

HATOKAYAH

BULLETIN

CONGREGATION B'NAI JESHURUN OF STATEN ISLAND

April 2019

Nissan 5779

SPECIAL PASSOVER EDITION

Proud Member of the United Synagogue of
Conservative Judaism



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Congregation B'nai Jeshurun of Staten Island

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism Member

Tel. (718) 981-5550

Email: CBJshul@gmail.com

Website: cbjsi.com

SYNAGOGUE SCHEDULE

Shabbat Services:

Friday Evenings at 8:00 pm

Saturday Mornings at 9:15 am

Daily Minyan:

Sunday Mornings-9:00 am

Monday & Thursday Mornings - 7:20 am

Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday Mornings

7:20 am at Temple Emanu-EL

**We invite you to join us
regularly for
Shabbat and
Yom Tov Services**

Please arrive promptly to insure a minyan
for those who need to say Kaddish

Proper attire is necessary at all times in
the Sanctuary

Passover / Shab- bat Services

Friday 4/19—1st Seder, No Services
Saturday 4/20—9:15 a.m. Shabbat and
Yom Tov Services
Sunday 4/21—9:15 a.m. Yom Tov Services
Thursday 4/25 eve—No Services
Friday 4/26— 9:15 a.m. Yom Tov Services
Friday 4/26— 8:00 p.m. Shabbat and Yom
Tov Services
Saturday 4/27—9:15 a.m. Shabbat and

President's Message

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our special Passover (Pesach) Hatokayah edition. Passover is the most observed of all Jewish Holidays and there are good reasons for this. It celebrates our exodus from slavery in Egypt to a generation wandering in the desert and finally becoming a people worthy of receiving the Torah and entering the land of Israel. Throughout the generations through times of peace and prosperity and those of suffering and hardship, we have gathered together with families and communities to retell the story to educate and inspire our children to follow in our ways as we remember. We are directed to welcome the stranger in our midst and indeed our Seders are made that much richer by extending ourselves to others so that they may too remember and celebrate.

What are your Pesach memories, both past and recent, that are so meaningful. Even our Hebrew School students contributed. I thank you for the responses you sent in—it is such a busy time of year that I really appreciate the effort it took to share them with us. I hope that we can continue to share memories with each other and that this will become a CBJ tradition. Enjoy.



Passover Remembrances

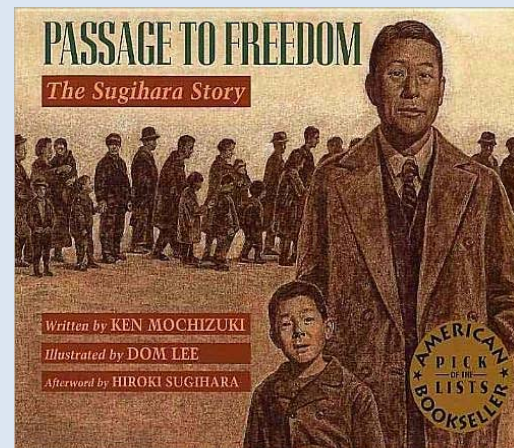
Rabbi Sam Kastel

My most powerful Pesach memory is my grandfather Rabbi Moshe Yehuda Blau singing the B'tzeit Yisroel M'Mitzraim during the Seder. He would get outwardly emotional and tell the same story every year.

My grandfather had been a student at the Mir Yeshiva and by the grace of G-d the Yeshivas received visas that allowed them to leave certain death in Europe and ultimately settle in Shanghai China. While they were grateful to have been saved they were living in poverty. It became unbearable for them when the Japanese took control of Shanghai and added restrictions and abuse to the hardship the Jews were facing. Ultimately almost all the Jews that were living there left.

On the boat that was bringing them from China to America they sang this song with great intensity. For them the song, which is about the Israelites leaving Egypt was symbolic of freedom after the Nazis and the mistreatment by the Japanese.

My grandfather dedicated his life to and publishing Jewish books and educating the people. I



father the rest of restoring publishing lost scholarly to rejuvenate Jewish always

A Passover Memory

by Joyce Lieb

My memories of Passover are pretty much the same as most people. Weeks and weeks before the Holiday, my Mom began “Spring Cleaning.” It was actually cleaning for Passover. Every closet, every drawer in the house had to be cleaned out and of course certain things were discarded and others given away.

