

Kayruv



קירוב

“Judaism for Today In a Warm and Caring Environment”

February 2019

Shevat/Adar 1 5779

FROM THE RABBI



Dear Friends,

As Purim gets near, my thoughts tend to dwell on the figure of Amalek, whose most famous physical descendant is Haman. We read in the Torah, on the Shabbat before Purim,

about Amalek¹. Amalek was the leader of the first group that decided to destroy our people. At the Exodus, he attacked our

nomadic group, focusing on the stragglers, the tired, the ones incapable of combat. There are many words that describe Amalek's behavior. One of those is predatory: Amalek preys on those in a weakened state.

Studying with Aharon Varady, I was surprised to see a connection between the predation symbolized by Haman and Amalek and the idea of something that is not kosher, or *treif*. It turns out the the word “*teref*”, which carries the root for *treif*, or *taref*, also means prey. Initially, the word *taref* meant simply “a torn animal” and that became one of the underpinnings of *kashrut*: we can only eat slaughtered animals, not carcasses torn by animals. An animal only becomes a carcass, can only arrive to that state, if it is the prey of another. It is the predatory instinct of the hunter that transforms the reality of the prey into *taref*, or torn, and therefore not kosher.

Similarly, Amalek is the symbol of the predatory impulse: in the Torah Amalek attacks the rearmost stragglers, the weak.

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Kayruv means “Welcoming.”



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¹ Deuteronomy 25:17–18

When learning about the habits of predators such as wolves, the connection becomes clear: particularly, wolves in North America would attack buffalos that were sick or old. Such behavior was so accepted by buffalo herds that Native Americans would wear wolf skins as camouflage to get close to sickly or old buffalos for hunting. This is depicted in George Catlin's "Hunting Buffalo Camouflaged with Wolf Skins", painted in 1832².

But to believe that Amalek is merely our outside enemies, such as Haman or Hitler, is to have a naïve view of Amalek. With the maturation of Jewish thought, Amalek changes from an outsider to an insider, that is, from a people out there, to an impulse we need to curb within. In that sense, the Amalek within is also our predatory impulse. And, as we know, a predatory impulse left without any check or balance will transform us into something worse than animals.

It is unchecked predatory behavior that brought about the greatest disasters in human history, whether wars, genocides, economic crisis or ecological ones.

Mitzvot were given to make us better – better individuals and a better collective. The extent to which we use *mitzvot* to help us curb our predatory impulses is the extent to which our own souls are progressively refined. Animals, in this sense, are put in the world for our benefit – including our spiritual refinement by being aware of the pain they suffer.

Amalek, however, is the impulse that says "have no pity." And, having no pity, having no compassion, having no awareness of other beings' suffering destroys a soul by progressively blunting it, by making our minds and souls more and more accustomed with cruelty.

In that sense *mitzvot* help us to say "no" to that impulse of underestimating how cruel we can be because we, human beings, can be unspeakably cruel. In many places, people boil animals alive and eat them. Regardless of the *kashrut* of the species in question – I am thinking dogs in China, but also lobsters in America – this is a practice completely banned in our *kashrut* system. Because it is more than just predatory, it is cruel. Pure Amalek.

Teaching ourselves to be sensitive to animal pain makes us more likely to be sensitive to people's pain as well. The discipline of *kashrut* is a constant reminder not to be cruel, not to tear others apart, not to behave like a predator – and hopefully it will make us think twice before being cruel to human beings.

May we, in our Purim fun, remember that we are not supposed to let Amalek win both inside and outside.

Warmly,
Rabbi Nelly Altenburger

Judaism and Animals:
Restoring the Relationship

Talk by Sara Eifler
with Q&A session afterwards
February 16th at 11 AM
193 Clapboard Ridge Rd ~ Danbury ~CT

ALL ARE WELCOME ~ Refreshments will be served



² You can see it here.

<https://www.georgecatlin.org/Hunting-Bufferlo-Camouflaged-With-Wolf-Skins-C.1832.html>

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

February, the month of love, candy, flowers, ground hogs, presidents (Abe and George) and canned food. Who knew? Who says you do not learn new things reading this article?

