

THE SHOFAR DECEMBER 2023

Congregation B'nai Israel

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FROM THE DESK OF RABBI PEARL

Chanukah, the much beloved and at least for children, much anticipated festival, begins this year on Thursday night, December 7th at sundown. The commemoration of a long-ago victory over an evil enemy who sought to eradicate Judaism, and of a miracle of lights that burned long beyond the modest oil supply of the newly sanctified Temple menorah, always brings us joy and reassurance that Jews somehow survive all the bad that history has thrown our way.

Chanukah inspires many questions in the codes of Jewish law that define and guide our observance. A famous one is, why was the miracle of the one day oil supply that lasted for eight days necessary at all? There is a principle in Jewish law "Tumah Hutra BeTzibur", holy items that are rendered ritually impure can still be used for a public purpose. So even if there was no pure oil available for lighting the menorah, the impure oil that was available was permissible. So who needs the miracle?

The answer to that question is that we needed the miracle.

The battle to defeat the Helenizers, those that wanted to obliterate Torah, was long and hard. At times, it must have been hard to see the hand of G-d. But at the culmination, a miracle was needed to remind our ancestors and ourselves, that G-d was involved every step of the way. So the victory, which was a miracle in and of itself, needed to have a public miracle to remind all that all miracles come from G-d.

The news of Israel continues to be hard to bear. While small numbers of hostages are being released, there are still many in captivity. Hamas is very far from being destroyed and awaits new opportunities to kill Jews. AS Churchill remarked on the defeat of Rommel in Egypt: "This is not the end. This is not even the beginning of the end. But perhaps, it is the end of the beginning". We await, and must appreciate, G-d's miracles to end this terrible time for Israel and for us.

Happy Chanukah.

Rabbi Pinchas Pearl

Please join us this coming Saturday night, December 2nd, for the second part of our screening of the six-episode series "A Small Light". The series is the story of Miep Gies, the woman who organized the hiding place for Anne Frank and her family, and who kept the family supplied with food. The screening will take place at 7 PM at the shul.

Ice cream and refreshments to follow. Please join us, even if you've missed the first part!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

December is the month of Chanukah! Hurray! A time of giving and rededication. We think of the brave Maccabees who rededicated the Holy Temple in Jerusalem so many years ago. Now is our time to light the candles on our chanukiah* and rededicate ourselves to our temple.

Our sisterhood has been as active as ever with new fundraising ideas and fun activities. We continue our Hebrew school classes and our regular services. The Rabbi's women's bat mitzvah classes are progressing. Don't miss our Chanukah dinner on December 8. We have also planned a New Year's Day brunch. (More information on that will be coming.) I hope that you can participate in more of these.

Recently Mel Fox has moved upstate. I will miss his participation in our regular temple life. He has been involved in our shul for so many years, and will be missed.

From my family to yours, a joyous Chanukah with light and laughter.

Marty Eisenberg

* *Chanukiah* – a Chanukah menorah.

SISTERHOOD UPDATE

I hope everyone had a very nice, warm Thanksgiving with family and friends.

Hard to believe but Chanukah is around the corner. Susan Finkelstein is busy receiving replies, and we are about to have the Chanukah cards printed. Before we know it, we will be mailing our members a lovely card with the names of those who have contributed to this effort. Thank you to all the participants.

On December 3, at least 15 people will be attending a musical at Wagner College, "It's a Grand Night for Singing". Thanks to the efforts of Laurie Raps for putting it all together.

Our next Book Club selection will be "Tuesdays with Morrie" by Mitch Albom. This book is celebrating its twenty-five year anniversary but is truly timeless. It is a most worthwhile read for everyone. We will have our book club meeting at 7:30 and our next regular meeting at 8:00 PM on December 4th.

Hoping that you and yours have a bright, beautiful Chanukah with family and friends adding to the warmth of this wonderful celebration. We have so much to be thankful for, while, of course, the safety and welfare of Israel is uppermost in our minds and hearts.

Sandy Levy, Sisterhood President

FRIDAY CANDLE LIGHTING:

December 1	4:12
December 8	4:11
December 15	4:12
December 22	4:14
December 29	4:19

FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICES – 8 PM

SATURDAY MORNING SERVICES – 9:30 AM

THE SMOKED SALMON DILEMMA: A POX ON YOUR LOX?

by Joel H Cohen

Until recent events drained the humor out of almost everything, this frequently quoted, light-hearted comment was a welcome summary of the Jewish experience:

"They tried to kill us, they failed, let's eat."

The eating element has always applied. Food-consumption plays a big role; some would say "too big" in the Jewish experience.

Think about it. Starting with the rules of kashruth that are sometimes perplexing - what can and can't be eaten, and in what order or combination.

For instance, I learned only recently that letting meat and fish share the same plate is a no-no. And I'm not a dietician, never played one on TV, so I'm puzzled as to why we Jews have to wait six hours to eat dairy after meat in Brooklyn, for instance, but the combo can sprout in Brussels in only three.

The food-related regulations go back to Biblical days. Adam and Eve disobeyed a fundamental rule and ate from the Tree of Knowledge

Abraham was celebrated for his hospitality. And also on the positive side, young women of the Bible showed their sensitivity by offering water to thirsty young potential suitors. Yet, future Patriarch Jacob held back food for his famished brother, Esau until his brother turned over his blessing of the first-born.

Every Jewish holiday has its own special food -- latkes on Chanukah, matzah on Pesach, while Sukkoth meals are even eaten in a special facility (a Sukkah). Absence of food, of course, takes the spotlight on Yom Kippur, and many secular conversations that day deal with how many hours until it's legitimate to eat.

