



The voice of Temple Israel - Greater Manchester's Center for Conservative Jewry
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The Blessings of Community

By Rabbi Jeremy Szczepanski

At the time of my writing this, it is *Isru Chag Pesach*, the day after Passover. By the time many of you read this, doubtless, your kitchens and dining areas will have already long been switched back from “Pesach mode” to their regular “rest-of-the-year” mode. There is usually a sense of normality this time of year on the Jewish calendar, as we can relax from the intense experience of recreating and reliving our redemption as slaves and the Exodus from Egypt. In years past, I have relished going out for pizza, that quintessential meal of pure *chametz*, to signify the end of another Pesach. I wish I could say I always had the restraint to leave a slice for Eliyahu ha-Navi, but I think he understands if I don’t.

Our journey as a people is not over with the end of Passover, however. We now wander the wilderness of the Sinai desert, headed to a destination unknown to any of us. The trip is fraught with peril and uncertainty, two things that quickly had our ancestors begging to be taken back to Egypt even at the expense of their newly won freedom. There is a comfort in the familiar at times, even when what is familiar to us is also harmful.

Despite their complaints – and *oy* there were many even from the outset – the Torah does not tell us that any of the Israelites chose to turn back of their own accord. Indeed, if any of them had wanted to do so, they could have easily packed up their belongings and headed back in the direction of Egypt and whatever may have awaited their arrival. Instead, these people who belonged to twelve disparate tribes chose to stay together for better or for worse.

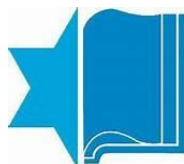
To be separated from the community in those days meant almost certain death. Often, when a person was exiled from the community, it was as good as a death sentence. Only the heartiest of souls could ever hope to survive the unforgiving environment, the volatile elements, the various animals that roamed the land, and the odd band of brigands, bandits, and other

unsavory characters that made such places their playground and backyard. To survive and thrive, one relied on the community.

Today, the definition of community has taken on new meaning. Many of us no longer live within the physical proximity of one another. We prize our space and our privacy and, as such, over time, we have erected physical barriers and barriers of sheer distance between one another. It has taken something like the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing necessity for physical distancing to remind us just how much we still need and rely on our community for support and comfort.

My hope out of this experience is that it renews within our *haimish* little community our sense of commitment not only to our Jewish values, ideals, traditions, and rituals but to each other as well. I hope none of us ever take for granted what we have here or balk at the idea of attending services or a synagogue event. These are sacred opportunities for connecting not only with God and Jewish tradition but with the broader family that is our Jewish community. While our physical lives may no longer depend on our proximity to one another, I offer that our spiritual lives still very much do.

My blessings to you all for continued health, happiness, safety, and security. I look forward to seeing you all fill the prayer and communal spaces of our beloved synagogue once more when our journey forth from this trying time finally reaches its end.



Jewish Book Club!

Come celebrate our Jewish authors and literature at the Temple Israel Book Club.

Interested?? Contact Ken Cohn for details at:
 603-801-1449 or newbegin04@yahoo.com

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Renee Brenner in memory of Gerald Peckerman
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Renee Brenner in honor Abigail Bernice Sydney

Special Thanks

- ❖ Dina Weber for help with mass mailing and proofreading
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 - ❖ Liz & Larry Eckman for supplying kitchen & bathroom goods
- ❖ Gabbai David Winthrop for helping with services, maintaining gahrzeit boards and Torahs (all 7!) and event prep
- ❖ Michael Sydney for overseeing the temple building and cemetery needs
- ❖ Our Kiddush Krew – Benay Bireh, Renee Brenner, Merle Paltrow, Carol Pressman, Rachel Spigler, Carol Sternberg, & David Winthrop
- ❖ The Family Shabbat Committee for organizing our shabbat events
- ❖ Carol Sternberg for ordering, displaying and photographing so many useful items for holiday and everyday use throughout the year in our gift shop.
- ❖ Greg DePasser for his invaluable help with our computer system security and PayPal integration

Looking to Grant a Mitzvah?

