucky, a Mexican-American, a Jewish-American, a woman speaking Spanish, a U.S. army veteran, a recording artist and a pastor

> who ended with "I am, you are, we are AIPAC."

Olga Miranda, a Spanishspeaking self-described union leader commented on Israel's relationship with a diversity of com-

protesting outside the con- claims of apartheid, to arguing that the state munities. She said "Mi causa, sí se puede," which can be translated as "my cause, yes we can." Claiming that "Israel is about creating allies, and AIPAC is about sustaining those relationships" she noted that Israel "helped me appreciate the common core values that we all, Israelis, Americans, Latinos share" and that "we must be committed

> AIPAC comes to show the unity from across the country, and even across the globe, for relations between America and Israel. This message was a powerful contrast to those handfuls of protestors outside the Convention Center, and to the hateful websites against Israel. As a student from a relatively small Jewish day school, and residing in a suburban community outside the New York area, I found it simply overwhelming to see the support worldwide for Israel and for AIPAC.

> to wanting to stand with each other." She focused on the

commonalities between the Latino community and Israel,

stating that "I stand here today because Israel is 'mi causa,"

and affirming her support for Israel.

[The author is in the 10th grade at the Melvin J. Berman Hebrew Academy. A slightly different version of this article will appear in the Spring issue of Hamodiya, a school publication.]

REFLECTIONS ON SHABBAT PRAYER

Part 31 "VaYechulu"

by R. Yaakov Bieler

The biblical verses describing the first Shabbat celebrated by HaShem immediately following the Creation of the universe, Beraishit 2:1-3,¹ are 1)privately recited within the Friday evening Ma'ariv Amida,²³ 2) publicly recited by the congregation immediately after everyone has completed their own personal Amida on Friday evening,⁴,⁵ and 3) constitute the first paragraph of the Friday evening Kiddush at one's Shabbat table,⁶,⁵ which leads to the obvious conclusion that these verses are considered by the organizers of the prayer book to be central to the beginning of every Shabbat experience.

"VaYechulu" is a ratification of the Mitzva to observe Shabbat in the first biblical account of the Ten Commandments.

Calling to mind this paradigmatic Heavenly Shabbat is in keeping with the first of the two versions of the Ten Commandments that are recorded in the Tora. In contrast to the particularistic Jewish history rationale offered in the second version appearing in Devarim—whereby the reason for Shabbat observance is stated as, (5:14-5) "But the seventh day is a Sabbath unto the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any manner of work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God Brought thee out by a Mighty Hand and by an Outstretched Arm; therefore the LORD thy God Commanded thee to keep the Shabbat day"—the passage beginning "VaYechulu" is in keeping with the first version's universalistic explanation: (Shemot 20:11) "For in six days the Lord Made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and Rested on the seventh day; wherefore the Lord Blessed the Shabbat day, and Hallowed it."

$Shabbat\ observance\ realizes\ an\ individual's\ spiritual\ potential.$

Consequently, at least at the outset of the holy day, i.e., Friday evening, the emphasis on the "VaYechulu" passage in prayer and Kiddush implies that the Shabbat observer should see himself as fulfilling one of the meta-principles of Jewish religious observance: (Devarim 28:9) "The Lord will Establish thee for a holy people unto Himself, as He hath Sworn unto thee; if thou shalt keep the Commandments of the Lord thy God, and *walk in His Ways*." The premise that all men have been Created in God's Image/Likeness⁹ is brought to fruition

when one acts in a Godly manner, and Shabbat observance becomes a double manifestation of this concept. Not only is a person complying with one of the Commandments that God Issued to man to create a pattern of behavior in accordance with God's Will (i.e., His Ways), but he is also literally emulating God's Example by ceasing his ordinary creative activities and ideally spending a day in contemplation and reflection regarding his individual spiritual experience and relationship to HaShem.

The uniqueness of this particular manifestation of "walking in God's Ways."

The most far-reaching Talmudic passage that describes a number of behaviors modeled by God intended for man's emulation appears in Sota 14a:

R. Chama son of R. Chanina further said: What means the text: "Ye shall walk after the Lord your God" [Devarim 13:5]? Is it, then, possible for a human being to walk after the *Shechina*; for has it not been said: "For the Lord thy God is a Devouring Fire" [Ibid. 4:24]? But [the meaning is] to walk after the Attributes of the Holy One, Blessed Be He.

