

Hakol

The Voice of the Pelham Jewish Center

A Message from the Rabbi

Dear Friends,

A few years ago I delivered a sermon on Rosh Hashanah in which I suggested that the lack of separation of church (synagogue?) and state posed a threat to Israel's very existence. Minimally, it poses a threat to the *character* of the Jewish state. Some folks in the synagogue felt that even if this was true, it was irresponsible to deliver this sermon on Rosh Hashanah while Iran was rushing to build nuclear capabilities. I very much understand the feeling of anxiety and fear about the external threats to the State of Israel, but I wonder why so many Jews feel that this precludes discussion about the internal question of values.

In an important article entitled "Beyond Survival: Jewish Values and Aspirational Zionism," Dr. Tal Becker appeals to the Jewish world to deepen the conversation about Israel. Becker, a fellow at the Hartman Institute and at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, suggests that when the normative discussion regarding Israel is preoccupied with a narrative of survival and crisis at the exclusion of all other issues, we ultimately damage Israel's chances of surviving as a homeland that

embodies Jewish values.

For starters, it is imperative that we understand why so many Israelis and Jews remain entrenched in this narrative. It is reckless to belittle the very real crises facing Israel: a nuclear Iran, a delegitimization campaign, an unstable maniacal regime in Syria, a powerful Hezbollah and Hamas on two borders, a volatile and hostile Egyptian government, and so on. We also focus on the narrative of survival because of the impact of Jewish history on our consciousness, a history that has demonstrated time and again that anti-Semitism and violence are tangible threats to our safety. Despite a powerful army and sovereignty, Israelis and Jews are still a traumatized people dealing with tangible fears. Our sense of vulnerability often makes us feel that it is a luxury to speak about anything other than the threats that endanger us.

Though it may be challenging, we *must* expand the discourse to include questions of values alongside the conversation about security. As Becker suggests, the crisis model of conversation "fails to provide a compelling narrative as to why Israel can, or ought to, be both central and

meaningful for contemporary Jewish life." If we suppress such conversations, the consequences will be devastating. Becker charges us to create a new model for conversations about Israel. "This narrative would focus less on what is *needed* to protect the Jewish State, and more on what kind of state we *want* Israel to be." He isn't saying that we abandon debate about how to best protect Israel. He is suggesting that we expand the conversation to include questions regarding the values that we want the Jewish state to embody. Becker calls this type of discourse "aspirational Zionism."

Some of the most pressing questions facing the future of Israel require active discourse within and between an engaged citizenry and the Diaspora community. Some of these questions include the relationship between the state and the rabbinate; the lack of religious pluralism; the construction of a secular Jewish identity that remains connected to Jewish values; the challenge of being a democracy and a Jewish state; the connection between Israeli and Diaspora Jews; the relationship with Israeli Jews and minority communities (Druze, Bedouin, Arabs); the legal status of African refugees seeking asylum; and of course, the political and moral issues of the West Bank and the

THE PELHAM JEWISH CENTER

451 ESPLANADE
 PELHAM MANOR, NY 10803
 PHONE: 914-738-6008
 FAX: 914-931-2199
 EMAIL: office@thepjc.com
 WEBSITE: www.thepjc.org

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The deadline for articles and other submissions for the February, 2013 issue of the Hakol is Tuesday, January 15th. Please send to Kim Lewis at office@thepjc.org and copy to Jack Klebanow at jack.klebanow@gmail.com.

Palestinians.

Aspirational Zionism seeks to create space for a conversation about values *and* external threats. In truth, the values conversation is also about Israel's security. Without a strong sense of the moral and ideological values of the Jewish State, it will not be able to survive as a thriving homeland for all of the Jewish people. In Becker's words, "A turn toward values, and reducing the rhetoric of fear in Israeli discourse, signals something important to those that wish us harm. It conveys determination and resilience...The sense that we are shaping our destiny out of collective purpose and a confident belief in our place in the world undermines their resolve and strengthens our own...Such a conversation...recognizes that what ultimately connects the Jewish people to Israel is not a shared fate or policy position, but a common moral calling."

I look forward to expanding this conversation along with you.

L'Shalom,



Rabbi David A. Schuck

Read Rabbi Schuck's blog, which you will find by visiting the website www.viatherabbi.blogspot.com. Feel free to post your comments!

