



The Voice of West Clarkstown Jewish Center

Box 1722 New City, NY 10956 • 845-352-0017

Mar./Apr. 2021

Adar/Nissan/Iyar 5781

Rabbi Jill Hackell

(email jghackell@gmail.com)

Rabbi's Message:

I write this as February turns to March, and our thoughts turn (are you ready?) to Pesach. This year the first Seder falls on Saturday evening, March 27. At that time, we will assemble once again to tell the often-told-tale of our Exodus from Egypt. After years of oppression in harsh servitude, God led us out of slavery and out of Egypt. Passover is *z'man heruteinu*, the time of our freedom. Moses sang the Song of the Sea; Miriam and the women sang and danced. In every generation of Jews, we remember our freedom. Passover is the most celebrated of all the Jewish holidays.

In 1863, during the civil war, Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the more than three million slaves in our own country. More than two years passed before the news reached the slaves in Texas. Finally, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers arrived in Galveston with the news. The now-freed slaves celebrated with prayer, feasting, song and dance, as they have done every year since then, on that day, now called Juneteenth.

But imagine if we were freed from slavery but had to remain in Egypt, under the hands of those who oppressed us. That is how the story of freedom played out for America's former slaves.

This year, after the horrific death of George Floyd, we are reminded that the legacy of slavery, and of a society that look

at Black people as "other" and "less than" is still very much alive in this country.

Since the protests this summer, I have been doing a lot of self-education about the issue of "systemic racism". Surely, we are not racist, we say. We are good people. We don't hate Black people. But what I have learned is this- the idea of the inferiority of people of color is built into the fabric of our society since the time of slavery, and it is almost impossible for anyone who lives here to be totally free of these attitudes. They influence the assumptions that we make, even if we are not aware of it.

We take for granted that white society and culture is what is normal. This shows up in things as trivial as expecting our Band-Aids to match our skin. Try and find a Band-Aid to match your skin if you are a Black person. It shows up in the Covid crisis, which disproportionally is affecting people of color. Why is this so? Let's pay attention to our answers. Are we blaming the victim?

As I said, I have been reading a lot this year, to try and understand this situation more deeply than I have in the past. I am currently reading "Waking Up White" by Debby Irving, a middle-aged white woman who shares her process of self-education with us. It's the most accessible of the books I have read so far this year, because she clearly describes how her thought-process changed over the course of her

learning. I recommend this book, and I will list others I have read on our website westclarkstownjc.org (see Rabbi's Corner; more from the Rabbi). I look forward to talking together about it.

The Torah tells us to care about the stranger, the orphan, the widow, the poor. Why? *"Always remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; that is why I command you to do this."* [Deut 24:22]. In fact, this sentiment is repeated in the Torah over and over again. So, as we celebrate our own freedom again this year, let's be mindful of others who are still struggling for dignity and equality and respect.

Shimmy and I wish you and yours a *zissen Pesach*.

Rabbi Jill

Ask our Rabbi - 2021 March / April

Q: What does the Torah say about abortion?

A: The Torah does not address abortion directly. However, it does contain the following verse: *"When men fight and one of them pushes a pregnant woman and a miscarriage results, but no other damage ensues, the one responsible shall be fined according as the woman's husband may exact from him, the payment to be based on reckoning. But if other damage ensues, the penalty shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise."* [Exodus 21:22 - 24]

That is, if the fetus dies, the responsible party only needs to pay a fine, but if the woman is damaged or killed, the usually prescribed penalties come into play (eye for eye, etc).

This is interpreted to mean that the legal status of the fetus is somewhat less than

the legal status of the mother. This is true until the moment that the baby is born. Once born, the baby has full legal status, and may not be harmed.

Because the fetus has a lesser legal status, the Talmud judged that if the pregnancy threatens the life of the mother, the fetus could be killed to save the life of the mother, and this would not be considered to be murder.

Thus, Judaism permits abortion at any time during pregnancy, when it is necessary to save the life of the mother. Many *poskim* (deciders of Jewish law) have interpreted "to save the life of the mother" more broadly and may also permit abortion to safeguard the mother's health or to spare her physical pain or mental anguish.

Although the fetus does not have full legal status, it is regarded as "potential life". Therefore, Judaism does not encourage abortion, nor favor it for more trivial reason, or sanction it "on-demand".

Thank you

A great big thank you to Barbara & Julie Shair, Susan Ravner, and Stefanie and Mark Benson for all of the time and energy they have donated to our Shoppe. We are forever grateful to all of them.

