

Chai~Lights



October 2011

3 Tishrei - 3 Cheshvan 5772

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Keys Jewish Community Center

P.O. Box 1332 • Tavernier, FL 33070 • 305-852-5235 • keysjewishcenter.com

October 2011

3 Tishrei - 3 Cheshvan

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Names denote leaders of Friday services. <i>Italicized names are Oneg sponsors.</i>						1 Shabbat Shuvah
2 KJCC Sisterhood Meeting 9:30 a.m. Fast of Gedaliah	3	4	5 Men's Club Game Night 7:30 p.m. at KJCC	6	7 Erev Yom Kippur Rabbi Danny Young & Cantor Mark Halpern	8 Yom Kippur Yizkor Service
9 KJCC Board Meeting 9 a.m. Decoration of sukkah	10 Columbus Day	11	12 Erev Sukkot	13 First Day of Sukkot KJCC Hebrew Classes begin	14 Steve Steinbock & Yardena Kamely <i>Toby & David Goldfinger</i>	15
16	17	18	19 Hoshana Rabba	20 Shemini Atzeret	21 Simchat Torah Yizkor Memorial Service Dave Mont & Georgia Landau <i>Barbara & Richard Knowles, Nissan & Israel Mayk</i>	22 Bereshit Chai-yaking with Dave Mont
23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28 Gloria Avner & Sam Vinicur 6:30 Service	29

2011 - 2012 Officers and Board

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Stuart Sax

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CHAI-LIGHTS is the
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P.O. Box 1332
Tavernier, Florida 33070
chailights@keysjewishcenter.com

President's Message Stuart Sax



Here we are half way through the most important period of prayer in Judaism and I am more than amazed at what we have accomplished as a small congregation in so many ways. We are privileged to be led by Rabbi Danny Young and Cantor Mark Halpern for the second time. By their professional presence, this also allows those who have sacrificed so much of their personal time leading us during the holidays to now sit back and enjoy the services from the congregational point of view.

I could spend my entire column thanking people for a job well done. You all know who you are and we all thank you for your assistance in making these High Holy Days meaningful and spiritual. Having said that, I must give special appreciation to Gloria Avner and Alan Beth for helping to organize our services. Much of what they accomplished was done from a distance by means of the Internet and it is a testament to what modern technology has allowed us to do.

This is also the time of year when Temple presidents around the world ask for money. It goes with the job. In the last few months we have made several improvements to our facility and property but, as our building ages, there is more to be done. Leaks in the sanctuary mean replacing the outer

windows. The awning over our entrance needs replacing. The driveway and parking lot need attention. These improvements cost money. Your generosity with gifts to the general fund above our modest dues structure is greatly appreciated.

Finally, a few weeks ago we were again reminded of how broken our world is since the events that occurred on September 11, 2001. After ten years there still seems to be as much dissension as existed before these tragedies. Fingers are still being pointed as to who was involved and who is to blame. On that historic date, Jews, Christians, Muslims and those of a variety of other faiths lost their lives. And it was Jews, Christians, Muslims and those of a variety of other faiths that immediately came to the aid of those in peril. At this season, may the words of "*Lo yisa goy el goy cherev, v'lo yil m'du ohd mil-chamah*" (Nation will not lift up sword against nation; neither will they learn war any more) finally be heard in the heavens above.

May this be a sweet, happy, healthy, and prosperous year for each of you and may God shine his countenance upon you and give you PEACE. ◇

Nosh

The Garden Grows

There are two beautiful new donations to our ever-expanding KJCC Meditation Garden. We now have a fountain, courtesy of Sisterhood, purchased with money they earned from last year's Women's Seder. We also have a new bench, donated by Larry and Dorothy Wolfe in honor of their grandsons. Brick orders continue to come in (we'll be acknowledging brick sponsors in the very near future). We also have begun offering living memorials. Our first tree has been sponsored and planted. The initial plan for that section offers five more, and then closes. Trees are \$300 each, and include a plaque. Please contact Steve Steinbock, 394-0143, for further information about bricks, or benches, or trees. And if you haven't seen the Garden recently, please stop by. KJCC's new maintenance contractor is offering special TLC to the Garden.

SANCTUARY SEAT PLATE

David and Patti Gross

In Honor of our Grandchildren

Lily and Noah

Hebrew Classes to Begin

The snowbirds are beginning to filter back, and High Holy Days are upon us. Just after Yom Kippur, on Thursday, October 13th, this year's Hebrew Classes will be underway. The intermediate class will again run from 6 p.m. until 7:30, with the advanced class from 7:30 until 9:00. The Friday morning beginner's class is also scheduled to start on the 14th, exact time to be announced. Costs for the classes are \$50 per term for KJCC members. Contact Yardena at 393-1768 for further information or to sign up.

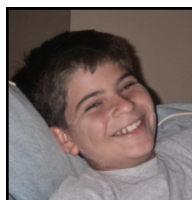
TREE OF LIFE

45th Anniversary

12/11/10

Arthur & Johanna Willner

*Paul and Barbara
Bernstein cordially
invite the KJCC
mishpocha to Joshua's
Bar Mitzvah service.*



Saturday, November 5, 2011
10 a.m. in the KJCC sanctuary

Light Kiddish to follow

October Anniversaries

Years

2nd	Jonathan & Arlene Line.....	35
2nd	Paul & Barbara Bernstein.....	17
12th	Harvey & Susan Schwaid.....	59
15th	David & Toby Goldfinger.....	52
23rd	Michael & Suzanne Gilson.....	10
28th	David & Lois Kaufman.....	32
31st	Harvey & Judith Klein.....	57

October Birthdays

1st.....	Nancy Yankow
2nd.....	Michael Gilson
4th.....	Michael Krissel
6th.....	Joel Bernard
7th.....	Jordan Feig
9th.....	Matthew Kaufman
11th.....	Cynthia Arsenault
11th.....	Ian Bader
11th.....	Olivia Landes
12th.....	Benay Krissel
13th.....	Salomon Turner
13th.....	Sean Bader
14th.....	Barbara Gintel
14th.....	Paul L. Friedman
15th.....	Alan Field
15th.....	Matthew A. Silverman
16th.....	Jacqlyn L. Burnett
16th.....	Kiersten Persoff
16th.....	Ronald Kaplan
17th.....	Stacey W. Seewald
20th.....	Barbara Knowles
21st.....	Alexander L. Burnett
21st.....	Sammy Knowles
22nd.....	Joseph Shabathai
22nd.....	Susan Roberts
24th.....	Marnie Gershowitz
24th.....	Stacy Temkin
26th.....	Natalio Abrudsky
29th.....	Adriana Sherman
29th.....	Jane B. Kwalick
29th.....	Patricia Schocket
29th.....	Shyella Mayk
30th.....	Franklin Greenman
30th.....	Katie J. Schur
30th.....	Mark Hitzig
31st.....	Brittany Schur
31st.....	Susan Cooper

Oneg Sponsors for October 2011

October 14th—David and Toby Goldfinger in honor of their anniversary.

October 21st—Barbara and Richard Knowles for Barbara and Sammy's birthdays, Nissan and Israel Mayk in honor of their parents.

A Time To Step Up – A Time To Step Down

Two of our members, who have each led Shabbat services for more years than we can count, have decided it is time to give up that role. Does this mean we will no longer see Jim Boruszak or Joel Pollack on the *Bimah*? Of course not.

We will see Jim on the First Day of Rosh HaShanah, performing *the Kohen's Torah Aliyah*. He will give our congregation the Priestly Blessing. He will still call out the 100 notes for Bernie Ginsberg's blowing of the shofar. You are right if you think this does not sound like retirement. Especially if you consider that this list leaves out all the work Jim does behind the scenes. As Head of the KJCC House Committee, he consults with our President and Board Members, technicians, security people, cleaners, and flower providers (just to name a few) every day. Jim Boruszak keeps our physical home functioning smoothly, and does it so well that while we enjoy his handiwork we rarely notice it.

Joel Pollack, who was not only a regular service leader but our KJCC Ritual Director for many years, and a stalwart leader of First Day Rosh HaShanah as well, still takes it upon himself to polish all our brass and silver ritual objects for the High Holy Days. Jim and Joel also lovingly and carefully change the "dress" of our Torahs from blue to symbolic pure white in preparation for every Rosh HaShanah. They do it quietly, and they do it well. Joel, too, will be on the *bimah* during Rosh HaShanah, performing the *Levite Torah Aliyah*. Linda will be by his side, as she has been for years co-leading services. Even though both men have decided that it's time to stop leading a Shabbat service at this particular stage in life, we applaud them for electing to marshal their strength for other tasks that contribute to the welfare of the KJCC. And have I mentioned that both also offered their many talents during terms as president of KJCC?

A huge *todah rabah* – our thank you – to two wonderful, dedicated men. Their love of and service to KJCC are deeply appreciated by every one of us.

-Gloria

Why Should You Be a Volunteer?

Many will be shocked to find when the Day of Judgment nears,
That there's a special place in Heaven set aside for volunteers.
Furnished with big recliners, satin couches and footstools,
When there's no committee chairman, group leaders or car pools,
No eager team that needs a coach, no bazaar and no bake sale,
There will be nothing to staple, not one thing to fold or mail.
Telephone lists will be outlawed, but a finger snap will bring
Cool drinks and gourmet dinners and rare treats fit for a king.
Who will serve these privileged few and work for all they're worth?
Why, all those who reaped the benefits and not once volunteered On Earth!

(Author is unknown, but gently submitted by Lauren Sax.)

Ongoing Projects and Mitzvah Programs of KJCC

Sunshine Committee – If you know of any member who should receive a get-well, congratulations or condolence card from KJCC, call Rene Rose, 305-852-3959.

Cemetery Information – If you wish to plan for the very distant future, you can reserve space at the Kendall Mt. Nebo Cemetery in the KJCC section. Call Bea Graham, 305-852-0214.

