



# Flushing-Fresh Meadows Jewish Center

193-10 Peck Avenue ✦ Flushing, New York 11365 (718) 357-5100

January, 2011  
Vol. 8, No.7

## THE BULLETIN

Tevet/Shevat 5771  
Rabbi Gerald M. Solomon  
Cantor Mordechai Dier

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR JANUARY

Friday, Jan. 1  
Candle Lighting Time. . . . . 4:19 P.M.  
Saturday, Jan. 2 - Parashat Vaeira  
Shabbat Mevarchim Services.. . . . 9:00 A.M.  
Shabbat Ends. . . . . 5:29 P.M.

Friday, Jan. 7  
Candle Lighting Time. . . . . 4:26 P.M.  
Saturday, Jan. 8 - Parashat Bo  
Shabbat Services. . . . . 9:00 A.M.  
Shabbat Ends. . . . . 5:36 P.M.

Friday, Jan. 14  
Candle Lighting Time. . . . . 4:34 P.M.  
Saturday, Jan.15 - Parashat Beshalach  
Shabbat Shirah Services.. . . . 9:00 A.M.  
Shabbat Ends. . . . . 5:44 P.M.

Friday, Jan. 21  
Candle Lighting Time. . . . . 4:41 P.M.  
Saturday, Jan. 22 - Parashat Yitro  
(Ten Commandments)  
Shabbat Services. . . . . 9:00A.M.  
Shabbat Ends. . . . . 5:51 P.M.

Friday, Jan. 28  
Candle Lighting Time. . . . . 4:49 P.M.  
Saturday, Jan. 29 - Parashat Mishpatim  
Shabbat Mevarchim Services.. . . . 9:00 A.M.  
Shabbat Ends. . . . . 6:00 P.M.

Back by popular demand:



**Romance &  
Sexual  
References In  
The Tanach  
Part II**

**An In-depth  
Study & Analysis  
Class Begins  
Wednesday,**



**January 5, 2011  
10:30 AM  
Until 12 Noon**



**INSTRUCTOR:  
Rabbi Gerald Solomon**

## ATTENTION:

Friday evening services for January are on a To Be Announced basis. Please check with the office each week for the schedule.

## SCHEDULED EVENTS

### Monday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 8:00 PM

Program Committee Meeting  
All Are Welcome To Attend

### Wednesday, January 5<sup>th</sup>

**10:30 AM to Noon**

Adult Education Institute Courses  
Conducted By Rabbi Gerald Solomon

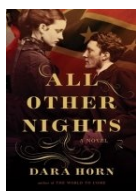
"Romance & Sexual References  
in the Tanach" Part II  
An in-depth study & analysis

### Thursdays: 11 AM to 1 PM

"On-going Discussion Group"

### Saturday, January 15<sup>th</sup>

Tu B'Shevat Kiddush



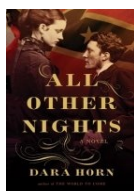
### Thursday, January 20<sup>th</sup>

@ 10:30 AM

Sisterhood Book Club

*All Other Nights*

By Dara Horn



### Saturday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>

Annual Sarah Solomon z"l

Memorial Lecture (Following Kiddush)

## ENDOWMENTS

### Yahrzeit Plaque

In main Sanctuary. . . . .	\$275
In Lasky Chapel. . . . .	\$175
Panel in new stained glass window. . . . .	\$500
Endow a Siddur. . . . .	\$50
Endow a Chumash. . . . .	\$75
Sponsor a kiddush. . . . .	\$150
Special kiddush. . . . .	ask
Listing in Book of Life. . . . .	\$25
Rabbi's Discretionary Fund. . . . .	

Please contact office (718) 357-5100  
if you are interested

## MAZEL TOV

Leslie Biscardi and her family on her son, Alex, becoming a Bar Mitzvah. May you schepp much nachas from this wonderful young man.

## REFUAH SHELEIMAH

We wish to extend our heartfelt prayers to all those who are confronting illness, have undergone medical procedures, and are recuperating from mishaps. Among those on our speedy recovery list are Anita Bernstein, Miriam Nadler, Carl Rosenthal, Bernie Solomon, Sylvia Udasin, and Shari Weinberger.

