



Shabbat Announcements

Shabbat Parshat Tazria-Metzora

April 25, 2009 1 Iyar 5769

TORAH
ARTSCROLL, 608
HERTZ, 459

MAFTIR
ARTSCROLL, 890
HERTZ, 694

HAFTORAH
ARTSCROLL, 1208
HERTZ, 944

GNS TEFILLA DIGEST: A Weekly Discussion about the Fundamentals of Jewish Prayer
 By Rabbi Brahm Weinberg – Rabbinic Intern

This inspiring article about tefillah is sponsored by Diane and David Rein in memory of Diane's mother, Helene M. Fink. z"l.

Issue # 38 – Hallel on Yom Ha'Atzmaut

Over the last few weeks we have been discussing the topic of Hallel on the Night of Pesach. While there is still much more that could be said on the matter, I have decided to move on to a new topic that is more relevant to the coming week. Our new topic follows very nicely on the foot heels of the last topic since it is also about reciting Hallel in a new and somewhat different context than the standard holiday recitations on Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot.

With the establishment of the State of Israel 61 years ago a host of new halachic questions arose. One of the questions was how to mark the day on which independence was declared in the modern State of Israel. However, in order to

figure out how to mark the day they had to figure out what the day represented.

On the one hand, the day marks the establishment of a modern democratic state which could be seen as a purely secular event devoid of religious meaning. On the other hand, the day can be viewed as one filled with tremendous religious meaning as well.

The establishment of the State in 1948 represented the new ability of Jews to freely return to the land of our ancestors and also to be saved from the dangers we faced living in anti-Semitic environments around Europe and the Middle East. One could even go further than that and say that it represents the beginning of the process of redemption, *kibbutz galuyot* (the ingathering of the exiles promised to us by the *neviim*), and the coming of the *moshiach*.

In other words, one could view the events that transpired surrounding the establishment of the State of Israel in two ways: As a fact of history no different than the achievement

of independence by other nations such as Greece and Italy, or as an event laden with miracles, driven by G-d as part of the vision of prophets who foresaw the end of our exile.

This debate is complex and ongoing: Even religious Jews have differing opinions about how to interpret the events of May 14th, 1948. There are religious Jews who think it was the first stage of the *geula*, some who think it was religiously significant but not part of the *geula*, and some who think it was a great offense to G-d! You have secular Jews who think it is a day filled with greater meaning and some how think it is just a secular holiday. These difficulties are even reflected in the language of the original Declaration of Independence. It speaks in secular terms about the establishment of a democratic country but still mentions the "vision of the prophets of Israel" and the trust they put in "tzur yisrael" the "Rock of Israel" which some would say refers to G-d.

Jews who see the establishment of the State of Israel as having some religious value wished to make

Times	
Candle lighting	7:26 pm
Mincha	7:00 pm
Hashkama	8:00 am
Minyan	
Parsha Shiur	8:30 am
Youth	8:30 am
Main Minyan	9:00 am
Beit Midrash	9:15 am
Gemorah Shiur	6:15 pm
Mincha	7:15 pm
Shabbat Ends	8:35 pm
Sunday,	7:30 am
April 26,	8:30 am
Mon., & Thurs.,	6:35 am
Tues., Wed., & Fri.,	6:45 am
Second Shacharit Minyan (Daily)	7:45 am
Mincha (week of April 26)	7:30 pm
Latest times for Shema/Shmoneh Esrei	
April 25	9:27/10:35 am
May 2	9:20/10:22 am
Next Shabbat - Acharei Mote-Kedoshim	
Candle lighting	7:33 pm
Mincha	7:00 pm

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SEUDAH SHLISHIT IS SPONSORED BY ELLEN & MITCHELL SIEGEL IN MEMORY OF HER FATHER MORRIS GIVNER, Z" L

Yom Ha'Atzmaut, Independence Day, as holiday that had a certain religious character. The topic of whether we have the right to establish new holidays in the Jewish calendar is a fascinating one which many have explored but is not the topic of this Tefilla article. However, one way which religious Jews wished to shape the holiday was with the recitation of Hallel in shul on the morning of Yom Ha'Atzmaut which *is* the topic of this article!

