



OR ZARUA newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 4

Iyar-Sivan, 5757 - June, 1997

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Shavuot Commences Tuesday Eve, June 10

Shavuot, which occurs on the sixth and seventh days of the Jewish month of Sivan, falls on Wednesday, June 11 and Thursday, June 12 this year. Shavuot celebrates the revelation on Mt. Sinai, the receiving of the Torah by Israel.

Shavuot has four names: *Hag HaKatzir*, the "Festival of Reaping" (Shmot 23:16), referring to the reaping of the wheat that has just been harvested; *Hag Shavuot*, the "Festival of Weeks" (Shmot 34:22, Devarim 16:10), referring to the seven weeks (corresponding to the Omer-period) that have been counted since Pesah; *Yom HaBikurim*, the "Day of the First Fruit" (Bemidbar 28:26), referring to the new gift offering that was made at this time in the *Beit HaMikdash*; and *Atzeret* (which the Sages used although it does not appear in the Torah), linking Shavuot to Pesah by calling it the "conclusion" of the Pesah festival (the Omer-period being deemed a long Chol Hamoed). See E. Kitov, *The Book of Our Heritage*, v. III, pp. 60-61.

Why is the celebration of the receiving of the Torah linked to what appears to be a traditional harvest festival? To quote one noted author: "The Mishnah describes a colorful procession in which farmers from small villages would gather in a large town to go together to Jerusalem. 'Arise, let us go up to Zion, to the House of our God,' the leader would announce as they set out on their pilgrimage. When they neared Jerusalem, flutists would greet them with music, and when they reached the Temple court, the priests would welcome them with hymns and psalms.

"How, then, did these festivities of fruits and grains turn into a celebration of the Torah? Part of the genius of the talmudic sages was their ability to overlay old agricultural holidays with historical

Annual Meeting Held On May 28

On May 28, 1997, Congregation Or Zarua held its annual meeting. The evening commenced with a festive dinner. Following dinner, the Congregation adopted the recommendations of the Nominating Committee on new officers and trustees. The officers of the Congregation for the coming year will be: Samuel C. Klagsbrun, President; Barry Alperin, Vice President of Finance; Andrew Frackman, Vice-President of Administration; Terry Ann Krulwich, Vice-President of Religious Life; Morton Z. Schwartz, Treasurer; Alisa R. Doctoroff, Associate Treasurer; and Neil W. Schluger, Secretary.

The Congregation also re-elected the following individuals to the Board of Trustees for a three-year term: Joyce Arnoff Cohen, David G. Glasser, Steven Magid, Diane Okrent, Sidney B. Silverman, and Henry Wollman. The Congregation is especially pleased to welcome Beth Nash, Linda Spitzer and Naomi Wolfensohn as new members of the Board, also for three-year terms.

Visit the Or Zarua Website at
www.orzarua.org

(Continued on Page 2)

Congregation Or Zarua*A Conservative Synagogue*

Founded 1989

LIVE THE PY



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Newsletter Editor
Andrew Frackman

Thanks to OZ Volunteers from Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter, Inc.

On Sunday April 6th, volunteers from Or Zarua prepared a special brunch for homeless men and women at the Neighborhood Coalition Shelter, Inc. Norma Samame, Director of Volunteer Services, has sent a thank you to Or Zarua, which we would like to share with you.

"On behalf of clients and staff at Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter, Inc. (NCS), I thank you for making Sunday April 6th a truly beautiful day at NCS. A special thanks goes to Donald Bernstein for coordinating the volunteers that made the day possible.

"At our multi-service center located at 237 East 77th Street, Or Zarua volunteers provided a special brunch for homeless men and women. Additional volunteers then planted a beautiful garden in the backyard to enjoy all summer long. At our permanent housing residence located at 211 East 81st Street, tenants also feasted on brunch. The day's activities culminated at the center where volunteers, including Rabbi Wechsler's talented daughter, provided lively entertainment for all

"NCS is proud to be part of a community with neighbors such as Temple Or Zarua. Your thoughtfulness and your caring makes a positive impact in the lives of the people NCS serves. I look forward to continuing a special relationship with the congregation."

