

Flushing-Fresh Meadows Jewish Center

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THE BULLETIN

March-April, 2012
Vol.9, No.5

Adar/Nisan, 5772
Rabbi Gerald M. Solomon
Cantor Aaron Katz

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES for MARCH

Friday, March 2 - Mincha/Maariv.....5:30P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....5:30P.M.
Saturday, March 3 - Parashat Tetzaveh
Shabbat Parashat Zachor Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....6:40P.M.

PURIM

Wednesday, March 7 - Fast of Esther
Maariv and Reading of Megillah.....7:00P.M.
Thursday, March 8 - **Purim**
Shacharit and Reading of Megillah.....7:00A.M.

Friday, March 9
Mincha/Maariv.....5:30P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....5:38P.M.
Saturday, March 10
Parshat KiTissa
Shabbat Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....6:48P.M.

Friday, March 16
Mincha/Maariv.....6:45P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....6:45P.M.
Saturday, March 17
Parshiot Vayakhel/Pekudei/Parah
Shabbat Mevarchim Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....7:55P.M.

Friday March 23
Mincha/Maariv.....6:45P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....6:53P.M.
Saturday, March 24- Parashiot Vayikra/HaChodesh
Shabbat Rosh Chodesh Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....8:03P.M.

Friday March 30
Mincha/Maariv.....7:00P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....7:00P.M.
Saturday, March 31- Parashat Tzav
Shabbat Hagadol Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....8:10P.M.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES for APRIL PASSEVER

Thursday, April 5 - Search for Chametz.....After 8:15P.M.
Friday, April 6 - Erev Pesach
Fast of the First Born Services.....7:00A.M.
Latest Time for Eating hametz.....10:25A.M.
Latest Time for Annuling Chametz.....11:44A.M.
Candle Lighting
First Evening of Passover.....7:08P.M.
Mincha/Maariv.....T.B.A.

FIRST SEDER

Saturday, April 7
First Day Passover Services.....9:00A.M.
Candle Lighting
Second Evening of Passover.....8:17P.M.
Mincha/Maariv.....T.B.A.

SECOND SEDER

Sunday, April 8
Second Day Passover Services.....9:00A.M.
Festival Ends.....8:18P.M.
Thursday, April 12 - Seventh Evening of Passover
Mincha/Maariv.....7:00P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....7:14P.M.
Friday, April 13 - Seventh Day of Passover
Services.....9:00A.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....7:15P.M.
Mincha/Maariv Eighth Evening of Passover.....7:00P.M.
Saturday, April 14
Eighth Day of Passover Services.....9:00A.M.
Yizkor.....10:45A.M.
Festival Ends.....8:25PM

YOM HA-SHOAH

Thursday, April 19 - Mincha and Program.....7:00P.M.

Friday, April 20 - Mincha/Maariv.....7:00P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....7:22P.M.
Saturday, April 21 - Parashat Shemini
Shabbat Mevarchim Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....8:32P.M.

Friday, April 27 - Mincha/Maariv.....7:00P.M.
Candle Lighting Time.....7:30P.M.
Saturday, April 28 - Parshiot Tazria/Metzora
Shabbat Services.....9:00A.M.
Shabbat Ends.....8:39P.M.

CONDOLENCES

Rae Mishler on the passing of her beloved sister, Yetta Eigan.

Joan Corn on the passing of her beloved brother Barry

May you be consoled amongst the mourners of Zion and Yerushalayim

As this Bulletin went to press we learned of the unfortunate passing of **Kurt and Susie Brunn** while on a trip to visit their daughter in Arizona.

SISTERHOOD:
SAVE THE DATES

March 29th Book Club
“Major Pettigrew’s Last Stand” by Helen Simonson

April 26th Sisterhood Meeting and program.

May 3rd Book Club “The Kitchen House” by Kathleen Grissom.

May 23rd Brooklyn, Queens Long Island Region of Women’s League for Conservative Judaism “Women of Achievement” dinner. FFMJC honoree is Sandra Schwadron. Watch for details.

KEEP ON GIVING

Hunger is a daily struggle for the indigent and does not end when the holiday season becomes a faded memory. Please continue to bring in canned or boxed goods so that the holidays are a little brighter for those less fortunate.