- 1) As He *Clothes the naked*, for it is written: "And the Lord God Made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin, and Clothed them," [Beraishit 3:21] so do thou also clothe the naked.
- 2) The Holy One, Blessed Be He, *Visited the sick*, for it is written: "And the Lord appeared unto him by the oaks of Mamre," [Ibid. 18:1] so do thou also visit the sick.
- 3) The Holy One, Blessed Be He, *Comforted mourners*, for it is written: "And it came to pass after the death of Avraham, that God Blessed Yitzchak his son," [Ibid. 25:11] so do thou also comfort mourners.
- 4) The Holy one, Blessed Be He, *Buried the dead*, for it is written: "And He Buried him in the valley," [Devarim 34:6] so do thou also bury the dead.

All of the enumerated cases involve man's doing something, actively seeking out those in need and assisting them in terms of what they are lacking. "Resting" on Shabbat generally is not about doing something for others, 11 but rather allowing time for oneself to at least temporarily stop what one normally does, and engage in Tora study, lengthier prayer, meaningful and relaxed interchanges with one's family, and contemplation and reflection regarding where one stands spiritually in his relationship with the Divine. Furthermore, when comparing

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"My Hon": In Memory of Cheryl Stern, 1960-2013

by Larry Stern

[In the past year, KMS has lost three long-time members—Gordon Lederman, Cynthia Abrams, and Cheryl Stern. Their loss has been felt profoundly not only by their families but by their friends and the many in our community, and beyond, whose lives they touched. Below we remember and pay tribute to Cheryl. In upcoming issues we will pay tribute to the lives of Cynthia and Gordon.]

and this is by far both the hardest and easiest one I've ever given. It's the hardest because my wife, best friend, mother of my kids and soul mate is lying here, along with a big chunk of my heart that died, and is with her as well. It's the easiest because my job is to eulogize her, which means to praise her and extol her virtues and I could do that all day long without any trouble whatsoever.

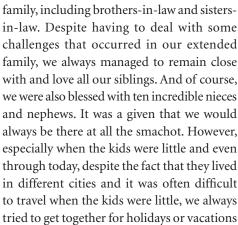
It starts with the words she constantly told the kids: whatever you do, you have to be a good person. These are words that she always

lived by, no matter the context. I've often felt that you can best judge people based on how they act with people they don't know or when times are difficult. With my hon, that point was proved in spades. Throughout our fight against this terrible disease, we had countless doctor visits and treatments. Unfailingly, she'd always greet each of our doctors and nurses with a big smile and greeting. She'd comment on what a pretty skirt or top the nurse was wearing, and would always thank them for helping her or comment on how good their technique was, regardless of how she herself was feeling. Quite frankly, if you closed your eyes and just listened, you wouldn't know who was the patient, and who was the caregiver trying to make the patient feel better.

As far as being a friend, well, the best way to describe her is as someone who cared, and in return, so many cared about her. She always asked about people, and she took interest in and remembered what was going on in their lives. She didn't just make friends, she kept them. She still had close friends from elementary school, high school, college, when we were first married and from all the other stages of our lives. They are still her friends. In fact, what describes her best in terms of friendships is that at each of our smachot, whether bar or bat mitzvahs or weddings, there was always a picture of Cheryl and her seven bridesmaids. They always all came since they all remained close friends of hers. It's amazing how so many of

her friends commented that they wished that they had known her then so that they could be in those pictures, but she cared for and loved them all.

However, anyone who knew Cheryl knew that family was her main priority. Her sister Aileen was also her closest friend and her relationships with her mom and her dad were both beautiful and mutual. But she was incredibly close with all her



and even just for Shabbat because it was important to us that the cousins become close to each other, as we were with our siblings. It gave both of us so much joy to know that the cousins are so close and that some of our kids' closest friends are their first cousins. But it wasn't an accident....it was a goal of ours and Cheryl helped make that happen.

