



Flushing-Fresh Meadows Jewish Center
193-10 Peck Avenue ✧ Flushing, New York 11365 (718) 357-5100

THE BULLETIN

Mar-Apr, 2016
Vol.14, No.3

Adar I/, Adar II /Nisan, 5776
Rabbi Gerald M. Solomon
Cantor Aaron Katz

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR MARCH

Friday, March 4

Mincha/Maariv.....5:30P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....5:32P.M.

Saturday, March 5

Parashiot Vayakhel/Shekalim
Shabbat Mevarchim Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....6:42P.M.

Friday, March 11

Second Day Rosh Chodesh Adar Shainee
Mincha/Maariv.....5:30P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....5:39P.M.

Saturday, March 12

Parashat Pikudei - Shabbat Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....6:49P.M.

Friday, March 18

Mincha/Maariv.....6:45P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....6:47P.M.

Saturday, March 19

Parashiot Vayikra/Zachor - Shabbat Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....7:56P.M.

PURIM

Wednesday, March 23

Fast of Esther - Maariv and Megillah.....7:15P.M.

Thursday, March 24

Shacharit and Megillah.....8:30A.M.

Friday, March 25

Mincha/Maariv.....6:45P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....6:54P.M.

Saturday, March 26

Parashat Tzav - Shabbat Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....8:04P.M.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR APRIL

Friday, April 1

Mincha/Maariv.....7:00P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....7:02P.M.

Saturday, April 2

Parashiot Shemini/Parah
Shabbat Mevarchim Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....8:11P.M.

Friday, April 8

Mincha/Maariv - Erev Rosh Chodesh.....7:00P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....7:09P.M.

Saturday, April 9

Parashiot Tazria/Hachodesh
Shabbat Rosh Chodesh Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....8:18P.M.

Friday, April 15

Mincha/Maariv.....7:00P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....7:17P.M.

Saturday, April 12

Parashat M'tzora
Shabbat Hagadol Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....8:26P.M.

PASSOVER

Thursday, April 21

Search for Chametz.....After 8:30P.M.

Friday, April 22

Erev Pesach - Fast of the First Born Services...7:00A.M.
Latest Time for Eating Chametz.....until 10:14A.M.
Latest Time for Annuling Chametz.....11:34A.M.
Candle Lighting - First Evening of Passover...7:24P.M.
Mincha/Maariv.....T.B.A.

Saturday, April 23

First Day Passover Services.....9:00A.M.

Saturday, April 23

Candle Lighting Second Evening of Passover...7:33PM
Mincha/Maariv.....T.B.A.

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SCHEDULE**Sunday, April 24**

Second Day Passover Services.....9:00A.M.

Festival Ends.....8:34P.M.

Mincha/Maariv - Seventh Evening of Passover.....7:00P.M.

Thursday, April 28

Candle Lighting Time.....7:30P.M.

Friday, April 29

Seventh Day of Passover Services.....9:00A.M.

Mincha/Maariv - Eighth Evening of Passover...7:00P.M.

Candle Lighting Time.....7:31P.M.

Saturday, April 30

Eighth Day of Passover Services.....9:00A.M.

Yizkor.....10:45A.M.

Shabbat/Festival Ends.....8:41P.M.

SISTERHOOD

As spring approaches and the start of a new season, we look forward to the return of the Snowbirds. However, the ongoing activities are still taking place.

Tuesday mornings the exercise class continues at 11 AM.

The monthly book club will be meeting as follows: Thursday, March 31 at 10:30 AM. We will be discussing "Winter of the World" by Ken Follett.

On Wednesday, April 27, the book for discussion is "The Marriage of Opposites" by Alice Hoffman.

Please note the change of day this time due to Passover.

The books are always reserved for us at the Fresh Meadows Library.

Save the date and make your reservations for the Yom Ha'azmaut luncheon on Thursday, May 12th. Watch for the flyer. We are planning a great celebration with the same entertainer as last year who everybody enjoyed.

Love,

Joan and Marilyn

CENTER NEWS**MAZEL TOV**

A double Mazel Tov to **Sylvia Udasin**.

Her first great-grandchild was born to her granddaughter Sharon, in Israel.

And....

Ronald Udasin, PhD, Sylvia's grandson, who has been awarded a Fullbright Scholarship to support his post-doctoral cancer research in the laboratory of Nobel Prize winner, Dr Aaron Ciechanover at the Technion Institute in Haifa, Israel.

Irene and Byron Dresner on the Bar-Mitzvah of their grandson Jonah Lewis. Jonah is the son of the Dresner's daughter and son in-law Andrea and Roy Lewis. The event took place in Manhattan at Congregation Rodeph Shalom on Dec 5, 2015 at Shabbat Services. Jonah is a student at the Congregation's Day School.

