

is for the homeless. Simchas Torah is for those in their happier stages of bipolar. *Mi K'Amcha Yisroel* (Who is like your people O Israel).....and people still wonder why the Jews invented psychology.

There are 3 spies that get captured. One spy is French, one is German and the other is Jewish. Their captors come into the cell and grab the French spy and tie his hands behind a chair in the next room. They torture him for 2 hours before he answers all questions and gives up all of his secrets. The captors throw the French spy back into the cell and grab the German spy. They tie his hands behind the chair as well and torture him for 4 hours before he tells them what they want to know. They throw him back into the cell and grab the Jewish spy. They tie his hands behind the chair and begin torturing him. 4 hours go by and the spy isn't talking. Then 8 hours, then 16 and after 24 hours they give up and throw him back into the cell. The German and French spies are impressed and ask him how he managed to not talk. The Jewish spy responds, "I wanted to! But I couldn't move my hands!"

Mazal Tov!

Choson Torah: Darryl Frankel
Choson Bereishis: Hymie Sacks

DIS-CHEM REACH FOR A DREAM GOLF DAY

of the Sydenham Shul

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WEDNESDAY
22 NOV
KILLARNEY COUNTRY CLUB



Join us for another great day away from the city noise and stresses

Please speak to Selwyn Kahlberg, Chairman of the Golf Day Committee, Ingrid Seelf, or Rabbi Goldman.



Calendar

Thursday 12 Oct - SHEMINI ATZERES

- ◆ Shacharis: 8:30 am; Shtibl: 8:45 am
- ◆ Halle: 9:15 am
- ◆ Yizkor & Geshem
- ◆ Mincha: 5:40 pm
- ◆ Candlelighting: not before 6:44 pm from a pre-lit flame (Blessings for Yom Tov & Shehecheyanu)
- ◆ Flags, Kids Carnival, L'Chaims for the Adults, Hakafof & Dancing
- ◆ Simchas Torah Dinner

Friday 13 Oct - SIMCHAS TORAH

- ◆ Shacharis: 8:30 am (one minyan only)
- ◆ Small Brocha
- ◆ Ladies Shiurim & Breakfast
- ◆ Hakafof & Dancing
- ◆ Aliyahs for all
- ◆ Big Brocha
- ◆ Mincha after Brocha
- ◆ Candlelighting: not after 5:58 pm from a pre-lit flame (Blessing for Shabbos only)

Simchas Torah Ladies Programme

Join Sydenham's Rebbetzins for Breakfast & Inspiration

Rebbetzin Rochel Goldman
Inside and Out
You are beautiful!



Rebbetzin Estee Stern
Simcha and Celebration
Why do we dance?



Friday 13 October 10:15am
Sydenham Shul Community Centre
Two Talks followed by Delicious Breakfast

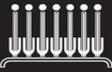



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Good Yom Tov SYDENHAM!

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Souls in the Rain

By Rabbi Yosef Y Jacobson

If G-d is "perfect," as Judaism says, what prompted Him to create the universe? What void was He seeking to fill?

The answer provided in Jewish Mysticism is that G-d desired marriage. Marriage necessitates the existence of someone distinct from yourself with whom to share your life, a union of husband and wife. G-d chose humanity as His bride.

What a marriage this has been--a roller coaster of romance, affection, quarrels and estrangement. In every generation, many counselors advocated a divorce while others proclaimed the Groom dead. Yet, the relationship has endured because both partners intrinsically know that they belong together. When all veils are removed, man manifestly yearns for union with G-d.

According to the Kabbalah, the High Holiday season is the annual experience of the cosmic matrimony between G-d and humanity. The five key spiritual moments of the season parallel the basic phases of a conventional courtship and union. The holidays invite us to journey through this process again and rejuvenate the relationship.

The Courtship

The Hebrew month of Elul precedes the High Holidays. This month is described in Chassidic teachings as a time when "the King goes out to the field to meet with His people, greeting them with kindness and tenderness, displaying a joyous face to all." We, in turn, "open our hearts to

G-d."

This time provides us with an opportunity to get to know G-d.

The Groom Proposes

The world goes haywire, says Master Kabbalist Rabbi Issac Luria. "During the night of Rosh Hashanah," he writes, "the consciousness animating the universe becomes frail and weak." The great Jewish mystics would, in fact, feel physically weak during the night of Rosh Hashanah.

All of existence was brought into being for the sake of this proposed marriage. If we refuse Him, then it was all in vain. The entire cosmos awaits our decision.

The Bride Commits

On the morning of Rosh Hashanah, a piercing sound rises from the Earth: the cry of the shofar. It is a simple cry, expressing man's yearning to connect with the Divine.

We have decided. Our answer is yes.

The Wedding

The wedding day arrives: Yom Kippur. A day described in the Kabbalah as "the time of oneness" in which cosmic bride and groom forge a bond for eternity.

In the Jewish tradition, bride and groom fast on their wedding day. On the day we unite with G-d, we abstain from food or drink as well. The Talmud teaches that upon marriage, all the sins of the groom and bride are forgiven.

That's why this day is called Yom Kippur, "the

day of atonement."

The marriage ceremony begins with the stirring melody of Kol Nidre, in which we remove the power from vows and addictions that tie us down. During these profound moments, we attempt to free ourselves from compulsive behavior and negative habits and let go of resentment, animosity, anger, fear and envy.

