

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.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

We are invited to celebrate
Minna Bromberg's ordination
at **mincha** service on **June 19**
at **Temple Adas Israel**

Minna has always generously shared her many talents with our community and joyously led CSH High Holy Day services last year.

Friday April 16, 2010 **Candle Lighting 7:12 pm**

Shabbat morning April 17th -- 9:30
Old Whaler's Church

Tuesday, April 20th Yom HaZikaron
Wednesday, April 21st Yom Ha'Azmaut

This week's Torah reading: Tazria | Metzora
Annual (Lev. 12:1-15:33): Etz Hayim p. 649
Triennial (Lev. 14:33-15:33): Etz Hayim p. 663
Haftarah (2 Kings 7:3-20): Etz Hayim p. 675

Musings on Tazria | Metzora --

"And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 'If a person has in the flesh of his skin (b'or b'saro) a sore'" (Leviticus 13:1-2)

The Sfat Emet (Rabbi Yehuda Leib Alter of Ger, 19th century) comments on Leviticus 13:1 with a midrash (traditional rabbinic narrative) from Genesis 3:21. As we leave the Garden of Eden, God makes for us garments of *or*, skin (spelled with an ayin). What were we clothed in previously? Garments of *or*, light (spelled with an aleph). When Moses descended from Mt. Sinai, when parents first see their newborn child, when a teacher is lost in passion for his or her teaching, the abandonment of oneself in the love or the task at hand allows one to positively 'glow'. Our original garments shine through.

Today, both physical and spiritual wounds or sores can create a metaphorical *tzara'at* (to our ancestors, the 'scaly affliction' that is the topic of our parasha), clogging our pores, scarring us, thickening our skins, deadening our emotions, and making it difficult for God's light to be revealed. Debilitating illness, guilt, weakness, anxiety, or depression can cause one to withdraw, to separate from friends and community. Our garment of light is concealed - we feel ill, tarnished, weakened, confused and unworthy.

In the absence of the priests and the set boundaries of our biblical communities, we become a cast of one in what used to be a communal drama. We judge ourselves, find ourselves diseased, unfit possibly for public appearance or inclusion in community, and close ourselves off either physically or emotionally from those around us. *Tzara'at* in Aramaic is *segiru* - closing.

It is not always a negative thing. Sometimes withdrawal gives one the time to heal, to gather strength for the challenges ahead, and to consider options for renewal and response. But in order to heal completely, we must (as Torah instructs) eventually return, emerge from our self-imposed isolation, and allow others to once again coax the light from within us.

In spite of our illnesses, our mistakes, and/or our failings, our original garments of light still exist just below the surface. We show honor and gratitude to God by allowing that light to shine through. <http://www.limmud.org/publications/tasteoflimmud/5766/Tazria-Metzora/>

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Often, a person's growth happens on the inside before it manifests in the outer world. The spiritual challenge lies in navigating this awkward time of dissonance between inner and outer. During this time the two realities must be reconciled. It is an uncomfortable time because there is a tendency to resist change and that resistance can manifest in the physical body. Retreat time is required in order to attend to and integrate the inner changes.

The spiritual challenge of *Tazria/Metzora* is to know when to separate yourself from the community and to know how to return.

The separation depends on having a community/relationship/family who honor and trust the process. This means that they understand the process of retreat as necessary and valuable to the life of the community.

When someone 'leaves the camp' to do the inner work that is calling them, they will be fully available upon their return and will have an integrated wholeness to give back to the community.

The process of retreat requires paying attention to the subtle messages of the soul in an atmosphere of spaciousness, without the everyday distractions and demands of the outer life. For some it may seem selfish to take this time for yourself, but it really is a requirement in the life of service. <http://www.reclaimingjudaism.org/torah/shefa%20tazria.htm>

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In this week's *parshah*, *Tazria*, we read about the disease *tza'ra'at*, commonly translated as leprosy. What is peculiar about this skin disease is that it not only afflicts humans but also clothing¹ and houses.² It is not only people's bodies that are struck with *tza'ra'at*, but also their possessions. What is the significance of this peculiar feature of *tza'ra'at* and what does it tell us about our society?

The rabbis understood *tza'ra'at* to be a punishment from God for various transgressions, including, most famously, wicked speech (*lashon ha-ra*), but also pride, deceit, false witness, bloodshed, wicked thoughts, pretending to have knowledge of Torah, causing discord, miserliness, announcing but not giving charitable donations, defamation of character, idol worship, blasphemy and robbing the public.³ Together these many sins point to a society that is falling apart: one filled with selfishness, deceit, disharmony and violence. Indeed, the theme of deceit, predominant in the above list of evils, strikes at the very core of what is essential for a society to function—namely our trust in our fellow citizens, leaders and social institutions.

The Sfat Emet, a Polish Chassidic Rebbe, takes the theme of wicked speech even further, indicating that **the plague of *tza'ra'at* results not only from evil things one has said, but also from things one should have said but didn't.**⁴ That is, it is not only that acts of evil are being committed, but as importantly, acts of good are being omitted. In particular, it is the failure to protest and oppose evil rampant in society that leads to the plague. http://ajws.org/what_we_do/education/publications/dvar_tzedek/5768/tazria.html

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## Skin

By CJ Stevens

You do hold us in  
with your blemishes and freckles  
and the funny way you  
zipper our scrapes and cuts.  
Even your method of draping  
blue-black curtains over our bruises  
catches amazement. So you weren't made  
to smooth old scars and wrinkles.  
On aches and itches we decorate you  
with salves and scratches. Belly deep  
in weight or close to the bone  
you follow us all on this ride.  
Up and down the slopes of our bodies,  
under our armpits, between our toes,  
we want your rind to surround us  
with a suede tough enough to live in.