OZ Celebrates Shavuot *(continued)*

meaning. In the case of Shavuot, the rabbis calculated that the festival fell during the same three-month time period in which the Children of Israel had reached the wilderness of Sinai after leaving Egypt. They fixed the date for both events as the sixth of Sivan and made the Sinai experience the essence of the holiday." F. Klagsbrun, *Jewish Days: A Book of Jewish Life and Culture Around the Year*, p. 157 (1996)(reprinted with permission of author).

Indeed, as Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel remarks: "One of the most important facts in the history of religion was the transformation of agricultural festivals into commemorations of historical events . . .

[In contrast to other ancient peoples, who] celebrated what happened in the life of nature in the respective seasons . . . to Israel the unique events of historic time were spiritually more significant than the repetitive processes in the cycle of nature While the deities of other peoples were associated with places or things, the God of Israel was the God of events: the Redeemer from slavery, the Revealer of the Torah, manifesting himself in the events of history rather than in things or places. Thus, the faith in the unembodied, in the unimaginable was born." R. Heschel, *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man*, pp. 7-8 (Noonday ed. 1975).

Yom Tov will commence with Mincha-Maariv services on Tuesday evening, June 10, at 8:06 p.m. Following Maariv, we will celebrate with a *tikkun leil Shavuot* - a traditional study session devoted to the event of the giving of the Torah. Each year, Rabbi Wechsler chooses a portion of Nobel Prize winning author Shmuel Yosef Agnon's book *Atem Re'item* - Agnon's study of Rabbinic literature about the event of revelation. This study session is followed by an eating

session devoted to the tastiest kosher cheese cake available in Manhattan this year - since it is also a tradition to eat dairy foods on Shavuot.

This year, Or Zarua is also going to follow the tradition of decorating the synagogue and bimah with greens, tree branches and flowers to celebrate Shavuot. There are different views as to the origins of this custom. Some assert that the greens represent the verdant mountain on which Moses received the Torah. In any event, the custom adds much to the festivity of the Yom Tov. We look forward to inaugurating this custom at Or Zarua this year.

Shacharit services for the first day of Shavuot will commence at 9:00 a.m. The Torah reading for the first day is from *Yitro* and includes the Ten Commandments (Shmot 19-20). Hallel is recited. Prior to the Torah reading, the Piyut "*Akdamut*" is read. The *Akdamut* was composed by Rabbi Meir ben Isaac, who was chazzan of the city of Worms (and, according to tradition, a teacher of Rashi). The *Akdamut*, written in Aramaic, is a praise of God and the Torah. The melody is note-worthy in that it also forms the traditional melody for the kiddush on erev Yom Tov. The Haftarah is from Ezekiel.

Mincha for the first day and Maariv services for the second evening of Shavuot will start at 8:15 p.m. on Wednesday.

Shacharit services for the second day of Shavuot will start at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday morning. The Torah reading is the same excerpt from *Re'eh* that is also read on the eighth day of Pesah and Shmini Atzeret. The Haftarah is from Habbakuk. The Book of Ruth is also read on the second day Yom Tov. Yizkor Memorial prayers are recited after the reading of the Torah and haftarah.

Our Israel Connection: Kehilat Sinai and Or Zarua Partnership

Last year we established a synagogue partnership with Kehilat Sinai, a Masorti congregation in Tel Aviv. On April 12, Shabbat Parshat Tazria, we hosted Kehilat Sinai's Rabbi Roberto Arbib, who gave us a Dvar Torah and informed us about his congregation and about the Masorti Movement in Israel.

With over 50 congregations, the Masorti Movement is an indigenous Israeli movement which maintains close ties to the worldwide Conservative Movement. Its mission is to promote the practice of traditional Judaism among concerned Israelis, and is dedicated to helping establish a spiritual and ethical foundation to the Israeli society. Since its founding in 1979, the Masorti Movement has been at the forefront of the struggle for religious pluralism in Israel. Today, the Masorti

Movement is under attack. The religious establishment in Israel is determined to nullify the Israeli Supreme Court ruling of 1995 that recognized the legitimacy of the movement. Our support of the Masorti Movement is needed now more than ever before.

