

# CONGREGATION AGUDATH JACOB

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From the Desk of  
Rabbi Ben-Zion Lanxner

## The Power of the Big Lie: Antizionism - Antisemitism & The Enemy within!

Last Oct. 7 was the deadliest day of violence against Jews since the Holocaust. It was also the start of the most vicious and virulent eruption of antizionism/antisemitism in the West since World War II.

To mention but a single statistic, in the first three days following the most terrifying Hamas atrocities, online calls for violence against Jews surged by 1,200 percent, according to the Antisemitism Cyber Security Monitoring System.

The barbaric, unhuman and orgiastic spilling of Jewish blood drove antizionists/antisemites into a frenzy of hatred that has yet to subside.

A year ago, it might have been possible to believe that the post-Holocaust taboo on openly loathing Jews was still in force. Though outbursts of antisemitic viciousness had been occurring in recent years with increasing and **alarming frequency** — and coming from both the right and the left — they seemed the exception to a broadly enforced rule. **No longer.** Even in America, antisemitism is being mainstreamed, particularly among the young, and especially among universities campus students all over the United States of America.. The post-Holocaust reprieve has ended. Antizionism/Antisemitism is back with a vengeance, brazen and self-assured.

Over the millennia, the hatred of Jews has assumed predictable patterns, none more fundamental than the "big lie." Antisemites — whether they hate the Jewish people, the Jewish religion, or the Jewish State of Israel — have expressed their hatred not merely by exaggerating negative stereotypes, denying inconvenient truths, or recycling bigoted slurs.

Time and again they have also promoted falsehoods so monstrous and vicious, so audaciously and aggressively untrue, that their utter implausibility gives them the illusion of truth, as you well know the fact that the more you tell a big lie, the more you start believing it is the Truth!!

**"In the big lie there is always a certain force of credibility," wrote Adolf Hitler in "Mein Kampf".**

Many people "tell small lies in little matters," he observed, but "it would never come into their heads to fabricate colossal untruths, and they would not believe that others could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously."

That is the paradox and power of the big lie, especially when it is repeated often enough: Even reasonable minds gradually accept it as fact. After all, they subconsciously assume, why would government officials or the press or social elites make claims so shocking and scandalous unless they were true?

Hitler launched his war against the Jews with the big lie that Germany was defeated in World War I because it had been **"stabbed in the back"** by Jewish traitors.

In reality, German Jews were **exceptionally loyal to the fatherland** — more than 100,000 had served in the German army during World War I and 12,000 had fallen in battle. (As a matter of fact, my own grandfather from my mother's side was a highly decorated officer in the German Kaizer's army).

Later came an even more unspeakable lie: the grotesque claim that Jews were **"racial subhumans"** who defiled the purity of Aryan blood.

Today it seems incredible that citizens of Germany, the most sophisticated and cultured nation in Europe, could have believed such insane falsehoods. But tens of millions of Germans did believe them. And when the Nazis set about ostracizing and then exterminating Europe's Jews, it was with the **avid support and participation of innumerable German citizens**, contrary to what some people would believe that their German neighbors did not know what was going on...

Jewish history is replete with such deadly lies. Nothing new here for the savvy people in history.

Beginning in the 12th century, Jews were oddly accused of kidnapping and slaughtering Christian children, in order to use their blood for baking Passover Matzah.

On the strength of these "blood libels," revived again and again in medieval Europe (and **recycled to this day in the Muslim world**), countless Jews were imprisoned, expelled, or murdered.

The accusation was not just false; it was a wholesale inversion of the truth. In Jewish culture, the consumption of blood is forbidden; indeed, it is one of the first prohibitions in the Torah. The most essential step in preparing Kosher meat is to meticulously rinse it **clean of blood**, because as the Torah teaches us **"Ki haDam Hu haNefesh"** for the blood is the Soul of man... Yet this demented big lie was believed by vast numbers of Europeans.

So was the big lie, spread during the devastating Black Death of the 14th century, that Jews had caused the plague by poisoning wells and springs. They intended, it was said, "to kill and destroy the whole of Christendom and have lordship over all the world."

The charge was ludicrous, not least because Jews were dying of the plague like everyone else. Yet so effective was the lie, and so fervent the antisemitic hunger to believe in Jewish culpability, that it resulted **in thousands of Jews being rounded up and burned alive**.

From era to era, the big lies told about Jews mutate. At the start of the 20th century, Jews were accused in the notorious **"Protocols of the Elders of Zion"** of conspiring to control the world.