## TODAH RABAH

Thank you to everyone for sharing in the celebration of Alexander's Bar Mitzvah. It was very special to the family to be able to have all three congregations under one roof to enjoy our simcha. Much appreciation is extended to all for their love and support. Thank you especially to Rabbi Solomon and Cantor Dier for their time, patience, and dedication in preparing Alexander for his Bar Mitzvah. Job well done, gentlemen!

Leslie Biscardi

## ALERT FOR OUR SISTERHOOD BOOK CLUB PARTICIPANTS

During the month of January the Fresh Meadows branch of the Queens Public Library will be undergoing renovations. Books for the January 20<sup>th</sup> discussion can be picked up at the Hillcrest Library branch, 187-05 Union Turnpike.

## KEEP ON GIVING

Hunger is a daily struggle for the indigent and does not end when the holiday season becomes a faded memory. Please continue to bring in canned or boxed goods so that the wintry months will be a little less cold for those less fortunate.

## **TU B'SHEVAT: NEW YEAR OF THE TREES**

Tu B'Shevat, the "new year of trees," begins this year on Wednesday night, January 19th and ends at sunset on January 20<sup>th</sup>. The name Tu B'Shevat corresponds to the holiday's date, Tu being an acronym of the Hebrew letters tet and vav, whose numeric values add up to fifteen, and occurs in the month of Shevat. Tu B'Shevat is a post-biblical holiday; it's first mentioned in the Mishnah (the codification, completed around 200 CE, of what, until then, had been Jewish oral law).

There, it is listed as one of four new years in the Hebrew calendar:

- (1) Rosh Hodesh Nisan in the spring, the first day of what the Bible specifies is the first month, and the date for counting the number of years a king has reigned;
- (2) Rosh Hodesh Elul in the late summer, the dividing date for determining which crops are subject to tithing (Maaisrot in Hebrew); those harvested before that date belong to one year; those on or during the date to another;
- (3) Rosh Hodesh Tishrei, in the early fall, which subsequently came to be called Rosh Hashanah and was designated as the beginning of a new Hebrew year, but here was designated as the day on which God judged human beings;
- (4) Tu B'Shevat, on which God "judges" trees according to the human behavior.

### **Tu b'Shevat Seder**

Tu b'Shevat seders first originated among followers of the Jewish mystical practice known as Kabbalah who settled in the Israeli city of Safed in the 16th century. Today, a growing number of Jews have reinstated the custom.

Tu b'Shevat also is used as the "divider" in determining the age of a tree, and when people may eat its fruit. A tree planted any time (even one day) before Tu b'Shevat is considered one year old on that day. In terms of when one may eat its produce: according to the law of orlah (forbiddenness), as stated in Leviticus 19:23-25, only beginning in the fifth year of a tree's growth may its fruit be eaten.

During the first three years, it is forbidden, while in the fourth, it is dedicated to God.

While Tu B'Shevat occurs in the middle of winter in North America, in Israel, it marks the very first signs of spring. The fall and winter rainy seasons, which generally begin around the holiday of Sukkot, generally end some time before Tu B'Shevat, and usually the first buds of the almond tree, the first tree to blossom, appear about the time of the holiday.

A minor holiday, on which working and cooking are allowed, and during which the Torah is not read and no special prayers are recited, Tu B'Shevat still is marked as a happy day. Traditionally, no eulogies are delivered on Tu B'Shevat. In addition, Jews everywhere drink wines and foods from Eretz Yisrael (the Land of Israel), particularly the seven types of grain and produce those for which the Land is praised in Deuteronomy 8:8: "a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of olive trees and [date] honey." If, as is customary, a person eats such fruit for the first time that year, he or she says the Shehecheyanu blessing, praising G-d for allowing one to live "until this season."

Additionally, in Israel, schoolchildren and other people plant trees on Tu B'Shevat, symbolizing their commitment to the Land. In the Diaspora, Jews have used the holiday to learn more about the Land of Israel, and to make or renew a commitment to safeguarding the environment.

A growing number of Jews have reinstated the custom of holding Tu B'shevat Seders. First practiced by followers of the Jewish mystical practice known as Kabbalah who settled in the Israeli city of Safed in the 16th century, these seders, like the Passover one, sometimes involve four cups of wine (dark red, light red, pink and white), symbolizing the passing of the four seasons. Also included are the seven species of grain and produce mentioned in Deuteronomy, and other fruits and nuts from Israel, along with readings related to Eretz Yisrael, nature and ecology, and social justice.

