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### The Jewish Association of the Philippines

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**Av/Elul 5769** 

August 2009

Volume 1 / Number 8

### **Parashat**

August 1 Va'etchanan

August 8 Ekev

August 15 Re'e

August 22 Shoftim

August 29 Ki Tetze

### SHABBAT CANDLE LIGHTING

July 31 6:07PM

August 7 6:05PM

August 14 6:01PM

August 21 5:57PM

August 28 5:53PM

### **ROSH CHODESH**

August 20 & 21

### **WEEKLY**

Sunday: 8:00 am Minian/ 9:30 am Hebrew School

Monday: 7:15 am Minian Shacharit

Tuesday: 11:00 am class with Rabbanit

Thursday: 7:15 am Minian Shacharit

Friday: 6:30 pm Kabbalat Shabbat

Shabbat: 9:30 am Minian followed by Kiddush



### **Calendar and Donations**

See our monthly events and the wonderful donations we received ......turn to page 2 in attached PDF file

### WHO IS ASHKENAZI? WHO IS SHEPHARDIC?

turn to page 2 in attached PDF file



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# Each month we will try and feature Manila Alumni. Families that have spent years of their lives with us and were part of our community, we want to keep as part of our community forever. We need your help, please send us contact information for any alumni you are in contact with......turn to page 3 in

Manila Alumni



### **OPEN DOORS MONUMENT**

attached PDF file



Last month, hundreds of Filipinos and Jews from all over the world gathered at the World's Nations Cherished park in Rishon Lezion.....turn to page 4 in attached PDF file

### JEWISH ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

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## August 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
<b>2</b> Hebrew and Torah Classes for Children	3 Minyan 7:15 Followed by Breakfast	4 Ladies Lesson 11AM	5	6 Minyan 7:15 Followed by Breakfast	7	8 Junior Morning Service 10:30 Kiddush sponsored by Dayan family in honor of Edmond Dayan
<b>9</b> Hebrew and Torah Classes for Children	10 Minyan 7:15 Followed by Breakfast	11 Ladies Lesson 11AM	12	13 Minyan 7:15 Followed by Breakfast	14	15 Junior Morning Service 10:30
16 Hebrew and Torah Classes for Children	17 Minyan 7:15 Followed by Breakfast	18 Ladies Lesson 11AM	19	20 Rosh Chodesh Lecture: Belief in God	21 Rosh Chodesh	22 Junior Morning Service 10:30
23 Hebrew and Torah Classes for Children	<b>24</b> Minyan 7:15 Followed by Breakfast	25 Ladies Lesson 11AM	26	27 Minyan 7:15 Followed by Breakfast	28 MONTHLY INTERNA- TIONAL SHABATON	29 Junior Morning Service 10:30
<b>30</b> Hebrew and Torah Classes for Children	31 Minyan 7:15 Followed by Breakfast					

### **DONATIONS**



Thank you **Tal Shem Tov** for the wonderful bookcases. We can now display the books we have in the library.



Thank you also to Camille Gilan for helping organize the books.

Please come and browse the books. Hook up your laptops to

our WIFI. Borrow the books. They are there for everyone. Any books you want to borrow please sign out with Claire.



### WHO IS ASHKENAZI? WHO IS SHEPHARDIC?

### **ASHENAZI**

The name Ashkenaz was applied in the Middle Ages to Jews living along the Rhine River in northern France and western Germany. The center of Ashkenazi Jews later spread to Poland-Lithuania and now there are Ashkenazi settlements all over the world. The term "Ashkenaz" became identified primarily with German customs and descendants of German Jews.

In the 10th and 11th century, the first Ashkenazim, Jewish merchants in France and Germany, were economic pioneers, treated well because of their trading connections with the Mediterranean and the East. Jewish communities appeared in many urban centers. Early Ashkenaz communities were small and homogeneous.

Ashkenazim focused on biblical and Talmudic studies. Centers of rabbinic scholarship appeared in the tenth century in Mainz and Worms in the Rhineland and in Troyes and Sens in France. Ashkenazi scholarship centered around oral discussion. Sages focused on understanding the minutiae of the texts instead of extracting general principles. The most famous early teacher was Rabbenu Gershom of Mainz. Some of his decrees, such as that forbidding polygamy, are still in existence today. The first major Ashkenazi literary figure was Rashi (Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes, 1040-1105), whose commentaries on the Bible and Talmud are today considered fundamental to Jewish study.

### **SEPHARDIC**

The descendants of Jews who left Spain or Portugal after the 1492 expulsion are referred to as Sephardim. The word "Sephardim" comes from the Hebrew word for Spain, Sepharad, that is stated in the Bible. It is believed that Jews have lived in Spain since the era of King Solomon (c.965-930 B.C.E.). Little information can be found on these Jews until the beginning of the first century. We do know that in 305 C.E., the Council of Toledo passed an edict forbidding Jews from blessing the

crops of non-Jews and prohibiting Jews and non-Jews from eating together.

The era of Muslim rule in Spain (8th-11th century) was considered the "Golden Age" for Spanish Jewry. Jewish intellectual and spiritual life flourished and many Jews served in Spanish courts. Jewish economic expansion was unparalleled. In Toledo, Jews were involved in translating Arabic texts to the romance languages, as well as translating Greek and Hebrew texts into Arabic. Jews also contributed to botany, geography, medicine, mathematics, poetry and philosophy.