Is the recitation of Hallel appropriate for Yom Ha'Atzmaut and should a bracha be recited?

Right off the bat it is important to note that there is no singular conclusive opinion on this matter. On the one hand, we are warned not to recite Hallel excessively since it must be reserved for very special occasions (Gemara Shabbat 118b). On the other hand, refraining from reciting Hallel seems to be fraught with problems.

The **Gemara in Masechet Sanhedrin 94a** strongly condemns King Chizkiyahu for not reciting Hallel after he defeated King Sancheriv who was the king of Assyria who laid siege to Yerushalayim. It says that G-d would have made Chizkiyahu *moshiach* and ended all future exile if he would have just recited Hallel over that great victory.

Thus, it seems incumbent upon us to recite Hallel to mark a miraculous event.

In fact, the **Gemara in Pesachim 117a** states that, according to one opinion (that of the sages which we follow), the prophets established that Jews should recite Hallel at various times in the year [such as the holidays] as well as times when they [as a group] are redeemed from dire straights or imminent danger. **Rashi** says that Channuka would be an example of an event in which the Jews as a group were saved from imminent danger after the war with the Greeks and so we recite Hallel on Channuka to show gratitude to G-d for saving us.

The **Gemara in Arachin 10b** concurs and tells us that we are obligated to recite Hallel on two types of occasions: A biblical festival (a day of great historical significance in the relationship between G-d and the Jewish people) and a day on which a miracle has occurred to a group of Jewish people.

There is a dispute amongst the Medieval commentators whether that obligation to praise G-d at times when the Jewish people were saved from imminent danger is a mitzvah "*deoraita*" (from the torah) or "*derabanan*" (rabbinic). Nevertheless, all agree that it is a mitzvah to acknowledge that which G-d has done by praising him. We do so by reciting Hallel.

The **Magen Avraham** and the **Mishna Berura** both say that not only can we do so on the days of ancient salvation of the Jewish people but on new days of salvation as well. They say that a community of Jews is authorized to recite Hallel and declare a day of celebration for all time on the specific date on which they were saved from danger. The rabbis refer to these days of communal celebration as "Purim of X city". They are allowed to establish the day of Hallel and celebration on that date in perpetuity. The **Chaye Adam** as well as **Chatam Sofer** and others record many communities that actually did this sort of thing after surviving different natural disasters or Anti-Semitic activities.

This would lead us to believe that after witnessing an event as great as the establishment of the State of Israel and after being saved from the onslaught of seven Arab armies with much stronger military force than our own we would be halachically obligated, as a group, to recite Hallel on Yom Ha'Atzmaut.

Next week we will continue this discussion and raise various other issues involved such as whether to recite a bracha.

Question to Ponder

How would you create a new holiday to mark the miracles of Yom Ha'Atzmaut? How prominent would the recitation of Hallel be in this celebration?



**Great Neck Synagogue
Shabbat Activities Program**

Dale Polakoff, Rabbi
Shalom Axelrod, Assistant Rabbi
Brahm Weinberg, Rabbinic Intern
Dr. Ephraim Wolf, z"l, Rabbi Emeritus
Zeev Kron, Cantor
Eleazer Schulman, z"l, Cantor Emeritus
Mark Twersky, Executive Director
Howard Silberstein, President
Harold Domnitch, Chairman of the Board

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RABBI REISMAN SATURDAY NIGHT TELECAST

Weinstein Torah & Technology Center Sat., 10:15pm www.gnstorah.org

SAVE THE DATE GREAT NECK LADIES NIGHT OUT

The 57th Annual Combined Sisterhoods will be held at Temple Beth El, Thursday April 30th at 6pm. With award winning author **Beth J. Harpaz**, as our guest speaker, delicious hors d'oeuvres and desserts by Lederman Caterers, a boutique, and raffle prizes! We are proud to participate in this event, and encourage you to become an event sponsor for \$36. Reservations are required! RSVP at 487-6100 or email drein@verizon.net. We're collecting toiletry items to donate to victims of domestic violence in conjunction with the UJA. Drop off donations in the synagogue office by April 24th.