Shalom Rav!

Even though it is a new year (3rd decade of the 21st century), nothing much is new or changed.

It is almost ten months since we have not been together at WCJC. We all try hard to make the best of the current situation.

It will be a true and glorious celebration when this pandemic has completely ended and we can pray and break bread together at our beloved WCJC.

We can focus our energies on the present and remain hopeful for the future. With complete confidence we hope to pick up where we left off and do even better.

Sisterhood is resilient as are other things in our lives.

In addition, we hope to move in an upward trajectory once we can meet in person.

Our newest member is Lil Zinn. Please continue to send your Sisterhood dues checks of \$36.00 to:

Fran Boxer
6 Cygnet Road
Congers, NY 10920

Believe it or not Purim is over. Only one month later is Pesach and springtime. My family joins me in wishing you a healthy, sweet and happy Pesach. "Chag Pesach Sameach".

L'hetra'ot,

Sheila Paris

Men's Club News

Hello All,

We are still living in unusual times due to the Pandemic. Everything is on hold for now. However, there is an apparent hope and light at the end of the tunnel. We can still communicate with each other via Zoom.

We just entered the month of Adar which means that Purim is upon us. This also means that our celebration of Pesach is just around the corner.

We thank those of you who have already joined Men's Club for this year. It is not too late for you to join. Dues remain at \$36.00 for the year. Send your checks to Steve Paris at 101 Rockland La., Spring Valley, N.Y. 10977.

Fraternally,

Steve Paris

Sunshine Cards

from -Lil & Gil Zinn – **to-** Dr. Nadav J. Praff -
Best wishes for continued succe in your new offic

from - Diane & Steve Klein, Lil & Gil Zinn, Sheila & Steve Paris -**to-** Roz Levine -
Happy 80th birthday

In Sympathy

from -Fred & Michele Finkelberg
- **to-** Richard Korn & Family - In memory of your sister, Ellen

from- Sheila & Steve Paris, Harriet Moskowitz- **to-** Stephanie Wechman - So very sorry to hear of Rob's passing

March Birthdays

Michael Paris	March 1
Michael Tessel	March 11
Harvey Ingber	March 15
Madellyn Ingber	March 15
Linda Scherzer	March 25
Harry Bloomfeld	March 26

March Anniversaries

Madellyn & Harvey Ingber	March 7
Barbara & Curt Schleier	March 25
Stefanie & Mark Benson	March 30

March Yahrzeits

Arthur Schiffman	March 1
Miriam Feurstein	March 2
Gertrude Breslaw	March 3
Shlomo ben Shimon	March 4
Bernard Goldstein	March 6
Milton Massler	March 6
Jack Klotz	March 6
Arnold Goldberg	March 8
Anne Shapiro	March 8
David Shrager	March 8
Regina Vadasz	March 9
Sylvia Last	March 9
Dorothy Rose	March 10
Sam Goldstein	March 10
Ruth Korman	March 11
Morris Goodman	March 11
Jack Atlas	March 13
Marvin Cohen	March 13
Joseph Bialo	March 15
Sol Gaswirth	March 17
Marge Jacobs	March 18
Jack Talmas	March 20
Eddie Starr	March 21
Max Zwirn	March 21
Mitchel Davis	March 22
David Groder	March 22
Harold Gologor	March 23
Nathan Schnur	March 24
Rose Alpert	March 26

Shirley Benson

March 27

Norman Moskowitz

March 28

Selma Ress-Gerson

March 31

Isaac Goldberg

March 31

Bertha Rothman

March 31

April Birthdays

Amie Valois	Apr. 11
Robin Jacobson	Apr. 12
Lil Zinn	Apr. 13
Barbara Jacobson	Apr. 18
Marcy Jacobson Koffler	Apr. 19
Douglas Benson	Apr. 29

April Anniversaries

Robin & Jeremy Garlock	April 4
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April Yahrzeits

Helen G. Franco	April 1
Alexander Kletsky	April 3
Murray Prager	April 3
Jacqueline Kletsky	April 4
David Romm	April 5
Edward Stone	April 5
Max Boxer	April 5
Mac Boxer	April 9
Rose Weiss	April 11
Samuel Green	April 12
Meyer Finkelberg	April 13
Milton Levine	April 19
Marilyn Nack	April 20
Abraham Bloomfeld	April 21
David Dubinsky	April 22
Samuel Massler	April 22
Sally Davis	April 22
Ira Yaruss	April 22
David Farb	April 26
Gary Wissner	April 26
Belle Citrin	April 28
Cynthia Bove	April 29

Donations

Yahrzeits

Allen & Roberta Shane in memory of her mother Doris Davis

Gil & Lillian Zinn in memory of his brother Morty Zinn

Philip & Joyce Ress in memory of her father Irving Wittlin

Arlene Janis in memory of her mother Estelle Greener

Harold & Esther Steinholz in memory of her mother Bertha Libien and Jesse S. Libien and his father Morris Steinholz.

