



Na'aseh, Nishmah and Angelic Mystery

By Rabbi Melvin Granatstein



In Parshat Mishpatim, the Torah describes a set of celebratory events connected to Kabbalat HaTorah – accepting the Torah. Moshe reads the Sefer HaBrit – the book of the Covenant – to the assembled Israelites. According to Rashi, this document consists of the Torah to this point, that is Sefer Breishit (Genesis) and all of Sh'mot (Exodus) up to the Hok U'Mishpat given to Israel at Marah. The people respond saying "All that God has spoken **נעשה ונשמע** – Na'aseh VeNishma, usually translated as "We shall do and we shall listen."

The Talmud (Shabbat 88.) tells us that a Divine voice was heard at Sinai praising Israel for saying Na'aseh first and that by placing Na'aseh, before Nishma, Israel had somehow discovered a mystery hitherto known only by angels. Well, what is the nature of this mystery? This precedence of "doing" before "listening" is usually taken to mean that Israel was offering blind obedience. But if that is true, two questions may be asked. Why is blind obedience better than informed obedience? Further, what is "mysterious" about blind obedience – or angelic?

נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע

The Maharshah (16th century Poland) has a different explanation. The "mystery" of the precedence of "Na'aseh" lies in its singularity of resolve. Human beings, after all are divided souls beset by intellectual and moral reflectiveness on the one hand, while driven by their "Yetser HaRa". The Yetser HaRa is usually translated as "the evil inclination." A more incisive understanding is that human beings are driven by raw amoral instinct just as are all biological creatures. It is this untamed instinct that is called Yetser HaRa and it is the task of all of us to control and channel those instincts to decent purpose. For this you normally need "Nishma" – reflectiveness, discipline and the willingness to obey.

By saying "Na'aseh" first, the B'nei Yisrael were expressing a single-minded commitment that would frame the reflectiveness of Nishma. That singularity of purpose is more characteristic of angels, not human beings. Angels, after all, are not biological beings. They have no Yetser HaRa which means that unlike human beings, - they do not have to balance the needs of instinct with moral purpose. Their singularity of purpose is predetermined by the simplicity of their nature. But human beings are complex, conflicted, and unfettered in their moral choices. To offer singular commitment in advance is to embody angelic purpose. For a complex and necessarily conflicted human soul to affirm Na'aseh in advance is the heroic achievement of Kabbalat HaTorah.





MONTHLY CALENDAR

Wednesday, June 4 - **Rosh Chodesh Sivan**

Morning Service..... 6:30 a.m.

Friday, June 6

Candle Lighting..... 8:39 p.m.

Kabbalat Shabbat 7:15 p.m.

****Please note new time.****

** When you Daven at an early Kabbalat Shabbat, you should light candles at that time.

Saturday, June 7

Parshat Naso

Morning Service..... 9:00 a.m.

Rabbi's Talmud Class 7:30 p.m.

First Grade Parsha Club 8:00 p.m.

Mincha..... 8:30 p.m.

Motsaei Shabbat..... 9:38 p.m.

Sunday Morning Services 8:00 a.m.

SHAVUOT

Sunday, June 8

Candle Lighting..... 8:40 p.m.

Mincha..... 8:50 p.m.

Ma'ariv..... 9:35 p.m.

All Night Learning..... 12:15 a.m.

Monday, June 9

Morning Services 9:00 a.m.

Mincha..... 8:50 p.m.

Candle Lighting - Not earlier than 9:39 p.m.

Tuesday, June 10

Morning Services 9:00 a.m.

Mincha..... 8:50 p.m.

Motsaei Yom Tov..... 9:39 p.m.

Weekday Morning Services 6:40 a.m.

Weekday Evening Services..... 8:50 p.m.

Friday, June 13

Candle Lighting..... 8:43 p.m.

Kabbalat Shabbat..... 7:15 p.m.

Saturday, June 14 - Graduation Kiddush

Parshat Beha'alotcha

Morning Service..... 9:00 a.m.

Rabbi's Talmud Class 7:30 p.m.

First Grade Parsha Club 8:00 p.m.

Mincha..... 8:30 p.m.

Motsaei Shabbat..... 9:42 p.m.

Sunday Morning Services 8:00 a.m.

Weekday Morning Services 6:40 a.m.

Weekday Evening Services..... 8:50 p.m.

