### SMALL ACTS DO NOT GO UNNOTICED IN THE LARGER PICTURE

BE A MENSON

Tzu Gut Un Tzu heit - To God AND To Humankind

Shavuot commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, when the ationship between G-d and the Jewish people was solidified. Extremely ortant to this relationship, are the individual relationships between people. One lesson of Shavuot is that the viability of a relationship that we each have with G-d is premised upon the relationships that we have with each other.

To understand the importance of valuing relationships with individuals in the message of Shavuot, one must appreciate the connection between Sefirat HaOmer, the counting of the Omer (the time period between Passover and Shavuot), the receiving of the Torah at Mount Sinai and the reading of the

biblical Book of Ruth on Shavuot morning.

Traditionally, Sefirat HaOmer involves customs of mourning. This seems to be a paradox, especially at such a time of great joy and anticipation. We mourn because, as the Talmud (Yevamot 62b) tells us, between Passover and Shavuot all of Rabbi Akiva's 24,000 students tragically died from a plague as a result of their disrespect towards one another. The Maharsha (a 16th century commentator on the Talmud), as understood by Rabbi Joel Zeff, explained that the students should have been deferential towards each other out of respect for their Torah knowledge, and that, since the Torah is the source of life, they

were punished by being deprived of life. Furthermore, the D'var Yom BeYomo (58a), explains that the Jews merited receiving the Torah because of the extraordinary unity they displayed at Mount Sinai. When the students of Rabbi Akiva did not treat each other with sufficient respect, they did not merit to "rereceive" the Torah on the holiday of Shavuot. Their deaths remind us of the vital need for Jewish unity and respect as preconditions for receiving the Torah.

Dominating the Book of Ruth are the qualities of respect, kindness and tolerance, the basis for good human relationships. Ruth came from a royal Moabite family. In the prime of her life, her Jewish husband died, leaving her a destitute widow. Her Jewish mother in-law, Naomi, pleaded with Ruth and th's Moabite sister-in-law (who had also lost her husband, Naomi's other son), to return to their respective families so that they could salvage their lives while still young. The sister-in-law, Orpah, returned to her family. Ruth, however, devoted herself single-mindedly to Naomi. Poverty-stricken, they returned to the land of Israel (which Naomi, her husband and their two sons had left many years earlier to escape the famine). By following Naomi, Ruth gave up her chance to reclaim a life of guaranteed comfort, luxury, and respect in exchange

for the unknown status of a convert in Israel. When Ruth converted and accepted the commandments, her destiny

by Susan E. Canter changed. In Israel, Ruth met Boaz while gathering food in his fields. After they met, Boaz explained to her why he was dealing with her in such a kindly way (Ruth 2:11). Boaz told her that "...it has surely been told to me all that you did for your mother-in-law...and that you left your mother and father and your birthplace and went to a nation that you did not know." The Targum (the Aramaic translation/commentary) explains that Boaz was also telling Ruth, through prophecy, that she would merit having the kings of Israel as her descendants as a result of these two deeds.

The words of the Targum, and the order in which these deeds are listed,

seem to equate the first act, the support of Naomi, with the second act of leaving her parents and country. Both are equally responsible for Ruth's meriting her great reward; yet, looking closer, we see that one action was an incredible act of selfsacrifice: Ruth, after being widowed, did not return to her family, but decided to convert and become part of the Jewish nation, choosing a life of poverty in which she would be dependent upon charity for her sustenance. However, the other action, a daughter-in-law helping her elderly mother-in-law, was a seemingly ordinary kindness. What was so special about this everyday act that earned Ruth the

reward of being the Mother of Jewish royalty, or that the act was placed on the same plane as her extraordinary self-sacrifice in her decision to convert?

The lesson that the Book of Ruth is teaching us is that even the smallest and the most seemingly mundane act can be elevated to an act of great self-sacrifice if done with the proper intentions. Ruth's pure heart and her desire to do the will of G-d, raised her small act of kindness to the ultimate level, and she therefore merited having the monarchy of Israel descend from her. Human nature is such that we all have lofty goals and high aspirations. Boaz and Ruth, however, remind us that we also need to remember the potential greatness in everyday, ordinary acts. Seemingly small gestures, with no apparent larger significance, are noticed by G-d, who discerns in them a layer of meaning and importance beyond our mortal comprehension.

The Book of Ruth concludes with the genealogy of King David (who, according to tradition, was born and died on Shavuot), the great-grandson of Ruth and Boaz. King David, the Talmud tells us, is the forefather of the Messiah, a time when the Jewish people will once again be unified, just as they were at Mount Sinai.

