From Pesah to Shavuot

Sefira – Counting the Omer

At the second Seder, we began daily sefirat ha-omer (counting of the omer), a counting of days to Shavuot, the next major festival. The counting, preferably done each night for 49 nights, is an expression of eager anticipation, commemorating the period of expectation and preparation we experienced in the Exodus from Egypt until the revelation at Sinai.

The simple home ceremony is printed in most siddurim (prayer books), including Sim Shalom, immediately after the weekday evening service. While it is a mitzva prescribed for adults, sefirat ha-omer can also be a fun, artistic and joyous ritual for families with children.

In the days before printed calendars, calendar watches and daily newspapers, the sefira served to keep the liturgical calendar of the Jewish People synchronized, no simple accomplishment, given the dispersion and isolation of much of the community. The term omer refers to the measure (one handful) of grain that was used to create a physical relic of the counting. With a physical reminder, even illiterate people could do a recount in case they forgot the day’s number.

Families with young children may use this opportunity to help their children understand

Fiber Artist Wendy Rabinowitz to Exhibit

Fiber artist Wendy Rabinowitz will usher in Spring at BEKI on 8 April and through early June, with her exhibit “YAHI OHR V’YAHI OHR - Let There Be Light and There Was Light,” a series of dynamic weavings inspired by Jewish prayer, story, and tradition. Rabinowitz describes her artwork as “…one-of-a-kind…weaving/mixed media assemblages that are deeply rooted in the power of Judaism, nature, and the sacred responses of the spirit.”

For over 30 years Rabinowitz has been developing her craft, focusing

Shabbat Schmooze: Inmate Education

Zelda Roland, the Director of the Yale Prison Education Initiative at Dwight Hall will be at BEKI for a Shabbat Schmooze on 28 April to talk about her ongoing work to bring high quality liberal arts education to incarcerated students in Connecticut. Roland is working to develop and implement Yale’s education programs in local correctional facilities. She also hopes to support and increase the impact of existing student- and faculty-led projects addressing issues of mass incarceration, education access, and criminal justice reform. On these
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Ask us about establishing a fund, trust or annuity to ensure BEKI's future.

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News

Pesah to Shavuot
Continued from Page 1

and experience anticipation, planning, counting and hope.

Teach us to number our days, that we may attain a heart of wisdom — Psalm 90:12

BEKI’s Practically Annual LaG BeOmer* Kumsitz** Campfire Singalong

Wednesday 2 May 2018 (Late on the Day of 32 Omer) 6:15p-8:30p at location to be announced (indoors in case of rain, sans campfire). Free Parking.

Directions from BEKI: Go south about a mile and look for campfire.

This Hebrew/Judaic Singalong is made possible by our hosts and supported by the Morris & Sara Oppenheim Endowment for Sacred Music at Beth El-Keser Israel. Event is Free and All are Welcome. For more info contact office@beki.org 203.389.2108 x14 or visit us at www.beki.org.

*LaG BeOmer: The 33rd day of counting of sheaves; some obscure Jewish celebration; just come and have fun.

** People kum to zing und dey sitz down.

Shavuot Two-Day Festival: The Jewish Hajj

The Festival of Shavuot (“Weeks”), one of the three major pilgrimage festivals, celebrates the anniversary of the Giving of the Torah at Sinai some 3,330 years ago. The word hag (pilgrimage festival) is known widely by its Arabic cognate, hajj (which, for Muslims, means pilgrimage to Mecca). The Torah commands, “Three times a year—one on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, on the Feast of Weeks, and on the Feast of Booths—all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place that He will choose. They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed, but each with his own gift, according to the blessing that the Lord your God has bestowed upon you” (Deut. 16:16-17).

Shavuot comes at the culmination of the counting of seven weeks from Pesah, and will be a major observance at BEKI this summer. Just as we look forward to important events in our personal lives, so too our ancestors enthusiastically and devoutly anticipated the event at Sinai. By participating in BEKI’s Shavuot observance, we re-enact the extraordinary experience of our ancestors and show our own enthusiasm for receiving Torah.

The traditional greeting is Ḥagg Sameaḥ – חג שמח – Happy Festival.

Tiqun Leil Shavuot

Our annual Tiqun Leil Shavuot Night of Study takes place on the first night of Shavuot, Motse’ei Shabbat (Saturday night) 19 May 2018. Dairy and pareve refreshments will be served.

