

OR ZARUA

Congregation

NEWSLETTER / VOLUME 21:4 ADAR / NISAN / IYAR 5769 MARCH / APRIL 2009

A THOUSAND UNSOLVED RIDDLES: *Searching for Reasons for the Commandments*

An Adult Education Course on Three Sundays Between Pesah and Shavuot

Congregant Marc Ashley will again be offering a course exploring pivotal issues in classical Jewish thought on three Sundays between Pesah and Shavuot. In “A Thousand Unsolved Riddles: Searching for Reasons for the Commandments,” we will discuss the centuries-old topic of “ta’amei hamitzvot”—explanations for why God imposed commandments on the Jews and theories as to why Jews are better off observing them.

After highlighting the puzzle of identifying precisely which commandments constitute the 613 mitzvot, we will canvass myriad views regarding rationales

behind the commandments and reasons to obey them. Although some traditional Jews have discouraged questioning why we should fulfill the commandments because they have made blind obedience a supreme virtue, many of our greatest thinkers have sought to decipher God’s motivations in commanding us to perform mitzvot. In seeking reasons for the commandments, do we implicitly challenge God’s authority in a futile effort to comprehend divine wisdom?

In a modern world in which religious allegiance is fragile, can we afford not to plumb the depths of commandments at the core of our tradition? Denominational

differences often hinge on whether we conclude that the authority of the commandments depends on our comprehension of their rationales or, rather, that our observance of mitzvot demands no justification other than that God said so.

Classes will meet in the synagogue library on April 26, May 3 and May 17 at 10:00 a.m. All Congregants are welcome to attend, and no prior knowledge of any kind is required. Please join us for stimulating discussions of these crucial historical, theological and practical issues in contemporary Jewish life. To register, please contact the synagogue at 212-452-2310, extension 39 or www.orzarua.org.

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YOM HA’ATZMAUT CELEBRATIONS

Israel Independence Day Program • Tuesday, April 28
James Kugel Lecture • Wednesday, April 29



Or Zarua will observe Yom Ha’atzmaut beginning on Tuesday evening, April 28 with Minhah/Ma’ariv at 7:30 p.m. After services, we’ll celebrate with Israeli food, music and dancing.

For the finale of our Israel Independence Day observance, we are delighted to have Professor James Kugel speak about “Israel in the Bible” on April 29 at 8:00 p.m. The lecture, sponsored by

Simon and Janet Katz, will be followed by a reception.

Professor Kugel’s most recent book, *How to Read the Bible: A Guide to Scripture, Then and Now*, drew a large turnout at Or Zarua’s book discussion. Kugel has had an interesting career, serving as poetry editor at Harper’s while in graduate school pursuing historical-critical studies of the Bible. For many years, he was Starr Professor of Hebrew Literature at Harvard before moving full-time to Israel, where he directs the Institute for the History of the Hebrew Bible at Bar Ilan University. A lively scholar, Professor Kugel is also a very engaging speaker.

ק"ק אור זרוע
CONGREGATION

**OR
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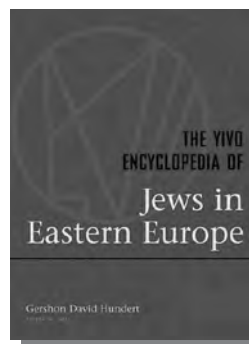
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From the Or Zarua Librarian

By Barry Feldman

If you are familiar with yizkor bikher—memorial books—that eulogized the past communities of eastern Europe a common theme becomes apparent: in the absence of a memorial marker, the book serves as a metzeveh or tombstone. The recently published *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, a two-volume compendium of 1,800 subjects, maps, charts, illustrations and cartoons contributed by 400 scholars, shatters this tragic image to reveal the dynamic, diverse, multi-layered communities that dotted the eastern European landscape.



dynasties are explored as well as the conflicts between secular and religious antagonists.