Kehilat Sinai, located in the heart of Tel Aviv near Dizengoff Center, is the only Conservative synagogue in the city. It is a young, vigorous synagogue, focused on education and outreach. It has created a Midreshet Iyun -- an educational system aimed at introducing Conservative Judaism to non- and even anti-religious Israelis. The system includes seminars, adult education classes, public lectures and symposiums. The programs have been attracting the unaffiliated; including new immigrants, high school and

university students.

The Synagogue Partnership program offers the opportunity to develop better understanding and closer personal relationships between members of Or Zarua and Kehilat Sinai. The program includes:

Hospitality for visitors; members of Or Zarua visiting Israel, and Kehilat Sinai members visiting the U.S. will have the opportunity to participate in services and meet and get to know each other.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah in Israel -- to be celebrated at Kehilat Sinai.

Exchange of newsletters; Scholar-in-Residence exchange; Assistance in planning tours in Israel.

Financial Responsibility; The Synagogue Partnership involves support of the activities of the "sister" congregation in Israel. Kehilat Sinai has a very limited budget, hardly sufficient for its extensive outreach programs. The Synagogue Partnership program obligates Or Zarua to allocate at least one dollar per family annually from our congregational budget to indicate our institutional support for our sister kehilah.

For those of us who visited Kehilat Sinai, the experience has been highly rewarding. We felt warmth and welcome and experienced an authentic Israeli phenomenon -- an egalitarian, Conservative Shabbat service in the midst of Tel Aviv.



At Kehilat Sinai, Tel Aviv, December 1996. From left to right: Rabbi Roberto Arbib, Honoch Ben-Pazi, Director of Education, Dr. Yaakov Shechter, Or Zarua

1997

June

1997

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4 8 pm	5 Talmud Class	6 8:04 pm Candle Lighting	7 9 a.m. Shahrut, Bemidbar 7:04 pm Minhah/Seudah Shlishit/Maariv
8 7:30 pm Book Club/Oh My America Johanna Kaplan	9	10 8:06 pm Candle Lighting 8:06 pm Minhah Shavuot 1 evening service followed by Tikkun Leyl Shavuot	11 9 am 8:15 pm Shavuot 1 morning service Minhah Shavuot 2 evening service 9:08 pm Candle Lighting	12 9 am Shavuot 2 morning service	13 8:08 pm Candle Lighting	14 9 a.m. Shahrut, Naso
15	16	17	18	19	20 8:10 pm Candle Lighting	21 9 a.m. Shahrut, Behaatekha
22	23	24	25	26	27 8:11 pm Candle Lighting	28 9 a.m. Shahrut, Shelah
29	30					

1997

July

1997

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4 8:11 pm Candle Lighting	5 9 a.m. Shaharit, Korah
6	7	8	9	10	11 8:08 pm Candle Lighting	12 9 a.m. Shaharit, Hukkat
13	14	15	16	17	18 8:04 pm Candle Lighting	19 9 a.m. Shaharit, Balak
20	21	22	23	24	25 7:59 pm Candle Lighting	26 9 a.m. Shaharit, Pinchas
27	28	29	30	31	Please Note: The Tisha B'Av Service will be at 8 pm August 11	

