

SEPHARDIC KEHILA CENTRE

ABIR YAAKOB CONGREGATION



President
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ברוכים הבאים שבת שלום
Welcome to our Synagogue
Shabbat Shalom

Chief Rabbi
Haham Amram Assayag
Hazan
Rabbi David Kadoch
Shaliach Tzibur
Marc Kadoch

פרשת ויקהל-פקודי Perashat Vayakhel-Pekudei
Shabbat March 10th, 2018, כג' אדר תשע"ח / 23 Adar 5778
Perasha Page 516 Haftara 1164 in Artsroll

Shabbat Prayer Times

שיר השירים Shir Hashirim	5:50 p.m.
מנחה Minha	6:05 p.m.
קבלת שבת Kabalat Shabbat	6:20 p.m.
הדלקת נרות Candle Lighting	5:59 p.m.
שחרית מנין החיד"א (ותיקין) Shaharit Ha'Hida Vatikim	5:40 a.m.
שחרית (Main Synagogue/Barechu:9:35) Shacharit	8:30 a.m.
תהלים Tehilim	5:05 p.m.
מנחה Minha	5:35 p.m.
שבת טוב Shabbat Ends	7:00 p.m.

Ereb Shabbat, Friday March 16th, 2018
Minha 7:10 p.m. (Candle Lighting 7:07 p.m.)

Weekday Services at Medrash Torah Vehayim

שחרית Shacharit Sunday	
ותיקין Vatikim	6:55 a.m.
מקדימים Makdimim	8:00 a.m.
קבועים Kebuim	9:00 a.m.
שחרית Shacharit Weekdays	
ותיקין Vatikim	6:55 a.m.
מקדימים Makdimim	6:45 a.m.
קבועים Kebuim	8:15 a.m.
מנחה Minha	7:05 p.m.
ערבית Arbit	7:45 p.m.

Shabat Zemanim- Netz- נץ- 6:39 am, Keriat Shema- קריאת שמע- 8:58 am, Shekia- שקיעה- 6:18 pm

Mazal Tov

Mazal Tov to Mr. and Mrs. Isaac and Michal Cohen on the birth of a baby boy
Proud Grandparents: Mr. and Mrs. Sam and Elvy Cohen, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence and Adele Levine
Proud Great Grandparents: Mrs. Rica Cohen, Mr. and Mrs. Albert and Esther Pinto

Kiddush

Everyone is invited to join us for Kiddush after services. In order to continue our coveted Kiddush which we all enjoy on a weekly basis, we are looking for sponsors.
Everyone is welcome.

Seuda Shelishit

This weeks Seudah Shelishit is sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Moise and Gladys Benedid, in loving memory of his father Abraham Benedid ז"ל, Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey and Renati Himelfarb, in loving memory of his father Avraham Himelfarb ז"ל, the Keslassy family, in loving memory of their father Jacob Keslassy ז"ל, the Bensimon family, in loving memory of their mother Mazaltob Bensimon ז"ל, and by Mr. & Mrs. Maurice and Elise Benzacar, in loving memory of his uncle Messod Benzacar ז"ל.
Everyone is welcome.

Torah Bites

By Rabbi Kadoch

"וירא משה את כל המלאכה" (ל"ט:מג)
"And Moshe saw all the work" (39:43)

Imagine the scene as the final stitch is sewn and the last brick is laid. The House of God has just been completed and from that moment on, *Avodat Hashem* will take on a new meaning. The above verse states that Moshe saw **all** the work; from beginning to end. Under the management of Betzalel, the *mishkan* didn't take a moment, more or less, than it needed to be and Moshe was there every step of the way. The commentators note the word *kol* (all) and learn from here that every person who contributed to the building of the *mishkan* did not fall sick nor die while it was being built. A similar miracle took place during the construction of the *Bet HaMikdash* where the verse states that "all the work was completed." Again, the word **all** comes to inform us that no one suffered any injury or illness during the building of the holy temple.

Our sages learn a fundamental aspect of faith from this. Namely, that one is promised never to be harmed amid performing a mitzva. Proof of this comes from Yaakov's death. It is told that as the entire Egyptian nation paid their respect for Yaakov by escorting him to Israel to be buried, "not even the belt of a person" was ruined during the trek. So, if an Egyptian was spared of harm for the sake of Yaakov's burial, all the more so will a Jew be spared when performing one of God's commandments. Leave the excuses behind for you are guaranteed Hashem's protection.

