

# CONGREGATION AGUDATH JACOB

JULY 2025 TAMMUZ/AV 5785

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From the Desk of  
Rabbi Ben-Zion Lanxner



**PEACE, PEACE and  
There is no PEACE!**

**"שלום, שלום, ואין  
שלום"**



**אֲרוֹמְמֶנְךָ יְיָ-יְהוָה כִּי דָלִיתָנִי וְלֹא-שָׂמַחַת אִיְבֵי לִי: (תהילים ל:ב)**

***"I exalt You, יְיָ-יְהוָה, for You have lifted me up, and not let my enemies rejoice over me" (Psalm 30:2).***

**A Ceasefire between Iran and Israel was announced this week. Or, more accurately, a ceasefire was imposed and enforced. The ceasefire is a positive development, although the manner in which it was implemented raises several questions.**

**President Trump issued his own version of Former President Biden's famous "Don't!" in calling back Israeli fighter jets post-takeoff as they were headed for an Iranian retaliatory strike after a missile struck a Beer Sheva building, killing four innocent Israeli citizens.**

**Many Israelis were relieved to hear the announcement of "return to routine" (חזרה לשגרה) or "back to normal," after days of disruption when one could not be far from a shelter.**

To be honest about it, I do not believe that many of us outside of Israel don't quite grasp the level of disruption our Israeli brothers and sisters have been experiencing in the past two weeks. People could not go to work. They had to abort plans. Prayer services (Tefilah) in their Synagogues had to transition and resort to Covid-style Zoom services, and, of course, the airport closed, causing flights to be disrupted, which led to monumental chaos as travelers were stranded trying to return to Israel. In contrast, others were stuck in Israel, some scrambling to flee through Israel's land borders.

There is no question that the success of this mission, from Israel's Mossad Intelligence and strategic strikes early on to the subsequent U.S. involvement in attacking Iranian nuclear sites, was a tremendous success, some would even characterize them as "miraculous".

While I know of some Israelis and friends of Israel who broke out the champagne, others are still hesitant to celebrate. There is no question, whatever your thoughts are about the recent actions, that this was a bold and necessary act, even though it has come with a price.

Let us also not forget that 28 civilians were killed (Hashem Yikom Damam! – May G-d avenge their blood), by the lethal ballistic missiles that unfortunately hit hard Tel Aviv, Bat Yam, Haifa, and Beer Sheva. Thousands were wounded. More than 16,000 Israelis are displaced; many cannot even return to their homes for a long time, and some have lost their homes entirely.

Businesses were paralyzed, schools were closed, millions of Israelis had to stop all their regular and daily activities, and Israel was completely cut off from the world as no other country would dare to get involved or assisted Israel. During this time, millions of people had to run to shelters, safe rooms [and underground parking lots], day in and day out, to protect their children, the elderly, the disabled, and their pets. It must have been exhausting, particularly since they couldn't tell in real time when it would be over.

Beyond that, the missing 800+ pounds of enriched uranium that was apparently ferried out of the subterranean Fordo underground secret fortress before the 30,000 lb American-made bunker-buster bombs pounded it, leaves many of us guessing and quite nervous, raising doubts as to whether the strikes achieved for certain their goal in terminating Iran's nuclear weapons aspiration.

As Israelis emerged from 'Ma'amadim' (safe rooms) and shelters, and flights will soon begin to resume, activist hostage mother Einav Zangauker, mother of Matan Zangauker, reminded everyone that there is no 'return to routine'. At the same time, there are hostages still being held in captivity as we reach the 630<sup>th</sup> day. Sharon Kunio, herself a released hostage and wife of David Kunio who is still being held in Gaza, shared her thoughts in an [interview](#) on Israeli Ch. 12 news.

In the meantime, another seven IDF Holy soldiers were killed just a couple of days ago in Gaza in a single attack (Hashem Yikom Damam!). In retribution, Israel halted many trucks of humanitarian aid.

The U.S. involvement in the strikes against Iran was lauded mainly by many in the international and Jewish communities. Those of us who supported President Trump's decision to finally act upon these constant threats instigated for decades by Iran's theocratic regime, largely saw this as saving the Jewish State from an existential threat and making the world a safer place.