Chag Sameach!

Susan E. Canter is an attorney with Merck-Medco and a member of the Beginners Service.

# CONGRATULATIONS AND MAZAL TOV

ENGAGEMENTS

Pamela Katz and Lee Fader Briele Stark and Joel Adler Mazal Tov to parents Helen and Robert Stark Bobbi Tannenbaum and Russel Siegel



Jackie Braun and Justin Garrod Mazal Toy to parents Marta and Joseph Braun

**BIRTHS** 

Polly and Gabriel Bousbib, on the birth of a girl, Shira Daniella Sandra and Alan Kipust, on the birth of a boy, Adam Cole Esther and Elliot Larner, on the birth of a boy, Binyamin Gedaliah Anat and Dr. Gabriel Levi, on the birth of a boy, Ezra Alexander Dr. Leora and Richard Linhart, on the birth of a girl, Ariella Jodie Jacqueline and Jeff Miller, on the birth of a girl, Alexandra Ashira and Asher Schepansky, on the birth of a boy, Shimon Pinchas Mazal Tov to grandparents Ellen and Chaim Cohen

Estie and Greg Shlionsky, on the birth of a boy, Yitzchak Mordechai



Allison and David Ullendorf, on the birth of a girl, Abigail Rose Mazal Tov to grandmother Regina Ullendorf Lori and Simon Zorour, on the birth of a boy, Ari Michael

**BAR/BAT MITZVAH** 

Jennifer Apple Mazal Tov to parents Robin and Stephen Apple Talia Barzel Mazal Tov to parents Hannah Lee and Dr. Eyal Barzel Leah Morse Mazal Tov to parents Michele and David Morse Yehuda Aryeh Steinberg Mazal Tov to parents Shaindel and Tom Steinberg Eliezer Zev Stromberg (10/2000) Mazal Tov to parents Linda and Dr. Gene Stromberg

CONDOLENCES

Diane Aiken, on the loss of her of father, Harry Hutmacher Chava (Eve) and Ruth Baygell, on the loss of their brother, Seth Baygell Elliot Larner, on the loss of his father, Bernard Larner Renee Leicht, on the loss of her mother, Rochelle Lippin

REFUAH SH'LEIMAH (SPEEDY RECOVERY)
Barry Diller

Harold Goldberg Max Janovic Les Nelkin

Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald, upon receiving an Honorary Doctorate from Yeshiva University

Helen Freedman, upon receiving the Aishet Chayil Award from the Jerusalem Reclamation Project

Tzipora and Dr. Moshe Rothkopf, upon receiving the Toras Chesed Award from the Bais Kaila Torah Preparatory High School

Regina Ullendorf, on her 80th birthday

### SAVE THE DATE

All Night Shavuot Learn-in Sun, May 27, 11:30 p.m. - 6:45 a.m.