In the aftermath of 9/11, Jews, Israelis in particular were accused of having plotted the terrorist attacks. Louis Farrakhan has for years indoctrinated his Nation of Islam adherents in the libel that Jews were to blame for "the horror of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, plantation slavery, [and] Jim Crow".

A thriving industry denies that there was ever a Holocaust, insisting that the most comprehensively documented genocide in history is a Jewish fiction. All of these are lies so crazy, such obvious reversals of reality, that they ought to be impossible for any sane individual to believe. (But denial helps and makes it so easy for responsibilities to be lifted from the guilty party).

Yet all of them have been believed, often in great numbers and by celebrated and influential people.

To inject some spirituality to this article, I would add that “The most dangerous Allies, are those who stay when it costs them”. “Where you go, I will go. Your people shall be my people, and your G-d shall be my G-d” Ruth 1:16.

Covenant isn’t proven when it’s easy. It’s revealed when it hurts. Ruth didn’t stay for opportunity. She stayed out of loyalty. When loyalty costs you something, you become dangerous to hell. Because now your “yes” isn’t circumstantial, it’s sacrificial. It’s easier to flee a Covenant than to stay in it.

In the modern era, the most lethal antizionist/antisemitic big lies have been those spread about the State of Israel. The Jewish state has been slandered for decades as being **founded on racism and practicing apartheid**. Israel is smeared as a colonialist intruder with no legitimate right to exist. (If Israel is a colonialist State, aren’t the United States of America, the British, the French also the same and equal “Colonialists”?)

Long after Israel unilaterally withdrew entirely from Gaza in 2005, it is routinely condemned as an “occupier”.

For decades, whenever Israel has been forced to fight in own defense, antizionists/antisemites have raged that the IDF slaughters civilians with a wanton disregard for decency and international law.

In the year since Oct. 7, these lies have been taken to fantastic extremes — that Israel deliberately bombs hospitals, that it knowingly induces famine, and even, in an updated imitation of Holocaust denial, that it faked the Oct. 7 massacre for propaganda purposes and concocted the evidence of mass rape and sexual torture putting the onus on AI!!

**The biggest of these big lies is that Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinians.**

Once again, this is not just a falsehood but a wholesale inversion of reality. It is **Hamas that unleashed genocidal violence against Israel on Oct. 7**, Hamas whose leaders publicly vow to carry out the “**slaughter, extermination, and annihilation**” of the Jews, and Hamas whose strategy explicitly relies on maximizing Palestinian deaths. To believe that Israel — which has always gone to great lengths to *avoid* civilian casualties — is actually trying to exterminate the Palestinian people is about as logical as believing that Jews would spread the Black Death by poisoning the drinking water.

But when it comes to Jews, people — even educated and sophisticated people — have always been willing to believe the most monstrous big lies. And the horror of Oct. 7, far from making such lies seem more deranged than ever, has led even more people to embrace them. Of course, as a Jew, I am always very disappointed and irritated by the naivete of people in general.

But when it comes from my own “Tribe”, my own people, as a Jew, a Rabbi and a Spiritual Leader of a Conservative Congregation, I will not be silence.

I will denounce it because not only it hurts more than when it comes from the “outside world”, but as Elie Wiesel said it so well before.... **Silence helps more the Tormentors, not the Victims!**

As you have seen it on World Israel News yesterday, “Reform Rabbis” are helping anti-Israel and Pro-Palestinians rally with Rashida Tlaib Michigan Congresswoman, in “Mumbling” the Truth about the legality of Israel living in its own Biblical Promised ancestral Holy Land and helping this Left Progressist Fascist from the Squad propagate and perpetuate this **Big Lie** about Israel committing “Genocide and starvation” of the Palestinian population of Gaza!!!

How does a Jew go so low as to hide behind these far left fascist progressist liars, sleeping at night with no shame at all, while at the same time accusing its “Own People” to please the enemy? They are a disgrace to our Jewish People and have to be denounced for such treason and betrayal. Unfortunately, this is the open stand of the URJ (United for Reform Judaism). Shame on them!

But being true to my beliefs as a Conservative Rabbi, I am reasonable and religious enough to give these Reform Rabbis a second chance. Maybe with G-d's help, they will come to realize their mistake and turn off that switch and tadam.... here comes the Light!

Since we are just about entering the new month of **ELUL**, the month of taking accountability of our souls, "Cheshbon HaNefesh" taking a good look in the mirror and do our best to correct the wrongs we have committed, let us pray together and help one another in attaining this positive outcome.

## What's ELUL all about?

**Elul**, is the last month of the Jewish year, and it is called The Month of 'Return' (Teshuva). It is the month of self-reckoning to 'return' ourselves to the right spiritual place. Therefore, it is a month of intense introspection, self-correction, inventory of the past and good resolutions for the future.

