
the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

JULY, 2019

SIVAN/TAMUZ, 5779

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

THIS MONTH

We all know that July brings us Independence Day, of course, on the 4th.

What you may not be aware of is that for 17 Tammuz (July 21st, this year), the Mishnah, in Taanit 4:6, lists five events that occurred:

- Moses broke the tablets of law he had been given on Mount Sinai
- the priests in the First Temple stopped offering the Tamid (daily) sacrifice because Jerusalem was besieged and they ran out of sheep
- the walls of Jerusalem were breached by the Romans in the Second Temple Period
- a Roman general named Apostomos burned a Torah scroll
- an idol was erected in the Temple by the Romans.

Now you know!

BOOK CLUB MEMBERS ARE READING ABOUT THE WAYS JEWS CHANGED HISTORY

On June 13th, the Book Club had a spirited discussion of "America's Jewish Women: A History from Colonial Times to Today" by Pamela Nadell. Every member learned about women's issues and where society is headed

Now we're starting "The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels," by Thomas Cahill. One of the gifts of the Jews of three thousand years ago was to completely change the way the world thought; not a small undertaking.

The club will discuss this book at 11:30 AM on Thursday, August 15 at the synagogue, so there's plenty of time for new members to join in.

For more information contact Jon Berger by phone or text at 256-457-0277 or email him at:

jonaberger@gmail.com

SISTERHOOD

Ladies,

What a nice time we had at Rosie's Cantina last month. Thanks to Lynne for installing the officers for next year. Also, thanks to Amy for arranging the luncheon. We had a big group in attendance, and I think everyone enjoyed the food and company. Welcome to Sue Paddock, who is going to be our new corresponding secretary (that said, she has been on the board many times in the past).

Plans are being finalized for the movie showing of "Heading Home: The Tale of Team Israel," at 3:00 PM on 18 August at the Synagogue. This is a commercial production and should be very good. Because the Sisterhood is having to pay for the movie and the rights to show it, there will be a \$5.00 charge for each adult to help defray the cost. Children will be free. This movie is suitable for the entire family. We are inviting all of the Synagogue, Temple, and Chabad, so hopefully we will have a nice crowd. If you want to bring a friend, that would be great. We plan to have snacks available (probably popcorn and maybe hot dogs but we'll let you know next month).

Please be sure to send Brenda your yearbook greetings and advertisements along with a check made payable to EC Sisterhood. This is our only major fundraiser, and we use the money to benefit the Synagogue (example, the new floor and carpet this year). Also, it is time to renew your Sisterhood membership. Dues are \$18, having not been raised in

many years! You can send all the money to Brenda at the same time. We really appreciate your support.

I hope everyone has a wonderful summer, and if you think of any programs or activities that you would like the Sisterhood to provide please let us know.

Natha

ONEGS

Jul 05 Rosenthal
Jul 12 Zelickson
Jul 19 Polin
Jul 26 Kalachman
Aug 02 Hancock

DONATIONS

General Fund

From: Natha & Scott Hancock

From: Michal & Gary Hall
In Honor of the High School graduation of Jordan Hall & Claudia Cerezo.

From: Irwin F. Noparstak
In Honor of Diana Polin's 90th birthday and Howard Polin's 95th birthday.

Rabbi Fund

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal
To: Robin Kirby – Looking forward to you getting well soon and back on your feet.

Sisterhood

From: Sandra Wiederecht

From: Clare & Michael Grisham

From: Dorothy & Bill Goldberg

Outdoor Lighting Fund

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

BIRTHDAYS

Jul 03 Michal Hall
Jul 03 Mante Polin
Jul 09 Sandy Martin
Jul 13 Ted Roberts
Jul 15 Debbie Leites
Jul 15 Michelle Persons
Jul 16 Shayna Johnson
Jul 16 Sam Kleiner
Jul 17 Christie Berry
Jul 18 Sandy Pepper
Jul 20 George Drake
Jul 21 Alana Palermo
Jul 22 James Wesley Stone, III
Jul 23 Jacob Fuerst
Jul 28 Stan Belsky
Jul 29 Sarah Kirshtein

ANNIVERSARIES

Jul 03 Amy & Matthew Mauldin
Jul 04 Dr. Louis B. & Beverly Weiner
Jul 28 Karen & Bob Feigenblatt

Yahrzeits**

Jul 03 Sivan 30 Phyllis E.A. Schreiber
Jul 08 Tamuz 05 Charles Klazmer
Jul 08 Tamuz 05 Doris Mae Aaronson Kirshtein
Jul 08 Tamuz 05 Morris Schindler
Jul 09 Tamuz 06 Abraham Kalachman*
Jul 09 Tamuz 06 Meyer (Mike) Zelickson*