Harry & Marianne Bloomfeld in memory of his mother Cecile Bloomfeld

David Talmas in memory of his wife Anita Talmas and his father Bernard Talmas

Jeff Plotkin in memory of his grandfathers Harry Yaruss and Louis Plotkin

Irwin & Reva Davis in memory of his father Samuel Davis and her father Morris Bloom

Steve & Sheila Paris in memory of their son Keith Paris and her mother Helen Pearlmutter and her grandfather Matyas Vadasz

Linda Haber in memory of her husband Sidney Haber, her mother Mary Schneider and her father Hennie Schneider

Fran & Paul Weiner in memory of her father George Nerenberg

Steve & Diane Klein in memory of her aunt Etta Berg

Stanley & Susan Alpert in memory of her brother Arnold Goldberg, her grandfather Isaac Goldberg and his mother Rose Alpert

Gil & Lillian Zinn in memory of his father Jacob Zinn

Michael Weinstein in memory of Martin Zall (Dave & Pearl's son)

Mark & Stefanie Benson in memory of her mother Miriam Feuerstein

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FAMILIES WHO SENT IN MISHLOACH MANOT CONTRIBUTIONS

Alpert, Benson, Boxer, Finkelberg,

Geneslaw, Ingber, Klein, Paris, Plotkin,

Scherzer, Talmas, Weiner, Weinstein,

Zinn.

THANK YOU TO:

Trudy Album for her Chanukah donation

Stanley Schiffman for his donation towards our electric bill

Lauren Perlmutter for her Year End Chanukah donation

**** INFORMATION ****

Congregation Sons of Israel (CSI) in Nyack has a Cemetery in Blauvelt.....

Lovely, Peaceful, Small, Easy to Visit -

Temple Israel Memorial Park

(there's even a separate section for Jews with a non-Jewish spouse).

Plots are available. For information contact CSI Cemetery Chair

Larry Kintisch 845-353-

0885 LKint@verizon.net

Comedy Corner

Jewish Computers

It is now possible to purchase Kosher computers. They are made in Israel by a company called DELL-SHALOM.

The price is low (wholesale), even with the shipping from Israel.

However, before you purchase a kosher computer, you should know there are some important changes from the typical non-kosher computer you are used to, such as:

- 1) The 'Start' button has been replaced with a 'Let's go! I'm not getting any younger!' button.
- 2) You hear 'Hava Nagila' during startup.
- 3) The cursor moves from right to left.
- 4) When Spell-Checker finds an error it prompts, 'Is this the best you can do?'
- 5) When you look at erotic images, your computer says, 'If your mother knew about this, she would die.'
- 6) It comes with a 'monitor cleaning solution' from Manischewitz that gets rid of all the 'schmutz und drek.'
- 7) When running 'Scan Disk' it prompts you with a 'You want I should fix this?' message.
- ☹ After 20 minutes of no activity, your PC goes 'Schloffen.'
- 9) The PC shuts down automatically at sundown on Friday evenings.
- 10) It comes with two hard drives - one for fleyshedik and one for milchedik topics.
- 11) Instead of getting a 'General Protection Fault' error, your PC now gets 'Ferklemt.'

12) The multimedia player has been renamed to 'Nu, so play my music already!'

13) When your PC is working too hard, you occasionally hear a loud 'Oy Gevalt!'

14) Computer viruses can now be cured with matzo ball soup.

15) When disconnecting external devices from the PC, you are instructed to 'Remove the cable from the PC's tuchus.'

16) After your computer dies, you have to dispose of it within 24 hours.

17) But best of all, if you have a kosher computer, you can't get SPAM.

Help WCJC by Selling on E-Bay

Barbara & Julie Shair have access to an E-Bay website. Items can be sold here.

Please donate jewelry...costume, gold, silver, single earrings or parts of a piece are acceptable.

Small antique items can be listed.

The funds help to support our shul.

Call: Barbara Shair 845-354-7223

Remember before you throw away we use e-bay.

Reminder: You can find information about service times, synagogue activities, copies of our newsletter and more

at our synagogue

website: westclarkstownjc.org