

the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

MAY, 2016

NISAN/IYYAR , 5776

Friday evening services begin at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday morning services begin at 9:30 a.m.

FROM THE RABBI

THE NEWEST VERSION OF A DOUBLE STANDARD AGAINST JEWS

One of the most ubiquitous activities on college campuses today is the BDS movement. BDS stands for boycott, divestment, and sanctions against Israel. I say that it stands for anti-Semitism, which I shall explain at the end of this article. But first, a word about BDS. BDS advocates justify their hostile policy because, they say, Israel isn't meeting its obligations under international law to:

- End the occupation and dismantle the Wall
- End discrimination against Palestinian citizens of Israel
- Respect, protect and promote the rights of Palestinians to return to their homes.

Let's address these canards.

1. The occupation of the disputed territories is a result of the Six Day War — a war in which the Arabs vowed to “drive the Jews into the sea.” The defeated Palestinian Arabs were offered an end of occupation (i.e., a state of their own), several times, and each

time they rejected it. The Wall exists to secure Israelis from violent Palestinian incursions. If Palestinians agreed to live in peace with Israel, there would be no occupation and no Wall.

2. There is no discrimination against Palestinian citizens of Israel. Yes, Israel is a Jewish state. True, the Israeli national anthem speaks of Jewish hearts yearning to be free in “our land” of Zion. But Palestinians vote in Israel's elections. They serve in the Knesset. They sit on the Supreme Court. Arabs in Israel live freer lives than Arabs living anywhere in the Arab world.

3. The right of return means nothing other than the end of the Jewish state. No nation should be told to dissolve itself.

Now, why don't I agree that BDS is an attempt (however mistaken) at a “human rights” campaign for justice? Why do I say, rather, that it's a new outbreak of the old sickness of anti-Semitism? Consider this: Israel is the world's only Jewish-majority state. There are 49 Muslim-majority states. Those 49 states include eight of the world's 10 worst human rights offenders. Twenty

two Muslim-Arab nations surround Israel. None of them are free. No Muslim state has a human rights record that is even close to that of Israel.

As David Cohen, a former US Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior writes, "Those who would single out the world's only Jewish state for boycott, divestment and sanctions, while ignoring the infinitely more virulent persecution and intolerance that prevails throughout the surrounding region, cannot claim to be crusading against injustice. They are crusading against Jews." The BDS crowd takes the term "double standard" to new heights of hypocrisy.

We need to be aware of this anti-Semitism and we need to keep opposing it. Our state opposes it. Alabama Senate Joint Resolution 6 denouncing the BDS movement passed unanimously both in the House and Senate. Hooray for Alabama!

Buy Israeli products. Support Israel's highly democratic institutions and donate to Israel's worthy charities. Plan a trip to Israel, if you can. Yom Ha-Atzma-ut (Independence Day) this year will be celebrated on May 12. Happy birthday, Israel. Am Yisrael chai!

Sincerely,

Stephen Listfield

YOM HA'ATZMAUT, 5776 (2016)

Yom Ha'atzmaut ("Independence Day") commemorates the Israeli Declaration of Independence in 1948. The day is celebrated on 5 Iyar according to the Hebrew calendar, although it can be delayed or advanced depending on Shabbat. For instance, this year Yom Ha'atzmaut is celebrated on

Thursday, May 12. The 5th of Iyar is actually the next day, Friday, but the celebration is advanced by a day so as not to conflict with Shabbat preparations.

Here is the description of the scene outside the home of David ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, as the delegates gathered to sign the Declaration 68 years ago. It appears in an essay by Ambassador Michael B. Oren:

"The Jews of Palestine ... were dancing because they were about to realize what was one of the most remarkable and inspiring achievements in human history: A people which had been exiled from its homeland two thousand years before, which had endured countless pogroms, expulsions, and persecutions, but which had refused to relinquish its identity—which had, on the contrary, substantially strengthened that identity; a people which only a few years before had been the victim of mankind's largest single act of mass murder, killing a third of the world's Jews, that people was returning home as sovereign citizens in their own independent state."

What the tiny nation of Israel has achieved while under siege every day of its existence is beyond remarkable. At services Friday evening, May 13, Rabbi Listfield will devote his remarks to some special aspects of the Jewish homeland.

SISTERHOOD

We celebrated Purim with a hot dog dinner prepared by Brenda and a Purim shpiel by the BBYO players with graggers and a great booable Haman. Thanks to Shoshanna Rosenthal and the BBYO

players who participated in the play, to Lauren and Shoshanna and BBYO for baking the Hamontashen, which we all enjoyed.

The last month's visit of Rabbi Listfield featured Friday night and Saturday morning services followed by a great Sisterhood sponsored luncheon by Larisa Thomason & Phil Kirshtein and Lynne & Steve Edmondson. A study group followed the lunch and on Sunday morning we had a brunch and a great discussion group; the subject was "Black Lives Matter".

