

the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

JANUARY, 2021

TEVET/SHEVAT, 5781

Services are not being held in the building due to Covid.
Please see our website for information on joining virtual services.

<http://www.etzchayim-hsv.org>

FROM THE RABBI

INOCULATION

Edward Jenner (1749-1823) was the English physician and scientist who created the world's first vaccine, for smallpox. You can guess why I am thinking about Edward Jenner. We now have inoculations for Covid-19, baruch HaShem, and Dr. Jenner is the 'father' of this endeavor.



I have not become an overnight expert on the life and character of this brilliant man. Admittedly my research has been cursory (I've read Wikipedia and a few other online articles). However, I am much moved by what I see. The interpretation of his scientific genius I leave to others; it's not my field. But here are a few thoughts that I've gleaned about Jenner's moral and spiritual being. I commend them to you:

* From an article by Stefan Riedel, MD, PhD, Baylor University Medical Center: "Although he received worldwide recognition and many honors, Jenner made no attempt to enrich himself through his discovery. He actually devoted so much time to the cause of vaccination that his private practice and his personal affairs suffered severely."

* From Wikipedia: "Neither fanatic nor lax, Jenner was a Christian who in his personal correspondence showed himself quite spiritual; he treasured the Bible. Some days before his death, he stated to a friend: 'I am not surprised that men are

not grateful to me; but I wonder that they are not grateful to God for the good which He has made me the instrument of conveying to my fellow creatures.”

*From the 19th century Rabbi Israel Lipschitz in his commentary on the Mishnah, the *Tiferes Yisrael*: “Dr. Jenner was one of the 'righteous of the nations,' deserving a lofty place in the World to Come, for having saved millions of people from smallpox.”

RIP Edward Jenner. We salute you, as we salute the physicians and scientists who, we hope, are bringing life and safety to the world's population in 2021 as the painful and gloomy year of 2020 finally draws to its end. Dear friends, please stay safe. Better times are surely coming!

My new year's wish is to SEE YOU ALL IN PERSON before very much of 2021 has elapsed,

Stephen Listfield

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

First off, I'd like to say, "Welcome to 2021". Whoohooo! 2020 is over. Remember how January was always the most difficult month for writing checks. Remember? You'd spend all month writing the wrong year for the date. Watch out for that!

Thanks to everyone for their continued patience during Covid while Etz Chayim doesn't conduct in-person services and/or meetings. This month is no different. We'll be having online services via Zoom.

Also, we'll be having a congregational meeting this month. It'll be a Zoom meeting as well. Everyone please try to attend. The details of the meeting will be coming soon.

I wish everyone continued good health. Please stay safe. Back to normal is just a short time away.