Message from our Education Director

"The Lord spoke to Moses saying: Speak to the children of Israel, and have them take for Me an offering; from every person whose heart inspires him to generosity, you shall take My offering.(...) And they shall make Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst." (Exodus 25, verses 1, 2 and 8)

The text above is part of *Parashat Terumah*, the Torah Portion we read in the first week of this month of *Adar*, just a few days before we celebrate the holiday of *Purim*. These verses from the Bible are especially fascinating as one week later we are told in the story of Purim, from The Book of Esther, about the evil Haman who wanted to eradicate all the Jews from the kingdom of Persia. As many scholars have cited, we do not hear the name of G-d being mentioned in the Book of Esther even once. So how can we comprehend the idea that G-d "will dwell in our midst" from the Book of Exodus and at the same time be completely absent from the whole story of Purim? How can these two ideas coexist in our minds? Are they related at all?

This reminds me of a question one of the Learning Center students once asked me: "Why don't we see G-d's miracles anymore, like the people of the Bible used to see in their time?"

I believe that the key verse when trying to find "G-d in our

midst”, in times of sorrow and in times of joy, is actually the first verses I cited from the book of Exodus: “from every person whose heart inspires him to generosity, you shall take My offering” (Exodus 25:2). Let me explain what I mean, using our Learning Center as an example. In the years I have been serving as Education Director, I have met countless times the generosity of our community in innumerable ways; I have seen parents offering their precious time, their thoughts, their suggestions, their actions, their talents, their connections, their cars, their books, their financial contributions, their souls, to the common good. And I have seen their children following in their paths, volunteering, contributing, cooperating and helping as they wish to bring their own offerings from their inspired hearts and minds. I see all of this kindness as an expression of “G-d dwelling in our midst”, as one may see the manifestation of G-d in the events and the intentional actions of the characters in the *Megillah* (the Book of Esther). Esther herself was ready to give away all she had to try to intercede with the King in order to avert the *Pur* (the destiny) of her people, after her uncle Mordechai tells her: “for if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place” (Esther, 14:4); the word “place” - in Hebrew- *makom*- is a reference of one of the names of G-d.

In our *makom*, our beautiful place, I do see how G-d is

present in the little and the big offerings that are made by all, every time anew, so that the Learning Center can become a “dwelling place” for all our hopes and aspirations of what is beautiful in the Jewish people.

Recently, on a Friday night dinner with LC families, one parent mentioned how he saw with concern the fact that every Jewish generation seems to become distanced from the Judaism of its ancestors. He described how his grandparents’ Jewish life seemed to be more intense than his own parents’, then how his Jewish life seemed to be lessened than his parents’, and he wondered: what will be the Judaism of my children, and of the following generations?

Well, I can understand his worries, and I can also say that I may attempt to suggest an answer to his question: it depends on our actions, on our intentions and our priorities. It depends on our willing to continue to give ‘*to the children of Israel*’; how we continue to show our children that Jewish continuity and Jewish education are our priority. Dr. Steven Brown, former Dean of the William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education at JTS, once said that one should not ask “where is G-d”, but “when is G-d”; the same applies to the question of our future generations: one should not ask where are the Jewish traditions and the customs that our ancestors brought from their ancestors; we should be able to see when these traditions are translated into actions,

reflecting the goodness, the generosity, the kindness of the hearts, embedded in Jewish knowledge and text and bringing Judaism alive in the Learning Center and in our community at large.

To all helping hands, hearts and minds, thank you so much for bringing the “*Schinah*” (another name for G-d) to dwell among us, keep it coming! Continue to support our upcoming activities in this month of Adar. Please follow the online weekly LC announcements for the details of every new week of amazing Jewish learning, and see how you can continue to be a part of what is happening in the Learning Center. I wish the Learning Center families Chag Purim Sameach; may we continue to bring forth the best from our hearts and may this place continue to be blessed by the presence of G-d through your inspiring offerings of help and love.

L’shalom,
Ana Turkienicz

Special thanks to:

-Zachary Echenreich and Melanie Stern for coming to the Museum of Jewish Heritage to share with our students at the inspiring and heroic stories of their parents during the Holocaust.

-Melissa Haber, Liz Tzetzso, Mimi Steinberg, Andrei Novikov, Abby Leonard, Ariana and Isabella Capanna, for their support and help for the success of our “Hooked on

Havdalah”.

-The Hei-Vav class parents for driving the Hei-Vav students to the Mt Vernon Soup Kitchen and Jeannie Radvany for organizing it.

- Leah Leonard for making sure every Junior Congregation and Torah Time runs smoothly

-Deborah Karson for taking pictures of the Hei-Vav artifacts for their Living Museum catalog

- Sharon Harrison for organizing the Purim “Mishloach Manot” with the Learning Center students

-Darren Lee for helping with all the printing needs of the LC

And many, many more...