The Shabbat mina afternoon service is 5:45p to 6:20. The Shavuot evening begins with the Festival Evening Service from 8:15p – 8:30p in the George G. Posener Daily Chapel. A shiur (text study or lecture) will begin at 8:30p. Candle lighting (home ritual) is at 8:49p. At 9:45p, another shiur will begin, followed by an additional session presented late into the night. Doors are locked at 11p so come early.

Please see “This Week at BEKI” and the May Mid-Month Mailing for a complete list of presenters and schedule.

Shavuot Mornings

Yizkor Memorial Service Book of Ruth

The Shavuot First Day Festival Shaharit Morning Service begins at 9:15a on Sunday 20 May 2018. The service includes the recitation of full Hallel. The afternoon and evening services begin at 5:45p. Candle lighting Sunday night is at 8:51p or later.

The Shavuot Second Day Morning service begins at 9:15a on Monday 21 May 2018. The Festival service includes a Shaharit morning service, Hallel (Psalms of praise), a Torah reading and Haftara. Following the Haftara (prophetic reading), the Yizkor Memorial Service is held. The Yizkor memorial service is one of four such services during the year that help us recognize our feelings of loss, which are sometimes especially intense during the Festival season, and to honor the memories of our loved ones.

Following Yizkor, the Book of Ruth is read to a uniquely beautiful and ancient melody based on the same system of ta’amei hamiqra (“trope”) found in most of the Hebrew Bible. Then the Festival Musaf additional service is recited.

Some Congregants may leave during qiddush for a hike to the top of West Rock. Weather permitting, bring appropriate shoes and leave with friends from the lobby.

The Festival Minha service is held in the George G. Posener Daily Chapel from 5:45p to 6:05p.
Art Exhibit
Continued from Page 1

on themes concerned with the earth, peace, healing and women's issues. Originally from Chicago, she currently lives in the Berkshires of Massachusetts where she works out of her Living Threads Judaica studio. In addition, she leads workshops on the power of Judaic art, rituals and the creative process.

Rabinowitz, whose ancestors include Sephardic Rabbis and women who were members of a large weaving community in Bielsk, Poland, combines the spiritual and the tangible through a Biblical “G-d wrestling” which is then transformed...”into shalom, peace, and simcha, joy.” Educated as an artist at the Art Institute of Chicago and in Jewish thought by several rabbis as well as at the Kabbalah Centre in Boston, Rabinowitz is represented in galleries, museums, synagogues, and private collections in the United States and Israel, including the United Nations, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and the Spertus Jewish Museum.

Her series, ‘V’I’MO-TEI-NU (And Our Mothers)” has traveled extensively throughout the U.S., and her seminal work, “Women at the Wall: A Call for Peace,” (which will also be included in the BEKI exhibit) was featured in the United Nations exhibit, “Miracles of Peace” in 2003 and 2007.

“Women at the Wall,” Rabinowitz explains, “is a symbolic container for all our cries, lamentations, pleas, exhalations, prayers and gratitude. We come to The Wall to find the place that holds our common humanity, that transcends and encompasses time and space, that connects us to our sacredness and tradition.”

Rabinowitz uses religious and visual techniques in the creative process. “As I seek to bring these images forth, they are connected to my commitment to the earth, peace, interfaith dialogue, women’s experiences, ritual and healing. My intention “kavannah” is that these artworks will be a visual pathway of connection and spiritual renewal.”

Rabinowitz will talk about the exhibit at BEKI on Shabbat 5 May, at 12:45p following Shabbat qiddush.

Schmooze: Prison School
Continued from Page 1

Successful university partnerships in prisons, such as those through Bard College as well as Wesleyan University have shown that liberal arts education can transform the lives of students, educators, and institutions of higher learning by providing rigorous, high-quality educational opportunity to underserved students of great potential.

A landmark study by the non-profit research group RAND found that if an individual participates in any type of correctional education program - whether it be adult basic ed, GED preparation, college education or vocational training - they had a 13 percentage-point reduction in their risk of being re-incarcerated. For those participating in college education programs, the reduction in risk of re-incarceration was an impressive 16 percentage-points. These reductions in recidivism make a difference not only in the lives of the incarcerated individuals, but also creates a positive ripple-effect for their families and communities as well as for society at large. These programs have proven to be cost-effective, saving nearly five dollars in re-incarceration costs for every dollar invested in educational programs.

