
The YI/Merrick NEWS

**** Nisan 1999 – PESACH ISSUE ****

Okay, so there's the old joke about Sir Moses Montefiore. When Sir Moses came before Queen Victoria, he was expected to kneel before her. Sir Moses refused, whereupon the Queen asked: "Why is this knight different from all other knights?"

Purim Thanks:

Special thanks to Avi Abikzer and David Ritholtz on their usual great jobs of reading Megillat Esther. Avi gives it that authentic flavour (Persian, Moroccan, what's the difference?) and David enables us mere Ashkenazim to be able to follow along. Just kidding guys, thanks for the good work.

Thanks to Sarah Goldstein (and to Caryn Lockspeiser for helping her set up) for doing just a terrific job in organizing and setting the meal after Ta'anit Esther. Sarah discovered the real price of a job well-done and it's a negative one -- if you do a good job, they ask you to do it again next year!

Thanks to Gail Stamler for organizing the costume contest and for the Purim carnival. Everyone had a great time and we got to fill our kids up with even MORE sugar.

Thanks to Avi Stein for the Purim play. It was a lot of fun and kids and parents alike really enjoyed it.

A Message from Rabbi Volk

Pesach and Spring Cleaning:
Year after year, Pesach seems to come over the horizon as begin our spring and find out which relatives will be celebrating with us. One of the main features of this pre-Pesach rush is the meticulous search and removal of chametz, those leavened food products which are forbidden to us on Pesach. We take out "magnifying glasses" and search every nook and cranny of the house, making sure that no remnant of chametz remains. In trying to keep up with the "Schwartzes", we all want to have the most clean and most impeccable home for Pesach. But perhaps we are all forgetting something - something that is very crucial.

In our search for the physical bread crumbs which may be scattered in our homes, we tend to forget to clean the most important facet of the Pesach festival - our soul. The mitzvah to search for chametz should not only be taken literally, but we must also realize that we all have chametz within ourselves - those bad habits which contaminate our Jewish soul. Therefore, each and every one of us must search with ourselves: What have I done wrong this year? How can I live a more

spiritually motivated life? Before it is too late, we must eradicate our inner chametz. We need to take an inventory of our deeds and dust away those which are not proper. It is a race against time. Will we be ready?

Jeryl and I wish all of you and your dear families a fulfilling and spiritually motivating Chag Kasher Vesameach.

Rabbi Marc S. Volk

Pre-Pesach and Pesach Goings-On

- 1) Don't forget to sell that chametz of yours. Rabbi Volk is available after Shacharit every morning and after Mincha on Sunday.
- 2) The Rabbi will be giving his Shabbat Hagadol drasha on Shabbat, March 27. It will take place at 4:50 p.m. and the topic is entitled "Setting Priorities in Our Lives". All are welcome.
- 3) On Erev Pesach, one should finish eating chametz by 9:52 a.m. and should be finished burning the chametz by 10:55 a.m.

- 4) Afikomen: On the first night, you must finish eating the afikomen by 11:59 p.m., and on the second night by 11:58 p.m.
- 5) On Shabbat Chol Ha'moed, don't forget to come to shul early enough to hear "Shir Ha'shirim" said during shacharit.
- 6) Yizkor will be recited on the last day of Pesach.
- 7) To all those kids going to Great Adventures on Chol Hamoed with NCSY, have a great time. To those of us with either smaller kids and/or who may be less adventurous, have fun at Adventureland.
- 8) To those who will be traveling away for Pesach, we wish you a very happy, healthy and kosher Pesach. Safe travel to all those. To those who will remain in the 516 area code or thereabouts, enjoy the...relatives (for 3 days!!)

A Pesach Thought:

When we open the door for Eliyahu Hanavi, we read pasukim from Tehillim and Eicha which speak of Hashem's revenge on His enemies: "Why should we seek the detriment of other nations, even if the reference is to our enemies who do not hesitate to harm us? Should we not pray only for our own deliverance, and not concern ourselves with what

becomes of our antagonists? The same question could be posed concerning one of the verses in the "Great Hall" (Psalm 136): 'Give thanks to the One who drowned Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, for His Kindness endures forever.' Why should we express gratitude for the ghastly fate that befell Pharaoh and his legions? Would it not have been enough for us if Hashem had neutralized the Egyptians in a way that would not have caused them so much harm?

Rabbi Chaim Shmulevitz supplied the answer to these questions, noting the dictum of the Sages (Berachos 33a): 'Vengeance is a great thing.' We find that David, while on his deathbed and issuing his final instructions to his son and successor, Shlomo, concerned himself with the issue of vengeance against some of most pernicious enemies. We even see vengeance sought out by the spirit of dead man, when according to the Sages' interpretation of I Kings, ch. 22, the spirit of Navos sought revenge from Achav for having murdered him. Certainly the immortal soul, which is completely removed from all physical and mundane pursuits and desires, would not concern itself with vengeance if it would not be an extremely important, spiritual endeavor.

R' Chaim explained that vengeance involves something much more significant than the mere settling of scores with an enemy; it is the manner in which

G-d makes His dominion over the world manifest to man. When evil is allowed to go unpunished it diminished man's recognition of G-d's hand in governing the affairs of the world. Vengeance against evildoers, when administered by G-d, or for His sake, is thus an important process in the sanctification of G-d's name in the world."

- *The Haggadah of the Roshei Yeshivah*

Statements and opinions presented in signed articles are those of the respective authors, and do not necessarily reflect official opinions of the Young Israel of Merrick.

