



CHANUKAH/
PESACH
5777/2017

G E S H E R

Washington Heights Congregation

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Happy Chanukah



A Message From The Rabbi ...

Accepting Surprises

by Rabbi Yaakov Hoffman

Yitzchak's reaction when he finds out he has blessed Yaakov instead of Esav has always puzzled me. Instead of insisting on a do-over, he immediately says *אָג, בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה*, affirming that Yaakov, whom he blessed mistakenly, shall remain so. Why should he have acquiesced so easily? In Judaism we have a concept of *טעות* – when something is done under false pretenses, it has no validity. Yitzchak should simply have said “A blessing is not a magic spell. If I was duped into giving a blessing, it has no value and I can do it over with the intended party.”

Furthermore, even if Yitzchak had felt for some reason that he could not or should not change the address of the blessing, one would have expected a bit of delay before declaring his peace with this outcome. Instead, he declares on the spot that the mistaken blessing should remain in effect.

The difficulties disappear if we adopt Rav Hirsch's ingenious reading of the episode. Rav Hirsch posits that Rivkah's goal in encouraging Yaakov to deceive his father was not actually to “get Yaakov blessed.” It was in order to get Yitzchak to think twice about his mistaken conclusion that Esav was worthy of the blessing. Once Yitzchak realized how easily Yaakov had deceived him, he recognized that Esav had similarly taken advantage of him: he pretended to maintain good behavior in order to make his father think that he could be his true spiritual successor. Once Yitzchak's delusion about Esav came crashing down, he immediately came to terms with the fact that it was Yaakov who was to carry on Avraham's legacy.

Yitzchak Avinu's reaction teaches us an important lesson for living. For each life event, we have a certain vision for how we expect it to unfold. It can be a great source of stress when the plan changes and unexpected developments occur. In such a case, we have a tendency to want to take a time out and desperately try to steer things back onto the course we imagined.

In such a situation, we need to follow the example of Yitzchak, who quickly put the past behind him. He set his sights on making the best of the current situation rather than fretting about what was already done. The effort that it takes to retrain oneself is definitely worth it, for better mental hygiene inevitably leads to more fulfilling spirituality as well. After all, attempting to feel in control by micromanaging one's life deflects attention from the One who is really running the show. 🙏🙏

Shul Events:

The WHC would like to thank **Cantor Shmuel Gilbert**, ba'al musaf with us for a fourth year, and **Cantor Neil Schwarzenberger**, ba'al shacharit, who led a most meaningful tefillah for our **Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services**.

On **Friday, November 18th**, The Bridge Shul hosted its **annual Chinese dinner**, this year in honor of **Rabbi & Leah Bloch** who were in New York for their regular fall visit. Rabbi Bloch, the featured speaker, spoke about Avraham's nephew Lot as representing the compromises and evasions of an essentially good person who recognizes the value of a Torah-based life, but is unable to make the necessary sacrifices and commitments. More than 50 people enjoyed delicious food provided by Kai Fan in Riverdale.

On **Sunday, December 11th**, friends of our former member **Koren Backstrand** o"ch gathered for a memorial to her, held after the end of the shloshim. May Koren's memory be a blessing. Special thanks to **Margot Fein** and **Freda Birnbaum** for making this afternoon happen. A video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=780p-l-y6iw>.

Save the date! Our **annual Tu b'Shvat lunch** will be held this year on the holiday itself, which falls on Shabbat Beshalach, February 11th. Listen to announcements and watch the website for details!

If you have any questions or needs,
please call the Shul office at **(212) 923-4407**
The answering machine is checked frequently.
You may also consult our website at **www.bridgeshul.com**

מזל טוב / Congratulations

To **Alma Schatten** on the birth of a great-grandson in Israel

To **Efraim Vaynman & Dvorah Weill** on the birth of their daughter

To **Sonya Jacobs** on the birth of a great-grandson, and to the grandparents **Shmuel & Michel Jacobs** and to the parents **Devorah & Joseph Chaim Weisz**

To **Monica & Martin Spier** on the marriage of their grandson **Benjamin Chervin** to **Shira Rubin**

To **Adam Roth** on his marriage to **Atara Chouake**

To **Sammy Tocker** on being Chatan Bereishit and **Rabbi Hoffman** on being Chatan Torah

To **Bertha Gruenspecht** on the birth of a great-granddaughter

To **Gloria Spira** on the birth of a great-grandson

To **Marjorie & Charlie Gregor** on the birth of a granddaughter **Rivka Gregor**; to **Aryeh & Tali Gregor** on the birth of a daughter, and to **Noach & Yehudis** on the birth of a sister

Kiddush Sponsors:

Oct. 8, Vayeilech: **Charles & Marjorie Gregor** to celebrate the birth of their granddaughter **Rivka Gregor**

Oct. 17, Sukkot (Day 1): **Judy & Elan Rieser** on the 11th yearzeit of **Dr. Michelle Daman Wasserman**

Oct. 18, Sukkot (Day 2): **Binyamin Dondo** on the yearzeit of his father **Dov ben Avrohom**

Oct. 22, Shabbat Chol Hamoed: seudah shlishit sponsored by **Sarah Klinger**

Oct. 24, Shemini Atzeret: **Sarah Klinger**

Oct. 25, Simchat Torah: **Sonya Jacobs** on the yahrzeit of her husband **Meyer Jacobs** and her father-in-law **Rav Shmuel Jacobs**

Nov. 5, Noach: given by the shul to welcome **Rabbi Ellis & Leah Bloch** to New York

Nov. 12, Lech Lecha: **Martin & Monica Spier** to celebrate the aufruf of their grandson **Benjamin Chervin**

Nov. 19, Vayera: **Adam Roth** on his aufruf and upcoming marriage to **Atara Chouake**

