

JULY 17, 2010 6 Av 5770 Parshat Devarim/Chazon

Orthodox Union-West Coast Offices: 9831 W. Pico Blvd., LA CA 90035 www.ouwestcoast.org

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Alzheimer's and the Jew

Alzheimer's is perhaps the most devastating words a doctor can say to a patient, likened to a living death sentence. To lose your health is devastating; to lose your mind, insane. In sickness, you are still you, but you are in pain. When one's mind is lost, your body may be present, but the you that is known and loved by all has faded.

Next Tuesday we will celebrate the most underrated holiday in the Jewish year, Tisha Ba'av. Ask your friends if they have ever heard of it. More often than not, the answer is no. After all, Hallmark has no cards for the day, and so it is not listed on their calendar as a day of importance.

Tragically, for most Jews the day no longer has relevance to them. Most Jews have never even heard of the day, and even those who will fast, more often than not, their mind is more on passing the time than reflecting on the day's message. Are we, the Jewish People, suffering amnesia or, even worse, Alzheimer's? Have we forgotten our mission and our heritage as G-d's Chosen People and allowed ourselves to become intoxicated by the lure of "The Good Life," aka a life of comfort? Are we forcing G-d to choose between His children suffering from a self-imposed amnesia of identity or an affliction from the outside that pains our bodies but awakens our souls to who we really are as a nation? In the words of the Brisker Rav, "Either the Jew makes Kiddush — sanctifies himself — or the Non-Jew will make Havdalah and separate the Jew by force from forgetting his unique role."

The last few years have seen our people go from the heights of glory to challenges that we never imagined we would face yet again and so soon after the Holocaust.

Tisha Ba'av is the most underrated holiday, but it holds the secrets to the gnawing question "Why?" The Book of Lamentations opens with the word "Eichah" — how could it be — and the next five chapters seek to explain the inex-

pliable. Tisha Ba'av may be sad, terribly sad. It is a day of the pain of our people. As horrific as that pain may be, it is never as bad as the alternative of Alzheimer's, that of forgetting who we are. For pain, there may be a cure; for spiritual Alzheimer's, there is not. Tisha Ba'av has extracted a horrible toll from our people, but it has also preserved us through the centuries. It is the source of our pain but also the secret to our eternity. Please don't let this Tisha Ba'av pass without joining us at the Shul or listening to the online programs offered at <http://www.ou.org/> or elsewhere. Remember, the greatest antidote to Alzheimer's is using our brain to think. This Tisha Ba'av, let's stretch our Jewish souls and connect with our heritage, remember who we are and reconnect with our Father in Heaven.

Good Shabbos

Rabbi Yakov Vann

Director, Kashrut Services, RCC

Rabbi; Calabasas Shul

RABBIS WEIL AND WEINREB OF THE ORTHODOX UNION TEAM UP FOR TISHA B'AV ALL-DAY WEBCAST

An OU tradition continues again this year with OU Executive Vice President Emeritus **Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb's** annual four-hour Tisha b'Av webcast on www.ou.org and www.ouradio.org, to be immediately followed by OU Executive Vice President **Rabbi Steven Weil's** Tisha b'Av presentation.

Rabbi Weinreb's live webcast will take place at 9am EDT from the **Young Israel of Woodmere on Long Island, NY.**

Rabbi Weil's will begin at 1pm EDT, 10am PDT, 3,000 miles away at **Shaarey Zedek Congregation in Valley Village, CA.**

Tisha b'Av is observed on Tuesday, July 20 this year.

The Orthodox Union **only** accepts responsibility for the kosher status of those advertisers under OU certification (310) 229-9000 ext.200 westcoast@ou.org

Design & Layout by Susie

UPCOMING EVENTS @ OU WEST COAST

October 22-24

Come join us for an **OU Weekend in La Jolla, CA**

Sheraton Hotel--La Jolla
Meals at Adat Yeshurun

\$350 per/couple

Info: EstherR@ou.org

Programs in the works:

Attorney Continuing Education

Medical Ethics Conference

Kallah Class II

Parenting Workshop

Israel Advocacy Event

Trustees Event

Annual Torah Convention

THURS, DEC 23 --

SUN, DEC 26, 2010

ISRAEL'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD

New 'Fat-finder' holds out hope of fat-busting drugs

A new fat-finding tool from Israel attached to a microscope can speed up research into obesity-busting drugs and save researchers time and money.