I can't help but retell the following story which illuminates this concept. It's a famous one, so forgive me if you've heard it/read it before. Nearly seventeen years ago, an attack took place in Sbarro restaurant in Jerusalem. Two American girls came to eat at the restaurant but were told by one of the workers that since the restaurant was very busy, that they should return in an hour or so. Shortly after the blast exploded. These girls felt indebted to this female worker to whom to feel saved their lives. The worker suffered serious injuries but did indeed survive. Shortly before returning to the United States, the girls visited their savior in the hospital and they promised her that if she needed to get treatment in the United States, they would take care of all her needs and expenses. Low and behold, a couple of weeks later, the girls receive a phone call from this worker that she was recommended by her doctor to receive plastic surgery treatment in the States as they were better suited there. Immediately she phoned the girls who took care of her and greeted her at the airport. The girls decided that the best doctor available for the procedure was far from where they worked but they didn't even think twice, since this girl saved their lives. The day that this worker received plastic surgery to reconstruct her body was September 11, 2001. The girls who escorted her along the long journey to the doctor both worked in the towers. We do not know the power of our actions.

People pay thousands of dollars over their lifetime for insurance packages. Life insurance, critical illness insurance, travel insurance, mortgage insurance; all because we are unaware of the unknown. What if something happens to us? What if we get injured at work or on vacation? While I am proponent of insurances, I offer you another one. It's a free insurance plan that can be opted in at any time. It's called "Mitzva Protection." When a person involves himself in a mitzva or a hesed, you have my word that no harm will befall you if done with the most noble and pure intentions. But don't take my word for it for I'm a nobody. Take it from Moshe Rabenu.

Halacha Corner

By Rabbi Eli Mansour

Nissan – Tikun Hasot, Fasting, Visiting Cemeteries, Ma'ot Hittim

From Rosh Hodesh nissan through 13 Sivan (a week after Shabuot), those who have the custom to recite Tikun Hasot every night omit the Tikun Rahel section, and recite only the section of Tikun Leah. This is mentioned by the Ben Ish Hai (Rav Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909), in Parashat Vayishlah (Shana Rishona, 5-7). Of course, on Shabat, Yom Tob and Hol Ha'mo'ed, Tikun Hasot is not recited at all.

The Shulhan Aruch rules that it is permissible to observe a personal fast during the month of nissan. For example, if one observes a Yahrtzeit for a parent during nissan, he may follow the custom of fasting on a Yartzheit. This is the ruling also of Hacham Bension Abba Shaul (Israel, 1923-1998), in *Or Le'sion* (vol. 3, 5:1). The work *Kav Ha'yashar* records the custom not to visit cemeteries during the month of nissan. If one observes a Yahrtzeit during nissan, then according to this custom he should visit the cemetery on Ereb Rosh Hodesh nissan, rather than on the day of the Yahrtzeit. Common practice, however, does not follow the custom, and it is customary to visit a cemetery during nissan if one observes a Yahrtzeit or completes the Shiba or Sheloshim mourning period. Nevertheless, one should not move himself to tears during the visit, given the festive nature of the month. (This Halacha is mentioned in the work *Ner Le'sion*.) One who fears that he might be moved to tears should visit the cemetery on either Ereb Rosh Hodesh Iyar or the 15th of Iyar.

There is a custom to donate money for Ma'ot Hittim (literally, "wheat fund") during nissan. In the olden days, community members would donate money to the poor so they could purchase flour with which to bake Masot. Nowadays, the custom is to give money to the needy to help them with their Pesah purchases. The Zohar Hakadosh emphasizes the stringency of this obligation, applying to those who do not participate the prophet's warning, "I shall cast excrement upon your faces – the excrement of your holidays!" If one enjoys the holiday celebration without ensuring that the needy are also able to celebrate, G-d disapproves of his celebration, and he is liable to grave punishment, Heaven forbid. Similarly, the Rambam (Rabbi Moshe Maimonides, Spain-Egypt, 1135-1204) writes that one is obligated to bring joy to "G-d's children" (the needy) on holidays, and if one rejoices on Yom Tob without giving to the poor, this is not a celebration of Misva, but rather a "celebration of his stomach." In earlier generations, Bet Din was authorized to force people to contribute to Ma'ot Hittim. Everyone is obligated to contribute according to his means, and those who do not participate in this charitable endeavor commit a grave sin, because this is an ancient custom and the poor rely upon these contributions for their holiday needs.

Summary: Those who recite Tikun Hasot every night omit the Tikun Rahel section from Rosh Hodesh nissan through the 13th of Sivan. One may observe a personal fast during nissan, such as for a parent's Yahrtzeit. One may visit a cemetery during nissan, though one should ensure not to move himself to tears. There is a strict obligation of "Ma'ot Hittim," which requires donating charity before Pesah to help the poor with their holiday expenses.