In addition to piercing the veil of despair that shrouds the eastern European past, the Encyclopedia is an antidote to the nostalgic and frequently distorted revision of eastern European Jewish life imagined by contemporary American Jews. The sentimental view of the shtetl frozen in an unchanging past as representing the entire spectrum of the eastern

European experience well into the 20th century will be challenged by an hour of cursory reading of this welcomed publication.

Readers interested in an understanding of the shtetl and modernity are referred to *Jews in Poland: Lithuania in the Eighteenth Century* by Gershon David Hundert. Professor Hundert is the editor of the Encyclopedia.

Selected entries include biographies, glimpses of esoteric sports figures, articles on religious leaders, musicians, criminals, pogroms, accomplishments in science, journalism, literature, the visual arts, language, Zionism, socialism and capitalism. The tensions among traditional rabbinical communities and the nascent Hasidic

OZ Committee Chairs

ADMINISTRATION	Alan Ilberman
AESTHETICS	Aaron Shelden
BOOK DISCUSSION	Reed Schneider
BUILDING	Diane Okrent
CEMETERY	Aliza Kaplan Mort Schwartz
DEVELOPMENT	Mimi Alperin
EVENTS/ADULT ED	Helene Wolff
HESED	Stephanie Failla
HEVRA KADISHA	Vera Silver Gerry Solomon
HOUSE	Janet Katz
ISRAEL	Aliza Kaplan
LIBRARY	Barry Feldman
MEMBERSHIP	Brett Cohen
MINYAN	Sheldon Adler
PUBLIC RELATIONS	Aaron Shelden
PURIM SPIEL	Arthur Rosenbloom Bonnie Maslin Tibor Feldman Barbara Sassoon
SCHOOL	Betsy Dizengoff
TORAH/HAFOTARAH	Yaakov Shechter
WEBMASTER	Jay Palmer

If you would like to serve on a synagogue committee, please contact the office for the committee chair's email address.

HESED COMMITTEE EVENTS

DOROT Pesah Package Delivery. Share the spirit of the holiday by visiting with home-bound seniors for approximately one hour on Sunday, March 29, bringing friendship and a package of holiday treats. Contact Aaron Shelden at ashelden@aol.com.

Do a Purim Mitzvah! Bring three cans of food or a donation to OZ's Purim Celebration on Monday, March 9 at the Lycée Français. All food and donations collected before the Purim Spiel will be delivered to the Yorkville Common Pantry. Suggested food items include: pasta, pasta sauce, cereal, peanut butter, canned fruit, vegetables, tuna, stew, canned or boxed soup, canned or bottled

juice, and boxed, shelf-stable milk (e.g. Parmalat) or powdered milk. Please be sure to check expiration dates. Contact Robyn Blumenthal at rblument@chpnet.org or Bruce Silverman at bsilverman@cbpreviewsnyc.com for more information.

A Thank You Note. Many thanks to our volunteers for another successful Israeli Night at Ronald McDonald House. The children glowed with energy and good cheer, and several mothers even joined professional Israeli folk dancer Danny Pollock for the Macarena! Special gratitude goes to Crumbs Bakery for once again donating their artistic and yummy cupcakes. Please remember to patronize our generous donors.

Shabbat Across America: March 20



Rabbi Michael J. Graetz will be the guest speaker at Congregation Or Zarua's Shabbat Across America dinner on March 20. His topic will be "The Masorti Movement in Israel: Successes and Challenges." Services will begin at 6:00 p.m.; candlelighting is at 6:48 p.m. and dinner will follow.

A co-founder and leader of the Conservative (Masorti) movement in Israel, Rabbi Graetz is a founding

member of the Schechter Rabbinical School in Jerusalem and served as chairman of the Siddur committee of the Israel Rabbinic Assembly. He served for 30 years as Rabbi of Kehillat Magen Avraham in Omer, a suburb of Beer Sheva, where he was deeply involved in developing programs of cooperation among different sectors of Israeli society: religious, secular and Masorti Jews and the Negev Arab Bedouin population.

