



# hakol

the voice



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FEBRUARY, 1993

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SHEVAT/ADAR, 5753

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**RABBI'S MESSAGE**  
To the parents of  
High School Students

Dear Friend,

Despite the many changes in American Jewish life in recent years, most Jews still strongly prefer that their children marry Jews. They understand that their children's happiness and our people's survival may well depend on it. It is, therefore, not surprising that many parents tell me they would do almost anything to increase the chances that their children will marry other Jews.

One of the most effective things we can do to significantly increase the probability that our children will marry other Jews is also one of the most overlooked: it is to insist that they attend a college or university with a substantial Jewish population.

Most college students enjoy active social lives. Some will probably meet the person they eventually marry while they are still in school. If there is only a handful of

(continued on next page)

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

On December 20th we had a beautiful and very successful Hanukkah party. There were prizes and all the latkes you could eat and everyone had fun. It was open to the entire Jewish community as part of B'nai Tikvah's outreach program.

We are planning even better Purim events for children and adults. The entire Jewish community are invited to these events as well. Plus we have many new and exciting changes ongoing and planned at B'nai Tikvah.

These improvements are the result of you, the congregants, paying your financial commitments on schedule. This has allowed the congregational leadership to spend the time needed to improve and improvise programs. I thank you all for responding positively to my request earlier this year.

Although Hanukkah is over, I would like to share the following with you since I have yet to hear the entire subject

(continued on next page)

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Graduate Division. Edie received her real estate license in 1984 and achieved her Broker's License in 1989. Edie has also been certified to teach the pre-licensure course for real estates sales associates and brokers. Edie resides in North Brunswick with her husband Stan and two daughters, Tami and Mindy.

She is a member of Congregation B'nai Tikvah in North Brunswick and is the Past President of its Sisterhood.

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If currently listed, please disregard this notice.


### Rabbi's Message (continued)

other Jews on campus, it is extremely unlikely that person will be Jewish. It really is just that simple.

Shalom,

Rabbi Andrew Warmflash

P.S. One of the best resources for parents seeking to learn more about the quality of Jewish life on various college campuses is the Hillel Guide To Jewish Life On Campus. It contains information on over 450 college campuses and a detailed discussion of issues for parents to consider. We have several copies available in the synagogue office for those who would like to borrow them.

	
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### President's Message (continued)

discussed or reported accurately.

#### *The Phantom of Hanukkah*

There has been a great deal of news coverage and controversy over the North Brunswick holiday display.

I was directly involved in the discussions, although you would not know it from reading the papers or listening to the radio. (Hence the title.) I feel you should know the truth about the bru ha ha.

In the last holiday season (1991) a nativity scene (creche) was donated to the town of North Brunswick, which the town put on display with a tree and a menorah. The synagogue leadership heard about it -- and decided not to make an issue over the creche. However, a council person thought the creche might violate some supreme court rulings. Additionally, some fundamentalist (Protestant) ministers were very upset about the creche.

The Mayor called a meeting of the six clergy of North Brunswick including Rabbi Warmflash. After a contentious meeting they agreed to a compromise. The creche would stay in 1991 but the following year there would only be a tree and a menorah as part of the township holiday display.

On December 7, 1992, I represented B'nai Tikvah at the lighting ceremony. I said the three blessings in Hebrew and in English and gave the  
continued...

## President's Message (cont.)

following brief ecumenical speech:

We celebrate the holiday of Hanukkah by lighting the menorah for eight days. Hanukkah commemorates the victory of the Macabees of their Greek oppressors.

We also light the menorah in prayer that God will bring his light of peace and freedom to everyone who suffers oppression, tyranny and famine.

In this special season we hope that God grants these gifts to the peoples of the Sudan, Somalia, Yugoslavia, Haiti, Mainland China, and all others not named -- Amen.

The Menorah was then plugged in by a township employee. Reverend Mark McGrath then gave his speech and prayer for the tree lighting.

While Rev. McGrath was giving his speech I went to say hello to Ron Truitt, a reporter from the North Brunswick Post. I was confronted by a woman calling me rabbi. Ron Truitt corrected her. She countered, he's wearing a hat (kippah) he must be an orthodox Jew who knows something. I calmly asked what it was she wanted to know and said I would try to answer her question. Then several other people joined in what was becoming an outburst. Ron Truitt, apparently knowing what was going to happen, tried to keep things civil.

