



The Poile Zedek Bulletin

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Rabbi: Abraham J. Mykoff • President: Mr. Danny Ravitz

May/June 2007

Iyar/Sivan 5767

**“WE WILL DO &
WE WILL LISTEN”**

THE RABBI'S MESSAGE

This Tuesday night, May 22nd, the holiday of Shavuot will commence. It is a two day celebration observed Wednesday and Thursday, May 23rd and 24th. Shavuot is identified in the liturgy *זמן מתן תורתנו*, “The Time of the Giving of the Torah”, for it commemorates the revelation at Mt. Sinai when Hashem, the Almighty, spoke directly to the Jewish Nation, proclaiming the Ten Commandments, and their acceptance thereof.

Unlike the other holidays, Shavuot was not assigned a specific date. In the Torah the holiday of Shavuot is primarily linked with the *Omer* offering and a seven week counting period, starting with Passover and climaxing on the 50th day. Thus, the name “Shavuot”, the Holiday of Weeks.

It is also called *Yom Habikurim*, the day of the first ripe fruits, when a special new offering was brought to the Temple.

Surprisingly, Shavuot, as commemorating *מתן תורה* - *Matan Torah*, the revelation at Mount Sinai, is not noted at all in the Torah. The only way we can directly connect Shavuot with the giving of the Torah is from the Book of Exodus (Chapter XIX) which describes how "in the third month [Sivan] following the children of Israel's departure from Egypt on this day they came to the Sinai Desert. They camped there opposite the mountain..."

One reason Shavuot is not openly identified with the giving of the Torah is attributed to the reluctance to commemorate a single day with our acceptance of the Torah, for every day is an opportunity for us to renew our acceptance of the Torah and make it part of our lives. As we proclaim in the blessing made over the Torah: “Blessed are You, our G-d, who *gives* the Torah.”

(Continued on page 3)



“נעשה ונשמע”

THE President's MESSAGE

One of the frequent activities which makes our synagogue unique among area congregations is our sponsoring of holiday meals - without cost to attendees - thus ensuring that all who wish, can experience and enjoy the Jewish holidays. In response to community needs this year, Rabbi Mykoff graciously conducted a Community *Seder* on the first night of Passover this year, in addition to conducting our annual *Seder* on the second night. Poile Zedek members and others who attended, appreciated the *heimish* and informal atmosphere in which Rabbi Mykoff conducted the *Sedarim* and explained the significance of its different aspects, making each *Seder* an informative, meaningful, and enjoyable experience for all, whether it was their fiftieth *Seder* or their first.

We were also privileged to once again participate in the National Jewish Outreach Program's “Shabbat Across America” providing participants with an unforgettable *Shabbos* experience while linking our community with hundreds of other synagogues across the United States and Canada. It was held this year on Friday night, May 4th. Rabbi Mykoff was very pleased with the unprecedented turnout of both Poile Zedek members and members of the larger Jewish community, who came to experience the beauty of *Shabbos* with Friday night services and a festive *Shabbos* meal.

Shavuos this years begins Tuesday eve., May 22. As is customary, Poile Zedek will celebrate the holiday of “The Giving of our Torah” by hosting a Torah Study Vigil on Tuesday night, following evening services and a wonderful holiday meal. Poile Zedek will also sponsor a Torah Study Program on Wednesday, May 23, following morning services and a holiday luncheon. Please join us—there is no charge and this is a wonderful time to recommit to Torah learning.

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Shavuot Schedule

TUESDAY, MAY 22—*EREV SHAVUOT*

Shacharit: 7:15 A.M.
 Candle lighting 7:55 P.M.
 Mincha & Maariv 8:00 P.M.
 followed by a holiday Seudah (dinner) & Torah Vigil Study Program.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23—*1ST DAY OF SHAVUOT*

Shacharit 9:00 A.M.
 Services to be followed by a holiday luncheon, Torah Study program, and Mincha.
 Candle lighting after 9:05 P.M.

THURSDAY, MAY 24—*2ND DAY OF SHAVUOT*

Shacharit 9:00 A.M.
 Book of Ruth 9:45 A.M.
 Yizkor after 10:00 A.M.
 Yom Tov ends 9:10 P.M.

