

Congregation Etz Chaim



74 Billings Street, Sharon, Massachusetts 02067
www.etzchaimsharon.com
(781) 784-7204

Treasurer: George Monat
Secretary: Janis Monat
Member at Large: Robert Dell
Member at Large: Michael Ferber
Member at Large: Rabbi Chuni Rappoport

Synagogue
Member



Parasha Vayechi

14th of Tevet

Lik ner 4:06 PM

Shabbos Day

Shacharis 9:00 AM

Latest Shema 9:31 AM

Latest Tefilla 10:17 AM

Mincha 4:05 PM

Shabbos ends 5:11/5:37 PM

Unfortunately, no shabbos services.

Shabbos Day at YI

Mincha 4:06 PM

Ma'ariv 5:07 PM

Havdalah 5:12 PM

Weekday Young Israel

Mincha/Ma'ariv 4:06 PM

(T. & Th. Ma'ariv) 9:00 PM

Shabbos Day at Chabad

Mincha 12:25PM

Shabbos ends 5:12 PM

Maariv 5:27 PM

Sunday at Chabad

Mo. – Th.

Maariv 7:00 PM

TORAH LEARNING

Rabbi Hartman's class is Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

Zoom ID: 903 917 1656

Password: 170 smain

SHMIRAS HALASHON class: M. & Th. 9:15 a.m.

Please contact Janis Monat: jbmonat@aol.com for the link.

DAF YOMI WEEKDAY ZOOM SCHEDULE

Via Zoom: Mon - Th 7:00 pm and Tu & Th 7:30 am

Meeting ID: 822 979 966

Password: 727190

DAF YOMI LIVE SCHEDULE:

Shabbos mornings at shul, 8:00 a.m., one hour before shacharis;

Sunday mornings at shul, 7:00 a.m., one hour before shacharis.

Contact Melvyn Huff

(781) 784-6608) or

melvynhuff@comcast.net for more information

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RABBI REISMAN

Watch as the **Book of Daniel** is brought to life with Rabbi Yisrael Reisman's famous thought-provoking *Navi class*, taking place every Saturday night at Congregation Etz Chaim. Beginning time is 7:30 p.m.

ETZ CHAIM BOOK CLUB

Our next read is ***By Any Other Name*** by Jodi Picoult. Copies are on hold at the Circulation Desk at the Sharon Public Library under the name "Congregation Etz Chaim Book Club." We shall meet to discuss it on **Monday, January 5th at 7 p.m.** via Zoom.

BOARD MEETING

Etz Chaim's next board meeting will be Wednesday, **January 7 at 6:00 p.m.** via Zoom. Please contact Janis Monat jbmonat@aol.com for the link. All are WELCOME!

GUEST LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

Rabbi Martin "Mendy" Rosenfeld of Teaneck, NJ, the Etz Chaim Yamim Noraim guest rabbi for the past several years, will begin a cost free, **interactive parasha class on Sunday, January 11** at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Rabbi Rosenfeld presents warmly and with wisdom.

Kindly RSVP to Janis Monat, jbmonat@aol.com for the link. All are welcome!

PRAYERS FOR THE STATE OF ISRAEL

May Hashem hear our prayers for the last deceased hostage to be returned now! **Staff Sgt. Ran Gvili is being held by Hamas, now 812 days as of this Friday's writing.** He was a 24-year-old Israel Police Special Patrol Unit "Yasam" **volunteer** from Meitar in southern Israel who **rescued roughly 100 Nova Music Festival survivors and killed 14 Hamas terrorists** during the battle near Alumim. Then **he was abducted and murdered.** **AJC is running this ad in Times Square so the world will know that Hamas is still holding Ran's body hostage.** May the people of Israel be granted the gift of shalom! **Am Yisrael Chai** 🇮🇱

REFUAH SHELAIMA

We continue to pray for the healing of the families mourning their loved ones murdered in the Bondi Beach massacre, the Brown University engineering classroom and the home of the MIT professor, Nuno F.G. Loureiro. We pray for the healing of all those injured in these attacks.

We pray for returned health to Heidi Goldblatt, Rachel Chana bas Menucha; Robert Dell, Chana Reuven ben Leah; George Monat's sister-in-law, Shayna Baila bas Rachel; Tzila Pass, Tzila Chava bat Rachel; Marve Rudenstein, Menachem Yitzchak ben Raitza; and Larry and Susan Cable: Eliezer ben Pesha and Shulamis bas Breindel Bashya. May HaShem speed **their** full recovery.

