

HAVURAT YISRAEL WEEKLY NEWS

13 Iyar 5782

SHABBAT EMOR

May 14, 2022

Shabbat Shalom!

7:00 pm Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat
7:46 pm Candle Lighting
Count Omer #28 tonight

8:45 am Mishnayot Class
9:00 am Shacharit
9:13 am Latest Shema
Parasha p. 672 Haftorah p. 1176
11:00 am Drasha — Rabbi Rubin, Kids Program
6:55 pm Perek in the Garden
7:35 pm Mincha, Seudah Shlisheet
8:39 pm Maariv, Havdalah
Count Omer #29 tonight

Kiddush & Seudah Shlisheet sponsorships available.

Upcoming Kiddushim

May 21 Ephraim Grossbein
June 6, Mehran & Rahel Arasheben
June 11 Ruth Finkelstein and Yael Yezep

Condolences to Sylvia Lieberman on the passing of her brother, our former member David Lieberman ZL.

LAG BAOMER

Thursday May 19



Learning English

Free English as a Second Language (ESL) Class with Marc Rose on Mondays, 7:30 pm.

Hebrew class for beginners — with Bruce Jacobs

Tuesdays at 8:00 pm on Zoom

For information, call Yael Yezep at 516-460-3202

Are you still a member of Havurat?

Membership dues were due January 1st and payable by **March 31st of each year** and a member retains the status of "good standing" only when dues are up to date. Please pay your membership on time and in full to enjoy special members' prices. All Membership privileges are extended **only** to fully-paid-up members. We want everyone to be not just a member, but a part of our caring family. If not now, when?

Nothing announces springtime at Havurat Yisrael **more** than the return of

PEREK IN THE GARDEN

Join in studying Pirke Avot every Shabbat afternoon!

Thank-you to our Mezuzah Contributors!

Jose Alvares
Beti Ajam
Mehran, Rahel, Kayla & Avriel
Arasheben
Renee & David Hirsch
Fernando & Ivelisse Leana
Roger & Jeanine Mashihi
Shimon & Sarah Mizrahi
Elisheva Palala
Donald Gallo
Shimon Martinez
Dante Lopez
Sharam Sharaf

Davood Baradarian
Benhour Mahgarefteh
Shahr Okhsedghe
Yael Yezep
Miriam and Jeff Benkoe
Michelle Bernstein
Darlene Frank
Neva Goldstein & Simcha Hellman
Ira & Cathy Kleiman
Linda & Serge Merkin
Louis & Rachel Ordentlich
Arlene Ross

Yom Yerushalayim

Community-wide celebration of our eternal indivisible capital, on the 55th anniversary of the liberation and re-unification of Jerusalem

at Havurat Yisrael.

Saturday, May 28 at 9:15 pm

*Refreshments • Israeli Music •
Group Singing*

All are invited to this Festive Event

SAVE THE DATE — SUNDAY JUNE 12, 2022

Singles Event At Havurat Yisrael

If you want to volunteer to assist with this event
please contact Alicia at 718-261-5500

SUNDAY May 15 / 14 Iyar PESACH SHENI	MONDAY May 16 / 15 Iyar	TUESDAY May 17 / 16 Iyar	WEDNESDAY May 18 / 17 Iyar	THURSDAY May 19 / 18 Iyar LAG BAOMER	FRIDAY May 20 / 19 Iyar
7:30 am Gemara Shiur 8:00 am Shacharit 8:45 am Breakfast 9:30 am Parasha Class in Spanish — Rabbi Algaze via Zoom Count Omer #30 tonight	6:30 am Gemara Shiur 7:00 am Shacharit 7:30 pm Journey in Jewish Literature — Rabbi Algaze (no class this week) Count Omer #31 tonight	6:30 am Gemara Shiur 7:00 am Shacharit 7:00 pm — Parasha Class — Rabbi Algaze-Moved to Thursday this week only! 8:00 pm Mesilat Yesharim — Rabbi Algaze (no class this week) Count Omer #32 tonight	6:30 am Gemara Shiur 7:00 am Shacharit Count Omer #33 tonight	6:30 am Gemara Shiur 7:00 am Shacharit 7:00 pm — Parasha Class — Rabbi Algaze Count Omer #34 tonight	6:30 am Gemara Shiur 7:00 am Shacharit 7:00 pm Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat 7:45 pm Candle Lighting Count Omer #35 tonight

HAVURAT YISRAEL

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DAVID ALGAZE, RABBI / JACK GOLDHABER, PRESIDENT

ILLUSORY FREEDOM

By Rabbi David Algaze

“You shall count for yourselves—from the morrow of the rest day (Pesach), from the day when you bring the omer (a measure of volume) of the waving—seven weeks, they shall be complete. Until the morrow of the seventh week you shall count, fifty days...” (Leviticus 23:15-16)

The connection between the festivals of Pesach and Shavuot is firmly established through the counting of the *Omer* (the *sefirah*). This mitzvah begins on the day after the first day of Pesach and proceeds for 49 days or seven full weeks (Shavuot) until the 50th day which is celebrated as the Festival of the Weeks (Shavuot). This entrenched relation between these two holidays is the reason that the festival of Shavuot is the only holiday that does not have a fixed date on the Jewish calendar. It is simply observed on the 50th day of the *sefirah* or on the 50th day after the first day of Pesach. (In our fixed calendar it falls on the 6th of Sivan, but in the time of the Temple it could fall on the 5th or 7th as well).