Jul 10 Tamuz 07 Jacob Milton Ludmer*
Jul 10 Tamuz 07 Jacob Zarovsky
Jul 10 Tamuz 07 Virginia Johanna McDonald*
Jul 12 Tamuz 09 Etta B. Roberts
Jul 13 Tamuz 10 Rose Flashner*
Jul 13 Tamuz 10 Joel Mendelson
Jul 20 Tamuz 17 Milton Fuerst
Jul 21 Tamuz 18 Sam Goldstein*
Jul 21 Tamuz 18 Benjamin Sainker*
Jul 26 Tamuz 23 Paula Levy Goldberg*
Jul 28 Tamuz 25 Samuel H. Cohen*
Jul 30 Tamuz 27 Harry Freedman
Jul 31 Tamuz 28 Lynda Citron Siff
Aug 02 Av 01 Naomi Miller*

* Plaque

**Light Memorial candle sunset of previous evening

MODESTY AND OTHER VIRTUES

By Ted Roberts

The Bible is full of mysteries. Aside from its poetry, philosophy, theology and history, it's brimming with mysteries that have baffled the rabbis, theologians, and secular scholars of the ages. Some are well known and have been explored for centuries. Let me pose one which slapped my face as I read the familiar story of disobedience by the first newlyweds: Adam and Eve. Such a simple story crowned by an anomaly that mystifies this scribbler and a schoolroom full of scholars. What is this obsession with nudity?

As we know, the snake, so to speak, seduces Eve. She, and naïve Adam swallow his marketing speech. Now they both metaphorically have ingested the wisdom of the Tree of Good and Evil. But to us, the ban on such a luncheon is already a puzzle. Why should G-d's finest creation not know the difference between good and evil? It would seem the finest ingredient of mankind. Sin –

the ingestion of the fruit of the tree – why the connection with nudity? There wasn't a single tailor in Eden.

First a strange interlude BEFORE they indulged their passion for the fruit of the tree: “they were both naked, the man and his wife and they were not ashamed”. How strange. Why should they be ashamed? What's blameful about nudity thousands of years ago? And who was to view their nakedness – the bluejays, the snake, the brown bear? A conundrum if there ever was one. And why would their disobedience bring on nakedness?

But we are not through. They do eat of the Tree of Good and Evil. And immediately they see something evil in their “nekkidness,” as we say down here. Why? They sew up underwear from fig leaves.

Why does their violation affect the lower reaches of their bodies and not their minds? Why are they suddenly sensitive to the revelation of their bodies? They just violated G-d's command and they're worried about the world's first burlesque show! How irrelevant. What an imbalance.

The charade – this relevance to the disobedience of an all-powerful G-d and underwear continues. It's a puzzle.

G-d calls out to Adam – basically “where are you” – as though He doesn't know. Adam, now wearing a fig leaf suit and matching vest, tells his Creator that he was afraid to answer, “because I was naked”.

Shocking. Adam is afraid to stand nekkid (as we say down here) in front of his G-d. And furthermore, his nudity evidently reveals the fact that for the sake of an apple he has shattered one of the only two commandments that G-d has levied upon him. Little does he know that centuries later his kin will receive 613 more! The dialogue that we and all mankind are familiar with follows. The punishment: Adam has to get a job. Poor Eve is plagued with childbirth pain.

And when the lecture is over unbelievably, G-d, Himself, “made tunics of skin and clothed them”. Why? Why is the Designer and Master of the galaxy shocked by nudity? Every living creature is naked!

This is mind bending. Evidently, the newlyweds' lack of wardrobe even impresses the Creator. And it loudly announces to G-d that the two naked ones have broken the only sanctions imposed on them. (And there are midrashim that claim that nudity is more than physical exposure. It's a metaphor for the flawed hearts and souls of humanity.) Maybe.

Why is it so important? We're talking about a primeval wilderness, not Times Square. And why would the G-d of all creation worry how his children are dressed? There is some meaning behind here that we are missing. I mean, if you carved the Alps and scooped out the trench for the Pacific Ocean and hung the planets in the virgin sky, what difference does a fig leaf here or there make? Clearly, the translation misses something. Modesty is far from the top of the virtue

chain. But I'm just a scribbler. Go ask your Rabbi.

Ted Roberts, "The Scribbler on the Roof," is a syndicated Jewish columnist and longtime

member of our Synagogue. Buy Ted's collected works at Amazon.com or the Sisterhood Gift Shop. Ted welcomes your comment and/or critique and can be emailed at: shirlr@hiwaay.net