



SONS *of* ABRAHAM

LAFAYETTE, IN
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Tammuz 19 - Av 20

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Susan Prohofsky & Sonya Garfinkel

Gratitude, Condolences and Congratulations

Mazel tov to **Steve and Florence Weingram** following the birth of their 4th grandchild.

Miriam Jerison, a former Shul member, whose husband was **Meyer Jerison**, died in Massachusetts on July 22, 2010. Burial was in Massachusetts where her sons **Michael and David Jerison** live. May her memory be for a blessing.

Refuah Shelema

We offer prayers for health, complete recovery and long life to **Johanna Gartenhaus** and **Aaron Slamovich**. **Jo** had shoulder replacement surgery and **Aaron** his tonsils and adenoids removed. **Sonia Barash** is recuperating from cataract surgery. Also, best wishes to **Harriet Diamond**, **Joe Haberer**, **Fritz Friedlaender**, **Madelyn Lillianfeld**, **Sarah Raskin**, **Barney Axelrod**, and **Irwin** and **Iris Treager**.

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Rabbi's Reflections

Ass, Knowledge, Service: On Belief and Thought

I spoke twice in connection with graduations this year, at a Purdue graduation, and the St Joseph High School Baccalaureate service. The messages were similar: from education take not just acquired knowledge to be used as a mere tool for personal gain, but as a means to serve other people. At Purdue, I told a story by Poland's most famous educator, Janusc Korczak: "A corporal told a student recruited into the army, 'my dear student, this is not a university, one must think here.'" Schools impart knowledge, not teach what to do with it, how to implement it, or the consequences of it. Wernher von Braun reportedly said, "I always shoot for the sky, but sometimes I hit London," or "The rocket worked perfectly except for landing on the wrong planet," which Tom Lehrer turned into, "Once the rockets are up, who cares where they come down? That's not my department," says Wernher von Braun."

At St Joseph High School, I told a story of fifteen-year-old Aaron, who had quite a reputation as a scholar. He studied at home and at school, day and night, while he ate, walked and bathed. He even dreamed of books. His fame finally reached the chief rabbi of Vienna, who, looking for an assistant, traveled to the young man's town. He asked the local rabbi, "Is it true he knows so much?" The wise, old rabbi smiled, "The truth? The boy studies so much he just hasn't the time to really *know*." Similarly, Bahya ibn Joseph Paquda wrote, "In their beginning, people study Pentateuch and [the rest of the] Bible. It is enough for them in reading the verse without understanding the matter. They do not know the explanation of the words or the use of the language. They are akin to an ass carrying books" (*Hovot Ha-levavot (Duties of the Heart)*, Gate 3, Chapter 4). Bahya's saying (used earlier by Samuel Ha-nagid, *Ben Mishlei*)

has come to be a metaphor for a person who reads endlessly yet learns nothing.

The real world teaches us to adapt and apply the school knowledge we learn. People at some great companies that have shut down or imploded learned that there is more to life than riches, even for a business, and knowledge is not the only element for survival and wealth. Israel Knox said, "Education has this sovereign purpose: to prepare one for more education. All else is subsidiary to this. Education should create hungers—spiritual, moral, and aesthetic hungers for value."

Belief underlies education and the values by which we apply it. Jews are fond of saying that we legislate action, do not have creeds, and worry more about behavior than belief. I even joke that the rabbis are like religious behavioralists. There is some truth to this if one wants to be technical and use old, outdated Christian meanings. In reality, Judaism has core beliefs, just no statement that we must say. Idolatry is one core prohibited belief. There are others, but I've made the point.

Beliefs influence behavior. This is knowledge's limit. We can talk ourselves into doing anything, even when it goes against the grain, if we believe we do it for a higher cause. Think of the famous Stanley Milgram behavioral experiment.

