

Rabbi's Column

If the world stops providing new things that I am involved with, I will get back to the Kashrut update issue. In the meantime, you may have heard about people gathering this past Saturday in various places throughout the world, including Cheyenne. Since it was on a Saturday, I put this into my mental drawer of "stuff I cannot attend" and did not think anything further about it. Sometime this past week, I was contacted by one of the organizers of the March. The March was starting at 10, but about noon they would be gathering back at the Depot so the religious leaders could speak. Would I be interested? Long story short, while I wasn't part of the outdoor speakers, I was the only one to speak during the food part inside the Depot.

These are the general thoughts I expressed - I had nothing of mine in writing, as I had in mind a tale, a teaching and a prayer. The tale got skipped for various reasons.

America is an amazing country. None of the protesters were shot, or arrested, and there are very few places and even fewer eras where that would be likely.

2500 years ago, Jeremiah told us, after we were exiled, to get on with our lives and pray for the welfare of the country we lived in. We have done so, whether the leader was the equivalent of Attila the Hun or Mother Theresa. On this very day, Jews everywhere were praying for the country they live in.

The organizers of the March probably did not consult the Torah portion to decide when to hold it, but if they had, this weekend would most likely have been chosen. We begin the book of Exodus. For the next four books, the major character is Moses, yet if it were not for five strong women, he would not have made it.

Shifra and Puah are the midwives who stood up to Pharaoh. Pharaoh is not one of your nice Western leaders, but somebody who makes sure that what he says happens. They stood up to Pharaoh by refusing to kill the boy babies. Pharaoh didn't care about killing the girl babies, as he did not consider them all that important. When Pharaoh confronts them, they tell him that by the time they get to the birthing spot, the Israelite women had already given birth, and left with the child. God rewards them by providing homes and families. Miriam, the sister, is according to some Rabbis only 5 years old as she follows her brother in his box, to see how she can help,

Yocheved, his mother, not only gives birth to him, but hides him for 3 months. Bat Par'oh comes to the water and rescues the infant in the box. She is one of only two people in the Tanakh who are considered compassionate, because she considered something more important than acting as part of her people. [King Saul is the other person considered compassionate. He let a fellow King, part of the tribe of Amalek, survive until Samuel kills the Amalekite as God had commanded.] These five women, who had no power as we think of it today, helped engender the whole Israelite beginning.

I then recited the Prayer for our Country out of Siddur Sim Shalom.

