
the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

NOVEMBER, 2023

CHESHVAN/KISLEV, 5784

For information on joining
virtual services and events, please see our website:

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

FROM THE RABBI

AFTER THE MASSACRE

As I write these lines in mid-October, Hamas looks like the clear winner in this round of Mideast fighting. Can anyone doubt that? They brutally massacred 1,400 people, they took over 200 hostages, and for those savage achievements they are basking in frenzied support throughout the Middle East, and in a sickeningly large amount of support throughout the world.

Unless Hamas is destroyed, those terrorists will strike again. Emboldened by their "victory," they likely will come at Israel with much more force. Do not doubt me. Their founding covenant calls for the destruction of Israel.

That's why I am fully in favor of Israel destroying Hamas. Their leaders have to be killed or captured. Ditto, their soldiers. Their infrastructure has to be dismantled. Everything should be done in order to get the hostages back. But the main goal has to be the destruction of Hamas in all its parts.

This is the legitimate and necessary goal of the state of Israel.

However, I see two problems. First, do you know how many hostages Hamas holds in Gaza? No, not two hundred. It's two million. The entire population are their human shields! How can anyone possibly find all the members of that terrorist organization?

Some of Hamas' top leaders are not even in Gaza. They are living luxuriously in Qatar. Do you expect that they will ever be brought to justice?

The second problem is, What is the end plan? If Israel miraculously does manage to annihilate their genocidal neighbors— who then is going to manage Gaza? You don't see the Egyptians opening their border fences, The people of Gaza and the Palestinian Authority have no use for each other. The Arab world pays lip service, but they show no real interest in the Palestinians. And if that's not enough, the sad fact is that a destroyed Hamas would give birth to a new Hamas. The sacred demand to eliminate Israel doesn't die, even if some perpetrators are killed.

Israel absolutely cannot absorb another massacre from terrorists! They are doing what they must. They have no choice. And that's all I can say at this bleak time.

Stephen Listfield

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello Etz Chayim Family,

The recent Holidays at Etz Chayim were wonderful with well attended services, food, family and friends! There were Sukkot services every day, we read from the Torah, had a family pot luck, and the Sukkah decorations were glorious! And finally, thank you to those who donated to the holiday food

bank during the music program in the Sukkah: 165 pounds of food and \$100 were collected from this event.

November is a slow month regarding Jewish holiday activities, but it will be an intense month testing our faith as the war in Israel and fallout around the world continues. Mark your calendar, on November 17-19 we have a Rabbi Shabbaton weekend with Rabbi Stephen Listfield. Time to meet, pray, discuss, and eat together.

Did you know Etz Chayim has a book club with lively discussions?! Our next meeting is Thursday, November 09, 11:30am. More information is elsewhere in the Shofar.

Etz Chayim has adopted a Safety Plan that covers a variety of emergencies including active threat, natural disasters, and health emergencies. Look for training dates to implement the Safety and Security Plans.

We recently lost a beloved member of our community, B J Brigadier. Her memory lives on through the newly created BJ Brigadier Memorial Fund.

Please complete the Member Interest Survey! It is the wish of the Etz Chayim Board that Congregants feel connected and involved with the Huntsville Conservative Synagogue and that the Synagogue is relevant and fulfills the needs of the Conservative Jewish Community in North Alabama. The mission, that the Synagogue is truly a House of Prayer, a House of Study, and a

House of Gathering requires that we get your input regarding our activities. It was already sent to you in an email or find the printed copy at the synagogue. You can leave your completed copy in the Etz Chayim foyer or return it to the following email by November 03: seccorr@etzchayim-hsv.org

This is a trying time for Israel and the Jews of the world. From an American Jewish perspective, my personal hope and prayers are to:

- 1) reduce Antisemitism that has existed around the world for hundreds of years
- 2) accept the right of Jews to a peaceful and prosperous nation of Israel
- 3) accept the right of Palestinians to a peaceful and prosperous land of their own in West Bank and Gaza
- 4) that Palestine replace Hamas with an elected government not based on terrorism and destruction of Israel, but with a vision of peaceful habitation side by side with their neighbors, so both countries can use their resources for the betterment of their people.