Educated at Columbia University and JTS, Rabbi Graetz made Aliyah in 1967, and served the IDF chaplaincy dur-

ing the Yom Kippur war. He has lectured and taught at the Judaic program in Kaye College, Beer Sheva. He is currently in the U.S.

His wife, Naomi Graetz, an educator and writer about women and metaphor in the Bible and Midrash, will be joining us for the evening.

Reservations are essential. Dinner prices are \$30 for adults, \$15 for children aged 5-12 and no charge for children under 5. Call the office at 212-452-2310 or register online at orzarua.org by Tuesday, March 17.

Or Zarua Book Discussion

Please join us for our next Or Zarua book discussion on Sunday, March 15 at 7:30 p.m. in Or Zarua's library. Pat Davidson will lead us in discussing A. B. Yehoshua's *Friendly Fire*. Yehoshua, author of many novels and one of Israel's most celebrated contemporary writers, has been presented with National Jewish Book Awards for two of his books (*Five Seasons* and *Mr. Mani*) and has also been awarded the Israel Prize for his contributions to literature. He teaches at Haifa University.

Friendly Fire is the story of a long-married couple spending an unaccustomed week apart. Daniella has flown from Tel Aviv to East Africa to mourn the death of her older sister with her brother-in-law Yirmiyahu, a retired diplomat. In short parallel chapters, alternating between



Africa and Israel, the story follows the busy husband Amotz, a designer of elevators, as he juggles the day-to-day needs of his elderly father, children, and grandchildren. Alongside unfolds the confrontation between his wife and her anguished 70-year-old brother-in-law, whose soldier son was killed six years earlier in the West Bank by the "friendly fire" of his comrades. Now working as the manager of a team of African researchers digging for the bones of man's primate ancestors, Yirmiyahu desperately strives to detach himself from every shred of his identity, Jewish and Israeli.

The following book discussion will be Sunday, April 26. If you would like more information on Or Zarua book discussions or have a book suggestion, please contact Reed Schneider at arlm1199@aol.com.

OZ CRAFTS CLUB Knit or crochet squares for a child's blanket, crochet kippot for a Hebrew school in S'derot, or work on a project of your own. All ages and skill levels are welcome. We meet the second Sunday of every month from 10:15-11:45 a.m. in the library. Our next meetings will take place on March 8, April 12, May 17, and June 14. For more information, contact Carrie Fox at cfox@aya.yale.edu.

TALMUD CLASS

Wednesdays at 8:00 p.m.

First chapter of *Masekhet Kiddushin*, this year focusing on women and their mitzvot, as well as treatment of the elderly.

conducted by
RABBI WECHSLER

Classes are taught in English; familiarity with Hebrew or Aramaic or previous study of Talmud is not necessary.

WWW.ORZARUA.ORG

Use our award-winning website to:

- View calendar and service times
- Register for meals and events
- Make donations online
- Sign up for morning minyan
- Learn about educational programs

YOUTH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Mini-Spiel for Young Children. All young children of Or Zarua are invited to a child-friendly Megillah reading—including singing, dancing and mishloach manot—prior to the main Megillah reading at the Lycée Français on Monday, March 9.

These special activities will take place during Minhah/ Ma'ariv services from 5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. in the Lycée Français cafeteria. The program is targeted to children ages 2-5, accompanied by an adult; however, all are welcome. The children may come in costume and will parade for each other. The program will conclude with the students parading into the auditorium at the start of the main Megillah reading.

Junior Congregation and Family Lunch. Our Torah reader for the Junior Congregation on March 7 will be Aliza Yaillen.

On Shabbat of May 16, following Junior Congregation, families with children are invited to join us for luncheon in the social hall. This is a special opportunity to meet with other parents and children from our congregation. The meal will cost \$18 for adults and \$13 for children under 12 years of age. RSVP by Wednesday, May 13 to Ilana Burgess at iburgess@orzarua.org.