The Kiddush Committee is very short of help for the winter months.
If you can fill in , please contact Carol Sternberg at (603) 623-7752 or carolsnh@myfairpoint.net



Editor's Note: Thank you to Ken Cohn for submitting this article.

“Shabbat Shalom! I want to welcome you all and thank you for coming to my Bat Mitzvah.

In my Haftorah portion, Shelach, Joshua sent two spies to Jericho to spy. Didn't see that coming. When they arrived in Jericho, they were sheltered by a woman named Rahab. The king had discovered the spies' presence and summoned Rahab. The king told her to unhand the spies. She told the king she had seen the men but did not know where they were from. She said they had already left but couldn't have been far. The king sent men to search for the spies. At the time, the spies were hiding on Rahab's roof. She joined them on the roof. She told them in return for keeping them hidden, her family must be spared when they take the land. She made them swear by the Lord that her family would be protected. They swore. Since Rahab literally lived in the wall of the city, helping the spies return to Joshua unseen was possible. She hung a rope out a window which the spies climbed down to exit the city of Jericho. They told Rahab to gather her family in her home and hang a crimson cord out the window they had escaped through.

Fun Fact: My parents put a Clifford The Big Red Dog stuffed animal under the crib of all their children because it is said the crimson cord will ward off evil. Clifford, crimson cord. Red is red.

Rahab did as the spies said and told them to head for the hills and hide there for three days before returning to Joshua. This way the king's men can't find the spies. They made it back to Joshua and told him, “The Lord has delivered the whole land into our power; in fact, all the inhabitants of the land are quaking before us.”

For me, reading this story, I can tell everyone had to have faith in one another. Even though the spies swore by the Lord that Rahab and her family would be spared, she still did not know if they would keep up their end of the bargain. She had to have faith in their words and in G-d. And the spies, on the other hand, did not know if they could trust Rahab. They had to have faith in the Lord and believe she was trustworthy.

Faith had to be present during this event. I don't mean me. I mean trust and hope. Now, if you know someone named Trust or Hope, I don't know what to tell you! Faith is a big part of my life, and not just because it's my name. It surrounds me in every way possible.

The way I got my name is a “faithful” story. Especially because the story is full of me. LOL! My mother was told not to get pregnant because she was recovering from a miscarriage. At the same time, my grandmother had been diagnosed with Pancreatic cancer. My mom came home from the funeral and found out she was pregnant. My mom and dad knew I had to be a girl. When I was born, even the doctor was in tears. My grandmother's name was Felicia. My parents took the “F” from her name and turned it into Faith. Oh mom, don't cry! As I said before, faith surrounds my life in multiple ways. One way is confidence. Faith is a form of confidence for me, especially at school. When taking a test or quiz, I have to have faith, I have to believe what I am doing is right and that I'm answering correctly. It's not hard for me to believe I'm answering correctly because I've always been a straight A student! Even getting up on the bima today took a lot of courage and faith. I had to believe I wasn't going to faint! So far, so good.

Now I would like to thank a few people who helped me get here today. I would like to thank my Hebrew teachers and Rabbi Gary for guiding me and supporting me. Most of you don't know that Rabbi Gary not only helped me with Bat Mitzvah prep, but he helped me on a personal level. I lost a teacher who was very special to me to cancer, and Rabbi Gary took the time to help me get through my loss. Rabbi Gary arrived at Temple Israel just after I started practicing. He took me on and became very special to my family. Thank you, Rabbi Gary!

Next, I would like to thank my two best friends, Alexis and Maria. Thank you guys for being my friends and listening to my excitement and being excited with me. Thank you for listening to all the things I have to say, no matter how silly. You guys are the best. Thank you!

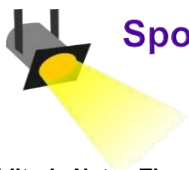
Now I would like to thank Neil, Seth and Lexi. I know I'm not always the best sister, but you guys are the reason I work to be one. You guys make me smile and laugh when I need to, and you support me through everything. You're by my side when I need you to be. You are the best siblings anyone could ask for, and I didn't even have to. Thank you!