The month of Elul always begins around the week when we read the portion of Shoftim, (this Shabbat August 30, 2025) which speaks of appointing Judges (**Shoftim**), anointing a King (**Melech**), and setting aside "Cities of Refuge" (**Harei Miklat**) for those who killed unintentionally.

As there are no coincidences in Judaism, we must ask ourselves: What is the lesson can we learn from all this?

As we approach the High Holidays, it is the perfect time to get closer to G-d—not physically, but mentally and spiritually.

**"Judges you shall appoint in all your gates"**. Now is the time to take accountability of the past year. As I mentioned earlier, it's time to look in the mirror, and "Judge" yourself and see if you have used your abilities to the fullest to fulfill G-d's will. Knowing where you stand is a great motivator. This is dealing and acknowledging the past, in order to look at a better and positive future.

**"Anoint a King over yourself"**. Accepting G-d as your King will move you to want to do His will, strengthening your commitment to Him. This is dealing with the future.

**"You shall set aside three cities."** The month of Elul is a "City of Refuge" in time, a place to go for atonement. It's an open opportunity to get closer to G-d as His arms are open to forgive us.

Our tradition tells us that during the month of Elul, G-d, our king, is in the field, kind of taking a stroll and is being openly available to meet with His people. He is smiling, and He grants good to us all. All we need to do is go out "to the field" and meet Him. This is a great opportunity; don't waste it!

On a personal level, many of us are in relationships that just seem to be on autopilot. We don't even realize that our significant other might be hurt by this indifference. Subconsciously, we think all is fine. And that might just be where we are totally wrong. And if you think everything is fine, then you are just qualified to follow the next steps:

**Revisit Relationships:** When was the last time you sat together and talked? Talk about what is important to you, or what are your aspirations? Talk about how you feel about each other, your relationship. This is considered dealing with the past, a real accounting of the past.

**Recognize the Other:** What are his or her needs? If you can't figure it out on your own, ask him/her to tell you or to write it down. Strengthen your commitment to each other. This would be considered as dealing with the future. And don't be afraid to go down this road because bettering your relationship is something you both want and desire most. Your significant other will be more than glad to work with you to improve your relationship and also your entire family's relationship.

Make plans together and just imagine coming to shul this Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, knowing that you are one with G-d, your Creator, and one with your Soulmate, your spouse. Wouldn't that be the perfect way to start the New Year?

Or even better, come and join us for our **SELICHOT** evening program on Saturday, September 13, 2025, at 8:00 PM for HAVDALLAH followed by refreshments and the **FIRST PREVIEW IN TEXAS OF THE MOVIE**

**“OCTOBER 8<sup>th</sup>”**

**Wishing y'all a HAPPY & HEALTHY NEW YEAR 5786**

**שנה טובה ומתוקה**

*Rabbi Ben-Zion Lanxner*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I have just finished the second volume of a four-volume set of books by Rabbi Alexander Ziskind of Horodna, entitled, *Yesod Veshoresh Ha'avodah*. The English translation is “the foundation and root of service.” The third volume just arrived, and I am excited to get started. It is a work of *mussar*, or moral instruction and development of good *middos* (character traits), and I read a chapter a day, each morning.

Now the reason that I am mentioning this is not because of the content of this particular work—which is very good and very informative—but because I want to promote the idea of daily devotional reading. That is, starting each day, after saying morning *b'rachot*, with some inspirational reading or Torah learning or something of a Jewish religious nature. I have been doing this for nearly 30 years, in addition to weekly *parashah* learning through great annotated *chumashim* and rabbinic commentaries, both classic and contemporary. Each morning, after praying, I sit down for a few minutes and do a bit of learning. This is a valuable practice both for my general edification and because it sets the tone for my day, jumpstarting it with *kedushah* (holiness) and *torah* (Jewish study). This kind of discipline is highly recommended.

There are plenty of inspiring works to choose from for daily devotional reading, whether explicitly organized as a reading-of-the-day type of book or simply a lengthy book divided into bite-sized chapters. There are works by contemporary rabbis and Jewish scholars, there are classic works of *mussar*, and there are other wonderful *sefarim* including selections from the rabbinic literature, both official canon and centuries of other great commentaries and writings. So many of these lend themselves to a daily-reading kind of practice.