But the first and foremost priority in her life was our children. A mommy was who she was; whether caring for them, raising them, worrying about them or, most importantly, always loving them and taking pride in them, no matter what they did or how they did it. It was total and unconditional love for each of them. While she may have adjusted the time she gave each of them based on their needs, the amount of love for each of them was exactly the same. A great story that exemplified who she was as a mother happened a couple of weeks ago when Josh took his SAT's. He had to get up at 6:15 in the morning and ordinarily, she'd have gotten up with him just to be sure he was up and to wish him luck. Unfortunately, by then she wasn't walking much by herself. In addition, she was taking several prescription drugs that all contained narcotics. She took them before bed and when she invariably woke up around 3 or 4. Any one of those medications would have knocked me out for several hours. However, despite all these narcotics, I remember waking at 6:20 to hear her voice as she

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Asara B'Tevet and the Holocaust

by R. Yaakov Bieler

Ithough Asara B'Tevet comes on the heels of Chanuka (the 8th day of Chanuka coincides with the 2nd day of Tevet), it commemorates an event that constitutes the very converse of the Festival of Lights. In contrast to Chanuka, which is associated with the refurbishing and rededication of the Second Temple that had been pillaged and contaminated by the Seleucids, Asara B'Tevet was established for the Jewish people to annually recall the beginning of Nevuchadnezzar's siege against Yerushalayim that ultimately resulted in the razing of the First Temple by the Babylonians. This day is one of a series of fasts calling to mind the destruction of the Temples, including Tzom Gedalya and Shiva Asar B'Tammuz, and culminating in Tisha B'Av.

Last year I became aware of an additional theme, connected to Asara B'Tevet and instituted by the Israeli Rabbinate, namely the Holocaust. Here is what R. Yisrael Meir Lau, former Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi, a survivor of the Shoa himself, wrote fifty-five years ago, reflecting the link that was established between these two national tragedies:

Soon after the State of Israel was established, the Chief Rabbinate designated the fast as the "General Day of Kaddish" in remembrance of the six million innocent Jews who were killed in WW II by the Nazi tyrants, since for most of them there is no record of their date of death nor are there any surviving relatives to say Kaddish for them. Yahrzeit candles are lit and Mishnayot are studied in their memory.

There is a deep symbolism in the joint commemoration of these two events—the siege of Jerusalem by Nevuchadnezzar and the Holocaust. It is as if we are offering a prayer that the Holocaust should be our people's final suffering. We can but hope that the words of the prophet Zecharya [8:19] will be fulfilled: "So says the Lord of Hosts: the fast of the fourth [month—the 17th of Tamuz] and the fast of the fifth [month—the 9th of Av] and the fast of the seventh [month—the Fast of Gedalia] and the fast of the tenth [month—the 10th of Tevet] will be for the House of Judah days of rejoicing and exultation

and of goodly festivals; therefore love peace and justice." We should note in passing that the Israeli Kenesset—the Israeli Parliament—chose the 27th of Nissan as "The Day of the Holocaust and Valor." On that day, in 1943, the Warsaw Ghetto finally fell to the Nazi murderers after an unbelievably valiant fight by a handful of Jews who still remained in the ghetto. The two dates chosen are not contradictory, for the 10th of Tevet is the memorial to the Jews who perished, while the 27th of Nissan commemorates the valor of the ghetto and other resistance and partisan fighters. Thus the first symbolizes the spiritual valor of the Jews who, despite the most degrading conditions ever devised by man, nevertheless retained their humanity, while the second symbolizes their physical valor in opposing the mightiest army in the world with almost no resources.²

This year, I decided that in the weeks leading up to Asara B'Tevet, we would solicit from our membership names of anyone known to them whom we could commemorate on this day. We lit a Yahrzeit candle during Shacharit, and made a special Keil Maleh, during which I mentioned the thirty-eight individual names that members had submitted, the various relatives of these people, as well as names of entire families that were practically wiped out. I was told by several of those submitting names that these names represented massive families of hundreds of people who perished during this darkest time of Jewish history.

Fast days are meant to be sobering, but this year's Asara B'Tevet at KMS was especially so. It is important that the unfortunate victims of the Shoa be remembered for as long as possible. It is not too early to send in names for mention during next year's fast. We will add any such names to the list that was begun this year. May their memory truly be for a blessing.

Notes:

1997, pp. 279-80.