Finally, I would like to thank my mom and dad. Mom, you've helped me all along the way. You sat with me through my stress, helped me practice my Hebrew, and helped me write my D'Var Torah. You sat with me every night telling me everything will be okay. You helped me through school and homework. You are the best mom anyone could ask for. Please remember that this upcoming Hanukkah! You are one of a few people who made today possible. You are my mom and my best friend. Thank you!

Dad, thank you for being there for me and agreeing with mom on everything. Thank you for helping me with math homework so I wasn't up to late. I enjoy cuddling on the couch with you and sharing a bowl of popcorn

with you. I love talking to you on the phone when you are gone and telling you about my day. You also made today possible, so thank you. You are the best dad anyone could ask for. Thank you, mom and dad, for helping me to become a Bat Mitzvah!"

Shabbat Shalom!!!



Spotlight on . . . Ruth Chevion Temple Member

Editor's Note: Thank you to Ken Cohn for submitting this article.

Hi, my name is Ruth Chevion. I've been a member of Temple Israel for 22 years. It's kind of strange to write about myself at this time of the COVID-19 crisis. On the other hand, what if I do get it? What if I die? What would I like to have said to my congregation?

For one, I can reveal some secrets. Here's one: what do I do when my mind wanders during a service? I turn to the back of the siddur, where I have some favorite readings. On page 392 there is one called "If My Days Be Few."

"If my days remaining on earth be few,

Let me know beauty...

Let me have a small house in a village hidden among the fields...

My life has been a long flight
Along unmarked roads, unsheltered...

And let my windows be open
to the world."

Several months ago, this poem gave me the extra push I needed to open an art gallery in Contoocook. "Yes," I said to the poem: "That's what I want in my remaining days...beauty. I'm aging. I have no grandchildren. I can do this."

Now the gallery is up and running. It is one of the most fulfilling experiences of my life. That poem by Sh. Shalom gave me the inspiration I needed.

Here's another secret: During the Amidah I am not very dutiful about reading all 18 verses. I shut my eyes and I pray. I pray fervently for my beloved cousins living in Israel and for peace and prosperity in Israel, and I pray for the wellbeing of my loved ones here too.

Frankly, it is not the liturgy that draws me to temple. It's the people. Having a congregation is a unique relationship, something like a good marriage where you have space as well as intimacy. When I go to shul, it's to see Lisa and David, and the rabbi, and Ken, and Mattie, and Sharon and Aaron, and Michael, and Deborah and Renee, and Jeff and Josh and so many others. Even the people I see just once a year, like the Bravermans, bring me joy.

I love Temple Israel because it saved me when I lost my son Paul. The daily "minyanares" guided me from despair all the way to "laying down the robes of grief and picking up the robes of joy." There was a minyan there for me every single day that year, even if a Singer

brother had to be called over in the last minute so I could say Kaddish. I relearned how to read Hebrew that year. Not only did I become a regular temple member after that, but I learned Torah and haftarah trope, and I had my first bat mitzvah.

What else? I'm a second-generation holocaust survivor. My mother and father both survived under Aryan papers in Poland throughout the war and managed to elude capture. Fifteen years ago, I testified in Polish in a Polish courtroom. My family had sued to win back the factory that the Nazis had seized from my grandfather, and we won!

I came to America as an immigrant at the age of 6½ years and entered second grade knowing no English. At various times in my life I have lived in Poland, in Belgium, in Israel, in Brooklyn, and in Manhattan, but my "small house in a village hidden among the fields" in Hopkinton New Hampshire suits me best.

I am retired from teaching law for 25 years at UNH School of law. My partner is Alan Scribner who is also retired from law and is currently the author of a series of murder mysteries set in ancient Rome. We don't live together, but we have shabbat together every week, and in other ways share the pleasures of aging semi-gracefully.

If I do catch COVID-19, I surely won't go willingly. I love the sensation of consciousness. But one thing I know: love never dies.

