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CHALINE

“The Bulletin of Beth David Synagogue”

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Shavuot 5783/May June 2023

FROM THE RABBI

The holiday of Shavuot, which we are about to celebrate, stands out from all the other Biblical holidays we celebrate throughout the year in the way it is presented in the Torah. All the other Festivals and holidays are presented by the date of the celebration and include, in various presentations, the specific date of the holiday, a description of some of the rituals and practices, and sometimes a historical reason for their celebration. Not so Shavuot.

In all the references throughout the Torah there is no mention of the date of celebration, nor is an historical reference even alluded to, and there are no specific rituals that are to be observed. True, the rabbis in the *Midrash* and Talmud do fill in the blanks. Shavuot is celebrated as *zman matan Torateinu* – the time that the Torah was given to us on Mount Sinai – and the study of the Torah becomes the focal point of the holiday. Yet even they concede that the holiday may occur on any of 3 different dates because of the way the calendar was determined during the Temple days and that we really don't know the exact date that the revelation on Mount Sinai occurred. These ambiguities result in the Shavuot being celebrated 50 days after the first day of Pesach.

Why is the date of the revelation, and therefore of Shavuot, not specified in the Torah?

Perhaps the reason for this is based on our understanding of what this special gift of the Torah means to us. The Torah is a book of teaching, instruction, advice, and requirements of how to live our lives. The book may be beautifully adorned, has an artistic cover, and looks beautiful on the shelf or table. But it really has no value until we actually read and study it. When we discover its contents, we then uncover its valuable lessons, thoughts, and directives.

The objective of this holiday is not to celebrate the experience of revelation. Rather, it is intended to celebrate the values, morals, and teachings we derive from the book. It is only after reading and studying the contents of the Torah do we begin to appreciate it and the value of this gift.

This cannot be accomplished in one day. Even if we spend the entire night of Shavuot studying the Torah we can only begin scratching the surface of what it contains. To really appreciate the Torah, we must spend some time every day, indeed for a lifetime, examining, reading, and reviewing its contents.

If the Torah would have specified the day of Shavuot we may have thought that the expectation is to read a little of the Torah on that day every year. It is like sounding the shofar. We do it on Rosh Hashanah and then put it away until the next year.

Torah is different. *B'chol yom yi'hi'u b'einecha k'chadashim* – Every day its words should be like it is the first time that you heard them, say the rabbis. We can discover something new in this wonderful gift from God every single day. We can celebrate Shavuot by studying some Torah on that day. And we can really celebrate Shavuot by studying it, again and again, each and every day.

Let us commit to spending a few minutes of Torah study each day for the next year. That would make this Shavuot special and meaningful. I wish all of you a *Chag Sameach!*

Rabbi Zev Silber

Shavuot Schedule

Thursday, May 25	Prepare Eruv Tavshilin Candle lighting <i>Blessing: L'hadlik ner shel Yom Tov</i>	8:09 pm
Friday, May 26	Shacharit Candle lighting <i>Blessing: L'hadlik ner shel Yom Tov and Shehecheyanu</i>	9:30 am before 8:10 pm
Shabbat, May 27	Shacharit Yizkor approximately <i>Sisterhood Luncheon after services</i> Shabbat and Yom Tov ends	9:30 am 10:55am 9:11pm

Mazel Tov to All Our 2023 Graduates

Arielle Feder, Yeshivat Noam Middle School, daughter of Sarah & Bruce Feder, granddaughter of Rabbi Zev and Judy Silber

Joshua Hubal, College Experience Certificate, College of Saint Rose, son of Shelley and Mark Hubal, grandson of Susan and Gerry Hubal

Avi Lazarus, 8th grade YBH, son of Abigail and Tzali Lazarus, grandson of Meryl and Harold Sasnowitz

Cara Miller, Vestal High School, daughter of Eileen and Dan Miller

Rina Poran, BA in Political Science and Korean from Rutgers University, daughter of Amy and Amir Poran, granddaughter of Steve Feuer

