

Kayruv



קירוב

“Judaism for Today In a Warm and Caring Environment”

December 2018

Kislev/Tevet 5779

FROM THE RABBI



Dear Friends,

As I write this, *Chanukah* is finally almost here. My children can barely wait these last days. Of course, there are the presents and the latkes, the Dreidel and the *sufganiot* (doughnuts).

But above the din of all these external entrapments, there is a fascinating idea that never gets old: miracles.

The basic idea behind lighting candles during *Chanukah* is *pirsum ha-nes*, publicizing of the miracle. Making the miracle known. The candles, which were originally oil lamps, indicate that we are talking about the miracle of the oil, but we also mention the military miracle in the paragraph that we add to our *Amidah*, our standing prayer: “You delivered the many into the hands of the few”.

An interesting question is asked, however, regarding the date of *Chanukah*. The Maccabees were able to seize and clean the temple on the 25th of *Kislev*, the Hebrew date when we light the first candle. That’s when they found that single hidden jar containing oil, and put it in the menorah of the Temple, and lit it. At that moment, there is no miracle of oil: the oil is burning as expected.

The miracle of oil happens, really, only on the 26th of *Kislev*, when we light the second candle. So if *Chanukah* is just about the oil, the date would be wrong. And that is impossible, so the date itself implies that there is more to *Chanukah* than meets the eye.

The rabbis really talk about *Chanukah* and its candles only in passing. There is no specific tractate in the Talmud about *Chanukah*, as the rabbis are discussing how to light the Shabbat lights, what can be and cannot be used as fuel, the question is asked: *mai Chanukah?* - “what is *Chanukah?*”

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Kayruv means “Welcoming.”



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And the basics are set out in about two pages. And then the discussion returns to Shabbat. The military win is downplayed in the Talmud and the reason is obvious: the Temple is not there anymore, and Romans are everywhere.

But the date carries a hint: it is also about that moment of entering, cleaning, rebuilding and against all odds, rekindling the menorah. And so the prayer, too, mentions it. Quickly.

I find that both of these miracles are great, but the greatness of the story still lies with characters so small we don't know who they are. Who was the common kohen that hid the jar of oil? Who was able to convince others that, yes, lighting the menorah is the right thing to do, even though we expect it to peter out and end? We know the names of the sons of Matatياهو, but we don't know the other 10,000 names of those who became the army. In each of them lies the same miracle, the miracle of Jewish resilience. The hoping-against-all-odds miracle. The miracle of having clear values and ideals.

Making the miracle public means to have a lit *Chanukiyah* in a visible place. The same piece in the Talmud indicates the left side of the door, or a window. Which miracle exactly you have in mind is almost irrelevant: the purpose of the *Chanukah* lights is to let them shine in the outside world, to celebrate whichever miracle you see in the story of *Chanukah* and make it a positive influence in the darkness outside. It is also a reminder to see ourselves as living within a miracle.

If we look closely, we will see miracles all around us. We are part of a miracle - we are part of a chain that, against all odds, is still here. This applies equally to our people, our community and our families. Let us make the miracle public to others, but also to our own hearts.

Chag HaUrim Sameach, happy Festival of Lights,

Rabbi Nelly Altenburger

RABBI'S OFFICE HOURS

Rabbi Altenburger invites you to meet with her and will be available any day except Wednesday and Shabbat. Please feel free to call or stop by.

Donations for CBI's Year Long Food Drive



Our ongoing food donation program continues to be a success. Don't stop now! There are people in our Danbury community that need our help. This is a monthly donation program. Please bring a little something whenever you can.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

Our shul has many assets including our members and dedicated volunteers. To me, one of our greatest **hidden gems** is our Adult Education Program. Each week I am amazed about everything I learn and new interpretations of what I thought I knew. As an

example, I will discuss the current class, *Power of the Midrash*.

