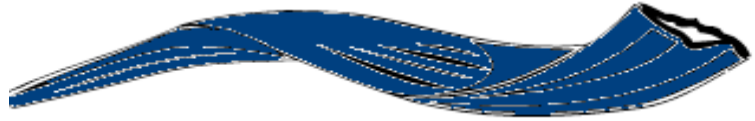


SHOFAR



Monthly Newsletter of the Monterey Peninsula Jewish Community

www.carmelbethisrael.org



Tu B'Shvat or the “New Year of the Trees” is Jewish Arbor Day. We observe *Tu B'Shvat* on the 15th (*tu*) of the Hebrew month *Shvat* which falls on January 17th this year. Scholars believe that originally it was an agricultural festival marking the emergence of spring. This year our students will be planting Arugula Microgreens thanks to PJ Library/PJ Our Way.

Many people plant a tree in Israel in honor or memory of loved ones and friends for *Tu B'Shvat*. We can plant a tree in Israel, too, by visiting the Jewish National Fund website, <https://www.jnf.org>, and clicking on their link to plant a tree.

You might also like to make this recipe:

No Bake Date Candy

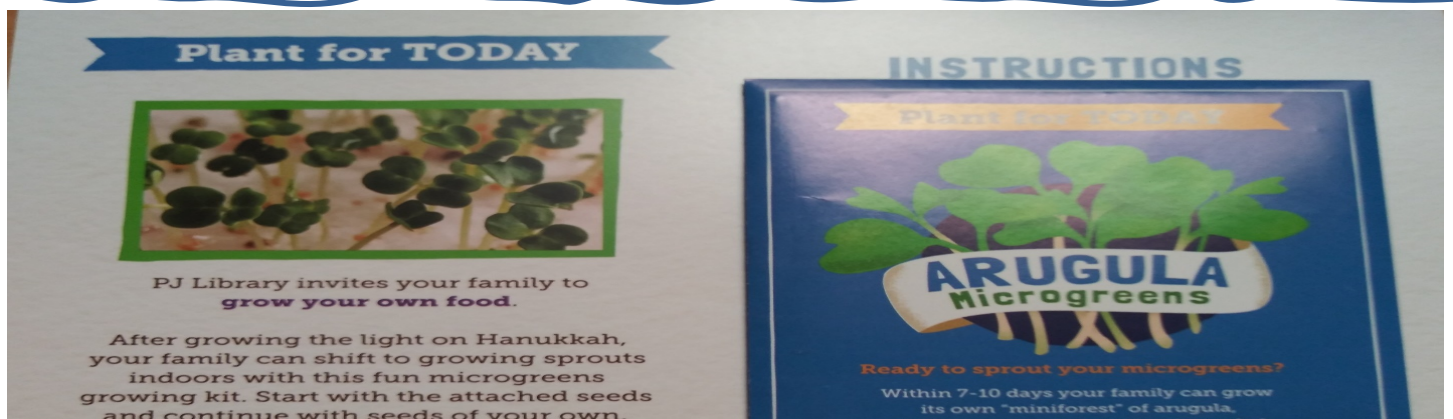
Ingredients

1 ½ cups tightly packed pitted medjool dates
1/3 cup creamy sunflower seed butter or tahini
½ cup shredded unsweetened coconut
Extra shredded coconut for rolling, if desired



Directions

- Pulse dates in a blender or add dates to a food processor with a “S” blade and pulse until it comes together in a sticky ball
- Add in Sunflower Seed Butter or Tahini and Shredded Coconut and process again until it forms a thick paste
- Scoop the mixture up with a tablespoon and roll into balls. Roll the balls in extra coconut, if desired.
- Chill in the refrigerator for 20 minutes to firm up





From the Rabbi's Desk...