Aside from religious holidays, food reigns. In modern times, the relatively subtle inquiry to determine whether someone is Jewish ("Do you know where I can buy a herring?") even has a foodish label: **bageling**.

A beloved Jewish lullaby centers on food: "Rozenkes unf Mandlen" = "Raisins and Almonds."

And a seeming corny but incredibly touching vignette deals with Bonshe Shveig, an impoverished man who never complained through years of pain and deprivation. A heavenly chorus of angels wants to reward him. Bonshe thinks for a moment and says, "maybe a piece of bread," and a moment later: "and maybe a little butter." The angels - and some audience members - weep.

Some years later, my late wife Nancy's sister and I were in a car at a brother-in-law's funeral. Ruthie mentioned she had Nancy's estate and also money for the shiva meal. To which Nancy, trying to lighten the mood, asked: "How did you know how much to leave for the Shiva meal?"

My sister-in-law replied: "Well, you don't have to serve them lox."

Jewish food wisdom to live by, don't you agree?

Thank You for Your Generous Donation

Lillian Brosnick and Marvin Cooper for sponsoring an Oneg and Kiddush in honor of Marvin's birthday
Joel Cohen in memory of Jerry Hauser
Joel Cohen in honor of Mel Fox
Joel Cohen in honor of Laurie and David Raps
Steven and Alice Frey in memory of Fay Frey
Gladys and Joel Graham in memory of Leo Ziegler
Gloria Hirsch in memory of Alex Preiser
Sandy Levy in memory of Sara and Philip Tenenzapf
Roberta Sapolsky in memory of Gladys Streger
Melinda Sims and Joel Bloom in memory of Sheldon Bloom

UPCOMING EVENTS - Mark your calendar!

Monday, December 4 at 7:30 PM – Sisterhood Book Club and Meeting

Saturday, December 2 at 7 PM - Movie night: "A Small Light", continuation of the story of Anne Frank, from the perspective of Miep Goes, who hid the Frank family. Refreshments will be served.

Sunday, December 3rd - Theater party to see "A Grand Night for Singing" at the Wagner College Theatre; tickets \$36. Contact Laurie Raps if interested.

Friday, December 8 – Chanukah dinner. Adults \$36, children \$10. Reservations must be made by December 5th.

Monday, January 1 – New Year's Day Brunch (see below)

Ongoing (listen to weekly announcements):

Sundays at 10 AM – Rabbi's class – Adult Bat Mitzvah

Sundays at 11:30 AM – Men's Club meeting

SAVE THE DATE!

NEW YEAR'S DAY BRUNCH

January 1, 2024 at 11 AM

\$18 per person

Details will be forthcoming

Yahrzeits for November 2023

Yahrzeits begin on the evening before the given date. If you need to say Kaddish for a Yahrzeit, please call the office two weeks before and we will try to have a Minyan. It would be helpful if you could have a few family members or friends attend the services to make sure there is a Minyan. For additions or corrections to this list, please contact Laurie Raps at (718) 967-4975 or spar1012@aim.com.

Hebrew Date	Yahrzeit Of	Relationship	Relative	Date in 2023
18 Kislev	Edith Helicher	Mother	Bonnie Arciero	Dec 1
18 Kislev	Ruth Sandick	Mother	Ilene Greinsky	Dec 1
20 Kislev	Bernard X Cohen	Father	Rae Ganzman	Dec 3
21 Kislev	Gail Siskind	Sister	Arnold Dunn	Dec 4
23 Kislev	Irving Cohen	Father	Joel Cohen	Dec 6
23 Kislev	Alan Weisberg	Husband	Judy Weisberg	Dec 6
24 Kislev	Bill Hirsch	Husband	Gloria Hirsch	Dec 7
25 Kislev	Phyllis Resnick	Sister	Gary Gordon	Dec 8
26 Kislev	Philip Rosenbach	Father	Janet Rocco	Dec 9
27 Kislev	Dorothy Bale	Mother	Rhoda Jaslow	Dec 10
28 Kislev	Jack Springer	Father	Sandy Levy	Dec 11
28 Kislev	Marion Pearlberg	Mother	Andrea Weiser	Dec 11
28 Kislev	Stuart Goldstein	Husband	Marilyn Goldstein	Dec 11
29 Kislev	Elliot Sklar	Brother	Ira Sklar	Dec 12
1 Tevet	Roselle Graham	Mother	Joel Graham	Dec 13
1 Tevet	Emmanuel Goldklang	Father	Lillian Phillips	Dec 13
3 Tevet	Isadore Kashubo	Father	Barry Kashubo	Dec 15
6 Tevet	Celia Morrison	Mother	Aviva Levine	Dec 18
7 Tevet	Nathan Cohen	Father	Iris Cohen	Dec 19
7 Tevet	Harry Cohen	Father	Sheldon Cohen	Dec 19
9 Tevet	Herman Perl	Father-In-Law	Marvin Cooper	Dec 21
12 Tevet	Anna Lebedinskaya	Mother	Galina Dvorkina	Dec 24
13 Tevet	Abraham Schragger	Father	David Schragger	Dec 25
14 Tevet	Bertha Cohen	Mother	Rae Ganzman	Dec 26
14 Tevet	Helen Katz	Mother	Otto Katz	Dec 26
14 Tevet	Delia Sotland	Mother	Lillian Brosnick	Dec 26
15 Tevet	Miriam Epstein	Mother	Rita Hauser	Dec 27
16 Tevet	Max Poris	Father	Steven Poris	Dec 28
17 Tevet	Roman Rapoport	Brother	Sophia Cohen	Dec 29

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