

Temple Shabbat Shalom

Volume 5, Issue 1

Purim/Passover 5765/2005

The “Global Village” Congregation

Shalom and Blessings

We wish a Happy and Liberating Passover to each and every one of you. Passover observance the evening of the Seder is a time of questioning. The Seder Supper is different from all others and is an opportunity to explore and bridge the divides between Judaism and Christianity. The differences were, in the beginning, a family affair. Then Christianity and Judaism separated, creating two distinct religions. Is it possible to consider the divide as between two sects of the same religion? If we define True Religion as Ethical Monotheism then both Judaism and Christianity embrace the truth.

In the book of Genesis (25:23) Rebecca's twin children Jacob and Esau struggle even in the womb. This verse is quoted by Judaism and Christianity to prove they are the “son” of divine favor. For two thousand years these two “sons” take divergent paths. Each claim to be the legitimate heir of the promises to the patriarchs and matriarchs. I agree with Professor Alan F. Segal that both Jews and Christians have no need to dispute their birthright. We are all children of Israel; children of Jacob and Rachel and Leah, children of Isaac and Rebecca and Abraham and Sarah and Hagar. I think every congregant should read Allan Segal's *Rebecca's Children-Judaism and Christianity in the Roman World*, Harvard University Press Cambridge 1986

Excerpts follow on page three.

Happy Holidays,

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PURIM: Friday March 25th

PASSOVER: April 23rd -April 30th

Our Congregation

With a Heavy Heart:

May God send peace to all who mourn and comfort all who are bereaved:

Our Condolences to:

Doug and Karen Gladstone on the death of Doug's Mother Berdie

Rabbi Aryeh and Karen Alpern on the death of Karen's Grandmother Ida

Stuart Korman and Lila Tickman on the death of their beloved mother Ida

Michelle Taksen & the Taksen & Curtis family on the death of Michelle's Husband & their beloved son Philip

Other Congregational News

Thank you for your continuing donations to the Torah Ark Fund in Memory of Ida Korman:

Harold & Helga Rosenberg, Joel & Susan Blau, Laurel Blau, Joy Getzenberg, Stuart & Diane Korman, Natalie Ross and Robyn Golden

A Special Thank-you to the Marvin and Patti Demoff:

On their Generous donation in Honor of their new Grandchildren-Carolyn and Benjamin Jacoby

A Special Thank-you to Allison and Mark Jacoby on their generous donation:

In honor of the birth of their children Carolyn and Benjamin

Congratulations to Reg Angel on the arrival of your new hip

Mazel Tov to our Newest Newlyweds- Laura Sundstrom and Joshua Sloat

Mazel Tov on our newest bundles of Joy

Christine and Andrew Schwartz- Alexander Matthew – September 24th

Kate and Marc Haber – Murphy Elizabeth born December 3rd

Patricia and Morris Edelstein- Zachary David December 29th

Happy Anniversary

Dallas & Jody –Jan 1-MA

Brian & Amanda – Jan 18-PA

Brian & Cara- March 8- PA

Beth & Brice- April 17- NY

Jim & Sandra – April 24-RI

Brian & Amy- May 15- RI

Audrey & Mike- May 18- Chicago

Stu & Colleen- May 24- PA

Karen & Jake- May 25- NY

Alex & Cynthia- May 29- FLA

Adam & Erin- May 30- CA

Newest Congregants

Jolie Simner and Robert Smith- Albany

Daniel Katz and Samantha Romanello- New Mexico and Colorado

Sarah Dinehart and John Wibel- Washington DC

Laura Seligman and Joseph Hovey- Ohio

Karen Farber and Justin Lefco- New York

Robyn Burg and Jason Decker- Binghamton, NY

Scott Krauthamer and Diana Romolo-New York City

Deborah Musinger and Tobias Biedenkopf- Geneva Switzerland

Rebecca's Children

Excerpt from page one

What is True Religion?

The time of Jesus marks the beginning of not one but two great religions of the West, Judaism and Christianity. According to conventional wisdom, the first century witnessed the beginning of only one religion, Christianity. Judaism is generally thought to have begun in the distant past, at the time of Abraham, Moses, or even Ezra, who rebuilt the Temple destroyed by the Babylonians. Judaism underwent radical religious changes in response to important historical crises. But the greatest transformation, contemporary with Christianity, was rabbinic Judaism, which generally became the basis of the future Jewish religion.

So great is the contrast between previous Jewish religious systems and rabbinism that Judaism and Christianity can essentially claim a twin birth. It is a startling truth that the religions we know today as Judaism and Christianity were born at the same time and nurtured in the same environment. Like Jacob and Esau, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebecca, the two religions fought in the womb. Throughout their youth they follow very different paths, quarreling frequently about their father's blessing. As was the case with Rebecca's children, the conflict between Judaism and Christianity molded their characters and determined their destinies.

