

Kayruv



קירוב

“Judaism for Today In a Warm and Caring Environment”

November 2019

Cheshvan/Kislev 5780

FROM THE RABBI



Dear Friends,

In the Talmud in *tractate Eruvin* 65b Rabbi Ilai tells us that a person's true character is ascertained by three things: one's cup, one's pocket and one's anger.

As the new month of *MarCheshvan* begins, this is a time to take stock of how those three areas of our behavior have been changed – or not – by the marathon of holidays that we went through.

Mar-Cheshvan can literally be translated as bitter-*Cheshvan*, a name thought to have been given because the month has no special days, not even a small fast day. That is the most common idea. But *Mar* can also mean “sir” – i.e, this is the most important month of our internal work.

A teacher of mine, Reb Mimi Feigelson, disagrees that that should be the name. She prefers *Ram-Cheshvan* which means “high” *Cheshvan* because this is the month, she says, when “the embers of *Tishrei* settle inside of you”, a month that holds “pure potential for that which our heart, mind and soul are yearning for some space to express.”

One of the ways to check in is by examining these three areas: cup, pocket, anger.

Cup is a symbol, of course, for all the ways we eat and drink. Checking in can simply be keeping a diary, and becoming more aware of what you eat and drink, and how. But an important act that Judaism attaches to eating and drinking is saying a blessing beforehand. Any *siddur* worth its paper has a list of such blessings, and a simple affirmation to be said after eating and drinking.

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Kayruv means “Welcoming.”



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These blessings change according to what the food or drink is. The practice of saying those blessings is great to enhance our awareness, both of the quality of what we consume and also that we actually consume.

Pocket is a symbol of our material possessions. Checking this area can be trickier, as our consumer society is built around making us buy things at the spur of the moment. But that is what credit card statements are for, as well as apps that help you track your spending. At the end of the month, it is useful to see what is our actual values: what we spend our money on, to what communities and causes we donate, says much about who we are. Do we really donate 10% of what we make?

Anger is a stand in for our emotional life. It is impossible not to feel anger and all other emotions, but how we act on them is what makes us different than animals. I saw an interesting journal for that, one that does not tell you what to feel, but invites you to check in with several different emotions. Many of us are under the illusion that there is one certain, precise way we should feel or react to things. In truth, there are appropriate ways of reacting and even using our emotions, but not what to feel.

There is a story about the Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan. His students knew him to be a person of wonderful disposition, never speaking a harsh word or even using a harsh tone with anyone. But his students noticed that after the night services and study session, the Chofetz Chaim opened the Holy Ark, where the Torah was kept, and prayed. One night, they hid under a bench in the synagogue, and waited silently for the Chofetz Chaim to appear, so that they could hear what his prayers were about. Imagine their surprise when they heard the Chofetz Chaim pleading, "Master of the Universe, help me overcome my anger. Please help me, help me."

If the Chofetz Chaim needed help to overcome his anger, all the more so do we. But it is by not denying what we feel that we become aware of our feelings, and are able to react differently to what life throws at us.

May this month of *Ram-Cheshvan* open us to plant the seeds of our growth in all the three areas that Rabbi Ilai talks about.

Warmly,
Rabbi Nelly Altenburger

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.

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.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends:

As president of B'nai Israel I am able to look through a "secret window" and see things that I had not seen before! I have been coming to services regularly for years, but now with my "new window" I see so many people who give so much of themselves, and their purses! These are people who do so much for the synagogue that no one will ever know about, and these acts are done without asking for acknowledgement. They seem to believe in B'nai Israel and dedicate quite a bit of their week to making our synagogue work. What I enjoy most about being President of B'nai Israel is working with such caring people and getting to know them as friends. This group would like to welcome you among their friends and would love to have some help and support. Look for the volunteer sheet (on page 5) to give you ideas of how you might become part of the "active team" that makes B'nai Israel so special!

UPCOMING EVENTS!

- November 12th, 7:00 P.M. at B'nai Israel - a celebration to honor veterans from all our armed services!
- If you are a veteran and would like to speak about your experiences in the service, please let me know or just show up!
- November 18th, 7:00 P.M. Schmooze and Booze featuring Sam and Dina Markind and their adventures in visiting an African Jewish community!
- November 16th, 7:30 Yale a cappella singers at the United Jewish Center.
- Our congregation took great joy and pride in celebrating Max Gambino's *Bar Mitzvah*. He led us through the entire service and delivered a masterful *Dvar Torah*. Way to go! YOU TOOK IT TO THE MAX!

Last month I heard six code words "cheese"! This month's secret code to let me know that you have

read my article in the Kayruv, is "HA HA"! THE JOKE WILL BE ON ME!