Gary

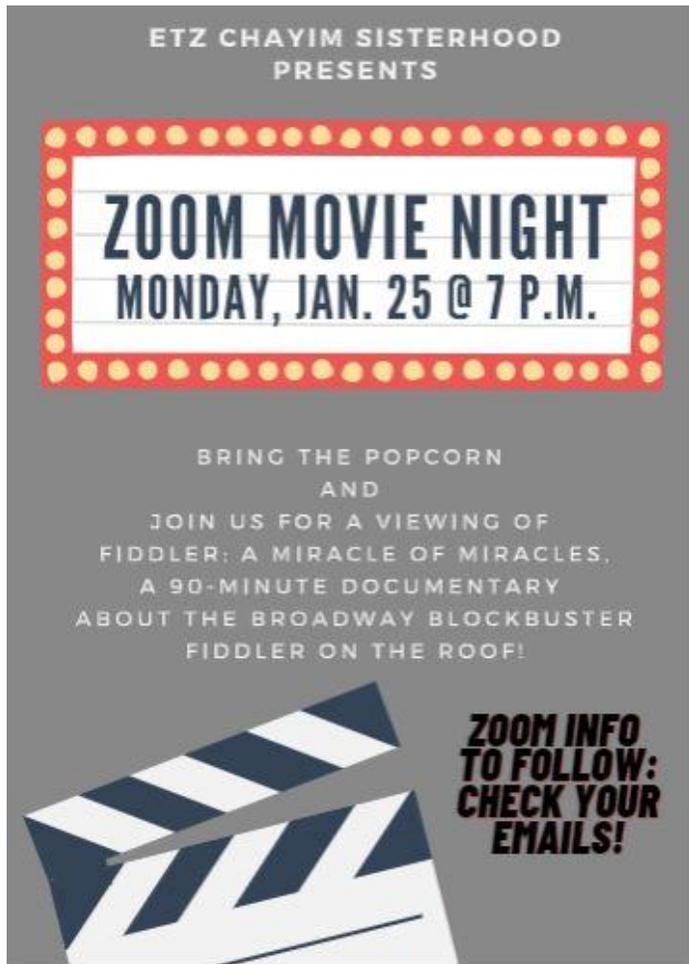
SISTERHOOD

Happy New Year! We had a fun time seeing a handful of you during our Hanukkah Latke Drive Through event last month. It was so nice to see all who visited, and I hope you enjoyed the latkes as much as I did. They were so delicious (though they don't hold a candle to the latkes made by our EC chefs)!

In November we had such a fun Zoom Trivia Night hosted by Manya and her daughter-in-law, Marti. We are excited for the next Zoom social event they're hosting on Monday, January 25 at 7:00pm when we will be watching the PBS movie "Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracles" together. Zoom details will be emailed to you (look out for an email from either Manya or Michelle P. (To those few members who do not use email, you can expect a phone call.)

Looking forward to a time soon when the weather warms, sickness declines, and we can gather in person again.

Amy



DONATIONS

Rabbi Fund

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal

To: Fred Kolchin & Family - In Memory of Fred's mother, Beatrice Kolchin

To: Shirley Roberts -Mazel tov on the marriage of your grandson Aryeh Roberts to Lele Kaltmann and on the engagement of your granddaughter Eliza Roberts to Jacob Itzkowitz.

To: Lucy Fisher and Family – In Memory of Charlie, he served on the synagogue board and was always there when needed. He will be missed by all who knew him.

From: Shirley Roberts

In Honor of my grandson Aryeh Roberts and his new bride Lele Kaltmann.

To: Fred & Linda Kolchin – So sorry for the loss of your mother.

General Fund

From: Janet Schindler

To: Fred & Linda Kolchin – In Memory of Fred's mother, Beatrice Kolchin.

To: Millie Rosenthal – Glad you are feeling better, continued good health.

To: Lucy Fisher & Family – In Memory of Lucy's husband, Charlie Fisher

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal

To: Shirley Roberts – In Memory of your brother-in-law, Hashi Katz

To: Arlene White – Very glad you are starting to feel better after your car accident.

To: The Yalowitz Family- So sorry the virus got you, hopefully you all are on the road to recovery.

From: David & Annette Fisher

In Memory of our father, Charles Fisher

From: Roslyn Honan

In Honor of Lydia Honan's participation in services and Happy New Year to everyone.

From: Brenda & Cliff Liles

To Sue Paddock - In Memory of your mother, Ann Richard. May her memory be for a blessing.

To: Lucy Fisher - In Memory of your husband, Charles Fisher. Wishing you and your family comfort.

From: Caroline & Frank Hodges

In Memory of Charlie Fisher, our good friend and neighbor.

Sisterhood Fund

From Diana & Howard Polin

To: Millie Rosenthal – So glad you are home from the hospital and on the mend.

To: Sue & Joe Paddock – In Memory of Sue's mother, Ann Richard. May remembrance of happier times help to bring comfort.

To: Shirley Roberts – Mazel Tov on your granddaughter Eliza's engagement to Jacob Itzkowitz and on your grandson Aryeh's wedding to Lele Kaltmann.

To: Shirley Roberts – In Memory of your brother-in-law Hashi Katz.

