



THE VOICE OF KOL EMET

November 2010



Don't Let the Light Go Out

By Rabbi Howard Cove
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Many of us remember being in elementary school and taking part in holiday programs where we sang some Christmas songs. As a sign of respect the program would include a song about dreidles, menorahs, and/or latkes. There might have been an explanation that the festival is celebrated for eight nights because a small jar of oil burned for eight days.

As we got older we learned that Chanukah is celebrated to pay tribute to the military victory of the Maccabees. Strengthened by G-d, Judah and his brothers miraculously led a band of guerillas to victory against the overwhelming Syrian-Greek army. This allowed the Jews to retake the Temple and rekindle the Temple's Menorah.

Chanukah also recalls a unique time in history when an overpowered nation said "no" to the demand that it give up its culture and convictions. Our ancestors defied the Syrian-Greek army. The message of Chanukah is one of ultimate hope. A small number of people who stand up and say "no" to intolerance and narrow-mindedness can change the course of history.

According to Rabbi Daniel Gordis in his book Does the World Need the Jews?, he writes "for the ancient rabbis, Chanukah was not just a celebration of military victory, nor was it simply about the miracle of a cruse of oil. Rather, Chanukah became a holiday about survival, about the spirit overpowering the sword, about goodness overcoming evil, and about the few, if their cause is just, ultimately vanquishing the many." Gordis strongly suggests that Jewish survival is the true miracle of this festival.

The survival of the Jewish people is truly one of the great miracles of all time. And Chanukah is certainly a time to remember and celebrate an extraordinary people.

What's Inside

Rabbi Cove's Message	1
From Carrie	2
Announcements	3
Donations	4
Anniversary and Birthday Announcements	6
Kol Emet Business Directory	7
Kol Emet Contact Information	8

It is the custom to put our Chanukiot in the window, according to the tradition of *le-pirsuma d'nisa*, to publicize the miracle for all to see. It proclaims that because we study Torah, observe Shabbat, keep rituals, maintain our institutions, care for our own, we are here. Our light as a people continues to shine.

And so the decision to follow Rabbi Hillel's custom to add a candle for each night of Chanukah (whereas Rabbi Shammai wanted to start with 8 candles and decrease one each night) can be seen as emblematic of the power of our tradition, culture, and community that gets brighter as the years go on.

As we prepare our Chanukiot this year (starting on Wednesday night, December 1st), let us appreciate the miracle that is the Jewish people and our way of life. May we each make a commitment to ourselves to do something in the coming year to help sustain the flame of the Jewish people and Jewish values.

Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul, and Mary wrote a memorable song whose lyrics can inspire us to increase the light:

*Light one candle for the Maccabee children, With thanks that their light didn't die
Light one candle for the pain they endured, When their right to exist was denied
Light one candle for the terrible sacrifice, Justice and freedom demand
But light one candle for the wisdom to know, When the peacemaker's time is at hand*

[Chorus:] Don't let the light go out!, It's lasted for so many years!, Don't let the light go out!, Let it shine through our love and our tears.

*Light one candle for the strength that we need, To never become our own foe
And light one candle for those who are suffering, Pain we learned so long ago
Light one candle for all we believe in, That anger not tear us apart
And light one candle to find us together, With peace as the song in our hearts*

[Chorus:] Don't let the light go out!, It's lasted for so many years!, Don't let the light go out!, Let it shine through our love and our tears.

*What is the memory that's valued so highly, That we keep it alive in that flame?
What's the commitment to those who have died, That we cry out they've not died in vain?
We have come this far always believing, That justice would somehow prevail
This is the burden, this is the promise, This is why we will not fail!*

[Chorus:] Don't let the light go out!, It's lasted for so many years!, Don't let the light go out!, Let it shine through our love and our tears.

*Don't let the light go out!
Don't let the light go out!
Don't let the light go out!*

Chag Sameach!



From Carrie

**By Carrie Shames Walinsky
Kol Emet Educational Director
cwalinsky@kolemet.org**

In a recent article Jonathan Woocher, the chief ideas officer of the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA) presented the "state of the union" of Jewish education. His findings were remarkable and on target with the vision and mission of our school and our synagogue.