One of my fondest memories, however, was about 15 years ago. My husband Howard is very involved with organized dentistry and in the capacity of being the General Chairman of the Greater New York Dental Meeting, we met and became acquainted with people from all over the world. He happened to become friends with a dentist and a group who invited us to their Dental Meeting in Paris. Because Howard was Chairman, we were obligated to attend this spring Conference. Unfortunately, we did not realize that it would be during Passover. Our family is very strict on Passover. I host our Family Seder for 20-25 people every year, cooking everything from scratch. I change dishes, the whole kit and caboodle. When we realized it, I was very worried about what we would do.

So— we decided to make lemonade from the lemons, as they say. We told the children that we would all go to Paris, and somehow figure out how to make a seder in the hotel. Two of the dentists in this organization were observant and offered to shop for us. We had refrigerators delivered to all the hotel rooms and gave a shopping list to our friends. At

it was time, and so they rented a hall. There were 85 people at this Seder. We were amazed. It was held in a hall, in the Le Marais district. The 4 brothers and sister sat at the head of this large U shaped table. They chanted the Haggadah from memory in Ancient Aramaic, and the sister would be the one correcting her brothers, if one syllable was pronounced incorrectly.

Aside from the uniqueness of this event, and the special customs (even different from our Sephardic customs), was the fact that most people there had their own Haggadahs, some passed down from generations, some with calligraphied letters, in gold gilt. Each group came up to us and proudly showed us their copies. Then, they asked us about ours. We had brought along our Maxwell House Haggadahs, which we use all the time. We meekly showed our Haggadahs, to which Howard said, “These are our travel Haggadahs.” I really do not know how we all kept straight faces, but we did.

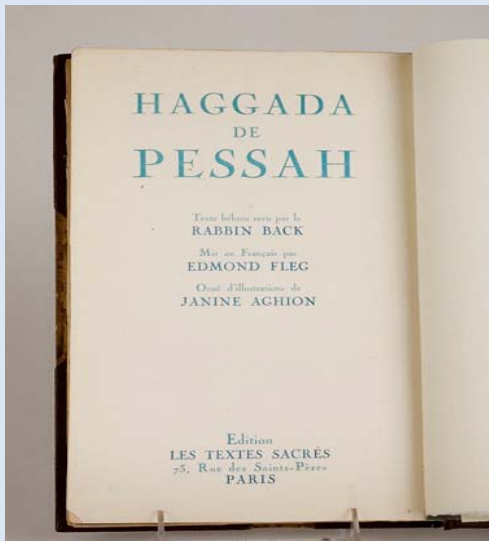


Interestingly enough, 2 people asked if they could have one.

A Seder in Tours, France

By Jack Bender

Back in 1962 I was in the Army stationed in Chinon, France. At the time France was bringing in immigrants from North Africa, many of whom were Jewish. For Passover our Chaplain arranged a Seder (about 25 from our post, including nurses and teachers) and it was held in the Synagogue in Tours, a nearby city. The congregants, about 40, were from Tunisia and local French. The food was “exotic” for a Seder. No brisket, gefilte fish, etc. Lamb, roast fish, rice with pomegranate. Excellent and really good Kosher French wine!! We supplied matzo. The Hagaddah was in French and English. It was like being with long lost cousins that you liked immediately. The service was led by their Rabbi and the Chaplain. Same words, different melodies. Excellent night. After we would help the immigrants from the never for-Seder.



with goods
Army PX. I
got that

“It Ain’t Chopped Liver!”

By Ruth Greenwald

Iz and I had been seeing each other for 6 months and were talking of marriage. My father, a jewelry manufacturer, had asked his diamond dealer to gather an assortment of stones in all shapes, sizes, and prices, so as to be ready when Iz approached him for help regarding my engagement ring. But—there was no such forthcoming discussion.

Come Passover 1963. . . My parents were hosting the first seder for our family and Iz’s. I helped my mother serve the first course and when I returned to my place at the table, there was a large diamond ring sitting in the chopped liver! I was so surprised that I first asked, “Is that for me?” and when told it was, I followed with the query, “Is it real?!” It is—it’s an heirloom from Iz’s mother’s family, which is why my father had not been involved.

Following an exciting seder evening, after I took off the ring to wash up, I examining his jewel- passed his test and so, to be reset years, I still my beautiful mond!



caught my father
the diamond with
er’s loupe! It
discriminating
except for having
just once in 56
wear and enjoy
marquise dia-
mond!

“A Zissen Desach!”

