

# Kayruv



# קירוב

“Judaism for Today In a Warm and Caring Environment”

June 2019

Iyar/Sivan 5779

## FROM THE RABBI



Dear Friends,

There are a few *midrashim*<sup>1</sup> about the Hebrew letters that form the words “giver” and “poor” in that language. For starters, here are two pictures:

Gomel – giver – begins with the letter gimmel:



Dal – poor – begins with the letter dalet:



Now you probably know that the letters gimmel and dalet follow one another in the Hebrew alphabet:



And the question of the midrash is: “Why is the leg of the gimmel extended toward the dalet?” And the answer has to do with our two words, giver and poor: “It is the manner of one who bestows loving-kindness to pursue the poor.” Meaning, it is not only “when you see the poor, help him” but “search for where the poor are, and help them.”

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**Kayruv means “Welcoming.”**

## **KOL HAKAVOD**

**(You deserve) All the Honor**

The proposed slate for CBI’s Board of Trustees for the coming year was unanimously approved at the June 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Congregational meeting. We thank our officers and trustees for their service to our community. (The list of our new board is found on page 9)

<sup>1</sup> Shabbat 104a, Kedushat Levi Exodus Tetzaveh 8, both available translated at Sefaria.org

When I was a child, I loved an Argentinian cartoon called Mafalda. And I recall being quite puzzled by the following exchange between Mafalda (the black-haired girl) and Susanita (the blond):



M: "It breaks my heart to see the poor."  
 S: "Me, too."  
 M: "We need to give houses, jobs, protection and wellbeing to the poor!"  
 S: "Why all that? It would be enough to hide them."

The exchange is funny because Quino, Mafalda's creator, is poking fun at an uncomfortable aspect of ourselves. We have a tendency, like Susanita, of not wanting to see the poor. Our tradition, on the other hand, reminds us that the real givers search for the opportunities to give.

The midrash continues: "And why is the leg of the dalet extended toward the gimmel?" And the answer is: "So that a poor person will make herself available to the giver." Here, of course we are reminded of another problem: some people are embarrassed when they have to ask for help, and so they hide their need. So the midrash is reminding us that for tzedakah to happen, both sides have to be open for the exchange.

And that is why the midrash finishes with a last question: "And why does the dalet face away from the gimmel?" And the answer is: "To teach us that one should give tzedakah discreetly so that the poor person will not be embarrassed."

Eskimos apparently have about 50 words for snow<sup>2</sup>, and we should not be surprised. "These people need to know whether ice is fit to walk on or whether you will sink through it," says linguist

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/there-really-are-50-eskimo-words-for-snow/2013/01/14/e0e3f4e0-59a0-11e2-beee-6e38f5215402\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/there-really-are-50-eskimo-words-for-snow/2013/01/14/e0e3f4e0-59a0-11e2-beee-6e38f5215402_story.html)

Willem de Reuse at the University of North Texas. "It's a matter of life or death." All languages evolve according to the needs of its speakers.

There are eight words for poor in Hebrew, according to another midrash<sup>3</sup>: "There are eight names for a poor person: *ani*, *evyon*, *misken*, *rash*, *dal*, *dach*, *mach*, *helech*."

The midrash then explains the derivation of each one:

- Ani** means literally "poor".
- Evyon** because he longs (*mita'ev*) for everything.
- Misken** because he is despised by all as it says "The poor man's (*misken*) wisdom is despised." (Eccl 9:16).
- Rash** because he is dispossessed (*mitroshesh*) of property.
- Dal** because he is detached (*medulda*) from property.
- Dach** because he is crushed (*meduchdach*): he sees a thing but cannot eat it, he sees a thing and cannot taste it, and cannot drink it.
- Mach** because he is trampled upon [*mach*] by everyone, he's made into a low threshold.
- Helech** [a vagrant]. Therefore Moses warns Israel: "when your brother becomes poor."

It is fascinating to see how the midrash is calling our attention to the internal reality of the poor. If Eskimos need many words for snow, Jews need many words for the poor – that is our "matter of life and death."