Some Jews use Tu B'Shevat to learn about

traditional and modern Jewish teachings and values on ecology, ethics, and social justice. This emphasis flows from the metaphorical use of "tree" - for example, the Torah is called "a tree of life" (aitz hayim). It also derives specifically from some of the instructive allusions to trees in traditional Jewish texts. An example is Adam and Eve's having been forbidden by God from eating from the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" in the Garden of Eden, thus losing their childlike innocence, but gaining a knowledge of the human potential for moral and immoral behavior (Genesis, chapters 2 and 3).

Jewish laws that pertain to nature, and to trees in particular, include one prohibiting soldiers from cutting down fruit-bearing trees to build bulwarks when besieging a city. In a striking expression of concern, even empathy, for the integrity of nature, the Torah asks rhetorically, "For is the tree of the field man, that it should be besieged of thee?" (Deuteronomy 20:19).

At the beginning of the Zionist movement, Tu B'Shevat again took on new meaning as planting trees became a symbol for the Jewish re-attachment to the land of Israel. The most recent transformation has re-popularized Tu B'Shevat into a holiday of Jewish environmentalism as a sort of Jewish Earth Day because of its association with trees and, by extension, with nature.



## **JEWISH NATIONAL FUND PROJECTS**

### FORESTRY

JNF has planted more than 240 million trees since 1901 to protect the land, green the landscape and preserve vital ecosystems. Through the generosity of donors like you, JNF continues this effort, planting seedlings, maintaining forest health, combating desertification, protecting watersheds and managing water flow.

### WATER

Over the last decade, Jewish National Fund has dramatically increased Israel's water resources, providing drinking water to 1.2 million Israelis. JNF's water management projects--never more critical to Israel's survival--include reservoir and dam construction, water conservation, river rehabilitation and recycling. More needs to be done to alleviate Israel's annual water deficit.

### COMMUNITY

JNF builds the infrastructure necessary to create and support entire communities throughout Israel, with a major focus on developing Israel's northern and southern regions. As Israel's population expands, these newly developed towns offer opportunities for Israeli families. But development costs are enormous.

### SECURITY

Through JNF's work, there is hope for a safer Israel. JNF builds security roads along the Lebanese border, so children and their parents can travel to school and work shielded from harm. Security roads offer more than just peace of mind. They offer Israelis the ability to live safely in their communities-- allowing them the freedom to travel, to shop, to live life as normally as possible. JNF-built parks provide a place for families to gather and enjoy simple pleasures away from the stress of daily life.

### EDUCATION

For over a century, JNF has fulfilled its mandate to provide Zionist education to Jewish children around the world--introducing them to the natural

wonders of their homeland and the importance of protecting the environment. JNF-sponsored scholarships and programs at the university level, such as Caravan for Democracy, ensure the commitment to enhancing the land and preserving its resources is transmitted from generation to generation.

JNF engages, educates, and energizes American students by introducing them to the natural wonders of Israel and the importance of protecting the environment.

Our annual Alternative Spring Break trip brings college students and young professional to Israel to perform community service projects. JNF brings Israel programs to hundreds of synagogues, summer camps, and community centers across the country.

#### TOURISM

JNF has built over 1,000 parks, playgrounds and recreation areas for enjoyment by Israeli families and tourists alike, as well as walking trails, archeological restorations and facilities for the physically challenged. JNF also builds soldier/family picnic sites, where the heroic men and women of the Israel Defense Force can share precious time with their loved ones. And JNF-sponsored trips allow thousands of visitors to experience firsthand the wonders of Israel and support its economy. Plan a trip to see the splendor of Israel today.

#### HERITAGE SITES

JNF is actively identifying, restoring and saving and historic sites associated with Israel's modern history. With our partners at KKL and the Society for Preservation of Israel Heritage Sites (SPIHS), we are working to increase public awareness of the importance of heritage preservation and providing new tourism opportunities. Whether it's the Ayalon Institute, an underground bullet factory used in The War Of Independence, or the museum at Atlit which is dedicated to preserving the story of illegal immigrants to Israel, JNF continues to be at the forefront of the development of vital facilities that boost the Israeli economy and improve the quality of life for the people of Israel and its visitors.