Nov. 26, Chayei Sara: **Morris & Laura Whitcup** on the yahrzeit of Laura's father **Joseph Treitel** o"h

Dec. 3, Toldot: **Efraim Vaynman & Dvorah Weill** to celebrate the birth of their daughter

Dec. 10, Vayetzei: **Margot Fein** on the yahrzeit of her aunt **Anna Fein** o"h

Dec. 24, Vayeshev: **Sam Tocker** on the yahrzeit of his father L'luy Nishmat **Yaakov ben Yosef Matisyahu** and on being Chatan Bereshit

Dec. 31, Shabbat Chanukah: **Rabbi Yaakov & Giti Hoffman** on him being Chatan Torah

If you are interested in sponsoring a Kiddush, please call the Shul office (212) 923-4407

Condolences to:

We regret to inform you of the passing of **Mrs. Edith Baumann** o"h, the sister of **Martin, Walter,** and **Alfred Spier**

We regret to inform you of the passing of **Koren Backstrand** o"h

May they be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

Washington Heights Congregation Zmanim

Winter - Pesach 5777

CHANUKAH SHABBAT PARASHAT MIKETZ

DECEMBER 30-31

Earliest Chanukah candles	3:50
Shabbat Candle Lighting	4:19
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:25
Shacharit (note early start)	8:30
Mincha	4:20
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:24

SHABBAT PARASHAT VAYIGASH

JANUARY 6-7

Candle Lighting	4:25
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:35
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:25
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:29

FAST OF TEVET SUNDAY, JANUARY 8

Fast begins	5:33am
Fast ends	5:22 pm

SHABBAT PARASHAT VAYECHI

JANUARY 13-14

Candle Lighting	4:32
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:40
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:30
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:36

SHABBAT MEVARCHIM PARASHAT SHEMOT

JANUARY 20-21

Candle Lighting	4:40
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:50
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:40
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:43

ROSH CHODESH SHEVAT SHABBAT PARASHAT VAERA JANUARY 27-28

Candle Lighting	4:49
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:55
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:50
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:51

SHABBAT PARASHAT BO FEBRUARY 3-4

Candle Lighting	4:57
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	5:05
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:55
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:59

TU B'SHVAT SHABBAT PARASHAT BESHALACH

FEBRUARY 10-11

Candle Lighting	5:06
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	5:15
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:05
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:07

SHABBAT PARASHAT YITRO FEBRUARY 17-18

Candle Lighting	5:15
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	5:20
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:15
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:15



**SHABBAT MEVARCHIM
PARASHAT SHEKALIM
MISHPATIM**

FEBRUARY 24-25

Candle Lighting	5:23
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	5:30
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:25
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:23

**SHABBAT PARASHAT
TERUMAH**

MARCH 3-4

Candle Lighting	5:31
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	5:40
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:30
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:31

**TAANIT ESTHER
THURSDAY, MARCH 9**

Fast begins	4:45 am
Fast ends	6:29 pm

**EREV PURIM
SHABBAT ZACHOR
PARASHAT TETZAVEH**

MARCH 10-11

Candle Lighting	5:39
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	5:45
Shacharit (note early start)	8:35
Mincha	5:40
Shabbat ends	6:38

**PURIM
MARCH 11-12**

Maariv	6:38
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Followed by reading of the Megillah

TURN CLOCKS FORWARD ONE HOUR

Shacharit	8:10 DST
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**SHABBAT PARAH
PARASHAT KI TISA
MARCH 17-18**

Candle Lighting	6:46
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	6:55
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	6:45
Maariv/Shabbat ends	7:46

**SHABBAT MEVARCHIM
PARASHAT HACHODESH
VAYAKHEL-PEKUDEI**

MARCH 24-25

Candle Lighting	6:54
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:00
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	6:55
Maariv/Shabbat ends	7:54

**SHABBAT PARASHAT
VAYIKRA**

MARCH 31-APRIL 1

Candle Lighting	7:01
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:10
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	7:00
Maariv/Shabbat ends	8:02

**SHABBAT HAGADOL
PARASHAT TZAV**

APRIL 7-8

Candle Lighting	7:09
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:15
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	6:50
Maariv/Shabbat ends	8:10

The Eruv

Information about the boundaries of the Washington Heights and YU Eruvin can be found at http://images.shulcloud.com/131/attachments/6279_DOC082112-003.pdf.

Note that the eruv does not extend into Fort Tryon Park or Gorman Park.

Find the CURRENT STATUS of both eruvim at <http://www.mtsinaishul.com/>, or call 646-450-ERUV, or send a text message (SMS) to 412-213-8991. If only the YU eruv is listed as unchecked, check www.yueruv.org closer to Shabbat, or listen to announcements in shul on Friday night.

Jewish Community Council of Washington Heights & Inwood

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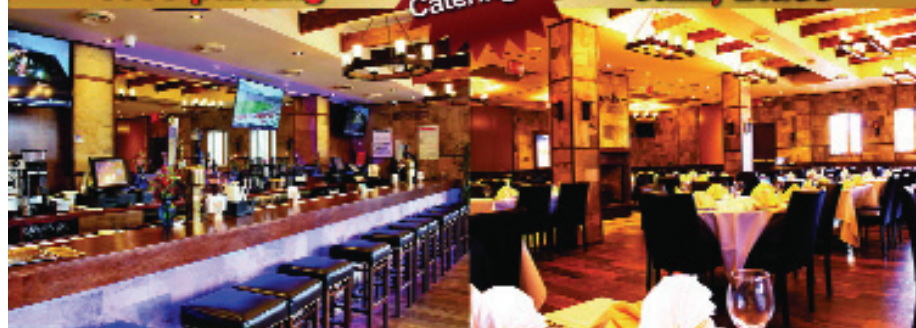


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