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Miss Karen's Hebrew school class submitted the following poems, thoughts and rap songs about what Israel means to them.

Seth Guttman

Israel. A place of hope and wonder
A place of peace and joy
A place where there isn't much thunder
But a place where people say "oy".
Israel is a wonderful place where people pray and run
And is a place that you should visit and have fun.

Ben Felder

Important
Sacred
Religion
Artistic
Extractions
Language

Newton Kershaw

I'm gonna tell about Israel and what it means to me
It's a holy land for everyone to come and see
There's many places to go like Tel Aviv and Dead Sea
And it's holy even though it's only the size of New Jersey
Even in Israel they're busting the rhymes
I didn't have enough time to finish so let me just say
Good night to everybody and have a good day

Ben DePasse

Israel is an amazing place
Super cool and fun
Really want to go there
Awesome sights to see
Everyday looks like vacay
Looks "lit".

Jake Sheff

Israel, the home to Jews
Start for Jewish civilization
Rituals of giving to God
All cultures are welcome
Even Arabs share it with Jews
Literature call Hebrew is an extremely old language
Israel the home to us
Get there by taking a plane and bus
May take long or another day
But when you get there
You are glad you paid.

Ava Kershaw

Interesting
Stolen
Real
Alive
Economy
Livable

Rachel Chazanoff

It's full of many religions
Sea
Religious
Ancient
Edom
Land of milk and honey



**Spotlight on . . .
Renee Brenner
Temple Member**

Editor's Note: Thank you to Ken Cohn for submitting this article.

I am Renee Brenner. I have been a member of Temple Israel for more than 60 years: In the earlier days, and many years thereafter, the Temple Israel main sanctuary was always full at the High Holiday services, (over 300 people).

I was president of Temple Israel Sisterhood for 2 years, and I did everything I could for the sisterhood and Temple.

I have been on the Board of Directors as secretary for many years; I do everything that is asked of me. I also am on the Kiddush crew and a regular at the Saturday minyan. We have a very nice group, and we would love to have more of our new members join us.

I was married to Larry for 50 years, but he died in 2006.

Larry and I raised two sons and one daughter; all were Bat and Bar Mitzvah in our Temple. Sadly, over the years, our membership declined, and it was very difficult for us.

Our membership has rebounded and is very large now, thanks to Norri Oberlander There are many children, and it has been wonderful to have so many bat and bar Mitzvahs after a long time without, which makes me very happy!

I am happy to see a large membership at our Shabbat dinners, at our Chanukah party and other Jewish holidays, with many children.

We did not have a Hebrew school for many years, but we now we have 40 students.

Our Rabbi is very special at our Shabbat services and special holidays.

I thank all our members who help when needed.

I am 83 years old. I have three married children and five grandchildren; all are married to Jewish spouses. I am very happy to still be here and do everything I am able to do.

Jewish Advocate

Coronavirus in the Middle East

Submitted by Brian Grodman

As of April 5, 2020, there were almost 1.3 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 worldwide, with 330,000 in the USA and 8,400 in Israel. By percentages, this equates to one infected person out of every 5,400 globally, and approximately one person out of every 1,000 in the USA and Israel. The disease is spreading extremely quickly in various regions and countries. The mortality rate varies from 2% - 8%, depending upon location.

Israel is currently in a slightly better situation than expected. Their central bank still has \$135 million in reserves – and they are balancing the economy vs. potential infections. The orthodox communities of Bnei Brak and Jerusalem have been hit hardest. It is possible these populations did not understand the danger, the contagiousness, simply live in much tighter quarters with large families, or did not heed the Government warnings. While there is great concern for the welfare of these Jews, their future socialization into Israeli society has many more on edge. The Israeli Arabs may also have a significant COVID issue, but it is impossible to extract accurate data. Israel is working with the Palestinian Authority in Judea & Samaria (West Bank) to slow the spread. For now, this has caused a significant reduction in terror activities. Qatar has provided financial assistance to Gaza, while only food and medical services are permitted to enter from Israel. The current expectation is for a slowing of the infection rate by the end of April.