To: Fred & Linda Kolchin & Family –In Memory of Fred's mother, Bernice Kolchin. You have our heartfelt sympathy. Take comfort in the love and devotion you shared through the years.

From: Manya Fuerst

From: Shirley Roberts

From: Antonia Spector

In thanks for the Latke Drive-Through

Outdoor Lighting Fund

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

A big THANK YOU to everyone who sent cards, telephone calls, letters and wonderful food following my operation. The prayers from the Rabbi and the congregation all helped with my recovery. Wonderful friends, thank you all so much. I'm getting back to myself. Love you all.
Millie

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jan 09 Virtual Shabbat morning services with Rabbi Listfield, 9:45 AM
- Jan 17 Virtual Sunday Café with Rabbi Listfield, 9:45 AM
- Jan 19 Virtual Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting, 7 PM
- Jan 22 Virtual Friday evening services with Rabbi Listfield, 7:15 PM
- Jan 25 Sisterhood Movie Night, 7 PM, *Fiddler: Miracle of Miracles*
- Jan 26_ Virtual Tuesday Gathering with Rabbi Listfield, 6:45 PM
- Jan 28 Tu B'Shevat

NOTICE: If you are planning a synagogue related activity or event, please inform our Web Shamash (webshamash@etzchayim-hsv.org) so your event can be noted on our calendar.

BIRTHDAYS

- Jan 01 Ron Goldberg
- Jan 01 Keith Lyonnais
- Jan 05 McKenzie Rosenthal Sanders
- Jan 10 Sarah Isabell Sinker
- Jan 11 Joe Sacks
- Jan 12 Michael Rosenthal
- Jan 21 Samuel Fuerst
- Jan 23 Alicia Hall
- Jan 23 Sam Sinker
- Jan 24 Alan Sacks
- Jan 26 Steve Goodman
- Jan 28 Elizabeth Persons
- Jan 29 Mary Ann Meyer
- Jan 30 Eliza Roberts
- Jan 31 Eileen Dorit Jackson
- Jan 31 Adam Zelickson

ANNIVERSARIES

Jan 01 Diana & Howard Polin
Jan 15 BJ & Bill Brigadier
Jan 17 Ana & Seth Spraggins

Yahrzeits**

Dec 27 Tevet 12 Gilbert Brodkin
Dec 27 Tevet 12 Lou Herbin*
Dec 27 Tevet 12 Bea Smolker*
Dec 29 Tevet 14 Betty K. Greenberg
Dec 31 Tevet 16 Bertha P. Smolker*
Dec 31 Tevet 16 Walter Delengowski
Jan 01 Tevet 17 Joseph Cohen*
Jan 02 Tevet 18 Howard S. McCall
Jan 03 Tevet 19 Bruce Roberts*
Jan 04 Tevet 20 Abigail Michaela Sawyer*
Jan 04 Tevet 20 Alex Harris
Jan 07 Tevet 23 Anna Rodkin
Jan 09 Tevet 25 Martin Klazmer
Jan 14 Shevat 01 Harry Warshaw
Jan 15 Shevat 02 Harry Zeruld*
Jan 16 Shevat 03 Hannah Rosen bat Schmueel
Jan 17 Shevat 04 Sylvia Kalachman*
Jan 18 Shevat 05 Royal Milton Jacobs*
Jan 22 Shevat 09 Ida Bernstein Sidel
Jan 22 Shevat 09 Alice Levine Yalowitz
Jan 23 Shevat 10 Selma Levitt
Jan 24 Shevat 11 William Flank*
Jan 24 Shevat 11 Hersh Schindler
Jan 25 Shevat 12 Henry Fleishman
Jan 27 Shevat 14 Rabbi Jeffrey Ballon
Jan 29 Shevat 16 Jerome L. Richard
Jan 30 Shevat 17 Esther Goldberg*
Jan 31 Shevat 18 Helen Flank Baum*

* Plaque

**Light Memorial candle sunset of previous evening

NACHAS

NACHaS hosted its first ever Family Creative Menorah Challenge, and boy did the students put forward their creativity and imagination! In late November, Hanukkah helpers delivered kits to families to use for this out-of-the-box family engagement activity. Yet, a majority of families created menorahs on their own with items they found in their homes or out in nature. You can see from the picture that the creations were impressive! The students were excited about their designs and eager to share with the other students during the final Sunday session of the year. The NACHaS board is thrilled that, despite the challenges experienced during 2020, families gathered together to embrace this project. The board is planning another great family experience for Tu B'Shevat.