In this class, we analyze the writings in the Torah as interpreted by our sages and the class members. Did you know that Avraham studied with Noah and Shem? Did the thirty plus years he spent with Noah and Shem have an effect on his thinking and life and help mold him into the patriarch he became? I cannot even put in this article what I learned about Adam and Eve. You might ask why I should care about the sages and their writings. Judaism is more than the Torah and scriptures. It is rabbinical interpretation of those writings. Remember any three Jews will have at least eight opinions. To me, that is the strength of our religion and particularly the Conservative movement where we interpret with an eye on contemporary times.

Our Rabbi is committed to providing our members with a wealth of adult education opportunities. She offers each class in both the morning and evening to attract as many participants as she can. When there is a conflict, she works with us. For example, I will have a conflict beginning in January with Thursday night, and she has agreed to move the class to Monday evening. If you have a subject that you would like to explore further, she is willing to develop a class. The topics have varied; focusing on prayer, forms of prayer, and a fantastic discussion of the Holocaust and where was G-d.

I encourage you to join us for one of the classes. While there is a theme to the classes, if you miss one it is not a big deal, you catch up quickly. Best of all there is no examination at the end of the course, just a feeling of expanding your mind and learning.

Recently I attended Shabbat services at a congregation in Pennsylvania that has about 75 member families; slightly larger than our membership. When I arrived on Shabbat there were 8 people and they ended with 13. I was so proud to

tell them, while trying not to boast, that we have slightly fewer members and that we usually can count on 20-30 members attending our Shabbat service. "What is your secret?" they asked. I wanted to tell them it was the power and persuasiveness of our president, but I realized the reason is YOU. You want to be part of our service and have that spiritual lift that comes from services and being part of the community.

I want to thank those of you who let me know what you thought of my article last month. While most agreed with me, someone took exception to my using the article for my political agenda. I respect that person and understand. It was good to know that someone reads the article. Since there are no Nielson ratings or other way for me to know, I would appreciate an email letting me know you have read this month's article. Just email president@danburyskul.org and indicate "yes I read it." Thank you.

Since I like to mention volunteers who go over and beyond, I must single out Henry Tritter for defrosting the freezer in the kitchen. We can store about 1/3 more now that the ice is gone. Thank you Henry.

Hot off the presses, I am pleased to announce that the Jewish Federation of Western Connecticut Endowment has awarded us an \$800 grant for a Post B'nai Mitzvah Course project. Thank you to our Vice President David Levine who proposed the course and spearheaded the grant application. This course will be an excellent opportunity for our post *B'nai Mitzvah* students to continue their education.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a wonderful *Chanukah* and New Year. Along with the end of December comes a frantic look for deductions to lower our taxable income. Might I suggest a tax-deductible donation to Congregation B'nai Israel. Perhaps you need to finish paying for your dues or Kol Nidre pledge; perhaps you want to send an unrestricted or restricted donation. I will be emailing a letter next week explaining all the ways you can contribute to CBI and increase your charitable deductions and lower your taxes.

Thank you,
Paul M Simon

DECEMBER EVENTS

Yehuda Maccabee and CBI invite you to our...

CHANUKAH FENCING PARTY

DECEMBER 9 AT 10 AM

CBI's Hebrew School students will tell the story of the Maccabees and the miracle of the oil. Afterwards, all Maccabees, young and old, will have the chance to learn and test Maccabee skills with Jeremy Goun and the folks from Candlewood Fencing Center.

There will be ample fortification from fried foods, of course!

OPEN program, limited slots available, RSVP a must



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Danbury CT



CANDLEWOOD FENCING
candlewoodfencing.com

CBI is thankful to David Levine who entered our *Chanukah* Fencing Party as part of the *Chanukah* Across America of the National Jewish Outreach.

LOOKING AHEAD

SUPER BOWL LIII



Get ready for Super Bowl LIII ! This year the game will be held on **Sunday, February 3, 2019**. We will be awarding a first place cash prize of \$600.00 as well as a half-time prize of \$150.00. The price of boxes is the same as previous years, **\$50.00 for one** and **\$100.00 for three**. We will be following the same ground rules as we have in past years. The random selection of boxes will be made at the synagogue on the morning of February 3rd. Watch for further details via email and in January's bulletin.

This month at CBI's Hebrew School...

