

From: The Rabbis at Chicago Torah Network

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To:

# Start the New Year Right!

Go to [www.torahnetwork.org](http://www.torahnetwork.org) or e-mail [info@torahnetwork.org](mailto:info@torahnetwork.org) for more information about these and other exciting CTN programs!



Chicago Torah Network presents



## Lunch, Learn & MITZVAH

1st Wednesday of the month

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.

Enjoy Rabbi Moshe Katz's popular workshop, "A Taste of Talmud". Discover how a few lines of Talmud can shed light on such diverse topics as spiritual and ethical growth, relationships, animal rights and more.



### Let the words come to life!

**Torah Study with Rabbi Doni Deutsch, Wednesdays at 8:15 pm**

### Busy during hebrew school?



**The CTN Five-Week Hebrew Reading Crash Course, with Esti Berger, begins February 8**

**Also watch for complete details about these two special learning opportunities:**

**THE JEWISH LITERACY CRASH COURSE**



Become a more knowledgeable and proud Jew in just **5** sessions.

Over 250,000 people have experienced the amazing **Discovery Seminar**. Now it's your turn! **Mark your calendar for Feb. 27** and watch for complete details.

The world-renowned **Discovery Seminar** comes to Chicago!

# 2+3=5,000

# THE CHICAGO TORAH NETWORK SHABBAT FAX<sup>©</sup>

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

VOLUME 18, ISSUE 12 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2010 / 17 TEVES 5771 CANDLE LIGHTING: 4:04 P.M. SHABBAT ENDS: 5:14 (CHICAGO)

*Hang in there - Shabbos is coming!*

## TORAH PORTION: SH'MOS (EXODUS 1:1 - 6:1)

*This week's CTN Shabbat Fax is dedicated in honor of Rochelle Rogowin:*

*"Thirty five is the number of years I've been blessed to know you, love you and share my life with you. I cherish this adventure we call marriage. Besides being my wife, you are also my best friend. I cannot imagine my life without you and hope that Hashem blesses us for the next 35 years. Happy Anniversary Rochelle! All my love, Joseph*

### **1. Moshe said to his father in law ... 'I would like to return to my people in Egypt' (4:18)**

It's one the beginning of one of the major stories in the Torah. The story of the Exodus.

*Picture it:* Moshe has accepted his mission. To take the Jews out of Egypt.

To lead them to Mount Sinai. Where they will receive the Torah.

The Torah with which they will teach the world so much. About G-d. And about man.

About morality. And about ethics.

It's a mission that will change the world.

*What can be more important?*

... But before he can begin, Moshe has something else to take care of:

First he goes to his father in law, who has been so helpful to him. Moshe tells him of his plans.

And asks his permission to leave with his wife and children.

*... It's a powerful lesson.*

We may not be Moshe.

And we don't have his mission.

But we also get involved in important things.

It may be a project at work. Something for the community. Our Synagogue. Or other things.

And there are goals. Deadlines.

And frustrations.

Lots of pressure to get the job done.

*... But we have to be very careful.*

Because it's so easy to get caught up in the big picture.

And to lose sight of the "little things".

*Like people's feelings.*

*... Because to the Torah, there's really nothing bigger.*

## A DEEPER LOOK

**"G-d said, I have seen the suffering of My people that is in Egypt and I have heard their cries in the face of its oppressors." (3:7)**

*Jewish tradition teaches that the Torah conveys its lessons not only by what it says, but by how it says it. And sometimes a small change in the wording can make such a big difference.*

*This verse is a perfect example.*

*... There's two ways one can refer to a nation or any other group of people.*

*We can refer to them in the plural: They.*

*Or we can refer to the unit, the nation, in the singular: It.*

*Either way is acceptable. It's just that we'd expect the Torah to be consistent. Especially within one verse!*

*But this verse is not consistent: 'Their' cries ... in the face of 'its' oppressors.*

*And the Commentaries explain this beautifully.*

*The Torah is not just telling us they cried when they were oppressed and G-d saved them.*

*It is telling us something much deeper.*

*About the way they responded to their suffering.*

*And how we should.*

*... Not 'they cried for their suffering'. Each one crying for their own pain.*

*But, they cried because 'it' – the Jewish People – was suffering.*

*When each person looks out for himself, cries for his own pain – that's a natural response.*

*But when people who are suffering are able to get beyond their own pain, able to cry for others and for the suffering of the community as a whole – that is true greatness.*

## THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

*"It is not necessary to be an observant Jew to appreciate the full historic and sacred aura that enshrines this perfect gift called "Shabbat".*

*Its prohibitions are not arbitrary. They provide insulation against the corrosive everydayness, they build fences against invasions by the profane, and they enrich the soul by creating a space for sacred time.*

*In a word, one need not be pious to accept the cherished principle of Shabbat.*

*One merely need be a proud Jew."*

*(Menachem Begin, Former Israeli Prime Minister; Knesset Speech, May 1982)*



*Shabbat Shalom and best wishes for a wonderful week.*

Rabbi Moshe Katz

Rabbi Doni Deutsch

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