In this second midrash we are asked to shake ourselves out from our selfish comforts, and empathize with how hard the life of a poor person is. That midrash was written by adults, rabbis. But the first one, brought in the tractate Shabbat, is brought in the name of the *dardekey*, the young students or primary education. That one is

<sup>3</sup> Vayikra Rabbah 34:6

concerned with the relationship between the giver and the poor, and the possible embarrassment.

It is not sufficient just to give. How we give is also paramount. The rabbis, a few paragraphs<sup>4</sup> before the second midrash point to the fact that "the text does not say 'happy is he who gives to the poor,' but 'happy is he who considers the poor.' (Psalms 41:2)" – empathy and sincere consideration are as fundamental as material assistance.

Warmly,  
Rabbi Nelly Altenburger

## **RABBI'S OFFICE HOURS**

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

## **Donations for CBI's 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.

<sup>4</sup> Vayikra Rabbah 34:1

## **FROM THE PRESIDENT**



As my Interim Presidency comes to a close, much of my thoughts turn to what I am thankful for. Most of it comes down to our members and their talents.

- People who keep the books and pay the bills.
- Who commit to calling and visiting the sick.
- The ones who make beautiful kiddushes even when the supplies in the kitchen make preparation of any kind of meal difficult.
- How about the person who shows up on Shabbat to teach the children, just because.
- There is/are member(s) who buy and replace the ceiling tiles and clear the roof gutters of debris.
- What about the person who spearheads fundraising events like tag sales and ink cartridge collections.
- How lucky we are to have been awarded grant money thanks to those who write the proposals.
- To the ones who seek new ways for our building to be used which will benefit both us and the greater community, e.g., Summer Reading Program.

When our sanctuary needs to be converted from a house of worship to a dining hall or from a funeral parlor back to a house of worship...these things don't just happen miraculously. There are a select few who, at a moment's notice, jump into action

and make all the necessary arrangements. We all have our own special gifts.

I would like to single out one person by name; and that is Chris Kimball. The man keeps a watchful eye on the two buildings we own and offers advice when he sees a need that requires immediate attention. I asked him for a report. He humbly stated. "The House Committee continues to preserve the house on a limited budget."

Thank you, Chris, for all you do.

Speaking of budgets...I'm thankful that we have a Budget. Yea!!! No simple task in light of the fact that our member numbers continue to get smaller. When this synagogue was first established, 36 families pledged to make this place their spiritual home. About 11 years ago, we were up to 84/88 families. The sad reality is that we have tried many things, great and small, to encourage membership, but have seen very little return. Friends, WE do not have the luxury of time. Now is the time to plan for our short, medium range and long term goals. That conversation has been a long time coming; and as a trustee, I'm curious...where will we be in 3, 5 or 10 years?

In closing I want to thank Rabbi Altenburger for sharing her knowledge and teaching us and our children the ways of Torah and how to live as decent human beings. Thank you to a Board whose members are committed to making the best decisions as we struggle with limited resources. And let me not forget to thank, Cheryl Vanak, our dedicated office manager, for all her good work.

*L'shalom,*  
Izzy

## GOOD TIMES WE SHARED

### RELIGIOUS SCHOOL STUDENTS FIELD TRIP TO GREEN CHIMNEYS

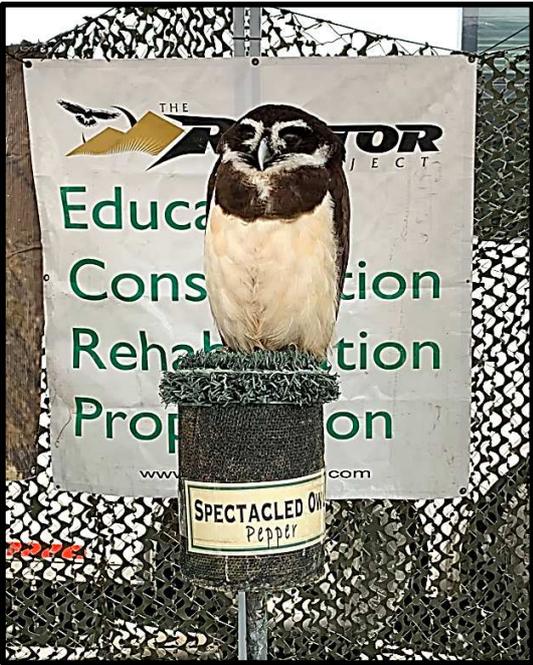
To prepare for *Shavuot*, Hebrew School students studied owls and eagles since the Torah says that God took us out of Egypt on eagles wings. We also studied that eagles represent compassion and that owls represent judgment and how we need both of these soul traits in our lives to receive Torah. We also studied the Jewish attitude towards animals.