Join us on 28 April to learn more. Ms. Roland and I are looking forward to having an informative and lively conversation about Yale’s role in education in Connecticut prisons. The schmooze will be held in the library-chapel and will start at 12:45p, after morning Shabbat services and qiddush lunch.

Shoshana Zax, Chair, Programming Committee
Shabbatot (Saturdays)
Darshanim
Darshan – noun, plural dar-sha-nim. Judaism. a preacher or teacher of Aggada or Halakha in a synagogue.
Rabbi Tilsen has invited the following speakers to serve as guest Darshanim in the coming weeks:
Sara Walstedter, bat mitzva, 21 April 2018, parashiyot Tazria - Metsora

Shabbat Shalom Torah Study
The Shabbat Shalom Torah Study meets every other Saturday morning at 10:45a in the office and is an ideal setting for veteran and novice shulgoers alike to explore the scriptural readings and liturgy of the day in a supportive setting. Expertly led by Steven Fraade, with Rabbi Alan Lovins, Rabbi Murray Levine, Nadav Sela, Isaiah Cooper and others, the Shabbat Shalom Torah Study is a nurturing exploration of practice and theory presented in a participatory, non-threatening and multi-generational setting. Many members who take advantage of this unique offering feel a deeper sense of awe born of increased understanding and appreciation of the Torah reading, Haftara (Prophetic reading) and liturgy.

The program often focuses on the scriptural readings, but also addresses the prayer liturgy and other topics related to the liturgical calendar, scriptural readings or current issues of concern.
Everyone is welcome to participate regardless of religious status or background. It is suitable for mature youths along with adults.

Hebrew with Will:
Back by popular demand, an hour of Hebrew with Will, alternating Shabbat mornings in April, 10:45a-11:45a, office. Free. Meeting on Shabbatot alternating with SSTS. Info perfectexodus@gmail.com.

Mondays
Rashi Study Group: I Kings
Each Monday morning from 7:47a to 8:30a adults meet in the Library Chapel to read Rashi’s commentary on the TaNaKh (Hebrew Bible). The Rashi Study Group (RSG) is reading First Kings. It is possible to join the study group for a single meeting or to begin at any time. Knowledge of Hebrew is not necessary. Rashi purported to explain the peshat of the text, i.e., the meaning in its historical, literary and linguistic context. Visitors and new participants are welcome. Hebrew and English texts are available. The RSG will not meet on the Monday of Sukkot, 21 May 2018. On Memorial Day (USA), 28 May, the RSG will meet from 9:45a to 10:30a.

Wednesdays
Hebrew Word of the Week
The Wednesday morning service (shaharit) features a 180-second “Hebrew word of the Week” to promote the learning of Hebrew. The Hebrew language is highly structured. Most words are based on three-letter roots, and are made with a limited set of verb or noun forms. By learning a few dozen roots and a small set of word-forms, it is possible to roughly translate Hebrew words isolated from any context, something less often possible in English. The Word of the Week often relates to the weekly scriptural readings or current events.

Rabbis’ Study Group
Wednesdays with Murray is a weekly study group exclusively for rabbis and clergy, facilitated by Rabbi Murray Levine. The Wednesday study group affords local rabbis an opportunity to pursue own talmud torah (Torah study) in a “safe” setting and with
opportunities to learn from each other’s experience and insight. The study group meets Wednesday mornings in the Rosenkrantz Family Library during the school year. In 5778, the rabbis are reviewing selected sugiyot in B. Shabbat. For more information, call Rabbi Murray Levine at 203.397.2513.

**Thursdays**

**Mini Morning Learning Service**

The Thursday morning services are supplemented with commentary and teaching relating to the history, themes, choreography and language of the daily morning service.

Shaharit service is from 8:15a to 9:15a on Thursdays; on other weekdays, the service begins at 7:00a.

**Berakhot Talmud Study Group**

A weekly study of the Talmud Bavli Berakhot meets in the Beit Midrash on Thursday mornings 10a–11a with Rabbi Tilsen.