According to Nationaltoday.com, "The Canned Food Information Council declared February Canned Food Month in 1987." A few more tidbits from the website:

- 1809 – Modern food preservation began – food was preserved in glass jars with cork tops, kept in place by metal wiring.
- 1810 – A British merchant patented tin cans
- 1855 – First can opener invented
- 1940 – Canning of carbonated soft drinks began
- 1957 – Aluminum was incorporated into the metal can

While this is interesting information, why is it important to our membership? CBI does not exist in a vacuum; we are part of a greater community. Some members of the community need assistance and our food and toiletries drive serves their needs. Since many donations are canned, we should celebrate Canned Food Month. If you are interested in other February holidays, go to www.holidayinsights.com.

February is also the month that we have held **Food By Dudes**. This Friday night program begins with a Friday night Shabbat service followed by dinner prepared by male members of our congregation. Should this tradition continue? Would you attend? If you are a dude, are you willing to assist and prepare your favorite meal or help setup? Please let me know by emailing me at President@danburyshul.org. I hope that we can continue this fun event.

Your Board of Directors has been busy working on a revised set of bylaws to reflect the current needs of our community and new guidelines for security. The members will have an opportunity to review and comment on the bylaws prior to a vote during the annual meeting.

Recently I attended the funeral of the mother of a former member (the member moved to Texas). During the service the poem *The Dash* by Linda Ellis was read. I never heard of the poem but was moved by it. I will quote just a small portion.

I read of a man who stood to speak at a funeral of a friend. He referred to the dates on the tombstone from the beginning... to the end.

He noted that first came the date of birth and spoke of the following date with tears, but he said what mattered most of all was the dash between those years.

The poem ends

So, when your eulogy is being read with your life's actions to rehash...Would you be proud of the things they say about how you spent YOUR dash?

The poem can be found at thedashpoem.com

I have probably spent too much time reflecting on my DASH. What will be my legacy? I have no children to remember me. So will I be remembered, and if so, for what? I know that I have helped many students throughout my career, but does that mean anything. Years later will I be remembered at CBI or just be a leaf on the tree, I encourage each of you to review your dash.

Building Community through involvement
Paul M Simon

SUPER BOWL RESULTS

Congratulations to this year's Super Bowl winners:

Grand Prize: Paul Tritter
Half-time Prize: Jay Scheuer

Thank you to everyone who participated in our very successful fun(d)raiser.

SCHEDULE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

☆ **Shabbat, 11 Adar 1, February 16, Tetzaveh:** Moshe and Aaron are instructed about the intricate designs of the priestly vestments.

Haftarah: Ezek: 43:10-27

☆ **Shabbat, 18 Adar I, February 23, Ki tissa** Moshe is gone too long and the people of Israel build a golden calf. *Haftarah:* 1 Kings 18:1-39

☆ **Shabbat, 25, Adar I, March 2, Vayakhel:** The portable sanctuary is built by the Israelites.

Haftarah: 2 Kings 12:1-17

☆ **Shabbat, 2 Adar II, March 9, Pedudei:** The *Mishkan* is completed and assembled to close the Book of Exodus. *Haftarah:* 1 Kings 7:51-8:21

CANDLE LIGHTING

February 15, 2019	5:13 PM
February 22, 2019	5:21 PM
March 1, 2019	5:29 PM
March 8, 2019	5:37 PM

YAHARZEITS

9 Adar 1, February 14, 2019

Beatrice Hermann (Patricia Weiner)

14 Adar 1, February 19, 2019

Fred Stein (Michael Stein)

15 Adar 1, February 20, 2019

Bobbie Sommer (Lorie Mael)

19 Adar 1, February 24, 2019

Helen Maser (David Maser)

25 Adar 1, March 2, 2019

Adele Small (Pam Lampell)

Hilda Hirsch (Peter Hirsch)

29 Adar 1, March 6, 2019

Brakha Rabinovich (Eliezer Rabnovich)

THANKS! THANKS!