Picture Postcards – We have beautiful picture postcards bearing the Millard Wells representation of the KJCC, which was commissioned by Sisterhood. Quantities to fit your needs and can be mailed to you or your gift recipient. The price is \$36 per hundred but we will sell lesser quantities. Contact Joan Boruszak, 305-852-0833.

Oneg Shabbat Sponsor – To schedule your special date with Sisterhood, call Joyce Peckman, 305-451-0665.

Meditation Garden – Participate in our newest venture. A beautiful garden is in progress and you can be part of this exciting new project by making a donation for an engraved brick, an engraved bench, or for plants in honor or memory of a loved one or event. Call Steve Steinbock for information, 305-394-0143.

KJCC Tree of Life Leaves and Rocks, Sanctuary Seat Plates, Yahrzeit Memorial Plaques, Bookplates for Siddurim – Call Carol Steinbock to arrange your donation, 305-852-6152.

JNF Trees In Israel – A gift of a tree, or two or more, makes a long-remembered way to honor a loved one, a relative, a friend or an occasion. Both Israel and the KJCC benefit. Call Nancy Kluger, 305-852-4353.

Chai-Lights Mitzvah – Place a greeting or notice in Chai-Lights. Call Carol Steinbock, 305-852-6152 to make your donation.

Advertisement In Chai-Lights or Directory – Your business ad will appear in every issue of Chai-Lights and/or annually in the Directory. Call Gene Silverman 305-664-3316 for rates.

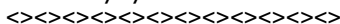
Call the names listed above for assistance or send your request and check to the KJCC, P.O. Box 1332, Tavernier, FL 33070. Recipients of your gifts will be notified by card and listings will appear in Chai-Lights as well. Honorarium and memorial cards can also be requested. Donations can be earmarked to our various ongoing funds: e.g. Holocaust Education Fund, Scholarship Fund, Sara Cohen Memorial Tzedukah Fund, or General Fund.

In Memoriam October 2011

In Memory Of

Stephen Berman

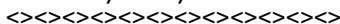
By Sylvia Berman



In Memory Of

Milton Boxer

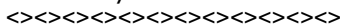
By Shirley Boxer



In Memory Of

Miriam Gitin

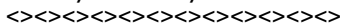
By David Gitin



In Memory Of

Fanny Elson

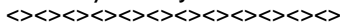
By Mrs. Marty Graham



In Memory Of

Stanley W. Jacobson

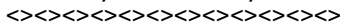
By Melvin Jacobson



In Memory Of

Leah Kamely

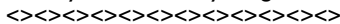
By Michal Kamely



In Memory Of

Eliza Christensen

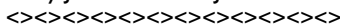
By Kurt & Nancy Kluger



In Memory Of

Fanny Grossman Bernard

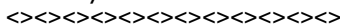
By Joel Bernard & Joan Stark



In Memory Of

Steven V. Calev

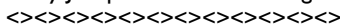
By Barbara A. Calev



In Memory Of

Arnold Widrich

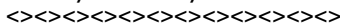
By Joseph & Susan Goldberg



In Memory Of

Lilian Goldenberg

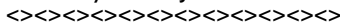
By Mrs. Marty Graham



In Memory Of

Pearl W. Hurowitz

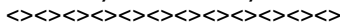
By Melvin Jacobson



In Memory Of

Rebekah Levy

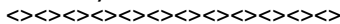
By Michal Kamely



In Memory Of

Irene Becker

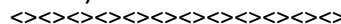
By Teresa Kwalick



In Memory Of

Gertrude Widlan

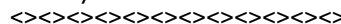
By Norbert Birnbaum



In Memory Of

Natalie Field

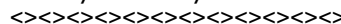
By Alvan & Carol Field



In Memory Of

Joseph Elson

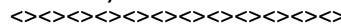
By Mrs. Marty Graham



In Memory Of

Elaine Hirsch

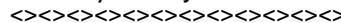
By Gerald Hirsch



In Memory Of

Muriel Jacobson

By Melvin Jacobson



In Memory Of

Esther M. Klein

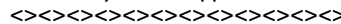
By Harvey & Judith Klein



In Memory Of

Jack Lippman

By Lillian Lippman

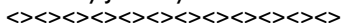


In Memoriam October 2011

In Memory Of

Joel S. Cohen

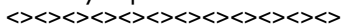
By Jim & Lynn Nobil



In Memory Of

Rosalyn Rose

By Skip & Rene Rose



In Memory Of

Morton I. Singer

By Mary Lee Singer



In Memory Of

Joel S. Cohen

By Richard & Sheila Steinberg



In Memory Of

Eva Buchman

By Mel Taks



In Memory Of

Doran David Zinner

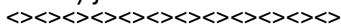
By Donald & Nancy Zinner



In Memory Of

David Frank

By Joel & Linda Pollack



In Memory Of

Reuben Oshinsky

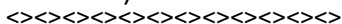
By Gerald Oshinsky



In Memory Of

Maurice Singer

By Lee Schur



In Memory Of

Perren Gerber

By Gloria Avner



In Memory Of

Saunders G. Cohen

By Richard & Sheila Steinberg



In Memory Of

Herbert S. Weihl

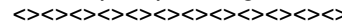
By Alfred & Sue Ann Weihl



In Memory Of

Jon R. Singer

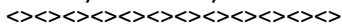
By Mary Lee Singer



In Memory Of

Harry Stein

By Ira & Shirley Stein



In Memory Of

Sarah Wernicoff

By Donald & Nancy Zinner



In Memory Of

Arnold Tomor

By Barbara A. Calev



In Memory Of

Abraham Kanowsky

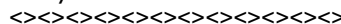
By Wes & Rita Conklin



In Memory Of

Harriet Feder

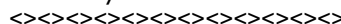
By David & Suzi-Sara Feder



In Memory Of

Simon Skolnick

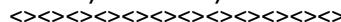
By Susan Gordon



In Memory Of

Freda Shipman

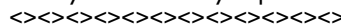
By Ira & Shirley Stein



In Memory Of

Minnie Kaplan

By Frank & Sandy Kaplan



Sisterhood Lauren Sax



Summer is officially over and I am well rested and ready to get back into the swing of all the KJCC happenings. It has been a good summer for me, as not only have I been able to take a little time off from working but I have also been able to see all our children, which is an extra bonus. Chicago was warm, much like the Keys, however spending a few days with our daughter and my mother was the best. I see my mom when she comes south for the winter but we don't get to see Jorie as much as we would like. Taking her out shopping, to dinner and to our favorite, Second City Theatre, was fabulous.

Sisterhood is in the process of organizing our High Holidays. By the time you receive this, planning for Rosh Hashana will be over and we will be on to Yom Kippur. Prepping for these holidays takes a great deal of effort, and I want to thank all those involved with the onegs during Rosh Hashana.

We have already had our first meeting of the new season, and at that time I announced, with much regret, the resignation of our treasurer, Nancy Kluger. Nancy has been Sisterhood's treasurer for ten years and she has done an exemplary job of keeping us all on track. She has certainly made it easier for me as an incoming president. It will be difficult to replace her, but we understand that she has given her all. However, I look forward to working with her on our major fundraiser this spring. Her resignation as treasurer is effective as of January.

Very shortly you will all be receiving a special Sisterhood letter. I am asking for help in all areas of our organization. Please read the letter carefully and think hard about what you can do for your Sisterhood and the KJCC. Whether it is making phone calls, addressing envelopes or helping on a committee, I would

appreciate any support you can give us. It is only through that support that we can continue to provide all the wonderful events Sisterhood is known for.

Speaking about helping, Vice President Georgia Landau and Kitchen Chairperson Dr. Erica Garrett did their *mitzvah* by spending a few hours cleaning and organizing the kitchen. Thanks to them, the kitchen is in good working order for the new year. Erica wants me to remind all of you about Yom Kippur and our Break-the-Fast. Traditionally, Sisterhood has put out a lavish spread and this year will be no exception. Please contact Erica at hippiejap@hotmail.com to coordinate the dish you will be bringing or if you can help with serving and clean-up.

Another example of Sisterhood's busy ladies are Susan Gordon and Roberta McNew. Next time you are at the KJCC, make sure to stop and take a look at all the new and wonderful items they've purchased for the gift shop. They have been working very hard to select just the right merchandise for you and will continue to scour the market for those Judaica goodies that we can't locate in the Keys. Also of note, we are displaying some of Rosie Biskar's original, hand-painted *mezuzot* on the wall next to the gift shop. (We doubt if any of you have ever seen a *mezuzah* quite like these.) Not only is her art unique and beautiful, but Rosie is donating half of the profits from any sale back to Sisterhood! These are truly works of art, and labor-intensive, and we are fortunate to have such a talented lady in our congregation.

I wish all of you a good holiday and an easy fast. ◇

Keys Jewish Community Center Gift Shop



New Year New Merchandise



Tallit, Jewelry,
Kiddush Cups, Yarmulkes
Candles, More!!!

Come & see all that's new.

For further information contact
Chairpersons:

Susan Gordon (305) 766-3585

Roberta McNew (305) 522-0643



Contributions to KJCC

We appreciate the thoughtfulness of those who support the Keys Jewish Community Center by remembering and honoring their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions. All donations made after the fifth of the month will appear in the following month's Chai-Lights. When you make a donation, please signify the fund it is to go to and the recognition of the name or names to be listed.