She demanded, wasn't the menorah a religious symbol of Judaism and isn't it true that the Christmas tree is not a religious symbol of Christianity. As I tried to answer her question, a man waved a piece of paper with

blown up dictionary definitions of the tree and the menorah, at the same time distributing duplicates of the sheet to what was now a small crowd!

At this point the reporter was trying to separate me from those yelling questions at me.

I tried to explain that we do not worship objects or people and besides, this candelabra was not the one from the Temple nor the one described in the dictionary.

The woman who mistook me for a rabbi then screamed 'we called the churches and they said that it was Rabbi Warmflash and the Jews that demanded the creche be removed! I said that is not true -- I was involved in advising the rabbi about the '91 meeting and added that this is not 60 years ago in Germany and I will not all you to blame "the Jews" for things which we are not responsible for.

I was no longer calm -- Ron Truitt was now dragging me away. I added that as far as we are concerned, there should be no display of any kind on government property. She yelled back why are you here then? At the top of my voice I said the Mayor invited us and we agreed to it in order to be ecumenical!

This misinformed woman and those with her disrupted the ceremony and upset many people.

Rev. McGrath assured me his church never blamed the Jews. The press decided not to report this incident because he and his editors felt it would inflame people and make things  
continued...

worse! Unfortunately, they did not calm things down and we never got our side (the truth) reported.

The Mayor reconvened the meeting of the clergy. They reaffirmed their compromise of 1991 and sent a release to the press.

Although the Post chose not to print the Mayor/clergy's statement, as of December 24 they were still publishing letters from the individuals that confronted me on December 7th. The leadership of B'nai Tikvah decided not to get into a shouting match with the individuals or the press. However, I thought that you, the congregation, should know what really happened.

The Board of Trustees will give Rabbi Warmflash a resolution to present to the Mayor at the meeting scheduled for this month. The clergy had agreed to meet after the holidays to discuss how to resolve the matter of holiday displays on town property. I will inform you of their resolution in my next message.

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**SPECIAL NOTICE TO PARENTS OF RECENTLY ADOPTED CHILDREN:** In the next few months, Rabbi Warmflash will be arranging for the conversion of several children who have been adopted by members of the congregation. Anyone who is interested in having their adopted children participate should contact the Rabbi in the Synagogue office as soon as possible.

## NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

What is the best thing about this month? Ask the children and they'll tell you -- the beginning of Mommy Stay & Play Day. This is your individual day that Mommy comes to school and plays with YOU! No siblings, no phones. Daddy will also have his day.

Also discussed during the month was George Washington & Abraham Lincoln. A trip to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital is planned for the Pre-K classes for their special children's program. A gift will be presented to the hospital for their playroom from the children. This was bought with the Tzedakah money that was collected every Friday.

If you haven't let us know that you are interested in registering next year, call the office immediately.

### FROM THE MOUTHS OF BABES:

At the fire station, the firefighter asked the class what they would do if their clothes caught on fire. Hilary replied, "we would drop, rock & roll!" ... When Melissa's mom asked her what favorite toy she would bring in for Show & Tell, she answered, "Daddy!" ... When the teacher asked the boys to get their coats & then the girls, one child corrected her by saying: "we're not boys & girls, we're all friends." ... The teacher asked Hilary how her new baby was doing, she informed her that "the baby is fine & she's hanging out with Mommy!" ... When Lidsey told her mother that a child  
continued

## Mouths of Babes (cont.)

painted on the classroom wall, her mother asked if the teacher was upset. Lindsey replied, "no, she didn't cry!" ... As the firefighters presented their program & spoke about fire drills, Alex informed them that his daddy had a fire drill in his tool box.

Joan Shames, Director  
Nursery School

## ANY OLD BONDS TODAY?

I keep hearing from people who think they are doing Israel a favor by not cashing in their matured Israel Bonds.

Once a bond has matured, the government of Israel returns the funds to Chase Manhattan Bank. The bank sits on the money (probably earning interest on it), in anticipation of the bond holder submitting the bonds for redemption. If the bonds are not redeemed within a reasonable period, the money goes to the treasurer of the State of New York.

I have nothing against Mario Cuomo, but it is not our responsibility to help him with New York's budget problems. Look under your mattress or wherever you keep your valuables, and if you find matured bonds, either cash them in or roll them over into new bonds.

