



Temple Isaiah
of Great Neck

EXPLORING JEWISH VIEWS OF THE AFTERLIFE: Contemporary Implications

presented by
Reb Simcha Raphael

Does Judaism believe in the afterlife? Unequivocally, the answer is yes! Unfortunately, in contemporary Jewish life we have lost touch with traditional Jewish wisdom on the afterlife. In this presentation, we shall explore Judaism's teachings on life after death, particularly in Kabbalah – Jewish mysticism.

Through discussion, story-telling and study of mystical texts, we shall explore the relevance of these teachings in dealing with the human encounter with death. We shall also discover the connection between Jewish teachings on the afterlife and traditional Jewish death rituals. Program presented on Zoom with colorful graphic images to highlight texts we are studying.

April 27th * 7:30 PM

RSVP by April 20th to
isaiahgn@yahoo.com

REB SIMCHA RAPHAEL, PH.D. is Founding Director of the DA'AT Institute for Death Awareness, Advocacy and Training. He has been Adjunct Faculty in Religion at LaSalle University and Temple University, and works as a psychotherapist and spiritual director in Philadelphia. He has written extensively on death and afterlife and is author of the groundbreaking Jewish Views of the Afterlife. His website is www.daatinstitute.net.

RSVP's Required to Receive the Zoom Link

RABBI'S COLUMN

By Rabbi Jerry Blum



Over the past many weeks, our Torah readings have revolved around the building of the *Mishkan*, our portable Tabernacle where the *Ohel Moed*, the *Tent of Meeting* is located. The *Mishkan* is the center of spiritual life for the Israelite nation as it moves through the wilderness and the domain of the *Kohanim*, the Priests and the *Levi'im*, the Levites and is clearly a very important space for the nation. The Torah goes into painstaking detail regarding measurements, materials, processes and even who will design this Tabernacle. But the *Mishkan* is much more important than all the priestly activity. In Exodus, chapter 25:8, God asks Moshe to tell the Israelites **"V'asoo li mikdash, v'shachanti b'tocham – They shall make me a sanctuary, and I will dwell among them"**. The verse teaches us that the *Mishkan* will be God's home-base among the people and that the *Mishkan* is a place of holiness and is the spiritual centerpiece for the Israelites. There is even a *midrash* that likens Moshe's completion of the *Mishkan* to God's completion of creation itself. It is truly up there on the all-time

important structure list for the Israelite nation, so it puzzles me as to how the entire chapter begins. Chapter 25 begins, **"Speak to the Children of Israel and tell them to bring me an offering. Take these offerings to me from all whose heart impels them to give"**. It seems that God is not commanding anyone to make these contributions to build and support the *Mishkan*, but rather, these contributions should be made if they come from the heart. Among the 613 *mitzvot* (commandments), that of donating precious possessions for the building of the *Mishkan* stands out for its element of volunteerism, which places it outside of the usually clear-cut nature of *halakhah* – *Jewish Law*. A donation for building the *Mishkan* not only isn't compulsory, but it becomes a donation worthy of God's approval only when it's spurred by a spirit of freedom and generosity of heart: **"all whose heart impels them to give"**.

The *mishkan* became the center of spiritual and social life during the many years in the wilderness. I'm sure they even had a lunch and learn every so often, but the Tabernacle was supported by the community because it was an important part of their lives, and because of that, they gave from their hearts. The Book of Exodus ends with the tabernacle being completed and the menorah being lit, and quickly moves onto the sacrifices in the Book of Leviticus.

One sacrifice in particular that caught my attention is the ***korban todah* – the offering of giving thanks**, but I like to call it the **offering of gratitude**. The *korban todah* was a gift to the *mishkan* that was given at times of good fortune, a happy occasion or even just because you wanted to show your appreciation for the community. What was so different about this sacrifice was the manner in which it was given. This sacrifice had to be eaten in one sitting. The *Kohanim* were of course invited to this feast, but so too was the donor's family and the entire community, because if there was anything left over, it would have to be completely burned, nothing could be wasted. This *korban todah* helped to support the entire *mishkan* community. As it happens, the *mishkan* was remembered and supported for so many reasons, for it bound us together as a people. The good fortunes or even the sad times, and for this reason, the *mishkan* was supported by the people and it came directly from their hearts.