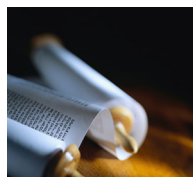
FRIDAY, MAY 25—*EREV SHABBAT NASO*

Shacharit 7:15 A.M.
 Candle lighting & Mincha 8:00 P.M.

SHABBAT, MAY 26—*PARSHAT NASO*

Shacharit 9:00 A.M.
 Shabbat ends 9:10 P.M.

The Holiday of Shavuot



Shavuot, Z'man Matan Torateinu, The Time of the Giving of Our Torah, is the second of the three major pilgrimage festivals (Pesach being the first and Sukkot the third) and comes exactly fifty days from Pesach. Shavuot, also known as Atzeret, which means completion, is the culmination of the odyssey which we began on Pesach. The goal of our redemption and departure from Egypt was to receive the Torah. On the sixth day of Sivan in the year 2448 after creation, the revelation at Mt. Sinai took place. G-d gave the Torah to the Jewish people on Mt. Sinai. Every year, on Shavuot, we renew our acceptance of G-d's gift.

Shavuot, which means “weeks”, signifies the completion of the seven week period between Pesach and Shavuot (the 'Omer' period) during which time the Jewish people prepared themselves to receive the Torah. During this period they cleansed themselves of the scars of slavery and elevated themselves spiritually so that they would be ready to enter into an eternal covenant with Hashem, through receiving and accepting the Torah.

The word Shavuot also means “oaths”. On this day Hashem swore eternal devotion to us, and we in turn pledged everlasting loyalty to Him. Our Sages have compared it to a wedding between G-d and the Jewish people.

Our Sages said that before Hashem gave us the Torah He demanded guarantors. The Jews made a number of suggestions, all of which were rejected by G-d, until they declared, “Our children will be our guarantors that the Jewish people will cherish and observe the Torah”; G-d immediately accepted them and agreed to give them the Torah.

On this day we received a gift (matan) from Above which we could not have achieved with our own limited faculties. We received the ability to reach and touch the Divine; not only to be cultivated human beings, but Divine human beings who are capable of rising above and beyond the limitations of nature. Jewish men, women and, especially, children should make every effort to be present in a synagogue on May 23, as the Ten Commandments are read from the Torah.

The holiday of Shavuot is also known by two other names: Yom Habikurim and Chag HaKatzir. Yom Habikurim, the Day of the First Fruits, is an expression of thanks to G-d. Starting from Shavuot,

WEEKLY CLASSES & SHIURIM



Millionaire Club — Lunch & Torah study with Rabbi Mykoff
 Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:00 – 1:30 P.M.

Partners in Torah—Study with your own private rabbi from Lakewood. Refreshments and *Ma'ariv* follow. Wednesdays — 8:10 P.M.

Torah Study in Russian — Learn the Torah with Rabbi Eli Kogan. Thursdays — 7:00 P.M. Men and women. Refreshments served.

Eruv Information

In order to utilize the New Brunswick eruv, you must check weekly on its status (whether it is functioning for that Shabbat) by calling the Eruv hotline: (732) 247-ERUV before Shabbat.

To request to be placed on the Eruv e-mail list, please call the Rutgers Hillel Foundation: (732) 545-2407. For a map of the Highland Park/Edison and New Brunswick Eruvim boundaries go to www.hperuv.org.



each farmer in the Land of Israel brought an offering to the Temple of the first wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates that grew in his field.



Chag HaKatzir, the Festival of the Harvest, commemorates the harvesting of the wheat. The wheat, the last of the grains to be ready to be cut, was harvested at this time of the year.

The Book of Ruth

It is on the second day of Shavuot that we read the Book of Ruth, one of the five *megillot*, scrolls, which are read on the various holidays.

This Megillah tells the story of Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi. Ruth is a Moabite woman, who, after her husband dies, follows Naomi back to Israel and pledges to her: "Your nation shall be my nation and your G-d shall be my G-d." In Israel, Ruth marries Naomi's kinsman, Boaz and is the great-grandmother of King David. Additionally, this episode takes place during the time of the bringing of the first fruits.

