



CONGREGATION AGUDATH JACOB

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From the Desk of
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בכל דור ודור עומדים עלינו לכלותינו

In every generation, they rise up against us to destroy us

WHY ARE JEWS SO HATED IN THE WORLD?

"And it is this that has stood by our ancestors and for us. For not only one has risen up against us to destroy us, but in every generation, they rise up against us to destroy us. But the Holy One, Blessed be He, delivers us from their hands".

"Vehi she-amdah la-avoteinu v'lanu. Shelo echad bilvad amad aleinu l'chaloteinu. Ela she'bechol dor vador omdim aleinu l'chaloteinu, v'HaKadosh Baruch Hu matzileinu mi-yadam".

Though our Passover Seder nights focus on Yetziat Mitzrayim, the Exodus from Egypt, the Haggadah also mentions antisemitic episodes around 4,000 years ago, that preceded and followed the events in Egypt.

From the outset, the first Jew encountered antisemitism: the people of Aram opposed Abraham due to his religious convictions, and the landowners of Hebron denied him burial ground for his wife Sarah.

What accounts for this persistent and ancient animosity?

For Our Success, Isaac was also hated because of his success. After their jealousy caused the Philistines to fill up Isaac's wells with sand, their king, Avimelech, expelled Isaac from Gerar: "Leave us, because you are stronger than us", Genesis 26:16.1

Pharaoh similarly invoked this perceived "strength" to persuade the Egyptians to enslave and persecute the Jewish people: "The Jewish people are greater and stronger than we are.

Let's act wisely with them, lest they become many and join our enemies in the event of a war", Exodus 1:9-10.

Throughout history, continued Jewish success has frequently provoked animosity. Professor Thomas Sowell, a prominent scholar of economics and prejudice, was once asked how Jews might reduce the hostility directed toward them.

Sowell's response was succinct: "if they Fail"!

Let me remind you that what I am about to tell you, is with a deep sense of humility. But at the same time, let us also be honest and say it the way it really is and obviously without shame of any sort: "Jews are the most successful minority in history". It is a fact. It has been demonstrated and proven time and again. This remarkable success has frequently been met with intense animosity. When afforded equal opportunities, Jewish communities have demonstrated notable initiative and resourcefulness.

Sowell elaborates: "They can either hate themselves for underperforming or hate others **for overperforming** – it is easier to do the latter.

Analyses of antisemitism often overlook the significant overrepresentation of Jews in numerous indices of human achievement.

Rather than learning from and benefiting from the accomplishments of a contributing minority, many respond with envy and jealousy, which ultimately fosters hatred (See "The Israel Test – Why the World's Most Besieged State is a Beacon of Freedom and Hope for the World Economy", by George Glider and "The Hatred of Successful Minorities" by Rabbi Doron Perez).

For No Reason Jacob also faced animosity – from both his brother and his father-in-law.

While the Torah explicitly details Esau's hatred and intent to harm Jacob, the Haggadah focuses solely on Laban's malevolent intentions: "**Tzei u'lemad: mah bikeish Lavan Ha'Arami la'asot l'Yaakov Avinu...**"

The Maharal explains that the Haggadah emphasizes Laban's hatred rather than Esau's because Laban had no reason to hate Jacob.

Esau's resentment stemmed from Jacob's acquisition of the **Bechorah and Berachot. (First born inheritance and his father's Blessings).**

In contrast, Laban, despite being Jacob's father-in-law and the grandfather of his children, still harbored baseless hatred and sought to destroy him.

Hated For Every Reason Laban's animosity and efforts to eradicate Jacob and his family established a precedent for similar attitudes throughout history.

Jewish communities have faced hatred in diverse societies, often from those lacking any substantive reason for such animosity.

Remarkably, Jews have been subjected to animosity for virtually every conceivable reason, and it's opposite.

Professor Michael Curtis observes: "The uniqueness of antisemitism lies in the fact that no other people in the world have ever been charged simultaneously: with alienation from society and with cosmopolitanism. with being capitalistic exploiters and also revolutionary communism advocates.

The Jews were accused of having an imperious mentality, and at the same time, they were the people of the book.

They're accused of being militant aggressors, at the same time as being cowardly pacifists, with being a chosen people and also having an inferior human nature, with both arrogance and timidity, with both extreme individualism and community adherence, with being guilty of the crucifixion of Jesus and at the same time held to account for the invention of Christianity...

Everything and its opposite becomes a reason for antisemitism" (see Antisemitism in the Contemporary world, Ch.1).

The existence of numerous, often contradictory, explanations suggests that none of these reasons constitutes the true underlying cause.

The Prophet Ezekiel teaches that Hashem employs antisemitism as a means to prevent our assimilation, Ezekiel 20:32-34.

When Jews perceive themselves as integrated within broader society, Hashem prompts that society to remind us of our distinctiveness. We are described as the nation that dwells alone (Numbers 23:9), due to our unique relationship with Hashem and our particular mission in the world.

