



# The Voice of West Clarkstown Jewish Center

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Av/Elul/Tishrei 5784

Rabbi Jill Hackell

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## Message from the Rabbi:

It's a very unusual year. The last days of August are slipping away, Labor Day is upon us, the kids are returning to school, and yet the High Holidays are still a month away (Rosh Hashanah 5785 begins on the evening of October 2)! It's out of the ordinary, even for a Jewish leap year.

But this has been an unusual year from almost the get-go. October 7<sup>th</sup> - with all the horror that happened on that day and all that it has brought with it - fell on Sh'mini Atzeret/Simchat Torah, the end of last year's High Holiday season. It's been almost a year since the hostages have been in Gaza, almost a year since Israelis from border areas have been evacuated from their homes, almost a year since the war has been raging.

It's been a year where public opinion against Israel has been even worse than usual, a year where college campuses harbored encampments and protests and school administrators defaulted on their responsibilities to contain them, a year where many Jewish students needed to re-examine who their friends really were.

It's been a year where the upcoming US presidential election is on everyone's mind. We have let politics divide us and define us, and we must carefully consider what will be the best path forward together for this country we love.

It has been a tough difficult year, Rosh Hodesh Elul falls on September 4 this year. Elul is the last month of the Jewish year - the month that is traditionally set aside for preparing ourselves to enter the New Year. It is a month where the shofar Sounds each weekday, saying - "it's coming, get ready".

In Synagogue, during Elul we add Psalm 27 to every service. This year, especially, it hits home - speaking of the safety and protection that we long for. Here are some of its verses:

God is my light and my help, whom  
should I fear

God is the strength of my life, whom  
should I dread?

When evil men assail me, to devour me  
It is they, my enemies who stumble  
and fall.

Should an army besiege me, my heart  
will not succumb to fear

Should war beset me, still I would be  
confident.

One thing I ask of God, one thing I  
truly desire

To live in the house of the Lord, all  
the days of my life

To feel God's presence and to  
frequent God's temple.

He will shelter me within His sukkah during terrible times  
Grant me the protection of His tent;  
Raise me up on a rock, out of reach of disaster.

Teach me Your way, God,  
guide me to walk straight on Your path despite the turmoil around me.  
Look to God. Be strong and of good courage. Look to God.

As we enter the month of Elul, a month of contemplation and preparation, let us pray together that the best that humanity can be is able to conquer the worst that humanity can be. Let us pray for peace and kindness - for each of us, for our community, for Israel and for the world.

Shimmy and I wish you and your loved ones a *Shana tova u'metuka* - a year of sweetness and goodness, a year of joy, health and peace.

*Rabbi Jill*

#### Ask Our Rabbi (Sept/Oct 2024)

**Q: How does Judaism prove the existence of God?**

**A: Proof of the existence of God is more in the realm of philosophy than religion.** Philosophers study HOW we know WHAT we know. Judaism's great philosopher, Maimonides, offered his own "proof" of God's existence by way of reason. He reasons that the universe is not empty. Therefore, it is dependent on a necessary Being, which is independent of anything else. If this Being is independent from everything else, it derives its existence from itself. Only one Being derives its existence from itself, and that is God. (I am not a philosopher, and what I've written is a big oversimplification of Maimonides' proof.

See Maimonides "Guide for the Perplexed" if you want to know more, but I don't find this philosophical "proving God" process helpful to me).

**Overall, Judaism has not concerned itself with "proving" the existence of God.** The religious person (person of faith) only needs to look out at the world, and to wonder about the world's existence and design in order to intuit that there is something beyond us that gives order and meaning to life, and that something can be called God. (And, yes, I am a scientist, and I subscribe to Darwinism and the Big Bang, and yet when I look at the world, I feel something bigger and beyond me). Go out into the world. Smell the flowers. Look at the intricacies of the patterns on the leaves. Look into the eyes of your grandchildren. That's all the proof of God I need.

#### **\*\* INFORMATION \*\***

Congregation Sons of Israel (CSI) in Nyack has a Cemetery in Blauvelt.....  
Lovely, Peaceful, Small, Easy to Visit -  
**Temple Israel Memorial Park**  
(there's even a separate section for Jews with a non-Jewish spouse).  
Plots are available. For information contact  
CSI Cemetery Chair  
Larry Kintisch 845-353-  
0885 [LKint@verizon.net](mailto:LKint@verizon.net)

## Sisterhood News

Shalom Rav!

The hot days of summer are coming to an end and that means The Ten Days of Awe will arrive soon after.

Starting with the first month, Tishrei, from Aramaic "Sherei" it is truly a new beginning for us and for Jews worldwide. The sign is Libra, Balance, hopefully our sins and merits will balance each other.

Seven of us met together at BJ's Brewery on June 26 for our annual Ladies Night Out. It was a wonderful evening filled with joy and laughter plus delicious food. Varied conversations abounded about our lives, the war in Israel and other topics. We all left very satisfied.

Since BJ's would not redeem us the 20%, I took it upon myself to make it up. I sent a check to Fran. I did it as a labor of love for Sisterhood & WCJC.

