

CONGREGATION AGUDATH JACOB

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Yom HaShoah Holocaust Remembrance Day



When you get to read this Newsletter, we will most probably be at the end of our Passover Holiday, as we will conclude it with Yizkor this coming Tuesday April 30, 2024. I could not resist mentioning that our community Seder this year was again a great success. We had over forty people in attendance, and we did remember our 133 brothers and sisters' hostages still in captivity in Gaza and added some prayers, leaving an empty chair with their pictures as a symbol of our complete solidarity with their parents, sisters and brothers in Israel doing everything they possibly can to have them all come back home, G-d willing very soon. Amen! It was quite different from the years before... I will be remiss if I didn't mention the name of 3 special ladies, Carrie Draher, Sara Tehilah Howeth and Susan Raphael who helped make this Seder a reality. They helped me in the kitchen the entire Sunday and Monday preparing and putting together our menu and making sure the Seder ran smoothly. My wife Susan, the Rebbetzin, was in charge of setting up the room, tables and decorations, great Job! Inez Bonneville helped cover the kitchen counters after I had "Kashered" the entire kitchen for Pesach.

Now, we are in the month of May, which generally begins with the Holocaust Remembrance Day. Although most people refer to the day set aside to remember the Holocaust as *Yom HaShoah* or Holocaust [Remembrance] Day, its official name is ***Yom Hazikaron LaShoah ve-LaGevurah***, "**Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day**". It was inaugurated in 1953 and takes place on the 27th of Nisan, which this year falls on Sunday May 5, 2024. The original proposal was to hold Yom Hashoah on the 14th of Nisan, the anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising (April 19, 1943), but this was deemed unworkable as it would then fall the day before Pesach, when many people are making preparations for the upcoming holiday. The date was thus moved to the 27th of Nisan, which is only eight days before ***Yom Ha'atzma'ut***, Israeli Independence Day, and therefore symbolically ties the two days together (see my next article, Dvar Torah on ***Yom Hazikaron***, Israel Memorial Day, for a more extensive explanation of the juxtaposition of these dates in my weekly email.)

Because Yom Hashoah was placed in the month of Nisan, which traditionally is a joyous month, and because there are other days set aside in the Jewish calendar that commemorate tragic days in Jewish history, not everyone approved of the chosen date. Nonetheless, the vast majority of Jews wanting to commemorate those that perished in the Holocaust have adopted this day.

Although it may not seem that the difference between the official name of the day as ***Yom Hazikaron LaShoah ve-LaGevurah***, "**Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day**," and the simpler title ***Yom HaShoah*** is important, it actually changes somewhat the emphasis and original intention of the day. As mentioned above, the initial date chosen coincided with the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in order to balance the impression that all Jews went to their deaths passively without a fight. Despite the fact that Jews were unarmed against an inconceivably cruel enemy, and that no one could have imagined ahead of time the demonic intent to murder an entire people, Jews in Europe did in fact resist on numerous occasions once the true intent of the Nazi killing machine became clear. Although resistance

movements sprung up throughout occupied Europe, the Warsaw Ghetto uprising was among the most sustained and concentrated acts of resistance, which further spurred revolts in many of the concentration camps including Treblinka, Majdanek, Sobibor, and Auschwitz-Birkenau, Bergen-Belsen once word got out.

Many Jews also joined partisans throughout Europe, (My own Father joined the Resistance through the French & Belgian Maqui) and approximately 500,000 Jews served in the Soviet Red Army during World War II. An additional 550,000 Jews fought in the American army, 100,000 in the Polish army, and 30,000 served in the British army.

Those Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, and the various camps where there were uprisings, knew their chances of victory were next to nil, but decided that it was better to resist and die than to give in to the inhumanity of total genocide. Their sacrifice and bravery left an indelible mark on the fledgling fighters of the nascent resistance movements in Palestine fighting for an independent Jewish state and forged a philosophy of self-reliance and determination prevalent in Israel to this very day.

It is thus especially pertinent to point out that **Yom Hazikaron LaShoah ve-LaGevurah** takes place during the week of **Gevurah** in the Omer count, emphasizing the aspects of strength and resistance implied in the full official name of this commemorative event. Along with numerous instances of physical resistance and revolt, there were countless acts of spiritual heroism as many Jews under the worst conditions imaginable courageously attempted to continue to observe the Torah and fulfill mitzvot the best way they could, as well as to maintain a sense of humanity and Godliness for themselves and for those around them.

In the book of Ezekiel (16:6), the prophet exclaims in G-d's Name: "And I passed by you and saw you downtrodden with your blood, and I said to you, 'With your blood, live,' and I said to you, 'With your blood, live.'" This verse is said at every circumcision ceremony to emphasize that our covenant with G-d is sealed in our very blood. Although we will never truly

understand or grasp the Holocaust, it is somehow through the blood of those who perished that we merited just three years later to re-establish a Jewish homeland.

A similarly life affirming theme was proclaimed by my mentor, Reb Shlomo Carlebach, who composed the song "Am Yisrael Chai," "The people of Israel lives," in response to a request to compose a song for the 1960-1980's movement to free the Jews of the Soviet Union for which he was a major player when it came to help infuse hope and Yiddishkeit to these Jews who couldn't wait to emigrate to the Promised land. That song, which captures the unwavering spirit of the Jewish people, has become a standard proclamation sung at Jewish events worldwide.

The original intent and the underlying meaning of **Yom Hazikaron LaShoah ve-LaGevurah** is to honor not only those who perished in the Holocaust, but also to remember those who resisted and fought courageously against the Nazi killing machine. Standing silently in the Land of Israel with heads bowed in reverence while the sirens blare on Yom HaShoah and Yom Hazikaron is a profound experience, one that opens the heart and instills a spiritual sense of determination to live as free and proud Jews.

