

WILSHIRE BOULEVARD TEMPLE

Online Edition
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BURDEN

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WE LEFT EGYPT AND WE TOOK DARFUR WITH US

Pesach was a time of communal joy—of seders, interfaith and intercultural gatherings (see page 2), and the call and response of “Don’t Leave Egypt Without Darfur.” Our community has again chosen to take action; so far, more than 120 of our congregants have donated nearly \$15,000 to buy solar cook kits that will help save lives, protect women against abuse and keep families together during the growing atrocity in western Sudan’s Darfur region.

Grandparents, parents and kids have heard the call. Consider this e-mail I received from a Brawerman parent: “One morning I was driving my daughter, and her classmate to Brawerman Elementary School. A car with a green ribbon on the back stopped in front of us, and she asked what it said. I told her it said “Save Darfur.” I took this to be one of those teachable moments and started talking about Darfur while trying to figure out how to explain the atrocities at a kindergarten level to a couple of kids who, I assumed, had never heard of Darfur. I talked about the fact that one group of people was trying to hurt another group of people because they were different. One of the kids excitedly called out, ‘We learned about this in school!’ Both started telling me all about the situation on a more sophisticated level than I had approached

it, interrupting each other while they schooled me about solar cookers, that they can turn dirty water into clean water and that, because of them, women don’t have to go into the forest where people would hurt them or maybe even kill them. I was blown away, but not surprised.”

This is the fifth year we have committed to responding to the Darfur genocide, and we’ll continue to do so until the killing ends. We know you’ll keep doing your part. For that, on behalf of myself and the Tikkun Olam committee, we are humbled and grateful.

■ *Rabbi Stephen Julius Stein*



It’s not too late to give. Please visit www.wbta.org/pages/darfur or call (213) 388-2401 to make a contribution to The Darfur Project

In This Issue

A
“Triple Crown”
Seder Season



INTERVIEW
WITH
THE CHEF





Sometimes it's easy to connect with the narrative of the weekly portion. This is not one of those weeks. For this reason, it's even more important that we take time to really wrestle with the information so we can derive some meaning in our lives today. This is what it means to *la-asoak b'divrei Torah*—get busy with the words and matters of Torah.

The heart of this portion is the concept of returning land to its original owner at the end of a 50-year cycle. This is called the jubilee year, or *yovel*. For an entire year before the property (the land) is returned, it must sit dormant. The purpose was seen as twofold: to serve as a reminder that nothing belongs to us indefinitely, and to release anyone from being enslaved for a lifetime.

I doubt any of us would advocate for reinstating this ruling in our current society. Would any of us want to give up our home or our business?

“WE MIGHT BEGIN TO DEFINE OURSELVES IN TERMS OF *WHO*, NOT *WHAT*, IS IN OUR LIVES.”

WHAT'S MINE IS... SOMEONE ELSE'S?

But what if we had to?

How would this change the way we attach ourselves to our possessions? What would be different? Would we spend more time with people and less time accumulating stuff? Would we live the value that people, not material possessions, are the most important asset? If we knew we would be returning our property, we might not get so attached to it. We might do more to help others. We might begin to define ourselves in terms of *who*, not *what*, is in our lives.

This Shabbat, let us reflect on the energy we put toward our relationships. Let's put people over property and see what can

happen. *Shabbat shalom* to you, your friends and family.

■ Rabbi Laurie Phillips



The Center for Religious Inquiry



This Pesach brought *tikkun olam* to the Temple in an extraordinary way as more than 300 people of different cultures and faiths engaged in Jewish rituals.

In early April, we hosted the Anti-Defamation League's Asian-Latino/Jewish "A Nation of Immigrants" Seder. West Coast Director Amanda Susskind said, "Our seder guests came away enriched and energized about future opportunities for interfaith dialogue. The seder was enjoyable and interesting for

everyone—Jews and non-Jews. It was a wonderful opportunity for our non-Jewish neighbors and friends to learn about our faith and culture. It was also an opportunity for the Jewish community to see how the values of Pesach, freedom and liberation from bondage, are universal, held deeply by many people of different faiths and national origin. ADL is looking forward to an even more successful seder next year. Next year in Los Angeles!"