If you have been a member of Congregation Beth Israel for any length of time, then you already know that my wife is fully dedicated to our congregation. She

has created numerous programs for CBI over the years including At Home with CBI and the Carmel Jewish Film Festival. Most recently she brought the Hanukkah Film Festival to our community with 11 films online. After watching all of them, I can honestly say I really enjoyed the vast majority of the films shown. Susan is constantly searching the internet, exploring what other synagogues are doing and then suggesting these activities to me or creating them herself. Just in the past month she suggested two programs that I would love to implement with your support and assistance.

One program Susan shared with me I would like to name "Fri-Play." Once a month on Friday afternoons, our members could gather for a special pre-Shabbat playful activity. It could be for younger families with children or any of our members. Depending on the status of Covid-19 the activities could be held outdoors where the threat of spread is minimized. Some possible Fri-Play events might include a group stroll along Scenic drive (better for our older members) or a sand building contest on Carmel beach (better for those with kids). We could do a Challah baking/braiding Fri-Play. Maybe a Zoom trivia Fri-Play event would attract lots of people a variety of ages? I envision taking about two hours early on a Friday afternoon (1:00-3:00?) for these programs. Members could even help me plan and run the programs. I am open to suggestions. What do you think might be a fun or stimulation Fri-Play program? Who is interested in helping me create a CBI Fri-Play?

A second program we might call "CBI Human Library." The difference between a human library and a regular library is important to note. The regular library is filled with a variety of books, both fact and fiction, from Travel to Mystery to Historic Novels and so much more. Our human library is filled with interesting people with a variety of backgrounds,

educations, experiences, and ethnicities. What if we create a monthly adult education program where we invite different CBI members to share their uniqueness with the rest of us? Let's gather in the evening, (maybe around 7 PM?) once a month to meet one of our members who can share some insights that will enlighten and enrich us. We could learn what it is like to grow up in Israel or Iraq or South Africa or...? We could listen to war stories from veterans. What's it like to work as a surgeon, or a veterinarian, or a pilot or a nurse or a...? Who has traveled to exotic places? Our congregation is filled with interesting people with a variety of experiences to share. Will you be part of our human library or join us as we "check-out" some of our members?

Most of you know that I spend a great deal of time serving our congregation. What you should also know is that my wife works behind the scenes to support me and CBI as well. Susan does this, not just because she is a rabbi's wife, but because all her life she has been part of a synagogue and understands how important it is to be an active and supportive member. If you are a board member, a committee member, a religious school parent, student in our school, or a regular participant in our programs and services, thank you for your support of CBI. Most organizations, including synagogues, end the year by asking members for their fiscal support. As we begin this New Year, I ask you for a different type of support. Join me in participating in our regular programs and services and help me create new activities that will strengthen our congregation. Happy New Year!



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From our President *Dan Nussbaum, President Board of Trustees*

Shofar, January 2022

This is a time of year when we are surrounded by celebratory, merry secular, sounds and activities. I grew up hearing these sounds and seeing these activities, simultaneously knowing that they were powerfully attractive and that they are integral parts of the American culture, but at the same time, they were different from who I was. Perhaps you too had these experiences?

Is there a Jewish counterpoint to all this secular merrymaking? Sure, there's Hanukkah, but it is often not contemporaneous with the secular holidays, so it is often not a useful counterpoint. Ah, yes, there is something, a minor fast, which looks back to an event of great historical interest and importance. It occurs on the 10th day of the month of Teveth on the Hebrew calendar, so of course it's known as the Fast of the 10th of Teveth. It commemorates the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians and their king, Nebuchadnezzar, an assault which ended in the destruction of the First Temple in 568 BCE. The First Temple had been built in 1000 BCE by King Solomon, after King David conquered Jerusalem and made it his capital, so it had been in operation for over 400 years. Most importantly, the exile of the Judeans to Babylonia ("if I forget thee, oh Jerusalem", "by the waters of Babylon,...") began a special period in Jewish history, in which Babylon became the center of the Jewish world, displacing all others, even Jerusalem.