#### RESEARCH

As a founding member of the International Arid Lands Consortium, JNF is at the forefront of this critical global issue. JNF funded-researchers find solutions to the challenges presented by the Middle East's arid environment. Breakthroughs in water-conservation technologies have enabled Israel's farmers to stay competitive in world markets. And by sharing this cutting edge technology with other countries, JNF is helping improve the quality of life not only in Israel but around the world.



SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL  
PLANT TREES WITH JNF  
FOR TU B'SHEVAT

PURCHASE OF TREES MAY BE MADE  
THROUGH THE SYNAGOGUE OFFICE.  
PLEASE CALL TODAY - 718-357-5100

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IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY DONE SO,  
PLEASE SEND IN YOUR CONTRIBUTION  
FOR "ISRAEL FIRE RELIEF" TO THE  
SYNAGOGUE OFFICE OR DIRECTLY TO  
THE JNF OFFICE IN ROCKVILLE CENTRE.  
PLEASE SEE THE ENCLOSED FLYER

**December 6, 2010**

**President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva**

**Brazil**

**Re: Brazil's Recognition of a Palestinian state on 1967 lines**

Mr. President, your decision to recognize a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders betrays your country's historical commitment to safe guard the Jewish people in their National Home in Palestine, the area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea including the West Bank and Gaza.

Brazil's commitment to the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine was demonstrated in your country's signatory of the "Mandate for Palestine," an historical League of Nations document that laid down the Jewish legal right to settle anywhere in western Palestine, the area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, an entitlement unaltered in international law.

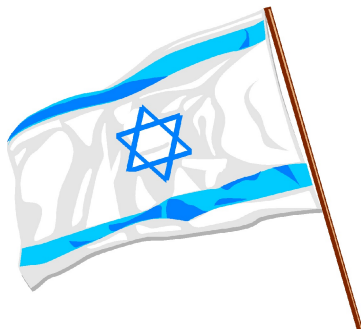
The "Mandate for Palestine" was not a naive vision briefly embraced by the international community. 51 member countries-the entire League of Nations, including Brazil-unanimously declared on July 24, 1922:

"Whereas recognition has been given to the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and to the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country."

Mr. President:

Justice is on our side. The truth may not always win, but it is always right!

Eli E. Hertz



## **GRIM PROSPECTS FOR A PALESTINIAN STATE**

By Benny Morris - Tablet

December 9, 2010

Starting with the Israeli handover of West Bank cities and Gaza to the Palestinian Authority in the mid-1990s, the Palestinians, ever-so-slowly and inefficiently, have built pre-state institutions of governance - most recently and competently under the leadership of Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. During the past few years Western observers have noted substantial improvements in Palestinian taxation, infrastructure, and economic development, and in the functioning of the (American- and European-trained) security services. Indeed, under Fayyad, the West Bank is a largely peaceful place, with residents even paying traffic tickets, and militants of Hamas and other organizations largely inactive.

However, "negotiations" are unlikely to lead to a peace treaty or even a "framework" agreement for a future peace accord due to a set of obstacles that I see as insurmountable, given current political-ideological mindsets. The first is that Palestinian political elites are dead-set against partitioning the Land of Israel/Palestine with the Jews. They regard all of Palestine as their patrimony and believe that it will eventually be theirs. They do not want a permanent two-state solution.

Hamas, which may represent the majority of the Palestinian people, openly repudiates a two-state solution. The secular Palestinian leadership is more flexible on the tactics. They express a readiness for a two-state solution but envision such an outcome as intermediate and temporary. This is why Fatah's leaders, led by PA President Mahmoud Abbas, flatly reject the Clintonian formula of "two states for two peoples" and refuse to recognize the "other" state, Israel, as a "Jewish state." They hope that this "other" state will also, in time, be "Arabized," thus setting the stage for the eventual merger of the two states into one Palestinian Arab-majority state.

It is hard to envision any circumstances under which the current Obama-initiated direct

Israeli-Palestinian peace talks can succeed. Politically, the two contending leaders have little room for maneuver and, at least on the Arab side, little will to concede anything. Abbas might sign off on "an end to the conflict" - and most likely be assassinated by Arab extremists in consequence - but a majority of Palestinians, and certainly a large minority of them, would continue the struggle, rendering the agreement no more than a wind-blown piece of paper.