Kadima Update. On January 24, Kadima had a small party at Or Zarua during which a planning meeting was also conducted to discuss ideas for future events. Kadima members offered a number of good suggestions, including a karaoke night, a sleepover party, a casino night, a sports day, a movie night, and many more—in fact, enough ideas for two years of great Kadima activities at Or Zarua. Kadima's next scheduled event is a Karaoke Night on Sunday, March 1. On May 17, our last event for the year, Kadima is going to put together a casino night.

For more information regarding Kadima at Or Zarua or to get on the Kadima email list, please email Shay Salhov at ssalhov@yahoo.com.

United Synagogue Youth. The Or Zarua chapter of USY, a youth group of the conservative movement for high school students, is in its second year. We are working on building the membership of our new chapter and developing programs. So far we have gone bowling, seen independent movies, and sang karaoke. Most recently, we went ice skating in Bryant Park and enjoyed the winter weather.

One of our main goals is not only to be a social club which sponsors fun activ-

ities but also to plan and participate in events that focus on community service. This year, we made and delivered bag lunches to a homeless outreach center. We plan on developing more programs to help others in need. On Sunday, March 8 at 4:30 p.m., eighth graders are invited to meet with the USY members to discuss planning for next year. We welcome all Kadima members as well as other eighth graders from the community.

To learn more about USY at Or Zarua, contact Jennifer Wallner, USY youth advisor, at jenzo25@gmail.com.

Youth Education Calendar

MARCH 2009

- Sun 1** Kadima Karaoke Night
- Sat 7** Junior Congregation, 10:30 a.m.
- Sun 8** USY Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- Mon 9** Purim (*no classes*)
- Mon 16** Spring Break (*no classes*)
- Mon 30** Classes resume
B'nai Jeshurun, 6 p.m.

APRIL 2009

- Mon 6** B'nai Jeshurun, 6 p.m.
- Wed 8** Pesah (*no classes*)
- Mon 20** Classes resume
- Sat 25** Junior Congregation, 10:30 a.m.

MAY 2009

- Sat 16** Junior Congregation and Family Lunch, 10:30 a.m.
- Sun 17** Kadima Casino Night
- Mon 18** B'nai Jeshurun, 6 p.m.
- Mon 18** Last week of classes
- Wed 20** Siddur Ceremony

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL SERVICE

On Monday, April 20 at 7:30 p.m., we will commemorate Yom Hashoah v'ehaG'vurah. At this time victims of the Holocaust are remembered. We also proudly salute the heroism displayed by many during this horrible time and pass on the memory of the Holocaust to the next generation. We cannot allow our people to forget the destruction of the many communities and lives in Europe.

For the last few years at Or Zarua, we remembered the Holocaust with a beautiful and touching ceremony led by our teens and adults. This year, support is especially important because Israel is fighting to protect itself from forces that wish to see its destruction. Being together on this evening will also show the world that 6,000,000 of our people did not die in vain.

Yom Hashoah is a community event to which everybody is invited.

Guidelines for Passover

The guidelines below were prepared for the Rabbinical Assembly Committee on Jewish Law and Standards by Rabbi Mayer Rabinowitz. They were accepted by the Committee on December 12, 1984 and are updated annually by Rabbi Wechsler. Remember that the kosher for Passover home is a unique and transcendent experience for adults as well as children. Pesah feels different to the extent that it is different, and special foods and practices are the source of the special experience.

The Torah prohibits the ownership of hametz (leaven) during Pesah. Therefore, we arrange for the sale of the hametz to a non-Jew. The sale—mekhirat hametz—is accomplished by appointing an agent, usually the rabbi, to handle the transfer. The transaction is a valid and legal transfer of ownership. At the end of the holiday, the agent arranges for the reversion of ownership of the now-permitted hametz. If ownership of the hametz was not transferred before the holiday, the use of this hametz is prohibited even after the holiday (hametz she-aver alav ha-Pesah).

