

PASSOVER BULLETIN 5784

Congregation House of Jacob Mikveh Israel



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Message from Rabbi Andrews



In the weeks leading up to Purim and Pesach, several supplementary Torah readings are added to the weekly Torah portions. Parshat Shekalim and Zachor are read before Purim, while Parah and HaChodesh are read before Pesach. Each of these additional sections is related to the respective festival it precedes.

Last week, we read Parshat Parah in the synagogue. It deals with the ritual of the Parah Adumah, also known as the red heifer, which is used to purify those who have come in contact with a dead body. This purification is necessary for those making pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Pascal offering, which is timely with the upcoming Pesach holiday.

The Parah Adumah is a Torah obligation that has gained notoriety for its incomprehensibility. Its parameters appear to be so foreign to human logic and cognition that even King Solomon, the wisest of Jewish leaders, was unable to understand its nature.

We traditionally classify commandments such as these Chukot as statutes that we follow without necessarily understanding their reasoning. We list these alongside the other two classes of Torah commandments: Mishpatim and Edot. Mishpatim are social laws necessary to maintain a functioning society. Edot are commandments that remind us of important historical events or truths about the world that we can comprehend. An example of an Edot commandment is the Korban Pesach, which commemorates the Exodus from Egypt.

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, z'l, Chief Rabbi Emeritus of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, questions the traditional definition of a "Chok" as a commandment that appears to have no explanation. In an unpublished sermon, he refers to the Rambam (Maimonides), who points out that according to Sefer Devarim (Deuteronomy 4:6), a Chok will inspire non-Jews with admiration for the wisdom of the Torah and its people. If these Chukkim are incomprehensible, how can the Torah say that non-Jews will admire them?



Rabbi Sacks' response to the question does not delve into the individual commandments but rather connects them with a common thread. He explains that each commandment serves to unite the Jewish community and prevent assimilation by providing distinct cultural markers.

Consider the laws of kashrut. Nobody knows why some animals are kosher and others are not. Yet, in the 19th century, Jews in Europe were, for the first time in many centuries, able to mix on relatively equal terms with non-Jewish society. But if you wanted social advancement, you couldn't take Lord so-and-so to dine at a five-star kosher restaurant.

There were individuals who concluded that if a command did not make sense, then it did not matter if they broke the laws. As a result, in present times, to quote Rabbi Sacks, "the descendants of those families are very Anglo, but no longer very Jewish."

Kashrut was a unifying force that helped us preserve our Jewish identity. Every nation has its own social laws (mishpatim) and rituals to remember its history (edot), but we also have chukkim- laws that are not easily understood but have worked like magic to keep us connected to our Jewish heritage.

Our neighbours sometimes saw things more clearly than we did. There were times when we were so eager to fit in with everyone else that we lost sight of the unique qualities that set us apart. Chukkim may seem confusing when examined closely, but from a distance, they represent our wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the world.

The paradox of chukkim is that sometimes others understand what we don't about Judaism, which can be our most significant source of resilience. Our greatest source of strength may often be what we are tempted to throw away.

As we prepare for Pesach while facing the ongoing war in Israel, we have the chance to reflect on the teachings of Pesach and redemption. This holiday has helped us maintain our unique identity and guided us to look back at our past and ahead to our future, even during the most challenging moments in our history.



Message from David Silver



In decades past, the symbolic leader of liberty in America, President Ronald Reagan, reminded his people to take measure of their advancement by questioning whether they were better off now compared to 4 years prior. The simplicity of the question allowed everyone to reflect on their individual status, as well as that of the nation. As we approach Passover, a festival immersed in the theme of freedom, it is only fitting to use this moment of reflection to measure where we, as a Jewish people, stand in our pursuit of freedom and everlasting liberty.

The answer is not straightforward and depends much on our perspectives. From Calgary looking outward to the greater world, we have lost much of our sense of place amongst the nations of the world. The veil of communal understanding and acceptance has been torn back to reveal a presence of antisemitism which we may have thought was a relic of the past. Public institutions in which, and for which, we have contributed immeasurable resources are now seen as having turned their backs on us. In some quarters, merely walking to Shul has become an exercise in extreme caution. From this global perspective, our collective freedom has certainly taken a step backwards.