Contributions

Shelley Binder, Yom Hashoah relative remembrance
 Solomon & Thelma Borodkin, refuah shlema for Noah Zachary and Norma Kreisler
 Solomon & Thelma Borodkin, Matanot LaEvyonim
 Phyllis Cornell, in memory of her husband, Dr. Albert Cornell, on his yahrzeit
 Morton & Judy Goldfein in memory of Carole Cohen
 Harrison & Diana Goldin
 Richard Hyfler & Amelia Rosner in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Miriam
 Mira Kimmelman, Yom HaShoah
 Ralph & Phyllis Lusskin, in memory of her father, Morris Brown, on his yahrzeit
 Frederick & Martha Mendelsohn, in

honor of Laura Resnikoff
 Frederick & Martha Mendelsohn, in memory of her father, Arnold Neustadter, on his yahrzeit
 Frederick & Martha Mendelsohn, in honor of the paperback publication of their daughter Jane's book
 Frederick & Martha Mendelsohn, in honor of their older son Jimmy's forthcoming graduation from law school
 Frederick & Martha Mendelsohn, in honor of their younger son Nathaniel's forthcoming graduation from high school
 Yehuda Nir & Bonnie Maslin in memory of the father of Michael Waldman and the father-in-law of Rebecca Cooper
 Daniel Okrent & Genevieve Andrews on the first yahrzeit of his father, Meyer Okrent
 Shirley Okrent & Diane Okrent, yizkor,

in memory of Meyer Okrent
 Ina Resnikoff in honor of her sister, Laura Resnikoff
 Morton & Evelyn Schwartz
 Aaron Shelden & Diane Okrent, Yizkor
 Reba Shelden, Yizkor
 Edward & Elyse Siegel in honor of their 28th wedding anniversary
 Jeffrey & Judith Siegel in honor of their daughter Linda's birthday
 Donald & Ellen Simon in memory of her mother, Jeanne H. Perlman
 Harry Trattner & Amira Kohn-Trattner in honor of Bonnie Maslin's special birthday
 Steven & Joyce Wolitzer in memory of her father, Charles Lindower, on his yahrzeit
 Alan & Laurie Dien Yaillen in honor of the birth of Mimi and Barry Alperin's granddaughter, Emily Rose Alperin

Gift in Kind

Donald & Robin Bernstein
 Jay & Nancy Zises

Hesed Fund

James & Patricia Fingerroth
 Richard Gottlieb
 Sam & Ruth Perelson

Hesed Food Fund

Ruth Drazen, in memory of her beloved Father Maurice Yorkin
 Jacob & Esther Oberman, in honor of the birth of Miriam Wallerstein's granddaughters, Avery and Julia Wallerstein, and of Esther Rose Alperin, granddaughter of Mimi and Barry Alperin
 Paul Posner & Terry Ann Krulwich, in honor of Laura Resnikoff
 Paul Posner & Terry Ann Krulwich, in appreciation of David Araten
 James & Martha Sasnor, in honor of Or Zarua's first annual Purim Shpiel, its prime mover Arthur Rosenbloom, Bonnie Maslin and Aaron Shelden and all its participants
 Barry & Judith Schneider

Hevra Kadisha Fund

Leslie Levison
 Frederick & Martha Mendelsohn
 Ira & Stephanie Rubin
 Herbert & Lorraine Shapiro
 Jerome & Linda Spitzer

Kiddush Fund

Congregation Or Zarua, in honor of the cast of the Purim Shpiel
 Alexander & Susan Deutsch, in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Abigail
 Ira & Betsy Dizengoff in honor of the naming of their niece, Hannah Ruth Jassen Fink
 Jerry Gliklich & Jane Salmon in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Benjamin
 Richard Hyfler & Amelia Rosner in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Miriam
 Allen & Valerie Hyman in honor of the naming of their twin grandchildren, Jacob Morrison Hyman and Julia Elizabeth Hyman
 Mickey Krulwich in memory of her father, Jeb Lewis, on his yahrzeit
 Herbert Lukashok in honor of the aufruf and his June 1 marriage to Judith Spitzer
 Steven & Margret Magid in honor of their daughter Barbara's reading
 Jay & Lesley Palmer in honor of the naming of their daughter, Michaela Ann
 Michael & Sybil Pollet in memory of her mother, Mollie Holtz, on her yahrzeit
 Okrent & Shelden families in memory of Diane's father, Meyer Okrent, on his first yahrzeit
 Reed & Anne Schneider, in honor of daughters Mariel & Lauren's birthdays
 David & Susan Shapiro, in memory of his mother Aida Shapiro, on her yahrzeit
 Marc Spero & Lavern Sullivan in honor of the naming of their daughter, Victoria Charlotte