Until next time,
Glen Lebetkin

If you missed Glen's Kol Nidre speech, here it is. Enjoy!

Once upon a time, long ago, in fact 5,780 years ago to be exact, in a land very far away, our great, great Zaydie lived. He worked hard, very hard. He was a shepherd, but he slept very well, probably from counting all those sheep. He loved his family with all his heart. He had what he thought was a very special idea. He knew he would not live forever, but wanted his family to continue and prosper. He wanted the ideas important to him to be important to his family.

This great, great Zaydie loved the color Red. He thought and thought until it hurt. Finally, an idea came to him! He would give each of his family a very special gift that they would pass along to their children in turn. Now what could this gift be? He would not give it to them when they were very young for fear they might not appreciate it, and even lose it. Yes, when boys were 13 and girls 12, they would each get this very special gift! Everyone knew girls matured earlier than boys -that is the reason for the different ages. So what could make this gift so special that it would be treasured by all who received it. Great, great Zaydie thought and thought. He knew it had to be the color **Red**! It came to him! When girls were 12, and boys 13, they would each get a **Red Umbrella**! Maybe, just maybe, it should have the word Travelers written all over it. Jewish people have always travelled a lot!

Time passed and more and more **Red Umbrellas** were seen around the land. As generations passed, **Red Umbrellas** could be seen all over the world, in fact you could find one if you looked hard enough in almost any country you travelled to. There were times, many times in fact, when kings of countries and rulers in far off places hated the color red! They banned by law every **Red Umbrella** from their land, under the penalty of death! Occasionally, rulers even went so far as to try collecting every **Red Umbrella**, burning them, and trying their best to never see another red umbrella.

But our great, great Zaydie's people were a proud people and their **Red Umbrellas** were important to them. Each parent knew how special their **Red Umbrella** was and they were determined their children should continue this tradition, and they too would have a treasured **Red Umbrella**!

Fast forward 3,658 years, to the year 1897. Fourteen families came to this country from the Old Country. Each of these families had their **Red Umbrella**! They settled in Danbury, CT with two major goals! To make a synagogue, and to provide a cemetery for their families. They housed their synagogue in various locations until in 1974, it came to this very building we are in now. These fourteen families grew over the years to be over 80 families, each with its **Red Umbrella**. At this point it represented over four generations.

Now to have a synagogue and maintain it, and to have a spiritual leader guiding them, required 200 apples each year! This was not a problem as each family generously donated three apples! Each year with 80 families, that guaranteed 240 apples, more than enough to run, and maintain the synagogue with all its needs!

However, over the years, some families moved to warmer climates, and then there were only 70 families, but that still provided 210 apples, still enough to continue. Several members aged and went to the Land of Blessed Memory, and then there were only 60 members. That meant there was a shortage of 20 apples. Realizing this shortage, five members generously gave four more apples each to make up the shortage. But in time these five members passed to the Land of Blessed Memory and soon there were fewer than 50 members. More apples were needed. A lot more! Where would these extra apples come from? Was it still important to hand out **Red Umbrellas** to their 13 year-old boys and 12 year-old girls?

Would younger members join remaining members and feel it important enough to work hard and contribute more apples?

May I ask all the past presidents of B'nai Israel to please stand. These people worked tirelessly to bring us to the point we are at today! This year there was no one left to follow this illustrious group. Our congregational meeting was postponed once because we didn't have a President to lead it! At this point I heard a voice in my head saying, "Ask

not what your synagogue can do for you. Rather, what can you do for your synagogue?"

Here is my plan: to continue all the good work done by those who have given so much of themselves. My plan is simple. I want to make this synagogue everything you want your home to be! A place where you feel love, where you feel safe, a place where there are examples of good deeds! A place where values are taught and passed on to your children. Where each of your children at the proper age will get a **Red Umbrella**! Where you will continue to hear the story of our Great, Great Zaydie, and call him proudly by his name, Abraham. Where we will continue to tell the story each year of Moses, of Egypt, of Haman, and, yes, of Hitler!

B'nai Israel provides a family as you go through your life. A true family outside of your home, complete with good food, plenty of "discussions" with brothers and sisters, celebrations of life events - *Bar and Bat Mitzvahs*, weddings and funerals. We provide each *Shabbat* a sharing and caring community, one of prayer, food, talk, companionship, and support! I have sat all my life at *Kol Nidre* services where money is the main topic. I know the feeling of pressure to come up with money that is needed but you may not have.

Tonight I am not going to ask you for money and pass this feeling of pressure on to you. Instead, I am going to tell you what your synagogue family offers you this year besides the usual synagogue stuff! The thrust of this year is Social Action!