Sincerely,

Lynne Edmondson

SISTERHOOD

Hi All,

Sisterhood would like to remind our Congregants that we are a largely volunteer-based synagogue with lots of "jobs" available. We're grateful for all the work many of us do to make the synagogue a warm and welcoming place. Sisterhood's Communications Secretary, Karen Feigenblatt, has posted our Oneg sign up list. Our custom is for each family to sponsor 2 or more Onegs per year. Please remember to take a look at the list and choose the available dates you'd like to sponsor, which entails providing refreshments for service attendees on Erev Shabbat. We also have a few dates available for preparing Saturday Kiddush Luncheons and Sunday Brunches, which Sisterhood and the Ted Roberts Memorial Fund sponsor, respectively.

Almost all of the New Year Book funds have come in, and we thank you for supporting this effort of ours. Even with a new printer, we had another successful year due to your help. Thank you very much!

We had a big turnout at October's Lunch Bunch, and I think we'll have another good group at Chuy's on November 20th. RSVP to Donna by November 16th to save your seat!



EC BOOK CLUB

The Book Club will be meeting on Thursday, November 9, at 11:30 to review the book, *The Emergence of American Zionism*, by Mark Raider. The book is a comprehensive review of how the concept of Zionism was established in America and the multitude of problems experienced by the proponents of Zionism during the period 1895 to 1939. Everyone is welcome to attend and enjoy the brilliant discussions during the review.

Max

THANK U ALL

Thanks to all who came to services on Friday, October 13, to help me celebrate the 50th anniversary of my 39th birthday. You all made it a special occasion for my family and myself.

Just to let you know if you were not at services that night, Dave Barrows sat by his truck at the foot of the synagogue driveway with his favorite shotgun during the entire service and oneg. Dave volunteered to do that without anyone asking him to do so. The congregation thanks you Dave.

Max

DONATIONS

General Fund

In Honor of the High Holidays
From: Elizabeth Kessler & Dennis Gilbride
From: Shirley Roberts
From: Millie & Max Rosenthal
From: Anonymous
From: Sue & Joe Paddock
From: Ray Applebaum
From: Lauren & Steve Goodman
From: Brenda & Cliff Liles
From: International Fellowship of Christians & Jews.

From: Eliane Zitomer
In Honor of Rabbi Listfield

From: Janet Schindler
In Memory of B.J. Brigadier

From: Sandy & Marvin Kalachman
In honor of the Kalachman & Makower Yizkors
From: Karen Hirsch
In Honor of Bill Goldberg

From: Sisterhood
For the Conference Room Blinds

From: Millie & Max Rosenthal
For the Conference Room Lights.

From: Brenda & Cliff Liles
In Memory of Maxine Persons, mother of
Jonathan Persons. We're sorry for your loss.
In Memory of B.J. Brigadier, wife of Bill
Brigadier. She will be remembered.
In Memory of Roslyn Honan, mother of Lydia
Honan. She was a very sweet woman.

From: Sue & Joe Paddock
In Memory of our Son, Jeff Paddock
In Honor of Sukkot

Sacks Memorial Fund

From: Alan Sacks
In Memory of my Mother, Harriet Sacks
In Memory of my Brother, Randy Sacks

Foodbank

From: Larry Levitt

B.J. Brigadier Fund

From: Sue & Joe Paddock
From: Susan & Larry Levitt
From: Virginia Bain
In memory of B.J. Brigadier

Outdoor Lighting Fund

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 28 Shabbat Morning Services, 9:45 A.M.
Nov 04 NACHaS and younger children Tot
Shabbat at TBS, 10 A.M.-10:30 A.M.
Nov 05 JWV decorates graves
Nov 06 SH Board meeting, 1 P.M., virtual
Nov 09 EC Book Club at 11:30 A.M.
Nov 11 Shabbat Morning Services, 9:45 A.M.
Nov 11 Veteran's Day, no JWV Parade
Nov 12 JWV removes Flags from grave
Nov 13 EC Board meeting, 7 P.M., virtual
Nov 17-19 Rabbi Listfield Shabbaton, includes
Erev Shabbat services followed by
oneg Shabbat, Shabbat morning
service followed by Kiddush lunch &
Torah discussion, Sunday Brunch
followed by discussion
Nov 19 NACHaS Thanksgiving break
Nov 20 Sisterhood Lunch Bunch