REFUAH SHLAYMA

Irene Dresner and to all in our Congregation who are ill, we pray for them a speedy and complete recovery.

CONDOLENCES

To **Jacqueline Kimmelsteil** on the passing of her beloved husband Albert.

(More on this later in this issue).

THANK YOU

Ephraim Klampka for sponsoring the Kiddush on Shabbat, February 20 in memory of his late wife, Ann.

CORRESPONDANCE

A heartfelt thank you to all our dear friends at the Flushing Fresh Meadows Jewish Center for their deep felt expressions of sympathy and their much appreciated gifts and donations in memory of my beloved husband Albert.

Jacqueline Kimmelsteil

We received a \$10,000 bequest from the Estate of **Lillian Gross** who died in 2013 and left bequests to several synagogues in the Flushing Jewish Community. One of the Synagogues was the Flushing Jewish Center. Lillian was an active member of the Free Synagogue of Flushing and was its representative to the Flushing Jewish Community Council eventually becoming editor of its Bulletin and President of the Council. She was active with the Council from its formation until she became homebound. We will be installing a Memorial Plaque in her memory in our Sanctuary as prescribed in her Will.



RABBI'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

Elsewhere in this bulletin, you will find the **STATEMENT ON ANTI-SEMITISM BY MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL LEADERS**. Please read it and understand that in the spirit of Purim and Passover which both commemorate Jewish historical events in which anti-Semitism reached great heights, we, today are fortunate that efforts can be made such as indicated to combat those forces which sought and continue to seek our destruction.

We are mindful of the statement in the Passover Haggadah: "In every generation they seek to devour us, but the Holy One, Blessed is He saves us from their hands."

AN OLD PURIM MESSAGE IS NEW AGAIN

On the feast of Purim, when we all listen carefully to the reading of the Megilla and ponder upon the story it tells us, let us all remember a few important details and facts that took place in those days at this time:

There arose a Haman, who issued a decree to murder and destroy all Jews at a fixed date. Queen Esther then calls upon Mordechai to "gather all the Jews and fast" and then she would go and plead with the King to rescind the terrible decree.

Mordechai thereupon goes and gathers tens of thousands of Jewish children and teaches them the Torah; he teaches them the procedure of offering the Omer when the Beit-Hamikdash would be rebuilt. All the children are so enchanted by the new spirit that Mordechai had inculcated into them, that even facing the danger of death, they exclaim: We stick with Mordechai and the Torah - for life or death!

In that very same day the decree becomes null and void. Haman's downfall is already assured and the Jews are saved, even though they learn of it only after a number of months. The experience of our fathers is a lesson to us all.

Let us remember that one of the chief means of frustrating the Hamans of our time, bring about their downfall, and bring light and joy to our people is:

TO GATHER JEWISH CHILDREN AND TEACH THEM TORAH!

To tell them that the true and complete redemption really lies in our own hands, for as soon as we Jews return to G-d in complete repentance - we are redeemed immediately. To tell them further, that our Holy Beit-Hamikdash will be rebuilt soon, and we must all be worthy and prepared to serve our G-d in the Holy Sanctuary.

On the day when the Jewish children are imbued with this spirit, and are ready to exclaim - "We remain with thee, our Torah, for life or death" - on that very day, our Torah assures us, all the Hamans will be defeated, and all Jews will have 'light, gladness, joy, and respect,' speedily.

A TIMELY PASSOVER MESSAGE FOR ALL TIME

An old adage provides: The only certainties in life are death and taxes. The only certainty of Jewish History is: God always comes to our aid. He may be depended upon, unlike any other temporary political alliances or allegiances which so often prove unreliable. History appears to indicate a preordained plan – an order, or as it is expressed in Hebrew, a Seder. The Seder of history has a preordained conclusion. Faith teaches that the story of our redemption from Egypt is but a prelude to the final, complete redemption involving the arrival of the Messiah. As our faith recurrently guarantees us such a future event that we even ask our children or grandchildren, who may well bear witness to this Divine expectation, to open the door for Elijah at every Seder to welcome the Elijah, the prophet, whose function is to announce the coming of the Messiah and the onset of the completed redemption of our people.

By eating matzah at the Seder we affirm the way of G-d in whose method we see this come to pass. It goes against the normative view that "history doesn't change overnight." But it is the method of historic change utilized by God Himself – and incorporated by way of the matzah symbol into the Passover holiday. Redemption, as illustrated by the matzah, anticipated as an eventuality, came speedily and unexpectedly. The Jews did not even have time to let their bread leaven. Suddenly, in a split second, the Israelite slaves were free.