Insights on the Torah

By Haham Amram Assayag

QUESTION: What is the reason for the four Shabatot in which we also read from a second Sefer Torat?

ANSWER: Three of these Shabatot symbolize events that occurred in the Bet Hamikdash at these times. On the other Shabat we fulfill a Misva of the Torah.

SHABAT PARA: This is the second last Shabat of Adar. At the time of the Bet Hamikdash, if a person became impure by coming into contact with the death, would remain impure for seven days and the method of purification would come about waters mixed with the ashes of the "Para Aduma", the red cow. This is announced before Rosh Hodesh Nisan, so the contaminated may prepare themselves to spend the Pesah in Yerushalayim.

SHABAT HAHODESH: The Shabat on which the arrival of Nisan is announced, so everyone may get ready to go up to the Bet Hamikdash and celebrate the first of the "Shalosh Regalim" – Pesah.

Parashat Vayakhel: The Definition of a Misva

By Rabbi Eli Mansour

Parashat Vayakhel tells of Moshe assembling Beneh Yisrael in order to tell them G-d's commands regarding the construction of the Mishkan. However, Moshe prefaces these instructions with the command to observe Shabbat. The Rabbis explained that Moshe began with Shabbat observance to underscore the point that the lofty undertaking of building a Mishkan, the place where the Shechina (Divine Presence) would reside, did not override the Shabbat prohibitions. The people might have assumed that given the importance of this project, and the nation's enthusiasm to bring the Shechina into their midst, they should do everything necessary to hasten the completion of the Mishkan, including working on Shabbat. Moshe therefore prefaced the commands regarding the Mishkan with the command of Shabbat, emphasizing that as important and precious as the Mishkan of course was, its construction had to be halted each week for the observance of Shabbat.

This concept conveys a critical message about our religious observance generally. It teaches us that only the Torah itself dictates for us what a Misva is. We cannot define for ourselves what a Misva is, what is good to do and what is not good to do. It made a great deal of sense to the people that the work on the Mishkan should continue on Shabbat, but this is not what G-d wanted. And so if the people had continued working to build the Mishkan on Shabbat, they would have been guilty of a grievous sin. Even though their work was idealistically motivated, they were sincere in their desire to bring G-d into their midst, and their activity certainly appeared and felt like a holy act, it would have been a sin. The fact something seems like a Misva does not make it a Misva. Only the Torah determines for us what is a Misva and what is not.

There are numerous different applications of this fundamental principle. One is the grave mistake made by the non-Orthodox Jewish movements. Their leaders have taken the liberty to decide for themselves, based on their feelings and perceptions, what a Misva is. And thus, for example, they decided that driving to prayer services on Shabbat is acceptable, because otherwise many people would be unable to attend. It is clear to anyone with even the most basic familiarity with the Halachot of Shabbat that driving constitutes an act of Shabbat desecration, and that avoiding driving on Shabbat is thus far more important than praying with a Minyan. The fact that some people might intuitively decide otherwise does not make their view correct. Only the Torah, and not people's intuition, determines what is a Misva.

Another example is the observation made by Rav Yisrael Salanter (1809-1883) about students who are so passionate about attending Torah classes that they push and shove to get a front row seat. They might feel they're doing something "religious" or "holy" by excitedly rushing to be among the first in the room and get a seat close to their Rabbi, but what they are doing, Rav Yisrael Salanter said, is sinful. It is better not to attend a Torah class at all than to push people on the way to a Torah class.

Another example is charity. Of course, charity is a wonderful and vitally important Misva. But there is zero positive value to giving charity with money which was earned dishonestly. A Misva performed by way of a sin is not a Misva. It might feel like a Misva, it might seem holy, and the donor might be sincerely motivated – just like building the Mishkan on Shabbat seemed holy – but in truth, there is nothing holy about it, because the Torah strictly forbids such conduct.

Similarly, there are people who are involved in the otherwise noble effort to build a new institution, such as a synagogue or yeshiva, and in the process take the liberty to insult, embarrass or malign other people. They assume that the lofty ends – building a new institution – justify the means of hurting other people and instigating fights. This assumption is in diametric opposition to the Torah. The Torah teaches us in no uncertain terms that the ends most definitely do not justify the means, and that a Misva performed by way of a sin is not a Misva at all.

Let us remember that the Torah, and only the Torah, teaches us what is right and what is wrong. We need to consult with our Rabbis and receive their guidance, so that we ensure that everything we seek to do that seems like a Misva is, indeed, a Misva.

If you have a Mazal Tob that you would like to share with the congregation or if you have a change of address or email please contact the office at (905) 669-7654 Ext. 1.

Please be advised that the cutoff time for insertion in the bulletin is Wednesday at 4:00 p.m.

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