

CONGREGATION AGUDATH JACOB

APRIL 2024 ADAR II / NISAN 5784

Phone: 254-772-1451

Fax: 254-772-2471

Email: cajassistant@grandecom.net

Website: www.agudathjacob.org

Rabbi Ben-Zion Lanxner
cajrabbi@grandecom.net

President Judy Hersh
hershladylawyer@aol.com

*From the Desk of
Rabbi Ben-Zion Lanxner*

PASSOVER or OUR ORIGIN STORY

Superman was sent to earth as a baby from a dying planet. Spiderman was bitten by a radioactive spider that gave him amazing powers. The ancient Romans believed their city was founded by twins who were suckled by a wolf. A Hindu legend says that the cosmos rides on the back of a giant sea turtle.

These origin stories serve, in part, to say something about the character and values of heroes, of nations, and of the world. Superman fights for the well-being of the world because he knows what it feels like when your world is destroyed. The Romans saw themselves as noble survivors because they believed themselves to be descendants of warriors who fought for survival.

Passover is the great story of the origin of the Jewish people. We celebrate the holiday by retelling the story of how we were slaves and how G-d saved us. We recite for our children the long list of G-d's plagues against our captors and how G-d performed miracles to make us G-d's own people.

Our story, too, serves to tell us something about who we are, about our values, and about the world we aspire to create.

Here are some of my thoughts this year about what our origin story is supposed to teach us about ourselves and the world:

- Isn't it odd that we see ourselves as slaves in our origin story? Most civilizations tell stories about how their founders were brave soldiers or noble kings. We tell a story about how our founders were helpless servants to mighty Pharaoh. The story describes how we complained and griped all the way to freedom. At its essence, our origin story warns us against arrogance and hard-heartedness. It reminds us that, without G-d's help, we are nothing. It also reminds us to have compassion for people who are oppressed and helpless. We know that experience, too.

- The traditional Haggadah makes very little mention of Moses. We do not want to tell our story as the tale of one great man and credit him for our victory. The story we tell about ourselves is that no one human being has ever been our savior. Instead, we look to G-d and we look to ourselves as a collective nation for our redemption. Judaism, as a religion, is highly suspicious of the human tendency to turn great people into heroes, and to turn heroes into gods. We don't want to elevate any human to the status of a god. We have seen how the Pharaohs of the world quickly turn despotic, and how those who worship false gods become passive and cruel.

- In our origin story, the final chapter of the story is never told. By the end of the Seder, the Israelites are still a ragtag mob that has just witnessed the redemption at the Sea of Reeds (or, the Red Sea). We stop the story before we can get to Mount Sinai and the Ten Commandments. There is even a self-conscious incompleteness to the story seen in the four cups of wine we drink. Each cup represents a promise that G-d made to us: **"I will bring you out of slavery in Egypt," "I will save you from their bondage," "I will redeem you with great power," and "I will take you as My people"**

(Exodus 6:6-7). However, there is a fifth promise in the biblical narrative: "**I will bring you to the land which I promised**" (Exodus 6:8). That unfulfilled promise is represented by Elijah's Cup, the cup from which we do not drink. The symbolism of the Seder reminds us that our journey is incomplete. There is much that we still have to do to make G-d's promises true in the world.

As you experience the Sedarim (plural of Seder) Monday and Tuesday April 22 and 23, 2024, consider what our story says about us. Think about what our first lesson is trying to teach us. We are not Romans who live to conquer and endure. We are not superheroes endowed with magical powers. In the story we tell about ourselves, we are human and deeply flawed. We are friends to those who are powerless and suspicious of those who are powerful. We are on a journey that is far from complete, but we are asked to be a part of it and to help write the next chapter – the one that starts today, or should I rather say, who started, almost 76 years ago, when the State of Israel was created, and so we are the proud and lucky generation who actually is living G-d's 5th promise to His Chosen People in His Promised Holy Land. Amen.

WISHING YOU ALL A HAPPY & KOSHER PASSOVER,

CHAG SAME'ACH

Rabbi Ben-Zion Lanxner

A Brief Note

It is hard to believe that April is already here. Our Purim megillah reading and celebration was well attended. I want to thank Jeff Levin for sponsoring the brunch. I also want to thank the Rabbi for shopping and cooking, Carrie Draher and Jarvis Howeth for the delicious, homemade hamentashen, Carrie Draher and Susan Raphael for helping with food service and Susan Lanxner for table set up and decoration.

With the war against Hamas going on now in Israel, it was so interesting to hear from Justin Lynn, sharing his recent Israel volunteer experience with us. Also, Morasha Stuckey, who moved to Israel a year ago, was visiting and shared her experience of living in Israel during the war. We appreciate their sharing and thank them.

In an abundance of caution and due to warnings about potential doubling of McLennan County's population and traffic because of the upcoming eclipse, we have decided that Shabbat services on Friday night, April 5 and Saturday morning services on April 6 will be live streamed only. The Temple has graciously invited CAJ members to attend the eclipse at the Temple beginning at 11:00 am. on April 8. Please RSVP to them if you plan to attend.

Our CPR training will be held Sunday, May 5th. Details to follow.