Chai-Lights
Graham, Bea
Kwalick, Teresa

Avner, Gloria honor Jim Boruszak & Joel & Linda Pollack for their years as service leaders

General Fund
Barton, Allison
Dorf, Barry and Natalie
Gross, David and Patti
Hartz, Steve & Jan
Lemelman, Elliot & Rebecca
thanks for recent hospitality
Steinbock, Stephen and Carol
sewer project
Tobin, Andrew

In Honor of

Field, Dr. Alvan and Carol
Goodman, Dr. Jamie and Laura
Gould, Maryon
Gross, David and Patti
Kluger, Kurt and Nancy
Knowles, Richard and Barbara
Levy, Ronald & Beth Kaminstein
Steinbock, Stephen and Carol

Sanctuary Seat Plate
Gross, David & Patti *In Honor of*
our grandchildren

General Fund
Kanowsky, Allyn & Neil
Pollack, Joel & Linda

In Memory of
Sandy Kanarek
Max Lieberman

Sara Cohen Memorial Tzedukah Fund
Goldberg, Joseph & Susan

Holocaust Education Fund
Steinbock, Steve & Carol
Swartz, George & Muriel

Scholarship Fund
Graham, Bea
Kluger, Kurt and Nancy
Levy, Ronald & Beth Kaminstein
Steinbock, Stephen and Carol

Meditation Garden
Field, Alvan and Carol brick - Alvan & Carol Field
Knowles, Richard and Barbara brick, Knowles
Family
Steinbock, Steve and Carol

Yartzeit Contributions
Avner, Gloria *In Memory of*
Alex Avner

Wolfe, Larry and Dorothy bench in honor of
grandsons Matthew, Jordan, Ryan
Sax, Stuart & Lauren memory of Howard Shutan

Cooper, Murray and Claire
Mark Sands
Gould, Maryon H. Robert Walters
Gould, Maryon Paul Gould
Steinberg, Richard and Sheila Erik Persoff
Steinberg, Richard and Sheila
Meyer Cohen
Steinberg, Richard and Sheila Sam Wainer

Rabbi & Cantor Fund
Avner, Gloria honor Bea Avner's 90th
birthday

Contributions to KJCC *continued*

Yizkor Book

Alter, Barry
Bader, Ivan & Jean
Berman, Sylvia
Bernard, Joel & Joan Stark
Beth, Alan & Candy Stanlake
Boruszak, Jim & Joan
Bromwich, Richard & Rita
Cianciolo, Carol
Coltman, Barney & Ellen
Conklin, Rita and Wes
Cooper, Dr. Alan & Susan
Davidson, Foster & Carol Laskin
Dorf, Barry & Natalie
Emkey, Gerri
Feinberg, Arthur
Lieberman-Garrett, Erica
Field, Dr. Alvan and Carol
Goodman, Dr. Jamie and Laura
Graham, Bea
Geller, Milton
Gilderman, Larry & Stephanie
Gilson, Michael & Suzanne
Goldfinger, David & Toby
Gordon, Susan
Gorson, Janice
Gould, Maryon
Greenbaum, Marilyn
Hartz, Steven
Hernstadt, Roger & Jessica
Hermann, Robert
Horn, Ronald & Dorothy
Incociati, Estelle
Isenberg, Henry & Patricia
Jacobson, Melvin
Kay, Joan and Harvey
Kluger, Kurt and Nancy
Knowles, Richard and Barbara
Kominsky, Randy and Eileen
Kwalick, Teresa

Kaplan, Frank
Krissel, Michael
Levy, Ronald & Beth Kaminstein
Line, Jonathan & Arlene
Margulies, Stanley & Jenny
Marmar, David & Pamela
Olsen, Gerald & Sheila
Peckman, Joyce
Pollack, Joel & Linda
Present, Marjorie
Rose, Skip and Rene
Roy, Medina
Sachs, Dr. Joseph & Susan
Sax, Stuart & Lauren
Schwaid, Harvey & Susan
Sheinker, Miltra
Silverman, Morton & Gene
Singer, Mary Lee
Smith, Dr. Steven & Barbara
Steinbock, Stephen and Carol
Swartz, George & Muriel
Tallent, Ralph & Lillian
Temkin, Dr. Robert & Susan
Weihl, Alfred & Sue Ann
Willner, Arthur Lee & Johanna
Willner, Morris & Sherrie
Zinner, Donald



The Many Faces of Sukkot

*For everything there is a season.
For everything there is a time.
A time to weep and a time to laugh.
A time to keep silent and
a time to speak.
A time to plant and a time
to harvest.*

- (Ecclesiastes)

The time of Sukkot is the time of joyous celebration. Sukkot celebrates nature, the season of the harvest. Sukkot, usually translated as Tabernacles or the Festival of Booths, occurs for seven days, from *Tishri* 15 to 21. There is a quick transition from the High Holidays, with their serious, somber mood of repentance and judgment, to a holiday of rejoicing and celebration for which we are commanded to build a hut – *sukkah*, plural *sukkot* – and make it our temporary home.

The Torah tells us: “You shall live in huts, *sukkot*, seven days in order that future generations may know that I made the Israelites live in huts when I brought them out of Egypt.” The *sukkah* also reminds us of huts the Israelite farmers built in the fields during the harvest, and shelters the Jews built in Jerusalem during their pilgrimage to the Holy Temple, *Bet Ha'mikdash*.

Sukkot is one of the three “Pilgrim Festivals,” along with *Pesach* and *Shavuot*, holidays for which Jews would make pilgrimages to the Temple in Jerusalem, bringing offerings, at this time from the fall harvest. Today,

in each of these three holidays we include a *Yizkor* (memorial) service as part of the liturgy. Thus Sukkot, like many other festivals, is linked not only to Jewish history but also to the agricultural cycle that is such an important part of life in Israel. Two of the four names by which the holiday is known reflect this aspect: *Chag Ha'Asif*, Festival of the In-gathering (of crops), and *Chag Ha'Sukkot*. Two other names suggest another aspect of this holiday: *Ha'Chag*, The Festival, and *Z'man Simchateinu*, Season of Rejoicing. In Biblical times, Sukkot was the most important festival of all, *Ha'Chag*.

There are three *mitzvot* (commandments) concerning Sukkot found in the Torah. (1) living in the *sukkah*; (2) gathering together the Four Species, *Lulav and Etrog*; and (3) rejoicing during the holiday. Other rituals and customs include the reciting of the *Hoshana* prayers while making circuits in the synagogue; reading the Book of Ecclesiastes, *Kohelet*; inviting *Ushpizin*, symbolic guests, to the *sukkah*.

Lulav and Etrog: The Torah tells us - when you have gathered in the harvest crops, you shall celebrate. You shall take the branches and fruit of beautiful trees and you shall rejoice. The branches and fruit we use are: *Lulav* – the branch of a palm tree, *Hadasim* – three boughs of a leafy myrtle, *Aravot* – two branches of a willow tree, *Etrog* – the lemon-like fruit of a citron. We hold them together, recite a blessing, and shake them in all directions to show that God is everywhere. The *Lulav* and *Etrog* stand for the crops of the

harvest, but tradition has given them additional meanings. Each of the crops is different: the *Etrog* is both sweet-smelling and tasty. Dates, from the *Lulav*, have taste but no smell. *Hadasim* (myrtle) have smell but no taste. *Aravot* (willow) have neither smell nor taste. The rabbis said they are like the many kinds of people who make up the Jewish community...those who study and perform *mitzvot*, those who study Torah, pray, but perform no good deeds, those who give *Tzedakah* but don't study Torah, and those who rely on the goodness of others. All four of these Jews are necessary to the sustaining of the people Israel, an essential part of the Jewish community, even the unbelieving, non-practicing one. When they are united, each makes up for the shortcomings of the others.

Hoshana: On each of the first six days of Sukkot (except on Shabbat) during the morning service the congregation makes a processional circuit – a *Hakafah* – around the reader's table, carrying their *Lulavim and Etrogim*. During this procession, they recite one stanza of the *Hoshanot*, a series of prayers that begin *Ana Adonai, hoshia na* – Please, Adonai, save us!

Sukkot in Israel: In many of Israel's *kibbutzim*, agriculture is an important industry, and the harvest celebration is a joyous festival. Members build huge *sukkot*, large enough for all the families, and decorate them beautifully with fruits and vegetables grown on their farms. Israel depends on winter rains, and there are music and dance festivals to recall the Water-Drawing Ceremony at the Holy Temple, *Simchat Bet Ha'Sho'evah*. Families take hiking and camping trips to enjoy nature and the fall weather. Throughout the week, in cities and towns, you can see people – young and old – walking to synagogues with their *Lulav and Etrog*, and enjoying festive meals in *sukkot* built on rooftops and balconies, even on sidewalks in front of restaurants.

Ushpizin and hospitality: Sukkot is a week

full of opportunities for inviting and being invited. In some communities, after morning services the first day(s), people go from sukkah to sukkah “making *Kiddush*.” Instead of a formal lunch at any one place, during the course of the afternoon they visit many *sukkot* in their neighborhoods. Sukkot is also a

holiday of hospitality in its most basic sense. As mentioned, there is a tradition of inviting *Ushpizin* – honorary guests, symbolic guests (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, and David) – to your *sukkah*. This custom is related to the important concern of giving shelter to the homeless and food to the poor. As with the Passover seder, we are encouraged to invite the poor to be our real guests in the *sukkah*. We are also encouraged to invite those acquaintances who do not have a *sukkah* to join us

so they can fulfill the *mitzvah* of using one.

At the KJCC we are looking forward to the building of our *sukkah*, its decoration by our Religious School children, and invite you to be our guests and celebrate *Sukkot* with us, doing the *Kiddush* and shaking the *Lulav and Etrog* in the *sukkah*. ◇

**“When
you have
gathered in
the harvest
crops, you
shall
celebrate.”**

On Sunday, October 9th, the KJCC Religious School will decorate our sukkah. All parents are encouraged to join us, of course. But we also enthusiastically invite all members of KJCC and their guests to join us in this important and meaningful mitzvah.