We also welcomed the American Jewish Committee (AJC) for an African American/Jewish Seder, filled with the inspiring words of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Bishop Desmond Tutu,

Maya Angelou and more.

Executive Director of AJC-Los Angeles Seth Brysk said, "AJC's seder with the African American community at Wilshire Boulevard Temple reinvigorated our longstanding relationships. We celebrated the common narrative of freedom with our African American partners and strengthened our bond of fellowship through sharing the bread of affliction. The seder reminded us that together, we can overcome. It was an evening of remembrance and hope, friendship and family."

As we reached the end of the festival, more than 140 Jews and Muslims gathered for the fourth annual Muslim-Jewish seder. The diversity—including new congregants and members from the AJC and Muslims from the Ismaili community, the Iranian Muslim American Network and the Islamic Center of Southern California—was unprecedented. So, too, was the warmth of spirit, the voices raised in song and the emotions generated by Dr. Mahmoud Abdel-Baset describing our 2007 pilgrimage from Egypt to Israel and his visit to Yad Va'shem, Israel's national Holocaust Memorial.

■ Rabbi Stephen Julius Stein
Director, The Center for Religious Inquiry

A "Triple Crown" Seder Season





While discussing Passover, Mia asked if God was a girl or a boy. We asked the class what they thought.

I think God is a boy but he made boys and girls. I know why he is a boy because he sounded like a boy when he spoke to Moses.

JACKSON, age 5

I think God is one side a boy and one side a girl.

NETANYA, age 5

God is a spirit, a boy spirit. He creates things. I think God gives spirit to boys and girls.

GABBY, age 5

I think God is a man because he is big and he created a big world.

JASON, age 5



Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps

Each summer, Executive Chef John Bard prepares tens of thousands of kosher-style meals for hungry and discerning campers who savor his healthful and tasty menus. During the rest of the year, he is busy catering to a broad variety of organizations and individuals that rent our camps and conference facilities for corporate retreats, weddings and b'nei mitzvah.

Through it all, he is an unflappable and gracious host. John has been working for our Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps for 13 years. He currently lives at camp with his wife, Nina, and two daughters, Miranda and Nicole.

Wilshire Boulevard Temple Bulletin: Where did you grow up?

John Bard: I moved around, but I grew up mostly in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

WBTB: When did you decide you wanted to become a chef?

JB: When I was 14, I got a job in a Mexican restaurant as a dishwasher. I loved the atmosphere of the restaurant and the camaraderie among the staff in the kitchen.

WBTB: You supervise a large staff that makes our camps work. How do you keep people motivated?

JB: I try to lead by example and be upbeat. I also think it's



AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN BARD Executive Chef and On-Site Manager of Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps

important to care about their lives—to check in daily, see how they're feeling and try to accommodate their needs. I like to think we have the same camaraderie in our kitchens as I did in my first job.

WBTB: What was the first meal you made when you started at camp?

JB: Cod Veracruz—codfish with red and green bell peppers. It was for one of our rental groups and it was awful. It's no longer on the menu! The first meal I made for campers was probably pizza bagels—a classic first-day meal, always delicious.

WBTB: Would you ever consider entering the *Top Chef* competition?

JB: Maybe, but I'm more of a technician than a "foo-foo chef." I'm more of a guy who cooks good food than crazy food that's styled.

WBTB: Anything else you'd like to share?

JB: I love being a chef. The joy of my job is making people happy through food. It's a great feeling to have people compliment you on something you've made.

■ *Beth Kanofsky*
Assistant Director, Wilshire Boulevard Temple Camps



Circle of Support Provides Help to Temple Members

At a senior staff meeting last month, Rabbi Leder asked each of us to tell a visitor what is special about working at Wilshire Boulevard Temple. It was straightforward enough—but we had to answer in one sentence. That posed a problem for me. I grew up at Wilshire Boulevard Temple and attended Religious School here. Rabbis Wolf and Magnin officiated at my bat mitzvah. I worked at our camps for 15 summers and eventually joined the full-time staff in 2002 as the Associate Camp Director. In 2005, I began working in the Development Office and managed the Capital Campaign to help rebuild the Dining Hall at Gindling Hilltop Camp. A few months ago, I became the Membership Director.