The reason for the linkage between these two holidays—one celebrating the Exodus and the other commemorating the day of the giving of the Torah to Israel—is that the freedom achieved on Pesach would not be a real freedom without the values and insights found in the Torah. The Rabbis tell us, “There is no freer Man than he who is engaged in the Torah.” (Avot 6:2). Only someone who possesses the intellectual and spiritual capacities provided by the Torah can be really called a free man.

There are many reasons for this phenomenon. First, there is the human fear of freedom. Without some boundaries or structures, a person given freedom will panic and eventually wish to relinquish that freedom. In his seminal work, *Escape from Freedom*, the Frankfurt-born psychologist and social theorist Erich Fromm, explores humanity's shifting relationship with freedom. He distinguishes between ‘freedom from’ (negative freedom) and ‘freedom to’ (positive freedom). The former refers to the process of becoming liberated from an oppressor whereas the latter refers to a freedom with a purpose, a freedom to create and develop something new. When we become emancipated from an overbearing authority, we are often left with feelings of emptiness and anxiety which may actually lead the person to hand over his freedom to another oppressor. Thus, Fromm explains, the insecurity and anxiety produced by the Weimar Republic paved the way for the rise of the authoritarian system of Nazism.

Without a positive goal and program, mere freedom becomes a burden rather than an opportunity. Sometimes, a negative freedom will result in a destructive attitude of rejecting everything in the past to create the illusion of a “new freedom.” This is often the sentiment in many liberal circles where liberty is related to the mere absence of any laws or the discarding of any traditions or values held in the past. Finally, a negative freedom may lead people to seek a superficial conformity with the trends of the time or the thinking of others. This avoids the anxiety which can be produced by free thinking. Thus, even when we are free from obvious authoritarian influence, we may still be subject in our thinking and behavior by ideas of ‘common sense’, what we call “correct thinking” or the advice of experts and the influence of advertising and especially the media.

The way to become truly free is to have a program of ideas and values chosen spontaneously as a form of self-expression and behave in a way that relates to other people in the world. The building of a just, elevated society, filled with ethical values, in which the ability to achieve personal fulfillment stands side by side with social responsibility and our concern for the needs of others—these are the qualities that the Torah instills in us. This is why without the Torah, our freedom may be simply a “negative freedom” and may ultimately lead us to any or all of these three phenomena: the surrender of freedom, engaging in a lifestyle of mere negativism and rejectionism that is destructive or by adjusting our lives to the tastes of others in our society, the fashion or the media. He who has that type of freedom is not really free.

By associating the experience of liberation with the receiving of the Torah at Sinai, the Torah is teaching us that in order to attain genuine freedom we need the values and the commandments of the Torah. Shavuot is also a festival of liberation that is the continuation and the culmination of the process of emancipation that began at the Exodus and concludes at Sinai. This is the message of the *sefirah* that asks us to connect the two holidays.

The freedom from Egypt needs the teachings of Torah to persist because the philosophical tenets of the Torah offer a clear program for life that will enhance and support that liberty. The unity of G-d, for instance, serves to remind us of the unity of humanity and the equality of all human beings. The ethical values, enunciated and developed through a complex system of laws, assure that society will progress towards a greater sensitivity to human suffering, the opportunity to exercise our generosity and kindness and the development of a civilization that will work in a united fashion freely rather than by coercion. The dignity of Man, the sanctity of human life, the existence of a higher dimension in Man—his soul, the encouragement of virtue and the deterrence of immorality and the ultimate hope that there will be a redemption from all our suffering and toils—these are the elements that make our freedom a real one. This is a positive freedom that is constructive, creative and lasting.

About the commandment of starting the counting immediately after the first day of Pesach, at the height of the awareness of freedom, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch writes, “When you are conscious of freedom and prosperity, which in general are the aims which all national desires and efforts are directed to attain, then you are to consider yourself not at the goal, but only at the beginning of your national destiny. Then you begin to count for the acquisition of another goal.” Independence for all nations is the goal; for the Jewish people it is just the beginning. How apt is this lesson for today when we ought to consider that our acquisition of the land of Israel in our times is not the end in itself but only the commencement of our march in history towards a higher destiny, namely the Redemption of all mankind, the ennobling of the human spirit and the acknowledgment of the Divinity of the Creator.

As we strive to be free we should bear in mind that only he who has Torah is considered a genuinely free person and only by acquiring the values imbedded in the Torah we are able to support and preserve that freedom for us as individuals and for all mankind.



Refuah Shlema Chava Naomi bat Doba Chana, Rivka Gitel bas Miriam (sister of Debbie Greenberg), Ha Rav Eliyahu ben Shushan, Alte Ester Riva bat Devorah Shifra (Eileen Alter), Batya bat Rachel (Betty Feit), Batsheva Friedle bat Rachel, Roiza bat Yita Feiga (Rosalie Tenzer), Yael bat Sheindel Ettel, Eshrat Bat Esther (Arasheben's friend), Obadia ben Leah (Steve Golub), Malka Bat Buca (Yeni Hassin), Devorah bat Sarah, Yaakov ben Leah.