Ma'ot Hittim Fund

Edward & Harriet Abramson
 Joseph Allerhand & Randi Schatz
 Barry & Mimi Alperin
 David & Annette Araten
 Linda Belkin
 Solomon & Thelma Borodkin
 Clifford Brandeis & Sharon Schneider
 Ethan & Karen Budin
 Paula Chalfin
 Barry & Bobbi Coller
 Brett & Gwen Cohen
 Phyllis Cornell
 Alexander & Susan Deutsch
 Stanley & Ellen Deutsch
 Juliet Diller
 Florence Edelstein
 Bart & Georgia Farber
 Saner & Mechele Flaum
 Andrew Frackman & Emily Braun
 Lynne Galler
 Alice Geisler
 David & Carla Glasser
 Glenn & Zella Goldfinger
 Meredith Golden
 Gurston & Marjorie Goldin
 Mina Greenstein
 Jesse & Isadora Hecht
 Roger & Susan Hertog
 Dore Hollander
 Judith Hozore
 Michael Jaffe
 Alan & Caroline Ilberman
 Mel Ilberman
 Marcel Kahan & Andrea Fastenberg, in honor of the Goldfingers
 Alexander & Sharon Mack
 Eric & Karen Mandel
 Ellen Markowitz & Zion Ozeri

Ma'ot Hittim Fund *(continued)*

Sharon Morris
 Alan Nadel
 David Nerwen
 Jacob & Esther Oberman
 Charles & Deborah Olstein
 Sam & Ruth Perelson
 Paul Posner & Terry Ann Krulwich
 Laura Resnikoff
 Daniel & Suzan Rosen
 Carl & Michelle Schaerf
 Victor Friedman & Victoria
 Schonfeld in honor of the Bar
 Mitzvah of Benjamin Gliklich
 Morton & Evelyn Schwartz
 Herbert & Lorraine Shapiro
 Marilyn Shapiro
 Yaakov & Robert Shechter
 Aaron Shelden & Diane Okrent
 Paul & Pam Shelden
 Reba Shelden
 Marvin & Linda Shulsky
 Edward & Elyse Siegel
 Robert & Vera Silver
 Roslyn Spector
 Martin & Rochelle Spergel
 Jerome & Linda Spitzer
 Judith Spitzer
 David & Elise Strauss
 William & Muriel Tannenbaum
 Bernard & Leah Tolpin
 Elia & Renee Toueg
 Miriam Wallerstein
 Harlan J. Wechsler & Naomi
 Friedland-Wechsler
 Alan & Laurie Dien Yaillen and
 Aliza
 David & Lidiya Yunantanov
 Evan Zimroth

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Daniel & Lynn Beller, in honor of Lynn's
 admission to Columbia Law School and
 Sarah's first reading from the Torah
 upon her reaching Bat Mitzvah in Israel
 James Posner & Jill Prosky in honor of
 Laura Resnikoff
 Laura Resnikoff, with thanks to Rabbi
 Wechsler

*All contributions listed were received on
 or before May 15, 1997. Capital Cam-
 paign contributions are not listed.*

**Or Zarua Hebrew
School News**

The Or Zarua Hebrew School has had an extremely successful month. One of the major highlights was our school-wide Passover Seder. Every student from each of the six classes had a role in the production of the Haggadah that we used at the seder. Each class was responsible for a different part of the seder, and gave commentary on the text of the Haggadah. The seder was very successful, and will be a Jewish experience that the students will remember for a long time.

The six classes are working diligently to complete the units that they have been working on over the course of several months. Progress reports were just recently sent to the families, and the teachers will be looking forward to speaking with the parents in the upcoming couple of weeks.

The last class of Hebrew School for the 1996-97 year is May 29th, and there will be a closing activity for all classes. Certificates will be given to each of the students, and they will each be inducted into the next class. The students will each receive a summer packet from their teachers to help them maintain the skills that they have learned over the past year, and to get ready for next year.