We are looking forward to getting a new floor in the kitchen and Oneg room. Bids for the floor will be presented at the next Board meeting, as will the slate of officers for the next year.

We thank Lauren Goodman for chairing the Pesach Seder and Steve Goodman for leading the Friday night service and Max Rosenthal for leading the Seder. Also, our thanks to all the members who helped decorate, move furniture, shop and came to participate in the Seder.

We will be starting to work on the New Year Booklet, and we will really miss our super salesman, Joe Sacks.

Looking forward to the next visit with Rabbi Listfield on May 13-15, and the Sisterhood sponsored luncheon by Raven Livingston and Christie Berry. A weekend with the Rabbi is always educational and fun filled.

So until next time, remember, the Sisterhood is always there to learn, work, have fun and support the synagogue.

Millie Rosenthal

DONATIONS

Sisterhood Fund

From: Alan & Susan Sacks
In Loving Memory of our Dad, Joe Sacks

From: Joel Weinbaum
In Memory of Joe Sacks

From: Arlene & Jerry Averbuch
In Memory of Joe Sacks

From: Janet Schindler
To: Harriet Sacks & Family - In Memory of our very good friend, Joe Sacks

From: Diana & Howard Polin
To: Harriet Sacks & Family - A prayer book has been donated in Memory of Joe Sacks
To: McKenzie Rosenthal Sanders - You are in our thoughts for a speedy recovery from your car accident.

From: Brenda & Cliff Liles
To: Harriet Sacks & Family - We are thinking of you during this sad time, and we will miss Joe.

Rabbi Fund

From: Lucy & Charlie Fisher
To: Harriet Sacks & Family - In Memory of Joe Sacks

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal
To: Harriet Sacks & Family - We will miss our friend and all he did for the synagogue and the community.

From: Michal & Gary Hall
To: Harriet Sacks & Family - In Memory of Joe Sacks

General Fund

From: Margaret Anne Goldsmith
To: Harriet Sacks & Family - In Memory of Joe Sacks

From: Reeve & Elizabeth Spalding
To: Harriet & Joe Sacks - In Memory of our good friend, Joe Sacks

JOE SACKS MEMORIAL FUND

From: Alan & Susan Sacks
In Loving Memory of our Dad

Curtis M. Benzie & Wendy S. Wilson
Stephen & Carol Bragg
Mr. & Mrs. Morton Combs
Hilda Nathan
Iris Thomas
Dr. Richard & Rebecca Brooks
Ira Leitner
Edward & Lea Eiland
Howard & Eleanor Levingston
Ann Denbo
Janna Ifshin
Lucy & Ariel Baruch
Mr. & Mrs. Edgar Gollop
Lynne Greenbaum
Barry & Mary Ann Meyer
Paul & Judy Kunitz.
Gail & D.J. Riese II
Arlene & Jerry Averbuch
Judith & Joe Goldstein
Martin Freeman
Sandra Wiederecht & Family

From: Sandy & Marvin Kalachman
To: Harriet Sacks & Family - Joe was a special guy that we all appreciated.

Outdoor Lighting Fund

In Memory of Gertrude & Perry Schlein from their daughters, Natha Hancock & Robin Slomka and their families.

FAREWELL JOE

By Howard Polin

How do you say goodbye to a guy who gave so much of himself to the Huntsville Conservative Synagogue and the Huntsville Community in general?

In addition to being a loving and dedicated father, grandfather and husband, Joe was active in so many ways. In the Huntsville Community he participated in the Huntsville Food Pantry program, providing food supplies for the needy; active at the Courthouse and a volunteer of Crestwood Hospital. In the Jewish Community he supported our little synagogue in many ways:

1. He ran the Bingo game at the Latke Party, and everybody got a prize, particularly the kids.
2. He obtained the most advertisements for the Sisterhood New Year Greeting and Memorial Book.
3. He was a member of, and he attended all, Jewish War Veterans events including decorating the military graves.
4. He participated with the maintenance of our synagogue.
5. Joe and I were known as #1 and #2 "shleppers" in our younger years. No one knew who #1 or #2 was. Fortunately, we still have a few members who fit that prestigious category, but we need more of the younger folks to help.
6. Joe, as President of our Men's Club, ran monthly poker games and supplied us with goodies to munch on and then sent us home with Care packages of left overs. Unfortunately, Joe sponsored our last poker game the night before he went into the hospital having no idea of what was about to happen.

I hope I didn't leave out any of Joe's many deeds. Joe and I, over 50 years, have personally shared the good and bad that happens during life. I'll miss him terribly. I'm sure this is true of all our community.

