

## ***MILESTONES*** ***Mazel Tov!***

### **Bar/Bat Mitzvahs**

- Esti & Mark Rossberg on the Bar Mitzvah of son Chaim

### **Births**

- Rabbi & Mrs Katz on the birth of a grandson (parents Ayala & Reuven Schnitzer) and great grandmother Dorothy Hettleman.
- Sandy & Eliezer Gunzberg on the birth of three grandchildren: Chewy (parents Avi & Dina), Kayla (Eli & Ronit), and Riggs (Lisa & Rick).

### **Condolences**

- Barbara Lasson on the loss of her mother

### **Weddings**

- Chana Leah & Eli Feldman on the marriage of son Moshe to Rickki Schonfeld (parents Chana & Yaakov Schonfeld).
- Devorah and Shimmy Gardyn on the marriage of son Eli to Jennifer Gluck.

### **Engagements**

- Harvey Honick on the engagement of grandson Asher Honick to Morgan Frahm.

*To send a mitzvahcard, call Judy Goldman (410-358-1507).*

*To sponsor a kiddush or shalosh seudos, call Ralph Frier (410-358-1544).*

*To rent the social hall, call Tzipora Frager (410-358-1699).*

*To place a leaf on the Tree of Life, contact Barbara Lasson (410-358-4649).*

*To join the Sisterhood, call Ariella Schuchman, (410-542-8223).*

## ***Message from the Rabbi***

In a few hours we will light the first Chanukah candles. The Story of Chanukah never fails to speak to our contemporary reality: Jews are attacked, many are killed, many martyred, men, women, children (Mumbai comes to mind this year). The very center of Judaism, the Temple itself, is seized and deliberately polluted. Torah scrolls are desecrated, holes are blown in the Temple walls, and all the oils are rendered impure. Judaism, the Jewish people qua Jewish people, faces oblivion. An old and familiar story, unfortunately.

And yet....it doesn't happen. A single jar survives. Its oil is pure, untouched, essential, and it provides light until more oil can be made...We all know the story.

The message? Communities, including shuls, survive if they possess a jar, even a small one, of pure oil, untainted by contaminating influences. Sometimes these influences come from the outside, improper habits and ways of thinking that seep into our community, our family, our shul, from the host culture. Who decides what is right and what is wrong? Our culture or the outside culture? It is a fair question, and often an uncomfortable one. Many of our jars have been touched and handled by others. Do we have any that have not?

This is the view of Rashi and the Rambam, who explain that the oil was *tamei* because it was touched by non-Jews. Others (Baal HaMaor, Meiri) see it differently. It was not the Greeks who were *metamei* the oil. Halachically gentiles cannot do this (I'll spare you the technical details). Rather it was the Hellenist Jews who did so, who went around and deliberate polluted all the jars of oil, save the one they overlooked, the one jar which was untainted by improper Jews pushing a different Judaism, a different set of values under the name of Judaism. For that is who the Hellenists were.

I think this is a more immediate problem for most of us as individuals and as a shul. We have to be on guard against occasions when we ourselves, the nastier side of ourselves, pollute our "oils" through bad middos and through bad actions, particularly in our interpersonal interactions, in our *bein adam la-chaveiro*. Though we give in often enough to unworthy temptations and actions, let us never forget to preserve at least one jar of pure oil, one corner of our personality where we acknowledge the truth when we misstep, and by whose illumination we are moved to put right that which we have made wrong. It is not for nothing that the Kabbalists see Chanukah as the end of Yom Kippur.

Chanukah makes us optimistic. In terms of the shul, I look forward to growth, both physically ( Let's expand the hall), ritually (Let's expand our set of Torahs!), and most importantly, personally (Let's put more passion into davening).