Antioxidants improve cardiovascular health, say researchers

Long-term use of antioxidant supplements may provide health benefits for people with heart disease, according to a new study by Israeli scientists.

Quenching your thirst with the sea

An Israeli company is making seawater potable for millions of people worldwide, with 400 desalination plants in 40 countries, producing 2,000,000 cubic meters of water a day.

Beating the boot-up blues

Israel's Soluto just won a prestigious TechCrunch Disrupt award with its lead product that may cut down PC boot-up time by up to half, a vital aid to the silent majority in need of solutions.

www.israel21c.org

OU SYNAGOGUES AROUND THE REGION

Beverly Hills: Cong. Beth Jacob (310) 278-1911

- Tisha B'Av JUL 19-20: Joint program BJ-BH / BDJ / YICC
MON, 7:50pm Mincha @ YICC; TUES 8:30am Schachrit @ BJ-BH with Rabbis Kanefsky, Muskin, Topp + video @ noon;
- Shabbat JUL 24: Board Installation lunch w/Rabbi Kenneth Brander, RSVP

Beverly Hills: Young Israel-North BH: (310) 276-7650 info@YINBH.org

- Shabbat JULY 16-17: S-I-R Rabbi Natan Slifkin, 'The Zoo Rabbi'
 - Shabbat JULY 31: Guest Rabbi Bentzion Kravitz, Jews4Judaism
 - Shabbat AUG 14: Guest Ofir Fisher, of The OR Movement
 - Shabbat AUG 21: Guest Rabbi Baruch Sufirin, Harkham-Hillel Academy
 - Shabbat AUG 28: Guest Rabbi Zvi Schindel, Maimonides Academy faculty
- Calabasas Shul: (818) 591-7485

Canada-Calgary: House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel (403) 259-3230

Canada-Edmonton: Beth Israel (780) 488-2840

Canada-Vancouver: Schara Tzedek (604) 736-7607

Denver, CO : BMH-BJ Cong (303) 388-4203

Denver, CO: EDOS (303) 322-7943

- Shabbat JUL 17: Family Seudah Shlisheit co-sponsored with Smile on Seniors Colorado --"Loneliness in the Elderly"

Irvine, CA: Beth Jacob (949) 786-5230

LA: Adas Torah (310) 203-9659 www.adastorah.com

LA: Aish Hatorah (310) 278-8672 x 305 or tsullivan@aishla.com

LA: B'nai David-Judea (310)-276-9269 or amram@bnaidavid.com

- Tisha B'Av JUL 19-20: Joint program BJ-BH / BDJ / YICC
MON, 7:50pm Mincha @ YICC; TUES 8:30am Schachrit @ BJ-BH with Rabbis Kanefsky, Muskin, Topp + video @ noon;

LA: Etz Jacob (323) 938-2619

LA: Mogen David Cong. (310) 556-5609

LA: Young Israel of Century City: (310) 273-6954

- SUN JUL 18, 8:30pm: Rabbi Natan Slifkin "Shaking the Heavens: Rabbinic Responses to Astronomical Revolutions" – Donation \$10 p/p
- Tisha B'Av JUL 19-20: Joint program BJ-BH / BDJ / YICC
MON, 7:50pm Mincha @ YICC; TUES 8:30am Schachrit @ BJ-BH with Rabbis Kanefsky, Muskin, Topp + video @ noon;

LA: Young Israel of Hancock Park: (323) 931-4030

LA: Yeshiva of LA (YOLA) 310-203-3197 yeshivarabbi@juno.com

- MINCHA/MAARIV: SUN-THURS, 15 minutes before Shkiah;
- LATE MAARIV: SUN-THUR 10pm. M-TH am/pm: adults/students chavrusas

Laguna Woods, CA: Beth Torah (949) 587-1967 (a retirement community)