ENDOWMENTS

Yahrzeit Plaques

Main Sanctuary.....\$275

In Lasky Chapel.....\$175

Panel in new stained glass window.....\$500

Endow a Siddur.....\$50

Endow a Chumash.....\$75

Sponsor a Kiddush (may be shared).....\$225

Special Kiddush.....ask

Listing in book of Life in lobby.....\$25

Rabbi’s Discretionary Fund.....

Please contact office (718) 357-5100
if interested.

LETTERS

To Rabbi Solomon,
2/12

I apologize that my siblings nor I got in touch with you after my dad’s memorial. The letter that Byron read that you wrote about Bob was very touching and heartfelt.

We are all aware that Bob was quite opinionated and vocal. He certainly enjoyed discussing things with you.

You are indeed a very caring man for your acceptance and warmth towards him.

Thank you for all you gave to him and my mother.

Fondly and gratefully,
Debra (Bob Smith’s daughter)

NOTE:

The Senior fitness program meeting on Tuesdays will resume after the Holidays. Watch for notice



RABBI'S MESSAGE

Both Purim and Pesach commemorate negative events in Jewish History which ended happily in the salvation of the Jewish People. Purim recalls the nefarious designs of the evil Haman who sought to commit genocide some 2400 years ago and Pesach recalls the enslavement by the Pharaoh of Egypt a thousand years earlier.

In the Exodus narrative we read that G-d acted directly through His performance of "signs and wonders" to bring about the salvation from the enslavement and the people to receive the Torah and eventual entry into the Promised Land. This notion was clarified for us in the text of the Passover Haggadah, in which we read: "In every generation they rise against us and seek our destruction. But the Holy One, Blessed is He, saves us from their hands." On Passover, we remember our salvation from the Egyptian enslavement by the Hand of G-d and the subsequent eternal covenant with G-d into which we entered. **Passover in the Bible is replete with G-d. The Megillat Esther contains no mention of G-d. Why? Let's clarify.**

The non appearance of G-d in the Book of Esther is reflective of the promise G-d made following the rebelliousness of the people who had forsaken G-d causing G-d to forsake them, but never permanently, as indicated many times in the words of the prophets of Israel. There appear to be times when G-d is inexplicably not to be found in history. This idea finds expression in Deuteronomy 31:18: "I will surely hide My face on that day." This is known in Jewish Theology as "Hester Panim." The turning aside of the Divine Countenance. This results in the ways of G-d becoming hidden, totally imperceptible to humanity and the cries of the people remain unanswered. So often in Jewish History the suffering did not appear to have any connection to a human failing. The question of suffering thus becomes a matter of conjecture. Suffering often remains inexplicable.

"Hester Panim" was evident in the story of Purim. The story unfolds by way of natural laws and historical processes. Divine intervention, seemingly, is nowhere to be found, although attempts at identifying it in the story have been theorized. On Purim we remember the salvation of our people from total annihilation, and although there is no mention of G-d in the Megillah, G-d's salvation of His People as indicated in the Megillah took place notwithstanding.

The significance of Hester Panim is also intimated by the name of the heroine of Purim, Esther. The Babylonian Talmud tractate Hullin 139B states, "From where does the Torah bring the name Esther? From the verse 'But I [God] will surely conceal my face [*"haster astir panai"*] on that day for all of the ill that they have done--for they turned to other gods. (Deuteronomy 31:18).'" The name Esther is interpreted as a sequel to or expansion of the phrase "concealed God." Esther and Astir have the same Hebraic root - to conceal.

Dear friends, throughout the last 2400 years, the Megillah we read on Purim has given both courage and faith to the Jewish People. It has served as a reminder that even in our darkest periods, we would indeed see the downfall of those who wish to destroy us as a people and wipe Israel off the map. While the Megillat Esther depicts one particular historical period, the moral of the story can be applied to many periods. It is a book whose message is indeed eternal. Given today's frightening

attacks and acts of overt hostility towards both Diaspora Jews and the State of Israel, the lessons of the Book of Esther, and the story of Purim, remain very important and meaningful to us today.

Today, the contemporary Amalekites and their Hamans include Iran's Ahmadinejad, the Palestinians, Iranian-backed Hezbollah and Hamas, etc. etc. Let us not forget their supporters around the globe, who all aim to wipe Israel off the world map. Jew-haters hope to destroy Israel's march through history and towards its unique special destiny: a State for the Jews where they can evolve into the fulfillment of G-d's charge - to be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation." This is what the evil entities which surround, condemn and castigate Israel fear. Today's Amalekites pursue all possible actions that could result in the destruction of the State of Israel. because they know that Israel has the special relationship with G-d and the potential, therefore to become the single most sacred and powerful nation on earth.