The Talmud, a hypertext extended outline of discussion organized around the Mishna and based on an oral text, has no beginning or end. One can begin study at any point; now is the best time. No prior knowledge is required, but basic facility in English is helpful; students with all backgrounds are welcome, beginner to advanced. The Berakhot Talmud Study Group meets Thursdays in April and May 2018, except for 5 April (during Pesah).

**Amazon Commission**

Buying items from Amazon ? Use this link or the link on BEKI’s home page beki.org (bottom) so BEKI will receive a commission (about 4%) on the sale at no cost to you. Bookmark our link. (Other Amazon programs such as Smiles provide only 0.5% so use our link instead.) See instructions and explanation under “Resources.” February 2018 take was $112 from Amazon Link (and just $12 from Smile).
Contributions

Rabbi’s Tzedqa Fund (minimum $25)
- Darcy McGraw & Bruce Altman for mekhirat hametz
- Dan & Diane Krevolin for mekhirat hametz
- Rabbi Richard & Judy Eisenberger for mekhirat hametz
- Rabbi Carl & Sharon Astor for mekhirat hametz
- Elma Guttenberg & Lisa Weiss Families for mekhirat hametz
- Barbara & Dennis Rader for mekhirat hametz
- Jay & Marjorie Hirshfield for mekhirat hametz
- Tina Rose and Seth Pauker for mekhirat hametz
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- Susan E. Jacobson for mekhirat hametz
- Harriet Friedman & The Bruce Family for mekhirat hametz
- Rabbi Hesch Sommer & Linda Waldman for mekhirat hametz
- Lou & Lisa Petrillo in memory of Leon Nirshberg
- Stewart Frankel & Joy Kaufman for mekhirat hametz
- Esther & Irwin Nash for mekhirat hametz
- Emily & Eric Weinstein for mekhirat hametz
- Harold & Bobbie Miller for mekhirat hametz
- Anne Schiff & David Norman for mekhirat hametz
- In memory of Sally Zamrotsky by Stan Saxe
- In memory of William Miller by Bobbie & Harold Miller
- In memory of Pearl Rosenthal by Amy G. Margolis
- In memory of Sydney Weiss by Suzanne Weinstein
- In memory of Etta & Charles Miller by Julian & Susan Miller
- In memory of her mother Eunice S. Rogoff by Eilen S. Rogoff
- In memory of Irving Nabatoff by Carol Nabatoff
- In memory of Frances Montlick Kaplan by Sharon Dwarkin
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- In memory of Lillian Chorney by Bud & Mickey Chorney
- In loving memory of Morris Oppenheim by Joyce & Michael Bohnen
- In memory of Louis Miller by Howard Miller
- In memory of Morris Altschuler by Roberta Atteson
- In memory of Abraham Epstein by Krinnie & Earl Baker
- In memory of Morton Silver by Ruth Silver
- In memory of Frances Ray by Barbara Rader
- In memory of Joseph Gimple by Sidney Gimple
- In memory of Jerome Rifkin by Sylvia Rifkin
- In memory of her sister Natalie Robbins by Teddy Deitch
- In memory of her brother Howard Robbins by Teddy Deitch
- In memory of Sydney Weiss by Suzanne Weinstein

Qiddush Sponsors (minimum $320)
- Jay & Lynn Brotman
- The Rastelli-Weiner family
- Bobbie & Harold Miller
- Shula Chernoff
- Rachel Light & Jonathan Freiman

Chai Fund (minimum $18) to support synagogue operations
- To Barbara & Lenny Stern with sympathy on the passing of Stan Moldawsky by Morris Bell & Rina Sotsky
- To Barbara & Lenny Stern with sympathy on the passing of Stan Moldawsky by David Margolis
- To Barbara & Lenny Stern with sympathy on the passing of Stan Moldawsky by Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes
- To Barbara & Lenny Stern with sympathy on the passing of Stan Moldawsky by David & Mary Lesser
- To Libby & Mark Abraham with sympathy on the passing of Jane Gershaw by Steve & Rachel Wisner
- To Libby & Mark Abraham with sympathy on the passing of Jane Gershaw by the Freiman-Light family
- To Libby & Mark Abraham with sympathy on the passing of Jane Gershaw by Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes
- To Libby & Mark Abraham with sympathy on the passing of Jane Gershaw by Bill Shargis
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- To Libby & Mark Abraham with sympathy on the passing of Jane Gershaw by David & Darryl Kuperstock