Please contact Yardenah with any questions, or to discuss how you can participate in this joyous event, at 393-1768 or yardenah@morah-yardenah.com

World Jewish Report

Medina Roy



They Swim Better in Winter

It's not surprising that, nine months after the coldest and dreariest time of the year, there's usually a spike in the number of children being born. But now, Israeli researchers have discovered that it's because winter sperm is actually better. (!) The scientists analyzed 6,453 semen samples and found that summer and spring sperm are not as likely to fertilize an egg as winter sperm is. Apparently, summer sperm, like most of us, become lethargic because of the heat. The study shows that, as the temperature drops, the ability of sperm to swim towards the egg increases. (*The Forward*, 8-15-11)

Possibly a Major Breakthrough

New research by scientists at Israel's Weizmann Institute could lead to an early diagnosis of autism in children. The biological causes of the disorder are still not completely understood, and at the present time a diagnosis is only possible after a child reaches the age of three or four. But the Weizmann research, which recently appeared in the science magazine *Neuron*, has found, for the first time, a method that can accurately identify a biological sign of the disorder in very young children. By scanning the brain activity when children are sleeping, the scientists discovered that autistic brains exhibited "significantly weaker synchronization between brain areas tied to language and communication, compared to that of non-autistic children." Many scientists believe that faulty lines of communication between different parts of the brain contribute to the disorder, but until now there has been no way to observe this in very young children because of their inability to lie still inside an MRI scanner

while awake. On the basis of the scans, the scientists were able to identify 70 percent of autistic children tested between the ages of one and three. (www.israelnationalnews.com, 7-29-11)

After Gaddafi

The day after the fall of the capital city Tripoli to Libyan rebels, Raphael Luzon, the leader of the Libyan-Jewish community in Britain, said that he has been invited by opposition leader Mustafa Abdul Jalil to return to his country of birth and run for political office in free elections once Gaddafi is gone. Luzon, 57, born in Benghazi (the city that was about to be massacred by Gaddafi and for which NATO initially intervened to protect) fled Libya with his family following a pogrom in 1967. Luzon said he would wait for further developments before making a final decision. "I said I would accept it once I see it is real democracy...If I do it, I do it for one matter...the first Arab country that proposed that a Jew run in a free election."

Jews have lived in Libya since ancient times. At its peak during the 1930s, the Jewish community in Libya numbered 25,000, but persecution by Italy and Germany during World War II and a series of state-sponsored pogroms after Libya's independence in 1951 took its toll. The Jews fled, immigrating mostly to Israel, Italy and the UK. The last Jew in Libya left the country almost a decade ago. Luzon said that if he were to return to Libya, his priorities would be the reconstruction of the war-torn country and the restitution to their rightful owners of Jewish assets confiscated by the Libyan regime. "As you know, we

left there 82 synagogues, land and property, and I would like to take care of this because it belongs to the Jewish community of Libya." Luzon also said that he hoped Israeli Jews of Libyan descent would be free to visit their country of origin.

(The Jerusalem Post, 8-31-11)

So Now, Where Do I Go to Find a Bialy?

After 91 years, *Coney Island Bialys & Bagels*, the oldest bialy bakery in Brooklyn, is closing its doors, having fallen victim to a bad economy and the changing demographics of the once-predominantly Jewish neighborhood. The area is now made up primarily of Asians, Russians and Middle Easterners. If you are not familiar with a bialy, it's the bagel's "first cousin." Instead of the hole in the middle, bialys (bialies?) have a depression in the center, which is then sprinkled with onions. "I'm heartbroken," said Steven Ross, the bakery's 51-year-old proprietor and baker. "It's been four generations, including my son." Ross's grandfather, Morris Rosenzweig, came from Bialystok, (the town from which bialys get their name), in north-east Poland. Rosenzweig began selling bialys with his brothers in Brooklyn in 1920. Ross began working in the store when he was eight, sweeping the floors. (And did you know that the reason the very best bagels and bialys are made in New York is because of New York City's tap water? No kidding.)

(The Forward, 8-19-11)

"Virtual" Autopsies

At the end of August, a new MRI device that can accurately determine cause of death without the need for autopsies was inaugurated at *Assaf Harofeh Hospital*, located in central Israel. The device allows doctors to conduct a "virtual autopsy," viewing the inside of the body without the need to cut the body open. This could bring an end to traditional autopsies in Israel, resolving a long-standing, problematic and divisive issue between religious Jews and the civil state. As in the U.S., Israeli police and medical authorities often insist on conducting autopsies in cases

where the cause of death is not clear.

Similar MRI devices have been around for several years, but recent technological improvements make the scans far more accurate than they were in the past. (By the way, the hospital is named for *Assaf Harofeh* – Assaf the Physician – who practiced medicine in Israel in the 5th century BCE. He is the author of the oath for Jewish physicians, which is very similar to the oaths of Hippocrates and Maimonides.)

(www.israelnationalnews.com, 8-30-11)

Mel Maccabee?

Once again, Mel Gibson finds himself in the middle of Jewish controversy. Gibson, along with Warner Brothers Studio, are said to be developing a movie that tells the story of the iconic Jewish hero Judah Maccabee, the second-century B.C.E. Jewish warrior who together with his father and brothers led a small revolt of Jews against the Greek-Syrian armies, thereby liberating Jerusalem. This event is commemorated by Jews when we celebrate Channukah. There are rumors suggesting that Gibson may even play Judah Maccabee himself. "Judah Maccabee deserves better," said Abraham Foxman, Director of B'nai Brith's Anti-Defamation League. "He is a hero of the Jewish people and a universal hero in the struggle for religious liberty. It would be a travesty to have his story told by one who has no respect and sensitivity for other people's religious views." Reports state that Gibson has been working on the project for more than a decade.

(www.virtualjerusalem.com, 9-9-11)

In Memoriam

-Noach Flug, a leading advocate for the rights of Holocaust survivors, recently died in Israel at the age of 86. In his younger days, Flug was part of the Lodz Ghetto underground. He was deported to Birkenau (the killing half of Auschwitz-Birkenau) in 1944, where over one hundred members of his family died. He was transferred to other concentration camps until liberation by American troops just days before the end of World War

II. After the war, he stayed in Poland until 1958 when he, together with his wife and two daughters, moved to Israel, where he worked as an economist and diplomat. Flug served as chairman of the Center for Organizations of Holocaust Survivors and organized his fellow survivors to directly lobby the German government for restitution. He believed that survivors should work on their own behalf and not rely on politicians to work for them. He also served on the board of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial. (*World Jewish Congress, 8-11-11*)

-lyricist Jerry Lieber died recently at the age of 78. Lieber, along with composer Mike Stoller, wrote numerous hit songs, including "Hound Dog," "Stand By Me," and "Jailhouse Rock." Lieber and Stoller met in the 1950s when they were teenagers. They wrote two hundred hit songs that were performed by, among others, Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, the Beatles, B.B. King, the Drifters and Peggy Lee. Lieber and Stoller have been honored by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and several other music organizations. (*www.jta.org, 8-24-11*)

The Jewish Side of Hurricane Irene

-Rozalia Gluck, an 82-year-old Holocaust survivor, died when torrential floodwaters from Hurricane Irene uprooted and swept away the cottage where she and her husband were vacationing in Fleischmann's, New York (a town in the Catskill Mountains, about 140 miles north of New York City). The motel guests, including Gluck's husband, had been evacuated earlier in the morning. "She survived Hitler, but she couldn't survive Irene," said Isaac Abraham, a community leader from the Chasidic community of Williamsburg (Brooklyn) where Gluck lived. It is not known why she did not evacuate with her husband and the other guests. (*The Forward, 8-29-11*)

-Orthodox Rabbi and father of four David M. Reichenberg, 50, tried to save the lives of five-year-old Reuven Herbst and his father, who were walking through a puddle near their home in Spring Valley, New York, when they came in contact with a fence electrified by a downed power line caused by Hurricane Irene. Reichenberg was able to pull the two

from the fence but was himself killed instantly. The father survived but the young boy, who was in critical condition after the incident, died on September 9th.

(*www.thejewishweek.com, 8-30-11 and The Forward, 9-11-11*)

Did You Know...

-Philip Levine, 83, has been named the 18th poet laureate (and one of the oldest poet laureates) of the United States. Levine, of Fresno, California, is the author of twenty collections of poems, including "The Simple Truth," for which he won the Pulitzer Prize in 1995. Levine is the son of Russian-Jewish immigrants. (*The Forward, 8-11-11*)

-The Library of Congress has digitized thousands of photographs showing the history of the land of Israel and made them available online. Many are over one hundred years old and are put into historical, Biblical and contemporary context. Most of the pictures are from photographers from the "American Colony" in Jerusalem, a group of Christian utopians that lived in Jerusalem between 1881 and the 1940s. At the website (which follows at the end of this sentence), you can get a picture a day from the collection.

(*www.israeldailypicture.com, 8-12-11*)

-Standard & Poor's has upgraded Israel's long-term foreign-currency sovereign rating from A to A+ with a "stable" outlook, four steps below AAA. S&P also reaffirmed Israel's local currency rating at AA-. The company was quoted as saying, "The rating...reflects our view of Israel's improved economic policy flexibility as a result of strong growth and careful macroeconomic management...Israel is on a credible path toward continued government debt burden reduction and stronger external indicators." S&P pointed to Israel's responsible fiscal policy and that expected tax revenues from natural gas discoveries will support these trends in the future. Yuval Steinitz, Israel's Minister of Finance, said, "This is an impressive certification for the Israeli economy, and its successful handling of the global economic crisis of the past three years in the in the Western world."

(*www.globes.co.il, 9-9-11*) ◇

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-This Month in Jewish History-

October

331 B.C.E – Alexander the Great defeats Darius III and the Persian army at Gaugamela (near Mosul in modern-day Iraq). This victory, and the death of Darius, mark the end of the Persian Empire and complete Alexander's conquest of the Middle East. Thus begins the profound Hellenizing influence on the Jewish people, their thinking and their culture.

768 – Carloman I and Charlemagne are crowned co-Kings of The Franks. Charlemagne treats his Jewish subjects well, even at the risk of going against Church doctrine. Jews "mingle freely at the Frankish court in defiance of canon law...disputes between Jews are resolved in Jewish courts." The increased protection and freedom offered the Jews by Charlemagne results in increased commercial and financial activity, especially trade with the Islamic world.

