

Parsha Perspectives

One thing we must keep in mind when studying Torah is that the Chumash is not merely a set of laws, history, and insights. It is the Jewish people's way of connecting with G-d. So there are no extra words or sentences or paragraphs in the Torah. G-d does not get paid by the word. Yet we often come across passages of the Torah that *seem* to offer little insight to the common reader. This week's Torah portion has one such passage.

"These are the descendants of Yishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar, the Egyptian, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham. These are the names of the sons of Yishmael with their names in order of birth. Yishmael's firstborn was Nevyoth, then Kedar, then Adbeel, then Mibsam. Then, Mishma, Duma, and Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Nafish, and Kedem." (Genesis 25:12-15)

What does G-d want us to derive from these verses? How is G-d talking to us in placing "His names" in the listing of Yishmael's sons? Why do we need to know and remember throughout history the names of Yishmael's sons? What is the message for us?

The only possible solution is that in order to relate to G-d properly, we must know who Yishmael is and what he is about. G-d values Yishmael as a nation and He wants us to see the depth that is within the Yishmael/Arab personality. Since Yishmael was a son of Abraham, he must possess a profound spiritual potential. Even while in the midst of fighting a necessary war against tremendous forces of evil, in the backdrop of our minds we should realize that there is potential spiritual good within Yishmael that is possible to access.

Where can we find this good? Perhaps it is Yishmael's willingness to make sacrifices for the service of G-d. The Midrash tells us: (Sanhedrin 89b) "Yishmael said to Isaac, 'I am greater than you because you were only 8 days old when you were circumcised (and barely felt the pain). I was 13 years old!' Yishmael does indeed serve G-d with much faith, prayer and sacrifice. In fact, his very name means that G-d will listen to his prayers as a result of his suffering and sacrifice.

This concept of recognizing value and potential goodness even in our enemies can be derived from the order of sacrifices that is brought on the Holiday of Sukkot. Throughout the holiday, we bring 70 sacrifices corresponding to the 70 nations of the world. (The Torah views the nations of the world as 70 roots with many other nations as branches.) This is because we see all nations of the world as important. Each has a specific role to fulfill in G-d's world and we pray to G-d, through these offerings, that He inspire them to true service of Him. It is especially on Sukkot that we do this because it is called in our prayers, "The Season of Rejoicing." When we are happy with ourselves, we look at the world positively and can see good in others, even other nations, even enemies, as well. According to our Sages, Yishmael repented at the end of his life (Rashi 25:9). We hope and pray that we will see the modern Yishmael, the Arab nations, join with us in the proper service of G-d.

This week's Dvar Torah was adapted from the writings of Rabbi Boruch Leff. Rabbi Leff is a vice-principal at Torah Institute in Baltimore and the author of the Kol Yaakov column on Aish.com.

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• Sunday: 9 — 12



Mount Sinai Jewish Center of Washington Heights

November 3, 2007 • 22 Cheshvan, 5768 • Parshat Chayei Sara
www.mtsinaishul.com

**Schedule
Shabbat Parshat Chayei Sara**

Candle Lighting	5:34 p.m.
Mincha	5:40 p.m.
Sephardic Minyan	5:30 p.m.
Shacharit	7:00, 9:00 a.m.
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema	10:03 a.m.
Talmud	4:10 p.m.
Mincha/Seudah Shlishit	5:10 p.m.
Maariv/Havdallah	6:37 p.m.

**Weekday Schedule
Week of November 4**

Shacharit	
• Sunday	7:30, 8:30, 9:00 a.m.
• Mon., Thurs.	6:45, 7:30, 8:00 a.m.
• Tues., Wed., Fri.	7:00, 7:30, 8:00 a.m.
Mincha	
• Sunday through Thursday	4:35 p.m.
<u>Next Shabbat, Parshat Toldot</u>	
• Candle Lighting	4:26 p.m.
• Mincha	4:35 p.m.
• Sephardic Minyan	4:25 p.m.

**To sponsor an issue of the bulletin,
please e-mail
MtSinaiBulletin@gmail.com.**

Eruv Sponsors

The eruv is **sponsored by** Daniel and Sally Frankel.

Eruv sponsorships are available each week, contact the shul office for details.

Please Note: The eruv does **not** extend into Fort Tryon Park.