The Torah also prohibits the eating of hametz during Pesah. We often need guidance when shopping and preparing for the holiday because many common foods contain some admixture of hametz.

During the eight days of Pesah, hametz does not lose its identity, even in an admix-

ture. Therefore, the minutest amount of hametz renders the whole admixture hametz, and its use on Pesah is prohibited.

Following are some general guidelines. Consult Rabbi Wechsler when there is any doubt about the status of a product. Examine the Kosher le-Pesah label: If it does not bear the name of a rabbi, does not contain one of the recognized symbols of rabbinic supervision, or is not integral to the package, check with the rabbi.

FOODS

● **Prohibited foods:** leavened bread, cake, biscuits, crackers, cereal, coffee containing cereal derivatives, wheat, barley, oats, spelt, rye, and all liquids containing ingredients or flavors made from grain alcohol.

According to Ashkenazic custom, the following foods—kitniyot—are added to the prohibited list: rice, corn, millet, and legumes (beans and peas; but string beans are permitted). The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards has ruled unanimously that peanuts and peanut oil are permissible. In contrast, Sephardic authorities permit the use of *all* kitniyot on Pesah.

● **Permitted foods that DO NOT require a Kosher le-Pesah label:** fresh fruit, fresh vegetables (for legumes, see above), and eggs.

● **Permitted foods that DO require a Kosher le-Pesah label:** all baked

products (matzah, cake, matzah flour, matzah farfel, matzah meal, and any other products containing matzah), canned or bottled fruit juice (often clarified with kitniyot, which are not listed among the ingredients), canned tuna (often processed in vegetable broth and/or hydrolyzed protein, even when packed in water), wine, vinegar, liquor, oil, dried fruit, ice cream, yogurt, and soda.

The following processed foods (canned, bottled, or frozen) DO require a Kosher le-Pesah label *if purchased during Pesah*: milk and milk products, butter, juice, vegetables, fruit, spices, coffee, tea, fish, and meat.

NON-FOOD ITEMS

● **Detergent.** If permitted during the year, powdered and liquid detergents DO NOT require a Kosher le-Pesah label.

● **Medicine.** Because many pills are made with hametz binders, follow this guideline: If the medicine is required for life-sustaining therapy, it may be used on Pesah; if it is not for life-sustaining therapy, some authorities permit, while others prohibit the use of the medicine. Consult Rabbi Wechsler.

KASHERING

● **Utensils.** The process of kashering utensils depends on how the utensils are used. According to halakhah, leaven can be purged from a utensil by the same

WHAT IS THE FAST OF THE FIRSTBORN?

Ta'anit bechorim, the Fast of the Firstborn, is a custom observed on the day before Pesah to commemorate our gratitude for surviving the pre-Exodus tenth plague, which smote all firstborn Egyptians but spared all firstborn Hebrews. It is a dawn-to-dusk fast, which this year falls on Wednesday, April 8.

WHO IS CONSIDERED A FIRSTBORN?

A firstborn is a male child who is the first child born either to his mother or to his father. Even if he is the first male born to either parent, having an older sister precludes his firstborn status—he is not the first child.

WHY ONLY THE MALE FIRSTBORN?

In the ancient world, male firstborns were subject to Temple service. It was this hierarchy that was the target of the tenth plague.

HOW CAN A FIRSTBORN AVOID FASTING?

The mitzvah of attending a siyyum—a completion of the reading of a tractate of Talmud—overrides the mitzvah of observing this fast. Firstborns can opt to attend a siyyum, which is followed by a festive meal. The meal is part of the deal, so the fast is legitimately broken. Synagogues facilitate this choice for firstborns by scheduling a siyyum for the morning before Pesah.

process through which it was absorbed into the utensil (*ke-voleo kakh poletu*). Therefore, utensils used in cooking are kashered by boiling, those used in broiling are kashered by fire and heat, and those used only for cold food are kashered by rinsing.