Yesterday Trump made it clear to the Jewish people that this President is the closest friend ever to the State of Israel, as, in addition to coming to the aid of America's closest ally in the Middle East, the President went to the personal assistance of PM Netanyahu:

**"BREAKING NEWS... (In President Trump's own words) ... I was shocked to hear that the State of Israel, which has just had one of its Greatest Moments in History, and is strongly led by Bibi Netanyahu, is continuing its ridiculous Witch Hunt against their Great wartime prime Minister!"**

Trump wrote this in a lengthy post on Truth Social, signaling his unwavering support of PM Benjamin Netanyahu.

Now, we need to keep our focus on ending the War in Gaza and bringing home the hostages. I believe that most of the Jewish people feel that the Prime Minister's great military achievements and success against Iran should now be put momentarily aside and concentrate his efforts in putting an end to the war with Hamas and Hezbollah, by not losing more soldiers, and bringing home the remaining hostages still languishing in those torturous and darkest tunnels of Gaza.

This may require a specific and unique strategy around President Trump, understanding that he is the only one who can force Hamas terrorists and Hezbollah to understand that the road to further regional peace and normalization will continue to be a dead-end without ending the war in Gaza, returning the hostages, and beginning the long and arduous process of figuring out what to do with Gaza.

Hopefully, Netanyahu's popularity among Israelis for accomplishing the singular and most repeated goal of his political tenure will now free him to deal with the problem at hand.

The fact that Israel went 'back to normal' from two wars to one, can be very misleading because this situation and the conditions that the Israeli citizens live in today is anything BUT "normal." We should not allow the longevity and perpetuity of the war in Gaza to become normal. Enough is Enough!

**The few remaining hostages in captivity are anything BUT normal.**

**This ever-growing quagmire with no end in sight is anything BUT normal.**

**Returning to normal takes time and requires a major and lengthy healing process.**

**I know for a fact that those amazing Holy IDF soldiers would love to come back home safely to their respective courageous and loving families TODAY if it were possible and get back to the “normal” day to day life, but unfortunately, we are not there yet.**

**Hamas is still a major treat and a killing terrorist organization that has to be totally obliterated from this world before the Israeli citizens can hopefully with G-d's help, live be-SHALOM, in peace in this wonderful Holy Land of Milk & Honey.**

**Let us all join in prayer, so SHALOM – PEACE reigns all over ISRAEL!**

**May we see that day come sooner than later. Amen!**

**AM ISRAEL CHAI – עם ישראל חי**

**Rabbi Ben-Zion Lanxner**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The summer is generally a slow time for us, as for most congregations. For Jews, it is the period roughly between *Shavuot*, our most recent *chag* (festival, holiday), and the High Holy Days, which begin toward the end of September this year. Many congregants are taking trips out of town, and we are using this time to make some repairs and upgrades at *shul* and to hire a new Office Administrator, as Shannon Reynolds will be moving on in a few weeks.

What has been on everyone's mind, of course, has been the situation in Israel. As of this writing, our forces have been miraculously successful, *B"H*, in diminishing the threat posed by Iran, but, as we are quite aware, the situation is fluid and things have not reached their full resolution. It is still a dangerous time for our brothers and sisters in Israel and also for our fellow Jews here in the diaspora.

This is maybe an opportune time to reflect on a somewhat mysterious people mentioned in the Torah, and further commented on in the Midrash—namely, Amalek. These people may be most familiar to us from the admonition to “blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven” (Deut. 25:19, JPS). While debates exist as to their specific identity and origins, most rabbis and scholars interpret Amalek as representing our eternal enemy or enemies. Without unpacking too much of this right here, I direct any interested readers to an article that I co-authored last year with Dr. David Jeffrey, Baylor's retired former provost and a dear friend of our local Jewish community and our *shul*. In fact, David and I, along with Dr. Brent DeMerville and Dr. Stanley Hersh, *z"l*, were *chavruta* partners for several years, learning Talmud and Bible here with our previous rabbi. This is a link to the article: <https://christianscholars.com/anti-semitism-amalekand-the-american-university/>. Note: it's not exactly pleasure reading.

Apparently, we still have not entirely blotted out Amalek, as it keeps rearing its head and threatening to kill Jews, and sometimes succeeding. At present, it remains to be seen whether efforts will be made, finally, to blot it out, or instead to continue to “manage” the situation, to “negotiate” and find “consensus,” etc., as the world expects us to do. I hesitate to introduce partisan views here, but in my opinion the time for all of that has long passed. We cannot continue to try and coexist with evil forces which wish to destroy our homeland and exterminate our people. As the saying goes, people tell us who they are, and the modern-day incarnations of Amalek are telling us in no uncertain terms.

