



CHANUKAH-
PESACH 2015

G E S H E R

Washington Heights Congregation

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A Message From The Rabbi ...

“Chanukah: A Time to Ponder the Pew Report?”

by Rabbi Yaakov Hoffman


Chanukah, a holiday that celebrates the religious triumph of the Jewish people, is a good time to ponder the relationships between Jews and non-Jews in the world today. One issue that is a major focus of the larger Jewish community today is one of the most extreme manifestations of these: intermarriage. We in the Orthodox community can be somewhat smug about this – after all, this problem is thankfully not so common in our communities.

However, this apathy is misguided. We recently read Parshat Vayishlach, which has one of the most striking examples in the Torah of what one might call a potential intermarriage (although the term is somewhat anachronistic). Dinah, the daughter of our forefather Jacob, is raped by Shechem, who suggests total intermarriage between his people and the Israelites.

How could such a tragic incident have afflicted our great forefather's family? It wasn't because Dinah was flirting with the local boys or actually wanted to intermarry. The Torah tells us וַתֵּצֵא דִינָה בַת לֵאָה... לְרֵאוֹת בְּבִטּוֹת הָאָרֶץ ‘Dinah, daughter of Leah went out... to check out the girls of the land.’ She wanted only to hang out with the girls – a seemingly innocuous display of interest in the local culture. We see, however, that excessive focus on the outside world can lead to a very slippery slope.

Most Orthodox singles feel safe that they will never intermarry. Nevertheless, the struggle against intermarriage does not start there. We may keep mitzvos, but if we follow Dinah's example and we are more enamored with secular culture than with Torah, this could lead some of our descendants on a path to intermarriage ג'ל"ר.

As we look at the striking Chanukah lights, let us let them remind us of the beauty of the Torah-true lifestyle which won out over

Hellenization. We must teach our children that, while some forays into secular culture are okay, we must display to them how uplifting an authentic Jewish lifestyle is. We must cultivate a genuine, overarching desire to serve God that dwarfs other, outside interests. It is our duty in the Orthodox community to address the underlying root cause of intermarriage. This stands a better chance at being effective than waiting to address the problem itself. 

Shul Events:

The WHC would like to thank Cantor **Shmuel Gilbert** and Cantor **Daniel Baum** who led a most meaningful tefillah for our **Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Services**.

On Sunday November 2, The Bridge Shul hosted an **SRO poetry reading and discussion** with award-winning poet **Pinny Bulman**. Pinny, who grew up in the WHC with his parents and siblings, was a member of the congregation until he and his family moved to Riverdale. He read several poems from his magnum opus “Old Shul.” This collection of poems reflects on his childhood and growing up in Washington Heights, with memories of our former location on 179th Street. The poems were poignant, humorous, and brought back the congregation and the neighborhood in decades past. A lively discussion followed the reading. We are proud to have been given permission to print one of the poems that was read; you will find elsewhere in the bulletin.

On November 7th, The Bridge Shul sponsored a delicious **Friday night dinner, in honor of Rabbi Ellis and Leah Bloch**, who were in the States for several weeks. The dinner was followed by Rabbi Ellis Bloch speaking about their adventures as new Olim living in Yerushalayim. The event was catered by Y&Y Caterers.

The WHC Annual Chinese Shabbat Dinner will be held on January 2nd. The guest speaker will be **Rabbi Alec Goldstein**, founder of the Kodesh Press. He received his ordination from RIETS in 2012. He will talk about halacha and intellectual property.

מזל טוב / Congratulations

Mazal tov to **Abba (Abe) Sclar** on being Chatan Bereishit

Mazal tov to **Marjorie and Charles Gregor** on their 30th Anniversary

Mazal tov to **Laura and Morris Whitcup** on their Anniversary

Mazal tov to **Sue-Rae Rosenfeld and Frank Balazs** on their 27th Anniversary

Mazel tov to **Moshe Zechariah Morgenstern** on the occasion of becoming a Bar Mitzvah, and to his mother **Leora** and his grandmother **Esther Morgenstern**.

Mazal tov to the **Moriah Senior Center** on celebrating the 40th anniversary of their founding, providing invaluable services to the senior citizens of our entire community as well as the Washington Heights/Inwood area.

Kiddush Sponsors:

September 27th, "Haazinu" Shabbat Shuva: Rabbi Yaakov & Giti Hoffman

October 17th, Simchat Torah: Sonya Jacobs on the yahrzeit of her father-in-law Rabbi Shmuel ben Chaim

October 25th, Noach: Hadassah Hersh, on the yahrzeit of her husband Dr. Henry Hersh

November 1st, Lech Lecha: Martin & Monica Spier in honor of Rabbi & Mrs. Yaakov Hoffman and Rabbi & Mrs. Ellis Bloch

November 8th, Vayera: Laura & Morris Whitcup in honor of Rabbi Ellis & Leah Bloch and Rabbi Yaakov & Giti Hoffman

November 15th, Chaya Sara: Anonymous sit-down Kiddush in honor of **Rabbi Ellis & Leah Bloch**, and **Rabbi Yaakov & Giti Hoffman**

November 22nd, Toldot: **Rabbi Ellis & Leah Bloch** in honor of the shul and all those who sponsored kiddushim in their honor

December 13th, Vayeshev: Co-sponsors **Margot Fein** on the yahrzeit of her aunt **Anna Fein** and **Sam Tocker** on the yahrzeit of his father **Jacob Tocker**.

