

THE JEWISH NEWS

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Sabbath Scriptural Selections

This Sabbath, the second day of Swan, 5727, the following Scriptural selections will be read in our synagogues:

Pentateuchal portion, Num. 4:21-7:89. Prophetic portion, Judges 13:2-25.

Shavuot Tora Readings

Pentateuchal portions, First Day, Wednesday, Ex. 19:1-20:23. Num. 28:26-31: second day, Thursday, Deut. 15:19-16:17. Num. 28:26-31. Prophetic portions: First Day, Ezek. 1:1-28. 3:12; second day, Habakkuk 3:1-19.
Candle lighting, Friday, June 9, 7:48 p.m.

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Shavuot and Its Sanctified Ideals

Many are the purposes and meanings of the Shavuot festival. It is the time for solemn assembly. It is the season of the first ripe fruits — the Hag Bikurim. It is an agricultural festival stemming from the ancient days of Jewish independence in the ancient Land of Israel, and it is the celebration of the Giving of the Tora — Zman Matan Toratenu.

A Hasidic sage, Rabbi Yitzhak of Gur, explained why the festival is called that of the Giving of the Tora rather than of Receiving by stating: "Because the time of the Giving of the Tora was only at Sinai, whereas the time of Receiving the Tora is every day." In this thought is embodied a great philosophy of Judaism: the endless obligation to observe the principles embodied in the sacred Law, a duty that is not limited to a single day on the calendar but one that calls for adherence to the highest ideals all the time.

That is why Shavuot has become so significant as the day for commencement exercises in our schools, for consecrations and confirmations. That is why Shavuot is the Festival of the Law that has been handed down to be honored through adherence to the principles of the Tora.

We think of Shavuot in terms of our children's role as the banner bearers of the traditions of which we speak on this festival, to which we dedicate ourselves in the obser-

vance of the symbolic holiday. For our youth this season of the year is a time to consider the steps that are to be taken from one graduation in studies to another. For some it is a time for graduation. For many, it is our hope, it is an occasion to think in terms of continued studies, of regarding the ensuing vacation months as mere interruptions in endless searching for knowledge.

That is why Shavuot also represents a challenge to Jewish homes and to our schools — to parents and to teachers. Can both emerge with sufficient strength to inspire study, to encourage dedication to learning?

We have not failed in it through the ages. There is no reason to fear that we are so impoverished in inspiration, that we are so lacking in the joy of Jewish living, that we can not continue our role as a people steeped in knowledge and constantly searching for more of it. Shavuot should, indeed, be an occasion for confidence that an indestructible spirit, an endless urge for learning, is the basic strength of an ancient people. It is with such a feeling of optimism in our future, in the fusion of forces involving parents, children and their teachers, that we always emerge on a high plane at a season like the present one which we welcome with rejoicing, affirming the season of harvest — the love of nature and the pride in learning.

All Together: To Israel's Aid

Israel alone can not be expected to wage the war for survival. The Nasser threat is clear and not to be misunderstood. He and his cohorts say bluntly that they seek Israel's destruction. This would mean the destruction of prophecy, as the realization of an historic aim to end the homelessness of the Jew: it would be a blow to world Jewry and would destroy the major achievement of our people after 2,000 years of statelessness. It would undermine faith in mankind whose aid was welcomed in the re-establishment of the Jewish State. Anything approaching even the minutest harm to the State of Israel would be an indictment of the non-Jewish world for having failed to prevent the safety of a people that has been fighting with its back to the sea.

What is happening now is a threat of another genocide and on a larger scale. Not a single person is secure in Israel under Nasser's domination.

What is happening in Israel now is, therefore, a challenge to world Jewry and to mankind.

The Jews of the world must mobilize their forces to guarantee all aid that can possibly be provided to assure the independence of Israel and the safety of its people.

The non-Jewish world's conscience is similarly challenged. Either the Christian world steps forward to remove all threats of serious attacks on Israel or the threatened destruction will place another mark of shame on the free world which had encouraged Israel's emergence and now appears hesitant to act firmly in Israel's defense.

Israel is certain to battle to a finish. There will not be another Masada. The slogan in Israel is: "Shenit Masada lo tipol" — "Masada shall not fall a second time." The Third Commonwealth must survive, else all human decency will perish with it.

Jewish communities everywhere are mobilizing their forces to provide the necessary assistance to the embattled nation. Hundreds of thousands of Jews have been rescued from many lands and have been settled in Israel. Nearly all of the Jews in Moslem

countries have been robbed of their possessions by the Arab rulers and have come to Israel. Israel had provided most of the funds for the integration of newcomers. Now world Jewry — primarily the Jews of America — must carry the burden, so that Israel may, without hindrance, bear the responsibility of the heavy military load.