Investigators persuaded fully 60 percent of the subject-teachers that, for the advancement of science, they administer the maximum 450 volts "shock" even after the subject-learners fell silent and nonresponsive two-thirds of the way through them. The late Carl Sagan and his wife Ann Druyan wrote about an experiment in which macaque monkeys were fed only if they pulled a chain that administered an electrical shock to another monkey who could be seen through a one-way mirror. Eighty-seven percent of the monkeys opted to go hungry instead of pulling the chain, and one refused to eat for 14 days.

Translation may say something about us. Proverbs 23:7 in the New Jewish Publication Society (JPS) translation is "He is like one keeping accounts; 'Eat and drink,' he says to you, But he really does not mean it." The verse concerns an insincere, miserly host, a person who uses others, and does not have integrity. Depending on how you see the whole chapter, this may apply to a ruler, or to a rich person. The Old JPS (based on

the Kings James) translation reads, "For as one that hath reckoned within himself, so is he: 'Eat and drink,' saith he to thee, but his heart is not with thee."

While I do not like to pull verses out of context, it can be instructive. The old JPS translation in more modern English reads: "As a person thinks, so is s/he." If we think we are this kind of person, then we are (or will become, if we strive to make it so). What we think and believe best predicts who we are and what we do if we have integrity. If we do not have it, then we often still will try to act as we think we should, only our heart will not be in it, and people will eventually find out no matter how hard we try to protect it. Beliefs have consequences.

Since I mentioned the pre-eminent rocket scientist Wernher von Braun earlier, if we look at missiles and satellites, their smallest section is the guidance system; yet, it is the most critical. Without it, we would not send anything up, afraid of where it would come down. We are like them. Our beliefs guide our consequent actions as we travel life's path. How we use the knowledge to take us in the direction we wish to go will be guided by our beliefs. We best discover meaning in life by the beliefs we hold. Knowledge and action will follow what we truly believe.

Rabbi's Calendar

Rabbi Rascoe will be in town July 9-11, 23-25.

Candle Lighting Times

(Source: Rabbi Rascoe)

July 2	9:07 PM
July 9	9:05 PM
July 16	9:01 PM
July 23	8:56 PM
July 30	8:49 PM

Sisterhood Notes

What a wonderful day for a picnic! The weather went from awful to beautiful in just a few hours. Many thanks to Rabbi Rascoe for ordering the meat, going to Chicago to get it and then schlepping it here. Thank you to the terrific "Grill Mavens", Harry Hirsch and Irwin Treager. Thanks to the Picnic co-chairs, Harriet Diamond and Jo Gartenhaus, and to everyone who brought salads and desserts, and helped to clean up. If you weren't there, you missed a great time.

July Calendar

July 2: Friday, 8 p.m. – Shabbat Services

July 3: Saturday, 10: a.m., Shabbat Services

July 9 - 11: Rabbi Rascoe will be in town
(Friday – Sunday)

July 9: Friday, 8 p.m., Erev Shabbat Services

July 10: Saturday, 10: a.m., Shabbat Services

July 15: Shul Board Meets at 8 p.m.

July 16: Friday, 8 p.m., Erev Shabbat Services

July 17: Saturday, 10: a.m., Shabbat Services

July 23 - 25: Rabbi Rascoe will be in town
(Friday – Sunday)

July 23: Friday, 8 p.m., Erev Shabbat Services

July 24: Saturday, 10: a.m., Shabbat Services

July 30: Friday, 8 p.m., Erev Shabbat Services

July 31: Saturday, 10: a.m., Shabbat Services

Shul Board to Meet

The Shul Board is scheduled to meet **Thursday, July 15 at 8 p.m.**

Board meetings are open to all members.

