

**The East End Synagogues
again join together to celebrate
Yom Ha'Atzmaut**

**Sunday, April 18th, 2010
Theme: People of Israel - Kibbutz Galuyot**

10:00-12:00pm The Jewish Center of the Hamptons

12:00pm Falafel at Chabad

4:00pm Movie and ... at Adas Israel co-sponsored by CSH

The Movie

Galil: A School With No Walls
Arabic & Hebrew with English subtitles

There will be an introduction by Maura Milles for the American Friends of Hand in Hand, the organization responsible for the school in the movie. I think it will be a fabulous program and will shed some hope for a possible peace in Israel, even if it is the next generation!

<http://www.handinhand12.org/>

Directors: Avi Hershkovitz & Sharon Hammou, France, 2006, 70 minutes

In Galilee, one of Israel's most ethnically diverse regions, 200 children aged 6 to 14 (Muslims, Jews and Christians) study at the Galil School, the first bilingual Jewish-Arabic school in Israel. Each class is half Jewish and half Arabic with two teachers teaching in both Hebrew and Arabic, encouraging students to openly discuss events of their entangled cultures. One day, fifth grade teachers Rasmia and Dana set out two maps – one is a map of Israel today, the other a 1947 map of Palestine. The young students discover that many of their houses in Ya'ad were built on the land of a Palestinian village that was called Mi'ar. *Galil* explores the exposed nerve of the Palestine-Israel conflict through the eyes of the students, staff and parents at this extraordinary school. Though the documentary doesn't shy away from the complexity of the situation, it presents hope in a possible solution.

Friday April 9, 2010 **Candle Lighting 7:05 pm**

**Shabbat morning April 10th -- 9:30
Old Whaler's Church**

Sunday April 11th Yom HaShoah

This week's Torah reading: **Sh'mini**

Annual (Lev. 9:1-11:47): Etz Hayim p. 630

Triennial (Lev. 11:1-11:47): Etz Hayim p. 636

Haftarah (2 Samuel 6:1-19 [S] or 6:1-7:17 [A]): Etz Hayim p. 645

Musings on Sh'mini--

At first glance, one would be hard pressed to uncover any thematic unity between the beginning and the end of Parshat Shemini. The initial narrative describes a tragedy. On the day Aaron and his sons were to be sanctified as the priests of Israel, Aaron's two elder sons, Nadav and Avihu,

offered an unauthorized sacrifice and died approaching the altar. The Torah describes Aaron's shocked silence upon hearing the news, followed by his later insistence to Moses that the celebration of sanctification could not go on unchanged.

The concluding section details the laws of kashrut, enumerating those animals that may and may not be eaten. It is near the end of these dietary laws that we might well find the elusive tie between the two major sections of our sedra.

The Torah indicates that if an "unclean creature" crawls into an earthenware vessel, that vessel should be shattered. The Talmud paradoxically rules that it is only through the shattering of the vessel that its shards can be rendered pure.

The second teacher of Hasidism, the Maggid of Mezeritch, applied this ruling to our inner lives: sometimes, the heart can only be rendered pure if it has been broken. While loss and sorrow may embitter us, the empathy and openness that also comes in the wake of heartbreak can prove transformative.

Perhaps the loss of his two sons -- together with his loss of faith during the sin of the Golden Calf -- qualified Aaron to become the High Priest. His own heartbreak made him singularly empathetic to others who had experienced bereavement or doubt. Realizing the urgent preciousness of life, he was impelled to "seek peace and pursue it," reconciling those alienated from each other. This Aaron became so beloved that when he died all Israel mourned him -- an honor not even accorded to Moses himself. <http://www.jewishexponent.com/article/20925/>

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## **VESSEL (SHEMINI)**

And if any of those falls into an earthen vessel, everything inside it shall be unclean and [the vessel] itself you shall break. --Leviticus 11:33

The heart is an earthen vessel,  
the body an urn: made from dust

and patched with slip,  
divine fingerprints everywhere.

Clay is permeable. What you see,  
what you touch changes you.

The small grey kitchen mouse  
with its neck snapped, dry and grisly

or the body losing integrity, blood  
welling someplace it shouldn't

or the friend who lets you down,  
the fierce hope that withers away:

each of these charges the heart  
with uncanny energy, untouchable.

All you can do is break the clay  
wide open, crack the very housing.

What hurts is what draws you  
ever nearer to what we can't reach.

<http://velveteenrabbi.blogs.com/blog/2008/03/this-weeks-po-3.html>

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Colliding Memories and Yom HaShoah

It is the season for memories.

Last week we remembered as if we, personally, went forth, baking matzah on our backs, singing songs about goats etc. etc. All very jolly. The sufferings of Egyptian slavery have been through the wash-cycle and are bleached white and shiny. The focus of Passover is on redemption and freedom; the focus is forwards, towards Sinai, and entering the land of Israel.

