



WINTER/SPRING
5776/2016

G E S H E R

Washington Heights Congregation

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A Message From The Rabbi ...

Putting God in the Acknowledgements

by Rabbi Yaakov Hoffman

Normally, we are taught not to flaunt our observance of mitzvot. Hanukkah, however, seems to be a remarkable exception to this rule. Although not widely practiced this way in the Diaspora, *Halakha* really prescribes that we light the candles outside by our front doorposts, for all passersby to see.

Furthermore, there used to be much more variation in how this mitzvah was fulfilled. The basic requirement is for the head of the household to light one candle every night of Hanukkah, and a more beautiful way is one candle per member of the household. It is only in later generations that the Jewish people universally adopted the most ideal practice of increasing the number of candles each day of Hanukkah. It seems especially inappropriate, then, that our sages established a practice that publicized how stringently we adhered to the commandment! *Chumros* and *Hiddurim* especially are supposed to be a private matter of a person's relationship with the Creator.

Why couldn't our recital of *Al Ha-Nissim* in our prayers have sufficed to thank God for the miracles of Hanukkah? The Talmud emphasizes that we must make a point to publicize our recognition of the miracle – the principle of **פְּרִסְמוֹ גִּיסָא**. But why is this the case? Surely God does not need us to inflate His ego through public acts of recognition!

I think that this principle is not so much for God as it is for us to improve our own character traits. When someone has given us a great deal of help, it can be very uncomfortable to embrace our debt of gratitude fully. It is unpleasant for us to acknowledge our own imperfection and inability to have accomplished the task on our own. It is specifically the act of public thanks that allows us to come to terms with this in a positive way. Private thanks simply do not suffice.

Case in point: Imagine someone helped you write a book, and you simply thanked him or her over the phone when the person really

deserved to be mentioned in the acknowledgements of the book itself. Imagine receiving an award and not including your major helpers in your acceptance speech, even if you acknowledge them privately. Even if the thankee does not care, it reflects poorly on your character that you could not publicly admit you needed others' assistance to attain your current achievements.

The point of lighting the Hanukkah candles outside is so we can internalize that the Jewish people does not struggle against its enemies alone. It is specifically the public acknowledgement of our debt of gratitude to God that humbles us and helps us recognize the true source of our resilience in the story of Hanukkah and indeed throughout our bitter exile. It can also teach us the lesson that when we are grateful to others, thanking them in the proper manner – publicly – is not only to make them feel good. It is to ingrain in ourselves the proper attitude towards acknowledging our own limitations, which can help us both in our interpersonal relationships and our connection to our Creator. 🏠

Shul Events:

We would like to thank our **High Holiday Chazanim Shmuel Gilbert** and **Rabbi Leibie Sternberg** for their lively and inspiring tefilot. They helped make the Bridge Shul's Yamim Noraim a meaningful and uplifting experience.

On Sunday, November 22, our friend **Rabbi Neil Fleischmann** read from his witty and moving poems, some of them touching on the Bridge Shul community, to an appreciative audience. One highlight: given a set of themes by an audience member, Rabbi Fleischmann dazzled us by improvising a poem on the spot.

WATCH FOR UPCOMING EVENTS!

Details will be announced in shul and posted on our website
www.bridgeshul.com.

מזל טוב / Congratulations

To **Hadassah Hersh** on the birth of a great-grandson

To **May and Gary Deutsch** and the entire Deutsch family on the marriage of **Naavah (Deutsch) Walker** to **Josh Brown**

To **Steve Braunschweiger** on being Chatan Bereishit

To **Rabbi Hoffman** on being Chatan Torah

To **Max and Gloria Spira** on the birth of two great-granddaughters

To **Freda Bluestone Birnbaum** on the renaming of part of Cabrini Boulevard after her husband **Ya'akov Birnbaum** o"h. The sign for Jacob Birnbaum Way is at the corner of 187th Street and Cabrini Boulevard

To **Martin and Monica Spier** on the engagement of their grandson **Benjamin Chervin** to **Shira Rubin**

To **Bertha Gruenspecht** on the bat mitzvah of a great-granddaughter

To **Sonya Jacobs** on the engagement of her granddaughter **Hudi Grunwald** to **Daniel Krasna**. Mazal tov also to Hudi's parents **Mark and Chani Grunwald** and her grandmother **Ruth Grunwald**

And to **Sonya Jacobs** on the birth of two great-grandsons

To **Victor and Irina Levin** on the birth of a granddaughter **Sophia Eliana**

To **Rabbi & Leah Bloch** on the birth of a grandson. Mazel tov to his parents **Yossi and Yael** and his brothers as well!

Welcome New Members:

Esther Rodriguez

Steve Braunschweiger

Kiddush Sponsors:

Sept. 28, first day of Sukkot: **Judy & Elan Rieser** on the 10th yahrzeit of **Dr. Michelle Daman Wasserman**

Oct. 3, Shabbat Chol Hamoed: Rabbi Yaakov & Giti Hoffman, seudah shlishit

Oct. 6, Simchat Torah: Sonya Jacobs in memory of her husband Meyer Jacobs o"h and father-in-law Rav Shmuel Jacobs o"h

Oct. 10, Bereishit: David & Shera Serrulha

Oct. 17, Noach: Hadassah Hersh on the yahrzeit of her husband, Dr. Henry Hersh (Zvi Hirsh ben Shraga Faivel) o"h

Oct. 24, Lech-Lecha: Marjorie & Charlie Gregor to celebrate their wedding anniversary