Our tradition teaches that the First Temple fell because of "causeless hatred." That is, there were fierce political and religious divisions within the Jewish community that led to communal violence, and which prevented any attempts at mutual support. This historical lesson that internal divisions lead to national weakness and even to national catastrophe, is as relevant today as it was then.

When we were given the opportunity to return to Jerusalem, not everyone took up the offer. Those who stayed settled in *for about 1500 years* and created a culture of Jewish leaders, philosophers, schools and academies, doctors, poets, and the Babylonian Talmud. The Babylonian Talmud(!), a cornerstone of Judaism, emerges from our defeat by the Babylonians and our exile. So here's another lesson from our history, that sometimes good things emerge from bad events.

One last point: The Tenth of Tevet remains closely associated with the Holocaust. It is recognized as the "General Kaddish Day" when all those victims whose actual date of death is unknown are commemorated in synagogues.

A minor fast, indeed!

May all our efforts to improve security and return to normal interpersonal activities bring us peace,

Dan

Dan Nussbaum

(C) (831) 324-3228





From Our Cantorial Soloist and Director of Education Suzanne Guinane

It is hard to believe January 9, 2022 will be the 11th *yahrtzeit* for our beloved Debbie Friedman. Debbie and her music continue to be the soundtrack for many of our lives.

Her music was instrumental in bringing many people back to services, especially in Reform synagogues. Her gift for combining Hebrew with English, or Hebrish as I like to call it, in her songs, helped people find a deeper and more meaningful way to pray and connect with each other during services. Debbie's *Mi Shebeirach* is sung/prayed in many Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist and Renewal communities around the world today. As she sang it to so many of us at her concerts, camp and services in synagogues, she always reminded us that the first time was for us followed by the second time for people's names shared in need of healing. We did this at the end of Virtual Torah Study on December 18th. Many congregations continue to observe *havdallah* with her melody, too.

Debbie's song leading style/techniques are still used to train song leaders for summer camp, schools, rabbis and cantors today. Her music is the core of my music curriculum for 6 months through high school. So many have learned the Hebrew alphabet from her *Aleph Bet* Song and many of the Jewish Holidays from I Am A Latke, Plant a Tree for *Tu B'Shvat* and her musicals for *Chanukah* and *Purim*. Her Priestly Benediction is a staple in many congregations for life cycle events.

"And the old shall dream dreams, and the youth shall see visions, and our hopes shall rise up to the sky. We must live for today, we must build for tomorrow. Give us time, give us strength, give us life." *Ken y'hi ratzon* – May it be so Debbie, today, tomorrow and future years to come.

Debbie's music has shaped my cantorate as a result of the cantors and rabbis that trained me. What a

legacy.
Debbie's
memory
continues to
be an abiding
blessing for so
many of us.
We will honor
Debbie's life,
legacy and
yahrtzeit at
our 1/14/2022



7:30 pm Erev Shabbat Services. I hope you will join us.



**Social Action
@ CBI**

The Holidays & Thereafter

Chanukah with I-HELP

We had an extraordinary Chanukah Celebration with 16 I-HELP men on Sunday, December 5th, with Hugo Gerstel playing Chanukah music on the piano, prayers led by Rabbi Bruce, and a giving circle to deliver their gifts. Each man received new clothing—shoes, pants, underwear, shirts and a warm, hooded, waterproof jacket. Thanks to our members' contributions to our Social Action Fund, we were able to provide these gifts, with the jackets donated by the Carmel Valley Rotary via Rabbi Bruce. Nancy and Barry Rund and I did all the shopping! (Continued on page 7.)