December 20th, Shabbat Chanukah: **Rabbi Yaakov & Giti Hoffman** in honor of being Chatan Torah.

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

Condolences to:

Our condolences to **Naavah Deutsch Walker** and to the **entire Deutsch family** on the tragic loss of **Akiva Walker**.

Our condolences to **Ina Sondheim** on the loss of her husband, our longtime member **Heinz Sondheim**, and to **David, Carol, Debbie**, and **Fred** on the loss of their father.

With great sadness we mourn the loss of our oldest and long-term member **Sara Samson**; our deepest sympathy on the loss of their mother and grandmother go to **Sam Samson, Morris Samson** and **Solomon Samson** and their families.

רפואה שלמה /

Best Wishes for a Speedy Recovery

Mr. Gary Deutsch

Mrs. Trude Kahn

Mrs. Esther Morgenstern

Mrs. Rivka Rosenberg

Mr. Ira Schatten

Mrs. Monica Spier

Ms. Dulcie Zirkind

Washington Heights Congregation Zmanim

Hanukkah-Pesach 5775

SHABBAT PARASHAT VAYIGASH, DECEMBER 26-27, 2014

Candle Lighting	4:16
Mincha/Maariv	4:28
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:15
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:20

FAST OF TEVET, THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 2015

Fast Begins	5:37
Fast Ends	5:16

SHABBAT PARASHAT VAYECHI, JANUARY 2-3, 2015

Candle Lighting	4:21
Mincha/Maariv	4:30
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:20
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:26

SHABBAT PARASHAT SHEMOT, JANUARY 9-10, 2015

Candle Lighting	4:28
Mincha/Maariv	4:35
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:30
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:32

SHABBAT MEVARCHIM, PARASHAT VA'EIRA, JANUARY 16-17, 2015

Candle Lighting	4:36
Mincha/Maariv	4:45
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:35
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:39

SHABBAT PARASHAT BO, JANUARY 23-24, 2015

Candle Lighting	4:44
Mincha/Maariv	4:50
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:45
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:47

SHABBAT PARASHAT BESHALACH, JANUARY 30-31, 2015

Candle Lighting	4:52
Mincha/Maariv	5:00
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:50
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:55

SHABBAT PARASHAT YITRO, FEBRUARY 6-7, 2015

Candle Lighting	5:01
Mincha/Maariv	5:10
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:00
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:03

SHABBAT MEVARCHIM, PARASHAT SHEKALIM/MISHPATIM, FEBRUARY 13-14, 2015

Candle Lighting	5:10
Mincha/Maariv	5:15
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:10
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:11

SHABBAT PARASHAT TERUMAH, FEBRUARY 20-21, 2015

Candle Lighting	5:18
Mincha/Maariv	5:25
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:20
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:19

**SHABBAT ZACHOR,
SHABBAT PARASHAT TETZAVEH,
FEBRUARY 27-28, 2015**

Candle Lighting	5:26
Mincha/Maariv	5:35
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:25
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:26

**TAANIT ESTHER/EREV PURIM,
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015**

Fast Begins	4:50
Mincha	TBA
Maariv/Megilla	TBA

**PURIM,
THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2015**

Shacharit	TBA
Mincha	TBA
Maariv	TBA

**SHABBAT PARASHAT KI TISA,
MARCH 6-7, 2015**

Candle Lighting	5:34
Mincha/Maariv	5:40
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:35
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:34

**SHABBAT MEVARCHIM,
SHABBAT PARAH,
PARASHAT VAYAKHEL/PEKUDEI,
MARCH 13-14, 2015**

Candle Lighting	6:42
Mincha/Maariv	6:50
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	6:40
Maariv/Shabbat ends	7:42

**ROSH CHODESH NISAN,
SHABBAT PARASHAT VAYIKRA,
MARCH 20-21, 2015**

Candle Lighting	6:50
Mincha/Maariv	6:55
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	6:50
Maariv/Shabbat ends	7:49

**SHABBAT HaGADOL,
SHABBAT PARASHAT TZAV,
MARCH 27-28, 2015**

Candle Lighting	6:57
Mincha/Maariv	7:05
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	TBA
Maariv/Shabbat ends	7:57

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This year, we expanded our program to include a Wellness Project, offering weekly yoga classes and monthly massage therapy sessions.

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hanging on

light coming reluctantly through
the taped up colored windows in
their rusting metal cages
obscuring the scratched empty benches
the undercarpet places where the floor
breaks like tired voices
reciting worn prayers
later thrown over streetlamps
like old sneakers
fraying holed
maybe a little dangerous
but hanging on.

By Pinny Bulman

A thank-you from Navi (Deutsch) Walker

For every warm smile
For every encouraging word
For every compliment
 Every phone call
 Letter
 Good wish and
 Hug sent through the mail
I know you have been there for me
 And always will be.
Quiet, strong, loving.
This is my community
And I am honored to be a part of it.

**If you have any questions or needs,
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The answering machine is checked frequently.
You may also consult our website at www.bridgeshul.com**

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