On the topic of early childhood education Jonathan wrote about the big push philanthropist funds and associations are placing on the importance of Jewish education in the early years. Not just the impact of the child but also the influences early childhood education has on the family. There seems to be a new focus on early childhood education and the success it has in raising children. However, Jewish early childhood education goes deeper than holidays and Hebrew.

Strong emphasis has been placed on the values we can teach our children in the early childhood arena. Values such as protecting the environment, kindness to animals, respecting our friends, listening and comforting, caring for the ill are all important Jewish values that our children at Kol Emet live every day. Whether they call a sick friend at home, place an icepack on their friends bump or share their favorite snack with the class; they are learning important Jewish values that we hope will last a lifetime. Because there is a need in the United States for qualified Jewish early childhood educators, there is a need for quality training. Gratz College is only one of 3 colleges in the United States that offers a certification in this field. Proudly most of our staff has taken courses at Gratz and they continue to work on their Gratz Certifications.

Woocher also realizes the large influence Supplementary schools have on our Jewish children. Currently 80 percent of Jewish children are educated through this process. Studies show that a child who receives at least 6 or more years of Jewish education will have a positive Jewish identity as an adult. The key being the older years, post B'nai Mitzvah, when more relevant and current topics are discussed. His concern lies when these students reach college years. It is then when they come into challenges and need the Jewish foundation to feel grounded in their identity. At Kol Emet, we are blessed with a staff who realizes this importance. A typical class period, especially in older grades does not start with prayer drills and reading skills, instead our staff takes the time to listen, hear stories, and share relevant and current issues. I applaud their natural insight for understanding the importance of developing solid Jewish identities for your children.

The Woocher article goes on to talk about the amazing effects informal education has on Jewish children. Jewish camping is a luxury Kol Emet can now afford thanks to our legacy grant and federation happy camper scholarships. I encourage that even if it is just a thought,

now is the time to reserve a spot to guarantee your child's acceptance at Camp JRF. I am a huge proponent and advocate of Jewish camping; it gives children independence and Jewish identity all at the same time. Because only 8 percent of Jewish children ever get to experience Jewish camping, new camps that specialize in arts, sports and other interests are trying to combine their specialties and include Jewish flavor. This is just at the beginning stages, but something to look forward for perhaps our grandchildren!

Finally, Israel education is a huge topic in Jewish education currently. Sadly as earlier mentioned students who enter college are not prepared for the bombardment of controversial issues that challenge them from combative groups on campus. This might include Palestinian groups, Jews for Jesus groups and other groups that challenge our children during their college years. We have an obligation to educate and prepare our students for these years. Birthright has been a huge investment that has attempted to educate our college students as well as boost their Jewish identity. Birthright is an amazing opportunity for young adults, but a 7-day trip to Israel is a band-aid for what really needs to be invested in our children, our children need education and community. They need to know that they are Jewish and that they have the passion and the identity to feel comfortable with whom they are.

I have always said that you, our parents are the primary educators, our school supports your commitment. We are blessed with an outstanding staff from our two-year-old teachers until our 11th and 12th grade programs. But our teachers are only as good as the parents who support their cause. I applaud you, our parents for your continued commitment to education. Through your

support, our staff can thrive and dedicate themselves to the highest standards in Jewish education. Thank you Jonathan Woocher!

Announcements

(Letter to the Editor, Jewish Exponent, Oct. 21, 2010)

Writer All Wrong About Today's Hebrew Schools

A letter in the Oct.7 issue ("Nostalgia for Northeast Hits at High Holidays") was from a gentleman who shared happy memories of his youth at Oxford Circle Jewish Community Center in Northeast Philadelphia. However, he ended his letter by stating, "I wish that caliber of education still existed today at the local Hebrew-school level."

I am in my 10th year as a religious-school educator, and I take some offense at his remark. Granted, many of us who went to religious school during the 1960s and '70s couldn't wait to get out. I hated it. My brother hated it. My husband hated it.

