

# CONGREGATION AGUDATH JACOB

February Shevat/Adar 1 5779

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From the Desk of



**Rabbi Ben-Zion Lanxner**

In last week's Torah portion of Yitro יתרו we were receiving the "Asseret haDibrot עשרת הדברות" usually translated as the Ten Commandments (*the correct translation should be the Ten Utterances*), at Mount Sinai.

As I am trying wholeheartedly to organize a monthly Shabbat where our entire Waco Jewish Community gathers together at "ShowUpForShabbatMevarchim" in order to get more acquainted with each other, in order to help and support one another and also to learn and study together about our Jewish identity, I am suggesting for the next few Newsletter articles to write some Jewish educational materials which will hopefully help us all in attaining some deeper knowledge of our 3000 years old tradition. As the time of the Giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai is actually the beginning of the spiritual formation of the Jewish people, I thought that it would be a good place to start.

As we continue reading the Torah portion of Yitro, we are told that the giving of the Ten

Commandments at Mount Sinai was accompanied by several natural and metaphysical phenomena: "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there was thunder and lightning and a thick cloud upon the mountain, and the sound of a shofar exceedingly loud" (Exodus 19:16); "And all the people saw the sounds of the thunder and the lightning and the sound of the shofar and the mountain smoking" (Exodus 20:15). Rashi comments that all the people were able to see that which is heard, something which cannot ordinarily happen.

Modern science refers to this phenomenon as "synesthesia," a condition wherein one of the senses reacts in a novel way to a stimulus ordinarily dealt with by another one of the senses (such as, the sense of sight designating a certain sound as blue, or the sense of sound designating a certain color as bell-like). The ability of all the people to see the sounds of the shofar represents a heightened state of consciousness, a "harmony of the spheres."

Kabbalah explains that as G-d uttered the Ten Commandments, the people perceived the dimensions of *physical and spiritual reality* as one harmonious whole. Symbolically, the mystical tradition relates that all the heavens opened and were revealed at Sinai. Further stressing this unity, we are taught that at first G-d uttered all the Ten Commandments simultaneously and only after repeated them word by word (Rashi on Exodus 20:1).

In the verse mentioned above the Hebrew word for “smoking [mountain]” (Ashan עשן), is comprised of three Hebrew letters, which form an acronym for the various dimensions of reality described by the Sefer Yetzirah.

The letter Ayin ע represents the Hebrew word for “world” or “space” (Olam עולם); the letter shin ש represents the Hebrew word for “year” or “time” (Shanah שנה); the letter nun נ represents the Hebrew word for “soul” or “consciousness” (Nefesh נפש), a dimension, according to the Sefer Yetzirah, (The Book of Formation) as real as the other physical dimensions. Albert Einstein was able to reveal just one hundred years ago, that time can also be considered a dimension and that the three dimensions of space and one dimension of time form a unified space-time continuum.

Although science has yet to deem soul a dimension per se, quantum physics now recognizes that consciousness is not a passive observer, but a critical determinant, of reality.

The idea of soul or consciousness as a dimension or as a determinant of reality is reflected by Rashi’s comment on the verse: “They travelled from Rephidim and came to the

desert of Sinai and they camped in the desert, and Israel camped across from the mountain [Mount Sinai]” (Exodus 19:2).

Rashi notes that the Hebrew word for “camped” is written in the singular, when, presumably, as the verb expressing the action taken by a multitude of people, it should have been written in the plural. Rashi informs us that the singular form comes to emphasize that the children of Israel came to Sinai united “as **One person with One heart**, כאיש אחד בלב אחד” a state of affairs not to be repeated again with such intensity during the forty-year sojourn in the desert.

Many commentators conclude from Rashi’s comment that it was this level of collective elevated consciousness and of unity that allowed for the Giving of the Torah.

The people’s unity elevated their spiritual and physical connection to the point that they were worthy receptacles and was in fact the prerequisite for and an essential part of the awesome experience. Their consciousness quite simply was instrumental in determining the reality as it unfolded at Sinai.

