

Community Wide Yom Ha'Atzmaut | Israel's Independence

Sunday, May 15th, 2011

10:00am - **The Jewish Center of the Hamptons**

Moment of Silence for Yom Hazikaron - Israeli Memorial Day

11:30am **Falafel at Chabbad**

4:00pm **Movie at Temple Adas Israel followed by CSH sponsoring an Israeli wine tasting**

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**Have you remembered to send in your CSH dues?**  
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MAY SCHEDULE -- CSH Shabbat Services

April 29 Parashat Kedoshim | Birchat HaChodesh Iyyar

May 14 Parashat Behar

May 28 Parashat Bamidbar (Rabbi Uhrbach)

Friday, May 6, 2011 Candle Lighting 7:33 pm (Sag Harbor)

This week's Torah reading: **Emor**

Annual: Leviticus 21:1 – 24:23 (Etz Hayim, p. 717)

Triennial: Leviticus 21:1 – 22:16 (Etz Hayim p. 717)

Haftarah: Ezekiel 44:15 – 31 (Etz Hayim p. 735)

Musings on Emor -- In Hebrew there are two synonyms for speech: *Emor* and *Daber*. What is the difference between the two? *Daber* usually refers to a harsher form of speech, while *emor* is softer. *Daber* is to exhort, to demand, while *emor* is to speak in a gentle tone; to request, to persuade.

The word *emor* itself teaches us a lesson.

It's not the thought that counts. Good thoughts need to be put into words, which need to be put into action. Before a person says something, certainly he or she deliberated on it for a while. However, the cogitation is not enough. The words also have to be expressed.

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**The priest who is exalted above his fellows, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured, and who has been ordained to wear the vestments, shall not bare his head or rend his vestments. He shall not go in where there is any dead body, he shall not defile himself even for his father or mother. He shall not go outside the sanctuary of his God, for upon him is the anointing oil of his God, Mine, the Eternal's (Leviticus 21:10-12)**

“Leviticus has been known in our tradition, since time immemorial, as Torah Kohanim, the “Laws of the Priests.” ...” A great part of it , deals with the service in the sanctuary and in the Temple which came thereafter- “and indeed, the key word to all matters of holiness in Torah Kohanim is the term, ” To their God”-”They will be holy to their God,” and not “they will be holy to you.” The Jewish people do not have to treat the priests’ status as something which is holy.”

Netziv of Volozim explains ” They will not imply holiness to the people by their clothes”-this means that they should not appear to the people as holy because of their special priestly clothes. The priestly clothes are meant for serving in the Temple. Outside the Temple, the priests are like any other people, and they should dress as any other person, and should look like any other person. If they attempt to look holy and special and separate from the people even outside and beyond their work in the Temple, “that is not honoring the name of God, but is arrogance and conceit.”

“This must be said against the spiritual plague, the plague against faith, religion and morals, that has infected, and still infects, certain people as holy in themselves, and not in terms of the function they fill in teaching Torah, and in observing the Torah, and in preserving the Torah. And let it be said: it is nothing but a form of idolatry that has penetrated into Judaism, and is a sign of the withering of faith in God.

“Jewish faith does not recognize the concept of holiness except in the context of worshipping God, and does not recognize holiness as an essential part of a person- and one should also add that the same applies to anything which exists in nature or in human reality, in a land or in a building.”

“He who distinguishes between holy and secular” is one of the main elements of religious awareness. One is forbidden to raise the secular to the level of the holy, and the secular includes all of man’s actions and all of human existence-except for those functions that are intended as an expression of the worship of God.”

From Accepting the Yoke of Heaven by Yeshayahu Leibowitz

<http://israelseen.com/2010/04/30/torah-bible-portion-of-the-week-emor-commentary/>

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Holiness is the Jewish answer to the problem of human existence. Mankind has always sought to ascribe some metaphysical meaning to physical life, feeling that if man is not somehow more than human, he is less than human. Thus, [he] attempts to transcend this temporal life through art, eros, religion and immortality. Judaism taught that it is holiness that can add this extra dimension to our lives, not by escaping from life, but rather by striving to "be holy" in this world and in this life.

Many of the laws spelled out in the Torah combine together to serve as a practical day-to-day manual on how to live a life of holiness, for both layman and priest.

From Peli, *Torah Today - A Renewed Encounter with Scripture* (Washington: B'nai B'rith Books, 1987), p. 143.

<http://www.kolel.org/pages/5764/emor.html>

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**Is Mother’s Day a Jewish Holiday?**

Jewish mothers evoke jokes with punch lines about light bulbs and martyrdom. But missing Mother's Day is no laughing matter, making us wonder if Mother's Day could possibly be a Jewish holiday.

The earliest known tributes to mothers date back to ancient Greek and Roman spring festivals dedicated to their mother gods. Christians honored Mary on the fourth Sunday of Lent and thus, in England, her "Mothering Sunday" was later expanded to celebrate all mothers.

