

## Gearing Up For Summer

Please help CSH by volunteering to

- Sponsor a CSH Shabbat dinner
- Set up / clean up Shabbat dinner
- Sponsor Shabbat morning Kiddush
- Chant Haftorah
- Other

Please let us know how you'd like to help. Reply to CSH1800@aol.com

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CSH Community Shabbat Dinner  
at the home of Rabbi Jan Uhrbach  
Friday, May 28<sup>th</sup>  
Following Kabbalat Shabbat Services  
RSVP necessary for dinner

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**Summer's just around the corner  
Please remember your  
CSH MEMBERSHIP DUES**

Friday May 7, 2010     **Candle Lighting 7:27 pm**

**This week's Torah reading: Behar-Bechukotai**

Annual: Leviticus 25:1 – 27:34 (Etz Hayim, p. 738)

Triennial: Leviticus 25:39 – 26:46 (Etz Hayim, p. 744)

Haftarah: Jeremiah 16:19 – 17:14 (Etz Hayim, p. 763)

Chazak, chazak, v'nizchazaik!

**Musings on Behar-Bechukotai --**

Back in Medieval times people would leave a portion of their field fallow on a rotation schedule. The beginning of this week's double portion of Behar and Bechukotai make a similar request: that we observe a Sabbatical Year, a Shemita. In the serfdoms of the Middle Ages they realized that the Jewish practice of remission would be agriculturally beneficial.

It is a common misconception that one is not allowed to make use of the produce during the

seventh year. If that were true our agrarian ancestors would have starved to death; rather, the field and the trees are free-for-all and landowners are not allowed to financially benefit from what grows during this year but may eat it themselves and give some away. This is the case in the Land of Israel to this day. I had a professor at Pardes who would hang up a sign during the Sabbatical year in his front yard saying something like "please come in and take from my tree". The Shemittah year only pertains to areas within the biblical land of Israel.

**To read this d'var in its entirety:**

<http://mattrutta.blogspot.com/2007/05/dvar-torah-s2-beharbechukotai-fallow.html>

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If I may be allowed to hijack yet another Kabbalistic phrase from popular culture, Shabbat and Shemittah are "about nothing" in the most profound sense. These times were introduced in order to offset to the excesses of our future-directed orientation. At defined intervals in our perpetual race to improve our materiality and our spirituality, we are commanded to pause in our tracks, look around, and appreciate the goodness that surrounds us, in our families, our environment, in the Torah, and in ourselves. The holiness and blessings that God bestows upon us are not all set aside to be unwrapped in some far-distant future; they are with us in the present, and it would be ungrateful of us not to appreciate them. The memories of those sabbatical experiences will linger with us through our workaday lives, giving meaning and value to our deeds and relationships.

The guarantee that one year's crops will be enough to tide us over for three years undoubtedly ranks among the most remarkable Biblical miracles. Nevertheless, I am led to speculate whether the Torah might not have been speaking of a supernatural increase in agricultural output, so much as of a psychological transformation within ourselves. Perhaps what it means to say is that the observance of the Sabbatical year in its true spirit will lead us to revise our priorities, so that we learn to get by without the luxuries that we previously regarded as necessary to our survival. "Who is rich?" it asks in Pirkei Avot. "Those who are satisfied with their lot." In this way the Sabbatical year bestows upon us inner wealth.

**To read this d'var in its entirety:**

[http://people.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/Shokel/Preaching/S980523\\_Sevens.html](http://people.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/Shokel/Preaching/S980523_Sevens.html)

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When William Penn created Pennsylvania's government, he allowed citizens to take part in making laws and gave them the right to choose the religion they wanted. The colonists were proud of the freedom that Penn gave them. In 1751, the Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly ordered a new bell for the State House. He asked that a Bible verse be placed on the bell - "Proclaim LIBERTY throughout all the Land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (Leviticus 25:10). As the official bell of the Pennsylvania State House (today called Independence Hall), it rang many times for public announcements, but its most famous ringing was on July 8, 1776 when it rang to announce the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence.

<http://www.limmud.org/publications/tasteoflimmud/5767/Behar-Bechukotai/>

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## **HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY**

### **Mothers: Every Year Is Their Year**

adapted by Dan Bottorff | First United Methodist Church of Westfield

This blessing is for all the mothers who have sat up all night with sick toddlers saying, "It's OK honey, Mommy's here."

This blessing is for the mothers who gave birth to babies they may never see. And the mothers who took those babies-- forever to be their own children.

This blessing is for all the mothers who attended ball games, recitals, rehearsals, etc. etc. and who said, "I wouldn't have missed it for the world," and meant it.

This blessing is for all the mothers of Kosovo who fled in the night and can't find their children or can't feed their children.

Creator God, what makes a good mother anyway? Is it patience? Firmness? A soft lap?

Or is mothering what is in her heart?

Is it the ache she feels when she watches her child disappear down the street, walking to school alone for the very first time?

The jolt that takes her from sleep to dread, from bed to crib at 2 a.m. to put her hand on the back of a sleeping baby?

The need to flee from wherever she is and hug her child when she hears news of a school shooting, a fire, a car accident, a baby dying?

Yes it is so.

So this blessing is for all the mothers who sat down with their children and explained all about making babies. And for all the mothers who wanted to but just couldn't.

This blessing is for all the mothers who yell at their kids in the grocery store with frustration and despair.

This blessing is for the mothers who show up at work with milk stains on their blouses and diapers in their purse.

This blessing is for all the mothers who teach their sons to cook and their daughters to speak up with pride.

This blessing is for mothers who put pinwheels, teddy bears, or flowers on their children's graves.

This blessing is for mothers whose children have gone astray, who haven't the words to reach them, and yet have never put them from their heart.

This blessing is for new mothers stumbling through diaper changes and sleep deprivation. And mature mothers learning to let go. For working mothers and stay-at-home mothers. Single mothers and married mothers.

And this blessing is for all of us who will move beyond sentiment into actions which support mothers and mothering persons in all of their life-giving and life-nurturing roles. Amen

**Our Condolences to**

Henry Block on the death of his brother, Irving

**Bruchim Haba'im**

To our friends Rabbi Leon Morris, Dasee Berkowitz and Tamir who are now residing full time in Sag Harbor.

**Quote of the Week**

One of life's best coping mechanisms  
is to know the difference between an inconvenience and a problem.  
If you break your neck,  
If you have nothing to eat,  
If your house is on fire,  
Then you've got a problem.

Everything else is an inconvenience.  
Life is inconvenient.  
Life is lumpy.  
A lump in the oatmeal,  
A lump in the throat  
And a lump in the breast  
Are not the same kind of lump.  
One needs to learn the difference.

**Author Unknown**

The original Liberty Bell announced the creation of democracy; the Women's Liberty Bell will announce the completion of democracy.

– Katherine Ruschenberger, suffragist, *New York Times*, March 31, 1915.

**Shabbat shalom. Happy Mother's Day.**

Stacy

Stacy Menzer  
President  
The Conservative Synagogue  
Of the Hamptons  
PO Box 1800  
East Hampton, NY 11937  
631 725 8188  
[www.synagoguehamptons.org](http://www.synagoguehamptons.org)