By Lenora Eillerman

It is customary to wish others a Zissen, or Sweet Passover. For me, the sweetness doesn't rely on the Manischewitz—it's all about the memories. Most are very sweet, some bitter-sweet, but all lovely just the same. Let me share:

*My dad, who was usually very jovial and loved a good joke, was very serious as he led the Seder. He would proudly sit on the pillow my mother provided and made sure we all followed along.

*My mother—did she love Passover! The aromas that came from her tiny kitchen was only exceeded by the taste of her food: gefilte fish, chopped liver, Passover potato knishes, potato latkes. . All homemade, all delicious.

*The kids—running around the house looking for the afikomen; their pride the first time they read the four questions in Hebrew; their pride sharing the family Seder for the first time with their (now) spouses.

*Mark—The first time he joined my family for a Seder, he wore a sports jacket and tie! He always came home from work with a bouquet of flowers for me, and my mom.

*Trying to accommodate my family, and Mark's, and extended family into my “Taj Mahal” for the Seder. How many tables can we fit? How many chairs do we need to borrow? Do I have enough soup spoons? Oy vey!

My Passover Memory

By Tamar Owens

My favorite Passover memory always makes me smile. It is from when I was 9 or 10 years old. I spent Passover in Israel with my mother and brother. We had our seder in a large tent in my cousin's backyard in Rishon Lezion and I was surrounded by my extended Israeli family. A day or two later we drove with several of our cousins on a road trip to the Sinai region (which was then part of Israel) and had the most wonderful time snorkeling in Sharm El Sheikh, swim-

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My Passover Memory

By Robert Schweitzer
Principal CBJ Hebrew School

I don't come from a very observant family but Passover was always special at the Schweitzer house, even if it was mostly a "dinner with some weird foods" mixed in! Of course, we had all of the typical Seder plate foods—and of course, the charoset was the best part and the parsley was the worst, but still I loved it all! While the Seder seemed like some kind of strange and exotic ritual that we all got together to do every year, and also gave me the opportunity to see grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins that I normally hadn't seen in a while. The whole house smelled from the wonderful chicken soup and brisket and the whole experience was incredibly fun, mystifying and almost "other-worldly." I loved the sound of the electric carving knife signaling all of the delicious eat we were going to have on our plates in a little while. Being about 9 years old, I had just started Hebrew School and was learning about our holidays, ancient customs and rituals. We cared this was all an important part of being Jewish? I thought it was just some crazy thing we were supposed to do very year - and how could I give up pizza for a whole week? But, wait. . . There's MATZOH BRIE!!! HURRAY!!!

At our Seder was usually my Daddy Ben (my grandfather) and Ma Bec (my grandmother, Rebecca). Daddy Ben was such a colorful character, always unbelievably retelling stories from the 1930's and 40's where he would remember every detail including the exact date, day of the week and time— how could

I think Daddy Ben was maybe 5'3 and Ma Bec about 5'. I used to watch them from our 13th floor window in Coney Island as they walked up the path to our lobby, her arm through his arm as they walked. I remember how cute they looked to me, especially looking even tinier from 13 stories up!

Finally, the Seder would begin and we would follow the Haggadah story through the Seder plate, the 4 questions and then get to the 10 plagues, dipping our finger into the grape juice and pressing it on our plate. Being the youngest child, I was always called on to recite the 4 questions, which I knew pretty well by heart (thanks to Hebrew School!), and very proudly sang the melody. I loved standing up and feeling special and important asking the questions and everyone telling me what a great job I did. I remember when I was even younger opening the door for Elijah and how we were told to notice how much less wine there was in the cup because Elijah had come to drink some—I really thought he came and drank some! I remember looking for the Afikomen and the thrill of getting a dollar (a whole dollar??) for finding it! We usually never got back to the Seder after eating dinner, didn't even know there was a second part until years later. But, the magic of Passover was already sowing its seeds in my



Our CBJ Students—**My name is Adam Cohen—**

My favorite Passover food is Biscuit

When I think of Passover, I think about food.