Ruth's acceptance of G-d and His commandments mirrors our acceptance of His Torah. Also, the bringing of the first fruits, and the harvest season depicted, makes reading the Book of Ruth particularly meaningful on Shavuot.

Shavuot Customs

Tikun Leil Shavuot — It is customary for many to stay up all night the first night of Shavuot learning Torah. When the B'nai Yisrael were about to receive the Torah, rather than sleepless anticipation, B'nai Yisrael overslept. As rectification for this, it is customary to stay up the first night of Shavuot all night learning.

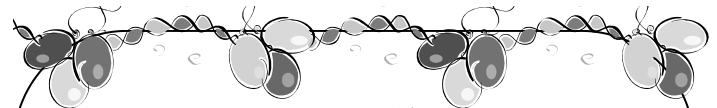
Akdmut is a piyut, liturgical poem, read on the first day of Shavuot before the Torah is read. It was composed as an introduction to the Ten Commandments by Rabbi Meir ben Yitzchak (during the time of the crusades in the 11th century). Akdamut, written in Aramaic, describes Hashem's creation of the world and the splendor of the World to Come, the angels praise of the Almighty and the greatness and suffering of the Jewish people. As it says:

*"Were the skies parchment, were all the reeds quills,
Were the seas and all waters made of ink,*

Were all the world's inhabitants made scribes."

*We could not begin to describe
the glory of Hashem.*

Dairy—It is customary to also eat a dairy meal on Shavuot. The most noted reason for this is because when B'nai Yisrael received the Torah and learned the laws of ritual slaughter, they had no time to prepare kosher meat and thus had dairy instead.



Making a Simcha? We make it AFFORDABLE!



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Congregation Poile Zedek

are available for your simcha
at a remarkably affordable price.

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In the Orthodox tradition.

(Rabbi's message continued from page 1)

Another reason for the Torah's reluctance to directly identify Shavuot with *Matan Torah*, is perhaps due to the fact that after committing ourselves to fulfilling G-d's Torah, we failed to live up to our commitment. Only forty days later there was the incident of the Golden Calf and the breaking of the Tablets, containing the Ten Commandments. It was only on Yom Kippur, after our *teshuva* - repentance was accepted, that we received the Second Tablets. Because of this, to this very day, on Shavuot, we endeavor to strengthen our commitment to Hashem and His Torah.

Congregation Poile Zedek represented at NORPAC's Mission to Washington

On Wednesday, May 9, 2007, NORPAC, a non-partisan political action committee, sponsored their 2007 "Mission to Washington." Our own Richard Shusteris played a major role in coordinating this program which was attended by over 700 Jews from New Jersey and the Metropolitan New York area. It was the largest pro-Israel PAC event of its kind. Among the many representatives who addressed the delegation was Senator Lieberman of Connecticut.

Rabbi Mykoff was invited to participate in this program to lobby congressional and senatorial members of our government on behalf of the State of Israel, in order to forge a stronger link between the U.S. and Israel.

(Continued from page 1)

Congratulations to all our officers who were re-elected to the shul's board at our recent meeting on Sun., May 6th:

Eric Kammer—Vice President

Hy Appelbaum—Treasurer

Ira Gang—Recording Secretary

Caryn Lipson—Financial Secretary

and to our trustees whose terms were extended for 3 more years: Marvin Marantz and Morris Gorlin.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation for their past and continued dedicated service to the synagogue. May they go from strength to strength.

The congregation wishes a "*Tzeshem L'Shalom*" to Richard Shusteris, a graduating Rutgers student, who will be leaving for Israel very shortly to study in a Yeshiva. Our good wishes for him, however, are not without regrets at his leave taking—he has been an integral part of the synagogue this past year. As our *Ba'al Tefilah*, Richard has been helping to ensure a daily *minyan* and expertly leading the *Shacharis* services. He recently commented: "Many of the congregants are unable to *daven* on their own, but are nevertheless committed to coming to shul and putting on *Tefillin* every morning. I felt it was a true *Z'chus* to *daven* on their behalf. If anyone is interested in helping out, it would be a huge *mitzvah*, and I personally guarantee that you will get more out of the experience than you put in."