Seudah Shlishit

Seudah Shlishit is **sponsored by** Rachel Shtern in honor of her grandfather's yahzeit.

**Don't forget to set your clocks
back one hour
before you go to
sleep on Motzei
Shabbat!**



Please Note: All weekday minyanim will take place downstairs except for the Sunday morning 8:30 a.m. shacharit and Sunday mincha.

Shabbat Hospitality: Deadline for guests and hosts to sign up is Thursday at noon; please e-mail
Shabbosmeals@gmail.com.

Weekly Activities

- **Motzei Shabbat:** *Men's Basketball*, 30 minutes after maariv; contact Benjy Burnat at Benjy-qy787@verizon.net for details.
- **Monday:** *Women's Aerobics*, 7:30-8:30 p.m.; aerobics with a professional instructor for women of all ages and abilities; contact Anat Coleman at 212-740-2740 for details.
- **Monday:** *Women's Basketball*, 9:00 p.m.; contact Susanne Goldstone at susqhb@gmail.com for details.
- **Tuesday:** *Women's Beit Midrash Program*, 8:00 p.m.; learning followed by a chabura from 9:15 — 10:00 p.m.; contact Cindy Bernstein for details.
- **Tuesday:** *Open Beit Midrash for Men*, 8:00 — 10:00 p.m.
- **Wednesday:** *Men's Basketball*, 8:00 — 10:00 p.m.; contact Gilad Halevy at ghalevy@chipwiz.com for details.
- **Wednesday:** *Rabbi Maybruch's Shiur for Women*, 9:00 p.m.; the topic of the shiur is "Mein Olam Habah: Understanding the 39 Melachot of Shabbat".

Upcoming Events

- **Nov. 4** — *Kristallnacht Program*, 7:30 p.m.; the program will feature the Spier grandchildren and Dr. Rafael Medoff, program will take place in the social hall.
- **Nov. 5** — *Uri L'Tzedek's Second Tzedek Beit Midrash*, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.; topic of the Beit Midrash will be "The Ethical Issues Around the Kashrut Industry Today and About Workers Rights"; the program will take place in the Beit Midrash and refreshments will be served; for more information contact Shmuly Yanklowitz..
- **Nov. 8** — *Comedy Night*, 8:00 p.m.; featuring renown comedian David Kilimnick and a special guest, contact Margie Cooper for more information.
- **Nov. 17** — *Mt. Sinai's Annual Journal Luncheon*, 12:00 p.m.; Please join us in showing our appreciation to this year's honorees. Reservations are required, please contact the shul office for details.



Please return your siddurim and chumashim to their designated places after tefillah. Also, if you have borrowed any seforim from the Beit Midrash, please return them after you are done using them. Thank You.

The NJOP Read Hebrew America is going on now:

Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. for beginner level readers, and Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. for



intermediate level readers. The program is located in the Rabbi's Study. For more information, please contact Susanne Goldstone.

Mt. Sinai's Annual Journal Luncheon is only 2 weeks away!

Make your reservations ASAP by calling the shul office or visiting the shul website at www.mtsinaishul.com.

We hope to see you there!



Hakarat HaTov

- **Alice Maltz** for helping in the office.



New! Women's Aerobics at Mt. Sinai!

Open to women of all ages and abilities, taught by a professional instructor; **Monday nights from 7:30-8:30 p.m.**



For more information or to attend a free trial class, contact Anat Coleman at anatcoleman@gmail.com.

The shul is looking for **sponsors for the next Shabbat Mevorchim Kiddush** which will take place on Shabbat Parshat Toldot, Nov. 10. Please contact Keren Simon or the shul office if you are interested.

If you can volunteer to help set up, please contact Arona Schneider or Estie Roth.

D'var Torah Workshop Given by Rabbi Josh Yuter

This workshop is open to men and women and will focus on organizing and presenting written and spoken divrei torah. The program begins next **Sunday, Nov. 11, at 10:30 a.m.** in the multi-purpose room. To sign up, please e-mail Josh Yuter at jyuter@gmail.com.



Contributing to Mt. Sinai

This week's feature: **Memorial Plaques** —

Buying a memorial plaque is a special way to honor a loved one. Plaques cost \$400 each. Please contact the shul office for details by phone, 212-568-1900, or via e-mail at office@mtsinaishul.com.

Don't forget to check back here next week for another donation feature.