1187 – Sultan Saladin captures Jerusalem from the Christian Crusaders. The Europeans had barred Jews from living in the city; Saladin allows them to return. Of Kurdish descent, Saladin is a great patron of the arts and learning. His personal physician is a renowned Sephardic Jew, born in Toledo, who even today is perhaps the most famous of all philosophers of Jewish law and ethics: Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon, or Maimonides

1666 – In Hamburg, Germany, on Yom Kippur, blessings are offered in honor of Shabbatai Zvi. Hamburg Jews are apparently unaware that the self-proclaimed Messiah had converted to Islam the month before.

1811 – The first steamboat to sail the Mississippi River arrives in New Orleans. The copper for the boilers in that steamboat is said to have been supplied by Henry Hendricks, a

prominent New York Sephardic Jew who also supplied the copper for all of Robert Fulton's steamboats.

1876 – Texas A&M University opens as the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, becoming the first public institution of higher education in Texas. By 1916, there are enough Jews on campus to justify forming an organization dedicated to their needs. It is called the TAMC Menorah Club, organized by Dr. Jacob Joseph Taubenhau, a native of Safed who is chief of the plant pathology and physiology division of the school from 1916 to 1937. In 1920, the club becomes the TAMC Hillel Club, technically making it the oldest Hillel House in the United States. That status is usually credited to the University of Illinois, whose Hillel was actually not founded until 1923.

1884 – Non-Jewish writer Damon Runyon is born in Manhattan...Kansas, not New York. Though not Jewish, Runyan does as much as anyone to introduce the New York Jewish sub-culture to the rest of the country. One of his signature characters, the gambler Nathan Detroit, is based on Jewish gambler Arnold Rothstein (the man who fixed the 1919 World Series). But Runyan also writes a famous poem defending Jews from anti-Semitism and repeated charges of cowardice. Recalling the heroics of Sergeant Sam Dreben during World War I, Runyan writes his now-famous poem, "The Fighting Jew." (In the brief war, Dreben had earned the Distinguished Service Cross, the Croix de Guerre, the Militaire and other medals.) Runyan ends his poem with: "*Thank God Almighty, we will always have a few, like Dreben a Jew.*"

1895 – German born, American-Jewish inven-

tor/businessman Emil Berliner founds the Berliner Gramophone Company. It will produce “flat gramophone records,” or what will come to be called phonograph records. His disc wins out over Edison’s cylinders.

1903 – In the first game of the very first World Series, The National League’s Pittsburgh Pirates play the American League’s Boston Americans. The World Series is the brainchild of Barney Dreyfus, a German-born Jew who immigrates to the United States in 1881. Dreyfus becomes part-owner and president of the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1900. Under his guidance the Pirates win three straight National League championships. During the 1903 season, Dreyfus meets with the owner of the Boston Americans and proposes that the two teams meet at the end of the season. The deal is consummated by a handshake. Dreyfus also builds Forbes Field and helps create the office of the Commissioner of Baseball.

1908 – The first edition of *Pravda* is published in Vienna. Its editors include Adolph Joffe, born Adolph Abramovich Joffe, and Leon Trotsky, born Lev Davidovich Bronstein. When European anti-Communism later takes on clear hues of anti-Semitism, a European rabbi reportedly quips that it might be the Trostkys who make a revolution, but the Bronsteins are the ones who suffer.

1917 – British Intelligence learns of a meeting in Berlin where Germans and Turks plan to offer the Jews of Europe a German-sponsored Jewish National Home in Palestine. This stimulates the British to finalize what becomes known as the Balfour Declaration.

1918 – King Boris III accedes to the throne of Bulgaria. During World War II, Boris refuses Hitler’s demands that he ship his nation’s 50,000 Jews to Poland. Boris attempts to work out of deal with the British that will enable him to send the Bulgarian Jews to Palestine. The plan is blocked by Anthony Eden, Britain’s Foreign Minister. Boris’ plans are not a complete success, but the bulk of the Bul-

garian Jewish community survives the war. Boris dies, supposedly of a heart attack, after visiting Hitler and refusing his demand that Bulgaria declare war on the Soviet Union. Many doubt that the death was, as reported, of natural causes.

1926: In New York, Joseph M. Levy, manager for Clark’s Tours in Palestine and Syria, returns from Jerusalem and reports that the city has a population of 60,000, 37,000 of whom are Jewish.

1931 – The *Habima* Theater opens in Tel Aviv. Founded by Nahum Zemach in 1917 in Moscow, *Habima* (Hebrew for “the stage”... you know, as in “join us on the bimah”) is one of the first Hebrew-language theatre groups. *Habima* is designated as the national theatre in 1958.

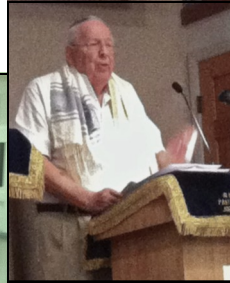
1943 – Jewish paratroopers from Palestine land in the Balkans during World War II. Many had been born in the region and therefore speak the language. The Jews are there to help organize non-Jewish underground units on behalf of the British war effort. In return, the British agree to let them aid other Jews once their primary mission is completed, though they make it clear they will offer only the opportunity, not any support.

1950 – Groucho Marx adds television to his list of show-business conquests as the game show “You Bet Your Life” first airs. He will later be banned from television for a quip that includes a reference to his cigar.

1965 – Pope Paul VI arrives in New York City, making him the first pope in history to visit the United States. Paul VI addresses the U.N. and, while in New York, publishes a document exonerating the Jews of all blame in the death of Jesus Christ.

1973 – During the Yom Kippur War, Gabi Amir’s armored brigade attacks Egyptian-occupied positions on the Israeli side of the Suez Canal. The attack fails, and over 150 Israeli tanks are destroyed. ◊

Photo Gallery



After leading more Shabbat services here at KJCC than probably anyone could count, Jim Boruszak led a service on August 19th that he says will be his last. Happily, Marc Bloom was there with his phone and we were able to capture a few photos. Jim always brought a certain

verve and style with him to the bema, and he'll be missed. (As you can see in the photo at left, he did manage to squeeze in a computer consultation

with Alan.) Please see Gloria's tribute to Jim and Joel Pollack that appears on page 3.

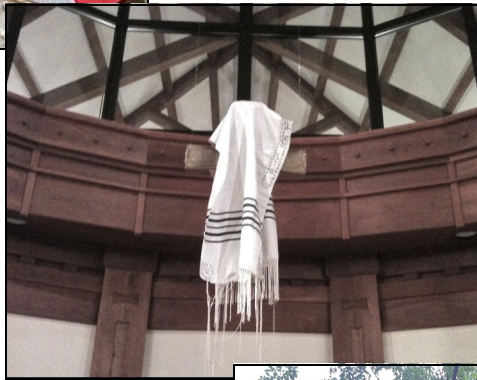


On Saturday morning, September 3rd, Rabbi Richard Agler (along with wife Mindy, KJCC's newest members) conducted a Shabbat service at KJCC. As it always is when he's here, it was a special morning. It isn't often we get to truly use our Torahs. And since Bernie can't lead services every week, it was nice to have Rabbi Agler able to fill in.



The photo top left was taken at the Mahjonggettes' annual getaway play-a-thon this past August.

If you'll look carefully beneath the tallit in the center photo, you'll see — yup, that's what it is — a crucifix. Medina Roy's summer house in Boone, North Carolina brings her to a small but active congregation that just happens to borrow a local church for their services. This photo shows how they customize the room and make it as (temporarily) Jewish as possible.



The photo bottom right is of Joyce Peckman's son Keith's house in New Jersey after a blind date with Hurricane Irene. It was messy, but the house didn't actually sustain any real damage.



The photo at left is at the base of the first memorial tree planted in KJCC's Meditation Garden. All tree sponsorships include a descriptive plaque.

To Every Thing There Is A Season

Turn Turn Turn: T'shuvah

Text and artwork by Gloria Avner

Whether the lyrics are Pete Seeger's version or straight Ecclesiastes, the words above and the notes playing in our heads make perfect background music for ushering in *Tishrei*, the most densely packed ceremonial month of the Jewish year. The Hebrew word "*Tshuvah*," the cornerstone of High Holy Days, means "return, a turning away from immoral behavior, turning toward God, returning to wholeness and holiness."

From the dark of the moon to fullness and back again, we continue the forty-day journey of self-examination begun in the previous month, Elul. Now, approaching our ten Days of Awe, we look inward towards self-

correction. We want to complete our turn and return before *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement, Remembrance, and Judgment. *Tishrei* is

the "head" (*rosh*) of our spiritual year. The name for this month comes from the Aramaic

"*sherei*," meaning "to begin." The first two days of the month mark only one of the four Jewish New Years, but over generations it has become known to the world as *the* Jewish New Year, our *Rosh HaShanah*. The Torah calls it *Yom Hazikaron* (Day of Remembrance)

and *Yom Teruah* (the Day of Trumpets Blasting Us Awake). Two of the four times a year that our oral tradition (the *Mishnah*) tells us the world is judged happen within *Tishrei*: on *Rosh HaShanah* all human beings pass before God. On *Sukkot*, the Feast of the Tabernacles, a decree is passed determining rain for the coming season. Everything is about nourishment. We correct our behavior and nourish our souls. This allows us to correct the world with the seemingly impossible goal of unifying mankind.

This month can be a daunting one. The sheer number of significant holidays presents

a challenge to our organizational skills and piles task after task on our pool of willing workers. In the modern world the number of holidays so close together (*Rosh HaShanah* followed a week later by *Yom Kippur* followed five

days later by seven days of *Sukkot*, followed one day later by two more holidays, *Shemini Atzeret* and *Simchat Torah*) also presents a challenge to our ability to balance home, work, and our spiritual worlds. The celestial sign of the month, the scales, is not only re-



lated to the Divine Judgment taking place between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, but also is asking us to weigh what we value in the world. As we transition from one holiday to the next, we travel on waves from crest to depth, from joyful celebration of new beginnings to serious introspection, and back to joyousness, all of it anchored by words of Torah and generations of symbolic ritual designed to anchor us respectfully to earth, inspire us to reach for the heavens, and, ideally, make the world a place where all can live in harmony.