This week we remember the Holocaust. And there is no jollity. As I write this my mind is drawn to the relationship between the march out of Egypt and the Death Marches of the last days of the Nazi era. Raizl Kibl marched from Auschwitz and later recalled;

'In a frost half-barefoot or entirely barefoot, with light rags upon their emaciated and exhausted bodies, tens of thousands of human creatures drag themselves along in the snow. Only the great strong striving for life, and the light of imminent liberation kept them on their feet. [For] woe to them whose physical strength abandons them, They are shot on the spot. In such a way were thousands who had endured camp life up to the last minute murdered, a moment before liberation.'

So what are we doing when we commemorate Yom HaShoah? It's not a 'happy ever after' kind of a story. There is, of course, a State of Israel, but there is no redemption. Nor can we rely on the oft-quoted slogan of my youth, 'Never Again.' There have been too many genocides, from Rwanda to Bosnia, for me to feel that there is a connection between the commitment to remember our own Holocaust and the safety of every people from this most heinous of offences. Rather, I want to suggest two other reasons for memory.

When we remember we afford a scrap of dignity to those who were killed being told implicitly and explicitly that their lives counted for nothing, that no-one would remember. We remember to prove the Nazis wrong. Their lives did count and do count still.

And secondly, we remember to feel pain, feeling pain is good. We should expose ourselves to feeling pain, this is how we know we are alive, this is how we know we are compassionate, this is how we know we care. We remember the Holocaust because, as our own eyes prick with tears, we remind ourselves of our own humanity and our membership of the Jewish people. The Rebbe of the Warsaw Ghetto, Kalonymous Shapiro, suggested that when all doctrines of reward and punishment have crumbled away all that remains is the possibility of crying together, together with our fellow humans and together with a God who, Shapiro claims citing the Talmud, cries too. In this we remind ourselves that even if we cannot change the facts of the Holocaust, we refuse to accept them with a shrug of the shoulders and a flip to the back pages to check out the sports headlines. http://rabbionanarrowbridge.blogspot.com/2009_04_01_archive.html

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### **Hannah Senesh -- The last meeting**

*She suffered the most terrible forms of torture without yielding. A missing tooth was testimony of their cruelty. They had whipped the palms of her hands and the soles of her feet. They had tied her up, forcing her to remain immobile for hours. They had beaten her so violently that her body was completely covered with ecchymoses. Her torturers wanted to know the radio code. They had discovered the transmitter that she had hidden before being captured and they wanted the correspondence code in order to send false messages and direct the Allies' bombers to their anti-aircraft guns. Aware of the importance of the code, Hannah refused to reveal it. (...)*

*The worst was yet to come for Hannah in the prison in Budapest. She certainly did not long to find herself again in the city of her birth. They threw her into a cell where, to her great sorrow, she met her mother. At a loss of words, she embraced her tightly and could only murmur these words: " Mother, forgive me, but I could not renounce my obligations. "*

*The Germans knew what they were doing. They threatened to torture her mother and to execute her before Hannah's very eyes if she refused to reveal the code. But she did not yield. Only those who knew how much she loved her mother could begin to imagine her suffering. For my part, I was shaken by her account and could not hide my bewilderment. How could she remain so calm and so steadfast? Where did she find the courage to sacrifice her mother, whom she so loved, rather than reveal a secret, upon which, it is true, the lives of many depended? Who knows? Perhaps her determination indirectly contributed to saving her mother? Had she yielded, the Germans would surely have executed her, sending her mother to the gas chambers in Auschwitz. In as much, the Germans did not admit defeat. They cast Hannah and her mother in the same prison, wagering that their joint imprisonment, hunger and fear of death would break them. Some friends - some prisoners who had known the family before the war or had heard about them - did what they could to help them. For example, they managed to arrange that they be placed in adjacent cells so that they could see each other. Once or twice a week, the prisoners were allowed to take a walk in twos in the miniscule courtyard of the prison under the surveillance of the guards who dealt severely with the slightest conversation. In this way, I could hear the steps of the two prisoners from my cell and I would immediately go to the window to see Hannah. The two walked side by side, clutching hands. In general, hours of interminable waiting, long days and long nights preceded their meetings, and when they would meet, Mrs. Senesh probably could not refrain from asking the question that preoccupied her:*

*Why?*

*Her daughter was content to grasp her hand tightly. Perhaps she also whispered:*

*If I had to do it again, I would and you would understand.*

*Hannah felt that her mother had misgivings about her activities. Perhaps she also tried to comfort her: You will be proud of me when you hear about what I did ...*

*Y. Palgui*

<http://www.jafi.org.il/education/moriya/caesarea/hanna.html>

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Welcome to our newest members

Harriette Benkov

Vivian Polak and Michelle Francis

Quote of the Week

Blessed Is The Match

Blessed is the match consumed
in kindling flame.

Blessed is the flame that burns
in the secret fastness of the hurts.

Blessed is the heart with strength to stop
its beating for honor's sake.

Blessed is the match consumed
in kindling flame.

*Hannah Senesh
(Serdice Yugoslavia May 1944)*

May we never forget.
Shabbat shalom.

Stacy

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