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## ISRAEL BONDS (continued)

Don't forget the Israel Bond Breakfast honoring Helene and Gary Tikel on February 7th. That will be the perfect chance to roll over your old bonds or to buy new ones in the Tinkels' honor if you wish.

-- Aaron Rosloff  
Israel Bonds Chairman

## FIFTY PLUS GROUP

Our February 23rd meeting will be a MINI LUNCH at 12:30 pm and Energy Bingo (to be confirmed.) A \$1.00 donation and receipt of your check confirms your reservation.

Theatre tickets are available for both theaters. *Foxfire* at George Street Playhouse on Thursday, April 8th at 11:00 am (\$15.00) and Sunday, April 25th at 2:00 pm (\$19.00) Time Magazine says: "*Foxfire* quivers with laughter and stabs of heart."

*Minnies Boys* -- a comedy on the lives of the Marx Brothers -- at the Forum Theatre on Sunday, March 21st at 2:30 pm (\$19.00) and on Wednesday, March 24th at 2:30 pm (\$17.00.) Receipt of your check confirms your reservation.

A health care program is in the planning stage for the April 27 meeting. Refreshments are always served! Come to our meetings and meet new and old friends. For additional information call Ann at 297-3575.

B'NAI TIKVAH  
GIFT SHOP NEWS

Our Hanukkah season was very successful! On behalf of the Sisterhood of B'nai Tikvah, thanks to all of you for your patronage and support of the gift shop.

Our Gift Shop is open year 'round to serve all of your Judaic shopping needs both for religious articles and gifts for all occasions.

We have a fine selection of gift items including Judaica books, cookbooks, children's games, toys, mezzuzah cases, and parchment, kipot, candlesticks, 14K jewelry, challah dishes and covers, shabbat candles, havdalah candles, memorial candles and holders, tefillin, & tallit

We continue to offer imprinted kipot for all your special events. Gift Certificates, Bridal Registry and Special Orders.

*New Feature: 10% discount on purchases over \$5.00 -- offered to all paid-up Sisterhood members and to all B'nai Tikvah Senior Citizen members (cannot be combined.*

The Gift Shop will be open from 9:30 am to 12 noon on the following Sundays:

February 7th & 21st  
March 14th & 28th.

\*\* Additional hours to be announced to serve all of your Passover needs \*\*

Happy 1993! Lynn Biderman

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## UNITED SYNAGOGUE YOUTH

The USY Shul-In was a huge success. The USY'ers lead Shabbat Services Friday evening and Saturday Morning and Havdalah services on Saturday night. After Havdalah, the USYers went ice skating in Old Bridge and returned to the synagogue to watch some late night movies. On Sunday morning we made flip books for patients at the pediatrics ward of Robert Wood Johnson hospital. USY held their annual Super Bowl Bagel sale and it was a profitable fundraiser.

The USYers are planning an arts & crafts night and baking night in February. In March we will be working booths at the annual Synagogue Purim Carnival and we will be holding a scavenger hunt at the end of March. If any high school student is interested in joining USY call Jessica Greenberg at 908-297-4169.



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## AD JOURNAL DEADLINE EXTENDED!!!

The final ad copy deadline for the Ad Journal Dinner Dance honoring Gale & Mark Dillman has been extended to February 8th.

- \* Help to Honor Mark & Gale \*
- \* Dillman by selling ads into \*
- \* the Journal. \$250 worth of \*
- \* ads receive a free ticket \*
- \* to an evening of dinner \*
- \* and dancing. \*

The dinner dance will be held on February 20th at 8:00 pm.

If you need additional order forms or need more information contact Ken Salzinger at (908) 329-6487 or the Synagogue office.

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## Jersey Jewish Singles

For Jewish Singles from 35 to 55. Events planned throughout February. To order the newsletter send \$12 (check or money order) to Jersey Jewish Singles. Please include your full name, address & phone # and mail to 1655 - 245 Oak Tree Road, Suite 126, Edison, NJ 08820.

There is also a Jewish Singles hot line to find out about various events around the area -- (908) 925-3836.





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\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Sunday morning, March 7**

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| 10:00 am - 11:30 am | Special Purim programs for children ages 5-12 in Religious School. |
| 10:45 am - 11:30 am | Pre-school age "Megillah Reading."                                 |
| 11:30 am - 2:30 pm  | Purim Carnival.  |



MAZEL TOV & YASHAR KOACH TO:

Doris & Jack Birkenthal on the birth of twin grandsons Ben Israel & Gil Hillel.