Last and First Beginners Shabbat Luncheons of the Seasons June 2, Sept 8

> Rosh Hashana Mon - Wed, Sept 17 - 19

## **SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**

•	SOLIEDOLL OF SELVAIOLO	
Sun May 27, 2001 - 5th of Sivan EREV SHAVUOT           Morning Services         7:10 & 7:50 AM           Candle Lighting         7:59 PM           Mincha         8:05 PM           Maariv         8:48 PM	Fri July 6, 2001 - 15th of Tamuz         Morning Services       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Earliest Candle Lighting       6:55 PM         Candle Lighting       8:12 PM         Mincha       6:45 & 8:15 PM	Fri August 17, 2001 - 28th of Av         Morning Services       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Earlest Candle Lighting       6:27 PM         Candle Lighting       7:37 M         Mincha       6:45 & 7:
Mon May 28, 2001 - 6th of Sivan SHAVUOT           Morning Services         4:55 & 9:00 AM           Bible Class         6:55 PM           Daf Yomi         7:10 PM           Mincha         7:55 PM           Yom Tov candles after         8:59 PM           Maariv         8:59 PM           Tue May 29, 2001 - 7th of Sivan SHAVUOT	Sat July 7, 2001 - 16th of Tamuz Balak       7:00 AM         Daf Yorni       8:30 AM         Bible Class       8:30 AM         Morning Services       7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM         Perek & Bible Class       7:05 PM         Mincha       8:05 PM         Shabbat Ends       9:12 PM         Daily Mincha & Maariv       8:15 PM	Sat August 18, 2001 - 29th of Av Re'eh       7:00 AM         Daf Yoml       8:30 AM         Bible Class       8:30 AM         Morning Services       7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM         Perek & Bible Class       6:30 PM         Mincha       7:30 PM         Shabbat Ends       8:34 PM         Daily Mincha & Maariy       7:30 PM
Daf Yomi       7:15 AM         Morning Services       8:00 & 9:00 AM         Bible Class       6:55 PM         Talmud Class       7:10 PM         Mincha       7:55 PM         Maariv       8:59 PM         Yom Tov Ends       8:59 PM	Sun July 8, 2001 - 17th of Tamuz SHEVA ASSAR TAMMUZ         Fast Begins	Sun August 19, 2001 - 30th of Av ROSH CHODESH         Morning Services       7:00 & 8:30 AM         Mon August 20, 2001 - 1st of Elul ROSH CHODESH         Morning Services       7:00 & 7:40 AM         Fri August 24, 2001 - 5th of Elul
Daily Mincha & Maariv       8:05 PM         Fri June 1, 2001 - 10th of Sivan       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Morning Services       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Earliest Candle Lighting       6:46 PM         Candle Lighting       8:03 PM	Morning Services         7:10 & 7:50 AM           Earlest Candle Lighting         6:52 PM           Candle Lighting         8:09 PM           Mincha         6:45 & 8:15 PM           Sat July 14, 2001 - 23rd of Tamuz Pinchas	Morning Services
Sat June 2, 2001 - 11th of Sivan Nasso       Daf Yomi     7:00 AM       Bible Class     8:30 AM       Morning Services     7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM       Talmud & Bible Class     7:00 PM       Mincha     8:00 PM       Shabhat Finds     9:03 PM	Daf Yomi       7:00 AM         Bible Class       8:30 AM         Morning Services       7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM         Perek & Bible Class       7:05 PM         Mincha       8:05 PM         Shabbat Ends       9:09 PM         Daily Mincha & Maariv       8:10 PM	Daf Yomi       7:00 AM         Bible Class       8:30 AM         Morning Services       7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM         Perek & Bible Class       6:20 PM         Mincha       7:20 PM         Shabbat Ends       8:23 PM         Daily Mincha & Maariv       7:20 PM         Fri August 31, 2001 - 12th of Elul
Daily Mincha & Maariv   S:10 PM	Morning Services         7:10 & 7:50 AM           Earlest Candle Lighting         6:48 PM           Candle Lighting         8:05 PM           Mincha         6:45 & 8:10 PM           Sat July 21, 2001 - 1st of Av Matot-Masei ROSH CHODESH         7:00 AM	Morning Services       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Candle Lighting       7:12 PM         Mincha       7:15 PM         Sat September 1, 2001 - 13th of Elul Ki Teitzel       7:00 AM         Bible Class       8:30 AM
Sat June 9, 2001 - 18th of Sivan Beha'alotcha         7:00 AM           Daf Yomi         7:00 AM           Bible Class         8:30 AM           Morning Services         7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM           Talmud & Bible Class         7:00 PM           Mincha         8:00 PM           Shabbat Ends         9:07 PM	Bible Class       8:30 AM         Morning Services       7:35, 9:00 & 9:45 AM         Perek & Bible Class       7:00 PM         Mincha       8:00 PM         Shabbat Ends       9:05 PM         Daily Mincha & Maariv       8:05 PM         Fri July 27, 2001 - 7th of Av	Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM Talmud & Bible Class 6:05 PM Mincha 7:05 PM Shabbat Ends 8:12 PM Daily Mincha & Maariv 7:10 PM  Mon September 3, 2001 - 15th of Elul LABOR DAY Morning Services 7:05 & 8:
Daily Mincha & Maariv       8:15 PM         Fri June 15, 2001 - 24th of Sivan       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Morning Services       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Earliest Candle Lighting       6:54 PM         Candle Lighting       8:11 PM         Mincha       6:45 & 8:15 PM	Morning Services       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Earlest Candle Lighting       6:47 PM         Candle Lighting       7:59 PM         Mincha       6:45 & 8:05 PM         Sat July 28, 2001 - 8th of Av Devarim HAZON	Fri September 7, 2001 - 19th of Elul           Morning Services         7:10 & 7:50 AM           Candle Lighting         7:01 PM           Mincha         7:05 PM           Sat September 8, 2001 - 20th of Elul Ki Tavo
Sat June 16, 2001 - 25th of Sivan Sh'lach       Daf Yomi     7:00 AM       Bible Class     8:30 AM       Morning Services     7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM       Talmud & Bible Class     7:05 PM       Mincha     8:05 PM       Shabbat Ends     9:11 PM       Daily Mincha & Maariv     8:15 PM	Daf Yoml       7:00 AM         Bible Class       8:30 AM         Morning Services       7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM         Mincha       5:30 PM         Fast Begins       8:16 PM         Maariv & Kinnot       8:59 PM         Shabbat Ends       8:59 PM         Daily Mincha & Maariv       8:00 PM         Sun July 29, 2001 - 9th of Av TISH'A B'AV	Daf Yomi     7:00 AM       Bible Class     8:30 AM       Morning Services     7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM       Talmud & Bible Class     5:55 PM       Mincha     6:55 PM       Shabbat Ends     8:01 PM       Daily Mincha & Maariv     6:55 PM       Early Selichot     10:00 PM       Late Selichot     12:53 AM
Thu June 21, 2001 - 30th of Sivan ROSH CHODESH Morning Services 7:00 & 7:40 AM	Morning Services         7:00 & 8:30 AM           Early Mincha         1:32 PM           Mincha         7:45 PM           Fast Ends         8:46 PM	Sun September 9, 2001 - 21st of Elul Morning Services
Fri June 22, 2001 - 1st of Tamuz ROSH CHODESH           Morning Services         7:00 & 7:40 AM           Earliest Candle Lighting         6:56 PM           Candle Lighting         8:13 PM           Mincha         6:45 & 8:20 PM	FrI August 3, 2901 - 14th of Av       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Morning Services       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Earliest Candle Lighting       6:40 PM         Candle Lighting       7:52 PM         Mincha       6:45 & 7:55 PM	Mon September 10, 2001 - 22nd of Elul Selichot & Morning Services
Sat June 23, 2001 - 2nd of Tamuz Korach         7:00 AM           Daf Yomi         7:00 AM           Bible Class         8:30 AM           Morning Services         7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM           Talmud & Bible Class         7:10 PM           Mincha         8:10 PM           Shabbat Ends         9:13 PM           Daily Mincha & Maariv         8:20 PM	Sat August         4, 2001 - 15th of Av Vaetchanan NACHAMU           Daf Yomi         7:00 AM           Bible Class         8:30 AM           Morning Services         7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM           Perek & Bible Class         6:45 PM           Mincha         7:45 PM           Shabbat Ends         8:52 PM	Wed September 12, 2001 - 24th of Elui         6:40 & 7:30 AM           Selichot & Morning Services         6:40 & 7:30 AM           Thu September 13, 2001 - 25th of Elui         6:40 & 7:30 AM           Fri September 14, 2001 - 26th of Elui         6:40 & 7:30 AM           Selichot & Morning Services         6:40 & 7:30 AM           Candle Lighting         6:49 PM
Fri June 29, 2001 - 8th of Tamuz         7:10 & 7:50 AM           Morning Services         7:10 & 7:50 AM           Earliest Candle Lighting         6:56 PM           Candle Lighting         8:13 PM           Mincha         6:45 & 8:20 PM	Daily Mincha & Maariv       7:50 PM         Fri August 10, 2001 - 21st of Av       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Morning Services       7:10 & 7:50 AM         Earliest Candle Lighting       6:31 PM         Candle Lighting       7:43 PM         Mincha       6:45 & 7:50 PM	Mincha       6:55 PM         Sat September 15, 2001 - 27th of Elul Nitzavim       7:00 AM         Daf Yomi       7:00 AM         Bible Class       8:30 AM         Morning Services       7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
Sat June 30, 2001 - 9th of Tamuz Chukat       7:00 AM         Daf Yomi       7:00 AM         Bible Class       8:30 AM         Morning Services       7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM         Talmud & Bible Class       7:10 PM         Mincha       8:10 PM         Shabbat Ends       9:13 PM         Daily Mincha & Maariv       8:20 PM         Wed July 4, 2001 - 13th of Tamuz INDEPENDENCE DAY	Sat August 11, 2001 - 22nd of Av Eikev       7:00 AM         Daf Yomi       7:00 AM         Bible Class       8:30 AM         Morning Services       7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM         Perek & Bible Class       6:40 PM         Mincha       7:40 PM         Shabbat Ends       8:43 PM         Daily Mincha & Maariv       7:40 PM	Talmud & Bible Class       5:55 PM         Mincha       6:45 PM         Shabbat Ends       7:49 PM         Daily Mincha & Maariv       6:45 PM         Sun September 16, 2001 - 28nd of Elul         Selichof & Morning Services       7:00 & 8:30 AM
Morning Services 7:10 & 8:30 AM		