With all that history, how could I answer in one sentence?

Then I remembered a conversation with a congregant whose medical bills caused him to worry about being able to pay his Temple dues. I was able to reassure him that because of our Donor Circle, I could reduce his dues to a manageable amount until he was able to get back on his feet. I remembered the real estate agent with two children in the CLE who called me because business was slow and her husband had been laid off. Remaining a member of the Temple and continuing her children's Jewish education was important to her, but no matter how she looked at it, she couldn't figure out how they could afford to continue. Once again, I was able to reassure her that because of our Donor Circle, we could work together to find an affordable membership rate for her family. My response was met with a deep exhale and a relieved and almost tearful "Thank you" as I

told both of these members "The Temple is here for you."

As we read daily headlines about economic uncertainty, it's even more important to thank those who make Temple membership possible for everyone who wishes to be a part of our community. Members of our Donor Circle give above and beyond their Temple dues to help families who otherwise may not be able to join our Temple or maintain their membership due to financial constraints. On behalf of the countless number of families who have been helped, I'm honored to thank our Donor Circle members. Because of their generosity, I'm able to offer Jewish community and continuity to families who may be struggling financially to make ends meet. Because of our Donor Circle members, no prospective member is turned away. This not only gives me great pride in our congregation, but also makes working at Wilshire Boulevard Temple deeply fulfilling.

So my answer to Rabbi Leder's question became clear: "Thanks to the generosity of the Donor Circle, I get to help people every day."

Please contact me at (213) 388-2401 or rnudel@wbta.org if you are interested in joining the Donor Circle for the upcoming '08/'09 membership year.

■ *Rebecca Sills Nudel, Membership Director*



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ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Friday, May 16, 2008
6:00 p.m.
Temple Campus

Please join us as we honor our outgoing board members and welcome new board members.

www.wbtla.org/events/item/191/worship_events



MIND OVER MATTER: MANAGING STRESS IN YOUR LIFE PRESENTED BY CEDARS-SINAI

Tuesday, May 20, 2008
7:30 p.m.
Irmas Campus

Stress has become a fixture in the lives of today's woman. Join guest speaker **Waguih William IsHak, M.D.** Director of the Psychiatry Residency Training Program and Interim Medical Director of Outpatient Psychiatry Services at Cedars-Sinai. as we focus on determining how to address and approach these issues in a productive manner.

www.wbtla.org/events/item/194/worship_events



A SHORT HISTORY OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Wednesday, May 21, 2008
Wednesday, May 28, 2008
Wednesday, June 4, 2008
7:30 p.m.
Temple Campus

Two thousand years ago, exiled Jews dreamed of returning to their ancient homeland and in the late nineteenth century, Theodor Herzl gave birth to the notion that Jews could—and should—live in a land where Judaism can be freely, openly lived.

www.wbtla.org/events/item/152/tikkun_events



PIER FUNDRAISER

Thursday, June 5, 2008
4:30 p.m.
Santa Monica Pier

Brawerman Elementary School and Mann Family Early Childhood Center

invite you to the annual Pier Fundraiser at the Santa Monica Pier.

www.wbtla.org/events/item/192/youth_events

Welcome to new Temple members...

Uri and Stacy Blackman and their children, Adam and Noa... Jonathan and Natalie Fischer and their daughter, Leah...Augie and Linda Hess and their daughter, Kelsey...David and Carina Luwisch and their son, Seth...Mica Rabineau and Jamie Kohn...Timothy and Stephanie Reuben and their daughters, Rebecca and Aubrey...Doug and Karin Schaer and their daughter, Jordyn...Roddy and Sharona Sooferian and their daughter, Taylor...Stephen Tomar and Stuart Lampert...

Congratulations to...

Mark Kleid and Melissa Morton on the birth and naming of their daughter, Charlotte Moran Kleid...Kevin and Lisa Lewin on the birth of their son, Aaron Daniel and to big sister and brother, Jessica and Ethan and to aunt and uncle, Sharon and Darren Lewin and cousin, Jared...Ross and Jodi Milstein on the birth of their daughter, Layla...