A great place to look to get started, among major Jewish religious publishers, would be the online book catalogs of Artscroll and Feldheim. For example, there is the *Living Emunah* series, by Rabbi David Ashear; volume 8 is about to drop. There is a series of lesson-for-the-day type of books which distill the teachings of the Chofetz Chaim, or which are written by Rabbi Abraham Twerski. There are loads of books on *emunah* (faith) and *bitachon* (trust in G-d), a favorite topic of mine, by various contemporary rabbis. Finally, there are multivolume works of *mussar*, easily convertible to a program of daily reading. Over the past couple years, for example, I read a collection of writings containing the teachings of the Abir Yaakov, as well as Rav Chaim Kanievsky's *Orchos Yosher*. Waiting in the wings I have Rabbi Eliezer Papo's *Pele Yoeitz*, which I hope to get to next year.

Again, my aim here is not to promote these particular works to you, although I have found them all insightful. Rather, I simply want to encourage every CAJ member to find something—anything—that would make a nice lesson-for-the-day type of reading, something to start one's day or to end one's day before going to sleep. All of the major Jewish book publishers have works like this, ranging from 5-minute-a-day lessons aimed at “beginners” to multivolume works of erudition that one can track through a chapter at a time.

As we prepare for the High Holy Day, I want to recommend this as a great habit for all of us to work into our daily life. Somewhere, somehow, I believe that all of us can spare, say, five minutes for some Jewish reading. What is especially rewarding is that at the end of the year, you look up and find that you have completed one or two or three books. The same goes for learning the *parashah* every week. After decades, I now have a literal wall of Torah commentaries that I have tracked through, week by week. When broken down into easily “digestible” units, one can eventually work through a veritable library of books.

Besides just the joy of learning and the promise that this will help to make each of us a better person and a better Jew, there is something more. A reading program like this can serve to create *yiras Hashem* (“awe of the L-rd”) and *ahavas Torah* (“love of the Torah”), and cultivating these traits is an ideal way to nurture our *neshamah* and instill in each of us a longing to do *mitzvot* and join together in worship and in the life of our *shul*. And it all goes back to taking a bit of time each day to learn and reflect.

*L'shalom,*  
Jeff Levin



## ANNOUNCEMENTS



- ❖ The Office will be closed Monday, September 1, for Labor Day.
- ❖ **Saturday September 13, Havdalah: 8:30 p.m.**



**followed by Refreshments & Movie.**

- ❖ The Office will be closed for the High Holidays on Tuesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> & Wednesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> for Rosh Hashanah.
- ❖ Please remember to complete your form for the Yizkor Name Reading List. There are copies in the foyer for your convenience.
- ❖ Please remember your orders for the Lulav and Etrog set are due, with payment of \$60, on/or before September 18<sup>th</sup>.
- ❖ **Please sign-up for the Honor of High Holidays Aliyot.**  
Erev Rosh Hashanah, Rosh Hashanah morning.  
Yom Kippur, Kol Nidre.  
Yom Kippur, Morning Service. **Sign-up sheets are in the office.**

# High Holidays



## Schedule of Services

2025

**5785/5786 Selichot: Saturday, September 13, 2025.**

**Havdalah: 8:30 p.m. followed by Refreshments & Movie**

**Selichot Service IN-PERSON & [Live on Facebook](#) at 10:00 p.m.**

**Rosh HaShanah: Sept 22 – Sept 24**

Erev Rosh HaShanah: Monday, Sept. 22, 6:00 p.m. IN-PERSON & [LIVE on Facebook](#)

Rosh HaShanah: Tuesday, Sept. 23, 10:00 a.m. IN-PERSON & [Live on Facebook](#)

**Tashlich:** Tuesday, [Sept 23 at 4:45 p.m.](#) Brazos Park E. 3516 N. MLK, Jr. Blvd.

Rosh HaShanah Day 2: Wed., Sept. 24, 10:00 a.m. IN-PERSON & [Live on Facebook](#)

Shabbat Shuvah: Saturday, Sept 27, 10:00 a.m. IN-PERSON & [Live on Facebook](#)

**[Kever Avot: SEPTEMBER 28](#)**

Sunday, [September 28](#), 10:00 a.m. at CAJ Cemetery

**Yom Kippur: October 1-2**

Erev Y. K. Kol Nidre: Wednesday, October 1, 7:00 p.m. IN-PERSON & [Live on Facebook](#)

Yom Kippur: Thursday, October 2, 2025.