We will continue to make this a place we are proud to belong to. We have so many role models in our congregation who lead the way.

We have social events - a time to enjoy each other's company. We have Schmooze and Booze nights, a chance to share and care! We've heard stories of the person who influenced us the most. We've had Joel Levitt talk about the importance of family history. We have Sam and Dina Markind coming in November to talk about their recent trip to the Jewish community in Africa that visited us not long ago. We came together to line dance. Together we provided over 1500 pounds of food to our local food pantry and soup kitchen by doing a food drive. We will celebrate Veteran's Day together in November, and share our talents in our talent show in January.

In short we will continue to make our home away from home one of kindness, caring, sharing and doing for one another. It will often be fun to come here, a place you like going to because it is one you enjoy spending time in. A place where you feel good after you leave. A place where you create memories and stories that you will share with others.

Isn't that what you hope for in your family and house? A place that you feel cared for, valued, have fun, learn something, make memories together, share good times, celebrations, and share sad times also?

From my experience, your family doesn't ask you for money! Your parents try to provide you with a caring, sharing, and fun environment - just like the synagogue. Parents don't pay dues to take care of you and what you need. You need school supplies, calculators, medical needs. If the heating system in your house breaks, if the air conditioning goes, if the driveway needs repair, if the plumbing needs a fix, you don't charge your kids a fee, you don't charge every visitor a visiting fee, you take care of the needs of your family. That is what you do for your family! So it is for our synagogue. We provide what you need to grow up, grow old, have fun and give support to each other! Your parents did for you what you do for your children. Make a home with love support, lots of fun, education, and a place where it is taken for granted that parents will provide enough apples and give those **Red Umbrellas** to their *Bar* and *Bat Mitzvah* children.

Our synagogue is a very special family. The love and support at every life cycle event you go through is unmatched. *Bar* and *Bat Mitzvah* celebrations (We will have five this year.), holidays, family funerals, and *Shiva* weeks, services, and educational classes.

Somehow, we have to provide enough apples, and give those **Red Umbrellas** to our *Bar* and *Bat Mitzvah* children. If we don't, we become the weak link and the diamond for which we have cared for over 3780 years will fall and be lost forever!

If we continue to make this synagogue the family you want your family to be, I know it will be important to you. You would never think of not having enough apples for your family. You want each member of your family to have a **Red Umbrella**. You want to make sure you are not the weak link and the end of your family history.

Dear Friends,

I want to thank those of you who have already made a financial contribution to B'nai Israel. I realize there are so many demands, requests, and places tugging on the strings of your purse. I am deeply grateful for your generosity this year, and do not take it for granted.

But, please remember there are many non-financial ways to contribute to the health of our synagogue. Volunteering help in our community, volunteering in our synagogue, and helping members of our congregation needing a visit, are all ways that will further strengthen our congregation.

I am enclosing a list of ways to contribute to our congregation other than financial.

1. Join a group willing to visit congregants not able to get out, or in need of a visit.
2. Host a Shabbat dinner or assist, for congregants who would greatly appreciate this.
3. Participate in a Food Drive.
4. Attend our Schmooze and Booze Events
5. Attend our special events, like our Veteran's Day Celebration, and future line dances.
6. Participate in our Talent Show.
7. Attend Synagogue Services.
8. Host a Shabbat Kiddush.
9. Volunteer in our Hebrew School.
10. Volunteer babysitting during a service.
11. Consider joining our Board.
12. Join our Social Action Committee
13. Participate in Laundry Love
14. Volunteer in the Food Pantry or Soup Kitchen

Again, many thanks for the "apples" you have contributed so far this year!

If you would consider participating in one of these areas, please let the office know.

I am interested in participating in number(s) _____ listed above.

Feel free to contact me personally by phone (203-733-4082) or email hargle5226@yahoo.com

With appreciation,
Glen Lebetkin

NOVEMBER EVENTS

Thanksgiving Meal Trimmings for Danbury Families in Need

As we have done for many years, CBI will be providing Thanksgiving meal trimmings for families in need in the Danbury area. The program is sponsored by the Interfaith AIDS Ministry.

We will be providing trimmings for six families. Please choose one or as many items as you'd like from the list of items BELOW. All items must be at the synagogue by **Sunday, November 24th by noon.**

Please email the office (cbi193clap@gmail.com) with what and how many items you will be bringing. You can start bringing items to the synagogue and leave in the office on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. Tuesdays from 4:00 – 6:00 P.M., Sundays from 9:00 – Noon or call the office if you need to drop off at a different time. Items can be brought in starting Wednesday, November 6th.

