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Shabbat Yitro

Sat. 14 - 15 Feb. 2020 - 20th of Sh'vat, 5780

כ' בשבט תש"פ

שבת פ' יתרו

Issue Number 939

Baal Koreh <i>Yom Shabbat Kodesh</i>	Mr Haim L. Eida	(Page-394).
Mufteer & Haftarah	Mr Haim L. Eida	(Page -1154).

Ten commandment song on (Page 12) (שיר של עשרת הדיברות (עמוד 12)

Mincha, Shir Hashirim, Kabbalat Shabbat & Arbit. 16:45

Shabbat Candles. 16:55

Shabbat Shahrit - Followed by Kiddush. (Shema 09:42). 08:30

Daf Hayomi with Rabbi Asher Sebbag Shlit"a. *

Mincha Shabbat - Followed by Seuda Shelishit. (*) (Sunset - 17:14). 16:40

Arbit Motzei Shabbat. 18:06

Shahrit Weekday - (Sunday - 7:30). 06:30

Daf Hayomi with Rabbi Asher Sebbag Shlit"a. 16:15

Mincha & Arbit. 17:00

Next Friday: Mincha, Shir Hashirim, Kabbalat Shabbat & Arbit. 17:00

Next Friday: Candles. **Shabbat. Mishpatim** 17:07

Yitro 5780 (Exodus 18-20)

Feb 9, 2020 | by Rabbi Yitzchak Zweig

GOOD MORNING! If I asked you, "What is the one thing that all Christians, Muslims, and Jews believe, agree upon, and (quite surprisingly) have incorporated into their religious beliefs?" I bet you would be hard pressed to give the correct answer.

Would you believe that all three of these main world religions believe as part of their doctrine that God descended upon Mount Sinai and gave the Torah to the Jewish people? In fact, they all consider the prophets of

the Old Testament to be authentic conveyers of God's truths.

Of course, Christians believe that Jesus then superseded and supplanted Jewish beliefs and traditional practices, while Muslims believe that Mohammed was the true and final prophet, who replaced both Christian and Jewish theology with a greater truth.

In fact, while Islam considers all those who don't accept Mohammed to be infidels whom have forfeited their right to life and possessions, Jews and Christians are in a different category as they are considered "People of the Book." Both religions fall under the

category called *Dhimmis*, which basically means protected people. Thus, as long as they paid the obligatory *jizya* tax, they maintained certain basic rights. While this is a fascinating subject, we'll save a more complete and in-depth discussion of this concept for another time.

Have you ever wondered why so many hospitals, recovery centers, and medical facilities are named Mount Sinai? On the surface this seems to be a very random and rather odd name to associate with healthcare.

This week's Torah reading gives us a clue. In this week's portion we find the following verse, "God shall descend before the eyes of all the people on Mount Sinai" (Exodus 19:11).

The implication of this verse stating that everyone was able to see God descend is that even those who had been blind could actually physically see God descend. A two thousand year old Jewish tradition therefore concludes that an incredible miracle occurred prior to the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai: Everyone was miraculously healed.

In other words, all the sick, infirm, and handicapped were cured at Mount Sinai. We can now understand why almost every large city has a hospital or medical facility named "Mount Sinai."

Yet, we must wonder why God deemed it necessary to perform such an incredible miracle. What was the

purpose of healing everyone? Clearly, God wasn't just showing off. What was the message that we were meant to take away from this incredible revelation of God's power and the departure from the physical norm?

In a famous paraphrasing of Karl Marx, critics have called religion "the opiate of the masses." Marx believed that religion had certain practical functions in society that were similar to the function of opium in a sick or injured person. Opiates reduce people's immediate suffering and provides them with pleasant illusions, but have no meaningful long term benefits. So too, Marx thought, was the purpose of religion.

(By the way, Marx was referring to religion as an opiate for the sickness and suffering brought on by soulless rampant capitalism. Meaning, religion was a temporary respite from the evils of capitalism. But with his communist agenda there would be no need for religion. We all know how well his philosophy worked out for the communists; yet, Marx's criticism of religion persists even after his ideas for a new world order have been shown to be abject failures.)

This was EXACTLY why God delivered the incredible miracle of healing everyone prior to the gifting his law to Moses on Mount Sinai. The purpose was to teach us that religion isn't primarily a bromide to suffering; on the contrary, the optimal way to accept the Torah is when we are in

perfect health, both physically and emotionally.