For the Rabbis Discretionary Fund

☆ Barbie and Jeffry Steinberg in honor of both Nada Adler's and Susan Tritter's 70th birthdays

☆ Gail and Abe Boms in honor of both Nada Adler's and Susan Tritter's 70th birthdays

For the General Fund

☆ Pat and Alvin Goldman in honor of both Nada Adler's and Susan Tritter's 70th birthdays

☆ Deborah and Fred Brosowsky in honor of Susan Tritter's 70th birthday

☆ Fran and Chris Kimball in honor of Susan Tritter's 70th birthday

☆ Jay Scheuer to honor Congregation B'nai Israel

☆ Paul Tritter to honor Congregation B'nai Israel

For the Siddur Fund

☆ Michael and Lois Stein in honor of Nada Adler's 70th birthday

☆ Donna and Miles Snyder in honor of Susan Tritter's 70th birthday

For Their Generous Kiddush

☆ Dina Markind in memory of Simon Markind

☆ The Tritters in honor of Susan's 70th birthday

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.

IN THE COMMUNITY



ESTELLE ZIMMER IS FEATURED SPEAKER AT FEBRUARY 21 LIFE, LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP MEETING

(SOUTHBURY) –The Jewish Federation of Western CT is proud to announce the upcoming speaker for the Life, Love and Friendship group held at our building.

Estelle Zimmer, volunteer and community leader, will lead a discussion on discrimination and protest from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 21, 2019 at the monthly meeting of the “Life, Love and Friendship” group held at the Jewish Federation of Western CT., 444 Main St. South, Southbury. Ms. Zimmer will share examples from past history and current events and will conduct a “Q & A” with the audience as well.

There is no charge to attend this program which is open to the public. Reservations are requested by February 19, 2019 by calling 203-267-3177, Ext 340. This group was established for those who have lost someone through death or divorce but some of their activities are open to the public.

The Jewish Communities of Western CT’s Endowment is pleased to award “camperships” for children to attend Jewish summer day and overnight camps. Jewish camp experiences support Jewish identity and continuity and we want to ensure that these programs are affordable for the members of our community.

For more information on how to apply for the Jewish overnight camp
<https://www.jfed.net/our-grant-making/overnight-camp-campership-application/>

All grant applications are due by **February 15, 2019**. For more information, contact grants@jfed.net or 203-267-3177, ext. 308

THE JCC IN SHERMAN

**P.O. BOX 282, 9 ROUTE 39 SOUTH,
SHERMAN, CT 06784**

The JCC in Sherman ~ 860-355-8050
info@jccinsherman.org

Sherman: A Mecca for the Arts & the People Who Made it That Way

**Sunday, February 10th at 1:00 PM
at the JCC in Sherman**

Few residents today know that Sherman was known for its literary stars and artists. William Faulkner visited his Sherman friend Malcolm Cowley, the literary historian of American literature. The works of Peter Blume and Arshile Gorky hang in the Chicago Art Museum. The Sherman Library has shelves of books featuring the works of Sherman authors. Roger Sherman is not the town's only notable.

For nearly fifty years, from 1930 to the 1980s, Sherman was home to writers, artists, musicians, and dancers, many with national and international reputations. More than two shelves of the Sherman library hold works by Sherman writers. Town Hall and the library feature works by Sherman artists whose paintings are also featured in the Chicago Art Institute. It was not unusual for shoppers at the IGA to see choreographer and ballet dancer Peter Martins. Summer people from Manhattan publishing houses came to consult and visit with Sherman's many authors. This is part of Sherman's history that should not be forgotten. Pat Endress asks you to join her in remembering these many people that made the town a literary and artistic Mecca. She has lived in Sherman for more than forty years (a relative newcomer) and has met many of those whose lives and works she will present.

Join us for this program on Sunday, February 10th at 1PM at the JCC in Sherman. Tickets are \$10 for this event. Please reserve tickets online to jccinsherman.org or call/email us at 860.355.8050 or info@jccinsherman.org. The snow date for this event is Sunday, February 17th at 1:00 PM.