Sunday, June 15

Rabbi Granatstein's class in Jewish Philosophical Text

At Torat Tzion Kollel 9:15 a.m.

Friday, June 20

Candle Lighting..... 8:46 p.m.

Kabbalat Shabbat..... 7:15 p.m.

Saturday, June 21

Parshat Shelach

Morning Service..... 9:00 a.m.

Rabbi's Talmud Class 7:35 p.m.

First Grade Parsha Club 8:05 p.m.

Mincha 8:35 p.m.

Motsaei Shabbat..... 9:45 p.m.

Sunday Morning Services 8:00 a.m.

Weekday Morning Services 6:40 a.m.

Weekday Evening Services..... 8:50 p.m.

Sunday, June 22

Rabbi Granatstein's class in Jewish Philosophical Text

At Torat Tzion Kollel 9:15 a.m.

Friday, June 27

Candle Lighting..... 8:46 p.m.

Kabbalat Shabbat..... 7:15 p.m.

Saturday, June 28

Parshat Korach

Morning Service..... 9:00 a.m.

Rabbi's Talmud Class 7:35 p.m.

First Grade Parsha Club 8:05 p.m.

Mincha 8:55 p.m.

Motsaei Shabbat..... 9:45 p.m.

Sunday Morning Services 8:00 a.m.

Weekday Morning Services 6:40 a.m.

Weekday Evening Services..... 8:50 p.m.

Sunday, June 29

Rabbi Granatstein's class in Jewish Philosophical Text

At Torat Tzion Kollel 9:15 a.m.

Thursday, July 3 - **Rosh Chodesh Tamuz**

Morning Service..... 6:30 a.m.

Friday, July 4 - **Rosh Chodesh Tamuz - Independence Day**

Morning Service..... 8:00 a.m.

MAZEL TOV

IN SYMPATHY

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

**THE CONGREGATION WOULD LIKE TO
EXTEND ITS HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES**

TO JOEL & JOHANNA RATNER AND FAMILY ON THE
LOSS OF JOHANNA'S MOTHER.

TO EVA HERSH AND FAMILY ON THE LOSS OF HER
HUSBAND, PHILLIP HERSH, WHO PASSED AWAY
ON MAY 12TH.

TO THE FAMILY OF SARAH KELVIN, WHO PASSED
AWAY ON MAY 13TH.

To Bob & Marla Stark on the upcoming marriage of
their son Ezra to Rachel Rothner, daughter of
Ricky Rothner and Elaine Rothner of Chicago.

Upcoming Events at GRS

June 8 at Night: Tikun Leyl Shavuot—All Night Learning

June 14, after Davening: GRS Graduation Kiddush

June 12, 8:00 pm: Fuchs Mizrahi School Eighth Grade
Graduation.

SUMMER SHABBAT GROUPS

- ◆ Our Shabbat morning groups will be ending on June 14th and will resume in the fall.
- ◆ The Pre-School—1st Grade group will continue to meet throughout the summer.

Sponsor a Kiddush for the entire congregation starting at \$400, or with Cholent at \$1000? Team up with friends who have birthdays or Yahrzeits around the same time and sponsor together. Every family event is enhanced when shared with the Shul. To schedule a Kiddush, call the office at 216-381-4757 or email Jane@GreenRoadSynagogue.org



2437 South Green Road
Beachwood, Ohio 44122
Phone: 216-381-4757
Fax: 216-381-5059
Email:
Office@GreenRoadSynagogue.org
Website:
www.GreenRoadSynagogue.org

Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday
9:30 am – 5:00 pm
Friday
9:30 am – 3:00 pm



**Come grow
with us!**

Spiritual Leader
Rabbi Melvin Granatstein

President
Ari H. Jaffe

Vice Presidents
Sheila Pearl Pickholtz
Daniel Borison
Shelly Senders
Elizabeth Sunshine

Treasurer
Yaron Goldberg

Recording Secretary
Eliav Sharvit

Administrative Director
David M. Seltzer

Synagogue Office
Jane Konopka

Youth Programming
Rabbi Nevo Zuckerman

JUNE–JULY 2008
SIVAN 5768

Volume 12, Issue 10



SPONSOR A KIDDUSH
For any occasion call
Jane: 216-381-4757

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. Postage
PAID
Cleveland, Ohio
Permit No. 645

DONATIONS

We would like to thank the following for their generous contributions to our Synagogue.