In fact, I became a teacher because I wanted my own children to have a different experience than I had had. I work at two religious schools today, at Beth Shalom in Elkins Park and Kol Emet in Yardley. I spend hours each week preparing materials and lesson plans. Our textbooks are colorful and interesting. But most of all, we teachers have been told to create an environment of love and warmth so that the children will come to think of synagogue as a second home, a safe haven.

Bonnie Gold

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Condolences To:

Susanne Sulby on the passing of her sister, Cecilia Case
Cheryl Gilmore on the passing of her brother, Dr. Joel Rosenbaum
David Shoneman on the passing of his father, Irwin Shoneman
Debra Stein on the passing of her stepfather, Alvin Sackin

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Send to: Congregation Kol Emet •1360 Oxford Valley Road•Yardley, PA 19067

Staying Informed at Kol Emet

There are many ways we try to keep you informed:

- The Voice: This Newsletter (http://www.kolemet.org/documents/jun_10_Voice.pdf) and past issues (<http://www.kolemet.org/monthly.asp>).
- <http://www.kolemet.org/>: Our place on the web. Includes the calendar (<http://www.kolemet.org/calendar.asp>).
- The Whisper: Weekly Email of upcoming events at Kol Emet and in the Jewish community. (<http://www.kolemet.org/weekly.asp>)
- Religious school: Materials sent home with your children every week.
- Shouts: Emails sent to alert you to imminent events and meetings.
- Congregational Meetings: Meet at Kol Emet to both listen to and be heard by your Board

Make sure all the adults in your family get The Weekly Whisper e-mail. If your family has more than one e-mail address, please feel free to sign-up your multiple addresses. To get The Whisper, send an e-mail to <mailto:office@kolemet.org>.

Mazel Tov to All of Kol Emet's December Wedding Anniversaries and Birthdays

Anniversaries

<u>Day</u>	<u>Couple</u>
2	Henry Grynberg & Marcia Eisner
2	Mitchell & Julie Stein
5	Mitch & Marci Rose
7	Mitch & Debbie Frank
9	Harold & Carol Kaplan
9	Rick & Susan Wilson
9	Geoff & Amy Goll

Birthdays

<u>Day</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Name</u>
1	Chloe Connors	24	Harold Kaplan
1	Michael Kitei	24	Leyna Kirsh
1	Rhonda Lichter	24	Thelma Sayare
2	Meridith Selekman	24	Roberta Sutker
2	Edward Sproul	25	Barbara Kaner
3	Dylan Peters	25	Howard Lee
4	Shelley Miller	27	Nicole Edelman
4	Linda Millman	27	Josh Finkle
5	Mike Biro	27	Marty Goldberg
5	Jake Schwartz	27	Mitchell Goldberg
6	Lori Goldstein	27	Brooke Levy
6	Alyssa Yeger	27	Charles Weiner
7	Gene Covell	27	Jessica Weistuch
8	Thea Cohen	28	Zachary Bush
8	Mike Pedrow	28	Frank Goldman
8	Heather Schultz	28	Steven Hoffman
8	Jeffrey Schwartz	28	Ira Melamed
9	Robert Katz	29	Micah Kubanoff
11	Evan Kotzen	29	Brandon Millman
12	Pam Lean	30	Allyson Goldberg
12	Joel Morein	30	Jeffrey Goldberg
12	Katherine Scull	31	Rachel Barrish
13	Julie Asplen	31	Harold Kaplan
13	Julie Frantz	24	Leyna Kirsh
13	Steven Sotoloff	24	Thelma Sayare
13	Gayle Sproul	24	Roberta Sutker
14	Anna Spingler	24	Barbara Kaner
14	Emily Weiss	25	Howard Lee
15	Sandy Cohen	25	Nicole Edelman
15	Marlene Greenberg	27	Josh Finkle
15	Mindy McCormick	27	Marty Goldberg
16	Anna Hoffman	27	Mitchell Goldberg
16	Abigail Yaffe	27	Brooke Levy
17	Seth Rosenwald	27	Charles Weiner
17	David Steiner	27	Jessica Weistuch
17	Stephen Young	27	Zachary Bush
20	Andrew Finkle	28	Frank Goldman
20	Michael Teitelman	28	Steven Hoffman
21	Andy Myers	28	Ira Melamed
21	John Pazdera	28	Micah Kubanoff
21	Brad Pedrow	29	Brandon Millman
21	Eric Ritzau	29	Allyson Goldberg
21	Andrew Stern	30	Jeffrey Goldberg
21	Corey Weistuch	30	Rachel Barrish
21	Jill Yeger	31	Harold Kaplan
23	Lee Biskin	31	Leyna Kirsh
23	Chelsea Klevan		

