

Parasha Perspectives

The Torah in Parashat Beshalach briefly tells of *Benei Yisrael's* experiences in Mara several days after crossing the Sea of Reeds. After traveling for three days without finding any water source, *Benei Yisrael* finally came upon water in Mara, but it was foul-tasting. God miraculously had the water transformed into fresh, sweet drinking water, and there in Mara Moshe taught the people "statutes and laws" (15:25). The Gemara in Masekhet Sanhedrin (56a) explains this to mean that *Benei Yisrael* were taught in Mara the *mitzvot* of Shabbat, honoring parents and *dinim* (establishing a civil court system).

Various theories have been proposed to explain why specifically these three precepts were selected as *Benei Yisrael's* first "taste" of Torah commandments. One possibility, perhaps, is to view these *mitzvot* as representative of the three basic categories of Torah obligation, namely, one's responsibilities to God, to family, and to society. Honoring parents, of course, reflects the Torah's strong emphasis on the family unit and connectedness to one's family heritage. And quite obviously the institution of *dinim* expresses the importance of maintaining a society governed by an enforceable legal system, whereby each citizen is held accountable for his conduct as a member of society. Finally, the observance of Shabbat requires a person to take time from his daily routine, and particularly from his pursuit of wealth, for the purpose of nurturing his relationship with God. Shabbat reminds us that life is ultimately not about serving ourselves, but rather about serving the Almighty.

Thus, the institutions of Shabbat, honoring parents and *dinim* encapsulate the basic responsibilities and obligations of a committed Torah Jew.

Like the waters of Mara, religious responsibility can at first taste "bitter." Living with so many commitments can, at times, feel overwhelming and overburdening. Ultimately, however, we enjoy the "sweetness" that results from a life of family, community, and spirituality. It may indeed be difficult at times to juggle these responsibilities, to invest time and energy into one's personal *avodat Hashem*, family and community. The experience of Mara perhaps reminds us that these occasionally "bitter" investments ultimately yield "sweet" dividends, providing us with genuine gratification and a sense of meaning and purpose.

By Rabbi David Silverberg, from the Virtual Beit Midrash (www.vbm-torah.org).

To submit a Dvar Torah to the weekly Keshet, please email bulletin@mtsinaishul.com.

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The Mount Sinai Keshet

January 29-30, 2010 • Tu Bi-Shvat, 5770 • Parashat Beshalach • Shabbat Shira

Shabbat Schedule

Candle Lighting	4:51 p.m.
Mincha	4:56 p.m.
Tu Bi-shvat Tisch	8:45 p.m.
Shacharit	7:00, 9:00 a.m.
Kri'at Shema before	9:38 a.m.
Rabbi Schwartz's Gemara shiur	3:35 p.m.
Mincha	4:35 p.m.
<i>Seuda Shlishit following Mincha</i>	
Shkia	5:10 p.m.
Maariv/Havdala	5:58 p.m.

Tefillah Schedule Week of January 31st

<i>Shacharit</i>	
Sunday	7:30, 8:30, 9:00 a.m.
Mon., Thurs.	6:45, 7:20, 8:00 a.m.
Tues., Wed., Fri.	7:00, 7:30, 8:00 a.m.
<i>Mincha/Maariv</i>	
Sunday -Thursday	5:00 p.m.
<i>Maariv</i>	
Monday - Thursday	10:00 p.m.
<i>Next Shabbat, Parashat Yitro</i>	
Candles	5:00 p.m.
Mincha	5:05 p.m.

Rabbi Schwartz's Office Hours

Monday: 9 p.m.-10 p.m.
Wednesday: Following 8:45pm Shiur (approx. 9:30-10:30pm)

Sponsorships

The **ERUV** sponsored in celebration of Ezra Blumenthal's engagement to Leora Davis, from all their friends.

The **KESHER** is sponsored in honor of Adina Schwartzberg and As of yet Unnamed Cohen-Mogilensky.

SEUDA SHLISHIT is co-sponsored by the **Education Committee** in honor of the Nach Yomi siyum. The speaker will be Ezra Frazer.

The Eruv DOES extend across Broadway, but does not extend into Fort Tryon Park. If you are not sure where you can carry, please contact the rabbi or a member of the eruv committee.

Friday Night Tisch!

Featuring guest Tisch-master Rabbi Reichman leading songs and Divrei Torah, along with Tu Be-Shevat snacks. 8:45 p.m. in the MPR

We're stocking our Mount Sinai Beit Midrash and YOU can HELP!