¹The memoir of his life, *Out of the Depths: The Story of a Child of Buchenwald Who Returned Home at Last* (OU Press, Sterling, New York, 2011) is very moving and definitely worth reading. ²*Practical Judaism*, trans. R. Shmuel Himmelstein, Modan, Tel Aviv,

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HaShem and the Jewish people. He notes that while there is a great deal of loving emotion imagined and expressed on both parts, the time that the lovers actually spend together is nonexistent. Perhaps the climax, as well as the most frustrating part, of the story is when the lovers are almost united, but due to the procrastination of one, the other departs:

Shir HaShirim 5:2-6

I sleep, but my heart waketh; Hark! my beloved knocketh: "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, my locks with the drops of the night." I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them? My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my heart was moved for him. I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with flowing myrrh, upon the handles of the bar. I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had turned away, and was gone. My soul failed me when he spoke. I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

The sense that just as the two lovers are determined to be together, but for one reason or another, continue to "miss" opportunities, the same is true both for the Jewish people in general—who throughout their history may essentially wish to live up to God's Expectations for them, but constantly come up short or even retrogress—and each individual in particular in his quest to come as close as possible to the Divine.

But suddenly R. Lau comes full circle, and returns to the theme of nature:

The "Aviviyut" ["springness"] of Shir HaShirim brings the couple to "leaping on the mountains, and skipping over the hills."13 There is a spirit of movement throughout the book. There is no quiet. There is no sense of calm that characterizes a home that proceeds along a regular pattern.... The essence of [Pesach] is "skipping"—God Skipped in Egypt over the houses of the Jewish people when He Smote the Egyptian first-born, 14 the Egyptians hurried the Jews to leave Egypt as quickly as possible,15 and the Jews left as quickly as possible, not even allowing their loaves to rise....¹⁶ There is (in the book, as well as the holiday) the spirit of a couple that is just beginning their relationship and who spend a great deal of time thinking, imagining and longing between each and every encounter.

R. Lau ends his essay by considering the "double-edged sword" aspect of the heady atmosphere engendered by the season, the holiday and the book:

The good news that accompanies Pesach is that there are prospects for love [between God and Israel]. The cautionary message that Shir HaShirim conveys is (8:4) "'I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem: Why should ye awaken, or stir up love, until it please?""

In other words, as passionate as feelings of love may be, to maintain a long-term relationship where both parties feel fulfilled, respected, loved, serious amounts of time and sacrifice will be required. What we should be brought to ask of ourselves on Shabbat Cholo Shel Moed of Pesach when listening to Shir HaShirim is, "Are we up to the task and expectations?" Hopefully we will respond with a resounding "Yes!!!"

Notes:

¹RaMa also notes that Kohelet is read on Shabbat Cholo Shel Moed Sukkot and Rut on Shavuot.

²Eliyahu Ki Tov, in his Sefer Toda'a (Sefer Rishon, Krach Sheini, "Nissan/Leil HaSeder," Machon LeHotzoat Sephorim, Yerushalayim, 1969, p. 122) mentions that there is in addition to the reading on Shabbat Cholo Shel Moed Pesach, a custom to recite Shir HaShirim at the end of the Seder. Many Haggadot either mention the practice of reciting this Megilla, e.g., R. Menacham Kasher, Haggada Shleima, p. 91, or even include the entire text, e.g., Haggada Shel Pesach— Torat Chaim, pp. 199-202.

³The only verse in Shir HaShirim which could be construed as explicitly referencing Yetziat Mitzrayim is (1:9) "I have compared thee, O my love, to a steed in Pharaoh's chariots." Da'at Mikra d.h. BeRichvai Pharoah (Amos Chacham) explains: "In Pharoah's stable of riding horses, i.e., a horse that Pharoah, the king of Egypt, in his glory would personally ride upon. This horse must certainly have been exceptional among horses and beautified with jewelry that attracts the eye. (In fn. 24, the commentator adds: "For some people, comparing the beloved to a horse appears strange. However, it is merely a matter of what is customary, since it is possible to compare a woman to a sheep, a deer, an antelope, a dove, etc., so too it is possible to compare her to a horse." [Perhaps this is a function of whether or not a person is accustomed to rural farm life where animals may be viewed differently, as opposed to someone with urban sensibilities.]

4"Hark! my Beloved! Behold, He Cometh, Leaping upon the mountains, Skipping upon the hills."