Our mission is to continue to promote our Judaism and Sisterhood for future generations. Never let it cease.

Good habits never die. Make it a habit to attend Shabat Services regularly. It is a rewarding experience.

Friendships have been formed over the years and we support each other in times of need. Your membership helps to make us stronger. After services a delicious lunch is served.

Steve & I will be traveling in August to Greece, Italy & Turkey on cruises. The first cruise with family in Greece and then just us to the 3 countries. I am looking forward to relax, absorb culture, enjoy ethnic food and meet people. Israel is not on our agenda this year.

From my family to yours, a healthy, happy, sweet and peaceful Rosh Hashanah. May there be an everlasting peace.

L'het'ra'ot

**Sheila Paris**

## Men's Club News

Hello all congregants,

We are heading into the cooler months of September and October. This means that the high holidays are not that far away. The new year of 5785 starts in early October.

Save the date of Sunday, September 25 th for our next Mexican Train game day event. The cost will remain at \$12 per person. Other details will be disseminated via e-mail as we get closer to the date.

The Men's Club and I urge everyone to try and attend at least one full Shabbat weekend a month of services.

Fraternally yours,

**Steve Paris**

## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Diane Klein	Sept. 12
Douglas Goldstein	Sept. 12
Marianne Ansel	Sept. 17
Howard Geneslaw	Sept. 23
Marc Levine	Sept. 30

## September Yahrzeits

Harry Yaruss	Sept. 6
Marilyn Sanders	Sept. 8
Jeanette Cohen	Sept. 8
Donald Laurence Kletsky	Sept. 9
Fannie Zwirn	Sept. 10
Sigmund Paris	Sept. 10
Howard Berg	Sept. 12
Joseph Schleier	Sept. 14
Charles Adelson	Sept. 15
Bessie Zinn	Sept. 16
Rose Smith	Sept. 17
Anna Ellner	Sept. 18
Murray Rose	Sept. 18
Allen Schomberg	Sept. 19
Frances Weinstein	Sept. 19
Gilbert Benson	Sept. 20
Benjamin Alpert	Sept. 21
Lottie Klotz	Sept. 22
Henry Feurestein	Sept. 23
Irene Gaswirth	Sept. 25
Rose Kleinman	Sept. 25
Morris Sternberg	Sept. 26
Hyman Weinstein	Sept. 27
Rose Wittlin	Sept. 27
Samuel Silver	Sept. 29
Rudy Illowsky	Sept. 29
Minie Silver	Sept. 29

## October Birthdays

Michael Levine Oct. 30

## October Yahrzeits

Murray Sachs	October 1
Gertrude Prager	October 2
Jack Schiffman	October 3
Anne Seltzer	October 3
Harry Steinberg	October 4
Benjamin Jacobson	October 4
Claire Weinstein	October 5
Bob Spellman	October 6
Manny Markman	October 7
Irving Tauber	October 9
Anna Rosenblum	October 9
Jerry Lite	October 9
Esther Gologer	October 11
Manny Elgisser	October 13
Moses Samuel Ingber	October 14
Lena Friedberg	October 17
Gerry Weiss	October 17
Clarence Sanford Davis	October 20
Paul Weiss	October 21
Mollie Levine	October 25
Loretta Klein	October 26
Toby Binenfeld	October 26
Felice Finkelberg	October 29
Abram Schoenfeld	October 30

## Donations

Steve & Sheila Paris in memory of his mother Roma Paris

Ruth Geneslaw in memory of her father Benjamin Weinberg

Lillian Zinn in memory of her mother Rebecca Silberzan

Victoria Stone in memory of her uncle Jaques M. Leventhal

Susan Ravner in memory of her father Jack Ravner

Al & Linda Scherzer in memory of his father Julius Scherzer and her father Seymour Shomberg

Lori Goldstein in memory of her father Herman Goldberg

Dina Ingber Stein in memory of her mother Ilse Ingber

Sharon Zall in memory of her mother Pearl Zall

## Help WCJC by Selling on E-Bay

Barbara & Julie Shair have access to an E-Bay website. Items can be sold here.

Please donate jewelry...costume, gold, silver, single earrings or parts of a piece are acceptable.

Small antique items can be listed.

You can bring items to Harriet in the office Tues. or Thurs. 10:00 A.M. to 12:00.

The funds will support our Kiddishes.

Call: **Barbara Shair 845-354-7223**

Remember before you throw away we use e-bay.

## Sunshine Cards

from-Fred & Michele Finkelberg  
- to- David Tessel - Thanks for all of your help.

from-Lil Zinn - to-- Rabbi & Mrs. Lichter - Mazal Tov on you daughter Malky's engagement  
from -Lil Zinn - to-- Rabbi & Mrs. Braun - Mazal Tov on the engagement of your grandson, Pinchas

## Sympathy

from Sheila & Steve Paris, Fred & Michele Finkelberg -  
to- Esther Steinholz - In memory of Harold Steinholz  
from -Sheila & Steve Paris  
- to- Lois Feigenbaum - In memory of your brother, Harold Steinholz