(The writer is a professor of history at Ben-Gurion University.)

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**SECRETARY OF STATE CLINTON  
ADDRESSED THE BROOKINGS  
INSTITUTION'S SABAN CENTER  
FOR MIDDLE EAST POLICY**

FRIDAY (DEC.10)

EXCERPTS:

"For both Israelis and Palestinians and, indeed, for all the people of the region, it is in their interest to end this conflict and bring a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace to the Middle East based on two states for two peoples....Negotiations between the parties is the only path that will succeed in securing their respective aspirations; for the Israelis, security and recognition; for the Palestinians, an independent, viable sovereign state of their own. This remains true today. There is no alternative other than reaching mutual agreement."

"It is time to grapple with the core issues of the conflict on borders and security; settlements, water and refugees; and on Jerusalem itself. And starting with my meetings this week, that is exactly what we are doing....The United States will not be a passive participant. We will push the parties to lay out their positions on the core issues without delay and with real specificity. We will work to narrow the gaps asking the tough questions and expecting substantive answers. And in the context of our

private conversations with the parties, we will offer our own ideas and bridging proposals when appropriate."

"Israeli leaders must be able to offer their people internationally recognized borders that protect Israel's security. And they must be able to demonstrate to their people that the compromises needed to make peace will not leave Israel vulnerable. Security arrangements must prevent any resurgence of terrorism and deal effectively with new and emerging threats."

"The United States and the international community cannot impose a solution....And even if we could, we would not, because it is only a negotiated agreement between the parties that will be sustainable."



*In case you miss reading one or more of the Torah portions in Shemot, here are some brief summaries - Rabbi Solomon*

### **Shemot - 12/25/10**

Summary: The book of Shmot begins directly from where the book of Genesis left off: listing the "names" of the descendants of Jacob who came down to Egypt after Joseph. Seventy members of Jacob's family down to Egypt, but we are told they were very fertile and increased greatly in Egypt. When a new king comes to the throne in Egypt, he oppresses and enslaves the people out of fear that this growing band of Israelites might prove to be a military or political threat. When this does not succeed in curbing their growth, he issues orders to kill all new-born Israelite boys. The infant Moses, however, survives this decree, and when his mother can no longer keep him hidden, she leaves him in a basket floating on the Nile. He is found by the daughter of Pharaoh, who adopts him and hires his mother as a wet-nurse. The text then jumps ahead. Moses, now a man, seeing a taskmaster beating an Israelite slave, Moses kills the Egyptian and then must flee. He runs to Midian, where he is welcomed by a Midianite priest and is given his daughter Zipporah as a wife. She gives birth to a son. While tending his new father-in-law's flocks, Moses is called by God from the burning bush. God instructs Moses to return to Egypt to free the Israelites from slavery. Moses returns and is reunited with his Brother Aaron. Together they go and pay their first visit to Pharaoh. But Pharaoh dismisses Moses and his God, and increases the workload of the slaves.

### **Va'era - 1/1/11**

Summary: On first approach, Moses has unsuccessfully confronted Pharaoh. Rather than heed God's instruction to let the slaves go, Pharaoh increases their workload and makes their situation even more difficult. Moses goes back to God, and is reassured that the Israelites will indeed be redeemed. The lineage of Moses and Aaron is given, and then they re-approach Pharaoh. When he will not listen, the battle of the plagues begins. However, Pharaoh will not be moved. After the

sixth plague, when Pharaoh still fails to relent, God "hardens" Pharaoh's heart, and then the final plagues upon Egypt commence.

### **Bo - 1/8/11**

Summary: With the final three plagues, the battle between God and Pharaoh comes to a dramatic conclusion. Locust swarm down upon Egypt devouring all the crops and plants that remain. But Pharaoh still refuses to let the Israelites go. When darkness descends upon Egypt for three full days, Pharaoh seems to relent, but not completely. Moses refuses his offer, and Pharaoh declares that Moses can not come before him again, or he will be put to death. Moses then forewarns the Egyptians about the final plague: Death of the First Born.

Before the final plague, God presents the first Mitzvah to be given to the People of Israel collectively: the observance of the festival of Pesach (Passover). Moses and Aaron are instructed by God to offer a lamb as a sacrifice, and to mark the doorposts of the homes of the Israelites with its blood. Instructions are then given to eat Matzah (unleavened bread) and Maror (bitter herbs) and to annually observe a seven day festival of commemoration of the Exodus (which is yet to take place).