The United Jewish Appeal dollars must be multiplied. Purchase of Israel Bonds must be stimulated and should go on uninterrupted. Just as Israelis now are investing heavily in domestic government loans, so, also, Jews everywhere must show their solidarity by giving unstintingly to philanthropic funds and by retaining the confidence that must persist in Israel's ability to retain its balance by investing in Israel's economic projects.

This is a time for a mass demonstration of loyalty to basic human demands. It is not the Jewish position alone that is involved: it is the honor of all mankind that plays its role in a crisis involving the right of people to life, liberty and the quest for the human decencies that are basic to the survival of mankind.

Israelis are holding their heads high. Having straightened their backs which had been bent under the persecutions of millennia they refuse to permit a return to humiliations and to human bondage. Their kinsmen everywhere have gained a new dignity by Israel's emergence. That dignity, that sense of accomplishment of ending servility, must be protected to the fullest. That's our duty. With prayers for justice on our tongues, with a determined will in our hearts, with a solidarity that makes our people indestructible, we must retain our duties as Americans who refuse to permit domination of brutality over humanity and a return to genocidal medievalism; we must keep faith as Jews that the eternity of Israel will never be sacrificed on the altar of indifference. With these aims, our self-respect will be protected, our dignity will be retained, Israel will be protected and the glory of the worldwide democratic principles will be retained for the good of all mankind.



Rothmueller's 'Music of Jews' Analyzes Historic Developments

Aron Marko Rothmueller, a native of Yugoslavia who has appeared with many of the major opera companies, who has composed many musical scores, is the author of "The Music of the Jews," a revised edition of which has just been published by Thomas Yoseloff.

Coming to this country in 1948, Rothmueller now teaches voice at Indiana University School of Music. He has gathered an immense amount of material relating to the subject of his book and has illustrated it thoroughly.

The subtitle of the book, "An Historical Appreciation," amply describes the basis for this work. It is, indeed, a valuable history of Jewish musical experiences and of the development of music among Jews.

The many musical illustrations supplementing the text not only serve to assist the reader but provide also the type of data that is vital for students and teachers.

This survey undertakes to cover nearly 4,000 years of cultural history and the seriousness with which the author covers his subject is a tribute to a very creditable undertaking.

Rothmueller's review of Jewish music in biblical times traces the beginnings to the 13th Century BCE. Naturally the author goes to the Bible. "On examining the books of the Pentateuch for references to music," he writes, "we find the first mention in Genesis 4:20-22 which tells us that Yaval (Jabal) was the first shepherd, Yuval (Jubal) 'the father of all such as handle the harp and the pipe' (kinnor and ugav) and Tuval (Tubal) Cain, the first 'forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron.' But it is very unlikely that Jubal was a musician who actually lived; it is much more probable that the word yuval is intended to convey the generalized conception of a musician."

There is an interesting footnote here which states: "There is an etymological similarity between Yuval and Yovel, 'horn,' used to signify the blowing of the horn to announce the Yovel or jubilee year. . . ."

The survey continues with analyses of music in the times of the early kings, during the Two Kingdoms, in the periods of the Babylonian Exile, the Restoration of the Temple, and the Greek and Roman epochs. The Psalms and the music applied to them provide special interest in the review of the biblical era.

Before turning to the Jewish musical accomplishments and creativity in the 19th and 20th centuries, Rothmueller devotes the central portion of the book to the music of the synagogue and to developments from the first to the 20th centuries. There is an immense amount of valuable material incorporated here relating to the influences of the Enlightenment, Emancipation and Reform. He shows how music written for the synagogue became "progressively enriched." He maintains that "this great development was rendered possible only as a result of the 19th Century Reform," and his account of the musicians and the composers, many in the Reform category, indicate the reason for such a claim.

The 20th Century Jewish composers, the Jewish folk songs, the modern attainments combine to form a rich concluding third part of this book.

Here we are introduced to the folk songs in many spheres, the Israeli songs, Yemenite, liturgical and other creative efforts.

Names of important composers pass in review here and the musical examples provide the basic background for a fuller understanding of the research that was conducted by the author.

There is an interesting comment by Rothmueller who states: "Music has not been developed among the Jews, even those of Europe, as a branch of culture, as it has among other European cultural groups. . . . The chief reason for the restricted development in Jewish music is to be found in the fact that generally speaking Jewish communal life was lived in unhealthy and unnatural conditions."

Israeli music, he adds, "is not regarded as Jewish in mood," and he adds that "Israeli composers are trying to overcome the mood of mourning and brooding which derives from the Diaspora." He finds in Israeli music "a synthesis of Bedouin-Arab-Palestinian (Israeli) modern Jewish color."

An appended list of Hebrew musical terms with transliterations and explanations of their meaning serves an added good purpose to this volume which will be found useful by musicians, interesting reading by laymen, serviceable as a textbook.