Our ancestors were told that at the very first Seder held prior to the exodus from Egypt, to sit "with their loins girded, with shoes on their feet, with traveling sticks in their hands" ready to begin their journey into freedom. Only the faith that God would fulfill His promise made it possible for them not only to believe, after centuries of bitter oppression

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that their salvation was imminent, but that its actualization was not a matter of months or years away, but a matter of moments. While human progress in many other ventures may take centuries, the matzah we ate demonstrated then and now, the speed of at which Divine intervention can occur. When we were ready, G-d acted. Blessing comes only when we are ready for it. Petitions we make of G-d are rejected on many occasion simply because we are not in the proper position to receive them. Rejection of the petitions we make of G-d by G-d are for our own good.

Indeed, the rabbis long ago told us to be attuned in particular to dramatic historic changes that came about in unprecedented and seemingly incredible speed. The haste of events is one of God's chosen ways to indicate His direct and personal involvement. When worthy, petitions will be honored, when worthy, redemption is immediate.

Both of the above messages carry the important substance we need to hear and learn - that doing right carries with it immediate positive results. Blessing, goodness, forgiveness and redemption are always at hand and immediately available to those who seek them earnestly. Earnest seeking will be rewarded.

Both of the above messages carry the important value that keeping the teachings of the Torah for ourselves and passing them down to subsequent generations will assure great blessing to us in this world and the next.

A wise teacher taught: "The people who change the world, whether in small or epic ways, are those who turn peak experiences into daily routines, who know that the details matter, and who have developed the discipline of hard work, sustained over time. . . If you seek sudden inspiration, then work at it every day for a year or a lifetime. That is how it comes. As every famous golfer is said to have said when asked for the secret of his success: "I was just lucky. But the funny thing is that the harder I practice, the luckier I become." The more you seek spiritual heights, the more you need the ritual and routine of halakhah, the Jewish 'way' to God."

With all good wishes for a happy Purim, a joyous Passover and a blessed and sanctified life for all our members and friends as well as our progeny and future generations of all our families among all of our people Israel, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Rabbi Gerald M. Solomon



ALBERT KIMMELSTIEL - AARON BEN FEIST - JANUARY 29, 2016

Ever since I learned of Albert's sudden passing, I have felt a recurrent sadness in my heart, because Albert was a special man to me and to so many in our community for so many years. It will take a major effort by those who mourn his passing to come to terms with this great loss. Today we are all mourners.

Albert and Jackie were and will always be remembered as much loved members of our synagogue, the Flushing-Fresh Meadows Jewish Center, for so many years and for those many years they were unconditionally dedicated members and workers who gave every ounce of devotion they had to the multitude of projects undertaken by the synagogue leadership. Albert served and worked in a myriad of capacities, including being one of the Vice Presidents of the congregation and Chairman of the Ritual Committee for decades.

Albert loved our synagogue and it loved him. He had an unbounded commitment to our religious services, which he diligently strove to perpetuate year in and year out. He tried his best to preserve the traditions of our faith, which he felt were a treasure, which must be preserved. He demonstrated concern for the Sifrei Torah, assuring that their kashrut status always be maintained. And as we know, he was in charge of the Minyan pushke and each year he took orders for *Lulavim* and *Etrogim* for Sukkot, in addition to the other multitude of ritual committee tasks which he performed.

He worked diligently to preserve the physical plant of our synagogue, always expressing an interest in the matters which needed fixing and making sure that the work got done. He was a good manager who guided his actions by what he felt was the best course to be taken and by what he believed would be of greatest benefit to our religious home.

We have lost a strong man who devoted his life, following his liberation from the Auschwitz death camp, to the rebuilding of the Jewish presence in the world. Our community, the Fresh Meadows Jewish Community and its environs, have been blessed by his presence and the presence of his gracious, dear and beloved wife, Jackie. Inspired by the horrors of the Holocaust, together they had embarked on a mission to build and rebuild Jewish life in our community, raising wonderful children and grandchildren and instilling within them their love of Judaism. They sought to educate and inspire others with those highly inspirational lessons, that only those who knew first hand about the horrors of the Holocaust could provide.

Albert and Jackie's commitment to the annual Yom Hashoah Commemoration Service within our community strove to keep alive the memory of those who perished and let the voices of those who survived be heard so that the truth of those tragic years be known and that "Never Again" become not merely a slogan, but a reality for all time.

I will always remember Albert as a man of great inner conviction, indeed as a defender of the faith. What he believed as true and right could not be argued with. What he believed as true and right was inviolable. HIS was a strong traditionalist view of our faith and he felt strongly about preserving the truth of our wonderfully rich heritage. He lived his life as best he could, in accordance with that belief.

He was also a man of great integrity – honesty and truthfulness were the essence of his creed. His yes was yes and his no was no. He was a man of great character even as he was a man of great conviction. He believed in what he spoke and what he spoke was worth hearing. A generally quiet man who listened well to others and who often spoke only when he had something to contribute. More often than not, his words were well-received and heeded.