Of course, the Torah also has the answers when we are suffering and/or not operating at our ideal level, but we can only fully appreciate all that God wanted to gift us on a personal and communal level when we are completely healthy.

When a person is ill or otherwise distracted by the pain of physical or emotional issues, his focus becomes distracted as well. The Torah can be helpful in addressing those issues, but at that moment all he can see is a very limited perspective of the truths the Torah contains. This is because a person in a state of pain sees everything through the lens of that suffering.

However, when one is at 100% strength, both physically and emotionally, the Torah can be seen for what it is really meant to be; a blueprint of God's wisdom for the world and a guide for getting the most fulfillment out of the life that God has bestowed upon us. God cured everyone at Mount Sinai so that each person could fully appreciate the infinite wisdom that the Torah offers and connect to God's truths contained therein without the slightest distraction.



TORAH PORTION OF THE WEEK

Yitro, Exodus 18:1 - 20:23

This is the Torah portion containing the giving of the Ten Commandments. Did you know that there are differences in the Ten Commandments as stated here (Exodus 20:1-14) and restated later in Deuteronomy 5:6-18? (Suggestion: have your children find the differences as a game at the Shabbat table during dinner).

Moses' father-in-law, Jethro (Yitro or Yisro in the Hebrew), joins the Jewish people in the desert, advises Moses on the best way to serve and judge the people -- by appointing a hierarchy of intermediaries -- and then returns home to Midian. The Ten Commandments are given, the first two were heard directly from God by every Jew and then the people begged Moses to be their intermediary for the remaining eight because the experience was too intense.

The portion concludes with the Almighty telling Moses to instruct the Jewish people not to make any images of God. They were then commanded to make an earthen altar; and eventually to make a stone altar, but without the use of a sword or metal tool.



In loving memory of
Rabbi Kalman Packouz
Kalman Moshe ben
Reuven Avigdor
1950-2019

*Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Yitzchak Zweig*

Seuda Shelishit: presented by Jacob Oved in memory of his late sister **Rachel** bat Margaret ר"ע,

Security Alert: Please be very vigilant when you leave the Synagogue. Do not stand in groups and chat, go home without gathering on the main road. Be safe and alert.

Kolel every Sunday: We are still having a Kolel every Sunday at the Synagogue hall from 09.30am - 12.00pm. Everyone is welcome.

THE KEHILLA WISHES חיים ארוכים "LONG LIFE" TO THE FOLLOWING WHO HAVE YAHRZEIT

02 Shevat	Mrs Esther Ezekiel	07 Shevat	Mr Nadhim N. Mouallim
03 Shevat	Mr Cesar Sassoon	07 Shevat	Mr Reuben Isaac Ezekiel
03 Shevat	Mr Joe Sassoon	10 Shevat	Mr Ezra H. Eddie Cohen
03 Shevat	Mr Robert M. E. Sassoon	16 Shevat	Mrs Iran Michael Yadeger
06 Shevat	Chacham Joe David	20 Shevat	Mr Joseph Lawee
06 Shevat	Mr Jack David	20 Shevat	Mr Maurice Lawee
06 Shevat	Mr Haim L. Eida	26 Shevat	Mr Raphael Mansour
06 Shevat	Mr Benny Benaiah	26 Shevat	Mr Samy Dallal
07 Shevat	Mr Joseph Lawee	27 Shevat	Mr Moshe Nahari
07 Shevat	Mr Maurice Lawee	29 Shevat	Mr Ivan Ezekiel

Join Prof Eliyahu Kelman on Sunday the 16th of February at 7.00pm till 8.30pm

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learn how to understand its depth and be really affected by its inner power

Ohel David Entrance fee donation of £5 to cover synagogue expenses

Refreshments served

ברוכים הבאים

Welcome to all who are visiting our Kehilla this Shabbat if you would like to enjoy a Shabbat meal at home of one of our members, please approach the honorary officers and they will be pleased to arrange this for you.

DID YOU KNOW?

It is forbidden for men or women to perform any work on Saturday night before:

Either The Evening Service Or Havdalah Or Reciting the following:

ברוך המבדיל בין קדש לחול

(Blessed he who separates between holy and secular) (See Shulchan Aruch O.H. 299:10)

Quote of the Week

**My concern is not whether God is on our side;
my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for He is always right.**