And then, as the climactic conclusion, the angel of death passes through, killing all of the first born of Egypt. With this final blow, Pharaoh sends the Israelites on their way, and they hurriedly depart. We are told that there were 600,000 adult men who left Egypt, along with all the Israelite women, children, and a "mixed multitude" - all the other non-Israelite slaves who also took the opportunity to leave. Our parasha concludes with a review of the laws of Pesach, as well as introducing the mitzvot of Redemption of the First Born and Tefillin.

### **Beshalach - 1/15/11**

Summary: The Israelites have finally left Egypt. God does not lead the Israelites along the closest route to the Land of Israel, which is through territory occupied by the Philistines. Rather, the people are led in the direction of the Yam Suf - the Sea of Reeds. One final time, God hardens Pharaoh's heart, and Pharaoh decides to chase after



the Israelites with his army. The Egyptian army catches up with the Israelites as they camp by the edge of the sea. Dramatically, the Israelites are caught between the sea on one side, and Pharaoh's chariots on the other. Moses reassures the people that they only have to trust God, and, as he raises his staff, God parts the waters, and the Israelites are able to cross in safety. The Egyptians chase after them into the parted waters of the sea, but are drowned as the waters return to their natural state. Moses and Miriam lead the people in the "Song of the Sea," a spontaneous song of exaltation and thanksgiving.

Faced with the new reality of survival in the wilderness, the people begin to complain almost right away. Principal concerns include water and food. God promises that if the people follow the commandments, God will always provide and care for them. God provides fresh water at Marah, and again later at Horeb, and then provides the people with Manna, the miraculous food that will sustain them throughout their years of wandering. Also, through the detailed instructions about the Manna, the notion of Shabbat is introduced. The Parasha ends with the Amalekites' surprise attack. This is the Israelites first experience with war.

### **Yitro - 1/22/11**

Summary: After leaving Egypt, Moses and the Israelites meet up with Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, who also reunites him with his wife and son. Jethro observes Moses's daily schedule as chief administrator, judge, and teacher of Israel, and worries that he is taking on too much responsibility. He advises him to delegate the responsibilities of justice and administration to different levels of leadership, so that disputes can be resolved quickly and fairly. In the third month out of Egypt, God calls to Moses and tells him to prepare the people for a great revelation at Mount Sinai. After three days of preparation, the Presence of God is revealed on the mountain with smoke and lightning and shofar blasts. Moses leads the people to assemble at the foot of Mt. Sinai. God summons Moses to ascend the mountain and instructs him to emphasize the prohibition against anyone being on the mountain during Revelation. Moses then descends and, standing among the

people at the foot of the mountain, God speaks the Ten Commandments to the entire people.

### **Mishpatim - 1/29/11**

Summary: From a literary point of view, the emphasis of the Torah now changes. Following Revelation and the giving of the Ten Commandments, the Torah moves away from narrative and continues directly with laws and legislation for the Israelites. This section of the Torah is known as Sefer HaBrit - "The Book of the Covenant." The word mishpatim means "rules" or "ordinances," coming from the Hebrew meaning "to judge." This parasha contains 53 distinct different mitzvot (there are 613 mitzvot in the entire Torah), including civil laws, liability laws, criminal laws, ritual laws, financial laws, and family laws. Specific laws in the parashah relate to sacrifices, slavery, accidental death, kidnapping, treatment of parents and responsibility for animals, and includes the famous (and usually misunderstood) Biblical statement of "talion": eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth... (Ex. 21:24). Towards the end of the parashah, the calendar for the three festivals (Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot) is established, and then the people reaffirm their commitment to the covenant. Moses offers a sacrifice, and then he, Aaron and his sons Nadav and Abihu, and 70 other elders go onto the mountain again, and there they are treated to an extraordinary vision of God. Then Moses goes back up to the top of the mountain, and remains there for forty days.