For this dear man we now have to bow our heads in submission to the inscrutable will of the Holy One, Blessed be He, who has seen fit to take him from us, even as we say "the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, Blessed be the Name of the Lord" and Baruch Dayan Emet, "Blessed is the true Judge." He was a dear and good man who will be very much missed by all who were privileged to have known him.

Aaron ben Feist, ***Lech B'shalom***, go in peace. As God told Abraham, He now tells Albert: "***Aal Tira. . .Anochi Magen Lach, Scharcha Harbay Me-od*** " :. . . Fear not. . . ; I am thy shield, thy reward shall be exceedingly great." (Genesis, 15:1)

Dear, Dear Albert: Go in peace with the knowledge that you have lived a good life, a righteous life, a life in which you always tried to do the right thing and you have succeeded admirably. You have done much good in your years and God is pleased with you and has and will continue to bless you. Your reward is great.

T'hey nishmato tserurah bitsror hachaim. May his soul be bound up with the souls of the living, indeed with the souls of the righteous. ***B'Gan Eden T'hey Menuchato***. May his repose be in Gan Eden, in the Heavenly Garden of Eden, together with all the souls of the righteous. Let us all say, Amen.

-Rabbi Gerald M. Solomon

Albert Kimmelstiel-Eulogy delivered by his granddaughter, Rebecca Kevelson at his funeral. Albert died on January 28, 2016.

January 29, 2016 just two weeks ago, my family gathered at my grandparent's house for one of our weekly dinners. I have become very fond of these weekly trips as it is a special time where Adam and I, my brothers, my parents, and my grandparents get a couple of hours to sit, chat about work, life and everything in between. It is rare that a family can spend such quality time together especially with grandparents. But this last one was not only so special because of the 3 birthdays we celebrated, or even more so because I now understand it was the last with my Opa, but because we celebrated Opas 71st anniversary of his departure from Auschwitz. This anniversary was celebrated with his fellow survivors, annually.

My Opa was a hero in every sense of the word and I am sure everyone here today, based on the countless calls and messages we have received, knew of his absolute heroism and bravery.

As my mother relayed to me last night, something about this family dinner was a bit different. She asked Opa more about this event this year, than in the past. She asked him about the unspeakable 3 month death march that he was forced to go on through the bitter cold and snow before his liberation, May 3, 1945, and the wooden shoes which snow clung to and was all he had for those months. This was not yet his liberation but a march leaving the horrible place, which housed him for many treacherous years. A place that murdered his loving brother, whom he had tried to protect with every inch of his soul. This was the hero my grandfather was.

When Opa and his family were sent to a ghetto in Riga, Latvia in 1941 from his home country, Germany, he was determined to take care of his family. And just like his father before him, he was a hero.

When Opa's mother was rounded up one afternoon, Opas father, Fritz, would not let her go alone, and together they gathered their precious items, giving them to their sons, and told to my Opa to care for Max, his brother — whatever should happen to him. That was the last time my Opa ever saw his parents. They were murdered in mass shooting outside the ghetto in March of 1942. He was only 18 years old.

Soon after, Max was chosen for the next deportation, and Opa did not hesitate, he joined Max, knowing their fate was Auschwitz. When they arrived each were tattooed, one number different from one another- Opa's 160761 and Max 160762. Over the next years, Opa sacrificed and fought to protect his deaf brother from alerting the Nazis of his condition. Unfortunately, just 9 months before January 18, 1945, Max was sent to the gas chambers.

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Through all the horrors that my grandfather endured, the most heroic of them all was his faith, love, and most of all compassion. Over the past few years I have retold his story to hundreds of New York City high school students. The most common question they ask is whether my Grandparents are able to forgive. Personally, this has always been a tough question for me, not knowing how to ever forgive those who committed the unspeakable atrocities that befell our family. But when I asked my Opa the same question, there was no doubt this man was a hero. He was never bitter or angry but grateful of the life he created in America.

And his love, which could be seen every single waking moment he spent with my Oma. Recently they celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. 65 years! Before I had gotten married, I remember having a lot of wedding related conversations with my grandparents.

Opa said during each conversation that he loved Oma more today than any other day. For two people who had it so difficult in the beginning of their lives, they were blessed to have met one another in an English class in Washington Heights in 1947.

After the horror and loss of Opas family, once he found my Oma, he was able to use that love to rebuild his life.

Opa attributed his survival during the holocaust to his faith in god. His devotion for his Shul and his community were a continuation of his strong belief and faith. As a child, I used to wonder how someone, who has been through so much horror could still have faith, yet my opa had an everlasting commitment to his synagogue- He and my oma created a unique community of fellow survivors whom took the place of family throughout the years.