⁵The first time that Moshe, via Aharon, makes such a promise is in Shemot 4:29-31:

And Moshe and Aharon went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel. And Aharon spoke all the words which the LORD had Spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had Remembered the children of Israel, and that He had Seen their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped. ⁶As summarized at http://judaism.stackexchange.com/ questions/666/shir-hashirim-on-shabbos-chol-hamoed.

⁷As summarized at http://chasingdepth.blogspot.com/2011/04/ pesach-lovestory-shir-hashirim.html.

8And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up. [Although until the Exodus, Tishrei was considered the first month of the year, the history of the Jewish people begins with their redemption from Egypt on the 15th of Nissan, establishing Nissan from that moment on as the beginning of the Jewish year: see Shemot 12:2; Rosh HaShana 1:1.]

⁹http://www.gfn.co.il/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2310.

¹⁰E.g., Shir HaShirim 2:2-3

As a lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. As an apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. Under its shadow I delighted to sit, and its fruit was sweet to my taste.

Ibid. 11-13

For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines in blossom give forth their fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

¹¹Devarim 16:1

Observe the month of Aviv [spring], and observe the Passover unto the Lord thy God; for in the month of Aviv the Lord thy God Brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.

¹² Shir HaShirim LeShabbat Cholo Shel Moed Pesach" in Etnachta:

Kriyot BeParashat HaShavua, Vol. 2, Yediot Achronot, Tel-Aviv, 2009, pp. 541-4.

13Shir HaShirim 2:8

Hark! my beloved! behold, he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.

14Shemot 12:23

For the Lord will Pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He Seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side-posts, the Lord will "Pasach" [Pass] over the door, and will not Suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

15Ibid. 33

And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, to send them out of the land in haste; for they said: "We are all dead men."

¹⁶Ibid. 39

And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual.

Israel Dig, continued from page 1

Occupied by the Idumeans (Edomites) after the destruction of the first Temple, Maresha was made into their capital during the Persian period. After the conquest of Alexander the Great, the city of Maresha was developed as a Hellenistic city settled by Greek soldiers. In 112 BCE, the city was reconquered by the Hasmonean king John Hyrcanus (the son of Shimon, and nephew of Judah Maccabee), who destroyed the city, forced the residents to leave or convert, and rebuilt it as a Jewish city.

The city thrived under Jewish rule until the time of the Bar Kochba rebellion in 132-135 CE.

After the history lesson, we were invited to descend into one of the caves. The relatively soft limestone under the ground made it easy to dig caves. The quarried stones were used as building materials for above-ground structures, while the emptied caves provided a place for families to cool down, enabled storage for food and water, and even facilitated more

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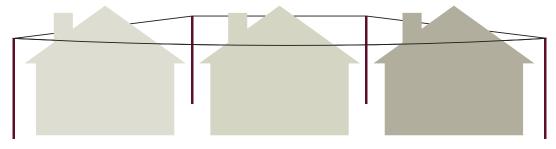
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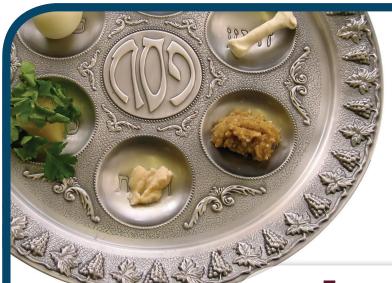
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Kiddush, continued from page 1

relationships that are the foundation of community. In a true community, everyone is both a servant and one who is served, simultaneously.

Which brings me to Kiddush Committees, a cornerstone of KMS and one of the shul's defining features. The many, many, many members who serve on Kiddush Committees, act as Kiddush Committee chairs (past and present), and arrange Kiddush for the other minyanim on a weekly basis, are engaged in community-building. Their service allows us to sanctify Shabbat communally and to eat and socialize together, creating a modern-day Eruv Chatzerot, a special shared "private" space on Shabbat. Their service demonstrates the shared values and shared commitments that characterize our KMS community, and helps give it the character that we all appreciate and enjoy. Thank you to the many of us, the large majority of the shul(!), who participate in Kiddush Committees!

[This article is based on a D'var Tora delivered by the author at KMS on February 22, Shabbat VaYakhel.]

