AND IT SHALL BE FOR YOU'A SIGN

by Joshua Shoshan

It is now the Thursday night before the same Shabbat that, more than two years ago, was the Shabbat of my Bar Mitzvah. Just a few weeks before held the holiday of Passover. Parshat Hachodesh, which literally means "the parsha, or portion of the month," is the Shabbat that precedes, or falls upon the first day of, the Jewish month of Nisan. In the synagogue, on Shabbat Parshat Hachodesh, we read – in addition to the regular weekly reading – Exodus 12:1-20, from a second Torah scroll, where the Torah first describes the institution of Passover. We read of some of the first commandments, or mitzvot, given to the Children of Israel.

When I was thirteen years old, at my Bar Mitzvah, I gave a speech in the synagogue that I prepared with the help of Rabbi Yechiel Poupko. In Exodus 12:3, G-d tells Moses to "Speak to all of the congregation of Israel saying, 'on the tenth day of this month they should take for themselves a lamb for every house." The Pesikta D'Rav Kahana (part of the midrashic literature – a collection of homilies written in Palestine in the fifth century, CE) records the following: "Rabbi Yochanan comments, 'Is not this sacrificial lamb of Passover better than all the others." Meaning that this paschal sacrifice in Egypt was better than it will ever be in the

future? Why was this sacrifice better than it will ever be? Because, from the tenth day of the month of Nisan, the lambs would be tied to the legs of the beds in the houses of the Children of Israel, whereas in subsequent years the sacrifice took place on the fourteenth day — without any special ceremony beforehand. So when the Egyptians came in and saw the lambs tied up, they went into shock to see their god in such a lowly state.

In connection to this, we should note the comment of Rabbi Chiya Bar (a) n Exodus 12:21, "Draw out and take lambs according to your families and all the paschal sacrifice.' All of you are to draw out - that is, drag out an Egyptian's god and kill it before the Egyptian's very eyes, even as the Egyptian speaks up in protest." What message did I wish to convey when I was thirteen years old? That in order to become a Bar Mitzvah - one who takes upon one's self the commandments of the Torah - and that is what the Children of Israel were doing for the first time - it was necessary to perform a public act of loyalty to G-d



GIMME THAT OLD-TIME "COMMITMENT!"

There is another public act that the Children of Israel had to perform in Egypt, and it is very important to look at the commandment, because the verse (Exodus 12:13) contains the one word that truly explains what it means to do something in public: "And the blood of the paschal sacrifice should be on the house as a sign." The key word is 'sign' - that which signifies and identifies. This word, 'sign' - in Hebrew, ot - is found in relation to several other commandments: the circumcision (brit), the Sabbath and the phylacteries (tepbilin). With regard to circumcision, the Torah says, "And it is a sign - an ot - of the covenant" (Genesis 17:11). In regard to the Sabbath, G-d says, Shabbat

"is a sign of the covenant" between Himself and the Jewish people (Exodus 31:17). Also, in regard to the phylacteries, the verse says, "And you shall bind [the phylacteries] as a sign on your hand" (Deuteronomy 6:8). The blood on the doorposts, which was a sign in Egypt, said, "I am a Jew," as does circumcision, Shabbat and phylacteries.

Why is this twenty-year-old speech relevant to the reader? As you may have guessed, I grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home and had the good fortune of receiving a yeshiva education starting when I was a little boy. Without going into all the gory details, as a young adult I

strayed very far from my origins, moved to a

foreign land and, for more than a decade, lost interest in the day-to-day practices of Judaism. However, through a variety of ironic twists and turns and, introduced to it by my wife, who was not born Jewish, I began attending Rabbi Buchwald's Beginners Service at Lincoln Square Synagogue. Now, about a year and a half later, I find my old Bar Mitzvah speech to be surprisingly apropos to my current circumstances. As we learned from the Midrash above, the blood of the paschal lamb in Egypt was a sign of the commitment of the Children of Israel to accept the Torah's commandments. So, too, for me, the daily wearing of tephilin (phylacteries) and the weekly observance of Shabbat are signs of my personal re-commitment to the Jewish practices and traditions that began thousands of years ago at the time of the Exodus from Egypt. I wish you a Chag Kasher V'sameach, a happy Passover.

Joshua Shoshan works in Institutional Equity Sales at Deutsche Banc Alex. Brown in New York City. He and his wife Yona have been attending Lincoln Square's Beginners Service for a year and a half.