Important Security Message

We are going to be turning on the PJC alarm and locking the building at 10:00pm each night effective immediately. If anyone needs access to the building after hours they should contact Adam Bukowski, Kate Lauzar or Darren Lee. If the PJC has a scheduled event that will run after 10:00pm the building will be locked/alarmed after the activities are done. We appreciate your understanding, as this is part of our ongoing development of a PJC security plan.

Coming up in February ...

Help out in our Soup Kitchen

Thank you to the Hersh/Rubock, Prigot/Hovaness, Dunkin/Kraftowitz, Levitz, Dukess/Liesman, Schneider, Goldberg, Driesen, Singer and Abeshouse families for providing a healthy meal to the Community Service Associates Soup Kitchen in Mount Vernon on January 15th.

Thank you also to the Hey class for serving at the Soup Kitchen which includes: Ben Glickman, Oliver Krulak, Michael Salama, Zach Leonard, Zara Levy, Sarah Dreyfus, Rachel Griffith, Lynn Dvorkin and Anna Shampanier-Bowen.

If you would like to provide 10 large or 20 small meatballs in sauce, 2 boxes of ziti or penne, salad and brownies for the Soup Kitchen on Tuesday, February 12th, please email Rachel Collens at rachelcollens@optonline.net.

Food is cooked in your own kitchen and brought to Rachel's house as early as Sunday evening the 10th and no later than 1:00 PM on Tuesday the 12th.

Purim...

Purim is February 24! Get into the Purim spirit by sending a Mishloach Manot package to your friends in the PJC community. Your name and good wishes will be added to the card included with the bag of goodies each family receives.

Feb 21 - Ta'anit Esther (Fast of Esther)

Feb 23 - 7:00pm Erev Purim - Megilla reading

Costumes welcome!

Feb 24 - Purim

Feb 25 - Shushan Purim

SAVE THE DATE

Purim Carnival

Sunday, February 24th

12-2pm

The Pelham Jewish Center Remembers the Following Yahrzeits in February

- | | | | |
|------|--|------|---|
| 2/1 | Bronia Fink, Founding member of The Pelham Jewish Center | 2/16 | Herbert Taub, father of Shelley Klein |
| | Carole Goldman, mother of David Goldman | 2/17 | Eleanor Goldman, mother of Robert Goldman |
| | Herbert S. Lewis, father of Sybil Rosenberg | 2/18 | Charles Goldberg, father of Shelli Goldberg-Peck |
| 2/2 | Max Schreiber, father of Gloria Staple | | George Pine, father of Richard Pine |
| 2/3 | Alan R. Dreyfus, Brother-In-Law of Eleanor Dreyfus | 2/20 | Harry Barback, father of Spencer Barback |
| 2/4 | Marian Stern, grandmother of Jill Goldenberg | | William Klein, father of Rhonda Singer |
| 2/5 | Carol Gevisenheit, mother of Cara Wulfsohn | | Dora Minkin Pine, mother of Richard Pine |
| | David Goldreich, father of Gloria Horowitz | 2/22 | Beatrice Kelber, mother of Hildy Martin |
| 2/10 | Henry Levy, father of Mary Goldiner | 2/23 | Leon Evan, father of Frederica Sigel |
| 2/10 | Alec Rossman, father of Robert Rossman | | Klara Nenner, grandmother of Jacqueline Hopper |
| | Charlotte Zipser, mother of Eleanor Einzig | 2/26 | Abraham Covell, Founding member of The Pelham Jewish Center |
| 2/12 | Sarah Vera Mandler, mother of Eleanor Windman | | Jacqueline Obstgarten, grandmother of Shayna Klopott |
| | Morris Weisman, Founding member of the Pelham Jewish Center, grandfather of Harold Weisman | 2/27 | Gloria Penrose, mother of Diane Cohen |
| 2/15 | Harry Druckerman, father of Martin Druckerman | 2/28 | Hyman Serebransky, father of Joel Serebransky |
| | | | Pauline Stampfer, mother of Morris Stampfer |

Social Action Update

Musical Talent Show

A Great Success!!!

Congratulations to Rachel Radvany on the success of Bat Mitzvah Social Action Project.

And big thank you to all that halped make this a success for her



Community Announcements

SAVE THE DATE

PJC Shabbaton 2013- June 7th, 8th and 9th: Save the Date for this Wonderful Community Shabbat Weekend! Watch for more info...

