

CONGREGATION AGUDATH JACOB

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*From the Desk of
Rabbi Ben-Zion Lanxner*



YOM YERUSHALAYIM – SHAVU'OT.

This month we are celebrating two important events in our Jewish calendar. The first is Jerusalem Day "Yom Yerushalayim" on Wednesday, June 5, 2024, the second, the holiday of "Shavu'ot" on Wednesday and Thursday, June 12 and 13, 2024.

"Yom Yerushalayim" is an awesome event in Jewish history, the reuniting of Jerusalem, Israel's eternal capital, in the Six Day War in 1967. Those who lived through the 19 years between 1948 and 1967, from the Independence Day of the State of Israel until after the miraculous Six Day war, when the Old City was under Jordanian control and completely inaccessible to the Jewish people, remember the great pain of the separation.

The inability to pray at the Kotel (The Western Wall) was a bitter blow for our people. But it's important to realize that access to the Kotel was often restricted even in the years before 1948. Under the British Mandate, Jews

were often forbidden from sitting on benches, putting up a *mechitzah* and blowing *shofar* at the Kotel – a crime for which this young pioneer Moshe Segal was arrested in 1930. Only after the Six Day War were our people completely free to pray there.

Yom Yerushalayim is the answer to generations of prayers. For millennia, we have prayed to return to Jerusalem as a unified Holy City.

In prior years I had many occasions to go to the Kotel, the Western Wall, where literally thousands of people flowing in and out of Judaism's holiest site were praying for the PEACE OF JERUSALEM.

It is so easy to take for granted not only the unification of Jerusalem but the fact that we have a Jewish country at all. Yet we should never forget what an awesome and unique time in history we are living in, and we should never take for granted the incredible privilege we have to have a country of our own, The State of Israel.

May G-d continue to watch over and protect The State of Israel, the courageous men, and women of the IDF, its citizens and its One and Only Capital, JERUSALEM. Amen.



SHAVU'OT - Mt. Sinai and the Big Bang

On the morning of the day the Torah was given at Mt. Sinai, along with thunder and lightning and a heavy cloud on the mountain, there was the sound of a shofar that grew increasingly loud.

Later it states that the people saw the sounds of the thunder and the shofar (Exodus 20:15). Rashi comments that their seeing sounds was something that was impossible to do in any other place. He also comments that these sounds emanated from the "mouth of G-d."

According to the Mishnah in Pirkei Avot (5.1) and expounded upon by Kabbalah, the agency of creation was Divine speech – the ten utterances through which G-d spoke the world into existence.

Rashi's comment regarding the unusual phenomenon of the sound of a shofar from the "mouth of G-d" continually increasing in loudness is somehow connected to the actual creation of the world.

In the 1960's two scientists practically by mistake stumbled onto one of the greatest discoveries of modern science.

Their picking up of an unexplainable static on a measuring device lead them ultimately to discover the background static of the "big bang," thus revolutionizing our concept of how the world was created.

And the emphasis is on the word "created," for before this discovery, science could not or would not admit what Torah has always claimed – that there was a beginning point of creation – and not that the world was eternal as the Greeks posited and accepted by many or most scientists until the big bang theory, now referred to as the standard model of creation.

The comment of Rashi regarding the Jewish people "**seeing the sounds**" is explained in Kabbalah in the following manner: at the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai, in order to perceive the Divine revelation, all the physical senses and dimensions were unified, as were all levels of human consciousness in an extraordinary union of physical and spiritual synesthesia.

When the people saw the sounds of the thunder and an increasingly loud shofar, it is possible to say that they were privy to seeing/hearing the background static of the big bang, in as much as this day had been set aside from the very beginning of creation as Rashi states – it was as if the world was in fact being created on the day of the giving of the Torah.

In Pirkei Avot (6.2) it states that everyday a voice goes out from Sinai admonishing the Jewish people to return to Torah. It was asked in the book

Degel Machane Efrayim, in the name of the Ba'al Shem Tov – if there is a voice coming out every day from Sinai – then why don't we hear it; and if we don't hear it – why bother to have a voice come out at all. He answers by saying that every time a person has the arousal to better themselves, or return to G-d and Torah, it is because they are in fact hearing that voice.

Just as there is a background sound permeating all the universe as a result of the initial instant of the big bang, we can say similarly that there is a spiritual background voice in the world resulting from the giving of the Torah at Sinai, an event that actualizes G-d's purpose for creation. Just because we don't hear the sound of the big bang doesn't mean it's not there.

Similarly – just because we don't hear the voice emanating from Mt. Sinai every day doesn't mean it's not there to be heard.

The entire universe, which we now know consists of billions of galaxies, each one greater in size than we can imagine, all comes from one almost infinitely small "point."

The world is all the result of that expanding seed or spark. So too, the Jewish people are spiritually rooted and unified in our source in receiving the Torah "as one being with one heart." (Rashi on Exodus 19:2).

May we all merit to hear the voice coming from Sinai "as if it was given today."