I guess it doesn't take a Ph.D. to understand the theme of this article. Our little temple is our *mishkan* and must be supported in good and not so good times. The temple has been there for us in every way, and we want it to continue to do so for many years to come, but we do need your support. I know there are many opportunities for all of us to give a *korban todah*, an offering of gratitude, and to remember the temple in all times. And don't think the *korban todah* is only about financial support (although don't get me wrong, we really need it, especially after a year of lockdown) but it is so much more. We need people to participate and help on committees, work on programs and just as helpers around the temple as we look forward to reopening our doors in the future. Join us in activities and bring friends and neighbors. Come to services, study sessions or social times. I pray that we all have so many reasons to say "*todah* – thanks" and to show our gratitude and may our small but supportive community continue to celebrate *simchas* together for many years to come.

Rabbi Jerry

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Terry Birnbaum-Horton

Exodus Journey



Every year I look forward to Passover - the family, the food, the buds on their way to be flowers. This year some of us managed to set the table for a Seder meal, some attended our TI second night Seder, others might have tried to ignore the holiday.

Ironically, here in the northeast of our continent, it also is the beginning of a new season. The sun is stronger and rejuvenating. We have made it through the blustery winter. Smiles are back on our faces, some not hidden anymore by masks. Our energy levels are returning to new highs. We are doing spring cleaning inside and out.

This year the longer warmer days mean more than ever to us. There is progress with vaccines and encouraging signs all around. Even though the opportunity to be outside is approaching, we also may be able to be inside with friends and family soon. We may be inside Temple Isaiah, any day now.

Passover symbolizes the beginning of the journey of our ancestors, leaving behind a difficult life. This past year it seems as if we have been on a difficult journey. This year we will complete the journey, god willing,

....and be together

Enjoy the longer daylight,

Terry Birnbaum-Horton
President

SAVE THE DATE:

**June 6th, 2021 Luncheon Honoring
Cantor Leslie Friedlander & Cathy Reibstein**

Our annual Journal, plus a luncheon. is around the corner and the Committee is hard at work.

This year we are planning to honor Cantor Friedlander and Cathy Reibstein to show our gratitude for all that they have done for us over the years.

The luncheon will be outside in the tent at Stresa Restaurant; space will be limited to 50 people.

Please mark your calendars.

Sincerely,
Journal-Event Committee



The Lantern Theater Company Presents
Cemetery Club
by Ivan Menchell

Join us on April 18th, 2pm, for an afternoon of belly laughs!

You don't have to get dressed up, you don't have to cough up any bucks, just be together with friends as we see a theatrical performance about three Jewish widows, (on film played by Olympia Dukakis, Ellen Burstyn and Diane Ladd), who meet once a week in their husbands' cemetery where they talk about the past, and the present. Believe it or not, this is a comedy!



Lantern Theater Company features three Temple Isaiah members: Alice and Richard Weiner and Richard Solow.

To quote Richard Weiner: "This is a Fun Raiser, not a Fund Raiser!"

We look forward to being with you (well, kind of being with you), on Zoom.

Best wishes until then. Stay Safe!

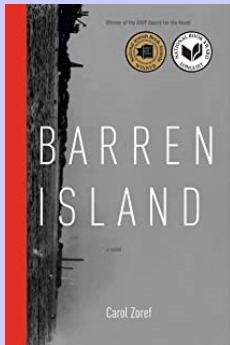
Program is Free to Members—\$10 fee for Non-members

RSVP's required to receive the link!

Call June Feldman to sign up—516-993-1180

Our Next Book for Discussion (Led by Judy & Helman Brook):

***Barren Island* by Carol Zoref**
(May 2, 2021, 11:00am)



How does one remember a world that literally no longer exists?

Barren Island by Carol Zoref is historical fiction with the emphasis both on history and literature. It tells the tale of a shoal in Jamaica Bay where the most desperate immigrants from multiple backgrounds made their home working at the city's rendering plant. It is narrated by a woman at 80 remembering her coming of age on this island that no longer exists off the coast of Brooklyn during the years between the depression and WWII. It is both sad and inspiring and sheds light on lives that were previously unimaginable.

RSVP to Shelley Sherman at seeshell98@yahoo.com.

Wednesday, April 14th
The Next Installment in Our
Engagement Series
Time and Topic To Be Announced!