Synagogue Fund (minimum $10) to support synagogue operations
- To Barbara & Lenny Stern with sympathy on the passing of Stan Moldawsky by David & Darryl Kuperstock
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- To Libby & Mark Abraham with sympathy on the passing of Jane Gershaw by Bill Shargis
- To Libby & Mark Abraham with sympathy on the passing of Jane Gershaw by Bill Shargis

BEKI Religious School
- To Barbara & Lenny Stern with sympathy on the passing of Stan Moldawsky by Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow
- To Libby & Mark Abraham with sympathy on the passing of Jane Gershaw by Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow
- To Murray Levine & Goldie Taub in honor of their birthdays by Caryl & Michael Klugfeld
- To Harold Miller in honor of his 75th birthday by Brenda Friedler
- To Angela & Bruce Oren with sympathy on the passing of James Michael Williams by Steve & Rachel Wisner
- To Lana & Martin Gad and family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Steve & Rachel Wisner
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by Steve & Rachel Wisner
- To the Freiman-Light family with sympathy on the passing of Jonathan Gutman by Steve & Rachel Wisner
- To the Freiman-Light family with sympathy on the passing of Jonathan Gutman by the Marx & Schonberger family
- To Michael Hurwitz, Debbie Chernomas & family with sympathy on the passing of Nathaniel Hurwitz by the Marx & Schonberger family

Yahrzeit Fund ($5 minimum) to support synagogue operations
- In memory of Etta & Charles Miller by Julian & Susan Miller
- In memory of her mother Eunice S. Rogoff by Eilen S. Rogoff
- In memory of Irving Nabatoff by Carol Nabatoff
- In memory of Frances Montlick Kaplan by Sharon Dwarkin
- In memory of Max Kaplan by Sharon Dwarkin
- In memory of Lillian Chorney by Bud & Mickey Chorney
- In loving memory of Morris Oppenheim by Joyce & Michael Bohnen
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- In memory of Jerome Rifkin by Sylvia Rifkin
- In memory of her sister Natalie Robbins by Teddy Deitch
- In memory of her brother Howard Robbins by Teddy Deitch
- In memory of Sally Zamrotsky by Stan Saxe
- In memory of William Miller by Bobbie & Harold Miller
- In memory of Pearl Rosenthal by Amy G. Margolis
- In memory of Sydney Weiss by Suzanne Weinstein

Visit us at www.beki.org
Abraham’s Tent

Set-up and cooking for Abraham’s Tent, a project to support people experiencing homelessness, a Columbus House effort, in which BEKI partners with the Church of the Holy Spirit (West Haven) and other local synagogues and churches. Ten men were housed at BEKI for a week in March.
LifeCycle

Hamakom Yinahem

With sorrow we note the passing of
Morris Olmer, father of Zachary (& Caitlin) Olmer
Jonathan London, husband of Ihrie Means, brother of Sharon (& David) Bender, father of I. Forest
Gary Smirnoff, son of Beatrice Smirnoff
May the Almighty comfort those who mourn

Benei Mitzva
Sara Walstedt, daughter of Scott & Lisa Walstedt, 20-21 April 2018, parashiyot Tazria-Metsora

Summer Shabbat Minha Schedule
Our Shabbat Afternoon service will be at 5:45p each week for the next few months. Daily (Sun-Thu) remains 5:45p–6:13p year-round. See Daily Schedule.

Liturgical Note
Counting of the Omer began the second night of Pesah.

Stupid Rebate Cards
Got a rebate VISA or other payment card with an odd amount you can’t use or will misplace or forget until it expires? Donate it online to BEKI.

Sanctuary
A group of BEKI members are attending a program at Mishkan Israel exploring “Sanctuary Congregations” on Sunday 8 April 2p-3:30p. Info jcarr.beki@gmail.com

Torah Reading
Rabbi Tilsen is coordinating VaYiqra (through 12 May); contact jjtilsen@beki.org. Darryl is coordinating BeMidbar (19 May – 14 July).

News Feed
Check the website to see articles in the secular and Jewish press about BEKI, also photos by Allen Samuel taken at the retirement luncheon for Clarence Bromell. https://www.beki.org/calendar-events/beki-in-the-news. Sinai Joins BEKI.