Please continue to pray for Israel, for its citizens, for its leaders, for the hostages, and for our brave IDF soldiers.

*L'shalom,*  
Jeff Levin



# July Service Schedule

## Friday, July 4

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

## Saturday, July 5

NO SERVICE

## Friday, July 11

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm  
Candle Lighting 7:56 pm

## Saturday, July 12

Shacharit 10:00 am  
Shabbat Ends 8:49 pm

## Friday, July 18

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm  
Candle Lighting 8:01 pm

## Saturday, July 19

Shacharit 10:00 am  
Shabbat Ends 9:00 pm

## Friday, July 25

Kabbalat Shabbat 6:00 pm  
Candle Lighting 8:06 pm

## Saturday, July 26

Shacharit 10:00 am  
Shabbat Ends 9:05 pm



## July 1

Henry Hacker

## July 13

Jasmine Presser

## July 14

Karen Alpert

## July 18

Hailee Yip

## July 25

Kam Bauer

## July 26

Inez Bonneville

## July 30

August Pearl  
Weidhorn

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

**July 2**

**Richard & Karen Alpert**

**July 3**

**Rabbi & Susan Lanxner**

**July 14**

**Craig & Hillary Weidhorn**

**July 23**

**Semyon & Anna Papernov**

**July 28**

**Dr Jeff and Dr Lea Levin**

**Stephen & Hailee Yip**



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ **A communal fast begins on Sunday July 13, at dawn the 17<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz and will continue thru till sundown. Shiv'ah Assar beTammuz.**
- ❖ **On Friday evening July 4<sup>th</sup> Service will be led by Joseph Settle and Jeff Levin.**
- ❖ **NO SERVICE SATURDAY JULY 5.**

# THANK YOU for your donations in June!

## Shabbat

Susan Raphael

Jeff Levin

Joseph Settle

Inez Bonneville

Miguel Perez

Henry Hacker

Steve & Carrie Draher

Susan Lanxner

George & Kathleen

Keller

## In Memory of

Rhua Settle

Joseph Settle

Milton Harelik

Harry Harelik

Dorothy Harelik

Harry Harelik

Dorothy Gulman

Jeff Levin

Killian Michlowitz

Barbara Dankenbring

AJ Farmer

Paul & Paula Farmer



# Yahrzeits

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 July 4**

Tammuz 7	Leslie Hoffman*
Tammuz 8	Mary Robinson Sam Marks* I Adams* Dora Kleiman* Morris Rosenberg* Mamie Sampson
Tammuz 10	Adolph Beerman* Isadore Dansky Naman Lipinsky Max Miller* Anna Neuwirth
Tammuz 11	Israel Genecov* David Harris*
Tammuz 12	Mrs L Gershowitz
Tammuz 13	Fannye R Smith*

## **Kaddish will be read on July 11**

Tammuz 14	Nathan Neuwirth Max Siegel*
Tammuz 15	Ben H Green* Matley Paley Harelik Robert Settle
Tammuz 16	Mrs M Adams* Phillip Koss* Marie Solovey Wangner
Tammuz 18	Annette Fox Eugene Gurkoff
Tammuz 19	Isaac Draiman* Louis Ringold*
Tammuz 20	Edwin Bernard Dreyfus Benson Offit John Perry

## **Kaddish will be read on July 18**

Tammuz 23	Claire Seriff
Tammuz 24	Max Israel* Mrs M Novy* Morris Rubinsky*
Tammuz 25	Kate Kahan
Tammuz 26	Isadore F Aronson* Sidney Lynn*
Tammuz 27	Herma Benjamin

## **Kaddish will be read on July 25**

Tammuz 28	Ida Budin* Edna Levy
Tammuz 29	Mose Genecov*
Av 1	Rudolph Genecov Rev Samuel Levy*
Av 2	Ilona Eleanor Belove* Hyman Frindell*
Av 3	Kalman Solovey*
Av 4	Evelyn Hoffman* Mrs Sam Koenigheit Bessie Toboloswsky
Av 5	Abe Ellis Barry Phillips Josephine Ringold