April 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Online Shabbat Services and Passover Yizkor, 6:30pm	3 No Torah Study
4	5	6 Board Meeting, 7:30pm	7	8 <i>Yom Hashoah</i>	9 Online Shabbat Services, 6:30pm	10 Torah Study & Service, 9:30
11	12 Hebrew Reading for Prayer, 7:30pm	13	14 Engagement Series, Details to Follow	15 <i>Yom Ha'atzmaut</i>	16 Online Shabbat Services, 6:30pm	17 Torah Study & Service, 9:30
18 "Cemetery Club" 2:00pm (RSVP)	19 Hebrew Reading for Prayer, 7:30pm	20	21	22	23 Online Shabbat Services, 6:30pm	24 Torah Study & Service, 9:30
25	26 Hebrew Reading for Prayer, 7:30pm	27 "Jewish Views Of the Afterlife," 7:30pm (RSVP)	28	29	30 <i>Lag B'Omer</i> Online Shabbat Services, 6:30pm	

Spring is Here and School is Zooming Back into Session!

Last month Rabbi Blum announced that we will be offering these educational opportunities to our community beginning in April. These courses will be open to our Temple family and the entire community. If you know of someone who would like to join us in our journey of study and self-awareness, please tell them to get in touch with us.



Offering 1 – “Hebrew Reading for Prayer”. This will be a beginners/advanced beginners’ class for students interested in learning prayerbook Hebrew. We will learn how to read from the siddur (prayerbook) and begin to familiarize ourselves with liturgical concepts, words recognition and the meanings of some of our favorite prayers. A textbook, siddur and notebook will be required. This will be a 10-session class with a **5-person minimum** to run this class. This class will be free for Temple members (plus the cost of the textbooks) and \$250 for non-Temple members (plus textbooks).

Our class will be held once a week on Monday evenings, for about an hour, beginning April 12 and ending June 21st (we will skip May 31st, for Memorial Day)

Offering 2– “Mussar Self Exploration Group”. This will be a spin-off of our popular “Taste of Mussar” series in December. Mussar is a thousand-year-old Jewish tradition that can help us make changes in ourselves that last. The path of Mussar focuses on the development of character traits as a means of spiritual growth. This group (**Vaad**) will meet monthly on an ongoing basis to discuss texts and how we can find balance in our lives through the study of these holy texts and the practice of life affirming ritual.

This group will be **limited to a maximum of 8 people (minimum of 4)**, who are committed to learning about one’s personal characteristics and Jewish texts (No knowledge of Hebrew needed). This will be free for Temple members and \$5 (per session) for non-Temple members, plus the cost of texts.

We offer this ongoing group experience in self-awareness and spiritual growth, once a month for about 90 minutes. If at all possible, we would like to have this group meet during the day, on the first Thursday of each month, beginning May 6th.

**And Don’t Forget Our *Afterlife* Program on April 27th (Page 1)
Plus Torah Studies and Special Events**

Please email Rabbi Blum at rabbi.jerry.isaiahgn@gmail.com to let him know which learning opportunity you would like to participate in or if you have any questions.

Last Call to
Sign Up for
These
Classes!



General Donations

In Loving Memory of:

Edgar Bendor, Father of Jane and
Cathy Bendor

Jane Bendor & Brian Graham

Gary McTiernan, Husband of Suzanne
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Suzanne Branch

Rabbi Theodore Tsuruoka

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Leslie Reider

Mary Rosner, Mother of Harriet Shindler

Harriet Shindler

Marcia Springer, Wife of Claude Springer

Claude Springer

Food Insecurity Project :

Shelley Sherman

Sponsorship of Afterlife Program:

Anonymous

In Honor of:

The Speedy Recovery of Bill Hersh

Terry Birnbaum-Horton

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Mindy & Howard Israel

Alisa & Martin Secofsky

Shelley Sherman

The Birth of Samuel Tobin Becker,

Grandson of Sherry & Paul Wallack

Terry Birnbaum-Horton

Judy & Helman Brook

Kathie Davis

Denise Miller & Steve Fein

June & Allan Feldman

Gail & Robert Gordon

Carol & Bill Hersh

Mindy & Howard Israel

Alisa & Martin Secofsky

Shelley Sherman

The Speedy Recovery of Howard
Israel

Terry Birnbaum-Horton

Judy & Helman Brook

Kathie Davis

Denise Miller & Steve Fein

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Marcelle Monasebian

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Rose Mandelbaum



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TEMPLE ISAIAH OF GREAT NECK

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Affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism

***Deadline for submissions
10th of the Month***

BULLETIN

President: Terry Birnbaum-Horton
Rabbi: Jerry Blum
Cantor: Leslie Friedlander
Production: Cathy Reibstein