Netanel Schachter, completing his IDF service with the distinction of being an Outstanding Soldier, son of Esther and Michael Schachter, grandson of Rabbi Zev and Judy Silber

Meir Sommer, Bergen CCC Nursing School with the distinction of being class Salutatorian, son of Rochie and Marc Sommer, grandson of Meryl and Harold Sasnowitz

Tehilla Tuchman, BA in psychology from the College of St Vincent, daughter of Leslie and Michael Tuchman, granddaughter of Meryl and Harold Sasnowitz

Leba Weissman, Central High School (YU), daughter of Avital & Elie Weissman, granddaughter of Rabbi Zev and Judy Silber

CONGRADULATIONS

Shavuot Customs and Practices

When: Shavuot begins on Thursday, May 25th at night, and lasts through the day of Shabbat, May 27th.

Eruv Tavshilin – The Mixing of Cooked Foods: The Biblical prohibition against labor on the Festivals specifically does not include the preparation or cooking of food. However, food may only be prepared for that day's use. When a *Yom Tov* falls on a Friday our Rabbis ruled that we are allowed to prepare food on the holiday for use on the Sabbath only if the preparation begins before the holiday. This is known as *Eruv Tavshilin*, or the "mixing of cooked foods", and is performed this year on Thursday, May 25, Erev Shavuot.

With a challah and any cooked food in hand (such as fish or a hard boiled egg), we recite a blessing and declaration as is found in a siddur.

Candle Lighting: As with every Yom Tov, we light candles each night of the holiday, reciting the 2 brachot – one for the holiday (*l'hadlik ner shel Yom Tov*) and the *Shehecheyanu*. *Shehecheyanu* is also recited at the end of Kiddush. Since the second night of Shavuot is also Shabbat, the first b'racha recited is *l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat v'shel Yom Tov* followed by *Shehecheyanu*. Kiddush on the second night begins with *Vayechulu*, continues with the holiday kiddush, adding the parts for Shabbat, and concludes with *Shehecheyanu*.

Tikkun Leil Shavuot: Since Shavuot commemorates the revelation at Mount Sinai and the acceptance of the Torah, there is a beautiful, time-honored custom to stay awake the entire night of the first day of Shavuot and study Torah. ***Since there are no plans to gather for Torah study, it is certainly proper and praiseworthy for each person to spend at least some of the first night of Shavuot in Torah study, either individually or with your immediate family.***

Megillat Rut: There is a custom to read the scroll of Ruth on the second day of Shavuot. Ruth, who was a convert, accepted the Torah just as the Jews did at Sinai. She was also the great-grandmother of King David, who was born, and died on Shavuot. We read the megillah before the Torah service.

Yizkor: Yizkor is recited on the second day of Shavuot after the Torah reading.

Dairy Foods: There is a custom to eat dairy foods on Shavuot. Thus, the annual Beth David Sisterhood Shavuot lunch on the second day of Shavuot will be dairy.

Mitzvah Fund

Tova Kohn, 754-4297 or tova.kohn844@gmail.com

Sisterhood acknowledges contributions to the Mitzvah Fund wishing:

Mazal Tov to:

Dick & Lori Lewis on Emily's passing the NYS Bar Exam

Judy Silber on hosting this year's Sisterhood Donor at her home

Dora Polachek on receiving this year's Jack & Mary Ferber Memorial Award

Howard Warner on reading his Haftarah in celebration of the anniversary of his bar Mitzvah

DONATIONS

Annual Dinner

Michael & Saba Wiesner

Annual Dinner - Bronze Sponsorship

Arieh Ullmann & Rhonda Levine

Edward Cameron & Katherine Shelly

Marilyn Bell

Martha Klionsky

Rabbi Zev & Judy Silber

Regina Frants

Debra Greenberg-Strano

Randy & Ronald Ehrenberg

Harold & Meryl Sasnowitz

Annual Dinner – Silver Sponsorship

Alan & Julie Piaker

Les & Barbara Bank

Jonathan & Natalie Pachter

Department of Romance Languages

Charles & Susan Gilinsky

Linda & Richard Borkow

Annual Dinner – Gold Sponsorship

Deborah Mindick Sliom

Meredith & Tony Pell-Preus

Michael & Saba Wiesner

Chaim Cathy Velenchik Joy

Harold & Toby Kohn

Drs. Sol & Dora Polachek

Nathaniel Polachek.