Lunch with the Rabbi

If you are vaccinated, please join Rabbi Greenbaum this month on **Wednesday, January 12 at noon** at an outdoor table on the patio of Baja Cantina, located about a mile east of CBI. If it rains we will find a table

inside. This month the Rabbi will lead a discussion on "Jewish Evolution." How has Judaism changed since its inception? From sacrifice to prayer and from orthodoxy to reformation, how do we make sense of these changes in our religion? What does it mean to be Jewish today? Come prepared to question and offer your thoughts. Call the CBI office at 624-2015 to RSVP. We will order off their regular menu so expect lunch to cost approximately \$15-\$20.



BEST YEARS

**Best Years
Favorite
Event:
Lunch Out!**

Join us on **Wednesday, January 26 at noon** as we enjoy what is clearly one of the most popular Best Years events, enjoying a nice lunch at a local restaurant. This month let's dine on hamburgers, sandwiches, and salads (fries too!). We will meet at RG Burgers located in the Crossroads, or call the synagogue to carpool with the rabbi. This free lunch, paid by the CBI Senior Endowment Fund is always a fun gathering. Please bring ideas for future Best Years events. Do you have a suggestion for a movie or speaker or program? Enjoy visiting with other members and feast on delicious foods. Drinks are included as well! To RSVP for this program call the CBI office at 624-2015. Please let us know if you need a ride for this event.



CBI Book Club

Dear Jewish Book Clubbers,

IMPORTANT: You must be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 in order to attend Book Club. Always notify the Book Club host that you plan to come so that you can be contacted in case of location change or cancellation.

Here are our next three dates and book selections. We plan to continue to meet in person, but we will be watchful regarding the evolving status of the pandemic, as well as state and county health regulations.

January 11, 1:30 PM, home of Suellen Rubin (suellenrubin@hotmail.com). Book—**MOTHER DAUGHTER WIDOW WIFE** by Robin Wasserman. Our warmest thank-you to Suellen for her generous hospitality in hosting Book Club over the past six months.

February 8, 1:30 PM, home of Karen Wiskoff (238-3140). Book—**THE LOST SHTETL** by Max Gross

March 8, 1:30 PM, home of Laela Leavy (626-4840). Book—**OUR COUNTRY FRIENDS** by Gary Shteyngart

The February and March meetings will be held in private residences at Carmel Valley Manor. To pass the Manor security gate, you will need your photo ID and your up-to-date Covid-19 vaccination card.



More Jewish Acronyms & Abbreviations

A Guide to more Jewish Acronyms and Abbreviations:

Acronyms — in

Hebrew, Aramaic and transliteration — appear frequently in Jewish correspondence, books, spoken conversation and even on gravestones. Famous rabbis are frequently referred to by their acronyms. Even books themselves, like the Hebrew Bible, are often identified in this abbreviated manner. Modern Hebrew has its own ever-growing roster of acronyms, such as its FBI equivalent, *Shabak* also known as the *Shin Bet*. (Stands for for *Sherut Habitakhon Haklali*, or General Security Service.) Below are more of the most common acronyms and abbreviations organized alphabetically in English transliteration.

On Gravestones and in Cemeteries

נ"ע נ"ע

Stands for: Nucha/Nucho Eden

Nucha (נוחה) *nucho* (נוחו) *eden*. (עדן)

Pronounced: noon ayin (the names of these two Hebrew letters) or noo-KHAH EH-den (for women) or noo-KHOH EH-den (for men) **What it means:** Hebrew for “Let his/her rest be paradise (Eden).”

פ"נ פ"נ

Stands for: *Po nikhbar* (פה נקבר)

Pronounced: pay noon (the two Hebrew letters) or POH neek -BAHR **What it means:** “Here lies” or “here is buried.”

תנצב"ה TNZB **Stands for:** *Tehi nishmato tzrura btzror hachayim* (תהי נ?מתו צרורה ?צרור החיים)

Pronounced: tuh-HEE neesh-mah-TOE tzroo-RAH beh-TZROHR ha-chayim **What it means:** Hebrew for “May his/her soul be bound up in the bond of life.”