La Jolla: Adat Yeshurun (858) 535-1196

- OCT 22-24: OU Shabbaton in La Jolla. Info EstherR@ou.org
- Las Vegas, NV: Shaarei Tefila (702) 384-3565 (Mikva 384-3317)

- SUN NOV 7: Annual Gala

Oakland, CA: Beth Jacob (510) 482-1147

Palm Springs, CA: The Desert Synagogue (760) 327-4848

Palo Alto, CA: Emek Beracha (650) 857-1800 (Mikva 493-5555)

Phoenix, AZ: Beth Joseph (602) 277-8858

Portland, OR: Kesser Israel (503) 222-1239

Sacramento, CA: Keneset Israel Torah Center (916) 481-1159

- Shabbat JUL 17: Mini-Shabbaton with Rabbi Yosi Aronson, from J'lem

San Diego, CA: Cong. Beth Jacob (619) 287-9890

San Diego, CA: Kehillat Ahavat Yisrael-KAY (858) 633-0181

San Francisco, CA: Adath Israel (415) 564-5665

Seattle: Bikur Cholim Machzikay Hadath (206) 721-0970

- SUN AUG 15: Annual BBQ & Fair. Contact info: Julie@bcmhseattle.org

Seattle: Ezra Bessaro (206) 722-5500

Seattle: Sephardic Bikur Holim (206) 723-3028

Valley Village, CA: Shaarey Zedek Cong. (818) 763-0560

- SUN JUL 18, 7pm: Documentary screening "Withdrawal from Gaza" with Director/Producer Joel Blasberg. (Americans for Safe Israel/Friends of Gush Katif sponsor). Free

Venice, Pacific Jewish Center-The Shul on the Beach:(310)392-8749

Washington-Mercer Island: Shevet Achim (206) 275-1539

Woodland Hills: Beit HaMidrash (818) 999-2059 (5850 Fallbrook Ave.)

- SUNs @ 8:30am: following 8am minyan-Shiur-Baba Kama w/Rabbi Yaakov Rechiniz

West LA: Westwood Kehilla (310) 441-5288x2 director@kehilla.org

- AUG 3-10: Group trip to the Canadian Rockies. Info at 310- 927-1853 or asherbrander@gmail.com

As a member of the OU Job Board We need your help!

As the OU Job Board moves forward we need to know what we are doing right and what needs to be done to correct what we do wrong. We urge you to please take one or two minutes of your time to help us in this endeavor. Please answer our brief ten question survey to help us move in the right direction?

If you have already answered this survey we appreciate your time and help

The survey can be found by hitting or copying and pasting this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PQ6JZ8F>

Thank you for your help in this very critical matter

Best regards,

Michael Srulie Rosner- OU Job Board

NCSY-JSU-YACHAD ANNOUNCEMENTS/EVENTS



Office contact: 310-229-9000 x 209 www.westcoastncsy.com

Want to help run a chesed project? call Solly at 310-557-6582

For more info on CITY NCSY or JSU call Solly 310-557-6582

CITY NCSY: Call Solly @ 310-557-6582 or Shess@westcoastncsy.com

Latte&Learning-is going strong!-TUES 7:30pm:@CB&T-233 S. Beverly Dr.

with Rabbi Josh Horwitz

DNL is on break for the summer - have a great summer!

JR. NCSY: (6-8 grade) Call Josh 310-694-2976 or ncsyjosh@gmail.com

... **NCSY Bar/Bat Mitzvah** tutoring available. Talmud Torah classes.

***Jr. NCSY Dodger Baseball Event:** call Josh for details 310-694-2976

YACHAD: Call Perri @323-228-4191.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

► THE ALLIANCE FOR JERUSALEM: SUN JULY 25 7:30PM

At Stephen S. Wise Temple-15500 Stephen S. Wise Dr. LA 90077

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND

Consul General Jacob Dayan will introduce Representatives of the 'Atalef-Israeli Naval Special Forces (equivalent to U.S. Navy SEALs) vets will discuss their personal real-life experiences from the field, including the recent flotilla activity.