● **Earthenware.** China, pottery, etc. may not be kashered. However, fine translucent chinaware that has not been used for over a year may be used for Pesah if scoured and cleaned in hot water.

● **Metal.** Utensils made entirely of metal and used in fire (such as a spit or broiler) must first be thoroughly scrubbed, cleaned, and then heated to the highest possible temperature. Utensils used for cooking or eating (such as silverware or pots) must be thoroughly scrubbed, cleaned, and then completely immersed in boiling water. These metal objects should not be used for a period of at least 24 hours between the cleaning and the immersion in boiling water. Metal baking utensils cannot be kashered for Pesah.

● **Ovens and ranges.** Every part that comes into contact with food must be thoroughly scrubbed, cleaned, and then heated to the highest possible temperature for a half hour. For ovens with no self-cleaning feature, use the broil setting; for self-cleaning ovens, use the self-cleaning feature to achieve the highest temperature. Continuous-cleaning ovens must be kashered in the same manner as regular ovens.

● **Microwave ovens.** These do not cook food by means of heat. After the interior is cleaned, place a cup of water inside. Keep the oven on until the water disappears. A microwave oven that has a browning element cannot be kashered for Pesah.

● **Glassware.** Drinking glasses and stemware require only a thorough cleaning, by hand or in a dishwasher, before Pesah.

● **Glass cookware.** There is a difference of opinion as to whether glass cookware should be kashered. One opinion is that it must be kashered—after a thorough cleaning, boil water in the cookware so that it overflows the rim. The other opinion is that only a thorough

cleaning is required.

● **Glass bakeware.** Like metal bakeware, glass bakeware may not be kashered for Pesah.

● **Dishwashers.** Clean any food trap or filter and leave the dishwasher unused for 24 hours. Then, complete a full wash cycle with detergent.

● **Electrical appliances.** If parts that come into contact with hametz are removable, they can be kashered in the appropriate way (if metal, follow the rule for metal utensils). If the parts are not removable, then the appliance cannot be kashered. However, all exposed parts should be thoroughly cleaned in either case.

● **Tables, closets, and countertops.** If they have come into contact with hametz, surfaces should be thoroughly

cleaned and covered before use.

● **Kitchen sinks.** Metal sinks must be thoroughly cleaned and then doused with boiling water. Porcelain sinks must be thoroughly cleaned and outfitted with a sink rack. Items may be soaked in a basin placed inside a porcelain sink.

● **Hametz and non-Passover items.** In order to prevent accidental use, all non-Passover kitchen items and hametz whose ownership has been transferred should be separated from Passover items, marked, covered, and placed in a locked area.

An ever-increasing variety of Kosher le-Pesah products is available in local markets as well as in the specially dedicated Pesah stores that appear each year. Patronize these special Pesah stores, for they provide an important service to the Jewish community.

OMER BASICS

WHAT'S AN OMER? An omer is a unit of measure for cut sheaves of a grain crop. The 49-day period between the second day of Pesah and the day before Shavuot is referred to as the period of *sefirat ha'omer*—the counting of the omer.

WHY DO WE COUNT IT? The Torah tells us in Parashat Emor (Leviticus 23:15-16) that an omer of barley was brought to the Temple on the second day of Pesah as a “wave offering.” This omer of barley consisted of newly harvested grain, and new barley could not be eaten until the omer offering was brought. Starting on the second day of Pesah, 49 days were counted, at the end of which Shavuot was celebrated and an offering was brought to the Temple from the early summer’s wheat harvest. The counting, *sefirat ha'omer*, is done at nightfall each day during the seven weeks. The counting of the omer connects the Exodus from Egypt with the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. In eagerness, we count the days of waiting for the revelation.