Kol Emet Business Directory

Advertisements from members of the Kol Emet community

Senior Care Planning Services, a Geriatric Care Management service, operated by Bill Blacker

provides assistance including a comprehensive assessment and care plan for senior adults and their families who are seeking help with long term care planning. The Service can be reached at: 215-901-6244/215-321-3312

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In the spirit of building community, *The Voice* includes text advertisements from Kol Emet congregants who have businesses offering products and services. Text ads only, no business cards or graphics. In addition to your text, we will list your name (if not included in your copy) so the reader knows which Kol Emet congregant is involved in the business.

Your listing will include:

Name of Company

Address (if business has a storefront location)

Contact (Phone, Email, and/or Web Address)

50 word description

Cost is \$10/issue.

Send information to the Kol Emet Office
(office@kolemet.org) by the 1st of the month for a listing in the next issue.

CONGREGATION KOL EMET CONTACT INFORMATION

Rabbi	Rabbi Howard Cove (rabbicove@kolemet.org)	215-493-8522 ext. 101
Associate Rabbi	Rabbi Susan Schein (rabbischein@kolemet.org)	215-493-8522 ext. 112
Executive Director	Bob Frey (bfrey@kolemet.org)	215-493-8522 ext. 113
Educational Director	Carrie Walinsky (cwalinsky@kolemet.org)	215-493-8522 ext. 103
Assistant Preschool Director	Susan Kaplan (skaplan@kolemet.org)	215-493-8522 ext. 103
Office Administrator	Judi Pogachefsky (office@kolemet.org)	215-493-8522 ext. 100
President	Robert Moses (natanbenmoshe@verizon.net)	215-321-9927
Vice President	Lisa Shiller (elizshiller@yahoo.com)	215-493-6822
Vice President	Chuck Weiner (charles@charlesweinerlaw.com)	215-932-0424
Secretary	Brad Pedrow (bpedrow@gmail.com)	609-775-7536
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Past President	Lisa O'Rourke (lisa.orourke@comcast.net)	215-295-9212
Religious Education	Jill Gordon (yardley4@comcast.net)	215-295-8838
Adult Education	Alan Kaplan (alkaplan@ptd.net)	570-640-2526
Early Education	Dina Bortnichak (dina@bortnichak.com)	215-295-1646
Finance	Eric Schwartz (eschwartz@comcast.net)	215-497-1057
Community Relations	Andrea Seidman (talzee@comcast.net)	215-736-8494
House	Rich Nedelman (rlnalla@yahoo.com)	215-493-5587
Long Range Planning	Burt Sutker (bjsutker@aol.com)	609-730-0837
Membership	Jacki Folkman (jackifolkman@aol.com)	215-860-3678
Preschool PTO Co-President	Risha Neil (rishaneil@aol.com)	215-428-1884
Preschool PTO Co-President	Allyson Reed (allysonreed.jaden@verizon.net)	215-493-5290
Religious School PTO Co-President	Randi Davis (davis193@comcast.net)	267-392-5265
Religious School PTO Co-President	Meryl Shoneman (shonemanfamily@comcast.net)	215-321-2381
Ritual	Alan Kaplan (alkaplan@ptd.net)	570-640-2526
Social Action	Wendy Jacobson-Simon (wellwatched@verizon.net)	215-321-1465
Sisterhood	Shelley Miller (shelleyjm@aol.com)	215-493-6856
Men's Club	Mark Henry (squirehenry@aol.com)	215-493-0627
Youth Programming	Heidi Bush (heitobush@verizon.net)	215-493-4080
Hilltoppers	Judy Kaufman (hjkman@comcast.net)	215-579-5950
Caring Committee Chair	Michael Seltzer (mgs48@aol.com)	215-598-8233