Yahrzeits

Name	Hebrew Date	2010
Stein, Calvin F.	Tammuz 19	July 1
Altman, Bernard	Tammuz 20	July 2
Cohen, Stella	Tammuz 21	July 3
Blecher, Eva	Tammuz 21	July 3
Stewart, Deb Bercovitz	Tammuz 23	July 5
Goodman, Anna L.	Tammuz 24	July 6
Silverman, Edward	Tammuz 27	July 9
Wolinsky, Gershon	Tammuz 29	July 11
Trueheart, Sadie	Av 2	July 13
Litman, Matilda	Av 2	July 13
Zimmerman, Morris	Av 3	July 14
Berger, Minnie	Av 4	July 15
Hartman, Sarah	Av 4	July 15
Goodman, Isadore	Av 5	July 16
Rostov, Chajah	Av 8	July 19
Pearlman, David	Av 8	July 19
Cohen, Harry	AV 8	July 19
Elkin, Barry	Av 9	July 20
Brudner, Samuel	Av 9	July 20
Bercovitz, Bessie	Av 10	July 21
Weisz, Berthold	Av 10	July 21
Goldstine, Ida	Av 11	July 22
Miller, Isadore	Av 13	July 24
Lomar, Herman A.	Av 13	July 24
Rubin, Harry	Av 14	July 25
Singer, Doba Risa	Av 15	July 26
Goldsmith, Ida	Av 15	July 26
Cember, Pearl	Av 15	July 26
Bosco, Isaac	Av 19	July 30

Shul Board Solicits donations to Special Purpose Funds

The **Chosnek Fund**, named for **Sam and Edith Chosnek**, is for ritual. For example, the fund could be used to repair such things a Torah covers and the like. The **Elkin Fund**, named for **Barry Elkin**, is for educational purposes. It might be used to pay part of the cost of bringing in a speaker. The **100th Anniversary Fund**, established by **Ed Simon**, is for capital expenses related to building maintenance. The **Ha Gomel Fund** is to celebrate recent recoveries from illness.

News from Jerusalem, courtesy of Cyrelle Simon

Customs on Minor Holidays and Semi-Holidays

The past few weeks have included many holidays. I am still learning on which days the secular, modern orthodox and the chared girls only, do not have school, and on which days no one has school. Some of these holidays are more recently inaugurated and their customs are still evolving. Then there are the days of "Isru Chag" (when a holiday is celebrated in the diaspora, but not here), when no one has school, but all businesses are open. During Chol HaMoed, the intervening days of Pesach and Succot, there is no school, however businesses are closed a half day of a whole day, so it's best to inquire before making shopping plans.

A Shavuot Experience:

As is common all over most people studied until about 4:30 p.m. then davened Shacharit, before returning home to sleep. I had an unusual opportunity to hear Megillat Rut in Yiddish for the first time. I was reminded of the only Seder that Ed and I spent alone, where we read the Haggadah both in Hebrew and in Yiddish.

Lafayette Israelis:

I recently visited Merav ne, Gilai at her Collectibles shop. Her brother Dani spent several years in my Shul nursery school class, where I was able to practice my spoken Hebrew, as well have making the time to teach him English. He works in Hi Tech in Tel Aviv. I also spoke recently with Yossi Mizrachi who has worked on the aloe Vera plant and increased the shelf life of tomatoes, among other projects. He recently returned from his eleventh trip to Africa to help with agricultural challenges there. His wife Nili is a sexologist and continues to write an advice column in one of the well known magazines. Their son, Adi, who is also a graduate of my Shul Nursery class, is now a biology professor at the Hebrew University, having recently received a prestigious grant from a European country. In addition, last week I had a tasty luncheon in the midst of a verdant patio of a moshav restaurant named Netanel, located halfway between Jerusalem and Midreshet Sdeh Boker. Four Israeli women who had lived in Lafayette joined me in a delightful reunion.

The City of Lod:

I recently spent an uplifting Shabbos with my newly married grandson Menachem and his wife, Merav. In addition to reveling in their warm and pampering hospitality, I learned a few facts about the city. Lod is an ancient city comparable to Tiberias, Tzfat, Acre, etc., however, it has no architectural remnants of its thriving eras. This is in contrast to the other ancient cities who have graves, caves, artifacts etc. Lod is also twenty percent Arab, and has been known for a high crime rate and drug dealing. These problems, as well as its very old sewage system, which often springs leaks, are now being addressed. My grandson, Menachem gives a daily D'var Torah for about forty minutes in a Sephardic Shul, while he davens on Shabbos in his more familiar Askenazic Shul. Since I visited both places I commented how much fancier and attractive the Sephardic Shul was than the Ashkenazic. He said that this is generally the case in Israel.