HOW DO WE OBSERVE IT? For a period of time during the counting of the omer it is traditional to observe certain semi-mourning customs, such as postponing weddings and foregoing haircuts. This tradition may have an agricultural origin in that the period leading up to the summer harvest is a time of concern for the continuing safety of the crop. But also during this time of year in the second century CE, some 24,000 of Rabbi Akiva’s students perished—they were most likely killed by the Romans.

WHAT IS LAG B'OMER? Lag B’omer is the 33rd day of the counting—“lag” is an acronym made up of *lamed* (30) and *gimel* (3). The massive fatalities of Rabbi Akiva’s students halted on that day, and the customs of semi-mourning are suspended. Lag B’omer is observed as the *yahrzeit* of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, the person said to have authored the mystical book, *The Zohar*. This year Lag B’omer begins on the night of Monday, May 11.

PARTICIPATE IN OR ZARUA'S Pesah Meal Match

First Seder, Wednesday, April 8

Second Seder, Thursday, April 9

Let us increase our joy in this z'man heiruteinu—the season of our liberation—by hosting other Congregants or by joining a host family for the first seder on Wednesday, April 8 and/or the second seder on Thursday, April 9.

Instead of a Second Seder in the synagogue, Or Zarua will extend our meal matching to include the second night of Pesah so that more Congregants get to know each other and share the seder experience.

If you would like to be a host or a guest, please complete the form on page 11 and send it to the synagogue office by 4:30 p.m. on Monday, April 6, or register online at www.orzarua.org.

Ma'ot Hittim Fund

The Hagaddah tells us that every Jew must experience the Exodus from Egypt, and the Mishnah tells us that a Jew should drink four cups of wine at the seder, even if they come from the public dole.

We therefore raise special funds each year to assist less fortunate Jews who cannot afford to prepare for Passover. We forward the funds, called ma'ot hittim (wheat money), to two communal organizations—the Joint Passover Appeal in New York and the New York Board of Rabbis—for distribution to needy Jews.

Please give generously to the fund as many will benefit from your kindness.

Sell Your Hametz

Before Passover, we are required to “sell” any hametz in the household to a non-Jew. The transaction is normally arranged by the rabbi to ensure compliance with the requirements of halakhah.

Please complete the form on page 11 and send it to the synagogue office by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 7. It is customary to enclose a contribution to Or Zarua's Ma'ot Hittim Fund with your authorization.

Birkat HaHamah: The Anniversary of the Sun's Travels

Birkat HaHamah is a special blessing made on the anniversary of the sun's apparent motion relative to the earth. This rare blessing, said once every 28 years, will be recited on April 8, 2009. The sun was set into place during the spring equinox on the fourth day of creation (Tuesday). Because the solar year is 365.25 days, it takes 28 years for the sun to be in the same place relative to the earth on a Tuesday at dusk, when it was created. The blessing is said while standing, on Wednesday morning, with the sun in view. The blessing will be recited at Or Zarua after the conclusion of the regular Shaharit service and the Siyyum on the eve of Pesah, Wednesday morning, April 8. Be there for this once-in-28-years event!

SCHEDULE OF PASSOVER SERVICES 5769/2009

Wednesday, April 8

Fast of the Firstborn / Bedikat Hametz / Birkat HaHamah

Shaharit, Siyyum Bekhorim 7:15 a.m.

Erev Pesah

Candlelighting 7:08 p.m.

First Seder

Thursday, April 9

First Day of Pesah

Shaharit 9:00 a.m.

Candlelighting 8:10 p.m.

Second Seder

Friday, April 10

Second Day of Pesah

Shaharit 9:00 a.m.

Minhah/Kabbalat Shabbat 6:15 p.m.

Candlelighting 7:10 p.m.

Saturday, April 11

Shabbat Hol Hamoed

Shaharit 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, April 12

Hol Hamoed

Minyan 8:45 a.m.