A number of well-known Jewish physicians practiced during this period, including Hasbai ibn Shaprut (915-970), who was the doctor for the Caliph (leader of Spain). Many famous Jewish figures lived during the Golden Age and contributed to making this a flourishing period for Jewish thought. These included Samuel Ha-Nagid, Moses ibn Ezra, Solomon ibn Gabirol Judah Halevi and Moses Mainmonides.

### **MANILA ALUMNI**

### Rina Cardema



I have good news! I just visited my doctor for the results of my PET CT scan that I did last week and he says that I am cancer-free and in remission! What a blessing! I'll have to do another follow up scan in 3 months time. To all of my wonderful doctors, friends and family who

supported me throughout this, a big thank you once again!

### Oren, Shlomo and Nanette Keston

I lived in Manila for nearly 30 years, from 1975 until the end of 2002. From the garment business in Manila, I went back



to my original love and interest in natural sciences, especially geology. I attend adult education courses, lectures, seminars and conferences, whenever given in English. Otherwise I stay home and watch a lot of sports on TV and have fun. The Dead Sea region is my

favorite destination in Israel. The food varieties here are the best, especially the fruits all year round.

Right now Nanette is visiting in Manila.

**Shlomo** 

### **VISITORS**







Rabbi Hiam Gurvitch

Joseph Ely Joel Weinberger and Baruch Gurfein



Rabbi Tessler, David Shamoon and Rabbi Katz



Rabbi Azaria, Rabbi Getzy Markowitz, Lee Blumenthal and Rabbi Freidman

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### **OPEN DOORS MONUMENT**



Last month, hundreds of Filipinos and Jews from all over the world gathered at the World's Nations Cherished park in Rishon Lezion. The event celebrated the culmination of three years' effort towards commemorating the Philippines' gesture and inaugurated the Open Doors monument, by renowned Filipino artist June Lee.

Government Services Minister Michael Eitan took the podium and after describing the bonds between the Jewish and Filipino peoples, he said it was Israel's "obligation to be especially polite to the [Filipinos] living among us." The Philippine tourism minister Joseph H. Durano also spoke. "We are a tolerant people. Never have we taken part in anti-Jewish activities and Jews never lived in a ghetto in Manila. There was an exchange of cultures. This inauguration is a symbol of the human spirit, which is second to that of God."

Max Weissler, 76, is one of the last survivors living in Israel who took refuge in the Philippines. For the past few years, he has been working to see the monument erected.

"I grew up in a region that belonged to Germany. We were the only Jews there. One day the village cop came to my father and said 'run away quickly. In a day or two, I'll have to arrest you.' When I was eight years old, we arrived in Denmark as refugees. They didn't let us stay, but did let us try and find a place to go to. My father went to the Philippines. I went there

with my mother later, in 1941. The Philippines treated the Jews well. My mother baked cookies, and I sold them after school. The church told them that we killed Jesus, but there was no anti-Semitism."

While 1,500 Jews found refuge on the islands, 8,500 more could have fled to the Philippines and thus been saved. "The president offered refuge for 10,000," Weissler tells *The Jerusalem Post*, "but the Jews who already lived in the Philippines claimed that [the refugees] would be a burden, and that only the ones who had a profession should be let in. One lady I knew, a nurse, wanted to bring her brothers in, but since she didn't have enough money, they were killed in the Holocaust. The Jews [preferred] to go to America. My cousin was on the ship *St. Louis* and in 1939 was sent back to Germany, to the death camps."

"We are proud to have common history with the Israelis," says Chester Omega Diaz, from the Philippine Council in Israel.

An estimated 35,000 Filipinos reside in Israel, employed mainly as caregivers. The community is active in charity work both here and back home. Former president of the FFCI (Federation of the Filipino Community in Israel) Anne Gonzaga says: "We wanted to be a part of this. We held a huge cultural event at the 50th anniversary for the diplomatic relationships between the two countries, and a raffle where the first prize was a flight to the Philippines. We dedicated all the profits to the establishment of the monument."

"There is justice in the establishment of the monument," Bilar says. "The Philippines were wonderful. I grew up in the Philippines until I was 18, when I came to Israel to study at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. There's a natural affection between the Philippines and Israel."

Ralph Preiss was born in Germany in 1930 and arrived in the Philippines with his parents in 1939. "We had never heard of the place, which had this remarkable 'open door' policy allowing German Jews to immigrate. My father, Dr. Harry Preiss, would have been arrested by the Nazis if he hadn't happened to be out of town. He went into hiding until we left [Germany.]

"We traveled to Paris on the way to Genoa, Italy, to catch a ship for the Far East. In Paris, we stayed with my two cousins, uncle and aunt, who had left Berlin in 1933. They were caught when the Nazis overran Paris and were sent to Auschwitz to be murdered. But we managed to escape to Manila.

"Our Filipino neighbors were all warm, helpful, hospitable, and completely without prejudice," Preiss recalls. "I have always been grateful to the Philippines for saving my immediate family, and to the Filipino people who have taught me hospitality and compassion to help others."

"We are excited about the monument," says Gonzaga, who has been working in Israel for five years. "It will serve as a memorial to the Filipino people's humanitarian deed. We opened not only our doors, but also our hearts to the Jewish people when we gave them refuge during World War II. I feel proud as a Filipino, especially because I took part in the project."

In Gonzaga's opinion, the erection of the monument will help strengthen ties between Israel and the Philippines. "The Filipino community here in Israel is excited and proud, as well. We all contributed to making this project possible," she says.