Let us appreciate that nearly half our people died "**Al Kiddush Hashem**" (sanctifying G-d's name) during the Holocaust. Let us respond by living a life filled with Kiddush Hashem to vindicate their sacrifice and make their deaths and our lives meaningful.

Rabbi Ben-Zion Laxner

A brief note from the President, Judy Hersch:

April has been a pretty quiet month around the synagogue. Just some repair work and roof leaks. Don't forget that on Sunday, May 5 we have our CPR training from 1-4 if you signed up. Tuesday evening, May 7 at 6:30 is our annual Holocaust memorial service at Temple Rodef Sholom. We are one of the

sponsors so your attendance would be greatly appreciated. The speaker is supposed to be excellent.

Hope everyone has a wonderful Passover. Please try to come to Passover services, especially Yizkor, so we can say Kaddish with a minyan.

Judy

May Service Schedule

Friday, May 3

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm
Candle Lighting 7:52 pm

Saturday, May 4

Shacharit 10:00 am
Shabbat Ends 8:50 pm

Friday, May 10

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm
Candle Lighting 7:57 pm

Saturday, May 11

Shacharit 10:00 am
Shabbat Ends 8:56 pm

Friday, May 17

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm
Candle Lighting 8:02 pm

Saturday, May 18

Shacharit 10:00 am
Shabbat Ends 9:01 pm

Friday, May 24

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm
Candle Lighting 8:07 pm

Saturday, May 25

Shacharit 10:00 am
Shabbat Ends 9:06 pm

Friday, May 31

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm
Candle Lighting 8:11 pm



May 2

Miguel Perez

May 7
Steven Draher
May 14

Avigail Via
May 20
Betty Bauer

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



May 4

George & Kathleen Keller

May 9

Craig & Lydia Hoffman

May 25

David & Maura Jortner

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ For the week of May 13 office hours will vary due to Shannon's daughter's wedding. The office will be closed May 16 and 20.
- ❖ ~~May 5 is CPR training at the synagogue for those who previously signed up. The cost is \$65 and the training is from 1:00-4:00.~~ CANCELLED

- ❖ Just a note of reminder, if you move/have an address change, please let the office know. Thank you so much!
- ❖ The annual Holocaust Remembrance will be held at Temple Rodef Sholom on May 7th at 6:30.

THANK YOU for your donations in April!

Shabbat

Javis Howeth	Susan Raphael
Judy Hersh	Jeff Levin
Mr & Mrs George Keller	Steven & Carrie Draher
Joseph Settle	Inez Bonneville

In Memory Of

<u>Lester Englander</u>	<u>Shirley Lynn Hoppenstein</u>
Leonard Englander	Justin Lynn
<u>Lena Aronson Lynn</u>	<u>Simone & Willie Bauer</u>
Justin Lynn	Richard & Melanie Bauer

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 May 3

Nisan 25	Ruby Campbell Howeth
Nisan 26	Murray Hersh*
	Mrs E (Bessie) Levin*
Nisan 27	George Adleman
	Mrs Mitchell Stein
	Julia Moes
Nisan 28	Leah Beerman*
	Rebecca Genecov*
	Rachel Kestner*
	Morris Miller*
	Alex Stein
Nisan 29	Ida Berkman*
	Don Tocker*
Nisan 30	Betty E Lejsal Schiller
Iyar 1	Harry Goltz*
	Mack S Roberts*

Kaddish will be read on May 10

Iyar 2	Sam Rubel*
	James Stuckey*
Iyar 3	Tessie Ruskin
Iyar 4	Lester Englander*
	Lawrence Emory Lynn*
	Mrs Sam (Agnes) Rubel*
	Annie Ray Wizig*
Iyar 5	Abraham Sprecher
Iyar 6	Ruth Bell*
Iyar 7	Jake Berkman*
	Mrs Rebecca Brickman*

Iyar 8

Mrs Bertha Rosen*
M Berlovitz*
Abraham Hashfield*
Mrs Abe (Eva) Wizig*

Kaddish will be read on May 17

Iyar 9	Zorach Hoppenstein*
Iyar 10	Dr Samuel F Chernoff*
	Mary Novich*
	Leona Faye Stuckey
Iyar 11	Max Chodorow*
	Mrs L Esserman*
	Mrs Sarah Israel*
	Lillian Rubenstein
	Jack Weissman*
Iyar 12	Benjamin Bauer*
	Joe Leo Siegel
Iyar 13	Abe Adams*
	Mrs Millie Gardner*
Iyar 14	Fannie Genecov*
	David Michael Novy*
	Rhua Settle
Iyar 15	Mrs E Hoffman*

Kaddish will be read on May 24

Iyar 16	Gilford B Fred*
Iyar 17	Julius Berkman
	Jacob Greenspan*
	Samuel Kestner*
	Abe Udashen*
Iyar 18	Jennie Rosenberg*

Iyar 19 N Suravitz*
Louis Kleiman*
Ralph Leeds*
Iyar 20 Philo Herbert Pesses
Iyar 21 Louis Marks*
Lee Wolkoff*
Sarah Stein
Iyar 22 Max Hoppenstein*
Abe Lewis*
Hyman B Novy*

Kaddish will be read on May 31

Iyar 23 Mandel H Citrin
Mildred Blank
Iyar 24 Mary Budin*
A Polansky*

Iyar 25 Orpha Starr
Ryan Younger Blythe
Otto Levy
David Harry Rubel
Sarah Stupak*
Iyar 26 Dave Spreo*
Melba Howeth Warren
Iyar 27 Phillip M Citrin
Julius Englander*
Hannah Lasinker
Iyar 28 Abe Levy*
Iyar 29 Al Jacobson