Present day haters of Jews and haters of Israel will experience the same destiny as their evil Amalekite predecessors. The command to blot out their memories from under the heaven is, according to the Torah a mitzvah which devolves on each and every successive generation.

The lesson gleaned from the book of Esther is the indestructibility of the Jewish people, which accounts for its continued appeal to all Jews in all times. Purim will not cease to be celebrated as long as prejudice and hatred of the Jews exists in the world. Purim will not cease to exist as long as there are those enemies of Israel who choose to challenge the choseness of the Jewish People.

On Purim, may we indeed celebrate the Almighty's deliverance of the Jewish People from annihilation in ancient Persia and may we also celebrate Jewish survival over the centuries and millenia at the hand of G-d, whether the machinations of those salvations were done overtly or covertly.

Purim became a symbol of Jewish deliverance, and whenever a Jewish community was saved from a horrible fate, from a pogrom, or from the evil designs which a Haman-like ruler tried to impose, the community would, in the spirit of Purim, celebrate it.

Purim will continue to be celebrated as long as prejudice and hatred of the Jews exists, as long as the likes of Ahmadinejad and the rest of the Amalekites will be around. We will celebrate their disappearance as we have done so many times before until the mandate is fulfilled. "... You shall wipe out the memory of Amalek from under the Heaven - You shall not forget."

Best wishes to all for a joyous Purim and a happy and kosher Passover.

Rabbi Gerald M. Solomon

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 Achaemenes, who would provide the stage, setting and landscape upon which the story of Purim took place.

The Purim 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 Mordechai 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 traditional 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 7th.

Megillat Esther will be read on Wednesday evening, March 7th at 7:00P.M. and at Thursday morning Shacharit Services which begin at 7:00 A.M.

**Happy
Purim**

PREPARING FOR PASSOVER

Passover is an eight day Jewish holiday, of Biblical origin, marking the birth of the Jews as a people and their emergence as a unique nation in history, devoted to G-d's will. It celebrates the liberation of the children of Israel—from slavery in Egypt over 3000 years ago, under the leadership of Moses. According to Biblical law, Passover is determined by the Jewish lunar calendar, and begins on the eve of the fifteenth day of the month of Nisan. The English date varies from year to year, falling in March or in April.

What Special Preparations Should Be Made In The Jewish Home For Passover?

The home must be thoroughly cleansed of all Chametz before Passover. Any Chametz not removed from a Jew's premises before Passover should be sold. Jewish law forbids the use of any Chametz which remains in a Jew's possession during Passover, even after the holiday is over. All cooking and eating utensils must be either set aside exclusively for Passover use, or, in some cases, "made Kosher" according to the procedures of Jewish law. All of these preparations must be completed by the morning before Passover. What Are The Rituals For The Period Before Passover Begins? The day before Passover is a fast day for Jewish firstborn males, in commemoration of the tenth plague, the slaying of the first born male Egyptians, which immediately resulted in the Exodus. In many congregations, a special celebration Siyum is conducted, following which participating firstborn males are permitted to break their fast. A ritual search for Chametz is conducted the previous night, and the Chametz that is found is burned the next morning.

1. Removing Chametz

Prior to Passover, every Jew is required to remove all Chametz from his home, property, and all premises under his or her jurisdiction (i.e. desk, office, locker, car). Even if one will not be on the premises during Passover, as long as one is there within 30 days of Passover, the obligation to remove all Chametz before Passover applies. In such cases, one should consult a competent Halachic authority and make the necessary arrangements.

To facilitate the removal of Chametz, each Jew is obligated to conduct a diligent search in all places where Chametz may have been kept or consumed any time during the preceding year. The specified time for this search is the night before Passover, traditionally using a feather and the light of a single candle. However, Passover cleaning in Jewish homes must be started much earlier. The premises should be clean by the time the search begins (approximately 45 minutes after sunset. The blessing is recited before the search begins, and a public disclaimer of ownership of Chametz (Bitul) is recited afterward. These texts can be found in most traditional Haggadahs.

It is permissible to sell Chametz to a non-Jew before the restrictions on Chametz go into effect on the day before Passover. To comply with the stringent requirements of Jewish law, the sale is conducted by contract through the rabbi, who is empowered to act as an agent by a Power of Attorney Form for the Sale of Chametz. The sold Chametz is the non-Jew's property until after Passover ends and must be treated accordingly. The Chametz should be locked away until after Passover when the Rabbi repurchases it for the community.

