

Pesach, the Exodus and AIPAC

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Pesach and the *Pesach Seder* is most observed of all Jewish holidays. We know the story of *Pesach*, which begins in Exodus chapter 1 with the enslavement of the Hebrews and ends with their exodus from Egypt, attaining freedom and becoming our ancestors – the ancestors of the Jewish People.



There is a second *Exodus*. It is a book by author Leon Uris, made into a movie in 1960 directed by Otto Preminger, with a screenplay by Dalton Trumbo and Leon Uris. (*Aside: The 2015 movie Trumbo tells Dalton's story of being blacklisted by the House Un-American Activities Committee is well worth watching!*) The movie starred Paul Newman and Eva Marie Saint and tells the story of the founding of the state of Israel whose action begins when a ship filled with Jewish immigrants bound for Israel is being off loaded in Cyprus.

Having just returned from the AIPAC policy conference in Washington, DC with 13 total Temple Har Shalom-ers, it was wonderful to see more than 18,000 conference goers, Jews and non-Jews, high school and college youth to young parents and senior citizens, people of color – every color, united in their support of Israel and the necessity of maintaining and even strengthening the relationship between two great friends and partners, the U.S. and Israel. Israel has many friends in the U.S. fighting for a secure, a safe, and a sustainable Israel and for that we are grateful.

So, this *Pesach* as we retell the story of the Exodus let us remember the joy and wonder of freedom, and remember to be grateful, too, for Israel and for our community and the freedom we have to worship, live and work together as Jews in the Watchung Hills; this is something we mustn't and cannot afford to take for granted.

On *Pesach* may you and yours rejoice in the richness of our traditions and be blessed with the rich and bountiful gifts of life!

Shalom Aleichem,
Stephanie and Karen