The traditional Jewish marriage ceremony culminates with the bride and groom entering a secluded room (*cheder yichud* in Hebrew) to spend time alone with each other. Yom Kippur culminates with the Ne'ilah, or closure prayer, so called because as the sun of Yom Kippur sets, the gates of heaven close--with us inside.

During Ne'ilah, every soul is alone with G-d.

The Celebration

When the bride and groom exit their private room, the party begins. From Yom Kippur we leap into the seven-day festival of Sukkot, described in the Torah as "the time of our Joy."

These days are filled with feasting and ecstatic happiness, celebrating the union between G-d and His people.

Union

The wedding feast is over. The guests and relatives have returned home. In a consummation of the relationship, bride and groom experience intimacy for the first time, their lives melded together as a husband and wife. Hence, following the seven days of Sukkot, we reach the zenith of the High Holiday season: Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, described in the Kabbalah as the "time of intimacy with the Divine." During these two charged days the joy reaches its peak, as G-d and His people merge into a seamless whole. A Divine seed is planted in each of our hearts.

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That's why we recite special prayers for rain on the festival of Shemini Atzeret. What is rain? In the midst of intimacy between heaven and earth, procreative drops from heaven are absorbed, fertilized and nurtured by mother-earth, which in time will give birth to its botanical children.

The Ordinary Month

The honeymoon comes to an end and the excitement begins to fade. Now the marriage becomes about caring for each other and demonstrating trust and loyalty as we work through the daily grind of life.

Out of the twelve months in the Jewish calendar, the only one lacking a single festive day immediately follows the High Holiday season. The Hebrew month of Cheshvan is the time to build a genuine relationship with our marriage Partner in our everyday lives. This is the time to discover the joy born out of a continuous relationship with G-d.

It It True That Jews Dance With Books?

On The Absurdity of Simchas Torah

By Rabbi Tzvi Freeman

Once a year, at the end of a whole string of holidays, there's something called Simchat Torah. Jews take out all the Torah scrolls in their places of worship and dance with them. In many places, they dance with them through the streets.

It's called hakafot, which means "going around in circles."

Scrolls are books. So, yes, Jews dance with books.

But what you really should be asking is: Is this normal?

Books are for reading. For understanding. For discussing. Dancing? Really? Does anybody else do this?

It goes further. These are G-d's books. Holy scrolls. Divine work.

On Passover night, we ask "Why is tonight different than every other night?"—just be-

cause we're crunching on flat bread and dipping a veggie in salt water. On Simchat Torah we're going around in circles, dancing wildly with books, yet nobody asks a thing.

Why? Because everyone understands. This is a Jew: Someone who dances with G-d's book.

The Eternal Dance

I met a Jew who told me he had searched for spirituality and Google found it. It came in the writings of a mystic teacher whose lectures opened gates of wisdom for him.

"You have found wisdom," I told him. "But you have not found yourself. You have found a pretty girl, but you have not found your betrothed wife. That you can find only in our Torah. It is ours, and we belong to it, for our souls have danced with it for three and a half millennia, you and I and all these Jews around us."

That's what it means to dance with a book. It means, as hard as you try, as much as you would like, you can never be divorced from it. You come close, you tear apart; turn face to face, then back to back; around in circles, around and around, like two spinning magnets in constant push and pull towards each other, like two soul-mates locked in a perpetual drama of eternal romance.

So, too, a Jew dances with Torah. A teaching resonates deep within, as though his soul itself were speaking to him. Another teaching he pushes away. There are questions unresolved, issues with which he has yet to make peace.

But it is a bond not contingent on reason or fancy. It is a marriage for which there is no other match, an eternal covenant. The Torah and the Jew, they belong to one another.

The Birthright Dance

After all, Jews are born owning that book. It says so in the book itself, "The Torah that Moses commanded us is an inheritance of every Jew."

The Talmud takes that quite literally:

Rav Yehuda says that Rav says: Anyone who withholds a teaching from a student is as

though he robs him of the inheritance of his ancestors, as it is stated: "The Torah that Moses commanded us is the inheritance of every Jew."

That is the first teaching a Jewish child must learn, as the Talmud says:

At what age do you start teaching your child? As soon as the child begins to speak, you teach him, "The Torah that Moses commanded us is the inheritance of every Jew." Then you teach, "Hear O Israel, G-d is our G-d, G-d is One."

Even before the child learns to say that G-d is one, he learns that Torah is his birthright.

With Whom Do You Dance?

All said, the question still remains: It is a book after all. A wisdom. A teaching. We don't dance with any of those. We dance with a living being, not with a book.

This I can answer best with a story.

In the gas chamber of Auschwitz stood a group of young boys, stripped of their clothes, awaiting their final demise. One boy sprang up and shouted: "Brothers! Today is the holiday of Simchat Torah. Before we die, let us celebrate Simchat Torah one last time."

"We do not possess anything," the boy continued. "We do not have clothes to cover us, nor a Torah scroll with which to dance. So let us dance with G-d Himself before we return our souls to Him."

They danced with G-d in the gas chamber. We dance with Him in the synagogues and in the streets.

For that is a Jew. One who embraces the Author within the book, the Teacher within the teaching, G-d within a scroll.

And it is with Him that we dance.

Live & Laugh

Purim is for alcoholics. Pesach is for OCDs. Shavuot is for insomniacs, and Lag B'Omer is for pyromaniacs who weren't satisfied with Chanukah. Tisha B'Av is for manic depressives and Rosh Hashana is for people who obsess over dying. Yom Kippur is for anorexics and Sukkos

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