



Adelaide Hebrew Congregation News

Volume 5 Issue 1

May 6, 2011

Shabbat Details

- Friday night service
6.15pm
- Saturday morning
service 9am
followed by
Kiddush
- Times for Shabbat:

LC 5:11PM
ends 6:08PM

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Notices

- **Yom Hazikaron Memorial Service**– Sunday 8th May at 7pm at Hines Hall (AHC) . Ma'ariv service will start in Shul at 6:15pm
- **Yom Ha'atzmaut Celebrations**– Sunday 15th May at 6pm at Hines Hall (AHC). Yom Ha'atzmaut special Tefilah and Hallel - Tuesday 7:00am
- **Kosher Chickens and Bread-Next delivery** will arrive on Wednesday, 11th May, 2011. Please place your orders by Monday, 9th May, 2011-9:00AM
- The new Board is seeking **expressions of interest** from any of the long-term members of the community to join a committee to help find the way forward for the future of the AHC. Please contact President Mark Cohen via the office if you are able to assist.
- We wish **Refuah Shlemah** to Judith Bayer, Rosy Costi, Mara Zaks, Hillel Friedler, Myer Solomon and anyone else who has been unwell recently.

Yahrzeits

We wish the following members long life on their Yahrzeits:

Mrs. Suzy Kertesz for father Albert Frangi

Mr. Maniu Tillinger for mother Sosie Tillinger

Dr. Leon Zimmet for mother Anne Zimmet

Mrs Miriam Naomi Millingen for mother Anne Zimmet

Ms Clara Sandler for grand-mother Perl Krell



Shabbat Parashat EMOR

PARASHAT EMOR-

WHY DO WE COUNT THE OMER?

In the midst of the Torah's discussion concerning the festival cycle, immediately after the commandment concerning the Omer offering (a barley offering in the Temple which marks the beginning of the harvest and allows the use of that season's grain), the following mandate is found:

"And you shall count for yourselves – from the day after the Sabbath, from the day you bring the waved offering of the Omer – seven weeks; complete shall they be. Until the day after the seventh Sabbath, shall you count fifty days; and you will offer a new meal offering to the Lord."

As codified by the rabbis, this mitzva, known as the mitzva of Sfirat Ha'omer, the Counting of the Omer, obligates each Jew to verbally count the days and weeks from the second day of the holiday of Pesach until the first day of the holiday of Shavuot.

Questions

What possible purpose can there be in verbally counting the days and weeks between Pesach and Shavuot?

The Torah offers no explanation for this mitzva.

Approaches

A.

Most obviously, the Counting of the Omer is perceived by many scholars as an act of linkage between the two holidays that border the mitzva, Pesach and Shavuot. Through the act of counting we testify that the Revelation at Sinai (commemorated on Shavuot) was the goal and purpose of the Exodus from Egypt (commemorated on Pesach). This relationship is established at the outset when God informs Moshe at the burning bush: "And this is your sign that I have sent you: when you take the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

On a deeper level, our counting consequently affirms that the physical freedom of the Exodus is incomplete without the spiritual freedom granted by God's law; a truth mirrored in the famous rabbinic dictum: "No one is truly free other than he who is involved in the study of Torah."

By counting the days between Pesach and Shavuot, many scholars continue, we also are meant to re-experience the sense of excitement and anticipation that marked this period for the Israelites, newly redeemed from Egypt. Just as we would "count the remaining days" towards an extraordinary event in our personal lives, so too we should feel a real sense of anticipation each year as we again approach the holiday that marks the Revelation at Sinai.

B.

Other authorities choose to view these days primarily as a period of "purification from" rather than "anticipation towards."

By the time of the Exodus, the Israelites have been defiled from centuries of immersion in Egyptian society and culture. Numerous sources, in fact, maintain that they have descended to the forty-ninth of fifty possible stages of defilement and are on the verge of becoming irredeemable. With haste, at the last moment, God pulls the nation back from the brink. The newly freed slaves, however, must now undergo a process of purification before they can encounter God and receive the Torah at Sinai. Forty-nine days – to counter each level of defilement experienced – must elapse before Revelation can take place.

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Shabbat Parashat EMOR

By counting the days between Pesach and Shavuot each year, we remember and mark this refining journey. Just as a married woman monthly counts the days leading to her immersion in a mikva we must count and spiritually prepare ourselves for our reunion with God at Sinai.