Goodbye and Shalom,

Howard

ONEGS

Apr 29	Roberts
May 06	Hall
May 13	Rosenthal
May 20	Zelickson
May 27	Meyer
Jun 03	Levitt

UPCOMING EVENTS

Apr 27,28	9:30 AM, Hol Hamoed service
Apr 29	9:30 AM, service
Apr 29	7:30 PM, Shabbat Pesach service
Apr 30	9:30 AM, Shabbat Pesach service, including Yizkor
May 13-15	Rabbi Listfield Shabbaton
May 13	Rabbi's Topic: "Locked inside the Transgender Bathroom"
May 14	Rabbi's Topic: "How to be a Wonderful Scoundrel"
May 15	Rabbi's Topic: "When a Song Captivated the State of Israel"
May 15	JFHNA presents <i>A Slippery Slope: The Consequences of Hate</i> , Chan Auditorium, 2:00 PM
May 26	Lag B'Omer

Please remember to put donated Food Pantry and First Stop personal hygiene items into the containers in the synagogue lobby.

BIRTHDAYS

Apr 27	Gary Hall
May 04	Caiden Johnson
May 8	Diana Polin
May 15	Sandra Wiederecht
May 20	Glenn Polin
May 22	Gina Yalowitz
May 23	Jordan Hall
May 25	Larry Levitt
May 26	Warren Novick
May 28	Jeff Yalowitz
May 29	Joe Johnson
May 30	Jon Berger
May 31	Brenda Liles
May 31	Sarah Sacks

ANNIVERSARIES

Apr 30	Sharon & Jeff Yalowitz
May 20	Shayna & Joe Johnson
May 25	Lauren & Steve Goodman

Yahrzeits**

Apr 28	Nisan 20	Henry Sevin
Apr 30	Nisan 22	Simon Blum*
May 01	Nisan 23	Jeffrey Weinman*
May 01	Nisan 23	Leo I. Goldberger
May 07	Nisan 29	Joseph Goldstein*
May 08	Nisan 30	Leo Ginsburg
May 09	Iyyar 01	Frieda Margol Katz
May 19	Iyyar 11	William Polin*
May 19	Iyyar 11	Rose Harrison*
May 20	Iyyar 12	Harriet Herbin
May 20	Iyyar 12	Eidele Sainker
May 22	Iyyar 14	Perry M. Schlein*
May 23	Iyyar 15	Sarah Kauffman*
May 24	Iyyar 16	Ruth Cohen*
May 26	Iyyar 18	Al Meyer
May 27	Iyyar 19	Anna Polin*
May 27	Iyyar 19	Alex E. Streit*
May 28	Iyyar 20	Jack Greenberg

May 29 Iyyar 21 Irwin M. Schindler
 May 31 Iyyar 23 Aaron Rodkin*
 Jun 01 Iyyar 24 Betty Kamisher*
 Jun 01 Iyyar 24 Elaine Ornstein
 Jun 02 Iyyar 25 Morris J. Green*
 Jun 02 Iyyar 25 Rita Fleishman*

* Plaque

**Light Memorial candle sunset of previous evening

Israel Independence Day Celebration

During the next rabbi visit, May 13-15, the Synagogue will be celebrating Israel Independence Day.

On Friday night during the Oneg, some Israeli food will be served and during the weekend the Rabbi will be talking about Israel. On Saturday the lunch after services will feature some Mediterranean food by Raven and Christie. The Sunday brunch will be by Shirley Roberts.

Please plan to attend.

WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED MOTHERING?

By Ted Roberts

I don't have much of a love affair with formalized days of commemoration like wedding anniversaries and birthdays. This does not endear me to my wife when I perceive February 4 as the day before February 5, instead of my wedding anniversary.

However, in my scroll of holidays there's one that demands attention. Mother's Day. Of all the possible feminine roles; sister, aunt, grandmother, lover, wife, friend - there's nothing like "Mother". The old Rogers and Hammerstein classic; politically incorrect, grammatically incorrect, but bubbling with feeling said, "There ain't nuthin' like a Dame". He should have said, there ain't nuthin' like a

mother.

Consider this. Unique among all personal relationships, the mother and child contract is totally one-sided. The mother gives - the child takes. All other human pairings depend on the balance of give and take. Both partners must receive something. She's smart and I'm dumb. Or she's beautiful and I'm ugly, but we're friends because my uncle's the butcher and I bring her the best rib steak in town.

I get "look, he's with that beautiful, smart Betty Sue Macintosh. What does she see in him?"

Notice that the whole world of rewards is encompassed by three gifts: love, friendship and money. What else does the world value? They are the currency of any relationship.

Now, examine the mother/child thing. From the first moment of conception, the mother host nourishes that new thing inside her with her own human sap. The growing clump of human cells gives nothing back. Many months later, when it painfully exits her body, it continues to suck away at her nutrients. And it screams at the slightest discomfort - demanding more nutrients and bodily comforts like dry diapers and a full stomach. It has no patience at all.