This is your opportunity to hear first hand from those in the field who must fight Israel's defensive war against those who attack while under a white flag. They will also describe Israel's practice of purity of arms (moral conduct in warfare).

Major (Res.) Yair Schindel, MD, MBA, IDF special forces combat medical officer and its Chief Medical Officer for a total of five years, will head the team. He participated in numerous highly dangerous special ops and was awarded the Navy's highest decoration for valor in saving the life of a comrade while under fire.

Net proceeds of the \$10 donation will go to the Atalef Foundation in support of the Israeli Navy Seals.

RSVP: Alliance For Jerusalem at icnexus.info@gmail.com

4629 Van Nuys Blvd., #E, Sherman Oaks, Ca 91403 818 390-7172

► ONGOING: OU'S WOMEN'S TORAH NETWORK (WTN)

Classes with Geri Wiener--Sessions will continue after the summer

→ MONs-Valley (private home): → WEDs-City (OU Hdqtrs):

► **West Coast NCSY presents Torah High**, a revolutionary after school Jewish learning program for Public School teens, grades 9-12. Torah High classes will provide meaningful and engaging Jewish learning experiences for teens, foster identification with and support of Israel, strengthen positive Jewish identity, and develop Jewish literacy. Please call Solly Hess at 310-557-6582.

Shanghai Kerry's Various Oils

Brand: Shanghai Kerry **Product:** Various Oils

Company: Shanghai Kerry Oils & Grains Co. - China

Issue: The OU terminated its certification of Shanghai Kerry Oils & Grains Co. Any oils made by Shanghai Kerry Oils & Grains Co., are to be deemed NON-KOSHER even when bearing the OU.

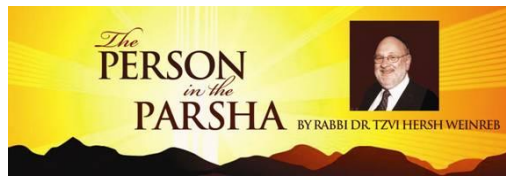


B'NEI AKIVA OF LA ANNOUNCEMENTS

→ **Office:** 310-248-2450 bneiakivaLA@gmail.com

→ **Upcoming Events:** Have a great Summer!





Parshat Devarim/Chazon

July 17, 2010 – 6 Av 5770

To read more articles and essays by Rabbi Weinreb, visit his blog at www.ou.org/rabbi_weinreb

" A Time and A Place "

"He was in the wrong place at the wrong time." We have all heard this phrase, and many of us have used it. It is especially apt when it is used to describe a person with many virtues and talents who just can't use them because of the social or physical circumstances in which he finds himself. That such a person faces profound frustration is, to say the least, obvious.

Many Jewish immigrants came to the United States blessed with spiritual gifts and intellectual skills, but found themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time. For you see, America was viewed in two very different ways by the Jews back in the *shtetl* of the old country. On the one hand, it was seen as the *goldene medina*, the golden country, the land of material opportunity. But on the other hand, it was also viewed as the *traifene medina*, the non-kosher country, the lands of insurmountable religious challenges.

The usual "success stories" of Jewish immigration to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries are narratives of "making it" financially, but utterly "losing it" from the point of view of traditional Jewish culture. American Jewish fiction, and even American Jewish history, know these narratives well and relate them in graphic detail.

What is largely missing from this body of literature are the stories of those who came to these shores imbued with religious fervor, committed to traditional observance. Lacking are the stories of men and women who found it difficult, if not impossible, to live out their faith convictions in this new place and time.

Particularly lacking are the narratives of the struggles that rabbinic leaders had in coping with the *traif*, albeit golden, American environment. One such rabbinic leader was Rabbi Jacob Joseph, the first and only Chief Rabbi in the history of New York City, who died 108 years ago, and whose *yahrzeit* was last week, the 24th of *Tammuz*. How ironic it is that his *yahrzeit* fell only a few days after the ultimate American holiday, July 4.