Rabbis and Sages

בש"ט Besht

Stands for: *Ba'al Shem Tov* (בעל שם טוב)

Pronounced: Besht **What it means:** Hebrew for “the owner/master of a good name,” this was the title given to Israel ben Eliezer (1698-1760), the founder of Hasidic Judaism.

רמב"ם Mainmonides (Rambam)

Stands for: Rabbi Moshe (Moses) Ben Maimon, also commonly known as Maimonides, the prolific and influential 12th-century scholar originally from Spain. **Pronounced:** RAHM-bahm

רמב"ן Nachmonides (Ramban)

Stands for: Rabbi Moshe (Moses) Ben Nahman, also commonly known as Nahmanides, a 13th-century Spanish scholar.

Pronounced: RAHM-bahn

רש"י Rashi

Stands for: Rabbi Shlomo (Solomon) Yitzchaki, the 11th-century French scholar best known for his comprehensive Bible commentaries.

Pronounced: RAH-shee

Modern Hebrew

מוצ"ש Motzash

Stands for: Motzei Shabbat.

Pronounced: moh-TZASH.

What it means: Saturday night, after Shabbat officially ends.

צה"ל Tzahal

Stands for: *Tzava hahagana l'Israel* (צבא ההגנה לישראל)

Pronounced: TZAH-hall **What it means:** The Israel Defense Forces (IDF)

For more information:

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/a-guide-to-jewish-acronyms-and-abbreviations/>

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Charlie Case	1
Ellie Sorkin	2
Susan Greenbaum	3
Todd Waldman	3
David Kleinman	4
David Rosenberg	4
Maezy Browning	5
Anya Griesser	5
Julianne Leavy	6
Peter Stern	7
Jude Olin Sun-Suslow	7
Mike Vitiello	7
Louis Kaplan	8
Illia Thompson	8
Edward Zander	12
Jaclyn Marcus	16
Leta McCarty Messinger	16
Cheryl Crose	17
Adrianna Kosmont	19
Rabbi Leah Novick	21
Sunny Sun-Suslow	21
Andrew Dicus	22
Dan Granoff	22
Carl Polhammer	22
Catherine Winter	22
Steven Packer	25
Stanley Semmel	27
Tally Helfont	28
Darcie Kroll	29
Rena Feuerstein	30
Steven River Gurtin	30
Richard Harrit	30

Social Action (Continued from page 4) Religious School parents grades 2 and 3 provided some breakfast and dinner foods supplemented by a delicious homemade Turkey Pot Pie prepared by Charlene and Matthew Schuss, along with Charlene's homemade chocolate cake. Nancy and Barry provided lunch, and Lorraine Gerstel and Judy Levin (a new Social Action participant!) helped with food preparations and serving.

We next serve the Men on Sunday, January 2, 2022 to wish them well for the New Year. We will be hosting the Women's program on Monday, January 31st.

Martin Luther King Jr. March

Stay tuned for information about this year's March, which may be scheduled on Monday, January 17, 2022. If the March is occurring, we will march beneath our CBI Banner. This is a wonderful opportunity for children and their families and for each of us to honor MLK and to stand for racial and social justice—the Dream that Dr. King had, which we share.

If you'd like to participate in our Social Action activities or have Social Action recommendations, please contact me and we'll plan what works best for you.

Arlene Krebs, Social Action Trustee
<arlenekrebs123@gmail.com>



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Matthew Schuss & Charlene Webber-Schuss:
in appreciation of Michael Waxer

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Barry R. Harrow
Laela Leavy: in memory of Arthur Latimer
Steven J. & Ann B. Packer: in memory of Bari
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Malina Breaux

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Nancy Callahan: in honor of Robert Taylor
Fletcher III
LaPointe Family: in memory of Ann Sams
Ellyn Gelson: December Anniversaries & Birthdays