Michael & Susan Wright

Lori & Brian Tuberman

In memory of Melvin Rozen

Richard & Marla Zirin

Len & Naoma Feld

Francine Stein

Raymond Seraydarian

In honor of Dr. Dora Polachek

Rabbi Geoffrey Brown

Rosalyn Anton

Dr. Lawrence & Annette Wiesner

Joseph Vebman

Brian & Susan Savitch

Marilyn Bell

Kiddush Luncheon in honor of Dr. Dora Polachek

Neisen & Marsha Luks

Jewish Federation

Other donations

Hollie Levine (*in honor of Susan and Gerry Hubal*)

Richard & Lori Lewis (*in honor of their daughter, Emily, passing bar exam*)

Rabbi Zev & Judy Silber

Leonard & Valerie Preston

Jerry & Ellen Schachter

Kerry Wright

SHABBAT SCHEDULE

PLEASE NOTE: AT THE PRESENT TIME, BETH DAVID ONLY HAS MINYAN ON SHABBAT AND HOLIDAY MORNINGS, AND ON SPECIAL DAYS, AS NOTED BELOW. FOR THE HIGH HOLIDAYS, THERE WILL BE MINYANIM AT NIGHT, AS WELL. A MINYAN AT OTHER TIMES MAY POSSIBLY BE ARRANGED, UPON REQUEST. PLEASE CONTACT THE RABBI.

Friday, May 19	<i>candle lighting</i>	8:03 pm	Shabbat, June 17	Shacharit	9:30 am
				<i>Shabbat ends</i>	9:24 pm
Shabbat, May 20	Shacharit	9:30 am	Friday, June 23	<i>candle lighting</i>	8:25 pm
	<i>Shabbat ends</i>	9:04 pm			
<u>Thursday – Shabbat, May 25 – 27</u>					
<i>See Shavuot Schedule</i>					
Friday, June 2	<i>candle lighting</i>	8:15 pm	Shabbat, June 24	Shacharit	9:30 am
				<i>Shabbat ends</i>	9:25 pm
Shabbat, June 3	Shacharit	9:30 am	Friday, June 30	<i>candle lighting</i>	8:25 pm
	<i>Shabbat ends</i>	9:16 pm			
Friday, June 9	<i>candle lighting</i>	8:20 pm	Shabbat, July 1	Shacharit	9:30 am
				<i>Shabbat ends</i>	9:25 pm
Shabbat, June 10	Shacharit	9:30 am			
	<i>Shabbat ends</i>	9:21 pm			

SISTERHOOD

Since the last Chailine was published, Sisterhood held its annual donor meeting on Wednesday, April 26, at the home of Rabbi and Judy Silber. The speaker was local educator and clock repairman Rick Pescatore.

On May 3, Inter-Sisterhood was held at Temple Concord. The speakers represented Jewish businesses both past and present. We thank Beth David members Dora Polachek, Marti Klionsky, and Eileen Miller who worked so hard to make the evening a success.

The sisterhood's closing meeting of 2022-23 will be held at Beth David on June 14 at 7 pm. A special Flag Day program will be presented by local 18th-century re-enactor George Cummings, who dressed as George Washington and will speak about the origins of our country and our flag.

Also, during the June 14 meeting, we will be voting-in our new slate of officers. The incoming executive board for 2023-24 will consist of Cathy Velenchik, President, Marlene Serkin Fund Raising Vice President, and Gina Santiago Programming Vice President. Cathy Velenchik will continue in her previous position as Service Vice President until a replacement is found. Susan Hubal will serve as Secretary and Deborah Mindick Sliom will be Treasurer.