Nov 26 NACHaS Thanksgiving break
Dec 07-15 Hanukkah
Dec 10 Latke Party, Bingo at Noon, Latke
Lunch at 1 PM



**Come Join Etz Chayim
To Celebrate Chanukah!**
Sunday, December 10
Location: 7705 Bailey Cove Rd.

Tickets: at the door \$9.00 for adults
children 13 & under free.
Checks or cash accepted.

bingo

Bingo starts at 12:00PM

Latkes and food served at 1:00PM

FIVE GUYS BURGERS AND FRIES

No, this is not an article about a fast food restaurant, it's a THANK YOU to the 5 Guys who showed up to take down the Sukkah.

We had about 15 guys to put up the Sukkah and at least 8 of them were 9 feet tall and did not need a ladder to attach all the lumber required to make the Sukkah. To take it down, only 5 showed up and none of them were over 4 feet tall and were scrambling up and down the ladders like a troupe of circus performers. So a big THANK YOU to Bill Brigadier, Bill Goldberg, Lew Weiner, and Fred Kolchin for coming out to do the work, and we didn't even have a breakfast reward.

Max

VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

The person in this position uploads events to the Etz Chayim Calendar and then shares our calendar to the Huntsville/Madison Jewish Community Calendar. Must have some computer skills and access to computer. Training will be provided.

Please complete and return the Member Interest Survey by November 3. It was emailed and copies are also in foyer.

We recently lost a beloved member of our community, B J Brigadier. Her memory lives on through the newly created BJ Brigadier Memorial Fund.

ISRAEL EMERGENCY RELIEF

JFHNA is conducting an Israel Emergency Relief drive on top of our Fall Campaign. We already have received a number of stock donations as well as cash. The vast majority is going toward humanitarian relief efforts as well as support to the Lone Soldier Fund and Friends of the IDF. If you wish to support this effort, **please visit JFHNA.org** to donate or send a check made out the "JFHNA" with a note marked for the Israel Emergency Fund. As in the past, you can mail it to our post office box: **JFHNA, PO Box 75, Decatur, AL 35602** or to me at **JFHNA, Attn: Joe Paddock, 1009 San Ramon Ave., Huntsville AL 35802.**

Joe Paddock



Sisterhood Lunch Bunch
Monday, November 20 at 12:30PM

Chuy's

fine Tex Mex

935 Bob Wallace Ave.

RSVP by Thurs., November 16

Donna Lyonnais: Cell: 803-508-1803

Email: donnamayo1950@gmail.com



BIRTHDAYS

Nov 01	Linda Kolchin
Nov 02	Karen Hirsch
Nov 03	Nannette Schwartz
Nov 03	Jennifer Roberts
Nov 09	Sharon Yalowitz
Nov 11	Shirley Roberts
Nov 16	Jonathan Levitt
Nov 19	Daniel Goodman
Nov 23	Adam Kalachman
Nov 23	Haley Rosenthal
Nov 24	Shoshana Rosenthal
Nov 26	Bill Goldberg
Nov 27	Sandy Lieberman
Nov 28	Yael Roberts

ANNIVERSARIES

Nov 06	Natha & Scott Hancock
Nov 13	Mante & Arthur Polin
Nov 24	Barry & Mary Ann Meyer