How are we faring on an individual level? While there is no way to express a thought that encapsulates a collective picture of the individual narrative, I believe some glimpses of growth were realized in the lives of our fellow members and friends. For example, there are people amongst us who not that long ago were living in what was considered a war zone. The experience of freedom in these households must be palatable. We should be proud as a community to have helped facilitate these life changing experiences.



At the same time, a number of our friends are struggling silently to experience freedom. Illness and worry impede their enjoyment of life. This struggle removes any sense of freedom and creates an existence of servitude to societal forces deemed out of their control. We cannot, and will not, ignore these struggles. In some ways, we are all contending with personal frailties that challenge us to go beyond and capture the light of life that surrounds us. My hope is that you have emerged stronger from the challenge and are more able to carry your success towards helping others. Your neighbours are counting on you. So is your Shul.

Where do we stand as a Synagogue? This question takes on more significance for me this year as I reflect on nearly 4 years as HOJMI's president. As my term nears a conclusion, I believe HOJMI's record of advancement has been mixed. We weathered the storm of Covid and responded well when called to recruit new rabbinic and administrative leadership. I believe our membership is more engaged in the outcomes of our synagogue and have attracted new members to the cause. In doing so, we have given ourselves a bit more room to breathe. Though we are positioned to thrive, we still need that drive to take us to the next level. For this failure, I take responsibility. Rest assured though, I will continue to be present to the needs of HOJMI and work to enable others to enjoy a spiritual and material freedom. Together, HOJMI can become, in the words of Regan, a "shining city upon a hill".

On behalf of my family, and fellow board members, I wish you a restful and enjoyable Pesach. May we all experience freedom this season and witness peace return to the land of Israel.

Chag Sameyach,

David Silver



Do it Right on the Seder Night

The Four Cups:

Wine is preferred, but grape juice is also acceptable. Each cup should hold at least 88.7 mil, and one must drink a majority of this amount each of the four times. NOTE: After imbibing freely of the first two cups, some people end up not drinking the required minimum amount for the third or fourth cup. In such cases using grape juice is clearly preferred.

The minimum amount should be drunk within a 25-second time period, if possible, and it is to be drunk while reclining on one's left side. A man who forgot to recline for the second cup must drink again.

Women are not required to recline, though many have the practice to do so.



Matzah:

Whether using hand-made or machine-made matzah, each person's first piece of Matzah eaten should be the size of 2/3 of a standard machine Matzah (Give each person a small piece from the seder plate Matzahs along with other Matzah from the box to make up the correct amount). For the Matzah used for the Korech sandwich and the Afikomen, the Matzah eaten should be the size of 1/3 of a standard machine Matzah. Each piece of Matzah should be eaten without interruption, preferably within 3 minutes, and within 9 minutes at most. If necessary, soften the Matzah by dipping it in water (not wine!) immediately

before eating. Men must recline while eating Matzah.

One may of course eat more than these minimums, and this is considered praiseworthy. One who cannot eat the minimum should try to eat at least half the normal minimum amounts.

All Matzah eaten at the seder the first time (after reciting the blessings), the second time (the Korech sandwich) and the last time (the Afikomen) should be what is known as Shemurah Matzah if at all possible. Both round hand-made and square machine-made shemurah Matzah are acceptable (machine shemurah will be so identified on the box).

Maror (Bitter herbs):

Vegetables that are acceptable for Maror include grated horseradish, romaine lettuce and iceberg lettuce (even though lettuce is not bitter). Commercially produced bottled horseradish, even if kosher for Passover, may not be used for Maror. One must eat the volume of half an egg (what the stores call a Large-size egg, as opposed to Medium or Extra Large) within a 9 minute period.