Pesach Recipes:

Pesach Mandel Bread:

1 cup sugar; 3 eggs; 1 cup oil; 3/4 cup potato starch; 1/2 tsp. Cinnamon; 1 1/2 cake meal; 2 Tbsp wine; 3/4 cup chopped walnuts; optional- chocolate chips, raisins, coconut, etc. Combine all ingredients and mix well. Shape into 3 loaves and place on lightly greased baking sheet. (Spray coating works well). Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Slice and return to oven to dry.

Pesach Farfel Kugel:

1 lb. matzo farfel; 7 eggs; 3/4 lb. Margarine; 1 large can of peaches, drained and syrup reserved; 2 cups hot water; 3/4 tap salt; 1 tsp. vanilla; 1 cup sugar; cinnamon. Place farfel in strainer, pour hot water over and strain. Beat

eggs and add fearful. Melt margarine and add to eggs, add peach syrup, salt, vanilla, sugar and cinnamon. Pour 1/2 of mixture into 9 x 13 pan (not greased), add 1/2 of peaches (sliced), add remaining mixture and peaches. Sprinkle with additional cinnamon and a little sugar. Bake 1 hour at 350 degrees. Delicious hot or cold.

Passover Macaroons:

3 egg whites; 2/3 cup sugar; 1 cup ground almonds; 6 Tbsp matza meal; 1 cup coconut (optional).

Beat egg whites until stiff. Add sugar gradually. Fold in nuts and matza meal and coconut. Drop with teaspoon onto greased cookie sheet. Bake in 300 degree oven for 30 minutes or until crisp.

The shul would once again like to express its deepest condolences to Stuart Ratner on the passing of his dear mother, Lillian. Deepest sympathies as well to Stuart's brothers, Howard and George, as well as to the entire Ratner family. May you only know peace, health and simcha for many years to come until 120.

Mazel Tov:

- 1) Once again to Lauren and Larry Korman on being this year's best looking couple - as well as our honorees. A good time was had by all. Kudos to Avi Abikzer (food and service) and Eric Gross

(entertainment). Also mazel tov to Gail Stamler on being honored with the Avodat award.

- 2) Mazel Tov to Bonnie Nathanson upon her engagement to Kenny Sicklick on March 2. Mazel Tov to Stacey and Howard Nathanson and Fran and Marc Sicklick of Lawrence. Mazel tov to grandparents, Sylvia Nathanson; and Dorothy and Arthur Ritholtz, and to all extended mishpocha. May you all only have much simcha, health, happiness and joy until 120.
- 3) Mazel Tov to Debby Gage who is being honored this year with the Aishes Chayil Award from the National Council of Young Israel - Women's League. The luncheon this year will take place on a Sunday, and it will be a brunch. Invitations are in the mail, so please try to join Debby in this lovely coved to a woman who works tirelessly for the shul.

Rosh Hashanah:

Yes, you read that correctly. The Seating Committee is now being formed. If you would like to participate and help make the seating arrangements as successful as they were last year, please contact Debby Gage.

Garage Sale:

It's coming up faster than you think. It's time to start using tough love on your possession - so get rid of them and give them to the shul to make some money. If anyone can make gold out of straw - it's Gail. Call her with all your valuable-wares.

Bus:

If you haven't mailed in your bus applications by now, I take it you intend on driving the kids to school both ways. If you haven't mailed it in, put down this newsletter and mail it right away. The deadline is April 1 - 1st day of Pesach.

Board Minutes:

- 1) Discussed the cost, budget and profits from the Journal dinner.
- 2) There is a need to form a kiddush committee.
- 3) A central calendar will be set up so that events and simchas can be noted and that board and shul can be aware of upcoming events.
- 4) Committee heads will be asked to speak to the board on the goings on in their particular committee.
- 5) Bingo - there is a real crisis going on with the lack of participation. More people are needed to help on a regular basis - whether early or late shift.

6) Discussed that people who want to run for the board elections in June need to put their names forward. A letter will be going out soon to the membership asking for candidates.

7) Discussed the need to form Hebrew reading/understanding classes for members who expressed an interest.

8) The need to form the High Holiday seating committee - we have more members and more bar and bat mitzvahs.

9) The Rabbi is going ahead with the purchase of his house.

This Month's Web Sites:

<http://www.613.org/kidpassover.html> Lets Sing the Seder (using real audio). Mr. Matzah Song. The Matzah that Papa Brought Home. It's all part of the OU Torah Dimensions Project!

<http://www.breslov.org> The official Breslov Chassidim site! An information bank on the teachings of outstanding chassidic master Rebe Nachman of Breslov (1772 – 1810) and activities of the Breslov Chassidim. "If you believe you can spoil, believe you can fix." – *Rebbe Nachman of Breslov*.

<http://www.jewish-history.com/seder.html> Confederate Passover. A letter written by a Jewish Confederate soldier, Isaac J. Levy of the 46th Virginia Infantry, describing how he and his brother Ezekiel observed Pesach while in the army. He was killed in the trenches at Petersburg, August 21, 1864..

<http://www.billybear4kids.com/holidays/pesach/pesach.htm> Help Moses as a baby! Help Moses find the ten Commandments! Help the people cross the Red Sea! Find your way to

the ten pieces of Chametz! Take the Ten Plagues Quiz!

<http://www.jewish-portraits.com>

The World of Jewish Art Portraits. The largest and most unique Jewish art portraiture painted by famous European artists.

<http://www.khazaria.com> The Khazars!!! A resource for Turkic and Jewish Historia in Russia and Ukraine. Really interesting links.

Over a thousand years ago the far east of Europe was ruled by Jewish kings who presided over numerous tribes, including their own tribe, the Khazars. After their conversion, the Khazar people used Jewish personal names, spoke and wrote in Hebrew, were circumcised, had synagogues and rabbis.

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