Ten years ago, my grandparents took our entire family, all 11 of us, on an unforgettable visit to Poland and Germany. This trip was of the utmost importance to Opa as his future generations were there to witness the atrocities his family endured. It represented an affirmation of the strength of the human spirit, which defined my Opa.

I am so lucky to have had Opa for so many years of my life and especially to witness him walk down the aisle at my wedding.

PURIM: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The key points of history show how easily the mighty can fall, and how survival of the Jews depends on a connection to G-d. When we think of the ancient world, we think of civilizations like Egypt, Persia, Babylon, Greece and Rome. We think of rivers like the Nile, Tigris and Euphrates; and of rulers like Ramses, Hammurabi, Xerxes and Alexander.

The story of Purim is set in an era which saw the Jewish people sovereign in the Land of Israel. That same period was witness to the end of their sovereignty and the destruction of the First Temple at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians.

DETAILS

The Jewish people, led by Joshua, entered the Land of Israel in the year 1272 BCE. After settling and developing the land and establishing both a monarchy and a sophisticated legal and judicial system, the building of the First Temple was begun in 832 BCE by King David, and completed three years later by his son King Solomon.

The First Temple stood for 410 years. During that time, a vibrant Jewish community flourished in the Israel -- with Jerusalem and the Temple as its spiritual, cultural and political center.

In the Near Eastern world which surrounded Israel, empires in Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia vied for power and prestige. After the allied forces of Egypt and Assyria failed in their attempt to conquer Babylonia, the Babylonians, with Nebuchadnezzar as their king, became the preeminent regional power. They controlled the trade routes from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, amassed enormous wealth, and became the overlords of numerous cities and peoples. It was this Babylonian superpower headed by Nebuchadnezzar which employed its army to conquer Jerusalem and destroy the Temple on the ninth day of the Hebrew month of Av (commemorated as Tisha B'av).

The destruction of Jerusalem began the period of Jewish history known as the Babylonian Exile. The Jews who survived the Babylonian onslaught were taken in humiliation to Babylon. There, with time, they were able to build a vibrant Jewish community and were, to a great degree, afforded the ability to conduct their religious and communal

lives with a good deal of social independence.

Some 50 years after the beginning of the Babylonian Exile, King Darius of Media and King Cyrus of Persia embarked on a campaign which sought to subdue much of the Near and Middle East, including Babylonia. Shortly after Babylonia fell, Cyrus became the king of the entire Persian-Mede empire, and as such inherited the Jews of Babylonia as his subjects.

Having been slaves in ancient Egypt, sovereign in Israel during the First Temple period, defeated and exiled by the Babylonians, the Jews were now subject to the rule of one of the greatest empires ever to appear on the stage of history -- that of the Persians. It would be that empire and those kings, Cyrus and his successor Achashverosh, who would provide the stage, setting and landscape upon which the story of Purim took place.

The Purim Story

Here is the story: The brazen and somewhat ineffectual king, Ahasuerus, banishes his queen, Vashti, and decides he needs a new queen. Through various plot devices he chooses Esther, a lovely Jewish girl, a relation of the wise Mordechai, who is in conflict with the king's advisor, Haman. Because Mordecai will not bow down to this arrogant, plotting, villainous man, Haman decides to issue orders throughout the land to wipe out **all** the Jews. Esther is able to use her station to inform the king of the plot, and Haman is brought down, and hung on the same gallows he built for the Jews. Furthermore, new orders go out throughout the land, allowing the Jews to rise up and protect themselves, and the tables are turned, and everybody lives happily ever after (at least in the book of Esther.)

The Purim story, one of near-genocide, hardly seems to be the occasion for masks and parties and rampant frivolity! Some commentators have suggested that the book itself is satirical, a kind of literary cartoon in which the characters are so stereotyped that the violence hardly seems real. Most authorities, however accept the story of Purim as a matter of historical fact. Others have said that partying on Purim is a kind of release from the drama of life- because who knows? Tomorrow an advisor to the king may plan our doom, so today celebrate life intensely. A third perspective points out that G-d is never mentioned in the Book of Esther- thus, in a roundabout way, proving that G-d was really the "hidden hand" behind the whole drama, and since G-d protected the Jews then, the Holy One will protect the Jews now- and if that's not a reason to celebrate, what is?

Customs

Whatever your understanding of the religious meaning of Purim, there are a few customs unique to the day. The most well known observance is the public reading of the Purim story, usually from a special scroll which is often folded like a letter to recall the letters that went out with the various royal proclamations. This is the one day that decorum is NOT observed in the synagogue: people make noises with all kinds of noisemakers whenever Haman's name is read, in order to "erase" his memory, and thereby fulfill the biblical injunction to blot out the memory of Amalek from under the heavens, a commandment found in Deuteronomy 25:19.

Other customs and observances include:

Ta'anit Esther: a minor fast day that some people observe from dawn till dusk the day before Purim, commemorating the fast that Esther asked all the Jews to observe as she worked hard to save them. See Esther 3:12; 4:16.