Throw Them in the Potomac: A Pesah Message by Rabbi Tilsen
Expendable Youth: Another Pesah Message by Rabbi Tilsen

JCARR
The father in a Syrian family sponsored by JCARR is recovering from emergency surgery. He is doing well but will be out of work for an indefinite period, with no paid sick leave. JCARR is seeking donations to help the family with rent, utility bills, medical expenses not covered by insurance, and other necessities until he returns to work.

Our goal is to raise at least $10,000. Online at (https://www.crowdrise.com/JCARR); or by check, payable to “Temple Emanuel JCARR” mailed to Peter Stolzman at 20 Peddlers Drive, Branford CT 06405. Info Gilah Benson-Tilsen jcarr.BEKI@gmail.com

Got Announcements?
Ask President Harold Birn to include your BEKI event in live Shabbat morning announcements by writing to announcements@beki.org. “This Week at BEKI” listings may be up to 50 words.

The Facebook
BEKI has a FB group. Members are welcome to post items that are respectful and of interest to our community.

Dance with Me
Israeli Dance on Tuesday evenings for Beginners, 7:15p–8:15p; for Everyone 8:15p–10p, Social Hall.

Yom HaShoah Memorial & Speaker
Arnie Pritchard, Storyteller & Historian, Shabbat 14 April 2018 at 12:45p, for people of all ages. Brought to you by Sisterhood.
Child and Adolescent Health Care, L.L.C.

A. Joseph Avni-Singer, M.D., FAAP
Shari Storeygard, M.D., FAAP
Carol Dorfman, M.D., FAAP
Shannon Martinello, M.D., FAAP

Many Generations

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We celebrated National Mix It Up Day in October to foster greater respect and understanding among our students.
Yom Ha Sho’ah

In April we celebrate and commemorate Passover (Pesah), Yom Ha Sho’ah, (Holocaust Remembrance Day), Yom HaZikaron (Israel Memorial Day) and Yom HaAtzma’ut (Israel Independence Day).

Yom Ha Shoah is a secular and solemn day. Jews collectively remember, mourn and honor the six million Jews who were killed in the Holocaust. All over the world, in Israel and in the Diaspora, we feel compelled to hold services, to light memorial candles, and recite Qaddish together. In Israel, at 10:00a a siren sounds, and every person, everywhere in the country – in stores or cars, at home or at work – is expected to stop and stand at attention to honor the dead to share in a moment of silent solidarity.

In 1981, members of the Federation of Jewish Men’s Clubs, a branch of the Conservative-Masorti movement, created a memorial project for Yom Ha Sho’ah. A dedicated _yahrzeit_ candle was conceived, with yellow wax and barbed-wire Star of David logo reminiscent of the armbands Jews were forced to wear during the Holocaust. This object has come to be known as the Yellow candle ™. Approximately 200,000 candles are distributed around the world each year, along with relevant prayers and meditations.

Sisterhood is offering these yellow candles to our congregation at no cost, to light on the eve of 11 April. Please come to the gift store and pick one up. Any donation would be appreciated. The donation will be sent to the Holocaust Memorial organization.

The local memorial is located on Whalley Avenue and West Park in New Haven.

This year Yom Ha Sho’ah is commemorated on Thursday 12 April. We light yellow candles on the eve of 11 April and recite poems and prayers.

Yom Hazikaron

Yom Hazikaron (Memorial Day in Israel) is to be commemorated this year on 18 April. Yom Hazikaron is the national remembrance day observed in Israel for all Israeli military personnel who lost their lives in the struggle that led to the establishment of the State of Israel and those who have been killed subsequently while on active duty in Israel’s armed forces. As of Yom HaZikaron in 2017 that number was 13,544.

Memorial candles are lit in homes, army camps, schools, synagogues, and public places. Flags are lowered to half mast. Throughout the day active duty and retired military personnel serve as honor guards at war memorials throughout the country. Families of the fallen participate in memorial ceremonies at military cemeteries. The day opens with a siren preceding evening at 8:00p. The siren is heard all over the country and lasts for one minute, during which Israelis stop everything, including driving on highways, and stand in silence, showing respect. A two-minute siren is sounded at 11:00a the following morning, which marks the opening of the official memorial ceremonies and private remembrance gathering in each cemetery where soldiers are buried. The day officially draws to a close at sundown around 7p in a ceremony at the national military cemetery on Mt. Herzl, marking the start of Israel Independence Day when the flag of Israel is returned to full staff.