Since most people will not eat enough horseradish, lettuce is strongly recommended. Romaine lettuce must be checked carefully for insects (iceberg lettuce is less likely to be infested). Maror is dipped in Charoses before eating, but excess Charoses clinging to the Maror must be shaken off before eating the Maror.

Reclining:

Reclining is required when drinking the 4 cups and eating Matzah. Reclining is done on one's left side, resting against some support like a pillow or the arm of a chair. It does not suffice to merely tilt and hold one's body at an angle.



Magid, Reading the story:

The mitzvah is to understand the story that is being read from the Haggadah, and those who don't know Hebrew should definitely have a Haggadah with an English translation (the story itself may be read in either English or Hebrew, though Hebrew is of course more traditional). If someone will miss part of the reading, be sure at the very least to hear the Four Questions and the answer ("We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and Hashem our G-d took us out") and the section that begins with words, Rabban Gamliel used to say..." (explaining the reason for Matzah, Maror, and the Passover Lamb).



Afikomen:

Meaning dessert, refers to the broken piece of Matzah put aside (or “stolen” by the children) at the beginning of the seder. If it cannot be found, other matzah may be substituted (shemurah matzah, if available). One may not eat after the afikomen, nor may one drink wine. Water, tea and soda are permitted.



After the 4th Cup:

After the 4th cup of wine, the blessing “Baruch ata... al hagefen” etc. is found in the Haggadah. This blessing is recited only if one drank at least 88.7 mil of wine or grape juice from the 3rd or 4th cup. It is proper that at least one person drinks this amount from the 3rd or 4th cup, to be able to recite this blessing for all assembled to answer Amen.



Special Candle-lighting times for Passover

This Pesach Bulletin lists two different times for lighting candles on April 29, 7:23 pm and 9:53 pm. The rule is that on the first day of Yom Tov, we are not permitted to make preparations (e.g. cooking) for the second day, which begins that evening but must wait until nightfall. This means that the earliest time to light candles on the 7th day of Pesach this year is 9:53 pm.

However:

In the last hour and a quarter (the exact number of minutes varies with the season) of the first day of Yomtov, we are permitted to light candles for the second night and cook for the second night's meal as long as the cooked food will be ready, and we will recite Kiddush and eat at least some of it before sunset. This means that we may light candles on the 7th day of Pesach anytime after 7:23 pm (though it is still day) and begin cooking, as long as we say Kiddush and eat some of the cooked food before the sun sets at 8:56 pm.

Tzedakah: Discretionary Fund

The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund assists needy families in Calgary in a quiet and dignified manner, and helps with small-scale shul needs (e.g. library books) not otherwise funded.

To partner in this mitzvah, please send your cheque made out to HOJMI Discretionary Fund to the synagogue office. Thank you!



Passover Schedule 2024

Sunday, April 21st:

9:33 pm - Search for Chametz

Monday, April 22nd - Erev Pesach:

6:45 am - Shacharit followed by Siyum

11:12 am - Latest time for eating Chametz

12:23 pm - Latest time for burning Chametz

& reciting Kol Chamira

8:25 pm - Mincha-Maariv

8:26 pm - Candle lighting

9:34 pm - Begin your Seder

Tuesday, April 23rd - 1st Day of Pesach:

9:00 am - Shacharit

8:30 pm - Mincha-Maariv

9:36 pm - Candle lighting & begin your 2nd Seder

Wednesday, April 24th - 2nd Day of Pesach:

9:00 am - Shacharit

8:30 pm - Mincha

9:44 pm - Conclusion of Yom Tov (Maariv & Havdalah)

Thursday, April 25th - Chol Hamoed Day 1:

6:45 am - Shacharit

7:00 pm - Mincha-Maariv

Friday, April 26th - Erev Shabbat & Chol

Hamoed Day 2:

6:45 am - Shacharit

7:05 pm - Mincha-Maariv with abridged Kabbalat Shabbat

7:20 pm/8:33 pm - Early/regular candle lighting

Shabbat, April 27th - Shabbat Chol

Hamoed:

9:00 am - Shacharit including reading of Shir Hashirim

8:35 pm - Mincha: Eat Seuda Shlishit at home

9:50 pm - Conclusion of Shabbat (Maariv & Havdalah)

Sunday, April 28th - Erev Yom Tov & Chol

Hamoed Day 4:

8:00 am - Shacharit

7:05 pm - Mincha-Maariv

7:22 pm/8:36 pm - Early/regular candle lighting

Monday, April 29th - 7th Day of Pesach:

9:00 am - Shacharit

7:05 pm - Mincha-Maariv *see explanation on page 8

7:23 pm/9:53 pm - Early/regular candle lighting

Tuesday, April 30th - Final Day of Pesach:

9:00 am - Shacharit

10:45 am (approx.) - Yizkor

8:45 pm - Mincha

9:55 pm - Yom Tov concludes (Maariv & Havdalah)

10:05 pm - Earliest time to eat Chametz

Wednesday-Friday, May 1st-3rd:

6:45 am - Shacharit

7:00 pm Mincha-Maariv (Wednesday & Thursday)

Shul Times 2024

Weeks		Weekly Mincha/ Maariv	Friday Mincha	Earliest Candlelighting	Parsha
from:	to:				
March 31	April 6	7:00 PM	6:40 PM	6:54 PM	Shmini
April 7	April 13	7:00 PM	6:45 PM	7:02 PM	Tazria
April 14	April 20	7:00 PM	6:55 PM	7:11 PM	Metzora
April 21	April 27	See Pesach Schedule	See Pesach Schedule	See Pesach Schedule	Pesach
April 28	May 4	See Pesach Schedule	7:15 PM	7:28 PM	Acharei Mot
May 5	May 11	7:00 PM	7:20 PM	7:37 PM	Kedoshim
May 12	May 18	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:30 PM	7:45 PM	Emor
May 19	May 25	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:30 PM	7:53 PM	Behar
May 26	June 1	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:30 PM	7:59 PM	Bechukotai
June 2	June 8	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:30 PM	8:05 PM	Bamidbar
June 9	June 15	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:30 PM	8:09 PM	Naso
June 16	June 22	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:30 PM	8:11 PM	Be'halot'cha
June 23	June 29	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:30 PM	8:11 PM	Shlach
June 30	July 6	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:30 PM	8:09 PM	Korach
July 7	July 13	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:30 PM	8:05 PM	Chukat
July 14	July 20	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:30 PM	8:00 PM	Balak
July 21	July 27	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:30 PM	7:52 PM	Pinchas
July 28	August 3	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:25 PM	7:44 PM	Matot-Masay
August 4	August 10	7:00 pm Mincha Only	7:20 PM	7:34 PM	Devarim
August 11	August 17	7:00 PM	7:10 PM	7:23 PM	V'etchanan
August 18	August 24	7:00 PM	6:55 PM	7:11 PM	Ekev
August 25	August 31	7:00 PM	6:45 PM	6:59 PM	Re'eh
September 1	September 7	7:00 PM	6:35 PM	6:46 PM	Shoftim
September 8	September 14	7:00 PM	7:30 PM	7:35 pm (later candlelighting time)	Ki Tetzei
September 15	September 21	7:00 PM	7:20 PM	7:19 PM	Ki Tavo
September 22	September 28	7:00 PM	7:05 PM	7:03 PM	Nitzavim- Vayelech

Sweet and Savoury Brisket

Recipe and photo from
"Perfect for Pesach"
cookbook



This amazing brisket is so good, you'll even love the leftovers – the longer the brisket sits in the cooking liquid, the more flavourful it gets.