Condolences to...

Ruth Friedman on the death of her husband, Ernest Friedman... Cathy Graf and Roger Scadron on the death of her father, Lawrence Graf and to grandchildren, Samantha and David...Martin and Barbara Kozberg; Roger and Joanne Kozberg; on the death of their mother, Evelyn Kozberg and to grandchildren, Carol and Barry Kaufman, Lindsey Kozberg and Anthony Kozberg and to great grandchildren, Brandon and Jonathan Kaufman...Friends and family of Bela Lelie...Elaine Schreiber on the death of her husband, Arthur Schreiber and to step son Gary and Dayna Lerner and their children, Hudson and Maya...Brad and Lisa Mindlin on the death of his grandfather, Raymond David Slotkin and to grandchildren, David and JT and to cousin, Ilene and Stanley Gold...

And to all immediate and extended family.

SHABBAT ON THE FLY

Thursday, July 31, 2008 -
Sunday, August 3, 2008
Irwin, Idaho

Join Rabbi Leder on our second annual "Shabbat on the Fly" fishing trip at the Lodge at Palisades Creek in Irwin, Idaho. We will share a weekend of fishing, with a little Torah and Shabbat thrown in for good measure and good luck.

www.wbtla.org/events/item/190/adult_events



For all events, including ongoing events and services, please visit www.wbtla.org/events



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Miller's Anniversary by Betsy & Rabbi Steven Leder

Nan McCullough and Rabbi Stephen Julius Stein by Merle Galindo

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Our gorgeous grandson, Benjamin Hoffman by Rachael & Norman Hoffman

My favorite Gramma & Pada, Rachael & Norman Hoffman by Benjamin Hoffman

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Schedule of Shabbat Worship & Study

FRIDAY, MAY 16

Soul Sounds Shabbat, CLE Graduation & Congregational Meeting
All Clergy
Temple Campus - 6:00 p.m.

Shabbat Service

Rabbinic Intern Gersh Lazarow and Cantorial Soloist Jacqueline Rafii
Irmas Campus - 6:00 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 17

Torah Study: LEVITICUS Behar 25:1 - 26:2
Avi Cohen
Temple Campus - 9:00

Tot Shabbat

Rabbi Phillips and Beth Weisman
Temple Campus - 9:00 a.m.

Shabbat Morning Minyan

Rabbinic Intern Gersh Lazarow and Cantor Caro
Irmas Campus - 9:15 a.m.

Shabbat Services

Rabbi Fox and Cantor Gurney
Temple Campus - 10:30 a.m.

Rabbi Eshel and Cantorial Soloist Pam Simmons
Irmas Campus - 10:30 a.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 23

Shabbat Service

Rabbi Leder and Cantor Caro
Temple Campus - 6:00 p.m.

Rabbi Eshel and Cantor Gurney
Irmas Campus - 6:00 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 24

Torah Study: LEVITICUS B'chukotai 26:3 - 27:34
Avi Cohen
Temple Campus - 9:00 a.m.

Shabbat Service

Rabbi Leder and Cantor Gurney
Temple Campus - 10:30 a.m.

Rabbi Eshel and Cantorial Soloist Marcus Feldman
Irmas Campus - 10:30 a.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 30

Women's Torah Study

Irmas Campus - 12:30 p.m.

Shabbat Services

Rabbi Leder and Cantorial Soloist Jacqueline Rafii
Temple Campus - 6:00 p.m.

Rabbi Eshel and Cantor Gurney
Irmas Campus - 6:00 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 31

Torah Study: NUMBERS B'midbar 1:1 - 4:20
Rabbinic Intern Gersh Lazarow
Temple Campus - 9:00 a.m.

Shabbat Services

Adult Bar Mitzvah of Robert Newmark
Rabbi Fox, Rabbi Stein and Cantor Caro
Irmas Campus - 9:00 a.m.

Rabbi Leder and Cantor Gurney
Temple Campus - 10:30 a.m.

Rabbi Eshel and Cantor Caro
Irmas Campus - 10:30 a.m.



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