WOMENS TEFILA

Women's Tefila is proud to announce that **Rabbi Brahm Weinberg** will be speaking before Mincha on Shabbat May 9th. Please note the date change, and will NOT be meeting on Shabbat, April 25th. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

HUNGER INITIATIVE

Do you have any leftover Passover food? Please bring unopened containers to the GNS synagogue office where they will be delivered to those in need.

TALMUD CLASS SIYUM

Rabbi Singer's Talmud class invites the congregation to a Siyum to celebrate the completion of Masechet Shabbat, to be held in conjunction with the midrash breakfast, promptly after morning minyan on Sunday, May 17th. All are invited!

MEN'S CLUB EVENT

May 6th, Wednesday 8pm: **Michael Tuchfeld**, commentator and correspondent on Israel TV2 News- The Knesset Channel 99, will be here to talk on the latest Israeli news, Topic: *Obama and Netanyahu, Where are you taking us?* This event is co-sponsored by the JPEF, publisher of the Jewish Political Chronicle.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

GNS hunger initiative wishes to thank everyone who made the Chometz drive and Passover food drive so successful. A special Yasher Koach to **Martin** of Everfresh who donated hundreds of canned goods to a local long island food pantry before Passover.

BLOOD DRIVE

Semi-annual Men's Club blood drive will be on June 7th, Sun. morning.

YIDDISH VORT

Concert with the Klezolim of "Shoresh": Wed., May 13th at 7:45pm. Enjoy a spring evening of Klezmer, Israeli, Yidish, Ladino, and Sephardic melodies. Free admission.
Stories of the Legendary Prankster, Hershel of Ostropol: Wed., May 6th at 1:30pm. All are welcome. For more info call **Roz Wagner** 487-9795

DEFENSIVE DRIVING COURSE

GNS Men's Club is holding an AAA Driver's Education course on Wednesday and Thursday June 3rd, and 4th from 7-10pm each night at GNS. \$25 per person over 55, \$30 for under 55. Checks made payable to AAA, call the Synagogue office for reservations 487-6100. Attendance is limited.

DRIVERS NEEDED

Drivers are needed to deliver food for Tomchei Shabbos on Wed. evenings. A once a month commitment is needed. Call **Jeff Bilfeld** at 509-0396. Earn chesed hours for school.

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday June 20th, the Annual **Sharon Sokol Heisler** Family Luncheon will take place. **Gary Rosenblatt** of the Jewish Week will be the featured speaker. More details to follow. The Youth Luncheon will also take place that day.

SAM AHARONOFF MEMORIAL SHIVTEI TORAH CAMPAIGN

The NSHA and the NSHA High School, in conjunction with the greater Great Neck Jewish Community, will hold a historic campaign that will involve the dedication and commissioning of 12 new Sifrei Torah. All proceeds will support the Sam Aharonoff Memorial Scholarship Fund to help offset tuition costs for dozens of needy students. For more info: www.shivteitorah.org, or **Arnie Flatow** 487-8687 ext 2.