Our month of November saw a suspension of our regular activities due to our Chanukah unit. For Chanukah we learned three songs: *Sevivon Sov Sov Sov* (in both international and Israeli versions), *Hava Nairima* and *Banu Chosbech Legaresh*. You will have the opportunity to listen to those when you come to our Chanukah Fencing Party. We reviewed the story and the blessings.



Our Shabbat unit, which will continue after Chanukah, began this month with making Challah and making Challah covers. We learned why we take the challah and its blessing, and what makes challah, challah. (It is not the braiding.) From challah we transitioned to the *Mishkan*, or Tabernacle. We connected and will continue to do so after Chanukah the idea of resting on Shabbat and the work of the *Mishkan*. We built a model of the *Mishkan*, and will study the parts of it as well. From the *Mishkan* we will move to the Temple, or *Beit Hamikdash*, which is actually the structure in the Maccabees' story.

We continue with our Hebrew Through Movement program, adding on words and actions, as well as reviewing all the Hebrew words connected to Chanukah.

Warmly,
Rabbi Nelly Altenburger
David Levine



NEW words for Hebrew Through Movement:

Chanukyah

Chanukiyot

Ner

Nerot

Sufganyah

Sufganyot

Levivah

Levivot

Nes

Nisim

Lakum

Likfotz

Litz'od

Yom

Laila

THE MARKIND'S TO DELIVER CBI'S GREETINGS AND GIFTS TO KENYA

CBI's Connection to the Jewish Community in Kenya is Growing



CBI has built a connection with the Jewish Community in Kenya. Almost three years ago, we were visited by Yehudah Kimani who is the spokesperson for Kehilat Kasuku in Ol Kalou. Now that connection is growing. Sam and Dina Markind will be visiting former CBI members,

Jonathan and Denise Lenchner, who have been living in Nairobi for the last couple of years. While in Kenya they will be spending a Shabbat with Yehudah and the community in Ol Kalou.

As part of their visit, Dina and Sam will be bringing Judaica items that Yehudah has requested. If you can contribute any of these items please call or email the office with what you can donate and we will get the items to the Markinds.

Here is the request list from Yehudah:
We would appreciate things that include - *Tallitot*, *Mezuzah*, *Tefillin*, *Chanukah* candles, Shabbat candles and candle holders plus a very important item if possible. If you come across a donation of a laptop that would be appreciated as well. My community needs it so much and any educational stuff you can send for our children. Whatever they have room for they will be happy to bring to Kenya. Thank you for your generosity.



CONNECTICUT TEENS MEET THEIR ISRAELI COUNTERPARTS

For over a decade, CBI member Alvin Goldman, in cooperation with Stacey Kamiser of the Jewish Philanthropy of Upper Fairfield County, has been arranging for students from area high schools to meet with Israeli teenagers to learn about Israeli culture and lifestyle. Each year, four outstanding Israeli high school graduates sponsored by the Federation, are utilizing their "gap year" between high school and mandatory military service in the IDF (Israel Defense Force) to come to the U.S. as emissaries to interact with Jewish/American students. During this time they are hosted by families in Fairfield County, providing them a first-hand opportunity to experience American life.

Alvin felt that it was important to expand the mission of the emissaries so that they could meet with students in secular as well as religious settings. In order to reach a broader group, he began outreach to social studies chairs in area high schools, making arrangements to have the emissaries speak to their classes. The emissaries developed a fascinating slide lecture of the many facets of Israel's history, geography and culture. They present this lecture to their American counterparts using a question and answer format. Frequently the American students are surprised when viewing a map of the Middle East that dramatically illustrates Israel's size i.e., comparable to the size of New Jersey—a fact that makes that country's broad range of accomplishments all the more impressive. Following the slide presentation, each emissary meets with a small group of students allowing for a more intimate and lively interchange of questions and ideas. At the end of these sessions, e-mail addresses are often exchanged to continue the dialogue.

The social studies chairs of many of the area schools enthusiastically welcome the new group of emissaries returning each year, stating that their presentations enhance the students' understanding of Israel's unique position in the Middle East and the world community.