On behalf of all the teachers of Or Zarua, we wish everyone in the Hebrew School a great summer, filled with good health, fun activities, sunshine, and overall enjoyment.

Charlie Sherman, Hey Class Teacher

Or Zarua Youth Hesed

As the school year winds down, it is a good time to reflect on the past year's Or Zarua Youth Hesed events and to look to the future. There has been a lot of excitement about OZYH, and members continue to enrich the lives of children and adults at New York Hospital. Several times during the past year, we have visited, read to and played with children of all ages on the various pediatrics units at New York Hospital. On several occasions, we have visited all Jewish patients to wish them a "Sweet New Year," "Kosher Pesach," etc. During such visits, we typically invite patients to the upcoming hospital Rosh HaShanah Service or Seder, give out mishloach manot, etc. Rabbi Stephen Roberts, Jewish Chaplain at New York Hospital, assures us that our visits consistently mean unusually excellent attendance at such celebrations.

On April 20th, several OZYH members visited all the Jewish patients at New York Hospital and gave out invitations to the hospital seder. One patient commented that she was so touched that a group of teenagers would actually give up a Sunday and to visit people in the hospital instead of going to the mall. Another patient insisted on knowing what shul we come from so she could make a donation in honor of the OZYH bikur cholim visit.

On Monday, April 21st (with their own seders just two or three hours away), several OZYH members helped lead the hospital seder, attended by at least 30 patients and family members.

We have been blessed with a good "shidduch" between OZYH and the oldest Hebrew School students. Next year, even more Hebrew School students will be old enough to join us. Rabbi Wechsler, Michelle Schaerf, Rabbi Roberts and I will be meeting in June to begin planning the calendar of visits for next year. We are also exploring the possibility of arranging an activity with another group of Jewish teens. Feel free to call me with additional suggestions or comments. Regards for an enjoyable summer.

Howard Blas - OZ Youth Hesed

***We Welcome
New Members***

Herbert & Elaine Blum
Doren Gopstein & Teresa Norwich
Jerry & Patti Josepher
Russell & Gloria Karp

Congratulations To

Marc & Joanne Ashley on the April 6th
birth of their daughter, Rebecca Michal
Gerald Cohen and Elizabeth Brandwein
on the May 16th birth of their daughter,
Hannah Ruth Cohen

Jay and Lesley Palmer on the April 18th
birth of their daughter, Michaela Ann

Or Zarua Book Club

Please join us on Sunday, June 8th at
7:30 for a discussion of Johanna
Kaplan's book, "O My America,"
which won a National Jewish Book
Award. Johanna has graciously agreed
to attend the meeting and participate in
the discussion of her book. In addition,
Johanna has a short story in the May,
1997 issue of Commentary Magazine,
which she will also discuss.

The book is available at the Jewish
Museum, Westside Judaica and can be
ordered through Barnes & Noble.
There is also a link on the Or Zarua
website (www.orzarua.org) to purchase
the book online from Amazon. The
book can also be ordered directly from
Syracuse Press (800-365-8929).

The meeting will be held at the home
of Zella and Glenn Goldfinger. We
look forward to seeing you, and feel
free to bring friends. Please bring your
suggestions for future book club
discussions.

Summer Celebrations

The lazy summer months are good
times to get better acquainted. A
series of informal parties is being
planned to be held in our various
summer venues, e.g. the Hamptons,
Catskills, Westchester, Connecticut,
and the Berkshires.

Let us know your summer address

and phone number so you will be
included in the party in your
neighborhood. If you plan to be in
the city and would like to be
included in an event within a day's
drive of the city, please tell us.

You may call the Or Zarua office
(212) 410-6041, or return the form
below.

Congregation Or Zarua
1384 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10128

Here's my summer address. Count me in!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

_____ Include me/us in an event a day's drive from Manhattan.

Congregation Or Zarua
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New York, NY 10128