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Prayer, continued from page 5

Shabbat to the four examples listed in Sota, God's Modeling Divine Rest *precedes* all of the other examples in time, occurring just after the creation of Adam and Chava and therefore well-before they became aware that they needed clothing, possibly suggesting that "Rest" occupies a special place with respect to the priorities that we should set if we do not think that we will be able to enact all of God's Exemplary Behaviors. Perhaps human Shabbat Rest that aspires to resemble the type of Rest attributed to God, serves as both a prerequisite and a goal with respect to the religious experience. ¹² It is during those moments of quiet contemplation that man can decide what it is that he needs to do in order to further his religious

development, as well as after-the-fact evaluate whether the measures in which he has engaged until this point have lived up to his expectations and have been carried out fully and with the proper intention.

As in so many things, in addition to regularly reciting this central biblical passage in our liturgy which most of us already do, stepping back and considering the implications of these words, why they play the role that they do and how they might inform the quality of our Shabbat experience, all can go far with respect to not only enhancing the time that we dedicate to Shabbat each week, but how we spend the rest of our lives bringing to the fore the Image of God which centrally resides within each of us.

Notes:

¹And the heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God Finished His Work which He had Made; and He Rested on the seventh day from all His Work which He had Made. And God Blessed the seventh day, and Hallowed it; because in it He Rested from all His Work which God in Creating had made.

²Koren Siddur, p. 349.

³A general discussion of the Friday night Amida can be found at: http://rayanotyaakov.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/prayer1_shabbat_maariv.pdf.

⁴Koren Siddur, p. 357.

⁵It cannot be said that "VaYechulu" is part of the quasi-Repetition of the Amida that takes place on Friday evening, since it is recited *prior* to the Shliach Tzibbur's beginning a telescoped version of the first blessing of Chazarat HaShaTz. Compare:

Standard first blessing

(e.g., Koren Siddur, p. 108):

Blessed are You, Lord our God and God of our fathers, God of Avraham, God of Yitzchak and God of Yaakov, the great, mighty, and awesome God, God Most High, Who Bestows acts of loving kindness and <u>Creates all</u>, **Who Remembers the loving kindness of the fathers and will bring a Redeemer to their children's children for the sake of His Name, in love. King, Helper, Savior, Shield: Blessed are You, Lord, Shield of Avraham.**

Friday evening first blessing

(Koren Siddur, p. 356):

Blessed are You, Lord our God and God of our fathers, God of Avraham, God of Yitzchak and God of Yaakov, the great, mighty, and awesome God, God Most High, **Creator of heaven and earth**.

⁶Ibid. p. 381.

A discussion of the Friday night Kiddush in general can be found at: http://rayanotyaakov.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/prayer6_shabbat_friday_night_kiddush.pdf.

⁸The association between Shabbat and the Exodus from Egypt does not constitute an exercise of "walking in God's Ways," but rather a recollection of what it was like to be enslaved, which should lead to empathy for those who are currently in one's employ.

9E.g., Beraishit 1:27

And God Created man *in His own Image, in the Image of God* Created He him; male and female Created He them. Ibid. 5:1

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God Created man, in the Likeness of God Made He him.

¹⁰While one is Toraitically prohibited from performing Melacha as well as Rabbinically prohibited activities that resemble or are related to the major categories of Melacha, the day is ideally intended for spiritual reflection and growth rather than a cessation of all human activity. ¹¹While Hachnasat Orchim often takes place on Shabbat more than on other days of the week, the preparations and hosting ironically often require more intense labor and effort than one's weekday activities! Clearly, hosting guests is a wonderful social activity enhancing tremendously the Shabbat experience, and when the individuals who are invited have nowhere else to go, extending hospitality does closely parallel the examples in Masechet Sota; however a case could be made that this is not the intended *essence* of the Shabbat experience.

¹²The dual nature of Shabbat rest that we are suggesting parallels the two dimensions of the attitude of Yirat HaShem (the fear of God) as described by a series of statements in the Talmud:

Shabbat 31a-b

ניסן-סיון 5774

1) Resh Lakish said, What is meant by the verse (Yeshayahu 33:6), "And there shall be faith in thy times, strength, salvation, wisdom and

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Prayer, continued from page 13

knowledge"? "Faith" refers to the Order of Seeds [the first of the six Orders of the Mishna]; "thy times", the Order of Festivals; "strength," the Order of Women; "salvation," the Order of Nezikin [damages]; "wisdom," the Order of Sacrifices; and "knowledge," the Order of Ritual Purity. Yet even so the fear of the Lord is his treasure [the most important thing, even beyond learning the law, is Yirat HaShem]. 2) Raba said, When man is led in for Judgment he is asked, Did you deal faithfully [i.e., with integrity], did you fix times for learning, did you engage in procreation, did you hope for salvation, did you engage in the dialectics of wisdom, did you understand one thing from another. Yet even so, if "the fear of the Lord is his treasure," it is well: if not, [it is] not [well].