In the United States, following the Civil War, Anna Jarvis, an Appalachian homemaker, organized a day to raise awareness of poor health conditions in her community, calling it "Mother's Work Day." Fifteen years later, Julia Ward Howe, author of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, organized a day for mothers to rally for peace, suggesting that mothers bore the loss of human life more severely than anyone else.

When Anna Jarvis died on May 9, 1905, her daughter Anna began a campaign to memorialize her mother's life work. At a church service on the third anniversary of her mother's death, the younger Anna handed out her mother's favorite flower, a white carnation, and embarked upon a national campaign to create an American memorial day for all Mothers. In 1914, Woodrow Wilson signed a bill recognizing Mother's Day as a national holiday on the second Sunday in May. Ironically, Anna later bemoaned the blatant commercialization of Mother's Day. In 1923 she filed a lawsuit to stop a Mother's Day festival, and was arrested trying to break up a peace convention selling carnations for a war mothers' group. She died blind, penniless and regretful that she ever started Mother's Day in the first place.

Nonetheless, Mother's Day was enthusiastically embraced by the American Jewish community. The Jewish Welfare Board published a Mother's Day pamphlet, and some synagogues even instituted special prayer services for the day, offering mothers white carnations and singing *Eshet Chayil* (Proverbs' *A Woman of Valor*) to them.

A little known fact is that we Jews already had our own Mother's Day on our Jewish liturgical calendar. The 11th of the Hebrew month of *Cheshvan* (October/November) has long been associated with the death of our matriarch Rachel, and, as such, was regarded as a sort of Jewish Mother's Day.

It is unclear why the 11th of Cheshvan became associated with Rachel. One theory has it that when the Spanish Expulsion brought many Jews to the Holy Land, the Kabbalists (Jewish mystics) created a pilgrimage festival to Rachel's Tomb on the road to Bethlehem. While the 15th of Cheshvan had generally been accepted as the major pilgrimage day to Rachel's tomb, tradition places her *yahrzeit* (day of death) on the 11th of the month. Might it be that since *eim* or "mother" has a numerical equivalent of 41, and the 11th of Cheshvan is 41 days after the birth of the world (*Rosh Hashanah*) that it became the preferred date for Rachel's commemoration and *Yom Ha-Eim*, the Day of the Mother? Midrashic tradition further associates the death of the matriarchs Sarah and Rebecca with the day.

So why would Rachel be chosen as the quintessential Jewish mother, rather than one of the other matriarchs: Sarah, Rebecca, or Leah? After all, Rachel suffered infertility for years before becoming a mother, while her sister, Leah, bore Jacob child after child. Perhaps it was this very suffering and death after childbirth that earned her special merit in our national folklore. Rachel certainly raised Jewish maternal martyrdom to new heights when, in Genesis she exclaimed to Jacob, "Give me children or I shall, die!" Sadly for Rachel this was a self-fulfilling prophecy. Because Rachel did not have much opportunity to enjoy the blessings of motherhood, the prophet Jeremiah depicted her as the archetypal mother of the nation of Israel: Rachel weeps for her children; she refuses to be consoled for her children, for they are gone. In Jewish folklore, Rachel became identified with the indwelling Presence of the Divine (the *Shekhina*), and the spiritual mother who accompanied the Jewish people into exile and remained disconsolate until their return.

We Jews were not surprised earlier this year when *The American Journal of Human Genetics* concluded that four women from the Middle East bequeathed their genetic signatures to the nearly eight million *Ashkenazi* (Eastern European) Jews now living around the world. These genes do not appear in non-Jews and are rare in Jews not of Eastern European descent. Thus was confirmed for us what we already assumed: While it takes no Jewish women to screw in a light bulb, it is possible that four Matriarchs populated our Jewish nation. And more important, it took one great Jewish woman to give birth to you, dear reader. So celebrate and honor your mother on Sunday, May 14, on 11 Cheshvan, today and every day.

[http://judaism.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ/Ya&sdn=judaism&cdn=religion&tm=11&f=00&tt=14&bt=0&bts=0&zu=http%3A//www.jewishdayton.org/content\\_display.html%3FArticleID%3D182277](http://judaism.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ/Ya&sdn=judaism&cdn=religion&tm=11&f=00&tt=14&bt=0&bts=0&zu=http%3A//www.jewishdayton.org/content_display.html%3FArticleID%3D182277)



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**In Memory of Howie Jablow**

Margaret Bromberg  
Frances and Ed Gotbetter

**In Memory of Marion Gotbetter**

Frances and Ed Gotbetter

**Yom Huledet Sameach**

Sue Shapiro  
Hy Brodsky

**End Quote**

How truly language must be regarded as a hindrance to thought, though the necessary instrument of it, we shall clearly perceive on remembering the comparative force with which simple ideas are communicated by signs. To say, "Leave the room," is less expressive than to point to the door. Place a finger on the lips is more forcible than whispering, "Do not speak." A beck of the hand is better than, "Come here." No phrase can convey the idea of surprise so vividly as opening the eyes and raising the eyebrows. A shrug of the shoulders would lose much by translation into words.

HERBERT SPENCER, *The Philosophy of Style*

Shabbat Shalom. Happy Mother's Day.

Stacy