Restrictions on the eating, then use, and finally, possession of Chametz normally begin on the morning before Passover. Just before these restrictions begin, the remaining Chametz must be destroyed (usually burned) and a public disclaimer of Chametz ownership (Bitul) recited. The exact times depend on your geographic location. Consult your rabbi for the times when these restrictions go into effect.

Chametz which remains in a Jew's possession during Passover may not be used by him or any other Jew at any time, and it may not be purchased after Passover. If Chametz is discovered during Passover, it should be disposed of, in accordance with Jewish law, as soon as possible.

Utensils For Use on Passover

A- Jewish law requires special dishes, cooking utensils, glassware, and silverware for Passover use, with separate meat and dairy sets. They can be made of any material, including plastic or paper. Once these are used for Chametz, they may not be used again on Passover.

If it is not possible to maintain a complete set of separate utensils for Passover it may be possible to use some year-round utensils for Passover after a special "kashering" procedure.

Metal and wooden utensils, if they can be thoroughly cleaned, may be "kashered," but earthenware utensils may not be "kashered". Procedures for "kashering" depend on how the utensil was used during the year.

Shelves, countertops and eating surfaces used year round should be cleaned and covered for Passover use, and special dish racks, sink racks and wash basins should be used. Cooking surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned and covered. Ovens should be thoroughly cleaned, and either "kashered" by being burnt out or used with a special insert liner.

3. Foods Which May Not Be Used On Passover

Any food or food product containing fermented grain products (Chametz) may not be used or remain in a Jew's possession on Passover. Even foods with minute amounts of Chametz ingredients, or foods processed on utensils which are used for other

Chametz-containing foods, are not permissible for Passover, use.

Ashkenazic Jews, (Jews of Eastern European descent) also do not eat many legumes (Kitniot) - beans, corn, peas, rice, etc. and products containing them as ingredients throughout Passover, while Sephardic, Yemenite and Oriental Jewish custom varies from one community to another.

Because of the large number of food products which contain Chametz or Kitniot ingredients, only food products manufactured under reliable rabbinical supervision should be purchased for Passover use.

That includes beverages, condiments, spices, and all processed foods such as fruits and vegetables, fish, meat and dairy products, and especially, baked goods.

Grain alcohol is a fermentation product, and is therefore Chametz. Any edible items which normally contain grain alcohol, including whiskey, liquor, and liquid medications, and even those which are not usually taken internally (such as perfumes, cologne, toilet water, hair spray, hair tonic, shaving lotion, mouthwash, liquid and roll-on deodorants) should be treated as Chametz unless specifically approved for Passover use.

Totally inedible non-food products which contain grain alcohol such as polish, ink, paint and floor wax, are permissible for Passover use.

Any person with a medical condition must consult his or her physician and rabbi to ascertain the medicines that should be taken during the holiday, and any special procedures that should be followed.

There are many families which maintain the tradition of additional restrictions to their Passover diet. Some do not eat any food products made of Matzah or Matzah meal mixed with -water (Gebrochts) during the first seven days of Passover.



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SEDER INFORMATION

Ha Lachma Anya: (This is the bread of affliction...All who are hungry, let them come and eat.)

The Four Questions, in which the youngest child present asks about some of the seder's unique rituals;

Avadim Hayenu: ("We were slaves..."), which begins the account of the Jews' experience in Egypt;

The Four Children one wise, one wicked, one "simple" and one "too young to ask" who ask and receive different answers, based on verses from Exodus and Deuteronomy about Pesach, on why and how the holiday is observed;

V'Hi She'amda: ("This promise made..."), which proclaims that a threat to Jewish existence was not only made by Pharaoh and the Egyptians, but that "in every generation they rise against us and seek our destruction. But the Holy One, blessed be He, saves us from their hands."

Arami Oved Avi ("A wandering Aramean was my father..."): a hyper-condensed version of how the Jews came to be oppressed in Egypt, beginning with a reference to Jacob's oppression by Laban;

The Ten Plagues: a recitation of the Hebrew name for each plague, from daam (blood) through makat b'khorot (the slaying of the [Egyptian] first-born), customarily accompanied by dipping one's finger into the cup of wine and spilling a drop for each plague, symbolizing sorrow at the loss of a human life;

Dayenu: a song commemorating many of the miracles G-d performed for the Jewish people, from "executing judgment" against the Egyptians to "building the [first] Temple." The word Dayenu "it [that miracle alone] would have been enough for us" occurs at the end of each stanza listing a miracle.

