



THE CHEVRA

Young Israel of Fair Lawn
The Morris J. Kraut z'l Torah Center

Joe Smith - President

This Shabbat:

Parashat Yisro
22 Shevat, 5767
Feb 9, 10 - 2007

The Haftorah is read from Isaiah
6:1-7:6 and 9:5-6.

Friday
Candle Lighting 5:05 PM
Mincha 5:10 PM

Shabbat
Chevra Mishnayos Shiur 8:00 AM
Shacharit 9:00 AM
Sof Zman Keriat Shema: 9:34 AM (Gra"h)

Mincha 5:00 PM
Shabbat Ends 6:07 PM

Sunday Shacharit 8:00 AM
Monday-Friday Shacharit 7:00 AM

Next Shabbat:

Parashat Mishpatim
29 Shevat, 5767
Erev Rosh Chodesh
Feb 16, 17 - 2007

The Haftorah is read from Kings II
12:1-17.

Friday
Candle Lighting 5:13 PM
Mincha 5:15 PM

Shabbat
Chevra Mishnayos Shiur 8:00 AM
Shacharit 9:00 AM
Sof Zman Keriat Shema: 9:29 AM (Gra"h)

Mincha 5:05 PM
Shabbat Ends 6:15 PM

Sunday Shacharit 8:00 AM
Monday-Friday Shacharit 7:00 AM

Mazel Tov !

Mazel Tov to Evelyn and Larry Kraut on the engagement of their daughter Jennifer to Benji Hooper of Toronto, Canada.

Special Mazel Tov to Jennifer's Grandparents Mrs. Elaine Kraut and Dr. and Mrs Walter Silver as well as the entire Kraut and Hooper families.

May they see BE"H much Nachas from the couple and may we share many Smachot together in the future for many years to come.

Board Meeting

There will be a Board Meeting at the Shul on Monday, February 12th at 7:30 PM.

The agenda will include:

- Committee Reports
- Discussion of Fundraising
- Other Business

All Members and Friends are welcome.

Torah Insights – Harav Shlomo Riskin

Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Yitro
Exodus 18:1-20:23

By Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel – It is fascinating to note that the central portion of the Bible, the narrative which tells of the divine revelation at Sinai in the form of the ten commandments which are the basis for all human

morality, is named after the Mideonite Priest Yitro and even opens with a meeting between Yitro and Moses. "And Yitro, the Priest of Mideon, the father in law of Moses heard all that G-d had wrought for Moses and for Israel his nation since the Lord took Israel out of Egypt" (Exodus 18; 1) It is fascinating to query what it was that actually brought Yitro to leave his Mideonite home and meet with Moses? What was his primary intention in coming?

The very next verse would certainly imply that Yitro was actually confronting Moses as a father in law, with familial interest to remind his son in law of his lapsed obligations towards his wife and children. "And Yitro, the father in law of Moses, took Tziporah, the wife of Moses after he (Moses) had sent her away and her two children....and Yitro, the father in law of Moses, came with his (Moses') sons and wife to Moses to the desert...." (Exodus 18:2-5) Note that in these five verses Yitro is referred to as Moses' "father in law" three times.

If I were to recount the situation, I would suggest initially- when Tziporah and the two sons returned without Moses to her father Yitro's home in Mideon, Yitro was not at all upset. It is difficult to imagine that this Mideonite Priest was very impressed – or even accepting- of this Moses as a son in law. Not only did he speak of a strange G-d, Y-HVH, but he was a renegade

from Egypt where he had murdered an Egyptian official, a taskmaster of the suspect Hebrews. Indeed, this Moses himself belonged to that accursed Hebrew race which had become delegitimized as a proliferating fifth column by the Egyptian leadership. Certainly, Yitro had hoped for more for the daughter of an individual so well respected in Mideon.

If Yitro had not been sorry to have received Tzipporah back home, our commentaries provide fascinating differences of opinion as to why Moses was interested in sending her home to her father. Rashi, citing the earlier verse wherein G-d gives Moses the green light to return to Egypt since those Egyptians seeking to punish Moses by taking away his life had all died, actually sites the verse "and Moses took his wife, and his sons and placed them upon the donkey to return to the land of Egypt" (Exodus 4:19,20) This classical commentary is therefore perplexed as to when and why Moses apparently changed his mind and sent his family back to Mideon. He therefore sites a midrash which suggests that when Aaron came out to meet Moses on his way back to Egypt, Aaron took a look at the strange woman and two sons accompanying his brother and enquired after them. Moses explained that these were his Mideonite wife and children who he was bringing with him back to Egypt. Aaron then suggested that since we Hebrews now regret the fact that we came to Egypt in the first place, why now add to the Egyptian slaves? Moses accepted Aaron's position and forthwith returned his wife and children to Mideon (Rashi to Exodus 18:2).

The Ibn Ezra adds another argument to Aaron's plea. If Moses were now to bring his wife and children into Egypt, the Hebrews would never believe that

he was really serious about taking them all out of Egypt. Why bring in your wife and children only to soon take them out again?

And the Ramban gives a third reason. You will remember that earlier on in the book of Exodus, just when Moses had begun his journey back to Egypt together with his wife and sons, Tzipporah herself took a flint and circumcised Eliezer (Exodus 4:25).

Apparently, says the Ramban, Moses was so agitated and emotionally immersed in his upcoming visit with Pharaoh and the responsibility of taking the Jews out of Egypt that he had actually forgotten – or perhaps lacked the emotional energy- to circumcise his own son. It was at this point that Moses decided to send his wife and children back to Mideon where they would be taken care of properly.

But whatever Moses' reasoning may have been, he sent his wife and sons back to Mideon and Yitro had not been unhappy to receive them.

But now the situation had changed. However it was that Yitro heard – Mideonite Times, CNN, Desert Fox News or mouth to mouth reportage - Moses has now emerged an international hero who has succeeded in vanquishing the most important power in the Middle East, the Pharaoh of Egypt. All of a sudden, this Hebrew renegade son in law, with his strange G-d takes on almost superhuman proportions. Yitro therefore decides that Moses is after all the best son in law he could ever have hoped for and so he takes his daughter and his two grandsons on a difficult but necessary journey to remind the international hero, Moses, that he still has a wife and two sons for whom he is responsible.

Obviously Moses understands the

entire picture and so when Moses tells over the narrative to his father in law, he makes certain to place G-d at the center, saying that G-d wrought what He did not for Moses and his nation, Israel – (as in 18:1) but rather for Israel – leaving Moses out as a central figure all together in the drama of the Exodus (Exodus 18:8). And Yitro himself seems to understand Moses' message. He rejoices and praises G-d for all that he did for the Hebrew people and he now understands that G-d is truly the greatest of all powers of the cosmos. (Exodus 18:9-11) Yitro now has an added reason for returning his family to his son in law: he is deeply impressed with the fact that they believe in the very unique G-d of Israel and the world. Is Yitro impressed enough to cause himself to convert as well? Perhaps we will continue this discussion next year please G-d.

Shabbat Shalom

Shlomo Riskin
Chancellor Ohr Torah Stone
Chief Rabbi - Efrat Israel