This may be compared to a man who instructed his agent, "Take me up a kor of wheat in the loft," and he went and did so. "Did you mix in a Kav of chumton?" he asked him. "No," replied he. "Then it were better that you had not carried it up," he retorted. The School of R. Ishmael taught: A man may mix a kav of Chumton in a Kor of grain, and have no fear. [These various behaviors and values are important, but only within the context, after a prerequisite, of Yirat HaShem.]

- 3) Rabbah b. R. Huna said: Every man who possesses learning without the fear of Heaven is like a treasurer who is entrusted with the inner keys but not with the outer: how is he to enter? [Yirat Shamayim is like the outer keys, i.e., the prerequisite.]
- 4) R. Yannai proclaimed: Woe to him who has no courtyard yet makes a gate for same! [Learning is the gate to Yirat HaShem, which is the goal.]
- 5) Rav Yehuda said, The Holy One, blessed be He, Created His world only that men should fear Him, for it is said, (Kohelet 3:14) "And God hath Done it, that men should fear before Him." [Yirat HaShem is the goal.]

Cheryl Stern, continued from page 6

was calling Josh on her cellphone from the bed to make sure he was up and to wish him good luck. The narcotics were no match for her mommy instinct. She hated the idea of dying. It wasn't because she had regrets, because in fact she had no regrets about the people in her life that she loved. Her only regret was that she wouldn't be able to live longer with the people she loved, especially our children. However, at least the feeling was mitigated somewhat by the great pride she took in our children, the way we raised them, and the spectacular way they turned out. She often said to me in the last few months, when talking about our kids and the open and inviting home that we tried to raise them in, that we may not have had the nicest house of anyone we knew, but that she wouldn't have traded the nicest house for the kind of home we built together.

And then there is me. How can I describe the relationship we had where we loved each other so much, and yet liked each other even more? Where we could always talk, and yet generally knew what the other one was going to say before they said it? Where we could honestly say that we loved each other at the end of the 30 years more than we did at the beginning? My dad was the master of describing something best by telling a story, or a maisa as he would say, in Yiddish, and so I'm going to try and do that as well. It's a story that I told Cheryl back in February after a particularly bad CT scan that confirmed we were on a bad trajectory. I don't think I'd read this story since high school and certainly didn't appreciate it then but for some reason it came back to me at that time and it totally captured how I felt about her and us. The story is from Greek mythology and is similar to one told in many cultures. I believe it was Zeus who came down to earth dressed as an old poor man to see how his subjects were doing. As the story goes, Zeus went from house to house one evening asking for a place to stay and

no one let him in. Finally, an older childless couple answered the door and warmly invited him in. They fed him dinner and gave him a nice, warm place to sleep. The next morning, after they'd given him breakfast, Zeus revealed himself to them. He told them that, as a reward, he would grant them one wish of anything that they wanted. After thinking about it briefly, they came back and said that they knew what they wanted. They said that, when the time came for one of them to die, their wish was for the other one to go as well because neither of them could bear to live without the other. I told her that I finally really understood that story because that's how I felt. However, I also told her that there is one crucial difference between us and that story: we are definitely not childless, and therefore, I do have a lot to live for and want to be with them, even as I totally understand what the couple wished for and why.

You know, aside from the obvious tragedy here, there's also a terrible irony. Unfortunately for us, our story is now going to be the one which gets people to hug their kid or tell their spouse they love them an extra time today or in the future. It's a terrible irony because we were the family that always hugged and kissed our kids and there wasn't a day that went by that we didn't tell each other that we loved each other. From when were dating, we each called each other "hon" as a nickname. From that, we each said that the other was "my hon," and soon, we each called each other "my hon," as in "how's my hon?" "what's my hon doing?" or, just "I love my hon." In fact, she and I rarely ever ended a phone call, or left the other to do something, let alone went to sleep, without saying, "I love my hon," and the other one would answer, "I love my hon," or sometimes, simply, "me too." So, now, that we've had this final "conversation," and even though for the first time in over 30 years I won't get a response, I need to close with, "I love my hon."