I cannot overemphasize, as Richard has pointed out, that keeping our daily *Shacharis* and *Shabbos minyanim* running properly is extremely important. We welcome anyone who can assist, either daily or occasionally. This is also an excellent opportunity for anyone who would like to gain more experience leading a *minyan*. Please join us *Shabbos* mornings at 9:00 A.M., Sunday at 8:00 A.M., and daily at 7:15 A.M. A complimentary light breakfast follows the davening. To speak with Rabbi Mykoff or for further information, please call the synagogue at (732) 545-6123.



Good & Welfare Mazel Tov

To the following upon their celebrations:

Births

Rabbi & Mrs. Reuven Drucker on the birth of a granddaughter to their children Rabbi & Mrs. David Drucker.

Michael & Judi Seidemann on the birth of great-

COMMUNITY EVENTS

An ACTT (Achieving Change Through Torah) discussion group on *Gratitude* will be led by Sheri Degani, LPC at 8:00 PM on Wednesday 5/30/07 at Congregation Ohr Torah. Please come to receive, as well as give, support/chizuk to each other.

Please save Sunday evening, July 1 for the Community Wide gathering and *Anger Management for Positive Results* Module 2 kickoff event. More details to follow. For more info, please call Phil Rosen (732) 572-8762. ACTT web-site: www.actt613.org, e-mail: info@actt613.org, tel# (732) 993-5376.

SHAVUOT PROGRAMS

- Holiday Dinner & Torah Vigil Study Program - Tues., May 22, following 8:00 P.M. services.
- Holiday Luncheon & Torah Study Program - Wed., May 23, following 9:00 A.M. services.

grandsons to their children, Yossie & Shulamis Basker of Lakewood and Yosef & Faigie Etttinger of Jerusalem.

Bar/Bat Mitzvahs

Jordan & Cheryl Rothenberg on the upcoming Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Danielle, at Poile Zedek.

Stuart & Patty Sackman on the upcoming Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Tamara, at Poile Zedek.

Engagements

Michael Feigin (Poile Zedek's webmaster) to Chedva Auman of Queens, NY.

Marriages

Golda Perlman upon her marriage to Akiva Bosowitch.

Rabbi & Mrs. David Bassous on the marriage of their son Yitzchak to Esther Assayag of Toronto, Canada.

Sandy Zummo on her upcoming marriage to Shmuel Hershkovitz.

Graduation

Richard Shusteris from Rutgers University.

Sarah Morrison from Moshe Aaron Yeshiva High School.

Refuah Shelaima

A speedy and complete recovery to the following:

Harry & Bea Einstein, Dr. Anna Feygina (Fridman), Pearl Friedkin, Miriam Goldman, Mike Gross, Yehudit Mitchell, Baruch Savitt, Helen S. Solomon, and Sima Svirskiy.

Condolences

Drs. Jerald Blum & Jay Blum, and their father, on the loss of their beloved wife and mother, Mrs. Claire Blum.

"May the Almighty comfort you among the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem."