Pesach, matzah, and maror: a pointing to, and explanation of (with proof texts), three of the seder's central symbols: the paschal sacrifice, the matzah, and the bitter herbs. According to Rabban Gamliel, a sage of the 1st century C.E., "Whoever does not explain [these] symbols at the seder...has not fulfilled his duty."

B'khol Dor vaDor ("In each and every generation..."): a paragraph that obligates: "In each and every generation, one must look upon oneself as if he [or she] came out of Egypt..."

Hiding the afikoman: A common custom is for someone at the seder to hide the afikoman, part of the middle matzah, which early in the seder had been broken by the leader. Children at the seder are often charged with finding the afikoman in a game of hide and seek. It's customary for the children to request gifts before returning the afikoman. The afikoman is eaten as dessert at the very end of the festive meal, which itself comprises the seder's 11th stage.

After the meal: *Birkat Hamazon* (Grace After Meals) is said. Before proceeding with the rest of the seder, the ceremonial fifth cup, the Kos Eliyahu (Elijah's Cup) is filled, and participants open the door to welcome him. Following this, the second part of Hallel (the cycle of Psalms 113-118 that offers various praises to G-d) is recited; the first part was chanted shortly before the meal.

The seder concludes with a section called *Nirtzah*, which proclaims that participants have "ended" the seder "according to custom, statute, and law," and implore G-d to "lead Your redeemed people, to Zion [Israel] in joy." Those present then sing, as they do at the very end of Yom Kippur, "*L'shanah ha'baah b'Yerushalayim*." "[May we celebrate Passover] next year in Jerusalem!, this usually isn't really the end of the seder, for various traditional reasons.

Pesach songs follow. Perhaps the best known and loved is *Chad Gadya* (Aramaic for "a little kid [goat]") a cumulative round in which, beginning with that "little goat," various animals and other objects consume or extinguish each other until the song's culmination: the "Holy One, blessed be He" slays the Angel of Death Himself.

RECENT QUOTES

"Iran, which is behind these attacks, is the greatest exporter of terrorism in the world.¼ The countries of the world must condemn these acts and draw a red line against Iranian aggression¼[and] on the Iranian nuclear program.¼ This aggression, if not stopped, will eventually spread."--Israeli Prime Minister *Binyamin Netanyahu*, blaming Iran for Monday's attacks against Israeli diplomatic missions in New Delhi, India and Tbilisi, Georgia, as well as Tuesday's attack in Bagkhok, Thailand, and reiterating that Israel will **"use a strong arm"** against international terrorism emanating from Tehran. (*Jerusalem Post*, February 13 & 15.)

"The scourge of terrorism is an affront to the entire international community. Our thoughts and prayers are with the injured personnel¼and their loved ones."--US Secretary of State *Hillary Clinton*, **"condemn[ing] in the strongest possible terms"** the terrorist attacks perpetrated against Israeli targets in India, Georgia, and Thailand. India's Foreign Minister S.M. Krishna also expressed **"shock"** over the attacks, and in a phone call with Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman promised to make all efforts to find those responsible. For his part, Lieberman affirmed that **"no Israel diplomat anywhere in the world will be deterred by terrorism."** (*Jerusalem Post*, February 13.)

"Israel perpetrated the terror actions to launch psychological warfare against Iran."--Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman, *Ramin Mehmanparast*, claiming that Israel committed this week's attacks against its own citizens in order to **"tarnish Iran's friendly ties with the host countries,"** and denying any Iranian or Hezbollah involvement. (*Jerusalem Post*, February 13.)

"For anyone who had any illusions as to the extremist nature of Hamas, I would hope this would serve as a wake-up call. The leadership of Iran and the leadership of Hamas share the same extremist goals. In many ways, Hamas is Iran's proxy."--*Mark Regev*, a spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, condemning last week's official visit to Iran by Hamas Prime Minister in Gaza Ismail Haniyeh. During his trip, which included meetings with President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Haniyeh asserted, **"[The] gun is our only response to [the] Zionist regime. In time, we have come to understand that we can obtain our goals only through fighting and armed resistance and no compromise should be made with the enemy."** (*NY Times*, February 10 & *Jerusalem Post*, February 13.)