Yom HaAtzma’ut

Yom HaAtzma’ut – Israel Independence Day – is 5 Iyar, which is 19 April 19, marking 70 years since the Declaration of Independence.

Scheduling Yom HaZikaron before Yom HaAtzma’ut is intended to remind people of the price paid for independence and what was achieved with the soldiers’ sacrifice. This transition shows the importance of this day among Israelis, most of whom either have served in the armed forces themselves or have a connection with people who were killed during their military service.

On 5 Iyar 1948 the State of Israel was established. David Ben Gurion read the Declaration of Independence in the presence of the People’s Provisional Council in Tel Aviv.

On the 25 Tishrei 5709 (1949), the People’s Council resolved that the official flag of the State of Israel would be a blue-and-white flag with a Star of David in the center. The emblem of the State of Israel is a seven-branched Menorah flanked by two olive branches, evoking the ancient Kingdom of Israel, and symbolizes our yearning to live in freedom and peace.

Ivrit (Hebrew) is a “living water” for Jewish people all over the world. The books of our heritage -- The Torah, Prophets, Writings and Mishna -- are all written in Hebrew, making it a significant part of our Jewish identity. When we returned to our historic homeland, Eliezer Ben Yehuda led a movement to restore the Hebrew language to life, so we could once again speak in our ancient tongue as we tilled the soil in our land.

Yom HaSho’ah Commemoration at BEKI

Please join BEKI Sisterhood in commemorating Yom HaSho’ah after Qiddush on Shabbat 14 April in the library. Our special guest, Arnie Pritchard, will be discussing the life of his mother Marion Prichard, who distinguished herself as a savior of children in the Netherlands in the midst of the Holocaust. A special and unique Qiddush along with our regular Qiddush will be served commemorating the Holocaust.
From left, Henry, Moshe and Debbie display mahzorim donated by BEKI to a small congregation in Nigeria. Debbie is a first cousin (by marriage) of Rabbi Tilsen.

Making Matzo at BEKI
Dear Rabbi,

If I have a highly intelligent robot, does it have to observe Shabbat?
Signed, U Robot

Dear O, U Robot

It can decide for itself.

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Dear Rabbi,

Can I ride in a self-driving car on Shabbat? I mean one that does not run over pedestrians.
Signed, Not Driving on Shabbat

Dear Driving Me Nuts on Shabbat,

This question was discussed long ago by our sages. It arises in the discussion of the permissibility of riding a streetcar or horse-carriage that is operating independent of the command or payment of the Jewish rider, riding an elevator, or of a person on a boat on Shabbat (hint: don’t get off the boat in the middle of the ocean just because it is Shabbat).

Driving or riding is a complex action, which may involve several Biblical and Rabbinic prohibitions. Among those are using fire (combustion); carrying across or crossing Shabbat boundaries; engaging in an activity likely to require commerce or entail some other violation. You crash, you get towed or hospitalized, write your name, use your credit card, who knows. Or, you don’t crash. Vehicles typically interact with other vehicles, necessarily causing others to activate or deactivate their combustion systems.

In general, we can say that there are “worse” and “better” options of Shabbat-compliant transit. Better is if you are not driving, the vehicle does not “burn” fuel (so electric beats gas), and the destination, route, and schedule are predetermined or determined by others. Better is a short distance, and better is no cargo. So if you ask your doctor, a likely answer is that walking is best, biking is good too, taking public transportation is OK, driving yourself is less desirable, and sitting on your tucbes watching TV alone at home is the worst choice, all else being equal. If you ask your rabbi, you get the same answer.

The other question is what kind of world do we want to live in. What if everyone took a day off, turned off their phones and computers, left their vehicles parked, and tried something different for a change?

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Dear Rabbi,

If I’m in New Haven and the hametz is in Israel when Pesah starts there, am I owning hametz on Pesah, even though it is not Pesah for me? The same question will need to be asked at the end of Pesah, complicated by the extra day of Pesah observed in the Diaspora.