Abarbanel regarded Ezekiel's prophecy as applicable to his own era as well.

Jews flourished in the Iberian Peninsula for centuries, fully participating in Spanish and Portuguese society during its Golden Age.

However, this period of acceptance ended abruptly with persecution and eventual expulsion during the atrocious Inquisition by the Catholic Church in 1492 with King Ferdinand II, Queen Isabella I, and Tomas Torquemada who forced Jews to either convert or get burned alive at the stake! (See Conversos).

The Abarbanel interpreted these events, in light of Ezekiel's prophecy, as reminders to Jews of their distinct identity and separation. Anne Frank offered a comparable response to Nazi persecution: **"The persecution reminds us that we are not like the rest of the nations of the world – we have a**

higher purpose... We can never become just Netherlanders, just English, or representatives of any country, for that matter.

We will always remain Jews" (Anne Frank, The Diary of a young Girl, entry dated April 11, 1944).

Millennia before Anne Frank and the Abarbanel, the Prophet Jeremiah offered a similar explanation for antisemitism. In the opening of Megillat Eichah, the Book of Lamentations, he asserts that Hashem maintains the isolation of the Jewish people to encourage our return to Him (Eichah 1:1-19).

Recognizing that only Hashem cares for us ultimately leads us back to Him.

In every generation, **Bechol Dor Va'dor** We encapsulate this historical process at a pivotal moment during the Seder.

Following the initial account of servitude and the Exodus from Egypt, we reflect on Laban's animosity, which predates the sojourn in Egypt. Prior to this reflection, the transition is marked by singing **Vehi She'amdah**, a passage that underscores the recurring attempts by various nations to destroy the Jewish people in every generation.

Both before and after recounting these threats, **Vehi She'amdah** attributes Jewish survival to Hashem's intervention.

As previously discussed, Hashem permits adversaries to threaten us in order to create distance from them and subsequently delivers us to foster a closer relationship with Him.

Our Seder This Year After the past two and a half years since October 7, this year's Seder night and the recitation of V'hi She'amdah will indeed feel especially relevant.

Like many generations of Jews, we, too, have been viciously targeted – by terrorist organizations and widespread hostility from their supporters globally.

Let's remember what the true cause of our suffering has always been and continues to be.

Maybe that is one of the main reasons why we are commanded to tell and retell our story to our children year after year! So that they know and realize where they came from? So that they know where they are going to....

May this realization merit us Hashem's salvation – ba'yamim ha'heim ba'zman ha'zeh.

**Wishing y'all a Happy & Kosher Passover, and see y'all at our Passover Seder,
Wednesday, April 1, 2026, at 6:00PM!**

חג פסח כשר ושמח

Rabbi Ben-Zion Lanxner



President's Message

As we are reminded on an almost daily basis, being Jewish in the present socio-political climate in North America does not come without its challenges. That is an understatement, of course, as we can all attest. The hatred for our people, our faith, and our homeland is at heights not seen since the 1930s. This hatred originates not from a particular polarity of the political spectrum, despite what so many folks wish to believe, but is an increasingly visible phenomenon of the left and right, of blue and red, and of gentiles and, sadly, even some of our own.

In light of this, how do we maintain our equilibrium? Anger, fear, and a knee-jerk-reactive mind may be understandable responses, but being consumed by such emotions does not help us maintain our well-being and our focus. Such responses may be quite understandable in the moment, but they are not of use to us or to our people as we strive, with G-d's help, to survive in this environment.

For Jews, *tsurises* (troubles) seem to be a part of life. Has there ever been a time in our 4000 years of history when there hasn't been any trouble coming our way? It may seem, at times, that this is our lot in life—something that comes with being Jewish. Whether that's necessarily true or not, we're all faced with the challenge of meeting such troubles head on. How can we do this effectively?

Some of our greatest Rabbinic sages taught us to keep in mind a simple idea, a simple phrase: "*ein od milvado*" (there is nothing besides G-d). Think of this as a sort of *mantra* whose recitation can serve to protect us from life's troubles, either preventing them altogether or, if not possible, enabling us to resolve or transcend them with a clear mind and a strong faith and trust in Hashem. This may seem like magic, or pie in the sky, but is psychologically and spiritually real. Maybe not because these words exert some mystical or supernatural power (or maybe they do!), but because they reinforce a useful frame of mind for us. They remind us that the G-d Who gave us life and sustained us and brought us to this time is the same One who will continue to sustain us now and in the future. In return, what He asks of us is pretty straightforward: to keep our faith and trust in Him and recognize that, ultimately, He is real and our Creator and Source of Being.