"We are very concerned to see that other American Jewish organizations have not issued statements condemning the Fatah/Hamas unity deal, a vicious alliance that clearly indicates that Abbas and the Fatah/PA have no qualms at uniting in government with a genocidal terrorist organization. At a minimum, these organizations should be condemning this development, which demonstrates starkly the falsity of the Fatah / PA as a peace partner for Israel and conspicuously exposes the true face of the PA's goals and ideology, which has always been--whether under Arafat or Abbas--to destroy Israel and murder its Jewish population. Jews are never again to be the Jews of silence. Our painful history teaches us that."--*Zionist Organization of America* President, *Morton A. Klein*, expressing regret that major American Jewish organizations have not publicly condemned the Fatah/Hamas reconciliation agreement, and **"respectfully urg[ing] them to do so without delay."** (*Independent Media Review and Analysis*, February 9.)

ATTACKS TARGET ISRAELI EMBASSIES IN GEORGIA, INDIA

Yaakov Katz *Jerusalem Post*, February 13, 2012

....Two seemingly coordinated attacks were launched on Monday against Israeli embassies overseas. In the first attack, the wife of the Israeli embassy's chief security officer was injured when a bomb exploded in her car in New Delhi, India. The woman succeeded in driving to the Israeli embassy where she was evacuated to a nearby hospital. She was reported to be in moderate condition....

In the second attack, an embassy staffer in Tbilisi, Georgia discovered a bomb underneath his car as he was driving to the embassy. The staffer¼heard something during the drive, pulled over to the side of the road, noticed the bomb and called local authorities. The bomb was dismantled before exploding.

Israeli security authorities raised the level of alert worldwide following the attacks. Security officials said that it was possible that the attacks were connected to the fourth anniversary of the assassination of Hezbollah military chief Imad Mughniyeh who was killed in Damascus on February 12, 2008.

Diplomats worldwide have been ordered to check in and citizens currently overseas have been asked to do the same.... Security at embassies is being boosted by local police and military forces and Israel was considering the possibility of sending reinforcements from Israel....

Iran and Hezbollah have tried a number of times in recent years to avenge Mughniyeh's assassination.... Attacks were recently thwarted in Azerbaijan and in Thailand. Other attempts have included a plan to shoot down an Israeli airliner over Turkey with shoulder-to-air missiles and a plan to attack Israeli tourists in the Sinai....

Last month, IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Benny Gantz warned Hezbollah not to test Israel's resolve by perpetrating a terror attack against an Israeli target overseas. "We are witnessing efforts by Hezbollah and other hostile elements to perpetrate a brutal terror attack far from Israel," Gantz said at the time. "I recommend to everyone not to test our resolve...."

It is still premature to determine what Israel's response will be following the attacks^{1/4}but the question of whether it should respond or not is currently hanging in the air....

WARNING IRAN AGAINST HITTING 'SOFT' AMERICAN TARGETS

Alan M. Dershowitz *Wall Street Journal*, February 13, 2012

The Iranian government has now made crystal clear that it is at war not only with Israel and Zionism but with Jewish communities throughout the world. As Iran's *Rafah* news website--identified with President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad--threatened last month, Iran plans to "take the war beyond the borders of Iran, and beyond the borders of the region." And last week an Iranian News Agency headline declared that "Israeli people must be annihilated."

These and other recent threats have, according to news reports, led Israeli and American authorities to believe that Iran is preparing attacks against Israeli embassies and consulates world-wide, as well as against Jewish houses of prayer, schools, community centers, restaurants and other soft targets.

If this were to happen, it would not be the first time that Iranian agents have bombed or attacked Israeli and Jewish targets in distant countries. Back in 1992, Iranian agents blew up the Israeli Embassy and a Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, killing and injuring hundreds of civilians, many of whom were children. The Argentine government conducted a thorough criminal investigation and indicted several Iranian officials, but those officials were well beyond the reach of Argentine legal authorities and remain at liberty.

The U.S. government should deem any Iranian attack against Israeli or Jewish soft targets in America to be an armed military attack on the U.S.--to which the U.S. will retaliate militarily at a time and place of its choosing. Washington should not treat such an attack as the Argentine authorities did, merely as a criminal act.

Under international law, an attack on an embassy is an attack both on the embassy's country and on the country

in which the embassy is located. And under the charter of the United Nations, an attack against citizens on its territory is an act of armed aggression that justifies retaliatory military action.