Yahrzeits

Sivan 5767 - May/June 2007

1 Sivan—May 18

Mark Morrison..... Aunt Rose

2 Sivan—May 19

Irene Bank husband, Gilbert

6 Sivan—May 23

Lillian Glasser mother

Joan Israel..... Uncle Hyman

Bobbi Rubin..... uncle, Arthur Buchbinder

Harry Schick..... uncle, Arthur Buchbinder

Irving Smith..... mother

10 Sivan—May 27

Ida Hodos..... husband

13 Sivan—May 30

Helen Solowey..... grandfather, Harry Siegel

14 Sivan—May 31

George Schrier..... father

15 Sivan—June 1

Joan Israel..... uncle, Leo Pfeffer

18 Sivan—June 4

Judith Evans..... father, Lionel J. Coen

Mark Morrison..... grandmother, Musa

19 Sivan—June 5

Bernard Israel grandmother, Fannie Israel

20 Sivan—June 6

Joan Israel..... Uncle Isie Pfeffer

21 Sivan—June 7

Ron Greenberg..... father, Stanley Greenberg

22 Sivan—June 8

Helen Solowey..... mother, Sarah Siegel

23 Sivan—June 9

Bernard Israel uncle, Samuel Israel

24 Sivan—June 10

Robert Speis..... grandmother, Lena Grossman

Robert Speis..... aunt, Etta Grossman

27 Sivan—June 13

Beatrice Einstein..... brother, Jack

29 Sivan—June 15

Chana Idesis..... mother, Berta Milman

Tamuz 5767 – June/July 2007

2 Tamuz – June 18

Ruth Gordon son

6 Tamuz - June 19

Corrine Natelson..... father

9 Tammuz – June 25

Mollie Cohn..... Gert Zall

12 Tamuz – June 28

Lola Kamp brother

Danny Ravitz father

15 Tamuz – July 1

Sophia Mezhibovsky father, Israel Kleyner

16 Tamuz – July 2

Barbara Bruskin..... father, Samuel Shakin

Sylvia Margolis husband

Robert Speis..... aunt, Eva Grossman

19 Tamuz - July 5

Ethel Meyers..... father

22 Tamuz - July 8

Michael Harrison mother

23 Tamuz - July 9

Pamela Kammer mother, Amy J. Bell

24 Tamuz - July 10

Marie Herman..... son

Teens to Israel—Matching Grants



High School students visiting Israel this summer may be eligible for the Jewish

Federation of Greater Middlesex County's Matching Grants program.

Congregation Poile Zedek, in co-ordination with the Federation, will match funds provided by the Jewish Federation (up to \$1,000) for eligible students.

This program offers a wonderful opportunity for students to deepen their connection to Judaism and Eretz Yisrael (the Land of Israel) through first hand experience.

For more information, please call the synagogue at (732) 545-6123. For an application, please call the Federation at (732) 432-7711.

A Loving Tribute

Memorial Windows



Memorialize your loved ones by dedicating a stained glass window in our beautiful sanctuary. We have a limited number of windows still available for this fitting tribute to the memory of a cherished family member. Each window is \$1500.

Memorial Plaques

Memorialize your loved ones by having their names listed on our bronze Memorial Boards in the sanctuary. A light will be illuminated on their yahrzeit dates. Each plaque is \$150.



Please call the synagogue at (732) 545-6123 to dedicate a window, order a plaque, or for more information.

Your Contributions Count!

Your contributions to Poile Zedek help support the operation of the shul and enable Poile Zedek to provide vital services to our community.

Poile Zedek has five funds for this purpose.

The Rebbetzin Fanny Mykoff Torah Fund

Established in the memory of Rabbi Abraham Mykoff's mother, of blessed memory, the Torah fund furthers Torah observance by assisting individuals to meet their social and religious needs.

The Joan Schick Educational Fund

The fund supports Torah education on both a community and individual basis. This fund includes the Joan Schick Memorial Library. It is in memory of a true woman of valor who devoted herself tirelessly to the synagogue.

The William Weber Matzah Fund

The William Weber Matzah fund was established by William Weber, of blessed memory, a veteran member of the congregation. The Matzah fund provides Passover food for the needy and sponsors our annual Community Seder.

Project Chesed Free Loan Fund

The Project Chesed Free Loan Fund was established by Mr. & Mrs. Zalman and Miriam Widofsky, in memory of their parents. This fund provides small, short term, interest free loans to individuals. If you know of anyone who could benefit, please contact the synagogue.

To make a donation or inquire about a free loan, please call the synagogue (732) 545-6123.

The Ellen Schick Gemilat Chesed fund

This fund was established in order to allow people to continue to benefit from Ellen's warmth and compassion for many, many years to come. This fund provides moderate loans to individuals. Donation checks should be made out to:

Ellen Schick Gemilat Chesed Fund, c/o:

Barry and Diane Mael, 423 Benner Street, Highland Park, NJ 08904. For more information please call (732) 819-3512.