Like so much in Judaism, *Tishrei* examined reveals layers within layers of meaning, and microcosms to explore. The themes of turning appear and reappear. We return to our Torah commandments to see where our behavior missed the mark. In addition, we turn to self, others, and our Creator for forgiveness. Confession is not complete until we do in community.

In sweetness and hope at the beginning of the New Year, we celebrate with a festive family meal brimming with auspiciousness. As Yom Kippur approaches, we pass through a dark night of the soul, fasting and giving charity. On Shabbat Tshuvah we return through prayer. We are judged, and the judgment is sealed on Yom Kippur. Hearing that long, loud final wake-up call --“Tekiah G’dolaaaaah,” we open our eyes, refreshed, renewed, and we go on – to eat, once more celebrating in community.

In this microcosm that is *Tishrei*, Judaism looks more clearly than ever like a great wheel, alternating sorrow and gladness, darkness and light, acts of exhortation with acts of generosity and expressions of gratitude. Five days after Yom Kippur, we start celebrat-



ing harvest. At the same time, seed planting begins. We pray with the “four species,” we decorate our outdoor temporary homes in the wilderness, our *sukkot*, with all kinds of fruit, and we start setting ourselves up for plentiful gentle rains. Not all seeds can be held in a hand. In our *sukkot*, living and eating under the open sky for seven days, we are already making provision, through prayer and ritual, for gentle rains to start the next growing season.

The day after we take down our *sukkah*, we celebrate completion of another season with the most joyous holiday of all: *Simchat Torah*. The minute we finish reading the last words in the last *parshah* of Deuteronomy, Moses’ reiteration of the Torah’s behavior manual, we start again at the beginning, re-rolling our

Torah scrolls – again in community, as a group, never alone – starting our weekly readings with the first words of Genesis, *Bereshit Barah*. And we dance, holding the Torah.

On *Rosh HaShanah*, we celebrate the birthday of the world and the creation of humanity. The wheel keeps turning. As years go by and we celebrate our own and the world’s birthdays, we see clearly that there is no beginning and no end, to life or to Judaism. Some of us will receive a light sentence on *Yom Kippur*; others will be gifted with a joyous year of health and prosperity. Still others will encounter serious challenges, or leave this plane of existence altogether, becoming sparks once again, waiting for another turn at *tikkun olam* and self-repair.

L’Shanah Tova. May all of you be written and sealed in the Book of Life for a sweet and wonderful new year. ◊

The Lulav and the Etrog:

Water, Rain, Unity, and Joy

by Gloria Avner

For Sukkot, the Torah instructs us to collect “*arba minim*,” four species, including the etrog (a citron), and the lulav, a bouquet of

tree branches – palm, myrtle and willow. It does not really specify what to do with them.

Jewish tradition, hundreds of years old, inspired the Sages to have us shake them towards the four cardinal directions and towards heaven and earth. I am struck by the similarities between this ancient tradition of ours and all early, even aboriginal, earth-based cultures. Unspoken is the seventh sacred direction – within – as we stand in the center, holding the minim, doing the shaking.

In the shapes of the “four kinds,” we also have explicit symbols of the masculine and feminine – the tall, erect species coupled with the rounded, womblike citron, united as one as are all parts of the Jewish world as we perform the mitzvah of living as our ancestors did, on the earth and under the sky, in total trust. We can have more space above us than substance (as we are instructed to in making the roof of our shelter), because in our sukkah we are living within the embrace of Shekhina, the divine presence.

The most intuitive explanation of lulav and etrog, though, relates to water – a central theme of Sukkot. The rainy season in Israel begins at Sukkot time. This is when we start saying the sentence in the prayer book that asks for rain. In Temple days, one of the most important ceremonies observed on Sukkot was “water drawing,” in which the altar and its surrounds were splashed with water.

Unlike all other holidays, when wine is the libation offered, on Sukkot the libations are water.

In each of the four species there are differing degrees of moisture. The palm core is on the dry end of the scale, the willow is water-needy (and withers over the course of the week), the myrtle holds its water well, retaining its fresh appearance all week, and the aromatic etrog is the ultimate fruity reservoir of moisture.

When the lulav is shaken, its rustling makes the sound of rain. Perhaps the waving ceremony is meant as a sympathetic ritual of power, inspiring the urge to rain, from the sky to the earth, filling well, rivers, and lakes, allowing fertility and assuring the abundance necessary for survival.

It is especially propitious if you do not get rained on while you are living in your sukkah, but it is the best of all worlds if rains begin

immediately afterwards. Apparently, we are to be joyous in our outdoor dwelling, and discomfort hampers joy. Asked the question “how much rain must fall before we can leave the sukkah and go inside,” the teaching responds, “when your cereal gets soggy.”

May each of us experience every level of joy and blessing as we break bread together and wave the four species in our sukkah.

What to do with a leftover etrog

Slice the etrog after Sukkot and put the slices into a bottle of vodka. Put the bottle into the freezer until the following Sukkot and use this liquid to make a “l’chaim” toast in your sukkah! ♡

***When the
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JONAH

Each year on Yom Kippur, toward the end of a long day of introspection and suppression of hunger pangs, the afternoon haftarah – the teachings and perspectives, with an occasional dollop of finger-pointing, of one of the ancient Biblical prophets – is read aloud. It is always the story of Jonah. This seems an unusual choice for the haftarah, in that its meaning is not readily clear among the often spectacular, cinematic details that we associate with the story; its drama also does not seem to fit, somehow, with the otherwise quiet and serious mood of the day. It is also the only book of or by any prophet that contains no, well, prophecies, but instead offers an almost picaresque narrative of its hero's spiritual journey. Yet, as is almost always the case, a careful look opens up the story's importance, and why the rabbis chose to include it on the Jewish year's most revered day.

With this look at the life and mission of Jonah, Chai-Lights begins a new series exploring different characters in the Bible, some of them very familiar, some a little less so, but all with more to their story than is revealed by a casual reading.

Almost all of us, when hearing the name “Jonah,”

instantly do a memory/familiarity/association search and think, “yes, of course...Jonah and the whale. I know that story. It's from the Bible.” Yes, that's true, but in Judaism the whale is really a minor player in the Jonah story, some would say not really a character at all but merely a device – though a memorable one – to help the story's protagonist begin to see the things that are really the heart of the story. (The whale is far more important in Christian theology, probably because Christian thinkers see in Jonah's ingestion

and subsequent forceful expulsion by the whale a symbolic death and rebirth, a central tenet of their faith. And the Bible's story doesn't say it was a whale. But more on that later.)

Few of us have been taught to associate the Jonah story as the embodiment of the teaching that God will always forgive those who repent; that they needn't do it perfectly, or even consistently, only sincerely. But this is what the rabbis say is the true meaning of the Book of Jonah, and why reading it is always part of the service on Yom Kippur.

In the story's first sentence we learn that Jonah is the son of Amittai. (Whose name, in one of



Jonah preaching to the Ninevites, by French illustrator/engraver Gustave Doré. (Ninevah did not likely have Greek architecture.)

those “hmmmm” factoids, is derived from the Hebrew “emet,” or “truth.”) According to the Talmud, Amittai was of the tribe of Zebulon, with Jonah’s mother being of the tribe of Asher. Jonah was from the city of Gath-hepher, in the northern kingdom of Israel in the region of Galilee. (Another element more important to Christians. It’s also interesting that Jonah is the only minor prophet Jesus mentions by name in the Christian Bible.)

Was Jonah a real historical figure? We don’t know for certain, but maybe. The Book of Kings does speak of him as an actual person. Josephus, the Roman-Jewish historian (and virtually sole source of a great deal of

information believed to be factual) regarded him as real. We’re told, by II Kings, that Jonah lived in the northern kingdom of Israel during the reign of Jeroboam II (c.785 - 744 B.C.E.). It was not a happy or tranquil period for the ten northern tribes. In the approximately two hundred years from the time King Solomon had died and Israel ended its affiliation with the southern kingdom of Judea, Israel had been rent with internal intrigue. Military rumblings were regularly heard and felt from warring would-be empires emanating from Mesopotamia to the north. Queen Jezebel had persuaded her husband King Ahab to allow the co-establishment of the cult of Baal in the kingdom, thereby introducing idol worship and practices, such as ritual prostitution, that were anathema to the disciplined and austere defenders of the way of life mandated by the laws of Moses.

Emerging from the boiling stew of Mesopotamian contenders, Assyria asserted its dominance under Tiglath-pileser III and became the region’s great power. It was only a

few short years until, in 722 B.C.E., Assyria would overrun Israel, obliterate its armies, and disperse its ten tribes to the winds of history.

About ten years before that, Jonah must certainly have known about the dire, virtually inevitable shadow of Assyria looming over Israel. The capital of that young and aggressive empire was Ninevah, which was very near what is today the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.

So put yourself in Jonah’s position. According to the Talmud, he was a devout follower of Mosaic Law, dutifully going three times a year to Jerusalem, even though a rival religious center had been established at Bethel in the northern kingdom.

He saw – everyone had to have seen – the precarious state of his home country, both because of the threats from abroad and the increasing rot from within. As a man of strict principles, one could comfortably say zealotry, Jonah would not have been particularly tolerant of the license and idolatrous lifestyle in Ninevah. And besides, why would he want to help or even save Ninevah? They were Israel’s enemy. Any time now they’d be marching south with their hordes, and Israel would be powerless to stop them. Yet it was to Ninevah, that very same Ninevah, where God commanded that Jonah should

go and warn the people that without repentance they would face God’s punishment.