Taking a step backwards, we might ask what induced this feeling of unity among the people? A credible answer may be that their recent prophetic experience during the crossing of the Sea of Reeds and especially during the singing of the Song of the Sea שירת הים, inculcated a sense of oneness and unity among the people, of their being “as **One person with One heart** .”

Another factor could be the battle with Amalek, the last episode related in the Torah before the Jewish people arrived at Mount Sinai. Only by

attaining a high level of determination, unity, and a sense of purpose could the children of Israel have defeated an enemy whose very purpose is the destruction of the Jewish people. Time after time in recent Jewish history we have seen the people of Israel, despite their many differences and disputes, come together “as one person with one heart” to defeat enemies bent on their destruction.

Both the experience at the Sea of Reeds and the battle with Amalek transformed the people,

endowing them with a feeling of unity and a sense of purpose.

This consciousness was translated into their arrival at Sinai “as **One person with One heart**” “כאיש אחד בלב אחד” and consequently led to the awesome and unique historical experience of the Giving of the Torah.

This same level of consciousness of our Jewish identity is what I hope we can together bring to our community, G-d willing ב"ה.

*Rabbi Ben-Zion Lanxner*

## *February Service Schedule*

### Friday, February 1

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 p.m.  
Candle Lighting 5:45 p.m.

### Saturday, February 2

Shacharit 9:30 a.m.  
Shabbat Ends 6:42 p.m.

### Friday, February 8

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 p.m.  
Candle Lighting 5:52 p.m.

### Saturday, February 9

Shacharit 9:30 a.m.  
Shabbat Ends 6:48 p.m.

### Friday, February 15

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 p.m.  
Candle Lighting 5:58 p.m.

### Saturday, February 16

Shacharit 9:30 a.m.  
Shabbat Ends 6:53 p.m.

### Friday, February 22

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 p.m.  
Candle Lighting 6:03 p.m.

### Saturday, February 23

Shacharit 9:30 a.m.  
Shabbat Ends 6:59 p.m.

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

February 1

Jeff Wolf

February 3

Debbie Hersh

February 8

Jim Stuckey

February 9

Simcha Via

February 15

Larry Taub

February 17

Jeff Levin

February 22

Rick Bauer

Florence Hersh

**HAPPY  
ANNIVERSARY**

February 19

Mr. & Mrs. Benjy Bauer

*Mazel Tov*

*Congratulations to the parents  
and grandparents of  
Norah Violet Silver*

Melvin Lipsitz

*Congratulations to Stormy  
Rogers on her conversion*

Abbye & Susan Silver

**Caritas**

FOOD FROM THE FAITHFUL

Please bring cereals and pasta packages throughout the year and Susan Silver will see that they are delivered to Caritas.

**Purim – SAVE THE DATE: March 20, 6:00 P.M.**



**Watch for coming details in weekly announcements!**



## January

### Food Sponsors:

*Javis Howeth  
Programs Committee*

### Special Donations:

*Robert & Gayle Monta  
Leonard Englander*

### Shabbat Donations:

#### January 5

*David Fay  
Javis Howeth  
Joseph Settle*

#### January 12

*David Fay  
Javis Howeth  
Jim & Gabrielle Howle  
George & Kathleen Keller  
Abbye & Susan Silver*

#### January 19

*David Fay  
Judy Hersh  
Javis Howeth  
George & Kathleen Keller  
James & Morasha Stuckey  
Gloria Yoder*