ONEGS

Oct 27	Lyonnais
Nov 03	Liles

Nov 10 Paddock
 Nov 17 Hirsch
 Nov 24 Feigenblatt
 Dec 01 Stora

Yahrzeits**

Oct 27 12 Cheshvan Paul Kunitz
 Oct 27 12 Cheshvan Martin Howard Goldner*
 Oct 28 13 Cheshvan Herschel Tzvi Rabinovich
 Oct 30 15 Cheshvan Pauline Rudoy*
 Oct 30 15 Cheshvan Dr. Herbert Pierre Secher*
 Nov 02 18 Cheshvan Arlene Yedid
 Nov 03 19 Cheshvan Abe Soble*
 Nov 03 19 Cheshvan Elise Margaret Hoehne
 Nov 04 20 Cheshvan Monroe Green*
 Nov 05 21 Cheshvan William Polin*
 Nov 06 22 Cheshvan Morris Goldberg*
 Nov 06 22 Cheshvan Leon Treister*
 Nov 06 22 Cheshvan Sam Ginsburg*
 Nov 07 23 Cheshvan Sheldon Fleishman*
 Nov 09 25 Cheshvan Dr. Abraham Feitelberg*
 Nov 10 26 Cheshvan Joan Carol Zelickson*
 Nov 12 28 Cheshvan Rose Mildred Feitelberg*
 Nov 12 28 Cheshvan Roger Linton
 Nov 12 28 Cheshvan Darwin Maier*
 Nov 13 29 Cheshvan Rose Goldberg
 Nov 13 29 Cheshvan Samuel Belsky*
 Nov 14 01 Kislev Ann Richard*
 Nov 15 02 Kislev Harold Isaac Goldman*
 Nov 17 04 Kislev Suzanne Ivy*
 Nov 18 05 Kislev Rose Soble*
 Nov 18 05 Kislev Rhonda Beth Baker*
 Nov 19 06 Kislev Abraham Belsky*
 Nov 19 06 Kislev Molly Levy Buchman
 Nov 22 09 Kislev Pauline Baron Kripke*
 Nov 25 12 Kislev Margareta Bernstein*
 Nov 25 12 Kislev Helene Kamisher*
 Nov 25 12 Kislev Beatrice Kolchin*
 Nov 26 13 Kislev Gertrude S. Goldberger
 Nov 30 17 Kislev Irving Weinberger*
 Dec 01 18 Kislev Lily Yedid

****Light Memorial candle sunset of previous evening**

AN EARTHQUAKE IN IRAN?

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



Our G-d is a jealous god, as He repeats many times in His book, and I intend not to denigrate his feelings. Don't argue with me – argue with Moses, who wrote *Exodus 20:5* and a long list of similar declarations.

And He is a God of punishment. You want a debate me? Don't waste your time. Go read *Isaiah 13:11* if you need emphatic underlining. "I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity." It is clear our G-d, contrary to Christianity, is a G-d who is passionate about justice – turning the cheek is not in His rulebook. He clearly believes in punishment.

He also dispenses mercy in carefully measured doses. And when I consider His many quotes announcing His patriarchal philosophy, how else, I reflect, can mankind be civilized? I think of the real world – from Sodom and Gomorrah to the 1940s of our generation – when we fought the evil threat of Naziism to the current Islamic Murder, Inc.

Like Solomon says in *Ecclesiastes*, "there's nothing new under the sun." And Sodom was small potatoes compared to world-wide Islamic terrorism.

Consider Sodom and Gomorrah. Merciful Abraham eloquently pleads for a reprieve if even ten good people exist in that stew of iniquity. Our patriarch delivers a speech full of eloquence, logic, and flattery ("Shall not the judge of all the earth do justly?") strongly implying that a total wipeout is NOT just! But evidently, the do-gooders cannot be found. G-d nukes the two cities of the plain. He either couldn't find ten moral people or He ignored his debate with Abraham and eliminated a few innocents with the sinners.

Oddly, World War II – two millennia later – the debate reopened at a human level. The highest

levels of allied leadership debated the bombing of German cities. (By now, man had almost the destructive power of G-d.) Dresden, Hamburg, and Berlin not only possessed railroad junctions and armament plants, but innocent men, women, and children. The discussion didn't last long. We pulverized those cities like radiation therapy destroys healthy flesh along with the cancer. And maybe ten innocent people were incinerated like the Nazi civilians. Maybe 50, or 500. Who knows?