At a theoretic level, this is a gonzo whopper of a halakhic quandary. The most widely accepted theory is that the prohibition depends on the location of the person, not the hametz. So Hawaiian Jews can own hametz in their apartment in Israel up until the deadline in Oahu. Now, what they might do with that hametz, 14,000 kilometers away, is another question. They can’t have their cake and eat it, too.

At a practical level, it is what we call an upper middle-class problem. Almost all of the hametz for which I serve as a sales agent is local; those who have a special case should call that to my attention. The best solution is to get rid of all hametz. If that really is not possible, I am usually able to effect a sale that will comply with all theories, thanks to my cooperative bulk buyer of hametz, an upstanding pedigreed gentile.

Seder timing on the moon is an old question. The principle arose in the case of the traveler who does not know what day it is, so is not sure when to observe Shabbat or a Festival. It also occurs regularly for people who live near or beyond the arctic circle, where during part of the year the sun never rises or never sets. And it arose in the question of which mitzvot apply, at all, outside the land of Israel, such as the rules of agricultural tithes or – the festivals themselves. A practical answer may not emerge until the reality arises regularly enough to force a practical answer that has some theoretical justification.

As for Mars, seder timing may depend on whether or not the human Martians maintain their connection to the Earth calendar or not. The Martian day is about 24 hours 39 minutes (Earth Standard), which means you get to sleep late every day, but the year is 687 Earth days (or 669 Martian days), so if you adopt the Martian calendar, it will be easy to determine whether or not the holidays are “late” this year.

For a popular scholarly discussion, see Rabbi David Golinkin’s essay, “How Does One Sell Hametz which is in a Different Time Zone?”
### April 2018

16 Nisan 5778 - 15 Iyar 5778

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<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<tr>
<td>Passover II</td>
<td>No Religious School</td>
<td>Hol Hamaod Passover II</td>
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<td>Hol Hamaod Passover III</td>
<td>Hol Hamaod Passover IV</td>
<td>Passover VII</td>
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<td>9:15am Festival Service</td>
<td>9:00am Rabbi's Study Group</td>
<td>9:00am Rabbi's Study Group</td>
<td>9:00am Rabbi's Study Group</td>
<td>7:00pm Candle Lighting</td>
<td>9:15am Festival Service</td>
<td>9:15am Festival Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mini-Qiddush: Gralla &amp; Schultz</td>
<td>7:45pm Israeli Dance</td>
<td>No Religious School</td>
<td>No Religious School</td>
<td>No Berakhot Study Group</td>
<td>Mini-Qiddush: Akresh</td>
<td>10:45am Children's Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:45pm Minha-Maariv</td>
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<td>7:03pm Candle Lighting</td>
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<td>6:00pm Minha-Maariv</td>
<td>Mini-Qiddush: Gralla &amp; Schultz</td>
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#### Service Times

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<tr>
<td>9 a.m. Shaharit</td>
<td>7 a.m. Shaharit</td>
<td>7 a.m. Shaharit</td>
<td>7 a.m. Shaharit</td>
<td>8:15 a.m. Shaharit</td>
<td>7 a.m. Shaharit</td>
<td>Before sunset: Minha</td>
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<td>5:45 p.m. Maariv</td>
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<td>5:45 p.m. Maariv</td>
<td>6 p.m. Qabbalat Shabbat</td>
<td>Before sunset: Minha</td>
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### Mark Your Calendar

- Shabbat Pesah 8 – Shir HaShirim – Yizkor 7April 2018
- Yom HaShoah Memorial & Speaker 14 April 2018
- Rosh Hodesh Iyar 15-16 April 2018
- Bat Mitzva: Sara Walstedter 20-21 April 2018
- Shabbat Schmooze: Zelda Roland 28 April 2018
More – Youth Scholarships

(A) Jewish Foundation, for local synagogue schools, scholarships.jewishnewhaven.org/form/religious; (B) Foundation Israel Program scholarships jewishnewhaven.org/scholarships (C) Barzillai Cheskis Youth Israel Scholarship at BEKI (office@beki.org) (D) One Happy Camper for overnight Jewish Camps (E) Noam Benson-Tilsen Fund for Ramah Scamperships (office@beki.org); (F) Federation College Scholarships (Needs-Blind and Needs-Based).

Tefila Tips

Seven pointers to improve our services, for leaders and followers, www.beki.org/tefila-tips.