Iran has a major Coronavirus issue due to their continuation of flights to/from China throughout March. It is assumed their infection and mortality figures are significantly higher than reported. They continue to spread the virus throughout the Middle East with Iranians continuing to travel. Lebanon is having difficulty containing the virus and providing medical assistance, as the country is bankrupt. To their east, Syria lacks adequate facilities to battle the disease. Additionally, the war within Syria rages with three armament facilities bombed last week. On the eastern border of Israel, Jordan has almost two million Syrian refugees without basic medical service. Egypt recognized a disease outbreak in January but was not able to contain the rapid spreading and 8% mortality rate. Turkey refuses to disclose legitimate data, similar to Iran and China. Iraq has an economic crisis and the only proper medical facilities are within United States military installations. Challenging Saudi Arabia's focus on the disease is their royal family tension. King Salman is 84 years old and there has been issues regarding selecting the next monarch. This, combined with collapsing oil prices, has caused a lack of resources for COVID response.

The Middle East will be very different next year - when compared with last year. Whether this will be a positive change is presently unknown.

PJ Hamantaschen Bake



Purim Carnival & Purim Party



MAY

Iyar 7 to Sivan 8

Candle Times and Torah Portions



May 1	7:29pm	Archrei Mot-Kedoshim
May 8	7:37pm	Emor
May 15	7:45pm	Behar-Bechukotai
May 22	7:52pm	Bamidbar
May 28	7:57pm	Erev Shavuot
May 29	7:58pm	Shavuot



May 22 - Liz & Larry Eckman - May 22 - 37 years
 May 28 - Michelle Rosenthal & Jeff Klein - 20 years
 May 30 - Debbie Ekland & John Sheppard - 16 years

May 2: Sedra Michaelson
 May 2: Judah Nathan
 May 5: Billy Cohen
 May 8: Eric Sheff
 May 8: Zoe Zeballos
 May 10: Charlotte Gross
 May 12: Vivianne Schill
 May 13: Liz Eckman
 May 14: Izzy Schill



May 15: Christy Aberg
 May 18: Neil Themea
 May 19: Gil Borenstein
 May 19: Rachel Chazanoff
 May 19: Frances Winneg
 May 21: Rami Preis
 May 28: Leslie Belanger
 May 28: Morgan Cantor

happy JUNE

Sivan 9 to Tammuz 8

Candle Times and Torah Portions

June 5	8:03 PM	Nasso
June 12	8:07 PM	Beha'alotcha
June 19	8:10 PM	Sh'lach
June 26	8:11 PM	Korach

June 8 - Rochelle & Gary Lindner - 46 years
 June 10 - Manuela & Robert Cooperman - 19 years
 June 12 - Elana Bannerman & Allan Lew - 6 years
 June 18 - Paula Fredriksen & Alfred Tauber - 20 years



June 23 - Martha & Michael Chazanoff - 13 years
 June 24 - Carol & Bob Sternberg - 47 years
 June 29 - Staci & Ian Felder - 13 years
 June 29 - Roberta & Irwin Sachs - 51 years

June 1: Rochelle Lindner
 June 2: Greg Ellis
 June 2: Stephen Hutter
 June 3: Al Shamash
 June 5: Tal Hagbi
 June 6: Iris Atkins
 June 6: Mattie Gilmartin
 June 6: Cindi Singer
 June 8: Rochelle Cantor
 June 9: Michael Fedder
 June 9: Kerry Holmes
 June 10: Hilda Landsman
 June 12: Jacob Hunt



June 13: Jeff Oxman
 June 16: Staci Felder
 June 17: Rebecca Singer
 June 18: Carol Sternberg
 June 18: Robert Hutter
 June 18: David Winthrop
 June 20: Andraya Oberlander
 June 22: Sharon-Ann Burnston
 June 23: Maelee Russell
 June 24: Allan Swartz
 June 24: Alfred Tauber
 June 25: Arielle Welch
 June 29: Debbie Ekland