And as it grows, so stringent are the physical and emotional requirements of the newcomer, that the mother gives up all of her personal aspirations and ambitions. Forget the new novel, the screen test at United Artists, the recital at Carnegie Hall, the Passover cooking, the vacation in Miami Beach and the mall expedition. Nothing takes precedent over the requirements of this stranger from her own body. And soon,

in a couple of years, it demands even more as it learns that, drugged by the culture, mothers hate to say “no” to any ridiculous request for the mother’s time or resources. This phase is followed by many years of sleepless nights by the mother creature as she worries about the new thing’s rebellious wandering through the world. Many a night the worried adult female sponsor wishes it was back, lying by her side - even screaming.

And so it continues until the ball of cells - that lived off the mother’s womb and metamorphasized into an adult human - forgets the mother’s phone number and address. It even forgets the mother’s pitifully brief 24 hours of honor, Mother’s Day. The child only takes - it rarely gives.

Did I hear you say something about love? You say this wailing bundle of demands cuddles up to the mother. That’s the mother’s reward? A cat does a better job and he never needs a clean diaper.

But there’s an old, old legend by a Jewish Memoirist, Gluckel of Hameln, that emphasizes this imbalance of love. It tells of a mother eagle who must ferry her brood over a wide sea to a new nest. Four fledglings depend on her - four perilous trips. She fights a head wind, her wings grow weak, and there’s far to go. “Do you love me?” the mother asks her first offspring “and will you promise to repay me for this?”

“Yes, I swear,” pipes the child.

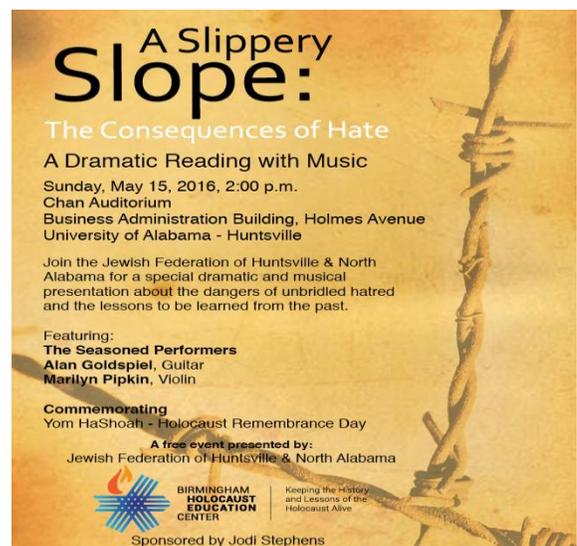
The mother knows a lie when she hears one so she drops her burden into the sea. Same story with eaglet two and three. But number four gives the universally honest answer for offspring of every breed. “Mother,” she says, “I can only promise that when I have my own

children, I shall do as much for them as you have done for me. The debt will be paid in full, but only to your grandchildren.”

The mother eagle knew the truth when she heard it. So she fought the wind and her fatigue and brought her child and the mother of her grandchildren safely to the shore. There’s a lot of wisdom in that parable. Love has a gravity like planet earth. Generation-wise, it flows down easier than up.

So Mothers, console yourself. Your kids, who NEVER even send you a postcard, will likewise receive no postcards from THEIR busy kids. Moreover, one day over a nice cup of coffee at the kitchen table, they’ll ask your advice on this problem; “Mom, I’m telling you they never call or write. I send presents - nothing comes back. What is it with kids?” Sip your coffee, look thoughtful, and offer some commonplace ideas that won’t work. Then tell her the parable about the mother eagle.

Scribbler on the Roof te11d@hiwaay.net
Website: <http://www.wonderwordworks.com>
Blogsite: <http://www.scribblerontheroof.typepad.co>
Buy Ted’s collected works at
<http://www.lulu.com/content/127641>



A Slippery Slope:
The Consequences of Hate
A Dramatic Reading with Music
Sunday, May 15, 2016, 2:00 p.m.
Chan Auditorium
Business Administration Building, Holmes Avenue
University of Alabama - Huntsville

Join the Jewish Federation of Huntsville & North Alabama for a special dramatic and musical presentation about the dangers of unbridled hatred and the lessons to be learned from the past.

Featuring:
The Seasoned Performers
Alan Goldspiel, Guitar
Marilyn Pipkin, Violin

Commemorating
Yom HaShoah - Holocaust Remembrance Day

A free event presented by:
Jewish Federation of Huntsville & North Alabama

 BIRMINGHAM
HOLOCAUST
EDUCATION
CENTER

Keeping the History
and Lessons of the
Holocaust Alive

Sponsored by Jodi Stephens