We have been the fortunate recipients of some beautiful artwork by Zamy Steynovitz, an Israeli artist and student of Marc Chagall. The artwork was donated by Marsha Wade-Israeli, in memory of her family, Sam Albert and Elizabeth Rubel Israel, and their son Stanley Harold Israel. A very big thank you to Marsha and to Harry Harelik for arranging the professional display. I hope you will enjoy viewing it in our social hall.

Please see the enclosed information about Passover which will be here before we know it. The first Seder, April 22, will once again be held at the synagogue thanks to Rabbi Lanxner's devotion to the congregation.

Hope to see you at services!

Judy

April Service Schedule

	Shacharit		10:00 am
<u>Friday, April 5 and Saturday April 6</u>	Shabbat Ends		8:34 pm
LIVE STREAM ONLY		<u>Friday, April 19</u>	
<u>Friday, April 12</u>	Kabbalat Shabbat		6:00 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat	6:00 pm	Candle Lighting	7:43 pm
Candle Lighting	7:38 pm	<u>Saturday, April 20</u>	
<u>Saturday, April 13</u>	Shacharit		10:00 am

Shabbat Ends 8:39 pm

Monday, April 22

Seder Service 6:00 pm
(First Night Passover Seder to follow)

Tuesday, April 23

Passover Service 10:00am

Friday, April 26

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm

Candle Lighting 7:48 pm

Saturday, April 27

Shacharit 10:00 am

Shabbat Ends 8:45 pm

Tuesday, April 30

Last day of Passover 10:00am
(YIZKOR to follow)



April 5

Jo Spark

April 8

Sarah Via

Elizabeth Silver-Schack

April 10

Susan Lanxner

April 21

Melanie Bauer

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



April 7
**Michael & Shelly
Pesses**
April 8
**Paul & Paula
Farmer**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ First Night Passover Seder will be on Monday, April 22 at 6:00pm. Seder immediately following in the Social Hall. Please RSVP and secure your reservation by submitting the form included in the newsletter, with payment by April 15, 2024.
- ❖ On Tuesday, April 30, 2024 we will have Last Day of Passover services at 10:00am followed by YIZKOR.
- ❖ For those registered, CPR training will be held on Sunday, May 5, from 1:00 – 4:00pm. Please remember that the cost of the class is \$65.
- ❖ **Services on April 5 & 6 will be livestream ONLY!**
- ❖ Our offices will be closed April 8, 23, 24, 29 and 30.

THANK YOU for your donations in **MARCH!**

Shabbat

Javis Howeth
Judy Hersh
George Keller
Susan Raphael

Joseph Settle
Jeff Levin
Steven & Carrie
Draher

Rabbi and
Susan Lanxner
Michael Pesses
Inez Bonneville

In Memory Of

Paul Leka
Paul & Paula Farmer

Ruth Budin
Judy Hersh
Tamma Settle
Joseph Settle

Anna Jacobson
Esther Lipinsky
Sheila Schnur
Barbara Dankenbring
Fannie Englander
Leonard Englander

In Honor Of

Paul Farmer
Debbie Hersh

Jackie Lee
Barabara Drankenbring

Special Donation

Purim Brunch
Jeff & Lea Levin

Boxcast
Inez Bonneville

YAHREZEITS

The following names of dearly departed will be read aloud by the Rabbi preceding the Mourner's Kaddish on Shabbat morning. It is fitting and customary that the nearest of kin be present in the synagogue for the recitation of this special prayer in their memory. Attendance not only honors the departed but also enhances and guarantees that a Minyan is present to recite the Kaddish.

Kaddish will be read on April 5

Adar II 29 Sherwin Fischman
Sophia Rubenstein
Nisan 1 Esther Jornitzky*
Morris Wise*
Nisan 3 Lean T Aronson*
Molly R Schwartz*
Phillip Harold Schwartz

Kaddish will be read on April 12

Nisan 4 Beatrice Dorman Drainman
Florence Hendler Feldt*
Shirley Helfer
Mrs Meyer Hoffman*
Nisan 5 A Adelman*
Lum Howeth
Dora Torchin*
Nisan 6 Ada Ellis
Minnie Hornstein Feldt*
Sophia Harris*
Nisan 7 Simone Bauer*
Nisan 8 Minnie Hoffman*
Lena Aronson Lynn*
Nisan 9 Abraham Berkman*
Bella Citrin
Shirley Lynn Hoppenstein*
Nisan 10 Abe Greenberg*

Kaddish will be read on April 19

Nisan 11 Willie W Bauer*
Frank Chazanow*
Evelyn Chernoff
Nisan 12 Harry Leeson Adler*
Nisan 13 Bernard Rapoport*
Nisan 14 Mitchell M Marcus
Jack Ruttenberg*
Nisan 15 Mrs Adolph Rubel*
David Stein
Mollie I Weissman*
Nisan 16 H B Cohen*
Mrs L Fred*
Anna S Hashfield*
Jacob Wizig*

Kaddish will be read on April 26

Nisan 18 Jennie Wizig*
Nisan 19 Sadie Goltz*
Nisan 20 Louie Genecov*
Donald Clare Stuckey
Nisan 21 Mildred Fetter*
Mrs Ida B Fred*
Nisan 22 Irving Stupak*
Nisan 23 Abe Jacobs*
Dora Schneiderman Sacks*
Louis Wise*