Neighbors:

I learned a little about Jewish genealogy from my Shabbos hosts. Both spouses descend from the Sephardim who were evicted from Spain over five

hundred years ago. The man's family came to Morocco and retained their Sephardic identity, while the wife's forebearers settled in Hamburg, Germany and became Ashkenazim through the years. However, because of their similar origins they found a number of customs in common. Incidentally, the wife's family was named Bamberger, whose family tree included the names of my new grandson-in-law.

All of Israel, with the exception of two cities lights Shabbos candles 20 minutes before sundown. Jerusalem and Petach Tikvah light 40 minutes before sundown. As far as I could determine, the reason for the earlier lighting time is to insure an extra guard against lighting too late.

In the late 1880s a group of Jerusalemites could not find proper housing and decided to build the city of Petach Tikvah. Since their Jerusalem custom was to light 40 minutes earlier than sundown, they continued to do so in Petach Tikvah until this very day.

Heroes and Heroines:

I am learning here that the largest funerals take place by the religious sector. Recently, my street was impassible for an hour when a huge contingent accompanied the coffin of a well-known rebetzin to the funeral home. And several days ago, the former Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Mordecai Eliahu, also called the Rishon L Tzion was buried about midnight, after dying a 4:00 p.m. the same day. Over one hundred thousand people accompanied the bier. And, as I have previously written, the dead are buried immediately in Jerusalem.

The Mir:

Many years ago, the city of Mir in Poland boasted an extraordinary yeshiva gedolah, a school for post high school students and upwards. Much has been written about the transfer of the Yeshiva community to Shanghai during World War 11. In 1947 the Yeshiva was moved to Jerusalem where it now occupies a vast campus with over 6,000 students learning at advanced levels. Mir is one of the most prestigious yeshivas and I am proud to say that my new grandson-in-law who has been learning there for 3 years, upon his marriage, was just admitted to the Kollel. When a man marries, if he is qualified, he earns a small monthly stipend

for learning, sort of like a graduate assistantship. People can learn in Kollel to an advanced age, however, when their families increase, they may choose to work part time to add to their wives' salaries.

Davening Times and Places:

Recently, a large supermarket was opened a neighboring area of Givat Shaul. In the center stands a lovely Shul. A loud speaker reminds the shoppers when there will be a minyan for Shacharit, Minchah and Maariv.

The Rockefeller Museum:

I enjoyed a visit to the Rockefeller museum, which is in Jerusalem's Arab section. The displays include artifacts from societies as far back as 40,000 years. One of the unusual exhibits was a large rock on which was inscribed several of the Ten Commandments. The museum includes an auditorium and a fairly large library housing journals in Hebrew, Arabic, English and German pertaining to the ancient Middle East. The museum structure is imposing with high ceilings and arched doorways. At the center is a pretty garden. I went with June Flanders and afterwards we met my cousin who was visiting from the States for lunch in the new Mamilla Mall with an outstanding view of the Old City.

Kollels Abound:

Jerusalem is filled with all sorts of Kollels. It is not uncommon for retired men to spend part of the day learning Torah. Often a wealthy man may find a suitable space, maybe in a Shul which is not used for some hours of the day, and establish a private learning situation where perhaps ten to twenty men spend a half-day in learning Torah. The younger men may be paid a small stipend and learn in another Kollel the 2nd part of the day or work. Several husbands of my friends learn in English Kollelim

With warm regards, Cyrelle

Deadline for August edition:

Wednesday, July 28. Please send materials you would like included in the next edition of the Sons or Abraham newsletter to:

penmike@embarqmail.com

Editor: Mike Adler & Layout and design: Penny Adler