Ingredients

- 1 (5-pound) shoulder roast
- 2 large onions, sliced
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 tablespoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 cup red wine
- 1 cup ketchup

Method

1. Preheat oven to 400 deg F.
2. Place onions into a roasting pan. Place meat atop onions.
3. In a small bowl, combine oil, garlic, salt, and spices, mixing them together to form a paste.
4. Rub the paste all over the meat.
5. In a separate bowl, combine wine and ketchup; pour mixture over meat. Place pan into the oven.
6. Bake at 400 deg F, uncovered, for 20 minutes to brown the meat. Then reduce the oven temperature to 350 deg F. Cover the meat; cook until the internal temperature reaches 130 deg F, approximately 1 hour 30 minutes for medium.
7. Remove from oven. Allow roast to cool, then slice it. Pour pan juices over meat to serve.

Cook's Tip

Even though first cut brisket is considered by many to be of higher quality, I prefer the second cut, which has more marbling, yielding a juicier and softer roast.

Prepare Ahead

To freeze and reheat, slice the meat and pour all pan juices over it. Wrap it really well and freeze it. When ready to serve, defrost overnight in the fridge; then gently heat it at 200-250 deg F, until warmed through.



ALMOND CAKE

*Recipe and photo from
natashaskitchen.com*

DIRECTIONS

Prep: Grease/butter a 9" cake pan or 9" springform pan. Line the bottom with a circle of parchment paper. Preheat oven to 350°F.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cups almond flour, measured correctly
- 4 eggs, separated, room temperature
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 Tbsp lemon zest, grated from 1 large lemon
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds
- Kosher for Passover Confectioners sugar and lemon slices for garnish, optional

Almond Cake Recipe Instructions:

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine 4 egg yolks and 1/2 cup sugar. Beat with an electric hand mixer on high speed 3 minutes or until thick, creamy and lightened in color. Add 1 1/2 cups almond flour and 1 Tbsp lemon zest and use a spatula to fold and stir together until incorporated. Wash and dry attachments from the mixer.
2. In a second large mixing bowl, add 4 egg whites and beat together until stiff peaks form (about 2 minutes). Fold the egg whites 1 heaping spoonful at a time into the almond batter, folding with each addition just until incorporated and scraping from the bottom of the bowl to ensure batter has an even consistency.
3. Once all the egg whites are incorporated and batter is even in consistency (do not over-mix), transfer batter to the prepared baking pan and sprinkle the top with 1/4 cup sliced almonds. Bake at 350°F for 30 minutes or until top is firm.
4. Let cake rest in the pan 15 minutes then run a thin spatula around the sides and invert it onto your hand then place it right side up on the rack. Let cool to room temperature and garnish with powdered sugar and lemon slices if desired.

Dear Members and Friends,

According to Jewish tradition, the first step in preparing for Pesach is the giving of **MAOT CHITTIM** (charity) to help everyone observe the Holiday properly.

As always, many experienced loss and hardship. In our own community, there are families who have suffered profound and significant financial distress and who desperately need your help this year.