An attack on an American synagogue is no different than an attack on the World Trade Center or on American aviation. We correctly regarded those attacks as acts of war committed by al Qaeda and facilitated by the government of Afghanistan, and we responded militarily. All American citizens, regardless of their religious affiliation, are equally entitled to the protection of the American military.

U.S. retaliation could take the form of military action against Iran's nuclear facilities. Though such action might be pre-emptive in its intention, it would be reactive as a matter of international law, since it would be in response to an armed attack by Iran. It wouldn't require Security Council approval, since Article 51 of the U.N. Charter explicitly preserves the right of member nations to respond to any armed attack.

This is not to argue against such an attack if Iran decides not to go after soft American targets. It may become necessary for our military to target Iranian nuclear facilities if economic sanctions and diplomatic efforts do not succeed and if the Iranian government decides to cross red lines by militarizing its nuclear program and placing it in deep underground bunkers. But the legal justification for such an attack would be somewhat different. It would be predominantly pre-emptive or preventive, though it would have reactive elements as well, since Iran has armed our enemies in Iraq and caused the death of many American soldiers.

If Israel were compelled to act alone against Iran's nuclear program, it too would be reacting as well as pre-empting, since Iran has effectively declared war against the Jewish state and its people. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah recently confirmed Iran's role as Hezbollah's active partner in its war against Israel, claiming that it "could not have been victorious" in its 2006 war without the military support of Tehran. Iran's ongoing support for Hezbollah and Hamas, coupled with its direct participation in the bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, constitute sufficient *casus belli* to justify a reactive Israeli military strike against the Iranian nuclear program. The best outcome, of course, would be to deter Iran from both foreign aggression and domestic nuclearization by making the costs too high, even for the most zealous or adventurous Iranian leaders. But for deterrence to succeed, where sanctions and other tactics appear to be failing, the threat of military action must be credible. Right now it is not, because Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and other administration officials are sending mixed signals, not only with regard to the U.S. but also with regard to Israel.

The administration must speak with an unambiguous and credible voice that leaves no doubt in the minds of Iranian leaders that America won't tolerate attacks on our citizens or a nuclear-armed Iran. As George Washington wisely counseled in his second inaugural address, "To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace."

(HOW) SHOULD ISRAEL BOMB IRAN?

Bret Stephens *Wall Street Journal*, February 7, 2012

Can Israel attack Iran? If it can, will it? If it will, when? If when, how? And what happens after *that*?

[Earlier this month] with Matt Lauer, President Obama said "I don't think that Israel has made a decision on what they need to do." That didn't square with the view of Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, who's been reported as saying he expects an Israeli attack this spring. Nor does it square with public warnings from Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak that the Iranians would soon enter a "zone of immunity" from foreign military attack if nothing is done to stop them.

Yes, these war drums have been beaten before. But this time it's different. Diplomacy has run its course: Even U.N. diplomats now say Iran uses negotiations as a tactic to buy time. The sanctions are too late: Israel can't afford to wait a year or two to see if Europe's embargo on Iranian oil or the administration's squeeze on Iran's financial institutions will alter Tehran's nuclear calculations. Covert action--computer bugs, assassinations, explosions--may have slowed Iran's progress, but plainly not by enough.....

Two additional points. Washington and Jerusalem are at last operating from a common timetable--Iran is within a year of getting to the point when it will be able to assemble a bomb essentially at will. And speaking of timetables, Jerusalem knows that Mr. Obama will be hard-pressed to oppose an Israeli strike--the way Dwight Eisenhower did during the Suez crisis--before election day. A re-elected President Obama is a different story.

That means that from here until November the U.S. traffic light has gone from red to yellow. And Israelis aren't exactly famous for stopping at yellow lights. But can they do it?

There's a mountain of nonsense exaggerating Israel's military capabilities: Israel does not, for instance, operate giant drones capable of refueling jet fighters in midair. At the same time, there's an equally tall mountain of nonsense saying that Israel is powerless to do significant damage to Iran's nuclear-weapons complex, as if the Islamic Republic were the second coming of the USSR. In fact, Iran is a Third World country that can't even protect its own scientists in the heart of Tehran. It has a decrepit

air force, antiquated air defenses, a vulnerable electrical grid, exposed nuclear sites (the uranium conversion plant at Esfahan, the heavy water facility at Arak, the reactor at Bushehr), and a vulnerable energy infrastructure on which its economy is utterly dependent. Even its deeply buried targets can be destroyed. It's all a question of time, tonnage and precision.