With this context, it makes a lot more sense that Jonah tried to resist God’s command and seek escape by ship to Tarshish. (The actual location of which, by the way, is not at all agreed upon. Some sources say it was in Spain, others that it was the city of Carthage in today’s Tunisia, others that it was on the Arabian coast. Either way, it was a

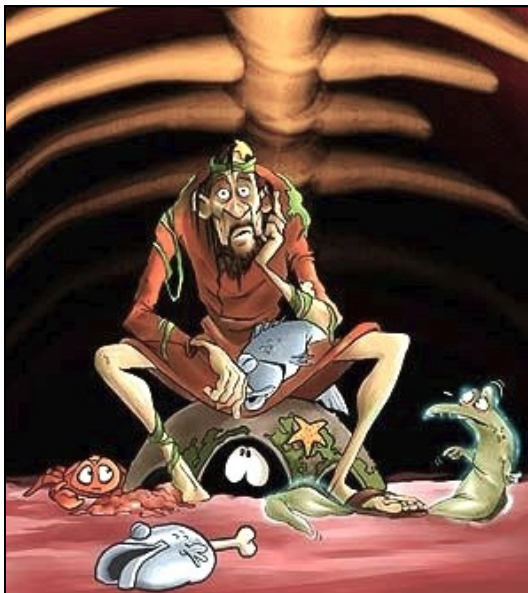


Michelangelo's depiction of Jonah on the Sistine Chapel ceiling. Notice the “great fish” just off his left leg.

long boat ride from Acre or God's Temple in Jerusalem.)

According to rabbinic commentary, this event – God instructing Jonah to go warn the city of Ninevah that without repentance and reform it would be destroyed – is the only place in the Jewish Bible where any descendant of Jacob is commanded to actively preach to those who today we would call Gentiles. There were many outsiders who chose to join in – such as Ruth – and a promise to Abraham that through his descendants God would bless the nations, but there was no other directive to go out and forcefully speak to non-believers in God's name.

It is at this point that the familiar elements of the Jonah story begin: the storm at sea, the admission that the storm is God's punishment for him and urging the ship's crew to throw him overboard, the sojourn inside the "whale." (The original Hebrew describes the creature as a "dag gadol," which unambiguously means "big fish." The Greek Septuagint translates this phrase into Greek as "ketos megas," where the term "ketos" itself means "huge fish." In Greek mythology this term was closely associated with sea monsters or serpents. This phrase later became "piscis granda" in the Latin Vulgate version of the Bible, but with "ketos" translated as "cetus" in Matthew 12:40. It's not certain when "cetus" became synonymous with "whale," though the study of whales is certainly today called cetology. The Englishman William Tyndale did translate the phrase from Jonah 2:1 as "greate fyshe," but also translated the word "cetus" from Matthew as "whale." This translation was later incorporated into the Authorized Version of 1611 –



With time, the Jonah story has become so familiar that it's now grist for cartoonists.

the King James Bible.)

It is after the familiar elements of the Jonah story that we come to the important parts, the parts the rabbis want us to study. Not willingly, but because he is not given much of a choice by God, Jonah does go to Ninevah and delivers God's warning. Though his heart isn't in it, he must do a pretty good job, because virtually all of Ninevah begins to reform and repent. It's clear they don't do it to Jonah's standards, but they do move in the right direction. Jonah, the commentary says, was zealous for punishment, but God

was willing to forgive a repentant Ninevah. Jonah was avid to seek to neutralize a potential threat to his home kingdom, but God makes it clear that repentance and atonement can forestall prophecies of doom for all of humankind, not just the chosen people of Israel or Judah. If sincere repentance is offered, a sentence of doom can be annulled. God is listening and is always willing to offer mercy. Ultimately, stubborn and resistant though he is, Jonah understands.

So near the end of a very long day of prayer, of particular phrases and themes repeated verbatim over and over, the central message of Yom Kippur – *t'shuvah* – is delivered a different way, via a dramatic story of disobedience and attempts to flee and violent storms and being both swallowed by and spewed out from a "great fish" and finally, at God's insistence, going to the house of your mortal enemy to offer them salvation from destruction. Mercy, after all, is preferable to strict and cold justice. And it's not available only to some; it's available to everyone. ♦

Tishrei Tidbits

No month in the Jewish calendar has more dates important to the ritual and continuance of Jewish life than Tishrei, which this year begins on September 29th. Almost half of all Tishrei's days have special religious significance, a total of thirteen. There are seven holidays on which work is not permitted.

Since it is the beginning of the civil year – there are four different new years on the Jewish calendar, remember – Tishrei begins, of course, with Rosh Hashanah. Then eight days later comes Yom Kippur. Five days after that comes Sukkot. The last of Sukkot's seven days (yes, it's seven days, not eight) is Hoshana Rabbah. Then the next day is Shemini Atzeret. If you're in Israel, Shemini Atzeret is also Simchat Torah. Those of us in the Diaspora, by rabbinic tradition, do not combine Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, but celebrate them on consecutive days. Whew.

Detailed religious tracts are far (far) beyond the scope of Chai-Lights. But we have compiled what we think is information (okay, factoids) about Tishrei's holidays that you'll find interesting, or stimulating, or even amusing, such as the results of a 2000 survey, which showed that only 46 percent of all Jews affiliate themselves with a synagogue, but 59 percent fast on Yom Kippur. Or that Tishrei itself is a Babylonian word; before the Babylonian exile, the month was referred to, in 1 Kings 8:2, as

Ethanim.

It's believed (or at least taught) that 1 Tishrei was the day that Adam and Eve were created, on the sixth day of creation. The first day of Tishrei was also the day that Noah sent out the dove on its third mission, the one when it returned bearing an olive branch, which is how Noah knew the flood was receding. One of the seminal events of Jewish history, the binding of Isaac by his father Abraham in preparation to follow God's command and sacrifice him, also is believed to have occurred on 1 Tishrei. This is also the day that Sarah died – not surprisingly; imagine hearing such a thing was about to happen while at the age of 127 – and was the first to be buried in the cave at Machpelah in Hebron. It was on 3 Tishrei that Gedaliah, the Jewish governor of Judea appointed by Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, was assassinated, which gives us, each year on that date, the little-known Fast of Gedaliah. (It's observed on 4 Tishrei this year because the 3rd is Shabbat.) More on Gedalia below.

The Fast of Gedaliah

When Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian army defeated Judea and destroyed the First Temple, he didn't totally disperse or exile the population as the Assyrians had with Israel 136 years before. He only deported the elite, the educated and wealthy and powerful, to Babylon. Most of the impoverished masses

were allowed to remain, to farm and generate revenue for Babylon from the new vassal state. To manage the Jewish peons, Nebuchadnezzar appointed a Judean, Gedaliah Ben Achikam, as governor. Some stability was actually established, and many Jews who had fled actually returned. This stability and relative prosperity displeased the King of nearby Ammon, who dispatched an aggrieved descendant of the royal house of Judea, Yishmael Ben Netaniah, to murder Gedaliah. Gedaliah received Yishmael warmly, even though he had been warned of the murderous plot, which he dismissed as mere *lashon hara*. The reports had been true, alas, and Yishmael did murder Gedaliah, along with many of his court plus a goodly number of Babylonians left behind by Nebuchadnezzar. Many Judeans, fearful of angry reprisals from Babylon, fled once again, this time to Egypt. (Nebuchadnezzar eventually invaded and laid Egypt to waste, so that hadn't been the ideal choice of places to go.) With no governance or economy, Judea lapsed into poverty, and to remember the horrid event – likening the death of a righteous man to the actual burning and destruction of the Temple – the sages instituted the Fast of Gedaliah, what in the early literature was called “the Fast of the Seventh,” meaning Tishrei, the seventh month.

Yom Kippur

-This holiday, to many the most important of the Jewish year, was mandated in the Torah, in Leviticus 23:26.

-Prayers and atonement on Yom Kippur, what the Bible calls “afflicting your souls,” only apply to sins relating to God. To atone for sins against another person, we are instructed to first seek out that person and attempt to right any wrongs we have inflicted on them. This must all be done *before* Yom Kippur.

-Yom Kippur is a complete Sabbath. Most know that all work is prohibited on that day.

But the Talmud also specifies other restrictions: it bans washing and bathing, anointing one's body (with oil, apparently, but also with cosmetics and deodorants), wearing leather shoes and engaging in sexual relations.

-All restrictions are relaxed where there is a threat to life or health. Children under nine and women in labor or who have given birth within three days are not permitted to fast.

-It has become customary to wear white on the day, to symbolize purity and reflect the promise made in Isaiah that our sins “shall be made as white as snow.”

-The *Kol Nidre* prayer, where we request God to nullify any vows we may make in the next year, was for many years held up by anti-Semites as proof that Jews are not trustworthy (we don't have to keep our vows). For this reason the Reform movement actually removed the prayer from their liturgy for a while. But both were incorrect. The vow stems from the opposite point, that Jews take any vows so seriously that they feel bound to honor them even when they are coerced. This prayer actually gave great comfort to Jews in Europe forced to convert to Christianity, and who had been made to swear fealty against their will. Because of this history, the Reform movement has reinstated the prayer.

-However individual atonement is intended to be, in synagogue prayers all sins are confessed in the plural. (It is always “we” who have sinned, not “I.”) This emphasizes the communal nature of the Jewish ethos.

-It is stressed during the “Days of Awe” that an initial unfavorable decision by God can be reversed, by specific actions on the part of the individual. Those actions are *teshuvah*, *tefilah* and *tzedakah* – repentance, prayer, and deeds of charity.

Sukkot

-A mere five days after Yom Kippur, on 15 *Tishrei*, we are instructed by Leviticus to begin the very different holiday of Sukkot.

-The themes of Sukkot have clearly been of great importance to the rabbis and sages. Sukkot is referred to in rabbinic literature as simply *HaChag* - "The Holiday."

-Sukkot represents the only time that Jews are instructed to build a structure as part of a holiday's observance. And it is specifically mandated that any *sukkah* be a temporary structure.

-Why is a *sukkah* so often decorated with fruit? To remind us that Sukkot was the time of the annual fruit harvest in Temple times. As one of the three mandated pilgrimage holidays, along with Pesach and Shavuot, Israelites were instructed to bring the first of their harvest to the Temple. The whole nation would gather to celebrate the harvest. (By traveling to Jerusalem, everyone would once again be staying in temporary housing.)