If we believe in the epiphany at Sinai, we must believe that our Creator destroyed thousands in the cities on the plain. Qualifications on both sides, though not stated, could be postulated. You might say: He couldn't find those ten righteous people, the basis of His agreement with Abraham. Evil must be eliminated.

Opposing view: isn't it possible that some of the evil would change; eventually mend their ways? Were the children evil? Consider also some 2-3 millennia before. The flood obliterated mankind. Remember HE wiped out humanity except righteous Noah and his brood and a few animals so we'd have a zoo to amuse us.

These are difficult ethical conundrums for biblical scholars to reconcile with the goodness and mercy Judaism now believes G-d to possess. Do we dare ask: Did HE change or did WE change? Or must we painfully accept that our G-d, who provides goodness, not only hates evil, but stands ready to enthusiastically eliminate it as we eradicate the malaria germ. This is a question not for me or a yeshiva full of rabbis to answer. It is beyond human ken. But the question still hangs in the air like a cloud over Guantanamo, where innocent thousands were saved by merciless punishment to a few. But those harsh methods must have punished some small measure of innocence. What's the rationalizing arithmetic? Ten thousand saved vs. four "innocents" put to pain? Let's face it, the Chumash would never hesitate on that trade-off. I advocate not – I only point to the Chumash.

Israeli missiles often destroy the terrorist home or car, even if his pals or family go with him to that libidinous Islamic heaven. There's nothing new under the sun, said Solomon – even

convoluted moral questions. Is there a calculus? Or even a simple arithmetic? One potential killer and three innocents require death to save the lives of fifty other innocents. Is that the deal? Or is it 20 – or a thousand? Who knows?

I would say the faithful believers of G-d's lecture on Sinai (and does that not include all Jews?) would destroy 10,000 sinners – some innocent – to save ten of His people. Do you think the Maloch Hamoves – the Angel of Death – cruising the skies of Egypt, checked the ethical character of his victims? No, says the book. He only looked for the lamb's blood on the door: avoided those houses and attacked the rest. He has mercy, but also a plentiful supply of wrath.

After consideration of the flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues, even Guantanamo; that saved thousands of our fellow citizens, we mourn the innocents, but the G-d of our Chumash does not let their peril paralyze our defense of goodness.

Again consider World War II. Military leaders of the U.S. and Britain, along with their air force chieftains, sat in a highly secured meeting room in London. Their topic, unknown to them, was Genesis, especially the Creator's decision on Sodom and Gomorrah. An awesome decision – made more for G-d than man – faced them. Whether to punish the innocent with the guilty or prolong indefinitely the struggle with the current evil, Nazi Germany? Whether to pinpoint by aerial bombardment tactical military targets or the cities of Berlin, Hamburg, Stuttgart, Dresden, Cologne, which contained military targets as well as women and children who did not build aircraft, tanks, or artillery?

But the decision makers followed the theme of Genesis and pulverized the German cities. And had the shade of Abraham been present, his argument for ten innocent Germans would have been as unheeded as the flies that buzzed at the windows. Man has always been less merciful than his Creator. The same could be said of the Strategic Air Command – when G-d-like they chose Hiroshima and Nagasaki for destruction. These decision makers chose the Chumash, not the tenderheartedness of the prophets.

We know nothing of the heart of G-d. I choose my words carefully because we do know His desires of us. A thousand rabbis (and clergymen, too) tell you of His book; and prattle of His wishes. But He, Himself, tells us His ways are hidden to us. "Who", "what", "why", even "when", are as obscured as the smoke with which He crowns his mountaintops.

Metaphorically, He tells us as much in the Chumash. Our Book abounds in the eternal mystery of good and evil, justice and mercy. According to His Chumash, He will shelter us in the palm of His hand and obliterate us with a clench of that palm if He chooses.

He hates evil. That's clear even to Sunday School children. And He punishes those that harm His people, as He repetitively states in His book. Therefore, I await the earthquake that will devastate the nuclear labs of Iran. Ten innocent deaths? Believe Torah? Then believe that. You say innocents will die. Remember the flood. Remember Sodom and Gomorrah. The calculus is unknown. I advocate not – I only point to our holy book and its lesson.