### **Terumah - 2/5/11**

Summary: With Parashat Terumah, the major theme of the rest of the Book of Exodus is now introduced. Great detail is given about the construction of the Mishkan (Tabernacle), the portable sanctuary that was the centre of the Israelites' religious life during the years they wandered in the wilderness. The Mishkan was "God's dwelling place amongst the people," where sacrifices were offered and God communicated with the people through Moses and the High Priest. Very detailed instructions are given to Moses as to how the Mishkan should be built and what materials are to be used. Included among the Klay

Kodesh ("holy implements") are the Menorah, the altar for sacrifices, the Ark, and the Holy of Holies. The portion begins with God asking Moses to ask the Israelites to bring Terumah, usually translated as "gifts," meaning something like "contributions" or "donations," but they are to be freewill offerings.

### **Tetzaveh - 2/12/11**

Summary: We continue with the theme that defines most of the rest of the Book of Exodus: the construction and institution of the Mishkan, the portable sanctuary, that was the place of worship for the Israelites and the House of God among the people during the years of wandering in the wilderness. Parashat Tetzaveh specifically focuses on the Cohanim, the Priests who perform the rituals and sacrifices on behalf of the people. Great detailed descriptions are given of the complex ritual garments of the Cohen Gadol (the High Priest) - regally resplendent in gold and adornments of precious stones. Details are also given for the seven day period of sacrifices and rituals required to consecrate the priests for service. The Parasha ends with a short description of the golden altar upon which incense was offered and how it too is to be consecrated.

### **Ki Tisa - 2/19/11**

Summary: Parashat Ki Tisa continues with discussion about the building of the Mishkan, (the Tabernacle). The portion begins with instructions for taking a census of the people. Each Israelite adult over the age of twenty must contribute half a shekel, to be used in support of the worship in the Mishkan. Next, there is description of the additional holy implements that need to be created: a copper washstand, the anointing oil and the incense. God then identifies Bezalel, a man endowed with "divine spirit of skill," as the chief artisan and architect of the Mishkan. But, before construction actually begins, God reminds Moses to tell the people about the importance of maintaining Shabbat. At the conclusion of this passage, God gives Moses the original set of the two Tablets, which are inscribed directly by God, and Moses returns to the people.

The Torah's focus then switches down the

mountain to the people, and jumps back a bit in time. The people, upset at Moses's delay up on the mountain, approach Aaron to make them an idol, and Aaron complies by creating a molten calf for the people to worship. Both God and Moses become angry with the people, and, upon his return, Moses smashes the Tablets and, together with the Levites, resumes control of the people, and 3,000 are put to death. God threatens to wipe out the people, but, despite his anger and words of rebuke, Moses prays on the people's behalf, and God relents. Moses then returns up the mountain and beseeches God to reaffirm the Covenant. Moses carves a new second set of Tablets, and before he returns, he is treated to a viewing of the Divine Presence. God does reaffirm the Covenant along with all its ritual and ethical implications.

### **VaYakhel - 2/26/11**

Summary: The two short parashiyot of VaYakhel and Pekudei are usually read together. Parashat VaYakhel seems a bit repetitive, telling the story of the actual building of the Mishkan. If it seems familiar, it is because it describes the people actually putting into effect the instructions we've already heard before. At Moses's bidding, the people bring all the materials required and the craftsmen begin to do the work. But, before the work even begins, everyone is reminded again to maintain Shabbat, emphasizing especially the prohibition against kindling fire.

### **Pekudei - 3/5/11**

Summary: Parashat Pekudei is the final portion of the Book of Exodus. Pekudei begins with Moses's full accounting of all the materials used in the construction of the Mishkan. He first inventories the building materials themselves, and then continues with the vestments of the Priests. Once all the work is completed according to God's instructions, Moses inspects the Mishkan and blesses the people. The Mishkan is then assembled for the first time, and the Divine Presence, manifest as a cloud, fills the Sanctuary, serving as a guide for the people.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>JANUARY 2011</b> <b>TEVET – SHEVAT 5771</b>						<b>1</b> <sup>25</sup> Tevet  Va-Era
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <sup>1</sup> Shevat  Rosh Chodesh	<b>7</b>   4:26	<b>8</b> <sup>3</sup> Shevat  Bo
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>   4:33	<b>15</b> <sup>10</sup> Shevat  Beshalach  Shabbat Shirah
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Tu B'Shevat   <b>טו בשבט</b>	<b>21</b>   4:41	<b>22</b> <sup>17</sup> Shevat  Yitro  Ten Commandments
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>   4:49	<b>29</b> <sup>24</sup> Shevat  Mishpatim
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>					

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