Spring Fundraiser is around the corner

Mark your calendars -- it's almost time for the Spring Fundraiser!! This year's event will be a Party at the PJC on March 2nd from 8-11 pm. Please plan to join us for a night of tall drinks, small plates and big desserts as we celebrate the spirit of giving and the spirit of community within our shul. Plans are being made for an evening full of extraordinary culinary treats, festivities and fun, as in FUNraising, with Michael Weissman at the mike to entertain and lead us in another successful live auction. Invitations will be in the mail soon. In the interim, please contact Lisa Daley at cjcraig24@gmail.com if you would like to help with planning for the event, or if you would be able to donate to the live auction effort -- items can include services, tickets to an event or a vacation home, just to name a few. We welcome your ideas and generosity.

We look forward to seeing everyone on March 2nd for an evening to celebrate and support the PJC.

Mishloach Manot

Don't miss the chance to send Gift Baskets to your friends!

One of Purim's loveliest traditions is the giving of a small gift to family and friends. Each year, the PJC delivers beautiful gift bags to our members and staff filled with symbols of Purim, sweets, and hamentashen. The Mishloach Manot project is a way for you to participate in this wonderful tradition.

How does it work? Sponsor a Mishloach Manot basket to send to the Whole Megillah (the entire PJC community), or choose 5 families. Your name and holiday greeting will be added to the card included with each gift.

To participate, please reply to this email with the answers to the following questions.

1. Do you want to send to the Whole Megillah for \$180 or to 5 families for \$72? If 5 families, please list.
2. How will you pay? Credit card on file, send a check, or be invoiced?

If you have any questions, please contact Sharon Harrison, at sh411@columbia.edu

The deadline is Thursday, February 7.

Kiddush Korner

It's never too early to reserve an upcoming Kiddush date now for Winter/Spring 2013—a complete list of available dates is listed below. Our PJC Kiddush represents a wonderful conclusion to the meaningful Saturday morning Shabbat service. It is a time to talk with fellow congregants, welcome new members & guests, and include our children in the weekly traditions. The weekly Kiddush is a special way to celebrate a *simcha*—birthdays, anniversaries, and graduations are just a few occasions to acknowledge. It is also customary to observe a *yahrzeit* by sponsoring a Kiddush in memory of a loved one.

Sponsorship is simple—all you need to do is pick a date—we do the rest, from menu planning to set-up and clean-up. Kiddush package options start at just \$150. Please contact PJC Kiddush Coordinator Leah Leonard at lleonard@optonline.net to reserve a date. Thank you for helping to maintain an important PJC tradition!

Available Kiddush dates for Winter / Spring 2013:

February 16, 23

March 23, 30

April 6, 13, 20, 27

June 22

The PJC thanks the following congregants for hosting a Kiddush last month:

January 5	Michael Glickman & Debbie Korenstein and family	In appreciation of all their friends at the PJC
January 12	Jacqueline Stein	In honor of Dana's birthday
January 19	Peter & Andrea Rothberg	In honor of Andrea's birthday
January 26	Lawrence Kraftowitz & Amy Dunkin and family	In honor of Jonah's Bar Mitzvah

Tributes Made to The PJC In Honor of ...

Did you know you can make these tributes and contributions online?

*Just go to www.thepjc.org and click on **DONATE** in the top right corner!*

- Mary & Paul Goldiner, in honor of Amy Martin's wedding
- Bob & Sandra Goldman, in memory of Janice Goldklang's mother
- Jeanne & David Radvany, in honor of Adam and Maria Abeshouse, Jack Klebanow, Michael Dvorkin, Amy Hersh, Deborah Karson, Jeremy Driesen, Kate Lauzar, and Darren Lee for all their help and support for Rachel's Bat Mitzvah social action project.
- Mary Beth Fishman, PACT Coalition, in honor of Rabbi Schuck for being a wonderful host for the fall PACT meeting
- Robert Fryd, ESQ., On behalf of Rosh Pinah Chavurah of the Rivertowns, in honor of Rabbi Schuck, and Steven Martin, The Siddurim—their generosity and graciousness helped make their Chavurah the Siddurim a special day
- Doris Benjamin, with great thanks to the PJC
- Avidan Y Cover, Thank you to the PJC
- Kate & Adam Lauzar, in memory of Janice Goldklang's mother Charlotte Goldklang, and in memory of David Ploski's father, Wlater Ploski
- Alfred Klein, in Mozel Tov to Andy Stettner and Jeanny Silva on the birth of their son
- Paul & Sylvia Stepner, in thanks to the PJC
- Steven Bruce Cottler, in honor of Harold Weisman

Contributions to The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

- Helen Stephenson, in thanks to Rabbi Schuck
- Leslie Schuck, in memory of Charlotte Goldklang
- Anna Nelson & Josh Fein, in honor of Rabbi Schuck for the meaningful naming ceremony he officiated
- Steve Martin, Thanks to Rabbi Schuck

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