Israel Dig, continued from page 9

complex activities, such as raising pigeons, pressing olives, or making wine. In time, a vast network evolved, with underground tunnels linking the caves together.

After John Hyrcanus conquered the city, the expelled inhabitants destroyed their own homes and filled the caves in with the ruins and with dirt. As excavators, we were handed picks, shovels, and buckets to loosen this dirt mixture, look for large remnants, and dump the remaining dirt into the buckets.

After about 45 minutes of picking, digging, and shoveling, we brought the buckets up and out of the cave. Teams of three people were formed to sift the dirt—dump it into a screened sifter that was to be shaken so that the dirt could be separated from various small items. As dust filtered through the sifter, the smaller artifacts were identified and removed. All of the artifacts (both large and small) were collected by the people running the program.

The last part of the program was a candlelit tour through some fully excavated caves. This involved squeezing through some very tight spaces that connected different rooms. Some of the rooms had columbaria, or niches in the walls used to raise messenger doves. When we came out of the tunnels, we ended up about 25 meters away from where we had originally entered the caves!

After this tour, all of the participants assembled to review what was found and to compare the patterns on the found artifacts to patterns from items already identified and dated from different time-periods as a way of dating the artifacts. Lastly, we were shown a pile of pieces of pottery that could not be reassembled into complete vessels, and therefore were no longer of archaeological interest to the project. We were invited to take some of these discarded shards as mementos of our visit.

So what did we find on our short dig? Almost all of the larger items were pieces of pottery, including some relatively hefty shards of large bowls. David found a sizeable piece of an oil jar—a coincidental connection to the time of the Hashmonaim and their need for pure oil for the Beit HaMikdash. But the most impressive find was the result of Kira's alert digging. After feeling the rim of an overturned bowl stuck in the ground, Kira abandoned the sharp tools and enlisted Gabi's help. By just gently digging with their hands, they were able to free a complete ceramic bowl that had not been seen in over 2000 years! The program leader, noting that this was an unusual and significant discovery, said that it probably originated in Greece and was a great example of high-end pottery of the time.

For anyone with interest in unearthing our past in the land of Israel, we highly recommend Archaeological Seminars Institute's Dig for a Day Program.



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ביסן-סיון April-June 2014 🛭 17

DONATIONS

The birth of grandson Rami to Aileen and Ben Kirschenbaum Sabine and Chaim Himmelfarb

A new granddaughter to Yael and Rabbi Sanford Shudnow Bea and Rich Greenberg

A new granddaughter to Shalom and Cynthia Brilliant Bea and Rich Greenberg

Rachel and Rabbi Ira Kosowsky
Risë Goldstein
(Keren HaSefer/Torah Fund)

Matt Kronisch for being a great neighbor Marc and Shuli Tropp

Jay Mazel for being a great neighbor Marc and Shuli Tropp

Ruth Goldberg's birthday David Abrams The birth of a grandson to Nurite and Craig Rosin Noah and Alice Baer

The birth of two granddaughters to Sharon and Leo Rozmaryn Alice and Noah Baer

The birth of a granddaughter in Israel to Cynthia and Shalom Brilliant Alice and Noah Baer

Rebecca Greenblum's engagement Jack and Beth Lichy

Uriel Levitt, youth honoree, a wonderful Ramah New England camper! Camp Ramah in New England

A new grandson for Betsy and Alan Chanales Michelle and Jonathan Schneck Marc Tropp

Arlene Groner's special birthday Sabine and Chaim Himmelfarb Sue and Arnie Schwartz Jack and Beth Lichy Anita and Mel Plotinsky Ed and Linda Zurndorfer

Natanya Nobel and Ron Murch
The Epstein Family
(THE GORDON LEDERMAN, Z'L, CHESED
WEEKEND)

Naomi Rosenbaum
The Epstein Family
(The Gordon Lederman, z'l, Chesed
Weekend)

Miriam, Achi, Sharona, Judah and Benjamin Guggenheim The Epstein Family (The Gordon Lederman, 2'l, Chesed Weekend)

REFUA SHELAIMA

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