New committee heads include Gina Santiago and Eileen Miller as Beth David's Inter-sisterhood representatives, and Stacey Silber as Historian.

Anyone wishing to become more active in Sisterhood will be welcomed onto the committee of their choice.

We want to remind everyone that Toby Kohn is still sending out **mitzvah cards which cost \$3**, and **Stacey Silber will be raising funds for Sisterhood through the sale of new or used items which are donated to her for that purpose.**

Chag Sameach / Happy Shavuot

Cathy Velenchik, President Beth David Sisterhood.

Give Double Chai to the ChaiLine

You can be a sponsor for a minimum donation of \$36.00 sent to the shul before the next deadline, **Sunday, 07/02/2023**. Write ChaiLine on the memo line and include your message. Some reasons to sponsor include graduations, births, bar/bat mitzvahs, birthdays, anniversaries, a new job, commemorating a yahrtzeit, or just to be a sponsor. A thank you message can be printed for a donation of \$18.00. Our \$180.00 Special Sponsors get special recognition for their generous contribution.

Chag sameach!

Gina M. Santiago

Beth David Family

Pesach brought Lori and Brian Tuberman to Eretz Yisroel where they enjoyed a wonderful holiday. They delighted in the sights, sounds, and tastes of Our Homeland.

Dmitry and Natania Ostrovosky and their children of CT visited their parents Susan and Michael Wright and Kerry Wright to spend Pesach in Binghamton. Grandma Trudy Greenspan was on hand to delight in the seder participation of her great-grandchildren.

Miriam and Aaron Alweis were overjoyed that their children Elisa and Melech Lapson and baby Tova of Chicago spent the first days of Pesach with them. During Chol HaMoed, they all traveled to Teaneck to enjoy the rest of the hag with Malka and Mike Alweis and their family.

Tanya and Will Wright, of Ann Arbor, MI delighted in the b'not mitzvah of their two daughters, Lily 15, and Ella 13. The sisters, active in musical theater, gave moving touches to the ceremony. Grandparents Barbara and Les Bank savored every moment of this meaningful simcha with family and friends from around the world.

The walls of Beth David reverberated with joy on Sunday, May 7th as tribute was paid to Dora Polachek. She was presented with the *Jack and Mary Ferber Award* for her many contributions to the shul's well-being. Dora's most notable impact is felt every month at the luncheon prepared by Judy Silber and her valuable crew. Dora seeks out speakers from across the Triple Cities to present engaging luncheon talks. She interviews the speakers and writes articles for our local Jewish publication, *The Reporter*, to highlight the talks and encourage community participation.

The dinner brought together Beth David members from near and far. It was a delight to see the Polachek children, Gila and Naftali, and the grandchildren Aharon, Eitan, and Elanat at the festive event. Kudos to Saba Weisner and Toby and Harold Kohn for creating such a lovely evening.

With sadness, I note the passing of our lifetime member and past president, Melvin Rozen. Mel was a steadfast contributor to this column throughout the years as he kvelled over his progeny. May his children, Brian and Chaya Rozen, Jay and Michelle Rozen, Michal, and Yerachmiel Donowitz, and his wife Barbara, and the entire family find comfort among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Many thanks go to those of you who contacted me with news for this column. Please remember to let me know what's happening with your family, so I can share the news with our Beth David Family. msasnowitz@gmail.com 607-760-5207

May we recall the joy and anticipation felt by our ancestors as they awaited the arrival of the Tablets at Mt. Sinai and may we each feel a greater connection to Our Torah as we approach Shavuot.

Meryl Sasnowitz

Please let me know what's happening in your family so we can all share the news. Keep me posted about your road trips, family visits, and special moments. You may think these things are trivial, but readers tell me they love to learn about the goings-on of our Beth David Family members.