Looking forward to seeing you all for our SHAVU'OT and YIZKOR services on Thursday, June 13, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

Rabbi Ben-Zion Laxner

June Service Schedule

<u>Saturday, June 1</u>	Shacharit	10:00 am
	Shabbat Ends	9:11 pm

Friday, June 7
 Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm
 Candle Lighting 8:14 pm

Saturday, June 8
 Shacharit 10:00 am
 Shabbat Ends 9:15 pm

Thursday, June 13
 Shacharit 10:00 am
 Yizkor 11:15am

Friday, June 14
 Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm
 Candle Lighting 8:17 pm

Saturday, June 15

Shacharit 10:00 am
 Shabbat Ends 9:17 pm

Friday, June 21
 Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm
 Candle Lighting 8:19 pm

Saturday, June 22
 Shacharit 10:00 am
 Shabbat Ends 9:19 pm

Friday, June 28
 Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm
 Candle Lighting 8:20 pm

Saturday, June 29
 Shacharit 10:00 am
 Shabbat Ends 9:20 pm



June 4
 Yhoshua Via

June 7
 Paula Farmer

June 8
 Martin Schwartz

Schmuel Via

June 17
 Ray Via

June 18
 Susan Raphael

June 27
 Hanna Harelik

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



June 20
Rick & Melanie
Bauer

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ There will not be office hours June 10-13 due to Shannon's daughter's wedding.
- ❖ Please join us for SHAVU'OT and YIZKOR services on Thursday, June 13, 2024 at 10:00 am.

A Brief Note

Summer has arrived. Our congregants travel, have guests visit and just enjoy some down time when summer rolls around. As you enjoy your time this summer, please try to think of the Shul. There is a small group of devoted people who regularly attend services, our "regulars." But even those people take some time away especially during the summer. This makes having a minyan for services even more difficult than it usually is. I am asking you a favor. If you are around and could possibly attend a Friday night or Saturday morning service, those of us in attendance would truly appreciate it. Just think, you may be "the one" to make 10! Have a great June.

Judy

THANK YOU for your donations in **MAY!**

Shabbat

Javis Howeth
George Keller
Susan Raphael
Joseph Settle

Jeff & Lea Levin
Steven & Carrie
Draher
Michael Pesses

Barbara
Dakenbring

In Memory Of

Murray Hersh
Judy Hersh

Philo Pesses
Mike Pesses

Phillip Citrin
Jeff Levin

YAHREZEITS

The following names of dearly departed will be read aloud by the Rabbi preceding the Mourner's Kaddish on Shabbat morning. It is fitting and customary that the nearest of kin be present in the synagogue for the recitation of this special prayer in their memory. Attendance not only honors the departed but also enhances and guarantees that a Minyan is present to recite the Kaddish.

Kaddish will be read on June 7

Sivan 1	Rosaline Gardner*
	Hennie Genecov
	Rebecca Zoblotsky*
Sivan 4	Morris Brickman
	Max Harris*
	Frances Lebowitz*
Sivan 5	Ervin Graubard*
	Audrey Mendelson
	Hazel Warnstaff
	Esther Zackin
Sivan 6	Rosa Keen*
	Jake Kirschner*
	Killian Michlowitz
Sivan 7	Betty Birnbach
	Hector Lago
	Mrs L (Mary) Meinstein*
	Golde Feigel Wizig*

Kaddish will be read on June 14

Sivan 9	Barbara Andrews
	Frank Sifuentes
	David Stein
Sivan 10	Mrs A Adelman*
Sivan 11	Klaire Kohn Schwarz*
Sivan 12	Louise Grass
	Nathan Gurwitz*
Sivan 13	Esther Greenspan Neuwirth*
	Mrs A (Jennie) Novich*
Sivan 14	Dorothy Kempler Harelik*

Kaddish will be read on June 21

Sivan 15	Israel Berkman*
Sivan 16	Willie Rosen*
Sivan 17	Sylvia Chernoff
	Jacqueline Leeds
	Rev J M Rosenberg*
Sivan 18	Louis Fred*
	Pearl Esther Goodman*
	Rose Todd
Sivan 19	Howard Hoppenstein*
	Phil Smith*
Sivan 21	David Hoppenstein*
	Hannah Moser*
	Barnett Sachs*
	Selma Schulman*
	Evelyn Sherman

Kaddish will be read on June 28

Sivan 22	Morris Goodman*
	Dorothy Gulman
	Harry Rubel*
Sivan 24	Isadore Budin*
	Bessie Taub
Sivan 25	Alvin Leonard Adelman*
	Edith Schwartz*
Sivan 26	Joseph Gurkoff
	Mary Haymann
	Harry H Schwarz*
Sivan 27	Jack Chodorow*
	Juluis Ceasar Genecov
	Nathan Juluis Genecov
	Barney R Goldberg*
	Milton Harelik
	Bernard Wolstein
Sivan 28	Mrs Nathan Zidman*