CONGRATULATIONS AND MAZAL TOV

MARRIAGES

Donna Arrick
and Russel Merman
Aline Azoulay
and Dr. David Smolanoff
Penina Cohen
and Aharon Hoffman
Rebeka David and Gabriel Boxer
Mazal Tov to parents Nina and Tim Boxer
Jacqueline Gold and Dr. Barry Grossman
Lisa Epstein and Dr. David Abrams
Anna Potoczek and Michael Morgenstern
Maura Ellen Shechtman
and Leonard Shaykin
Chana Tova Tehilla Strumpel
and Shimon (Steve) Klein

BIRTHS

Beth and Marc Bengualid,
on the birth of a boy, Jacob Isaac
Shelly and George Ben Nathan,
on the birth of twin girls,
nnifer and Caroline
H sah (Elizabeth Kirk) and Gerald Blitzer,
on the birth of a boy, Avraham
Judith Goldkrand and Barry Cheskin,
on the birth of a girl,
Joy Sarah (Bluma Shulamit)

Tracy and Sander Gerber,
on the birth of a girl, Talia Golda
Jill and Jonathan Lamstein,
on the birth of a boy, Joshua David
Elizabeth (Fried) and Dr. Baruch Silverstein,
on the birth of a boy,
Avraham Mordechai
Leah and Heshey Steinacher,
on the birth of a girl, Ruth

BAR/BAT MITZVAH

Shimon Gedalia Radovsky Mazal Tov to parents Yocheved and Chaim Radovsky

CONDOLENCES

Claude Devillers, on the loss of his mother,
Francois Devillers
Frank Dickstein, on the loss of his father,
Joseph Dickstein
Hannah Silbergeld Gordon,
on the loss of her husband,
Simeon Gordon
Henryka Haberman,
on the loss of her mother, Helen Korngold
Marilyn Rosen, on the loss of her mother,
Jeanne Rosen
The family of Jay Abrams

REFUAH SH'LEIMAH (SPEEDY RECOVERY)

Barry Diller Max Janovic Les Nelkin

THANK YOU

Honorable Enid Langbert, Petezie Sack and Ruth Gutradt, and all the Purim Schpielers, for the wonderful Purim presentation

SAVE THE DATE

Model Seder Mon, April 2 - 7 pm \$5 before April 1, \$10 at the door

LSS Dinner in Memory of Rabbi Herschel Cohen May 5 (no luncheon)

Beginners Shabbat Luncheons - Saturdays 12:30 pm - \$15 June 3

Beginners Schmooze - Mondays 8:15 pm - Free May 7. June 4

> All Night Shavuot Learn-in Sun, May 27, 11:30 pm - 6:45 am

| Thu April 5, 2001 - 12th of Nisan TA'ANIT BECHOROT MUKDAM Morning Services |
|---|
| Fri April 6, 2001 - 13th of Nisan EREV EREV PESACH Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM Latest time to burn Chametz 11:25 AM Candle Lighting 7:08 PM Mincha 7:15 PM |
| Sat April 7, 2001 - 14th of Nisan Tzav SHABBAT HAGADOL EREV PESACH 6:45 AM Morning Services 10:10 AM Latest time to eat Chametz 10:10 AM Daf Yomi 6:30 PM Mincha 7:15 PM Candle Lighting 8:09 PM Maariv 8:09 PM Begin seder after 8:09 PM |
| Sun April 8, 2001 - 15th of Nisan PESACH Morning Services 9:00 AM Daf Yomi 6:20 PM Mincha 7:05 PM Yom Tov candles after 8:09 PM Maariv 8:09 PM Begin seder after 8:09 PM |
| Mon April 9, 2001 - 16th of Nisan PESACH Morning Services 9:00 AM Daf Yomi 6:20 PM Mincha 7:05 PM Maariv 8:09 PM Yom Tov Ends 8:09 PM Daily Mincha & Maariv 7:15 PM |
| Tue April 10, 2001 - 17th of Nisan PESACH (CHOL HAMOED) Morning Services |
| Wed April 11, 2001 - 18th of Nisan PESACH (CHOL HAMOED) Morning Services |
| Thu April 12, 2001 - 19th of Nisan PESACH (CHOL HAMOED) Morning Services 7:00 & 7:30 AM |
| Fri April 13, 2001 - 20th of Nisan PESACH (CHOL HAMOED) Morning Services 7:00 & 7:30 AM Candle Lighting 7:15 PM Mincha 7:20 PM |
| Sat April 14, 2001 - 21st of Nisan PESACH 7:15 AM Daf Yom! 7:15 AM Morning Services 8:00 & 9:00 AM Talmud Class 6:25 PM Mincha 7:10 PM Yom Tov candles after 8:15 PM Maariv 8:15 PM |