Steven River Gurtin: in memory of Milton
Gurtin

Nick & Aline Harris: in memory of Harry Kite
Cele Passin: in memory of Robert Passin
Stephen L. & Wendie A. Ryter: in memory of
W. Gold, Myron Ryter & B. Goldstein-Smith
Matthew Schuss & Charlene Webber-Schuss:
in memory of Veta Winick
Herbert Stern: in memory of 2021 yahrzeits
Michael & Debora Waxer: in memory of
Nathan Fred Waxer

Social Action

Matthew Schuss & Charlene Webber-Schuss:
in honor of Arlene Krebs

Ethan Biblarz Campership Fund

Bruce & Susan Greenbaum: in memory of
Ann Sams
Bruce & Susan Greenbaum: in honor of
Miriam Lyons and Andrew Dicus becoming
B'nai Mitzvah

Welcome to Our New Members
and Their Families

Joseph & Carol Mironov

Family News

With gratitude to Hashem, Debora & Michael
Waxer are delighted to announce the birth of their
grandson, ***Nachshon Amichai Ben Israel***, in
Jerusalem, to Shira Neshama (***Kira***) and Yehonatan
Ben Israel.

HAPPY
ANNIVERSARY

Leonard & Sheri Chodosh	20
Norman & Diana B. Jacobson	29
Jennifer & Steven Prager	30



Congregation Beth Israel
January 2022
Tevet ~ Shevat 5782

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					31 7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services with Anniversary Blessings ONLY	1 January 2022 New Year's Day 10:30 Shabbat Torah Study Also on
2 No Religious School I-Help Mens	3	4	5 No Hebrew Liturgy Class	6	7 6:00 PM Family Shabbat Services with Birthday Blessings also on	8 10:30 Shabbat Torah Study also on
9 9:00 AM Religious School	10	11 7:00 PM CBI Executive Committee Meets	12 10:00 AM Worship Committee meets 12:00 Lunch with the Rabbi 4:00 PM Hebrew Liturgy Class 7:00 PM Fundraising Committee	13	14 7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services with guest speaker Jeff Schulman also on	15 10:30 Shabbat Torah Study Also on
16 9:00 AM Religious School 1:00 PM Aleynu	17 Tu B' Shvat Tu B' Shvat Martin Luther King Jr. Day	18 7:00 PM CBI Board of Trustees Meets	19 4:00 PM Hebrew Liturgy Class	20	21 7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services also on	22 10:30 Shabbat Torah Study Also on
23 9:00 AM Religious School	24	25	26 12:00 Best Years Lunch RG Burger 4:00 PM Hebrew Liturgy Class	27	28 7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services with Anniversary Blessings also on	29 10:30 Shabbat Torah Study Also on
30 9:00 AM Religious School 1:00 PM Aleynu	31	1 February	2 4:00 PM Hebrew Liturgy Class			



Torah Connections:

Vol. 164 January 2022, 5782

By Michael L. Waxer

What do you seek?

If you were granted a wish, what would it be?
In the Torah story about Joseph being sent out to look for his brothers, and the brothers and their flocks aren't where they are supposed to be, an 'ish' sees him and asks:

"And a man found him and there he was wandering in the field, and the man asked him, saying, 'What do you seek?' (Genesis [Beresheet] 37:15)

Our sages tell us that this man, this 'ish', was none other than the angel **Gabriel**, sent by HaShem ('the name' of God, 'Adonai' is synonymous) at this moment, this crossroad, of history.

When you think about it, this part of the story is so unnecessary: The text could have just had less detail, having Jacob asking Joseph to go find his brothers and the flocks and to check on them. The detail, of going to Shechem to find them, and then this 'ish' happening to notice Joseph wandering and who happened to overhear the brothers saying they are going to Dothan, and then relaying this critical information to Joseph.

Of course, there are deeper ways to analyze this. For example, why would the brothers pasture their flocks in Shechem? Remember, it wasn't that many years prior that Simeon and Levi killed every male in that town for having kidnapped and raped their sister, Dina. One of the reasons Jacob and his family moved south, to the Hebron area, was specifically because of this incident. Yet, Jacob lets his sons and flocks return to that same area? It is as if HaShem gives us a clue that something is out of the ordinary.