WITHIN OUR FAMILY

Mazal Tov to **Susan & Steven Mayer** on the birth of twin grandsons, born to their children **Stacy & Stuart Mayer**.
Mazal Tov to **Esther & Jacob Ambalu** on the birth of a grandson, born to their children **Sara & Daniel Ambalu**.
Mazal Tov to **Ester & Eliezer Noy** on the birth of their granddaughter, born to their children **Nadine & Jack Noy**.
Mazal Tov to **Nechama Liss-Levinson** on winning the 2009 Sydney Taylor Manuscript award for her children's book, *When the Hurricane Came to New Orleans*. This story of 8 year old Gertie who is evacuated from New Orleans along with her family, is based on the volunteer efforts of those in GNS who went to New Orleans to repair and rebuild. Thanks to everyone who participated in that effort by being there in person, or through financial support.

CHESED OPPORTUNITY

Please join Hebrew Free Burial Association's Day of Chesed to help maintain the Silver Lake Cemetery in Staten Island on April 26th 12-2pm (weather permitting). Call 212-239-1662 or contact **Nechama** 516-773-3572 for info.

WALK-A-THON FOR STEM CELL RESEARCH

Sun., May 3rd, the Great Neck Hadassahs will host their Third Annual walk-a-thon for stem cell research. Registration and snacks are at 9am. Starting time is at 9:30am, from Steppingstone Park (rain or shine) For more info call 829-0413.

WALK FOR SHAARE ZEDEK

Join the **NSHA** Middle School Walk-a-thon on Sun., May 3rd 10-12pm to support Shaare Zedek's New Glaubach Pediatric Emergency Room. Please sponsor or lend your support for an Emergency Care Area to help save thousands of children. The Walk-a-thon will begin and end at **26 Old Mill Road** and is sponsored by the 6th Grade Chesed Club. Sponsorships: \$100, \$180, \$360 and \$500. For info contact: **Shani Jensen** 516-662-3912 or **Sharon Goldwyn** 917-287-7334.

SAVE THE DATE

2nd Annual "Koby Memorial Day Baseball Game," for the benefit of Camp Koby and the victims of terrorism: Monday May 25, 3 games: ages: 6-12; 13-18; and 19 and up! See **Barry Libin**

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday May 17th 9:30-11:30am there will be a networking breakfast for those seeking jobs, and those that have jobs or advice to offer. This event is the first in a series that chazakchazak.org is organizing.

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Saturday, 1 Iyar

Debbie Wang Etzion for Samuel Wang
Trudy Friedman for Julia Lederer
Gloria Wang Miller for Samuel Wang

Sunday, 2 Iyar

Janet Greenhut for Sylvia Lipson
Jacqueline Hott for Ida Rose
Ira Lubin for Helen Mannes

Monday, 3 Iyar

Rose Baim for Sonya Diamond
Nettie Halitzer for Frances Radisch
Sonia Herman for Gloria Okun
Herman Kotler for Esther Kotler
Renee Krieger for Esther Kotler
Francine Mermelstein for Gitla Zimmerman
Sally Olshin for Edward Weinberger
Ellen Siegel for Morris Givner

Tuesday, 4 Iyar

Roslyn Dicker for Max Gottlieb

Wednesday, 5 Iyar

Ronald Braun for Robert Braun
Aaron Eliach for Ruth Eliach
Peter Epstein for Isidore Epstein
Ebrahim Gabbazadeh for David Gabbazadeh
Michael Nevens for Sally Nevens
Aaron Seligson for Abraham Seligson
Roselin Wagner for Recy Prebluda

Thursday, 6 Iyar

Sheila Bachman for Florence Gur
Halina Greenwald for Pola Salpeter
Ephraim Slonim for Jacob Slonim

Friday, 7 Iyar

Reuel Shinnar for Betty Halpern

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Join us on Tuesday evening
April 28, 7:30 pm
to celebrate

Israel's Independence Day.

Join us for special program for Yom
Hazikaron and t'fillot for the day.

Show your support for Israel.

**To be a sponsor of this event
please call the Synagogue
office or speak to Rabbi Moskowitz.**

Sponsorship levels:

\$50 Friend

\$100 Patron

\$250 Supporter

\$360 Benefactor

\$500 Patron