*Excerpt from page 18-19: ***What is an Inter-marriage?****

Endogamy, or marriage only within the group, is the most common marriage system in human society. But in the Hebrew case it is also part of a larger symbolic system in which the holiness of the people is protected by concentric circles of exclusion, ending in the purity of the High Priest as he enters the inner sanctum of the Temple on Yom Kipper. Avoiding foreign women was part of the system of moral prohibitions within a dominant strand of pre-exilic traditions, since Canaanite religion, as practiced by Canaanite wives, accepted child sacrifice (a practice that continued even into Roman times). Worship of Yahweh necessarily entailed the command to marry within Abraham's family, thus guaranteeing a national life through the gift of progeny, the very opposite of Canaanite child sacrifice.

This is the key passage for me. Jews and Christians move in the same circles. When it is time to marry, I consider them in the same circle. We are not Canaanites unless we sacrifice our children to modern ethnocentricity. What do you think?

Rebecca's Children

Excerpt from pages 139-140: ***Notes for an Interfaith Seder***

The rabbinic Passover liturgy, the Haggadah, is a clear example of a formal Greek dinner party and philosophical evening of discussion; much like the one described in Plato's dialogue *The Symposium*. The rabbinic version of the Symposium described in the Passover Haggadah has been entirely adapted for Jewish purposes.

In the modern Passover liturgy there is no mention at all of Moses. This is because of the dangerously exalted role Moses played in Hellenistic Judaism. Philo says that Moses was virtually divine. The Samaritans also exalted the role of Moses. Consequently, the rabbis felt the need to expunge Moses from the Haggadah. In their eyes, Passover is the story of *God's* deliverance of the people, not the story of the divinization of a single man, no matter how admirable he may be. By creating a liturgy which states that every Jew should look upon him or herself as having experienced the saving events of the Exodus personally through the dinner ritual dramatizing the event, the rabbis spiritualized the events of Israel's history to symbolize personal and communal salvation for each member of the Jewish people. Relying on the central events and meaning of the holiday, they de-emphasized the old national aspects of the holiday and transformed them into a mythological drama of salvation.

This will begin our discussion on an actual text of a true interfaith Seder.

I welcome and await your comments,

Rabbi Aryeh Alpern

FEED THE BODY WHILE YOU FEED THE SOUL

Apple Farfel Kugel

4 cups of Matzah farfel 4 tablespoons oil 4 cups boiling water
½ teaspoon lemon rind, grated 6 eggs, beaten ½ teaspoon cinnamon
4 apples, peeled and sliced ¾ cup sugar or splenda

1. Soak the farfel in boiling water and drain well.
2. Beat eggs and combine the rest of the ingredients.
3. Place into a greased casserole.
4. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes or until brown.

Tzimmis

1 cup grated sweet potatoes ½ cup matzah meal ½ cup grated carrots
2 tablespoons lemon juice 1 cup grated apples ½ teaspoon cinnamon
½ cup chopped raisins ½ teaspoon salt ½ cup chopped prunes
1 stick butter ½ cup sugar or splenda

1. Combine all ingredients.
2. Turn into greased baking dish.
3. Bake 350 degrees for 45 minutes.

Macaroons

1 cup flaked coconut 1/8 teaspoon salt
½ cup finely cut dates ½ teaspoon vanilla
½ cup chopped walnuts 1 egg, well beaten
½ cup sugar or splenda

1. Combine all ingredients **except eggs and vanilla** and mix well
2. Beat vanilla into egg s and add to mixture
3. Let stand 5 minutes or longer.
4. Drop by small spoonfuls onto greased cookie sheet
5. Shape into balls using damp fingers
6. Bake 350 degrees for 10 minutes or until golden brown
7. Remove from pan at once and cool on rack- using plastic spatula

The Secret of the Jews Immortality

“If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one quarter of one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous piece of stardust lost in the place of the milky way. Probably the Jew is hardly to be heard of, but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people and his importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his number. His contributions to the world list great names in science, art, music, and are also very out of proportion to the weakness of his number. He has made a marvelous contribution in this world in all ages and has done this with his hands tied behind him. The Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Persians, filled the planet with sound and splendor. They then faded and passed away. The Greeks and the Romans followed and made a loud noise, and they are gone. Other peoples have sprung up and held their torch for a time but they burnt out and they sit in quiet now or have vanished. The Jew saw it all, survived it all, and is now that he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no influence of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies.

All things are foretold, all of the forces pass, but what is the secret of this immortality?”

What is the secret of this immortality? We are the secret of this immortality!

The fact that we are here together is the secret of this immortality.

(The above was written by Mark Twain, Harper's Magazine, 1897.)