Monday, April 13

Hol Hamoed

Minyan 7:00 a.m.

Tuesday, April 14

Hol Hamoed

Minyan 7:00 a.m.

Seventh Day of Pesah

Minhah/Ma'ariv 6:15 p.m.

Candlelighting 7:15 p.m.

Wednesday, April 15

Seventh Day of Pesah

Shaharit 9:00 a.m.

Minhah/Ma'ariv 7:35 p.m.

Candlelighting 8:17 p.m.

Thursday, April 16

Eighth Day of Pesah / Yizkor

Shaharit 9:00 a.m.

Festival ends 8:20 p.m.

Pesah Meal Match

I would like to participate in a seder as a:

(check one)

- GUEST**
 FIRST SEDER (Wednesday, April 8)
 SECOND SEDER (Thursday, April 9)

Are you planning to bring children? _____ If yes, how many and what ages? _____

Are there any food restrictions? _____

- HOST**
 FIRST SEDER (Wednesday, April 8)
 SECOND SEDER (Thursday, April 9)

How many people will you host? _____ How many children will be attending? _____

What are their ages? _____ Do you welcome children as guests? _____

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Best time to call _____

Please mail or fax completed form by 4:30 p.m. **on Monday, April 6, 2009**, to:
 CONGREGATION OR ZARUA, 127 EAST 82ND STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10028, FAX: 212-452-2103

Authorization for the Sale of Hametz

Dear Rabbi Wechsler: In accordance with Jewish law, please sell all hametz in my possession at the locations listed below. Enclosed is my contribution to Or Zarua's Ma'ot Hittim Fund.

Name _____ Apt. No. _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Other Locations (vacation home, office, etc):

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please complete and return this form **by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 7, 2009**, to:
DR. HARLAN J. WECHSLER, RABBI
 CONGREGATION OR ZARUA, 127 EAST 82ND STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10028, FAX: 212-452-2103

MARCH/APRIL 2009 CHECKLIST

- Knit or crochet with the OZ Crafts Club on Sunday, March 8 and April 12.
- Attend OZ book discussions on Sunday, March 15 and April 26, 7:30 p.m.
- RSVP by Tuesday, March 17 for Or Zarua's Shabbat Across America Dinner on Friday, March 20, featuring Rabbi Michael J. Graetz.
- Participate in the DOROT Pesah Package delivery on Sunday, March 29.
- Sign up to be a host or a guest in the Pesah Meal Match by Monday, April 6.
- Sell your hametz! Submit the form on page 11 by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 7.
- Remember the Ma'ot Hittim Fund and please donate generously.
- Commemorate Yom Hashoah on Monday, April 20, 7:30 p.m.
- Register for Marc Ashley's class on Sunday, April 26, May 3 and May 17, 10:00 a.m.
- Celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut! Israel Independence Day festivities will begin with food, music and dancing on Tuesday, April 28, 7:30 p.m. Then Professor James Kugel will lecture on Wednesday, April 29, 8:00 p.m., with a reception to follow.
- Mark Wednesday nights for Talmud Class with Rabbi Wechsler at 8:00 p.m.
- Do you have an idea for an article that is appropriate for publication in the *Or Zarua Newsletter*? Is there an Or Zarua program that is being overlooked by the editor? Please contact Charlie Spielholz at cssrs@earthlink.net.

THE REBECCA AND ISRAEL IVRY PROZDOR

*The Hebrew High School Program
of The Jewish Theological Seminary*

OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, March 22, 2009

Sunday, May 3, 2009

9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

**The Jewish Theological Seminary
3080 Broadway (at 122nd Street)
New York, NY 10027**

SHABBAT USHERS are needed for services throughout the year. Please email Janet Katz at jmkatz@nyc.rr.com to add your name to our list of volunteers. Your help is greatly appreciated.



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127 East 82nd Street
New York, NY 10028

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