

PRAYER

Teach us true freedom, O God of freedom.
Who revealed Yourself with these words:

*"I am your Almighty God
Who took you out of the land of Egypt,
Out of the house of bondage."*

Many are the slaveries still afflicting humankind:
Ignorance, poverty and fear,
Lust for power, for wealth and for fame.

*Teach us true freedom, O God -
Freedom from selfishness which narrows our vision,
Freedom from hate and poisoning prejudice,
Freedom from gnawing fear and cold indifference.*

Teach us true freedom, O God,
Freedom from sadness and boredom
Through the joy of serving You!

*Teach us the freedom O God,
Which can help us tame our passions
By self-imposed discipline and integrity.*

For only those who place on their shoulders
With their own hands the yoke of the Torah
Are free to carry its life-giving waters
To our parched, barren, thirsty earth.

*Call not a people "Free"
If they be prisoners of fear,
Or prisoners of lust or greed.*

But call people free who love God
And serve the Creator with all their might.

*Call those people free who bind themselves to fellow mortals
For in each person's freedom all are made free!
Teach us, O God, true freedom.*

Unknown

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

Man is a peculiar animal who can read the writing on
the wall only when his back is up against it.

Adlai Stevenson



January 28, 2012

ד' שבט תשע"ב

Parashat Bo - Exodus 10:1-13:16 (בא)

Hertz – p 248

Stone – p 340

Haftarah – Jeremiah 46:13-28 ירמיהו: מו:יג-כה

Hertz – p 263

Stone – p 1151

*"Interactive Pirkei Avot"
A Tish with Rabbi Gordon
following Kiddush Luncheon*

Talmud Class with Rabbi Gordon – 3:30 PM
Minchah - 5:00 PM **Shabbat Ends – 5:59 PM**

On This Week's Torah Portion

נב

God's promise to Abraham is the gift of freedom for his descendants. This freedom begins for the Israelites on the eve before their Exodus. We learn that freedom comes with specific expectations. For the first time, God addresses the Israelites as a new nation. God's first expectation is that the Israelites are to keep a lunar calendar instead of the Egyptian solar calendar. The second is the creation of a series of community rituals. Why are these obligations imposed on the eve of their great freedom?

God knows that freedom means being able to choose. The simple and controlled life of the slaves was about to end. Now they would be faced with a life full of possibilities. With such a staggering number of options what should the people choose? How can they avoid the fear and confusion that can come with such choices? God gives the Israelites the lunar calendar to renew themselves in this transitioning.

The contrasts between the solar and the lunar calendar can give us insight into the significance of this commandment. We can look at different shapes of the moon and the sun. While the sun keeps its round appearance, the moon is forever changing its shape during its 28 day cycle. The moon gets smaller and smaller and then, just when it looks like it might disappear, a new moon begins to show itself. This rebirth of a new moon offers a sliver of hope to show the Israelites that they now have a chance to be reborn as a free people. The Hebrew word for month is *Chodesh*, which actually means renewal. It is God's gift to the Israelites and all future generations to be able to constantly evaluate and have the possibility to renew themselves every month just like the moon.

The lunar calendar shapes the freedom the Israelite community will experience.

Today in our own generation, let us help each other continue the journey towards freedom and the freedom of choice initiated by our ancestors. With every new moon, may we encourage the asking of questions and allowing for changes so that the world will be open to multiple possibilities for all of us.

To all of you, family and friends, and especially to my son, Benjamin, take this Torah portion from *Bo* and hold it in your hearts and minds as a reminder of our freedom to choose. This gift to the Jewish people, to choose, and choose wisely, was granted us from God at the time of the Exodus. Let us all commit to making wise choices in our own lives because choices we make as individuals affect us all. Amen.

*Shabbat shalom,
Barbara Gaponoff Berson*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, January 31 *Tu B'Shevat* PJ Storytime at Brodsky Library, 6:45 PM for ages 3-9 and parents/grandparents. Stories, puppets, crafts, treats. RSVP required, 314-442-3720.

Shabbat, February 4 **Kiddush luncheon sponsored by the family of Ann Cohn** in honor of Ann's 90th birthday.

Sunday, February 5 **Knosh & Knowledge** featuring Sol Segal. Continuing our series about Jews from around the world, Sol will discuss growing up Jewish in Brazil—family, friends, school, community, society, university and work. Brunch begins at 9:45 AM, the presentation at 10:45. Please RSVP to Marian at 314-576-5230 by Jan. 31.

Shabbat, February 11 **Kiddush luncheon** sponsored by Mark & Janine Orenstein in memory of Mark's brother, Sheldon Orenstein.

Motzei Shabbat, February 11 **Casino Night and Silent Auction, 7:30 PM.** Casino games, food, drinks, live music, karaoke & silent auction. See Newsletter for admission packages. We need your donation of items or services for our Silent Auction—sports tix, theater tix, a case of wine, a service you provide...? Call Jennifer Tobias at 636-532-6621 and let her know what you can contribute to our Silent Auction, and tell your friends to mark their calendars for Feb. 11.

Motzei Shabbat, February 25 **Youth Bowling Night, 7:30 pm** at Olivette Lanes (9520 Olive Blvd) for grades 7 and under. Two games of bowling. Sponsored by the Youth Committee so no charge to participate. Parents are welcome to stay and bowl. Need a head count by Thursday 2/23 as we have 4 lanes reserved so please RSVP to 314-576-5230.

Plans are underway for Graduation Shabbat on May 5th. Contact Claire Hack if you have a high or college grad you'd like to be included (even if they're unable to attend). If your graduate would like to participate in the service or if you can help with the event, please contact Claire at ceh1492@hotmail.com.

Crown Center needs volunteers 1-2 hours/week to deliver hot kosher dinners to older adults in UCity. Contact Florence Schachter, 314-991-2055, if you can help.

DAILY SERVICE TIMES

Sunday morning – 9:00 AM
Monday-Thursday evenings – 6:30 PM
Monday-Friday mornings – 7:00 AM
Friday evening – 5:45 PM