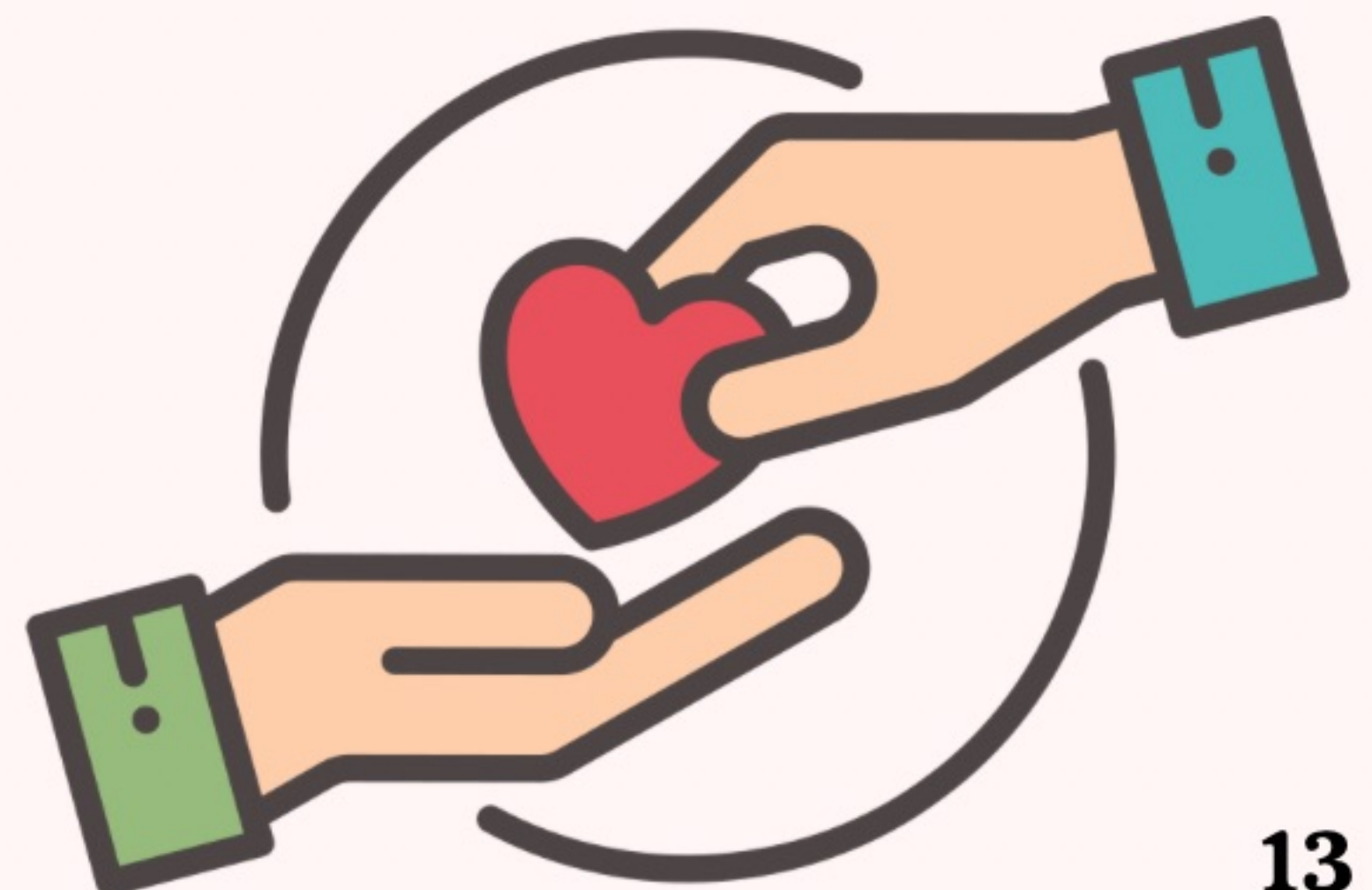
I ask for your compassion and generosity during these trying times.