THOUGHTS on parasha Vayechi and the Tenth of Teves, the yartzeit of my father, Chaim Leib ben Binyamin, haLevi by Janis Monat

Vayechi, means "**He Lived**". This is the final parasha in Bereishis and it opens as Yaakov is preparing for his death. He requests that his son, Yosef, swear to bury him in Canaan, in the cave of Machpelah. Yaakov then

blesse Yosef's two sons, Ephraim and Menashe, the first Biblical account of a grandparent blessing a grandchild, and his other 11 sons. (They were 12 tribes as Yosef was blessed through his sons and Shimon and Levi were blessed together). After Ya'akov dies his sons bury him and the parasha ends with Yosef's death, 54 years later. How telling it is that as I write this note it is on the 14th yartzeit of my father, Chaim Leib ben Binyamin, haLevi, Harold Leon Brainin, whose soul left him on the 10th of Tevet in 2012.

What Yaakov left the family was his honest appraisal of his sons' mistakes, notably Reuven, Shimon and Levi, as well as the promising attributes of sons Yehuda, Zebulun and Yissachar, and the others. What my father left us was the model of his kindness toward others, his great pride for Israel, and his wish that "his girls would get along", I being one of 3 sisters... and yes, later in life we did.

One particular blessing which Yaakov gave to Yehuda, ch. 49:12, "...He will be white toothed from milk," especially resonated with me. My parents were known for their warm smiles. Upon entering the home my sisters and I and guests were always greeted this way. After my dad, then my mother passed away, 2012 and 2024, friends and family related that same feeling they felt when my parents offered their warm, welcoming smiles. Literally, theirs was both bright and "white!"

My father was an avid supporter of Israel, as was my mother, Rivka Petal bas Yitzchak, and was constantly amazed at the country's ingenious ways to win wars aggressed by its Arab "neighbors". Today, decades after the peace accords with Egypt and Jordan, due to Israel's inventive genius, it provides Egypt with natural gas and Jordan with desalinated water. My father would have smiled knowingly and proudly for Israel conceiving these engineering, economic, inventive "miracles".

My dad wisely would add, "You just don't know what's behind the scenes." We have learned from 10/7/23 to be aware of and act on early warning signs, such as our G-d given decision to preemptively act leading to a successfully short Six Day War.

Regarding the 10th of Tevet, the Babylonian siege of the Temple walls, Chabad reminds us that, "Whenever a Jewish society loses its moral clarity, whenever unity gives way to internal fracture, whenever faith becomes routine rather than commitment, the **siege** begins again". Yet the prophets didn't place blame solely on Babylon. They insisted that the Jewish people's internal strength—moral, spiritual, and communal—which was needed for Jerusalem's true defense - was lacking. There is a danger in "normalization".

We must not take our comfort in America for granted. When antisemitism is rebranded as "criticism," when Jewish self-determination is treated as uniquely illegitimate, and when moral clarity is blurred under the guise of progress, **the siege quietly tightens** and the seeds of destruction are put in motion. Jews in the diaspora are increasingly told—explicitly or implicitly—that their acceptance depends on distancing themselves from Israel and suppressing their connection to Jewish peoplehood. This, too, **is a siege.**" We must recognize early warning signs like falsehoods hardening into consensuses.

I heard these ideas/warnings from a wise theologian, Dr. Kenneth Levin, a Newton psychiatrist and historian. His present book, *Canary on the Couch*, has these messages in it.

We must speak even though at times silence feels safer, (I think of Iranian street protests), defend the truth, and strengthen our unity before pressure fractures us. As in Jerusalem then, the walls have not fallen, but the pressure is constant and the intent is clear.

This condition that can recur at any time. Presently Chinese military drills are sending "stern warnings" to the U.S. and Japan regarding their support of Taiwan. The world has learned from Hitler, Iran, and some Arab countries/terrorist organizations that "exercises" can and do turn into attacks.

3,000 years later we are here and the Babylonians are not. The tribal sons promised their father, Yaakov, "Listen, Israel, the L-rd our G-d, Adomye is One." Then and now, we have had humility in putting our lives in Hashem's hands, believing in Hashem despite our millennium in the diaspora, and being united in our shabboses, reading the same Torah in every synagogue throughout the world each week.

This shabbos is George's and my secular 38th wedding anniversary. May our decision to make a Jewish home carry us into the future as our present carries the past.

And may the fast of the Tenth of Tevet be turned into a day of joy and clarity for Israel and all humanity. L'chaim... to my father, to life, and to you! A wonderful shabbos of shalom and a welcoming smile!