DON'T FORGET THE WOMEN

By Ted Roberts, the *Scribbler on the Roof*, (1930-2020)

Have you ever noticed in our Chumash the huge positive prejudice toward women? It's hard to miss – and yet there's a wave of scholars and kibitzers who criticize us for our denigration of the female species.

A silly judgment that ignores the surrounding world of 2000 B.C.E and the cultural judgment that women were chattel. Into this storm of injustice, Judaism introduced the notion that Eve and her sisters were not like sheep or goats, as was the view of pagan nations among whom we lived. According to their primitive mores, the two top professional opportunities were scrubwoman and Temple prostitute. Pagan women encountered in the antique annals of the time compare poorly to our aggressive matriarchs and others such as Deborah, Leah, Yael, and Judith.

To restate simply, the Tanach and its attitudes must be judged in its time – not by today's. You must not expect a smart young lady to crash through the ceiling, imposed by the world's culture and build the Temple or lead the Israelites into battle. Amazons they were not. And ceilings were steel, not glass.

To revive an old but apt expression, generally they were "mothers in Israel". And consider their role as opposed to the patriarchs. When it comes to plain ol' honesty and goodness, I'd take Jacob's Rachel and Leah over Jacob any day of the week: morally, behaviorally (is that not what pleased G-d?).

True, his mother Rebecca has a fleeting flirtation with deception as to Isaac's inheritance, but we can forgive that since it's motivated by maternal love.

And Miriam, who guided us through the wilderness, certainly must have pleased G-d over Aaron, who had his weaknesses. Remember he had a fixation on golden calves when Moses was out of town negotiating with the celestial King of Kings.

And talk about Moses – our peerless leader whose morality is impeccable – the most saintly of the Pentateuchal cast. Even Moses – if you compare him to Zipporah – has a bad day or two. In fact, you might say that this woman – lauded by Torah – daughter of a Priest of Midian – not even a Jewess – has her moment of triumph. She saves the life of Moses when at the sight of a vengeful G-d, she abruptly circumcises their son. This must be the most mysterious, enigmatic series of verses in our holy text. G-d seeks to kill Moses? (Why? Because he didn't circumcise Gershom, say most scholars.)

Remember he had a killer job. After all, he had to satisfy our stiff-necked ancestors. Constant meetings, tense parleys with Pharaoh, and meetings with the Boss Himself – you didn't want to be late for that appointment! Gershom's circumcision? Maybe next week. Zipporah, in the midst of this encounter, grabs a sharp flint and performs the job of the Mohel and flings the foreskin at "his" feet. Whose feet? Moses? Or an anthropomorphic G-d? "You are a husband of blood," she shrieks. Zipporah saves the day. A most puzzling passage, which scholars have indigestibly chewed

upon for years. But our present concern is to point out the omnipotent role of women in our bible. And here is a significant example. Without Moses to guide them, our leaderless ancestors may have ended up in Sudan. Certainly not a land of milk and honey. And some commentators say Moses chose Zipporah because she was of a desert tribe who knew the Sinai.

Throughout our canon, we have women represented. We have the sons of Jacob, and we have his single daughter – Dinah. We meet Ruth the Moabite and her unswerving loyalty to her mother-in-law, clearly a text asking for tolerance – even to Israel's enemies. And let's not forget heroines like Yael and Judith and the prophetesses like Deborah who basically judged the fledgling nation. We value our women. May it continue.