*Photos courtesy of the Altenburgers, Nadja Raver and Gretchen Kennedy-Graber*









## SCHEDULE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

☆ **Shabbat, 12 Sivan, June 15, Naso:** The princes of Israel bring their offerings: The laws of the *Nazir* and the *Sotah* are explicated.

*Haftarah:* Judges 13:2-25

☆ **Shabbat, 19 Sivan, June 22, Beha'alotekha:** The blessings and the curses "If you walk in My ways or not." *Haftarah:* Zech. 2:14-4:7

☆ **Shabbat, 26 Sivan, June 29 Shelah-Lekha:** Scouts are sent out to the land of Canaan and bring back a fearful report which results in forty years of wandering in the desert. *Haftarah:* Joshua 2:1-24

☆ **Shabbat, 3 Tammuz, July 6, Korah:** Korah and his band challenge the leadership of Moses and Aaron The earth opens up and swallows them. *Haftarah:* 1 Sam. 11:14-12:22

☆ **Shabbat, 10 Tammuz, July 13, Hukat:** The death of Miriam and Aaron: Moshe leads alone. *Haftarah:* Judg. 11:1-33

☆ **Shabbat, 17 Tammuz, July 20, Balak:** King Balak unsuccessfully contracts Bilaam the prophet to curse Israel. *Haftarah:* Micah 5:6-6:8

## CANDLE LIGHTING

June 14, 2019	8:10 PM
June 21, 2019	8:12 PM
June 28, 2019	8:13 PM
July 5, 2019	8:12 PM
July 12, 2019	8:09 PM
July 19, 2019	8:05 PM

## Yahrzeits

### 19 Sivan, June 22, 2019

David Weiner (Jay Weiner)

### 20 Sivan, June 23, 2019

Dennis Adler (Nada Adler)

### 21 Sivan, June 24, 2019

Martha Hindin (Allen Hindin)

### 30 Sivan, July 3, 2019

Harry Nackman (Joyce Shenker)

### 4 Tammuz, July 7, 2019

Harry Kaplan (Barry Kaplan)

### 7 Tammuz, July 10, 2019

Jacob Smeer (Dina Essinger)

Anne Kaplan (Donna Goodstein)

### 12 Tammuz, July 15, 2019

Leon Bank (Alex Bank)

Joseph Zimmerman (Shoshannah Zimmerman)

### 14 Tammuz, July 17, 2019

Louise Ellen Alpher (Harriet Lebetkin)

## THANKS! THANKS!

### For the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

☆ Susan and Henry Tritter

### For the General Fund

☆ Dick Steinberg in memory of Milton Steinberg

☆ Pat and Alvin Goldman in memory of Pam Lampell; *mazel tov* to Glen Lebetkin, Nadja Raver and all the newly elected board members and trustees

☆ Stanley and David Small in memory of Pam Lampell

☆ Hillary Oser in memory of Pam Lampell

☆ David and JoAnn Small in memory of Pam Lampell

☆ Sandy Burland in memory of Pam Lampell

☆ Gail and Abe Boms in memory of Pam Lampell

☆ Barbara Weisblatt in memory of Pam Lampell

☆ Chana R. Engel in memory of Pam Lampell

☆ Michelle Bayuk in memory of Pam Lampell

### For the Hospitality Fund

☆ Yuki and Dan Turk

### For the Shiva Fund

☆ Susan and Henry Tritter in memory of Pam Lampell

### For Their Generous Kiddush

☆ Simeon Lamour

☆ Melanie and Davalene in honor of CBI

☆ Fran and Chris Kimball in honor of their children and grandchildren