-We're instructed to invite others to share our meals in the *sukkah*. This isn't mandated just to be nice. It's to remember that for many years after the Exodus we were homeless and wandering. We often asked for help from neighboring tribes and nations but were usually turned down. We are also required to more than remember the concept of compassion; we're required to act on it.

-Being so firmly tied to the Temple in Jerusalem, the celebration of Sukkot was actually suspended during the Babylonian exile. When they returned, Nehemiah describes them rushing en masse to observe Sukkot, building booths and rejoicing.

- One of the other names by which Sukkot is also known is *Z'man Simchateinu*, "the season of our joy." What joy? Well, there's freedom, and gratitude for a bountiful harvest. (The holiday is also known, as a nod to its agricultural roots, as *Chag HaAsif*, the Festival of Ingathering. Yet another name is the Feast of Tabernacles.) But there's also the

more penetrating notion that to live in temporary, flimsy huts is to be forced to remember how interdependent we truly are, how our vulnerabilities are also reminders of our need for one another, and how those vulnerabilities foster cooperation instead of distance.

-The Book of Leviticus very clearly says, "You shall live in booths seven days." But there's no actual evidence of the fleeing or wandering Israelites actually living in booths, or God commanding them to do so. The only actual mention of "sukkot" is in Numbers 33, and there it's a *place*. ("The Israelites set out from Rameses and encamped at Succoth.")

Rabbi Akiva interpreted the verse literally, claiming that if the Torah says so, and Leviticus implies it, then there were huts. Rabbi Eliezer, however, claimed that the "sukkot" of the verse referred to "clouds of glory that accompanied the Israelites in the desert."

-Sukkot is the last of the three pilgrimage festivals (though first on the calendar). Unlike Passover and Shavuot, which also have both historical and agricultural bases, Sukkot does not take place during generally pleasant weather. In Israel it's at the beginning of the rainy season.

-The Zohar says that a *sukkah* generates such an intense concentration of spiritual energy, a divine presence, that it attracts from the Garden of Eden the souls of the seven shepherds of Israel, called *Ushpizin*, the Aramaic word for "guests." On each of the seven days each will in turn visit each *sukkah* - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph and King David. In some Sephardic communities, there is a "minhag" (custom) to decorate and dedicate a chair on each of Sukkot's seven nights, in honor of that evening's special guest.

-The Book of Ecclesiastes, traditionally believed to have been written by King Solomon, is read on Shabbat during Sukkot. The book's theme, that we should concentrate on

Sukkot is the last of the pilgrimage festivals, though it comes first on the calendar.

eternal things instead of transient and temporal pleasures, is derived from the same ideas that instruct us to make a *sukkah* out of flimsy materials through which we can be rained on but also see the sky and stars and think of something more important than our material comforts.

-Each Ushpizin, say the mystics, corresponds to one of the seven spiritual pathways (sefirot) through which the world is nourished and perfected. Abraham represents love and kindness; Isaac represents restraint and personal strength; Jacob represents beauty and truth; Moses represents eternity and dominance through Torah; Aaron represents empathy and receptivity to divine splendor; Joseph represents holiness and the spiritual foundation; David represents the establishment of the kingdom of heaven on earth.

-Despite its attention to the spirit, Judaism as always remains grounded in the importance of human actions. As far as sharing with others the food and drink that graces each of our sukkahs, Maimonides makes it clear: "While eating and drinking himself, one is obligated to feed the stranger, orphan, and widow, along with the other unfortunate poor...One who does not is not enjoying a mitzvah, but rather his stomach."

Hoshana Rabbah

-According to the Mishnah, in Temple times, during the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), huge willow branches were placed around the altar, while worshipers recited "Hoshanah" (*save us*). With the Temple gone, the scene shifted to the synagogue, where worshipers would hold the four species and make circuits around the bemah, all the while reciting similar Hoshanah prayers and hymns for God to save them.

-Though not well known to modern Jews, this holiday was thought by the rabbis to be a mini-Yom Kippur. Why? Because, as most know, it is on Rosh Hashanah that God's

judgment is rendered. On Yom Kippur it is sealed. But it's on Hoshana Rabbah that the final judgment is actually *delivered* to the Book of Life. So there's still time after Yom Kippur to affect the year's outcome. But not after Hoshana Rabbah.

-It has become customary on Hoshana Rabbah to exchange the Aramaic greeting "piska tava," meaning "a good note." This refers to the actual action of writing the final inscription in the Book of Life.

-During the six previous days of Sukkot the Torah is placed on the bemah, while the congregation circles it once, shaking their *lulav* and *etrog* in a processional called the *hakkafah*. On Hoshana Rabbah, however, instead of one hoshana, seven *hashanot* are recited and seven *hakkafot* are made around the sanctuary.

-There's a further ritual after the seven *hakkafot*, again taken from one performed in the *Beit HaMikdash*, the Temple in Jerusalem. Branches of a willow (*aravot*) are struck upon the ground five times. It is another symbolic gesture of casting away sins, hoping to influence God to include us in the Book of Life. The day is also known as "the day of the beating of the *aravah*." No blessing is recited over the beating of the *aravah*, since doing so is not a mitzvah but merely a custom.

-Hoshana Rabbah is the last day we are required to fulfill the mitzvot of the four species and of dwelling in the sukkah.

-It has become customary to read the whole of *Tehillim* (Psalms) on Erev Hoshana Rabbah. It has also become customary to read all of Deuteronomy the next night. The point here is twofold: first, Deuteronomy is a mini-summary of the rest of the Torah; and second, this assures that the reading of the Torah is complete before Simchat Torah two days hence.

Shemini Atzeret

-22 Tishrei, the day immediately after the seventh day of Sukkot, is Shemini Atzeret.

Though proximate, it is a wholly separate holiday, translating literally as “the assembly of the eighth day.” (Which would tend to imply it is indeed part of Sukkot, in fact its eighth day. But the rabbis say it isn’t.)

-The sukkah now being put away, pleasant weather is no longer required. But it’s time to nurture the new plantings, so rain is required. The most significant element of ritual on Shemini Atzeret is the Geshem prayer. (“Geshem” is Hebrew for rain.) From this moment on, a brief mention of rain is included in the Amidah prayer until Passover. The Mishna teaches that on Shemini Atzeret the world is judged for water, or rainfall. So it was a very important day in an agricultural society.

-The Shemini Atzeret prayer for rain parallels the prayer for dew on Passover. And, in fact, these two holidays are the bookends of the agricultural growing season.

-Shemini Atzeret is mandated in the Torah, with the required offerings clearly stated. But once the Temple was destroyed, all that was left to distinguish the holiday was the prayer for rain.

-It was probably in the early middle ages that Shemini Atzeret began to be associated with the end/beginning of the cycle of Torah readings. It’s considered likely that Simchat Torah, which follows the day after Shemini Atzeret, developed from what was originally the second day of Shemini Atzeret.

-In rabbinic literature, Shemini Atzeret is also seen as a day to underline the special relationship between God and the Jewish people.

-Yizkor is said on Shemini Atzeret. It is clearly the least-known of the four holidays connected to Yizkor.

Simchat Torah

-Simchat Torah translates as “rejoicing with (or of) the Torah.” The celebration marks the end of the cycle of Torah reading and the seamless beginning of a new cycle.

-The main celebration takes place during evening and morning synagogue services. In many synagogues, this is the only time the Torah scrolls are removed from the Ark and read at night.

-In the evening, all of a synagogue’s Torah scrolls are removed from the Ark and carried around the entire sanctuary in a series of seven *hakafot* (circuits). These circuits are often accompanied by singing and dancing, which have been known to go on for hours and spill out into the streets. With the Orthodox, of course, only men carry the Torahs and do the dancing, certainly that which spills out into the streets. Women and girls are sometimes allowed their own small dancing circles.

-After the hakafot and the dancing, three different scrolls are read from. From the first is read the last parshah from Deuteronomy, V’Zot HaBerachah. Then the first chapter of Genesis is read from the second scroll.

-It is considered a great honor to read the last aliyah from Deuteronomy. The person receiving that honor is called the *Chatan Torah* (groom of the Torah) or *Kallat Torah* (bride of the Torah). It is also considered an honor to be allowed the first aliyah from the Book of Genesis. That person is called *Chatan B’reishit* (the groom of Genesis) or *Kallat B’reishit* (the bride of Genesis).

-In recent times Simchat Torah has become a very child-centered holiday. Many synagogues invite all children up for a group aliyah, and give them all flags to carry and wave as they march around in their own *hakafah*.

-The name Simchat Torah does not appear in the Torah. Its use is actually relatively recent. In the Talmud it is considered the same as Shemini Atzeret.

-The custom of dancing during Simchat Torah apparently comes from the gaonic period in Europe. The custom of holding Torahs and marching around the bemaah probably began in the 16th century.

-In the 20th century, Simchat Torah came to symbolize the public expression of their Judaism by Soviets, often celebrating en masse on the streets of Moscow. ♦

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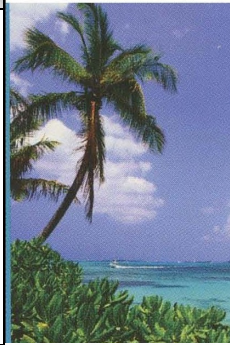
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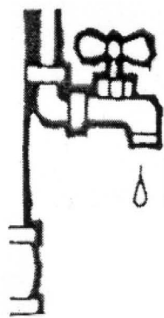
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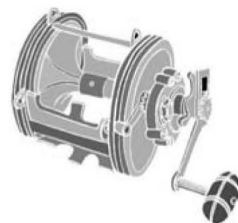
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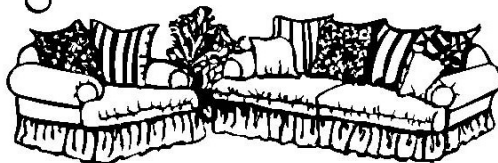
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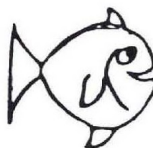
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