<http://www.limmud.org/publications/tasteoflimmud/5768/Tazria/>

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Musings on Yom HaZikaron – Yom HaAtzmaut –

A powerfully emotional 9 minute video – well worth the time!

<http://www.tzipiyah.com/2008/05/yom-hazikaron-and-yom-haatzmaut.html>

This Shabbat we stand between *Yom HaShoa* and *Yom HaZikaron-Yom HaAtzmaut*, paralleling the historical transition from the Holocaust to the rebirth of Israel. In a few days we will go through another transition, the difficult one from the mourning of *Yom HaZikaron* immediately into the celebrations of *Yom HaAtzmaut*....

It is important to emphasize the vast difference between the sadness of *Yom HaShoah* and that of *Yom HaZikaron*. The Gaon HaRav Gustman *zt"l* once paid a shiva call to a family sitting for their son killed in Lebanon. He pointed out that while his own son had been passively murdered in the Holocaust, their son had died as a heroic soldier in the IDF defending the people of Israel and the land of Israel. This same point was made on *Yom HaShoah* two years ago when the mother of the soldier Shmuel Weiss *hy"d*, killed in Jenin, eulogized him at his funeral. This distinction does in fact comfort us.

The Sfat Emet writes that every Torah holiday has a parallel Rabbinic one. Sukkot, centered in the Temple, has Chanuka. Shavuot, the reception of the Torah, has Purim. "And from Pesach we are still hoping for a holiday as it says, 'like the days when I took you out of Egypt I will show you wonders'". Baruch HaShem that our generation has merited to see the fulfillment of his holy prayer! <http://www.nishmat.net/article.php?id=203&heading=0>

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"The upheaval through which our people have lived during the past ten years is so terrible that to attempt to explain it is to be smug and complacent... Yet one effect of that upheaval is that our people have been shocked out of its indifference to its future as a people on a land of its own. The iron clutch of the Galut has been compelled to release us and we, like our people of old in the time of the Exodus... are therefore able to celebrate the Pesach of our people. The slave mentality of the Galut-loving Jew who hated real freedom has been defeated with the establishment of the state of Israel." ("Judaism and Freedom," *Chayenu*)

Israel, as a nation State, is a marker of 'real freedom,' a freedom which is not cosy, but comes with challenges, burdens and complexities. It is only the 'slave mentality,' says Jacobs, which would reject this 'real freedom.' Our challenge is to celebrate this real freedom, as we celebrate the challenging freedom from Egypt. We may indeed pause to remove some wine from our cups, but if we dare lapse back into an 'indifference to [our] future as a people on a land of [our] own' we fail. [http://rabbionanarrowbridge.blogspot.com/2009\\_04\\_01\\_archive.html](http://rabbionanarrowbridge.blogspot.com/2009_04_01_archive.html)

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Why is Yom HaAtzmaout called Yom HaAtzmaout?

This is not such a simple question as would appear.

The word "Haatzmaout" is a Hebrew neologism created in 1943 by Itamar Ben Avi, the son of Eliezer Ben Yehuda; it obviously derives from the term "etzem," which means "bone," but which at the same time denotes something like "substance" or "essence". Also stemming from the same

root is the word "atzum," which in Hebrew means "powerful".

Itamar was not wrong. All these meanings are encapsulated in the concept of "independence," and all the more so in the concept of the State of Israel.

The power of deploying the essence. The substance that makes it possible for one to be oneself, all the way down to one's very bones.

After more than 1,800 years of active hope, how else to celebrate but with a word dedicated especially to the object of that hope? <http://en.morim.org/HomeStatic.aspx?id=349>

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### **Prayer for Israel and the Israel Defense Forces**

From "Vaani Tefilati " published by the Masorti Movement and Rabbinical Assembly of Israel. Prayer written by Rabbi Simchah Roth, translated by Rabbi Eric M. Lankin.

May the One who blessed our Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and our Matriarchs, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah, bless the State of Israel. May His sovereignty be revealed upon the Land that He swore to our ancestors to give to us.

Dear God, extend Your mercy on the leaders of the State. May they be worthy to build and establish her eternally in law and righteousness. Place the spirit of unity and love of our fellow Jews in their hearts and ours, wherever we may live, and together may we be dedicated to Your will with a full heart.

Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, protect the soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces. Save them from all trouble and distress and bless them with success in all their tasks. May they go in peace and return to their homes and loved ones with the blessings of life and peace.

Divine Parent in heaven, grant peace to the land and everlasting joy to all her inhabitants. As the Prophet Jeremiah said (Jer. 30:10) "And the people of Jacob shall be tranquil and calm with none to trouble them."

Manifest for us speedily in our time, that which is written in Scripture (Micah 4:4): "Every man shall sit under his grapevine or fig tree with no one to disturb him."

Spread your shelter of peace over all who dwell upon Your Earth and may this be Your will and we say, Amen.

<http://www.jewishfederations.org/page.aspx?id=64236>

### **Thank you for Your Generous Donations**

Shirin Kermanshachi and Monica Graham in honor of Robbie Kaplan and Rachel Lavine  
Joan and Paul Schreiber

### **Quote of the Week**

We offer peace and neighborliness to all the neighboring states and their peoples, and invite them to cooperate with the independent Hebrew nation for the common good of all."

[Israeli Declaration of Independence, May 14, 1948](#)

Shabbat shalom.

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)