Seth Dvorin on his Bar Mitzvah.

Glenn Kessler on his Bar Mitzvah.

Rachel Pelcyger on her Bat Mitzvah.

CONDOLENCES TO:

Barbara Moskowitz & Family on the loss of husband & father Melvin.

Roslyn, Robert & David Naiburg & Family on the loss of husband & father Irving Naiburg.

Ann Rosensweig on the loss of her father.

YARZEIT FUND

Ron & Mindy Shapiro in memory of Bertram Shapiro.

Solomon & Irina Dinkevich in memory of Etta Hillel.

Joel & Joyce Gerbman in memory of George Weinstein.

Shirley & Wilfred Eberle in memory of Betty & Albert Jones.

Leonard & Joyce Mandelblatt in memory of David I. Mandelblatt.

Meyer & Shirley Ketofsky in memory of Louis Wieseltier.

Lena Friedel-Feld in memory of Solomon & Luba Trachtenberg.

Fran Schneider in memory of Jack Schneider.

Jean & Herbert Schneider in memory of Jack Schneider.

Arleen Panson in memory of Harold Herlands.

Larry & Judith Gold in memory of Aaron Gold.

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Hyman & Mary Arougheti in honor of their 50th Anniversary remarriage.

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Felix Sanchez.

Richard & Lisa Seidman in honor of Jason Benjamin Seidman.

Bernard & Abbey Lorber in memory of Charles Lorber.

Martin & Marci Abschutz, Stuart & Claire Koshner in memory of William Koshner.

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Janet Cutroneo in memory of Jean Kuperblatt.

Martin Abschutz in memory of Yvette Abschutz.

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PRAYERBOOK FUND

Howard & Carole Kalish in memory of Albert Kalish.

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YOUTH FUND

Mark & Gigi Cohen in memory of Jesse Cohen.

To send a card call Renee Grodman 329-6059 or Betty Stark 297-4398.

## JOB NETWORK

1992 was a very tough year in the job market. More and more area corporations have been downsizing, restructuring their organizations so that many of our congregants (40 + families ) have unfortunately lost employment.

To start 1993 off on the right economic foot we are starting a JOB EXCHANGE so that our congregants can learn more about the tri-state job market. This meeting is for people at all levels as we will bring job leads well into the six figure salaries.

### LEARN ABOUT:

- INFORMATION ON NETWORKING TECHNIQUES
- RECEIVE A LIST OF OPEN "HOT" JOB LEADS-FIND OUT WHAT COMPANIES HAVE JOB BANK PHONE #'s THAT YOU CAN CALL TO FIND OPEN POSITIONS
- OBTAIN LIST OF PEOPLE WHO KNOW WHAT THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE IN THEIR ORGANIZATION
- GET FINANCIAL / TAX INFORMATION FROM A CPA
- LEARN ABOUT THE BEST WAYS TO HANDLE HEALTH INSURANCE-COBRA
- HAVE YOUR RESUME CRITIQUED BY VICE PRESIDENTS OF HUMAN RESOURCES, WHO WILL GIVE YOU HONEST FEEDBACK

If you are in the job market, want to get back in, or are contemplating a job change you should plan to attend.

We look to kick off our first meeting on February 18,1993, at 7:45 P.M. at the Synagogue.

Come prepared with your resume (3 copies), if you do not have an up to date resume we will help you. Also bring a list of questions, problems and job opportunities that others can share.

Please complete the attached form to reserve your place for our first meeting.

If you would like additional information please contact:  
Mark Mehler at 908 -821- 6652.

JOB NETWORK EXCHANGE

Name:

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Occupation:

Last three corporations that you have worked for:

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CONGREGATION B'NAI TIKVAH CALENDAR