My favorite part of Passover is finding the chamatz

I would least like to experience this plague: Death of the firstborn

My name is Andrew Konowitz

My favorite Passover food is Chocolate matzah

When I think of Passover, I think about slavery

My favorite part of Passover is hiding the Afikoman

I would least like to experience this plague: Blood, Death of the firstborn

My name is Peter

My favorite Passover food is matzah

When I think of Passover, I think about matzah

My favorite part of Passover is hiding the matzah

I would least like to experience this plague: Raining frogs

My name is Rachel Memoli

My favorite Passover food is mashed potatoes

When I think of Passover, I think about seder plate

My favorite part of Passover is trying food

I would least like to experience this plague: Boils

My name is Zane

My favorite Passover food is matzah

When I think of Passover, I think about different foods

My favorite part of Passover is finding afikoman

My name is Kailey

My favorite Passover food is matzah

When I think of Passover, I think about different foods

My favorite part of Passover is finding afikoman

I would least like to experience this plague: blood

My name is Jordan S. Owens

My favorite Passover food is Apple kugel

When I think of Passover, I think about matzah

My favorite part of Passover is the Apple kugel

I would least like to experience this plague: Death of the firstborn

My name is Riley C. Martin

My favorite Passover food is Charoset

When I think of Passover, I think about freedom

My favorite part of Passover is finding the Afikoman

I would least like to experience this plague: Blood

My name is Maia Konowitz

My favorite Passover food is My grandma's meatballs

When I think of Passover, I think about matzo

My favorite part of Passover is Finding the afikomen

I would least like to experience this plague: Boils

My name is Paige Wiener

My favorite Passover food is hard boiled eggs

When I think of Passover, I think about matzah

My favorite part of Passover is reading about the four sons.

I would least like to experience this plague: Death of the firstborn

My name is Lily Connolly

My favorite Passover food is matsa

When I think of Passover, I think about plagues

My favorite part of Passover is the last day

I would least like to experience this plague: Hail

My name is Michael Malinov

My favorite Passover food is matzah

When I think of Passover, I think about matzah and the seder plate

My favorite part of Passover is being with my family

I would least like to experience this plague: Death of the firstborn

And wrapping it up:**My name is Adam Rachman**

My favorite Passover food is Grandma Anita's Gefilte Fish

When I think of Passover, I think about Family

My favorite part of Passover is My mom's cooking

I would least like to experience this plague: Boils

Passover Research

A group of leading medical researchers has published data indicating that Seder participants should NOT partake of both chopped liver and charoses. It seems that this combination can lead to Charoses of the Liver

Q: Why do we have an Haggadah at Passover?



Ten Ways to Tell You've Too Many People at Your Seder

10. You can't find anywhere out of sight to hide the afikomen
9. To recline while drinking the wine, you all have to lean in unison
8. You have to sketch your living/dining room on graph paper
7. You have to use a microscope to divvy up the kneidlach
6. When you rotate the verses of "Echad Mi Yodea?", someone ends up singing "Who knows 39? I know 39."
5. You start looking at ads for closed circuit TV and auxiliary speakers
4. While waiting for everyone to wash their hands the second time, the matza rises
3. Even the kids complain that they don't have enough maror
2. When you recite the names of the ten plagues, the locusts really ring a bell
1. When Elijah shows up, and you have to give him his wine "to go"

DIRECTORY for**Congregation B'nai Jeshurun of Staten Island**

Phone: 718.981.5550 Website: Cbjsi.com Email: cbjshul@gmail.com

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|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Rabbi | Samuel Kastel | Samkastel@gmail.com |
| Cantor | Mordechai Edry | Edrycpa@aol.com |
| Co-Presidents | Sandra Conrad | sjconradrn@aol.com |
| V.P. Administration | Jerry Grushkin | jgrushkin@hotmail.com |
| V.P. Finance | Sue Bender | suebender@gmail.com |
| Treasurer | Corey Stalerman | cstalerman@si.rr.com |
| V.P. Ritual | Roy Moskowitz | R2ceo@aol.com |
| Recording Secretary | Bonnie Rothman | momreads@aol.com |
| Corresponding Secretary | Vickie Gimbelman | Vickieg472@aol.com |
| Hebrew School Principal | Robert Schweitzer | rns60@aol.com |
| Youth Group Director | Bruce MonteLeon | cbjyouth@yahoo.com |
| Men's Club President | Joel Brimmer | brimmer911@aol.com |
| Cemetery Information and Management | Arlene Rachman | arlenrachman@gmail.com |
| Adult Education | Rabbi Samuel Kastel Tamar Owens | samkastel@gmail.com |
| Ritual Committee | Joyce Lieb | mamalieb@aol.com |
| Publicity | Roy Moskowitz | R2ceo@aol.com |