Rabbi Jacob Joseph, a disciple of the master moralist Israel Salanter, was a rising star in the Lithuanian rabbinic constellation, a gifted orator, a noted pedagogue, and an ardent proponent of meticulous ethical behavior. He accepted a call to the New York Chief Rabbinate, and he soon found himself "in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Rabbi Joseph was certainly not the first great man to find himself in a human context in which he was misunderstood, and in which he was beset by deep disappointment, nay disillusionment. I have long insisted that the first such individual was Moses himself, which brings us to this week's Torah portion, *Devarim*.

This week, we begin not only a new portion but an entirely new book, the book of Deuteronomy. This book, *Sefer Devarim*, can be read as a personal retrospective of Moses as he reviews the highlights of his life, and particularly of his relationship with the Jewish people. Time and again he expresses the frustrations he experienced in trying to bring his followers to the ideas and practices which he espoused.

There can be no greater frustration than that experienced by one who has encountered God face to face, but who cannot convey His message to his audience. And hence we have verses such as, "I cannot bear the burden of you by myself" (*Deuteronomy* 1:9). Or, and this the reader intones with the classic melody of lament, "How can I bear unaided the trouble of you, and the burden, and the bickering!" (*Deuteronomy* 1:12)

Moses had a unique set of personal experiences, unprecedented visions of the divine, natural tendencies toward all that is just and right, and above all, unparalleled humility. And he was predestined

to live in a specific time and place. But how often he must have felt that this was the "wrong time at the wrong place," and certainly, "the wrong people."

Millennia after Moses came Rabbi Jacob Joseph. He was born in Eastern Europe, educated in its old-fashioned yet positively formative schools, and began a successful rabbinic career. He spoke widely and wrote prolifically. His themes were the importance of ethical behavior and the need to be considerate of other human beings. He was, by nature, meditative and would often take his young students into the fields and forests for their lessons. He was an expert in *halacha* and meticulous in its observance.

And then he was thrown into the American fray. He encountered fraud where he expected honesty, and violence when he was accustomed to gentleness. He found a land where materialism and profit were primary values, and where spirituality and charity were scoffed at and mocked.

He suffered a stroke at an early age, and he died in anonymity and neglect. His funeral was attended by thousands, but it became the scene of a vicious anti-Semitic riot which made the front page of the newspapers of the time. He was indeed a great man in the "wrong place at the wrong time."

One can only speculate about what Rabbi Joseph's accomplishments would have been had he lived in a different place and a different time. For the United States of America is still a *goldene medina* for the Jewish people, a land of religious freedom unprecedented in our history. But it is no longer a *traifene medina*, for it has been transformed into a land of spiritual opportunity and religious accomplishment for our people.

Rabbi Jacob Joseph would have been proud of the "*yeshiva* constructed upon his grave." The Rabbi Jacob Joseph School was known as the mother of all *yeshivot* when it was situated on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, and when I was a student there. It has since been transplanted to a new locale and continues to educate hundreds of Jewish children.

His writings have now been compiled and are available for all to see and study. And his biography is incorporated into numerous anthologies of American Jewish history and into the history of the *Mussar* Movement, which tried so valiantly to emphasize the importance of ethical behavior in our religious tradition.

Like many others who experienced the frustration of being in "the wrong place at the wrong time," he left a lasting impact on our place and our time. And so did his predecessor, Moses our teacher, so very long ago.

Although in Moses' case we can only conjecture about his inner feelings, in the case of Rabbi Joseph, we know from records of his final sermons that he indeed believed he "was in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Our tradition, however, teaches us a contrary lesson, namely that none of us are in the wrong place or wrong time. Each of us has a mission in life, and the Almighty Himself chooses the time in history and the place in the world where that mission is to be accomplished. Moses was the right man at the right time. That is apparent. And even Rabbi Joseph, although he could not realize it in his lifetime, served a specific purpose as a transitional figure in American Jewish history, helping to bridge the divide between the doomed *shtetls* of Eastern Europe and the *traif* but changing New World.

That we all ultimately are in the "right place at the right time" is the deeper meaning of teaching of our sages: "Despise no one and disdain nothing, for there is no one who does not have his hour, and there is nothing that does not have its place." (*Avot* 4:3)