**FEBRUARY**

Tuesday	2	7:30 pm	Kadima/Youth Lounge
Friday	5	5:01 pm 8:00 pm	Shabbat Candle Lighting Shabbat Services * Teachers Recognition Shabbat
Saturday	6	9:30 am 10:15 am - 12:15 pm	Shabbat Services Junior Congregation
Sunday	7	am	Israeli Bond Breakfast Honoring Helene & Gary Tinkel
		9:30 am - 12 noon	Sisterhood Gift Shop Open
Friday	12	5:10 pm 8:00 pm	Shabbat Candle Lighting Time Shabbat Services
Saturday	13	9:30 am	Shabbat Services
		12:30 pm	Lunch & Learn program
Sunday	14	9:30 am	Men's Club/Kiddush Room
Wednesday	17	7:30 pm	Kadima/Youth Lounge
		8:00 pm	Sisterhood Meeting/Social Hall
Friday	19	5:18 pm 8:00 pm	Shabbat Candle Lighting Time Shabbat Services
Saturday	20	9:30 am 10:15 am - 12:15 pm	Shabbat Services Junior Congregation & Daled Class Luncheon
		pm	Ad Journal Dinner Dance Honoring Gale & Mark Dillman
Sunday	21	11:00 am	Baseball Card Show
		9:30 am - 12 noon	Sisterhood Gift Shop Open
Tuesday	23	1:00 pm	Fifty Plus/Youth Lounge
Friday	26	5:26 pm	Shabbat Candle Lighting Time Gimel Class Service & Dinner
Saturday	27	9:30 am	Shabbat Services

## ABOUT US

**Skeptics, take note --** Can you believe the story of an Ashkelon, Israel man who broke into, of all things, a police van? Caught red-handed with the ignition wires in his palms, he claimed he entered the vehicle in order to read psalms....it being Friday night. Guess he did not have a prayer of a chance with this unorthodox explanation!

**Solidarity --** In Zimbabwe, the Jewish women's groups have taken on the responsibility of feeding 1,000 deprived children who would otherwise go hungry and uncared for. In a gesture of solidarity midst the horrors of Serbia, Jewish young men and women accompanied Muslim young people as they joined young Christian comrades who were at Christmas services, saying "well, we do fight and everything else together." In San Francisco, officials of the Hebrew Free Loan Association met with Latino and Black representatives to lend their expertise in teaching grant-writing strategies and how to supply background information so that these groups could obtain bank loans and other aid, modeled after their own efforts. So, how is it that we never read of these events on the front pages of newspapers, or hear about it on television.

**Nutley, New Jersey --** Police in Nutley and the Tel Aviv Police Northern District have signed a twinning agreement. Recently, they held a 10-day exchange program in which they addressed the subjects of terrorism, drug abuse and cultural awareness.

**West Orange, New Jersey --** A

reader of Moment magazine spotted and sent to the Jewish monthly this advertisement from a local supermarket flyer: "Free! 1 lb. of Jewish rye with each pound of ham..."

**Patagonia --** (It's in southernmost Argentina) recently was the scene of a first, a bar mitzvah. This remote province had to import the Director of the Jewish Association of another remote area in the northern section of the country, in order to conduct services. No, somehow we just know it was not a catered affair.

**Egypt --** renovations and repairs to the Pyramids at Giza require special grinding wheels for the work. We hear the Egyptian firm doing this work has ordered the wheels from Kibbutz Sarid in Israel. The name of the firm at Kibbutz Sarid? Appropriately, Camel Grinding Wheel Works.

**Portugal --** Portuguese cuisine owes some of its best and most unusual dishes to the Jews who were forced to convert under the threat of Inquisition. Among the curious colorful customs are a rice pudding desert decorated with cinnamon Stars of David.

**JNF --** In a wonderful mailing from the Jewish National Fund, we are told that Israel's water crisis is not over, and that more reservoirs are needed to contain scarce rainfall. We are urged to send contributions with this marvelous message: "Give a dam ... or give a reservoir!"

L'hitroat,  
Mili Rosloff.



**BRIT MILAH--THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION**

by the Editors of HaKol

While circumcision is universally practiced among Jews, Brit Milah is being neglected by some because of ignorance or prejudice.

What is the nature, origin, and meaning of the ritual of circumcision? The Jewish religion requires that every Jewish male child be circumcised on the **eighth** day after his birth (as prescribed in the Torah [Genesis 17:9-10]), unless he is ill. This precept, the oldest and most sacred rite in Judaism, is called Brit Milah or the Covenant of Circumcision. Because Abraham was the first to perform it, it is also known as the "Covenant of Abraham". Circumcision is defined in Biblical literature as a "sign of the Covenant" between God and the Jewish people for by its practice, we carry upon our flesh the indelible mark of our faith and heritage.

Although science has proved that circumcision carries with it hygienic advantages, it is observed for religious reasons, as a token of the Covenant.