| SCHEDULE OF SERVICES | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Sun April 15, 2001 - 22nd of Nisan PESACH Daf Yomi 7:15 AM Morning Services 8:00 & 9:00 AM Talmud Class 6:25 PM Mincha 7:10 PM Maariv 8:15 PM Yom Tov Ends 8:15 PM Daily Mincha & Maariv 7:25 PM | | | | |
| Fri April 20, 2001 - 27th of Nisan YOM HASHOAH Morning Services . 7:10 & 7:50 AM Candle Lighting . 7:22 PM Mincha . 7:25 PM | | | | |
| Sat April 21, 2001 - 28th of Nisan Shmini Daf Yomi 7:00 AM Bible Class 8:30 AM Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM Talmud & Bible Class 6:15 PM Mincha 7:15 PM Shabbat Ends 8:22 PM Daily Mincha & Maariv 7:30 PM | | | | |
| Mon April 23, 2001 - 30th of Nisanr ROSH CHODESH Morning Services | | | | |
| Tue April 24, 2001 - 1st of Iyar ROSH CHODESH Morning Services 7:00 & 7:40 AM | | | | |
| Wed April 25, 2001 - 2nd of lyar YOM HAZIKARON Morning Services 7:00 & 7:40 AM | | | | |
| Thu April 26, 2001 - 3rd of Iyar YOM HAATZMA'UT Morning Services | | | | |
| Fri April 27, 2001 - 4th of lyar Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM Candle Lighting 7:30 PM Mincha 7:35 PM | | | | |
| Sat April 28, 2001 - 5th of lyar Tazria- Metzora Daf Yomi 7:00 AM Bible Class 8:30 AM Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM Talmud & Bible Class 6:15 PM Mincha 7:15 PM Shabbat Ends 8:22 PM Daily Mincha & Maariv 7:30 PM | | | | |
| Fri May 4, 2001 - 11th of lyar 7:10 & 7:50 AM Morning Services 7:10 & 6:39 PM Earliest Candle Lighting 7:37 PM Candle Lighting 7:37 PM Mincha 6:45 & 7:45 PM | | | | |
| Sat May 5, 2001 - 2th of Iyar Acharel Mot- Kedoshim Daf Yomi 7:00 AM Bible Class 8:30 AM Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM Talmud & Bible Class 6:40 PM Mincha 7:40 PM Shabbat Ends 8:44 PM Daily Mincha & Maarly 7:50 PM | | | | |

| Fri May 11, 2001 - 18th of lyar LAG B'OMER Morning Services . 7:10 & Earliest Candle Lighting | 7:50 6:3 <i>2</i> 7:4 7:5、 | AM |
|---|--|----------------------|
| Sat May 12, 2001 - 19th of lyar Emor Daf Yomi Bible Class Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & Talmud & Bible Class Mincha Shabbat Ends Daily Mincha & Maariv | 7:40 | PM. |
| Frl May 18, 2001 - 25th of lyar Morning Services 7:10 & Earliest Candle Lighting Candle Lighting Mincha 6:45 & | 6:39 7:51 | PM PM |
| Sat May 19, 2001 - 26th of lyar Behar- Bechuk Daf Yomi Bible Class Morning Services 7:40, 9:00 & Talmud & Bible Class Mincha Shabbat Ends Daily Mincha & Maariv | 7:00 8:30 9:45 6:45 7:45 8:51 | PM PM |
| Mon May 21, 2001 - 28th of Iyar YOM YERUSHA Morning Services | 1.4YI 7:50 | M AM |
| Wed May 23, 2001 - 1st of Sivan ROSH CHODE: Morning Services 7:00 & | 3H 7:40 | АМ |
| Fri May 25, 2001 - 3rd of Sivan Morning Services . 7:10 & Earliest Candle Lighting | | |
| Sat May 26, 2001 - 4th of Sivan Daf Yomi Bible Class Morning Services Talmud & Bible Class Mincha Shabbat Ends Daily Mincha & Maariv | 7:50 | -M |
| Sun May 27, 2001 - 5th of Sivan EREV SHAVUC Morning Services . 7:10 & Candle Lighting Mincha Maariv . | 7:50 7:59 | AM PM PM PM |
| Mon May 28, 2001 - 6th of Sivan SHAVUOT Morning Services 4:55 & Bible Class Daf Yomi Mincha Yom Tov candles after Maariv | 7:10 7:55 | PM PM PM |