What do you seek? Some people see our existence as a purely physical thing... just maximize living life, enjoyment, pleasure. Others see life as a battle of sorts, trying to overcome injustice, disease, sadness. **The Jewish view is to seek a relationship with HaShem, and to seek seeing the essence, the soul (neshama), of each individual you encounter.**

The concept of being 'one' with HaShem, as expressed in the famous verse in Torah,

"Hear O Israel, HaShem is our God, HaShem is One" (Deuteronomy [Devarim] 6:4)

This search for 'oneness' or connectivity, is an essential part of Judaism. In the 5 levels of Jewish soul, the 4th level describes one's soul, and being able to identify other souls. The deepest level, the 5th, **recognizes that each individual soul is connected to each other, and to HaShem.** It is so difficult for us to understand this, as our physical body is such a firm separation. This becomes even more tragic when we look at all the bloodshed throughout history, where there is virtually no understanding of this higher level of being.

What do you seek? Some people believe that God fulfills wishes, like being a celestial genie. If you desire wealth, or status, or possessions.... some say God often grants these wishes, although they can serve to distance oneself from the true opportunity, the real goal. But God can also send an angel to help create more opportunities for individuals to rise to their potential, to recognize the real blessing of our existence.

Judaism often describes **Torah study** as a great way to seek this understanding. The mitzvot, which are given to us in the Torah, are specific tools to help on this journey. But perhaps the key item is to approach the Torah and the mitzvot with **a desire to seek**, to see this God given gift, so we may become aware of our neshama. If one reads Torah as a novel, or a history book, or only at the literal meaning, then one is undermining their ability to receive the insight, to be able to receive the blessings that are part of this higher connection.

What do you seek? Seek HaShem, seek the connection that we all share at the soul level, seek the Torah and the mitzvot, the tools that HaShem has given us to prepare us on this journey. We are here in this physical world to facilitate our soul development, to bring us to a state of holiness that is like that of our Creator. We need to sense this bigger picture, and to seek it out.

May your journey be filled with light, love, and blessings, and may you inspire all those you come into contact with, helping them on their journeys.

This Torah Connection is the sole responsibility of the author and specifically does NOT necessarily reflect those of the Board of Trustees of CBI, CBI, its membership, Reform Judaism, or Judaism. Please send any comments to the author at: mlwaxer@sbcglobal.net.

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Thinking about honoring a
loved one or a special occasion?

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A Yahrzeit Plaque in our sanctuary \$360





Congregation Beth Israel
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E-mail: shalomcbi@aol.com
Website: www.carmelbethisrael.org

Chartered in 1954 as the Jewish Community of the Monterey Peninsula, Congregation Beth Israel today serves the spiritual, educational, and social needs of Jews on the Peninsula. We derive programming and administrative strength from our affiliation with the Union for Reform Judaism and offer traditional programming to meet the needs of most Jews on the Monterey Peninsula. The Congregation sponsors weekly worship services on Shabbat evening and Shabbat morning; observances of all holidays and festivals; and formal educational programs from toddler through adult. We operate our own school on weekend mornings and midweek afternoons, and we also maintain a Judaic library.

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Carmel, CA

Parshiot

January 1, Va'era

T: Exodus 6:2-9:35

H: Jeremiah 46:13-28

January 8, Bo

T: Exodus 10:1-13:16

H: Ezekiel 28:25-29:21

January 15, Beshalach

T: Exodus 13:17-17:16

H: Judges 4:4-5:31

January 22, Yitro

T: Exodus 18:1-20:26

H: Isaiah 6:1-7:6; 9:5-6

January 29, Mishpatim

T: Exodus 21:1-24:18

**H: Jeremiah 34:8-22;
33:25-26**