6~boxes of mashed potatoes
6~ bottles of apple juice/other fruit juice
6~bags of dinner rolls
6~canned vegetables
6~bags of dinner rolls
6~large cans of yams
6~cans of cranberry sauce
6~large cans of chicken broth

Monday, November 25th from 7:00 to 8:15 P.M. ARC'S Inaugural Thanksgiving Jazz Concert

The Jazz Concert is a new community event this year that replaces the traditional Interfaith Thanksgiving Service. Performing at the concert are Jonny Chapman, a professional jazz, rhythm and blues singer and guitarist and Dave Savitsky who performs on tours with Jonny. Dave is a jazz saxophonist and music teacher at S.U.N.Y New Paltz. Both of these performers are donating their time to help raise funds for ARC.

Let's show our support for ARC and spend an evening listening to a Jazz Concert. Tickets are only \$5.00. ARC is also asking that you bring a canned good. All proceeds benefit ARC's Emergency Aid Network.

SCHEDULE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

☆ **Shabbat, 11 Cheshvan, November 9, Lekh lekha:** Abraham and Sarah are called by God to set out for Canaan and become a people.

Haftarah: Isa. 40:27 -41:16

☆ **Shabbat, 18 Cheshvan, November 16, Vayera:** Abraham's tests: The birth and binding of Isaac. *Haftarah: 2 Kings 4:1-37*

☆ **Shabbat, 25 Cheshvan, November 23, Haya Sarah:** Sarah dies and Isaac is paired with Rebecca. *Haftarah: I Kings 1:1-31*

☆ **Shabbat, 2 Kislev, November 30, Toledot:** The wrestling twins Jacob and Esau are born. *Haftarah: Mal. 1:1-2:7*

☆ **Shabbat, 9 Kislev, December 7, Vayetse:** Jacob leaves home to make his own life. *Haftarah: Hosea 12:13-14:10*

☆ **Shabbat, 16 Kislev, December 14, Vayishlah:** Jacob reunites with his brother Esau. *Haftarah: Obadiah 1:1-21*

CANDLE LIGHTING

November 8, 2019	4:23 PM
November 15, 2019	4:16 PM
November 22, 2019	4:11 PM
November 29, 2019	4:08 PM
December 6, 2019	4:06 PM
December 13, 2019	4:07 PM

THANKS! THANKS!

For the General Fund

☆ Barbara Weisblatt in memory of Martin Dretel, Jerry Rose, and Jerry Levine; in honor of Ros Kopfstein, Carol and Joe Tuggle, Alan and Barbara Braverman, people in her Grief Group Center for Hope: Barbara Poli, Fran, Rosemarie and others

☆ Fredda Fuchs in memory of her mother Shirley Lerner

☆ Daniel Block in honor of Jessica Block

For Their Generous Kiddush

☆ Thank you to all the volunteers who our made Break Fast wonderful

☆ The Gambino family in honor of Max's becoming a *bar mitzvah*

YAHARZEITS

16 Cheshvan, November 14, 2019

Mildred Osnoss (Kenneth Osnoss)

18 Cheshvan, November 16, 2019

Leo Mendlovitz (Pat Goldman)

22 Cheshvan, November 20, 2019

Rhea Yulman (Susan Tritter)

23 Cheshvan, November 21, 2019

Conrado Lopez (Isabel Kaplan)

24 Cheshvan, November 22, 2019

Anna Levitt (Joel Levitt)

25 Cheshvan, November 23, 2019

Gunter Hermann (Patricia Weiner)

27 Cheshvan, November 25, 2019

Clara Shenker (Martin Shenker)

Sylvia Steinberg (F. Richard Steinberg)

28 Cheshvan, November 26, 2019

Eugene Cahn (Charles Cahn and Claire Cahn)

29 Cheshvan, November 27, 2019

Fred Adler (Dennis Adler)

1 Kislev, November 29, 2019

Sidney Steinberg (Jeff Steinberg)

5 Kislev, December 3, 2019

Jerry Simon (Paul Simon)

6 Kislev, December 4, 2019

Peter Ohring (Mary, Isaac and Rachel Ohring)

7 Kislev, December 5, 2019

Martin Schorr (Heather K. Mazarakos)

10 Kislev, December 8, 2019

Golde Rochma Kerstein (Michael Kerstein)

12 Kislev, December 10, 2019

Gloria Mark (Paula Cook)

13 Kislev, December 11, 2019

Barbara Salm (Joyce Shenker)

16 Kislev, December 14, 2019

Max Klein (Christine Gambino)

17 Kislev, Decm,ber 15, 2019

Joseph Kaufman (Heather K. Mazarakos)