Oct. 31, Vayera: given by the shul to welcome Rabbi Ellis & Leah Bloch to New York

Nov. 7, Chayei Sara: Rabbi Ellis & Leah Bloch

Nov. 14, Toldot: Morris & Laura Whitcup to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary

Nov. 21, Yayetzei: Martin & Monica Spier to celebrate the engagement of their grandson Benjamin Chervin to Shira Rubin

November 28, Vayishlach: given by the shul to thank Bob Wolf for his years of service as our President and to welcome our new President Elan Rieser and the new Board

December 5, Yayeshiv: co-sponsored by Steve Braunschweiger on being Chatan Bereishit and Sammy Tocker on the yahrzeit of his father Jacob Tocker o"h

December 12, Miketz: Rabbi Yaakov & Giti Hoffman on him being Chatan Torah

December 19, Vayigash: Victor & Irina Levin to celebrate the birth of their granddaughter Sophia Eliana

December 26, Vayechi: co-sponsored by Elan & Judy Rieser on the 22nd yahrzeit of Judy's maternal grandmother Alice Einhorn Cohen and Laura & Morris Whitcup on the yahrzeit of Laura's mother Myrna Treitel o"h and the yahrzeit of Morris's grandfather Morris Berlin o"h

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

Washington Heights Congregation Zmanim

Winter to Pesach 5776

SHABBAT PARASHAT

VAYECHI

DECEMBER 25-26, 2015

Candle Lighting	4:15
Mincha/Maariv	4:25
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:15
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:19

SHABBAT PARASHAT

SHEMOT

JANUARY 1-2, 2016

Candle Lighting	4:21
Mincha/Maariv	4:30
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:20
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:25

SHABBAT MEVARCHIM

PARASHAT VA'ERA

JANUARY 8-9, 2016

Candle Lighting	4:27
Mincha/Maariv	4:35
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:25
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:31

SHABBAT PARASHAT BO

JANUARY 15-16, 2016

Candle Lighting	4:35
Mincha/Maariv	4:40
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:35
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:38

SHABBAT PARASHAT

BESHALACH

JANUARY 22-23, 2016

Candle Lighting	4:43
Mincha/Maariv	4:50

Shacharit 8:40

Mincha 4:40

Maariv/Shabbat ends 5:46

SHABBAT PARASHAT

YITRO

JANUARY 29-30, 2016

Candle Lighting	4:51
Mincha/Maariv	5:00
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:50
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:53

SHABBAT MEVARCHIM

PARASHAT MISHPATIM

FEBRUARY 5-6, 2016

Candle Lighting	5:00
Mincha/Maariv	5:05
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:00
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:01

SHABBAT PARASHAT

TERUMAH

FEBRUARY 12-13, 2016

Candle Lighting	5:09
Mincha/Maariv	5:15
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:10
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:09

SHABBAT PARASHAT

TETZAVEH

FEBRUARY 19-20, 2016

Candle Lighting	5:17
Mincha/Maariv	5:25
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:15
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:17

**SHABBAT PARASHAT
KI TISA**

FEBRUARY 26-27, 2016

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

**SHABBAT MEVARCHIM
PARASHAT**

**SHEKALIM/VAYAKHEL
MARCH 4-5, 2016**

Candle Lighting	5:33
Mincha/Maariv	5:40
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:35
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:33

**SHABBAT PARASHAT
PEKUDEI**

MARCH 11-12, 2016

Candle Lighting	5:41
Mincha/Maariv	5:50
Shacharit	(note time) 8:35
Mincha	5:40
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:41

**SHABBAT ZACHOR
PARASHAT VAYIKRA**

MARCH 18-19, 2016

Candle Lighting	6:49
Mincha/Maariv	6:55
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	6:50
Maariv/Shabbat ends	7:48

**SHABBAT PARASHAT TZAV
MARCH 25-26, 2016**

Candle Lighting	6:56
Mincha/Maariv	7:05
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	6:55
Maariv/Shabbat ends	7:56

**SHABBAT MEVARCHIM
PARASHAT PARAH/SHMINI
APRIL 1-2, 2016**

Candle Lighting	7:03
Mincha/Maariv	7:10
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	7:05
Maariv/Shabbat ends	8:04

**ROSH CHODESH NISAN
SHABBAT PARASHAT**

**HACHODESH/TAZRIA
APRIL 8-9, 2016**

Candle Lighting	7:11
Mincha/Maariv	7:15
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	7:10
Maariv/Shabbat ends	8:12

**SHABBAT HAGADOL
PARASHAT METZORA
APRIL 15-16, 2016**

Mincha/Maariv	7:15
Candle Lighting	7:18
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	7:00
Maariv/Shabbat ends	8:20

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**

ברפואה שלמה / Best Wishes for a Speedy Recovery

Dr. David Gitler
Mrs. Trude Kahn

Mr. Ira Schatten
Mrs. Sheva Shtaygrud

Condolences to:

Condolences to the family of our long-time member **Rivka Rosenberg**, o'h.
Condolences to **Gary Deutsch** and his family on the passing of his sister.
We have received the news that **Anni Weisser** o'h, who sometimes attended our services when we were on 179th Street, was niftar in May.

May they be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

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.



HATZOLOH
(212) 230-1000

For current status
of the
Hudson Heights Eruv,
call the Eruv Hotline:
(646) 450-ERUV
3 7 8 8

Jewish Community Council of Washington Heights & Inwood

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