Mishloach Manot: gifts of food to friends and neighbors. Traditionally, one puts together more than one kind of food (say, a bagel and an apple, or a muffin and a handful of nuts) and sends gifts to at least two different people. This can be simple or elaborate; the point is to recall the verse which says that after the Jews were saved from destruction, "They were to observe them as days of feasting and gladness, and as a time for sending gifts to one another and giving presents to the poor." (Esther 9:22.) Sending food to friends recalls the simple miracle of being alive, of the physical survival of the Jewish community, and connects our celebration with those close to us- plus, it's a lot of fun to give and get all kinds of cookies and snacks throughout the day! A traditional food for Purim is hamantaschen, a three cornered fruit filled pastry.

Matanot L'eviyonim: presents for the poor, are based on the same verse quoted above. Traditionally, the gifts can be of money or of food, but are given on the day of Purim itself; since we are celebrating the gift of our very lives, we express our gratitude by helping others to live. It's a very Jewish thing to do: celebrate by giving and sharing, making sure that everybody around us is included in the party.

Finally, it's a long standing tradition to have a **Seudah** - special meal on Purim afternoon with friends and family, with skits and silliness and drinking. In fact, the Talmud says you should drink until you can't tell the difference between "Blessed is Mordecai" and "Cursed is Haman," but Maimonides and later halachic commentators say that this can be fulfilled by merely drinking and eating a bit more than usual and taking a nice nap after the festivities- after all, one certainly can't distinguish between "Blessed is Mordechai" and "Cursed is Haman" when you're fast asleep!

Please note: This year the Fast of Esther is observed on Wednesday, March 23rd. Megillat Esther will be read in the evening following Maariv at 7:15P.M. and on Thursday morning during the course of Shacharit Services which begin at 8:30 A.M.

Israel Calls on World Nations to Regulate Anti-Semitism in Social Media

Sam Sokol (Jerusalem Post) - Excerpts

- *Akiva Tor, director of the Israel Foreign Ministry's Department for Jewish Communities, speaking to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations in Jerusalem on Monday, asked why platforms such as Google, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter are "tolerating" violent incitement.
- *"How is it possible that the government of France and the European Union all feel that incitement in Arabic on social media in Europe calling for physical attacks on Jews is permitted and that there is no requirement from industry to do something about it?"
- *Israel is working with European partners to push the technology sector to adopt a definition of anti-Semitism so its constituent companies can "take responsibility for what they host."
- *While Facebook has said it will take down material that violates its terms of service following a complaint, Tor asked why the social-networking giant could not self-regulate and use the technology at its disposal to identify and take down offending content automatically.
- *"If they know how to deliver a specific ad to your Facebook page, they know how to detect speech in Arabic calling to stab someone in the neck."
- *Following the Foreign Ministry's Global Forum for Combating Anti-Semitism last year, it called for the scrubbing of Holocaust denial websites from the Internet and the omission of "hate websites and content" from web searches.
- *Last October, 20,000 Israelis sued Facebook, alleging the social media platform is disregarding incitement and calls to murder Jews being posted by Palestinians. The plaintiffs argued that Facebook "has the ability to monitor and block postings by extremists and terrorists urging violence, just as it restricts pornography."

Global Commentary and Think-Tank Analysis

(Best of U.S., UK, and Israel): EXCERPTS

Jews Know that a Boycott Is Just the Beginning - Jonathan Neumann

- * The British government has decided to ban boycotts of Israel by local councils. The boycotters target the Jewish state alone and do not go after any other liberal democracy or British ally, let alone any dictatorship; only Israel, the Jew among nations. Wherever the BDS movement surfaces, it is accompanied by harassment of Jews.

*Boycotts have been the instrument of Jewish persecution for a millennium. The last century taught the Jews full well that what begins with a boycott by a few thugs or unknown academics does not end there. BDS cannot be tolerated in a decent and civilized society. BDS and anti-Semitism may come for the Jews first, but the radicalism behind them has us all in its sights. The writer is a director of Jewish Human Rights Watch. (Telegraph-UK)

Have the Palestinians Renounced the Peace Process? - Alan Baker

- * Riyadh Malki, the minister for foreign affairs of the Palestinian Authority, announced in Tokyo on February 15: "We will never go back and sit again in a direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiation." This is all the more ironic since it is Israel that is being accused and held responsible for obstructing the return to a negotiating mode, whether by the French foreign minister, the U.S. State Department or the EU leadership.
- * Malki's declaration runs solidly against Yasser Arafat's solemn commitment in his letter dated September 9, 1993, to prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, according to which: "The PLO commits itself to the Middle East peace process and to the peaceful resolution of the conflict between the two sides and declares that all outstanding issues relating to permanent status will be resolved by negotiation."
- * This official announcement by the Palestinian foreign minister should be considered a clear violation of all Palestinian commitments so far, and possibly as a fundamental breach of the Oslo Accords. One might hope that all those senior politicians and foreign ministers who consider themselves involved in the Middle East peace process will demand solid, public reassurance by the Palestinian leadership that the Palestinians have not given up the option to solve the dispute through negotiation. The writer participated in the negotiation and drafting of the Oslo Accords and served as legal adviser and deputy director-general of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (*Jerusalem Post*)