It is not that our collective *tsurises* aren't real—they can be deadly real—but we have something and Someone to cling to and rely on to keep our emotions on an even keel and enable us to meet the challenges we face. The next time we read a news story about something terrible happening to Jews or in Israel, *chas v'sholom*, or the next time we personally face some difficult news, try repeating this phrase to yourself. *Ein od milvado*. It's not a call to ignore the trouble or pretend it's not real. Rather, it may help us to keep our wits and be reminded that the things of this world—though very real and at times very devastating and meriting our response—are ultimately transient. What is eternal is our Creator and His intention to watch over us and be the One upon Whom we should rely. *Ein od milvado*.

L'shalom,
Jeff Levin

Sisterhood

The Sisterhood would like to thank Hope Hacker and Paty Haessly as well as everyone else who donated at the Purim party!!

April Service Schedule

<u>Wednesday, April 1</u>		<u>Saturday, April 11</u>	
Pesah	6:00 pm	Shacharit	10:00 am
<u>Friday, April 3</u>		Shabbat Ends	8:32 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat	6:00 pm	<u>Friday, April 17</u>	
Candle Lighting	7:32 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat	6:00 pm
<u>Saturday, April 4</u>		Candle Lighting	7:41 pm
Shacharit	10:00 am	<u>Saturday, April 18</u>	
Shabbat Ends	8:27 pm	Shacharit	10:00 am
<u>Thursday, April 9</u>		Shabbat Ends	8:37 pm
Yizkor	10:00 am	<u>Friday, April 24</u>	
<u>Friday, April 10</u>		Kabbalat Shabbat	6:00 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat	6:00 pm	Candle Lighting	7:46 pm
Candle Lighting	7:36 pm	<u>Saturday, April 25</u>	
		Shacharit	10:00 am
		Shabbat Ends	8:43 pm

We will have a morning service on Thursday, April 9th, at 10:00 am, the last day of Pesach. This will include a Yizkor service.

The office will be closed to observe the Holidays, April, 2nd
April, 8th and 9th

This Shabbat April 4, we will have a Special Holiday Luncheon following services.

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY WILL BE HELD THIS YEAR
AT TEMPLE RODEF SHOLOM APRIL 14, 2026

APRIL 14, 2026 - 6:30 PM

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

TEMPLE RODEF SHOLOM
1717 N NEW ROAD, WACO 76707



Guest Speaker: Ron Schwarz

Ron is the son and grandson of Holocaust survivors. A regular speaker at the Dallas Holocaust Museum, he is the author of "The Quiet Strength of Resilience," a family memoir about his father's experiences during the war.

*Sponsored by Temple Rodef Sholom, Congregation Agudath Jacob
and the Greater Waco Interfaith Conference*

NOTE: The Temple is implementing a clear-bag policy for this event, enforced by security officers at the front door. Any individual entering without one will be asked to place their bag in their vehicle.



April 1

Semyon Papernov

April 5

Jo Spark

April 8

Sarah Via

April 10

Susan Lanxner

April 12

Steven Schwarz

April 21

Melanie Bauer



April 8

Paul & Paula Farmer

THANK YOU for your donations in March!

Shabbat

Susan Raphael
George & Kathleen Keller
Chris Culver

Joseph Settle
Jeff Levin
Inez Bonneville

In Memory Of

Bernard Hersh

Linda Kowel

Jack Blutman

Barbara Dankenbring

Anna Goldman Hersh

Judy and Florence
Hersh

Birdie Citrin

Jeff Levin

Esther Lipinsky

Judy and Florence
Hersh



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 3

Nissan 16 H B Cohen*
Mrs. L Fred*
Anna S Hashfield*
Jacob Wizig*
Nissan 18 Jennie Wizig*
Nissan 19 Saide Goltz*
Nissan 20 Louie Genecov*
Donald Clare Stuckey
Nissan 21 Mildred Fetter*
Mrs. Ida B Fred*
Nissan 22 Irving Stupak*

Kaddish will be read on April 10

Nissan 23 Abe Jacobs*
Dora Schneiderman Sacks*
Louis Wise*
Nissan 25 Ruby Campbell Howeth
Nissan 26 Murray Hersh*
Mrs. E (Bessie) Levin*
Nissan 27 George Adelman
Mrs. Mitchell Stein
Julia Moes
Nissan 28 Leah Beerman*
Rebecca Genecov*
Rachel Kestner*
Morris Miller*
Alex Stein
Nissan 29 Ida Berkman*
Don Tocker*

Kaddish will be read on April 17

Nissan 30 Betty E. Schiller
Iyar 3 Maria Gordon

Iyar 4 Tessie Ruskin
Lester Englander*
Lawrence Emory Lynn*
Mrs. Sam (Agnes) Rubel*
Annie Ray Wizig*
Iyar 5 Abraham Sprecher
Iyar 6 Ruth Bell*

Kaddish will be read on April 24

Iyar 7 Jake Berkman*
Mrs. Rebecca Brickman*
Mrs. Bertha Rosen*
Iyar 8 M Berlovitz*
Abraham Hashfield*
Mrs. Abe (Eva) Wizig*
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*