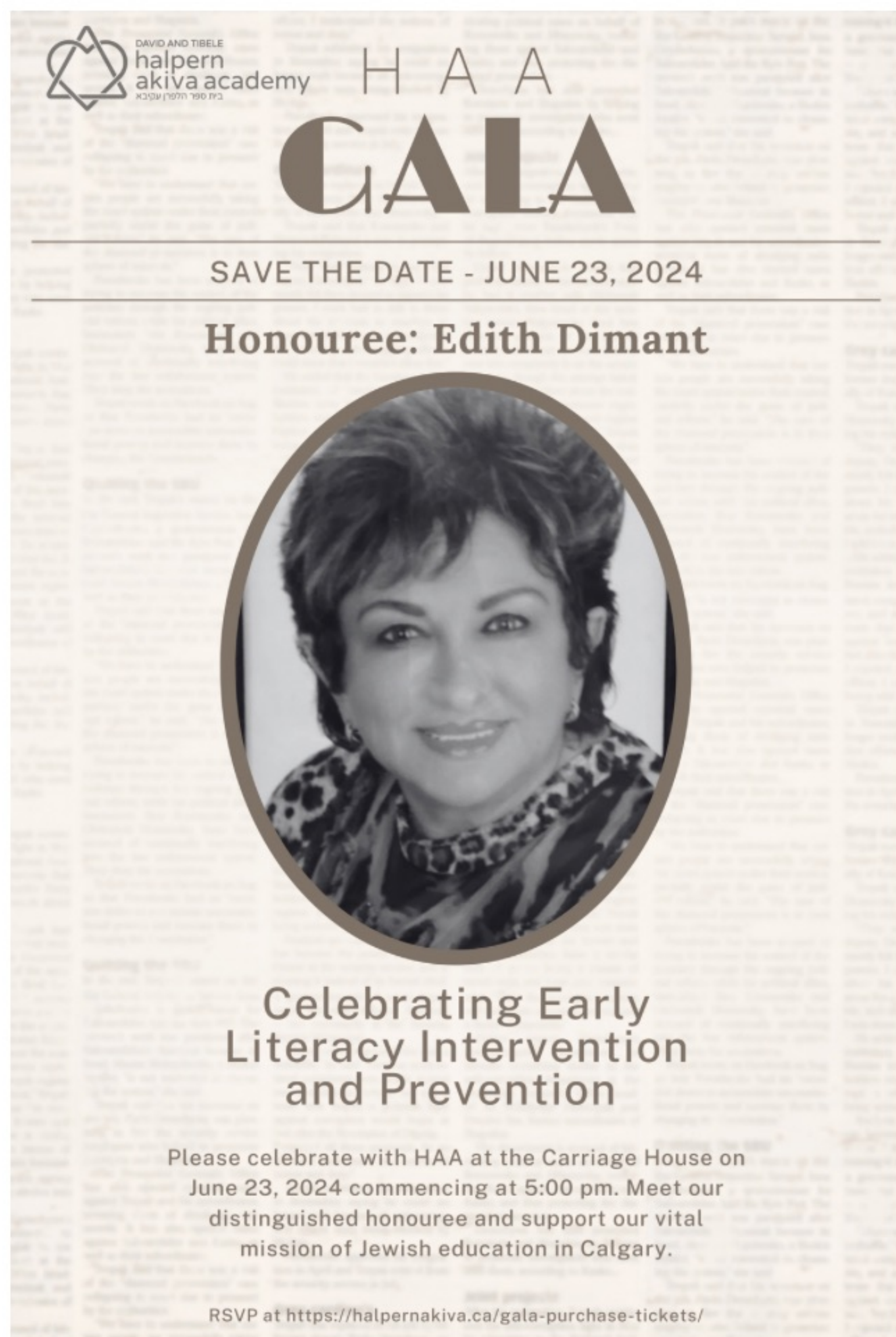
All contributions to the MAOT CHITTIM Fund should be made payable to the Rabbi's Account. Interac transfers can be made using **Rabbi.Andrews.HOJMI@gmail.com** as the contact information.

I thank you in advance for helping to continue this MITZVAH and may we all celebrate Pesach together for many years to come.

Best wishes,

Rabbi Nisan Andrews






DAVID AND TIBELE halpern akiva academy

H A A
GALA

SAVE THE DATE - JUNE 23, 2024

Honouree: Edith Dimant



Celebrating Early Literacy Intervention and Prevention

Please celebrate with HAA at the Carriage House on June 23, 2024 commencing at 5:00 pm. Meet our distinguished honouree and support our vital mission of Jewish education in Calgary.

RSVP at <https://halpernakiva.ca/gala-purchase-tickets/>



Be a Host on Pesach

Would you be interested to volunteer and make sure everyone will have a seat at a Seder table? Please contact us if you would be willing to welcome guest/s on the First and Second (or both) Seder nights.



SECURITY ALARM SYSTEM IN USE

The shul recently upgraded the building's security system. A new CCTV system was installed and the monitor is accessible to everyone for viewing. New panic buttons are armed 24/7 that summon the police when activated. External doors are monitored and motion detectors are in place when building is empty at night.