STATEMENT ON ANTI-SEMITISM BY MAYORS AND MUNICIPAL LEADERS

In July 2015, AJC announced the launch of the Mayors United Against Anti-Semitism campaign, inviting U.S. mayors and municipal leaders to sign on to a statement that calls upon their European counterparts to publicly address and take action against anti-Semitism in their communities. By signing the statement, U.S. mayors and municipal leaders pledge to advance respectful coexistence in their own communities and urge their European counterparts to affirm that anti-Semitism is incompatible with fundamental democratic values. To date, more than 300 mayors from 47 states representing more than 75 million people have signed on.

STATEMENT

We, the undersigned Mayors and municipal leaders, recognize that we live in a global era. Our cities and towns, regardless of size, belong to a global community in which our citizens are more interconnected than ever and where events in one community can have ramifications across the world.

We also understand that mayors and municipal leaders have a significant role to play in promoting respectful communities that advance coexistence among peoples of all races, ethnicities and faiths, and that the success of any city or town is based upon people of all backgrounds coming together to move our civic communities forward.

It is with this in mind that we express our deep concern about the alarming spread of anti-Semitism around the world, most violently and visibly in parts of Europe, and from which the United States is not immune.

Anti-Semitism is not only an attack on Jews but an assault on the core values of any democratic and pluralistic society. In a world of global communications where anti-Semitic ideas can and do spread rapidly, the impact of the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe does not stop at Europe's borders. When the fundamental values of democracy are challenged, a concerted and principled response is required.

We are, therefore, heartened that leaders from around the world have spoken out about this dangerous

(Continued from page 10)

phenomenon and have urged action to confront it. Examples of such statements include:

- *President Obama, speaking at a Washington, D.C., synagogue, warned: “In recent years, we’ve seen a deeply disturbing rise in anti-Semitism in parts of the world where it would have seemed unthinkable just a few years or decades ago. This is not some passing fad; these aren’t just isolated phenomena. And we know from our history they cannot be ignored.... When we allow anti-Semitism to take root, then our souls are destroyed, and it will spread;”
- *German Chancellor Angela Merkel declared: “Anyone who hits someone wearing a skullcap is hitting us all. Anyone who damages a Jewish gravestone is disgracing our culture. Anyone who attacks a synagogue is attacking the foundations of our free society;”
- *French Prime Minister Manuel Valls outlined just how critical the fight against anti-Semitism is declaring: “The choice was made by the French Revolution in 1789 to recognize Jews as full citizens. If 100,000 Jews leave, France will no longer be France. The French Republic will be judged a failure.”
- *The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reaffirmed, this past November, the crucial need for participating states to continue to combat anti-Semitism.

As Mayors and municipal leaders, we have a special responsibility to speak out against the growing menace of anti-Semitism, and we call upon our European counterparts to join us in adding their names to this statement and in affirming the following:

- * **Condemn anti-Jewish hatred, in all its forms;**
- * **Reject the notion that anti-Semitic acts, while sometimes carried out in the name of a political cause, may ever be justified or excused by one’s opinions about the actions or existence of the State of Israel;**
- * **Declare that prejudices against Jews or others due to differences in religious faith are inconsistent with our core values;**
- * **Support government efforts directed at eradicating anti-Semitism and preventing extremist indoctrination and recruitment; and support expanded education programs, including Holocaust programs, that increase awareness and counter intolerance and discrimination;**
- * **Recognize the ever-present need to be vigilant about efforts to prevent and report acts of anti-Semitism and other hate crimes; and**
- * **Believe that communities that promote a climate of mutual understanding and respect among all citizens are essential to good governance and democratic life.**

We, therefore, commit to working within and across our communities to advance the values of respectful co-existence and call upon mayors, municipal leaders, and other officials in Europe to join us in affirming that anti-Semitism is incompatible with fundamental democratic values.

**COMMITTEE ON
SMALL BUSINESS**

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CONTRACTING AND WORKFORCE

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AGRICULTURE, ENERGY AND TRADE

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA



Grace Meng

Congress of the United States

Sixth District, New York

January 21, 2016

**CONGRESSIONAL ASIAN PACIFIC
AMERICAN CAUCUS**
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CHAIR
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Rabbi Gerald Solomon
6740 164th Street, Apartment 3G
Fresh Meadows, NY 11365-3140

Dear Rabbi Solomon,

Thank you for contacting me to express your support for preventing a nuclear-capable Iran. I was the first Democrat in Congress from New York to publicly oppose the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action ("Deal"), and was one of only 25 Democrats in the House of Representatives to vote against it.

