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March 2004

The following excerpts from the Lamp are available for your review:

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From the Desk of Rabbi David E. Fass

Who Says What God Says?

One of our congregants forwarded the following to me, and I feel it very important to share it with you:

The Presidential Prayer Team is currently urging us to: "Pray for the President as he seeks wisdom on how to legally codify the definition of marriage. Pray that it will be according to Biblical principles. With many forces insisting on variant definitions of marriage, pray that God's Word and His standards will be honored by our government."

In response, someone wrote the following:

"I'm sure any good religious person believes prayer should be balanced by action. So here, in support of the Prayer Team's admirable goals, is a proposed Constitutional Amendment codifying marriage entirely on Biblical principles:

-- Marriage in the United States shall consist of a union between one man and one or more women. (Genesis 29:17-28; II Samuel 3:2-5.)

-- Marriage shall not impede a man's right to take concubines in addition to his wife or wives. (II Samuel 5:13; I Kings 11:3; II Chronicles 11:21)

-- A marriage shall be considered valid only if the wife is a virgin. If the wife is not a virgin, she shall be executed. (Deuteronomy 22:13-21)

-- Marriage of a believer and a non-believer shall be forbidden. (Genesis 24:3; Numbers 25:1-9; Ezra 9:12; Nehemiah 10:30)"

Who has the right to arrogate to themselves the right to speak for God? Even as a Rabbi, I certainly don't. Those in favor of a Constitutional amendment defining marriage based on "God's word" are using only their word, not God's. Let us be very careful to leave the definition of what it means to be created in God's image to the Almighty, not to fallible human beings.

I will pray – but I will pray that the president and those who advise him understand that sexual preference is hard-wired, not some evil choice that must be eradicated. It can't be. It can only be persecuted to the detriment of those involved and to the detriment of the freedoms our country claims to cherish. God forbid that we allow some to hijack God's word at the expense of others.

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Cantor's Notes

It is truly a pleasure to see our sanctuary filled. One such occasion took place on Shabbat Shirah. We had a very special event with a Klezmer band that played during the service and gave a concert afterwards. I think that we managed to achieve a wonderful feeling of community. It was such a pleasure to see the entire congregation dancing and singing together. I hope we will have many more events like this in the future.

This feeling of community is possible to achieve only when we have a community, only if you come for these events. It is a chain reaction. The more you come for the services, the more you participate in services, the better and more spiritual services are.

As you probably already know, on March 6 at 6:30 PM we will celebrate Purim in a very special way. Temple Beth Sholom will present a Purim shpiel, in this case a musical "The Sounds of Purim." This Purim festivity is oriented for people of all ages. There are over 30 participants involved in this humorous show. Don't miss this very special event!

There is another event you don't want to miss – **Shabbat Across America** on Friday night, March 12. This service will include participation of all of our choirs and some musical instruments in style of "Kleiz...." , actually it does not matter in what style, but it will be fun!

And last but not least! On March 21 at 3:00 PM our Adult Choir will be participating in the New Jersey- Hudson Valley Choral Festival which will take place at Temple Emeth in Teaneck, NJ.

Come to support our Choir, and may be soon we will see you singing with our Choir.

Have a wonderful month!

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