

Once, before Pesach, a man entered the home of Rabbi Yossi Ber, and asked him a question: “Tell me, Rabbi, can I fulfill the commandment of the four cups with milk instead of wine?”

The rabbi asked him, “Are you – God forbid – ill?”

The man answered him, “No, thank God, I am quite healthy, but I cannot afford to buy wine this year.”

Rabbi Yossi turned to his wife and said, “Give this man twenty-five rubles.”

The man said, “Honored Rabbi, I came to you to ask a question, not to beg for *tzedakah!*”

The rabbi calmed him, saying, “This money is given to you as a loan.” The man took the money, thanked the rabbi and praised him.

After the man left, the rabbi’s wife asked him: “Why did you tell me to give him twenty-five rubles? After all, wine only costs two or three rubles.”

The rabbi answered, “I understood from the man’s question that he does not have enough to prepare anything for the holiday. If he had had enough money for fish and meat, he would not have asked if it is permissible to use milk instead of wine. Milk cannot be drunk at the same meal with meat. That is why I gave him money to buy everything he needs for the holiday.”

-“Four Cups of Milk: A Folktale” from A Night to Remember by Mishael and Noam Zion

This Sunday morning, April 2nd, we are pleased to host our annual JUF Brunch celebrating the outstanding work of the Jewish United Fund/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago and this year’s most deserving honorees, Lee and Lisa Bloom. Like Rabbi Yossi Ber, JUF understands that caring for individuals, both locally and abroad, goes beyond addressing immediate needs to offer families a full range of resources and support, all with the highest attention paid to issues of human dignity. Given the difficult state of our world today, the kinds of services that JUF provides – from job placement and career counseling to eldercare assistance and citizenship support for new immigrants, programs that provide food, shelter, and financial aid to families here in Illinois to initiatives that offer humanitarian relief all over the globe – become all the more critical. JUF currently serves 300,000 Chicagoans of all faiths as well as providing help to Jews in Israel and 70 other countries worldwide.

In addition to JUF’s mission of providing for Jews in need, it is also dedicated to strengthening Jewish community and standing in solidarity with Israel, two areas of advocacy which suddenly seem more important than ever when we look at the rise in anti-Semitism and strong censure of the State of Israel that have emerged in recent weeks. JUF has been advising our congregation and others about enhanced security protocols in light of the latest wave of telephone terrorism sweeping our country and

responded quickly and effectively after the terrible act of vandalism at the Loop Synagogue, helping to organize our city's Interfaith Rally Against Hate. They provide support to college students struggling with issues of BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) and help to foster interfaith dialogue and cooperation which keep our community strong. Many of us have found ourselves asking, over the last few months, what we might do to fight for the values that we hold dear in an era that can seem increasingly dark and threatening. Contributing to JUF is one important way of doing good in the world and doing good for the name of the Jewish people, both at the same time.

We hope that you will come out and join us this weekend, not only to strengthen the vital work of JUF but also to pay tribute to the Blooms, dear members of our congregational family who embody the spirit of philanthropic giving and principled leadership that are at the heart of JUF's mission. Those unable to attend on Sunday may also consider making an independent donation:

<http://www.juf.org/donate/default.aspx>. We appreciate your generosity and support!

Thanks to Don and Carole Babendir for chairing this year's breakfast and congratulations again to Lee and Lisa – we are excited to celebrate with you. Looking forward to seeing you on Sunday!

Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Annie Tucker