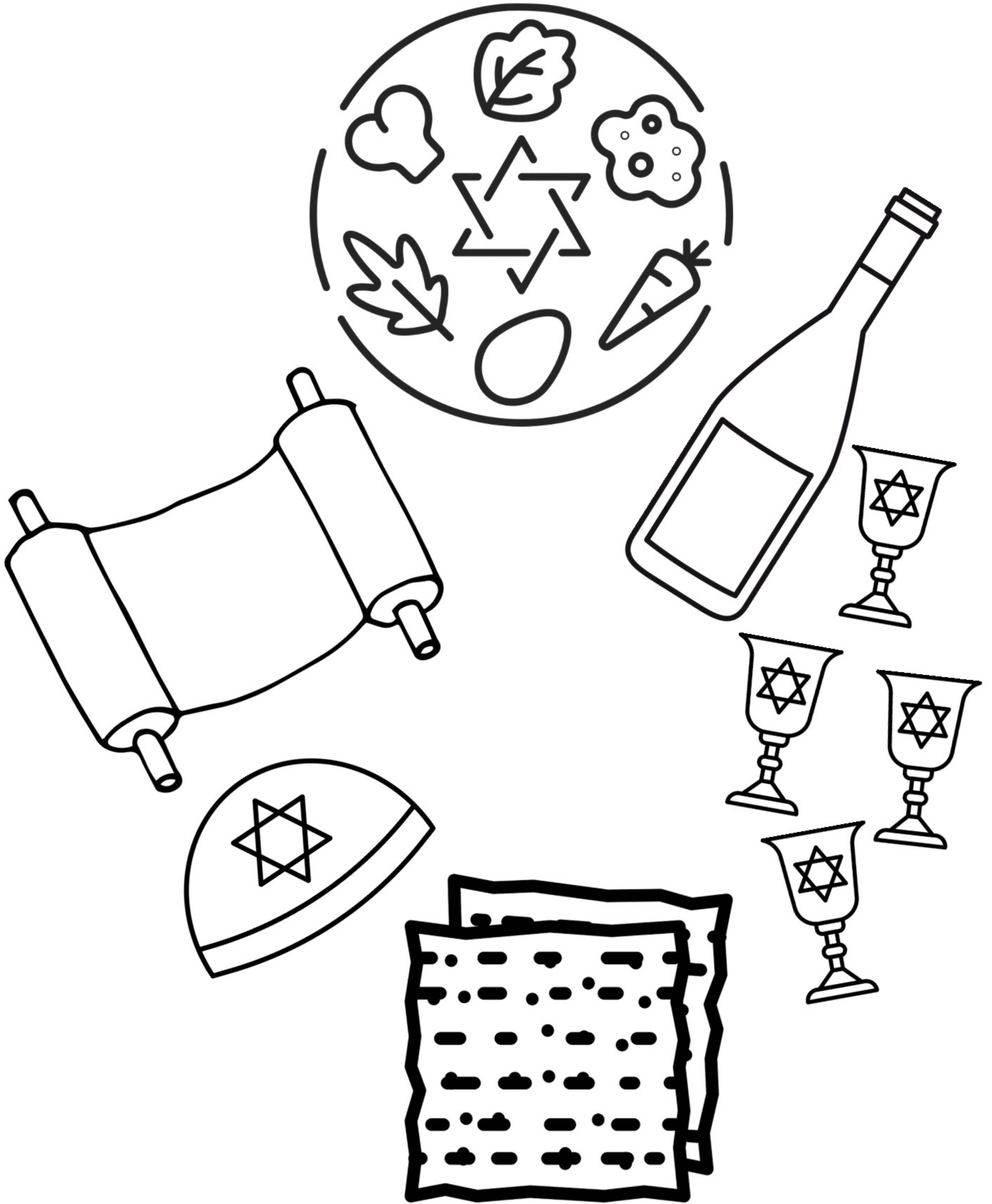
Therefore, please note that all exterior doors are alarmed and motion sensors are active from 12:00 am to 5:30 am.

Please do not enter or exit the shul from 12:00 am to 5:30 am or the security system will be set off.



CHAG PESACH SAMEACH

FROM YOUR HOJMI FAMILY





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