The photos below show the four emissaries. Shay Eshel, Eyal Marom, Rotem Sharon and Yuval Shahar presenting the slide lecture to students in New Fairfield High School last November as well as meeting in small, animated discussion groups.

Pat Goldman



GOOD TIMES WE SHARED

Our religious school students hard at work baking *challah* for our *Chanukah* party.

Photos courtesy of Nadja Raver





VOILA!!

SCHEDULE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

☆ **Shabbat, 30 Kislev, December 8, Miketz:**
Joseph's powers as a dream interpreter bring him to Pharaoh. *Haftarah:* Zechariah 2:14-4:7

☆ **Shabbat, 7 Tevet, December 15, Vayigash:**
Joseph reveals himself to his brothers and reunites with his father. *Haftarah:* Ezekiel 37:15-28

☆ **Shabbat, 14 Tevet, December 22, Vayhi:**
Jacob blesses his sons before he dies. *Haftarah:* I Kings 2:1-12

☆ **Shabbat, 21 Tevet, December 29, Sh'mot:**
The Israelites are enslaved and Moshe is called by God to confront Pharaoh. *Haftarah:* Isa. 27:6-, -28:13;29:22--23

☆ **Shabbat, 28 Tevet, January 5, Va'era:**
Pharaoh refuses to set the Israelites free and Egypt is beset with plagues. *Haftarah:* Eek. 28:25-29-21

☆ **Shabbat, 6 Shevat, January 12, Bo:** Free at last! The Israelites leave Egypt. *Haftarah:* Jer. 46:13-28

CANDLE LIGHTING

December 7, 2018:	4:10 PM
December 14, 2018:	4:11 PM
December 21, 2018:	4:14 PM
December 28, 2018:	4:18 PM
January 4, 2019:	4:24 PM
January 11, 2019:	4:31 PM

YAHARZEITS

9 Tevet, December 17, 2018

Lila Adams (F. Richard Steinberg)

11 Tevet, December 19, 2018

Ralph Blumenthal (Susan Tritter)

13 Tevet, December 21, 2018

Israel Nurenberg (Carol Nurenberg)

19 Tevet, December 27, 2017

David Slavin (Natalie Slavin & Evelyn Weinstein)

20 Tevet, December 28, 2018

Meilakh Asinovsky (Geysa Rabinovich)

21 Tevet, December 29, 2018

Betsy Field (Joyce and Martin Shenker)

22 Tevet, December 30, 2018

Norman Bass (Gail Boms)

1 Shevat, January 7, 2019

Louis Heller (Marc D. Heller)

6 Shevat, January 12, 2019

Benjamin Smeer (Dina Essinger)

8 Shevat, January 14, 2019

Bertha Blumenthal (Susan Tritter)

THANKS! THANKS!

For the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

☆ Susan M. Saloom in honor of Rivka Cohen.

☆ George Ohring in honor of the rabbi and the ritual committee for organizing and participating in the funeral and *shiva* for his wife Jean.

For the General Fund

☆ Paula and Philip Cook in memory of Doug Wise

☆ Christine Gambino in memory of Max Klein

☆ Abe Boms in memory of Shlomo Boms

☆ Gail Boms in memory of Pearl Wexler Bass

For Their Generous Kiddush

☆ Dina Markind

☆ Barbie and Jeff Steinberg in memory of Jeff's father Sidney

☆ Paul M Simon in memory of his father Jerry

☆ Christine Gambino in memory of Max Klein

☆ Isabel Kaplan in memory of her beloved father

IN THE COMMUNITY

What's Happening at the JCC in Sherman!

9 CT-39, Sherman, CT 06784

Phone: [\(860\) 355-8050](tel:(860)355-8050)

An Evening of Jazz with The TJ Thompson Trio

Saturday, January 12th 7PM (snow date Jan. 19th 7PM) - \$20 Members | \$25 Non-Members

Please buy tickets online by Thursday, Jan. 10th

Glass Bottle Paint Night with Color on Wheels

Thursday, January 24th 7PM-9PM (snow date Jan. 31st) - \$45 Per person, glass bottles included, BYOB, light snacks provided. Please Register by Tuesday, Jan. 22