

Invocation for Leonard and Tobee Kaplan Dinner
May 18, 2008
Rabbi Eliezer Havivi

In the *parsha* we read this week, *Parshat B'chukotai* – we read of God's promise to the Israelites if they carry out God's *mitzvot* faithfully:

"V'hisig lachem da'ish et batzitr, uvatzir yasig et zara.

Your threshing shall overtake the vintage, and the vintage shall overtake the sowing, you shall eat your fill of bread, and dwell securely in your land."

What a beautiful image of bounty – there will be so much grain to thresh, that the threshing will continue into the late summer when the vines are picked, and the vines will be so plentiful, that the harvest will extend into the wheat planting season.

Tonight, we celebrate the contributions of a couple, whose leadership and foresight have made our synagogue and our neighborhood, the vibrant and abundant and bountiful Jewish community that it is today.

We have two vigorous and spirited synagogues; A Hebrew Day School, a Federation matched by none in the country, a Jewish Boarding High School where some 20% of the students are from in town, and a little farther away down the road, a Camp Ramah Darom and in the other direction, a North Carolina Hillel, all of which strengthen us – adults and students and campers and families in growing and living engaged Jewish lives.

What a plentiful Jewish community we celebrate tonight! To use the metaphor of the *parsha*, there are so many Jewish activities going on in one night, that they overtake the Jewish activities and meetings and classes and shul going on, on the next night. .

Leonard and Tobee, much of this bounty is due to your support, your vision, your persistence, and your generosity. You understand that what we are given in life is not really ours, but is a gift; a God-given tool to pass on to others, and to use, to make the world a better place. Thank you.

Tobee and Leonard – We are all about to enjoy the bounty of a delicious meal. You would honor us if you would allow me to join you in reciting the *Motzi*, acknowledging our thanks to God, for being the ultimate provider of the gifts that we enjoy and the bread we savor tonight.