#### January 26

*Inez Bonneville  
Jim & Morasha Stuckey  
Gloria Yoder*

### *In Loving Memory*



#### Cal Goldberg

*Abbye & Susan Silver*

#### Joe Zoblotsky

*Morris & Beverly Zoblotsky*

#### Dave Lebowitz

*Shirley Warshaw*

#### Barney Brickman

*Bobbye Brickman*

#### Frank Israel

*Nancy Israel*

#### Bessie Novy

*Jake Bauer*

#### Henry Novy

*Jake Bauer*

#### Doris Sprecher Silver

*Abbye & Susan Silver  
Larry & Elizabeth Silver*

#### Stanley Hersh

*Cheryl Hersh  
Debbie Hersh  
Florence Hersh  
Judy Hersh  
Arielle Levy  
Rebecca Levy  
Sam Harelik  
Harry Harelik*

## HOW TO OBSERVE THE YAHRZEIT

It is traditional to kindle a Yahrzeit Candle in the home on the evening Yahrzeit begins. It should remain lighted until sunset the next day. Possible prayer before lighting a Yahrzeit candle: Eternal God, I/we light this candle in memory of (name) \_\_\_\_\_, my/our beloved (relationship) \_\_\_\_\_. The light of the flame rekindles all the warm memories of the moment we shared together, and reassures me /us that a piece of his/her soul dwells in my/our heart(s) forever. May his/her soul be bound up with the bonds of eternal life. Amen. Candles are available at the Gift Shop. Every effort should be made to say Kaddish at congregational services. It is meritorious to perform some Mitzvah or to contribute to the synagogue in commemoration of the deceased.

### Kaddish will be read on February 1

*Shevat 26 Bella Levy*  
*Shevat 27 Sam Harelik (D. Harelik, H. Harelik)*

*Gertie Kantrovich*  
*Dave Knobler*  
*Abe Novich*  
*Shevat 28 Jacob Wolf*  
*Mrs. B. Coopersmith*  
*Mrs. I.F. Aronson*  
*Miriam Salpeter*  
*Stanley Hersh (C. Hersh, D. Hersh, F. Hersh, J. Hersh)*

*Shevat 29 Esther Anna Gulman (J. Levin)*

*Shevat 30 Bert Gardner*  
*Mrs. B. Levinson*  
*Harmon McNabb, Jr. (L. McNabb)*

*Sharon Lee Slutsky (I. Bonneville)*

*Adar 1 William Chernoff*  
*Naomi Levy*  
*Nathan Zidman*  
*Tama Settle (J. Settle)*

*Adar 2 Hyman Herzlich*

### Kaddish will be read on February 8

*Adar 4 Anne Goodman Deyo*  
*Cecelia Dreyfus*  
*William Ruttenberg*  
*Sam Wolstein (J. Wolstein)*

*Adar 5 Emma Podrizki*  
*Celia Zelen*

*Adar 6 Morrie Alperin*  
*Joseph Wise*

*Adar 7 Esther Isaac Aronson*  
*Lois Helfer*  
*Mrs. A. Ray Lowich*  
*Seymour Neuwirth (C. Neuwirth)*

*Adar 8 Harry Siegel*  
*Phillip Reich*  
*Marie Rosenberg*  
*Adolph Rubel*  
*Joseph Smolensky*  
*Chaym D. Silevitch*

*Adar 9 Jacob Farbstein*  
*David Wizig*  
*Leon Berman*

### Kaddish will be read on February 15

*Adar 10 Morris A. Cohen*  
*Lauren Hoffman (C. Hoffman)*  
*Rachel Stein*

*Adar 11 Bessie Offman*  
*L. Weisberg*  
*Goldey Reich*

*Adar 12 Lou Belove*  
*Rose Patlis*

*Adar 14 Annie Adams*  
*William Beville deMerville (B. deMerville)*  
*Helen Levy*  
*Max Levy*

*Louis G. Paley*

*Adar 15 Isidor Sacks*

*Adar 16 Gerald Abels*  
*Mrs. J. Englander*  
*Max Jortner (B. Jortner)*  
*Dora Peasachovitz*

### Kaddish will be read on February 22

*Adar 17 Bessie Genecov*  
*Bessie Zoblotsky*

*Adar 18 Blanche R. Ellis*  
*Louis Esserman*  
*Rebecca Hayman*  
*William Lender*  
*Robert Todd*