If you'd like to donate money towards the purchase of new sefarim OR if you have two sets of the same sefer at home, please let us know at education@mtsinaishul.com or speak to the office. Help make our Beit Midrash a great place to learn!



HATZOLA
(212) 230 - 1000

This Week at Mt. Sinai

Sunday:

General Membership Meeting, 10:00 a.m. See opposite page for details.

Shiur with Rabbi Angel, 7:00 p.m. on Divrei Hayamim. Ice cream celebration to follow!

Monday:

Women's Aerobics, 7:30 p.m. Contact: Anat Coleman, (212) 740 2740. \$10 to try a class.

Lecture with Rabbi Doniel Baron, p.m. See opposite page for details.

Women's Basketball, 9:00 p.m. Contact: Susanne Goldstone, susqhb@gmail.com.

Tuesday:

Women's Basketball, 9:00 p.m. Contact: Elie Appleson, elie.appleson@gmail.com.

Wednesday:


Men's Basketball, 8:00 p.m. Contact: Daniel Falik, daniel@danielfalik.com

Class with Rabbi Schwartz, 8:45 p.m. Jews in the Non Jewish World.

Motzai Shabbat:

Men's Basketball, 6:30 p.m. Contact: Daniel Falik, daniel@danielfalik.com

Education Update

- Sunday, January 31 at 7 pm, **Rabbi Angel** will give his final shiur in our Nach series, and it will be on Divrei Hayamim. There will be a special ice cream celebration as part of the shul's Nach Yomi siyum. All are welcome. 
- Rabbi Schwartz's shiur** will continue his series, "Jews in a Non Jewish World" on Wednesday at 8:45 p.m.
- This Monday night, February 1, **Rabbi Doniel Baron** will be speaking on "Aleph Bet: DNA of the world". Rabbi Doniel Baron is a senior lecturer at Aish HaTorah's Discovery Seminar. He received his law degree from NYU School of Law and practiced law at Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft. He presently lives in Jerusalem with his wife and children. Rabbi Baron is a disciple of Hagaon HaRav Moshe Shapiro Shlita and disseminates his weekly shiur to hundreds of followers through out the world.
- Our annual scholar-in residence will take place the weekend of February 19-20. We're privileged to be having **Rabbi Ytizchak Etshalom** from Los Angeles. **YOU can choose** what Rabbi Etshalom will speak about by filling out a brief online survey. See the email announcements for the link.

Check out the Torah Tab at mtsinaishul.com, and follow us on Twitter @mtsinaiedu. Contact education@mtsinaishul.com

Welcome New Member

Stephanie Berger



Refuah Shleima

Rabbi Yehuda Hilewitz



General Membership Meeting

There will be a general membership meeting **this Sunday, January 31st** at 10AM in the Beit Midrash.

On the agenda will be a vote on the shul's proposed new constitution and the presentation of shul financial reports.

Please remember that in order to attend and vote at the meeting you must be a member in good standing. If you have not received your bill for 2010, please contact the office.

Save the Date:

Purim at Mt Sinai!

Saturday Night, February 27th

Featuring the Purim Schpiel, The 2nd Annual Digital Shorts Contest and a Costume Contest!

Start preparing your Digital Short today!

For more information contact Sefi and Rebecca at events@mtsinaishul.com.

Please send all announcements to office@mtsinaishul.com and bulletin@mtsinaishul.com by 5 p.m. on Wednesday. Thank you!

Career Networking Initiative Email List

The Chessed Committee's Career Networking initiative will be establishing an email list to circulate information about available jobs to those who are looking. If you are interested in being added to the email list, please email Zev Safran, at zsafran@gmail.com.

Please include basic details about your background and what you are looking for.

Mazal Tov!

- Ely and Lori Perlmutter on the birth of a son.
- Lisa Grundman on her engagement to Kenny Birnbaum
- David and Oshra Mogilensky on the birth of a daughter.
- Ezra Blumenthal on his engagement to Leora Davis
- Arielle Fenigstein and Yehuda Cohen on their engagement



Hospitality Committee

Need a Shabbos meal? Want to host guests? Sign up at www.mtsinaishul.com/hospitality by Thursday at 10AM.

If you have any questions, the please e-mail shabbosmeals@gmail.com.

Gabbaut Notice

The Shabbat Hashkama minyan is looking for volunteers to lain in the upcoming weeks. If anyone is able to volunteer to lain please contact Yoni Ray or Ya'akov Kanner.