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CTN LUNCH, LEARN & MITZVAH 2

A unique opportunity to combine a great kosher lunch with quality Jewish learning, while at the same time giving dignity and respect to developmentally challenged young adults.

The lunch will be provided by the KJ Café, a joint effort of Keshet, Bernard Weinger JCC and the Sandwich Club. KJ Café is unique. It is staffed by young adults of Keshet which provides educational, recreational and vocational programs for Jewish children and young adults with special needs.

Lunch will be followed by more wisdom from Rabbi Katz's popular workshop, "Living Life to its Fullest": Judaism's powerful tools for getting greater pleasure and meaning out of life.

Please join us for a great lunch, great learning and a great mitzvah!

Lunch Learn & Mitzvah
Wednesday, June 9th, 2010
At Northbrook JCC 300 Revere Drive

Networking & Lunch – 11:30 am
Workshop – 12:00 pm
Cost – \$15 (includes lunch)

Advance registration required: www.torahnetwork.org/register.htm
Info: info@torahnetwork.org or 773 761 0400 x201



THE CHICAGO TORAH NETWORK SHABBAT FAX[©]

A WEEKLY PRESENTATION OF JEWISH THOUGHT PUBLISHED IN MEMORY OF RAE DANIEL

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 30 FRIDAY, MAY 28, 2010 / 15 SIVAN 5770 CANDLE LIGHTING: 7:55 P.M. SHABBAT ENDS: 9:06 (CHICAGO)

Hang in there - Shabbos is coming!

TORAH PORTION: BEHA'ALOSECHA (NUMBERS 8:1 - 12:16)

This week's CTN Shabbat Fax is dedicated by CTN's Women's Learning Division, in honor of Bruce & Cheryl Leon. 'Your generosity and vision allowed over 150 Jewish women of all backgrounds to experience a powerful day of inspiration, education and sharing, at the Ilene C. Leon Chicago Conference of Jewish Women. Thank you for all that you do!'

1. The Menorah was made... (Numbers, 8:4)

Jerusalem. 70 CE. The Roman legions finally succeed in capturing the city. They burn the Temple. Sell thousands of Jews as slaves. And take the Temple vessels to Rome. It is such a major victory that they build a memorial: The Arch of Titus. You can still see it in Rome.

On it, you will see Roman soldiers carrying the Menorah.

... 1950's. Rabbi Yosef Kahaneman, one of the leading Torah scholars of the 20th century, travels from the young State of Israel to Europe, to raise funds for his Yeshiva. He arrives in Rome in the middle of the night.

The Rabbi says to his driver, "Please take me to the Arch of Titus". The driver, a former student of the Rabbi, was very surprised. Especially since Rabbi Kahaneman was known for never imposing on another person.

"Rabbi. It's the middle of the night. Can't the Arch of Titus wait until tomorrow?"

The Rabbi's reply? "Please forgive me. I must go there now".

So the student drives straight there. The Rabbi gets out of the car. Walks over to the Arch.

And in a loud voice calls out, "Titus. We're still here"!

And gets back in the car.

The Arch of Titus wasn't all. The Romans also minted coins to commemorate the defeat of the Jews. Many of those coins still exist.

One of them shows a Jewish woman sitting on the ground weeping. Next to the woman is a date palm tree, one of the ancient symbols of the Land of Israel. Imprinted on the coin are the words *Judea Capta* - the Jewish State is captured.

The New York Times, June 12th, 2005: After 2000 Years, a Seed From Ancient Judea Sprouts.

"Scientists in Israel have managed to germinate a date seed which is almost 2000 years old. And the seed was found at Massada, the last Jewish fortress during the Roman siege.

The plant is now 11.8 inches tall and has produced seven leaves.

It's the oldest seed ever germinated.

As one scientist said, "Plants from ancient seeds usually keel over and die soon. But this one is different."

That was back in 2005. Since then?

As of June 17, 2008, the Times reported that the 'date seed of Massada' was over three feet tall.

It's an amazing story. And a powerful metaphor.

How the Romans are gone. And Jewish scientists in Israel are nurturing this ancient palm seed.

It's the miracle of the Jewish People!

▪ **And there's a deeper message in the sprouting of an ancient palm tree.**

In the Biblical Book of Psalms it says: "A righteous individual shall sprout like a palm tree."

And the Jewish mystics explain how throughout Jewish history there were righteous Jewish men and women who were concerned about the future. And they prayed to G-d with all their heart:

'Let my descendants be filled with Torah knowledge and values. Let them be proud, knowledgeable and righteous Jews, living lives filled with Jewish growth.

But our history wasn't always easy. And sometimes their children and grandchildren drifted away. Weren't as Jewishly connected as their grandparents and great grandparents.

But eventually, "A righteous person sprouts forth." ... And those prayers were not wasted.

Sometimes it takes years, sometimes generations. But eventually the spiritual energy created by that power hits home.

And suddenly a Jew feels drawn closer to Judaism. And decides to learn more. To bring more Torah and more Judaism into her life.

Why does that happen? Where does that come from?

The answer? Somewhere many years ago, there was a bubby. Whose tears and heartfelt prayers – like the long lost palm tree – are finally sprouting.

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

"Life's full of challenges.

They can make us bitter.

Or they can make us better.

It's up to us."



Shabbat Shalom and have a wonderful week.

Rabbi Moshe Katz

Rabbi Doni Deutsch

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