*Adar 19 Ben Keen*  
*Max Wise*  
*Mrs. I. Chodorow*  
*Esther Harris*

*Adar 20 Anna Jacobson*  
*Eli Hoffman*  
*I.J. Gollob*

*Adar 21 Harry Brodkey*  
*Frank Israel*  
*Thelma Lipinsky*  
*Pearl Greenfield*

*Adar 22 Harry Levine*  
*Carlos Sifuentes*

*Adar 23 Anna Goldman Hersh (F. Hersh, L. Kowal)*

# February 2019

## 26 Shevat 5779 - 23 Adar I 5779

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

						<b>1</b> 7:33AM/5:45PM ij5:27PM Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 p.m.          26 Shevat Chullin 66	<b>2</b> 7:32AM/5:46PM §6:31PM Shacharit 9:30 a.m.          27 Shevat Chullin 67
<b>3</b> 7:31AM/5:48PM  Minyan & Classes 9:30 am - 1:00 pm          28 Shevat Chullin 68	<b>4</b> 7:30AM/5:49PM          29 Shevat Chullin 69	<b>5</b> 7:29AM/5:50PM  Rosh Hodesh I          30 Shevat Chullin 70	<b>6</b> 7:28AM/5:51PM  Rosh Hodesh II  <b>Religious School 4:15 pm</b>          1 Adar I Chullin 71	<b>7</b> 7:27AM/5:53PM          2 Adar I Chullin 72	<b>8</b> 7:26AM/5:54PM ij5:36PM Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 p.m.          3 Adar I Chullin 73	<b>9</b> 7:25AM/5:55PM §6:40PM Shacharit 9:30 a.m.          4 Adar I Chullin 74	
<b>10</b> 7:24AM/5:56PM  Minyan & Classes 9:30 am - 1:00 pm          5 Adar I Chullin 75	<b>11</b> 7:22AM/5:58PM          6 Adar I Chullin 76	<b>12</b> 7:21AM/5:59PM          7 Adar I Chullin 77	<b>13</b> 7:20AM/6:00PM  <b>Religious School 4:15 pm</b>          8 Adar I Chullin 78	<b>14</b> 7:19AM/6:01PM          9 Adar I Chullin 79	<b>15</b> 7:17AM/6:02PM ij5:44PM Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 p.m.          10 Adar I Chullin 80	<b>16</b> 7:16AM/6:04PM §6:49PM Shacharit 9:30 a.m.          11 Adar I Chullin 81	
<b>17</b> 7:15AM/6:05PM  Minyan & Classes 9:30 am - 1:00 pm          12 Adar I Chullin 82	<b>18</b> 7:13AM/6:06PM          13 Adar I Chullin 83	<b>19</b> 7:12AM/6:07PM §6:52PM Purim Katan I          14 Adar I Chullin 84	<b>20</b> 7:11AM/6:08PM §6:53PM Purim Katan II  <b>Religious School 4:15 pm</b>          15 Adar I Chullin 85	<b>21</b> 7:09AM/6:10PM          16 Adar I Chullin 86	<b>22</b> 7:08AM/6:11PM ij5:53PM Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 p.m.          17 Adar I Chullin 87	<b>23</b> 7:06AM/6:12PM §6:57PM Shacharit 9:30 a.m.          18 Adar I Chullin 88	
<b>24</b> 7:05AM/6:13PM  Minyan & Classes 9:30 am - 1:00 pm          19 Adar I Chullin 89	<b>25</b> 7:03AM/6:14PM          20 Adar I Chullin 90	<b>26</b> 7:02AM/6:15PM          21 Adar I Chullin 91	<b>27</b> 7:00AM/6:17PM  <b>Religious School 4:15 pm</b>          22 Adar I Chullin 92	<b>28</b> 6:59AM/6:18PM          23 Adar I Chullin 93			