Shacharit, 10:00 a.m., [Yizkor, 12:30 p.m., Mussaf, 1:30 p.m.](#)

[Mincha, & Neilah: 5:30 p.m. IN-PERSON & \[LIVE on Facebook\]\(#\)](#)

**and Break the Fast at 7:30 p.m. in our Social Hall**



## Sukkot: October 6-14

Erev Sukkot: Monday, October 6, 6:00 p.m. IN-PERSON & LIVE [on Facebook](#) with  
**Kiddush in the Sukkah.**

Sukkot Day 1: Tuesday, October 7, 10:00 a.m. IN-PERSON & Live [on Facebook](#) Followed  
by Kiddush & Luncheon in the Sukkah.

Shabbat Chol Hamo'ed: Friday, October 10, 6:00 p.m.

Shabbat Chol Hamo'ed: Saturday, October 11, 10:00 a.m.

**Shemini Atzeret & Simchat Torah,**  
**Tuesday, October 14,** at 10:00 am IN-PERSON & LIVE [on Facebook](#)  
Followed by YIZKOR at 11:15 a.m.

Followed by Kiddush in the Sukkah.



**Order Your Lulav & Etrog Set**

Each set includes Etrog, lulav, myrtles,  
willows and a lulav bag.

Quality Set \$60

**Payment is required with order by**

**Thursday, September 18, 2025.**

## September Service Schedule

### Friday, September 5

Kabbalat Shabbat	6:00 pm
Candle Lighting	7:29 pm

### Saturday, September 6

Shacharit	10:00 am
Shabbat Ends	8:22 pm

### Friday, September 12

Kabbalat Shabbat	6:00 pm
Candle Lighting	7:20 pm

### Saturday, September 13

Shacharit	10:00 am
Shabbat Ends	8:13 pm

### Friday, September 19

Kabbalat Shabbat	6:00 pm
Candle Lighting	7:11 pm

### Saturday, September 20

Shacharit	10:00 am
Shabbat Ends	8:04 pm

### Friday, September 26

Kabbalat Shabbat	6:00 pm
Candle Lighting	7:02 pm

### Saturday, September 27

Shacharit	10:00 am
Shabbat Ends	7:54 pm



September 9

Sarah Cohen-Sioteco

September 11

Stormy Rogers

September 12

Abbye Silver

September 19

Lesley Rosen

September 27

Joseph Settle



September 1

Martin & Loren Schwartz

September 5

Inez & Gerald Bonnevill

### *Shabbat*

Susan Raphael

Joseph Settle

Javis Howeth

Jeff Levin

Steve & Carrie Draher

Inez Bonnevill

George & Kathleen Keller

### *In Memory of*

Robert Mitchell

Kathleen Keller

Hildur Metz

Kathleen Keller

Haskell Harelík

Harry Harelík

Gita Papernov

Semyon Papernov

Fannie Lieberman

Jeff Levin

# 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 September 6**

Elul 3	Chester Zeichner
Elul 4	Morris Marcus*
Elul 5	Minnie Rae Fink
Elul 7	Esther Brown*
	Jake Aaron Hayman*
	Julius Jacobson*
Elul 8	Dora Berlovitz*
	Marthe Bloch Heyman*
	Bennie Markusfeld*
	Gina Marie Perry-Valusky
Elul 9	Jacob Halpern

## **Kaddish will be read on September 13**

Elul 10	Bessie Chernoff*
	Isaac Wolpo
	Anna Wolstein
	Jonas Samuel Zackin
Elul 11	Fannie Lieberman
	I (Doc) M Mott*
Elul 12	Mrs. I Adams*
	Harry M Dalkowitz
Elul 13	Hannah G Rosenblatt
Elul 14	Pauline Kempner
	Louis Kolom*
	Nell Miller*
Elul 15	Pearl Koppman Wise*
Elul 16	Ada Edleman
	Dave Greenspan
	Rene Kluk
	Joe A Novich*

## **Kaddish will be read on September 20**

Elul 17	Mrs. Abe (Pearl) Lewis*
Elul 18	Louis Harelik
	Mrs. Ben (Fannie T) Kaplan*
	Nettie Marcus
Elul 20	Pearl Jacobson*
	Johanna Levy*
Elul 21	Charles Harris*
Elul 22	Mollie Feldt*
	Morris C Kleiman*
	Myron Rubel
Elul 23	Gerald Robert Smith*

## **Kaddish will be read on September 27**

Elul 25	Morris Chernoff*
	Virginia Perry
	Rae Trustman*
	Zell Tobolowsky Wizing*
Elul 26	I Diamond*
	Ronie Hoppenstein*
	Edith (Sandy) Sacks
Elul 27	Mrs. I J Gollob*
Elul 28	Java Alonzo Howeth
	Sarah Jacobson
	Meyer Koppman*
	Sam Schaeviz
	Ellen Schwartz
	Micheal Stewart
Tishrei 1	Jake Sampson