Physicians and surgeons are competent to do the surgery of circumcision. They are usually not qualified to perform the Covenant of Circumcision. Brit Milah carries more significance than the removal of the foreskin. It is an act of faith which unites the child with the ancestors of his people. When the physician usurps the place of the **Mohel**, the act ceases to be a sacred ceremony marked by deep

spiritual meaning. Instead, it becomes nothing more than a minor surgical procedure. Only if performed by a religiously qualified person, a Mohel (who in actuality acts as the father's "agent"), can it be considered as constituting a sign of the Covenant.

In response to the above the Conservative Movement, in 1989, has implemented a *Brit Kodesh (Sacred Covenant) Program* which is designed to train doctors and certain other non-physicians to be "Conservative" Mohalim. Besides the given medical qualifications, each candidate to the program must be committed to making halachah a central part of their personal and family life. Some of the standards include: being committed to the binding nature of halachah and the observance of mitzvot within the framework of the Conservative Movement (both within the home and the community); being committed to ongoing personal Talmud Torah and regular Tefillah; and last, but not least, being committed to perform brit milah only according to halachah. The *Brit Kodesh Program* is a positive statement about the integrity and authenticity of the Conservative Movement...a movement which IS fulfilling the needs and desires of its constituents.

In the course of history, whenever oppressors arose to harm or destroy the Jewish people, they sought to abolish circumcision. We, who live in a land of freedom, should not take for granted the heritage preserved at much cost by many of our forbearers and fellow Jews. Indeed, those who stood  
(continued)

## BRIT MILAH (continued)

steadfast in times of adversity and performed the *mitzvah* of Circumcision can be applauded and praised by US leading lives which uphold the fundamental and timeless spiritual principle of *kedoshim tihyu*-- "You shall become holy, for I the Lord your God am Holy" (Leviticus 19:2). We, as they did, must come to understand that God "offers" the Jewish People tangible deeds--this Brit Milah and other *mitzvot*, as practical vehicles for transforming ourselves (individually and collectively) from an unholy state to a holy one. As a reward for this often demanding, yet enlightening and ongoing transformation process, the "individual" and the "nation" can now justify its "worthiness" of having a relationship with God and the coupled "privilege" of being God's *shaliach* (agent) in the capacity of caretaker of the Torah and performer of righteous deeds on the Earth. It is through our readiness and desire to adhere to halachah (Jewish Law) vis a vis through the performance of *mitzvot*, *tzedakah*, etc. that we are able to "validate" to ourselves (and the world, respectively) that our relationship with God is special and that the Jewish People are worthy recipients of God's Covenant and blessings!

The Brit Milah is an inspiring ceremony filled with beauty, sanctity, and symbolism. Abraham represents the "past", Elijah the Prophet (agent of God) represents the "future", and the Mohel (agent of the parents), along with the baby, represents the "present".

After the father recites the blessing, all present respond by saying "As this child has entered the Covenant, so may he attain the blessings of the Torah, marriage, and a life of good deeds." Obviously enough, it was the successful attainment of these threefold blessings by our Jewish brethren of past that has caused us to be an *Eternal People* thus far. Now, current and future generations will have to strive for "holiness" so that through God's blessings, the Jewish People might continue to share in the birthright of the future!

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### Culture Corner: YIDDISH

Sometime during the 10th century, Jews from what is now Northern France, who spoke old French and of course Hebrew, migrated to towns along the Rhine, where they began to speak the local German dialect. Hebrew remained untouched as the sacred liturgical language for reading Torah and Talmud, for use in prayer, and in scholarly or theological discourse.

In Rhineland, Jews wrote German phonetically, using the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, just as Jewish sages in Spain wrote Spanish with Hebrew letters.

Yiddish really took root and flowered as a vernacular in the ghettos which began in walled areas in Venice in the 13th century. The new parlance was a melange of Middle High German, some old German remnants of old French and old Italian, Hebrew names and phrases, and local dialects. But Yiddish did not really settle down and raise its own young until after the 15th century, when Jews migrated to Eastern Europe (Poland, Galicia, Hungary, Rumania, and Russia). There, the buoyant tongue of Yiddish picked up the new additions, adapting itself to the street and marketplace. Yiddish became the Jew's tongue.

(Note: Germans despised Yiddish as a vulgar jargon. Hebraists loathed it as the shabby slang of the masses. Ardent Israelis consider it a demeaning tongue of the hated Germans and ghetto ancestry.)