The bottom line is that a strike on Iran that sets its nuclear ambitions back by several years is at the outer periphery of Israel's military capability, but still within it.....

What happens on the day after? Israelis estimate that between Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Syria and Iran itself, there are some 200,000 missiles and rockets pointed in their direction. They could start falling before the first sortie of Israeli jets returned to base. Israel's civil defenses have been materially improved in recent years. But the country would still have to anticipate that missile and rocket barrages would overwhelm its defenses, causing hundreds of civilian casualties. Israel would also have to be prepared to go to war in Lebanon, Gaza and even Syria if Iran calls on the aid of its allies.

Put simply, an Israeli strike on Iran would not just be a larger-scale reprise of the attacks that took out Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981 and Syria's in 2007. On the contrary: If it goes well it would look somewhat like the Six Day War of 1967, and if it goes poorly like the Yom Kippur War of 1973. Nobody should think we're talking about a cakewalk.

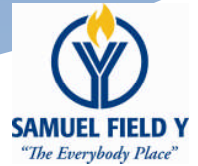
So: Should Israel do it? If the U.S. has no serious intention to go beyond sanctions, Israel's only alternative to action is to accept a nuclear Iran and then stand by as the rest of its neighbors acquire nuclear weapons of their own. That scenario is the probable end of Israel.... [And] destroying Iran's nuclear sites will be a short-lived victory if it isn't matched to the broader goal of ending the regime.



Planning Ahead: Elder care

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Ronald A. Fatoullah, Esq. *CELA, is the principal attorney of Ronald Fatoullah & Associates, a law firm focusing on Elder Law, estate planning and special needs planning. . Known for his outstanding services to senior citizen and special needs communities, Mr. Fatoullah is an award winning elder law attorney who has been recognized in New York Magazine as one of "The New York Area's Best Lawyers" for six consecutive years. Mr. Fatoullah regularly lectures to banks, corporations, accountants and attorneys on elder law, estate planning and special needs matters. He is frequently quoted in the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and Newsday and is a co-author of the "Long Term Care Planning Guide for Accountants". His offices are located in Long Island, Manhattan, Queens and Brooklyn.

Date/Time: Wednesday, March 14, 2012 / 10:30am-12:00pm

Location: Flushing Fresh Meadows Jewish Center – 193-10 Peck Avenue Fresh Meadows, NY 11365

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MARCH, 2012

ADAR/NISAN 5772

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 ⁹ Adar Tetzaveh  5:30 Ends 6:40
4	5	6	7 Erev Purim Read Megilla 7:00 PM	8 Purim Luncheon 12:30 PM	9  5:38 Ends 6:48	10 ¹⁶ Adar KiSisa Ends 6:48
11 Daylight Savings Time	12	13	14	15	16  6:45 Ends 7:55	17 ²³ Adar Vayachei- Pekudei Ends 7:55
18	19	20	21	22	23  6:53 Ends 8:03	24 ¹ Nisan Rosh Chodesh Vayikra Ends 8:03
25	26	27	28	29 Sisterhood Book Club 10:30 AM	30  7:00 Ends 8:10	31 ⁸ Nisan Tzav Shabbat Hagadol Ends 8:10

APRIL, 2012
NISAN/IYAR, 5772

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i> Erev Passover First Seder  7:08	<i>7</i> ^{15 Nisan} 1st Day Passover Second Seder  8:17
<i>8</i> 2nd Day Passover	<i>9</i> Chol-Hamoed	<i>10</i> Chol-Hamoed	<i>11</i> Chol-Hamoed	<i>12</i> Chol-Hamoed  7:14	<i>13</i> 7th Day Passover  7:15	<i>14</i> ^{22 Nisan} 8th Day Passover <i>Ends 8:25</i>
<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i> Yom-Hashoah Services 7:00 PM	<i>20</i>  7:22	<i>21</i> ^{29 Nisan} Shemini <i>Ends 8:32</i>
<i>22</i> ^{30 Nisan} Rosh Chodesh	<i>23</i> ^{1 Iyar} Rosh Chodesh	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>  7:30	<i>28</i> ^{6 Iyar} Tazria/ Metzora <i>Ends 8:39</i>
<i>29</i>	<i>30</i>					