Unfortunately, Congress was not able to garner enough votes to block the Deal, so it formally took effect on October 18, 2015. On that day, the Administration began issuing provisional waivers to grant Iran sanctions relief. Sanctions relief began on January 16, 2016, at which time Iran also announced the release of five Americans as part of a prisoner swap with the United States. After the prisoner swap, the U.S. Treasury Department issued sanctions on 11 individuals and businesses that were involved with providing materials for Iran's ballistic missile program. I will continue to closely follow Iran's activities and highlight any and all provocative actions the Iranian Government engages in that are contrary to the spirit of the Deal.

I strongly believe the world could and should have a better agreement than the one set forth in the Deal. The inspections procedures that will be used to determine whether Iran has violated the terms of the Deal are flawed. Leading nuclear experts assert that inspectors would not necessarily know whether Iran is manufacturing uranium components for a nuclear weapon. This is unacceptable. Furthermore, I am deeply concerned that almost all of Iran's nuclear infrastructure would remain intact; this leads me to believe Iran will simply resume its pursuit of a nuclear weapon at the conclusion of the Deal in a decade's time. Finally, the sanctions relief provided to Iran in the Deal will likely incentivize the funding of terrorism and lessen Iran's interest in restraining its nuclear ambitions over the long term. Although I appreciate President Obama's and Secretary Kerry's efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, the Deal is simply inadequate for the American people and maintaining global security.

Please rest assured that I will remain steadfast in my opposition to the Iranian nuclear program, and that I will be monitoring any legislative proposals that would improve oversight and Iranian compliance of the Deal.

I appreciate you taking the time to share your views with me on this very important issue, and I hope you will continue to do so in the future.

Sincerely,

Grace Meng
Member of Congress

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Please sign up for Rep. Meng's newsletter at <https://meng.house.gov/contact/newsletter>

MARCH, 2016

ADAR I/ ADAR II, 5776

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Low-Impact Exercise 11-noon	2 Rabbi's Class "G-d, Jews and History" 10:30-Noon	3	4  5:25	5 ^{25 Adar I} VaYachel <i>Ends 6:41</i>
6	7	8 Low-Impact Exercise 11-noon	9 Rabbi's Class "G-d, Jews and History" 10:30-Noon	10 ^{30 Adar I} Rosh Chodesh	11 ^{1 Adar II} Rosh Chodesh  5:40	12 ^{2 Adar II} Pekudei <i>Ends 6:49</i>
13 Daylight Savings begins	14	15 Low-Impact Exercise 11-noon	16 Rabbi's Class "G-d, Jews and History" 10:30-Noon	17	18  6:48	18 ^{9 AdarII} Vayera <i>Ends 7:57</i>
20	21	22 Low-Impact Exercise 11-noon	23	24 Erev Purim	25 Purim  6:55	26 ^{16 Adar II} Tzav <i>Ends 8:04</i>
27	28	29 Low-Impact Exercise 11-noon	30 Rabbi's Class "G-d, Jews and History" 10:30-Noon	31 Sisterhood Book Club "Winter of the World" 10:30 AM		

APRIL, 2016

ADAR 11/ NISAN, 5776

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<i>1</i> 29 Adar II  7:02	2 1 Nisan Rosh Chodesh Shemini <i>Ends 8:11</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	5 Low-Impact Exercise 11-noon	6 Rabbi's Class "G-d, Jews and History" 10:30-Noon	<i>7</i>	8  7:09	9 8 Nisan Tatzria <i>Ends 8:18</i>
<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	12 Low-Impact Exercise 11-noon	13 Rabbi's Class "G-d, Jews and History" 10:30-Noon	<i>14</i>	15  7:17	16 15 Nisan Metzora <i>Ends 8:26</i>
<i>17</i>	<i>18</i>	19 Low-Impact Exercise 11-noon	<i>20</i>	<i>21</i>	22 Erev Pesach First Seder  7:24	23 22 Nisan Pesach Second Seder  7:33
24 Pesach <i>Ends 8:34</i>	25 Third Day Chol Hamoed Pesach	26 Fourth Day Chol Hamoed Pesach Low-Impact Exercise 11-noon	27 Fifth Day Chol Hamoed Pesach Sisterhood Book Club "The Marriage Of Opposites" 11-noon	28 Sixth Day Chol Hamoed Pesach  7:30	29 Seventh Day Pesach  7:31	30 29 Nisan Eighth Day Pesach <i>Ends 8:41</i>