Yiddish, using the letters of

the Hebrew alphabet, is written from right to left. Its spelling is emphatically phonetic. Yiddish consists of Hebrew words and Hebrew phrases (10-15%); adapted from German (65-70%); and the rest from the languages where Jews resided (Polish, Russian, Rumanian, Ukrainian, various Slavic dialects, and within the last century, English).

In Eastern Europe Yiddish flourished and became the loved native tongue of the Ashkenazim. Yiddish was never used by or known to the Sephardim. Since Jewish women were not taught Hebrew, they spoke Yiddish to their children, who in turn spoke it to their children. Yiddish therefore became known as "Mama Loshen" (Mother's Language) to distinguish it from "Loshen HaKodesh" (Hebrew-the sacred language).

In the 1920's it was estimated that about two-thirds of all the Jews in the world could understand Yiddish. Hitler's gory harvest changed that forever. Today, familiarity with Yiddish appears to be correlated directly with age; the older the Jew, the more he/she understands Yiddish. It is safe to generalize that more Jews understand Yiddish than speak it and more Jews can speak it than read it. More Jews can manage to read Yiddish than write it.

Yiddish is one of the richest of languages. Wherever Jews traveled, they picked up local words. It would be a tragedy if Yiddish disappeared. Yiddish is rich, warm, loving, colorful, and quite earthy! To give you a "fir instence"...

**YIDDISH (continued)**

**ALEVAI:** The Jewish mother's hope... "Mine daughter should only marry a doctor, alevai."

**BULVON:** A Jackie Gleason size, or what young males grow into after eating their way through adolescence.

**CHALOSHES:** Something revoltingly ugly... Your Aunt Nettie's flowered 1940's living room wallpaper.

**CHMALLYEH:** The classic Jewish mother's threat of that quick smack across the face. It sounds just like it feels!

**FARBISSEN:** Embittered, sour, mean... The attitude of the typical 60 year old spinster garment center bookkeeper when gazing on the 18 year old showroom model!

**FEH:** Yiddish equivalent to "Yuck"... Or having to eat your mother-in-laws tuna casserole.

**FROSK-EN-PUNIM:** That same Jewish smack across the face-used perhaps primarily on children from the "Bronx".

**GOTTENYU:** When a Jew addresses God privately, personally, intimately... "Gottenyu, if You would only have him deal me that Queen of Hearts, I would make Gin.

**HOK-A-CHAINIK:** The depth of your mother's "lectures" on the phone when you're rushing to leave the house to go to your psychotherapy session!

**IN MITTEN DERINNEN:** In the midst of just getting into the bath, "In mitten derinnen"... the telephone rings and someone

is knocking at your front door.

**KNIPPL:** That "special" fund that your spouse keeps hidden for those I got-to-have consumer goods.

**KVELL:** That special look that descends over the faces of each Bar/Bat Mitzvah parent when the Congregation bursts into "Siman Tov".

**SHMATTE:** A dress "FIND" from anywhere off the racks found on 11th Avenue and 37th Street N.Y.C.

**TSATSKELEH:** Never your daughter, but that other little "tsatskeleh" your son the Law student has suddenly discovered!

Last (though not at all least), **A ZOI**... Your meaningful (and wistful) reply when your best friend tells you that her parents are watching the children for the entire weekend, and thus your friend is spending the weekend's free time enjoying the quiet of a good book, romantic evenings, and a great night's sleep!

Wishing you a **vahrim** (warm) month, a **gezunte** (healthy) month, and a **zeeseh** (sweet) month!  
**The Editors of HaKol**

(Note: The above article was reprinted, in part, from various sources.)

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To submit articles:

\*\* We welcome all written contributions from congregants of B'nai Tikvah. Any submissions which the editors find inappropriate, will be turned over to the Rabbi and/or President for final approval.

\*\* We appreciate any ideas from readers which may enhance this publication.

\*\* All submissions must be in HaKol box (located in the Synagogue office) by the deadline dates listed below.

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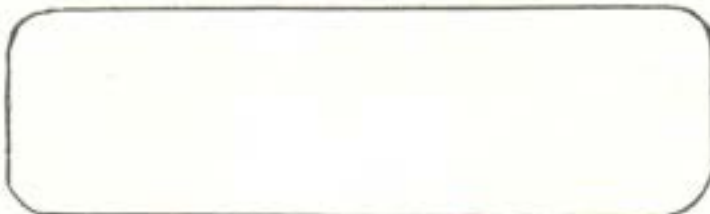
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