IN MEMORY OF:

Ann Frum: Mike Frum; Helene & Steven Pincus

Aron Pincus: Helene & Steven Pincus

Norbert Amsterdam: Marc & Pamela Borstein; The Laserson Family

Phillip Hersh: Leon & Helen Shear; Sidney & Bernice Borison; Amy, Adam & Eric Gerson; Mini-Users Group Committee; Marla & Joseph Shafran; Louis & Sarah Radzeli; Patty & Eric Rubin; Babs & Len Eichorn; Chesterland Friends Sunshine Club

Bernice Borison's mother, Francis Belt: Sidney & Bernice Borison

IN HONOR OF:

Josh Mandel's Safe Return: The Shafran Family; Jordan & Jane Lefko; Barry & Lynne Shiller

A Speedy Recover to Goldie Weiss: Celia Isakovitz

SIDDUR:

In Honor of Yehuda Baskin's Recovery: Barry & Lynne Shiller

100 Siddurim: Anonymous

KIDDUSH:

May 24: By Bob & Marla Stark in honor of their son Ezra's Auf Ruf.

SEUDAH SHLISHIT:

May 10: By Shimon Fuchs in memory of his wife, Shura Fuchs, on the occasion of her Yahrzeit.

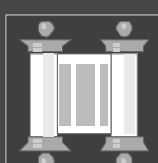
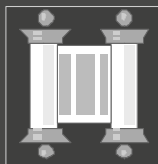
May 17: By Igor & Tatyana Spira in memory of Igor's father, Mayer Spira, on the occasion of his Yahrzeit.

May 24: By Barbara Baskin & Marla Shafran in memory of their father, Louis Minsk, on the occasion of his Yahrzeit.



Shavuot

The festival of Shavuot is one of the three pilgrim festivals of the calendar in which Jews in Temple times would come up to Jerusalem in thanksgiving to God. Shavuot is Z'man Matan Torateinu — the festival that commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. It is significant that the Torah does not designate a date for Shavuot. We know its occurrence purely in terms of the counting of the Omer which begins on the eve of the second night of Pesach and concludes after forty-nine days of counting. The next day, the fiftieth, is Shavuot. Incidentally, since we must count and observe forty-nine complete days of the Omer, we cannot begin Shavuot evening services on the first night until after dark.



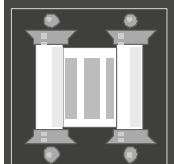
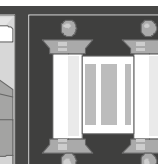
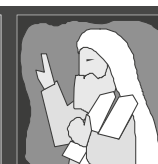
Even the connection of Shavuot with the giving of the Torah is something we can learn only by inference from the Torah; indeed, the Talmudic rabbis are divided in terms of which day in Sivan was the actual date of the giving of the Torah. Even the exact geographical location of Mt. Sinai is not known to us in spite of certain Arab and Christian traditions locating it. There can be no question that the Torah intends on being purposefully vague about this. This is because the Torah is bound to neither time nor space — it is binding on all Jews at all times and under all conditions.

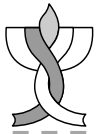
This is the majestic message of Shavuot: that God has entered into human events by revealing His Torah to Israel, thus making them an eternal people with an eternal Torah beyond spatial/temporal limitations.

May God purify our hearts to serve Him with love and grant our portion in His Torah.

Tikun Leyl Shavuot

Once again we will conduct our Tikun Leyl Shavuot in conjunction with Fuchs Mizrachi High School, Young Israel, Kollel Torat Tzion and N.C.S.Y. Both adult and teen learning will be at Green Road Synagogue beginning at 12:15 am. At dawn the Hashkama Minyan will follow the night of learning. Refreshments will be served.





5th Annual
Green Road
Synagogue
Graduation
Kiddush

June 14

Honor your
graduates by
becoming a
Kiddush
sponsor:



Pre-school thru Graduate School

For \$100 you can co-sponsor Kiddush & have your graduate's name announced and listed in the special Shabbat program we will be printing for that weekend.

To list your graduate and co-sponsor Kiddush you can call Jane at the Shul: 216-381-4757, e-mail: Jane@GreenRoadSynagogue.org or fax: 216-381-5059.



GRS Graduation Kiddush Sponsor Sign Up Card

Name of Graduate: _____

School: _____

Grade Graduating/Degree: _____

Parents' Names: _____