

May 29, 2009

Chag Samayach and Shabbat Shalom!

I wanted to share a few thoughts and insights from our Shavuot Evening Seder and Discussion last night, which, I am sure, will provide you with some food for thought as we observe this festival of commitment to learning and to community!

- *Respect all people and have regard for the natural world as well.*
- *Protect the earth's resources through recycling and all that "going green" entails.*
- *Share what you have with those in need by supporting food pantries and other institutions that offer crucial assistance.*
- *Give to others in any way you can, including time, talents and spirit!*
- *Be happy with what you have.*
- *Be a good parent and/or a good teacher to members of the next generation!*
- *We should act in such a way that can enrich our lives and the lives of others.*
- *Being members of a community means showing empathy, making outsiders feel like insiders, finding a touch of God in each other, and engendering fellowship, unity, acceptance, love, reverence, and mutual support.*
- *Truly listen to people who seek your support and respond thoughtfully to their concerns.*
- *Send a portion of leftover food from public events to shelters, children's homes, and other similar agencies.*
- *Be present for people in moments of joy and at times of sorrow.*
- *Making peace between people can include constructively dealing with conflicts at work or at home in a way that can bring resolution.*
- *Volunteer for agencies, institutions and causes that will enable you to live your values.*

These comments from the discussion among our minyan-plus gathered at Temple last night all came in response to classic texts from the Jewish heritage. May we continue to study, examine and explore Jewish insights and teachings in the future so that we can find new ways to practice the values that we prize!

-- L'shalom, Rabbi Larry K.