Based on this approach, the Ohr Hachaim explains why Sfirat Ha'omer begins each year on the second day of Pesach, rather than on the first. The Exodus, he observes, occurs on the first day of the festival. For a portion of that day, therefore, the Israelites yet remain in Egypt and the journey of purification cannot yet begin.

C.

Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik perceives yet another lesson embedded in the act of Sfirat Ha'omer. The Rav suggests that, in Jewish experience, an individual can perform the act of counting within two realms: the realm of Sfira and the realm of minyan (the root of each of these terms means "to count").

When you count in the realm of minyan, the Rav explains, all that matters is the attainment of the ultimate goal, the endpoint of your counting. Nine upstanding, righteous men can assemble for a prayer service but, without a tenth, there is no minyan.

When you count in the realm of Sfira, however, things are different. Although you still count towards a goal, each individual unit in the calculation becomes a goal, as well. While someone counting precious diamonds, for example, is certainly interested in the total number of diamonds he has, he also pauses and holds each gem up to the rays of the sun, admiring its unique facets, color and shape.

The act of Sfirat Ha'omer teaches us to "count our days in the realm of Sfira" – to see each day as a goal unto itself.

Too often, we live exclusively goal-oriented lives; moving from accomplishment to accomplishment, from milestone to milestone, rarely stopping to appreciate the significance of each passing day. And yet, when all is said and done, the quality of the journey, in large measure, defines our lives – and the ordinary moments spent with family and friends are as significant, if not more significant, than the milestones themselves.

The Rav's observation may also be mirrored in two versions of the verbal formula for Sfirat Ha'omer which have developed over the years. Some communities recite, "Today is the ----day la'Omer (literally "to the Omer")" while others count "ba'Omer (literally "in the midst of the Omer")." Taken together, these two versions form the balance that should mark our approach to life. On the one hand, without goals our lives are aimless. We therefore count la'Omer, towards the endpoint of the Omer count. On the other hand, never losing sight of the journey's value, we also count ba'Omer, in the midst of the Omer.

Adapted from one of the multiple essays on this parsha in *Unlocking the Torah Text* by Rabbi Shmuel Goldin, published by OU Press and Gefen Publishing

Shabbat shalom and Chag Hatzmaut Sameach!

Rabbi Netanel Friedler

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The State Zionist Council of SA and the Tarbut Society invite the community to the

Yom Ha'Zikaron Memorial Service 2011

Erev Yom Ha'zikaron, **Sunday 8th May at 7pm**

(Ma'ariv Service starts at 6:15pm)

Hines Hall, Adelaide Hebrew Congregation, 13 Flemington St, Glenside

Yom Ha'Zikaron is the day that Israel remembers its fallen soldiers and the civilian victims of terrorism. Please join us in commemorating the soldiers and civilians who have given their lives to protect the state of Israel. The ceremony will be in English and Hebrew.

Guest of Honour: Mr Nevo Barchad, Consul and Director of Economic Affairs, Embassy of Israel Canberra

עמותת תרבות והמועצה הציונית של דרום אוסטרליה מזמינים את הציבור ל

טקס יום הזכרון לחללי מערכות ישראל ונפגעי פעולות האיבה ה'תשע"א

ערב יום הזכרון, יום ראשון ה-8 במאי בשעה 19:00
(תפילת ערבית מתחילה ב-18:15)

,Adelaide Hebrew Congregation, 13 Flemington St, Glenside אולם היינס,

אורח כבוד: מר נבו ברח"ד, קונסול ישראל בקנברה





The State Zionist Council of SA and the Tarbut Society invite the community to the celebrations for Israel's 63rd Independence Day

In the programme:

- Yom Hazikaron memorial
- Guest singer – Miri Mor
- Israeli style dinner
- Sing-a-long with Oded Gordon

The celebrations will take place at **6pm** on **Sunday May 15, 2011** in the Hines Hall, Adelaide Hebrew Congregation

Cost: \$20 per person, \$15 pension card holders, \$50 family

Chag Sameach

עמותת תרבות והמועצה הציונית של דרום אוסטרליה מזמינים לחגיגות יום העצמאות ה-63 של מדינת ישראל

בתוכנית:

- טקס יום הזכרון לחללי מערכות ישראל
- הופעה של הזמרת מירי מור
- ארוחה בטעם וריח ישראלי
- שירה בציבור עם עודד גורדון

יום א' 15.5.2011 י"א אייר תשע"א בשעה 18:00 באולם היינס, Adelaide Hebrew Congregation

מחיר: \$20 ליחיד, \$15 פנסיונר, \$50 למשפחה

חג שמח