**BETH ABRAHAM CONGREGATION SCHEDULE**  
**December 2008/5769 - Pesach 2009/5769**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Shabbos
12/21/08	12/22/08	12/23/08	12/24/08	12/25/08	12/26/08	12/27/08
SH 8:00 MN/MA 4:30 <i>1<sup>st</sup> Night Chanukah</i>	SH 6:45 MA 9:00 <i>2nd Night Chanukah</i>	SH 6:55 MA 9:00 <i>3rd Night Chanukah</i>	SH 6:55 MA 9:00 <i>4th Night Chanukah</i>	SH 6:45 MA 9:00 <i>5th Night Chanukah</i>	SH 6:55 MN/MA 4:33 <i>6th Night Chanukah</i>	<i>Rosh Chodesh</i> SH 9:00 MN 4:33, MA 5:33 <i>7th Night Chanukah</i>
12/28/08	12/29/08	12/30/08	12/31/08	1/1/09	1/2/09	1/3/09
<i>Rosh Chodesh</i> SH 8:00 MN/MA 4:35 <i>8th Night Chanukah</i>	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 8:00 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MN 4:38	SH 9:00 MN 4:38 MA 5:38
1/4/09	1/5/09	1/6/09	1/7/09	1/8/09	1/9/09	1/10/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 4:40	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	<i>Asara B'Teves</i> SH 6:35 MN 4:30 <i>{Fast Over 5:42}</i>	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MN/MA 4:43	SH 9:00 MN 4:43 MA 5:44
1/11/09	1/12/09	1/13/09	1/14/09	1/15/09	1/16/09	1/17/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 4:45	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MN 4:52	SH 9:00 MN 4:52 MA 5:53
1/18/09	1/19/09	1/20/09	1/21/09	1/22/09	1/23/09	1/24/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 4:55	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MN 4:58	SH 9:00 MN 4:58, MA 5:59
1/25/09	1/26/09	1/27/09	1/28/09	1/29/09	1/30/09	1/31/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 5:00	<i>Rosh Chodesh</i> SH 6:30 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MN 5:06	SH 9:00 MN 5:09, MA 6:07
2/1/09	2/2/09	2/3/09	2/4/09	2/5/09	2/6/09	2/7/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 5:10	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:35 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MN 5:14	SH 9:00 MN 5:14, MA 6:16
2/8/09	2/9/09	2/10/09	2/11/09	2/12/09	2/13/09	2/14/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 5:15	<i>Tu B'Shevat</i> SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MN 5:23	SH 9:00 MN 5:23, MA 6:24
2/15/09	2/16/09	2/17/09	2/18/09	2/19/09	2/20/09	2/21/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 5:25	<i>{President's Day}</i> SH 8:00 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MN 5:31	SH 9:00 MN 5:31, MA 6:32
2/22/09	2/23/09	2/24/09	2/25/09	2/26/09	2/27/09	2/28/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 5:30	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	<i>Rosh Chodesh</i> SH 6:30 MA 9:00	<i>Rosh Chodesh</i> SH 6:30 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MN 5:38	SH 9:00 MN 5:38, MA 6:39
3/1/09	3/2/09	3/3/09	3/4/09	3/5/09	3/6/09	3/7/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 5:40	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	<i>Rosh Chodesh</i> SH 6:35 MN 5:46	<i>Rosh Chodesh</i> SH 9:00 MN 5:46, MA 6:47
3/8/09	3/9/09	3/10/09	3/11/09	3/12/09	3/13/09	3/14/09
<i>{Daylight Savings Time}</i> SH 8:00 MN/MA 6:50	<i>Taanis Esther</i> SH 6:30 MN 6:40, MA 7:50 <i>Megillah</i> 8:15	<i>Purim</i> SH 6:00/8:00 MN 3:00, MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MN 6:53	SH 9:00 MN 6:53, MA 7:54
3/15/09	3/16/09	3/17/09	3/18/09	3/19/09	3/20/09	3/21/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 6:55	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 7:00	SH 9:00 MN 7:00 MA 8:01
3/22/09	3/23/09	3/24/09	3/25/09	3/26/09	3/27/09	3/28/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 7:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:30 MA 9:00 <i>Rosh Chodesh</i>	SH 6:55 MN 7:00	SH 9:00 MN 7:07, MA 8:08
3/29/09	3/30/09	3/31/09	4/1/09	4/2/09	4/3/09	4/4/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 7:10	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MN 7:00	SH 9:00 MN 7:14, MA 8:15
4/5/09	4/6/09	4/7/09	4/8/09	4/9/09	4/10/09	4/11/09
SH 8:00 MN/MA 7:15	SH 6:45 MA 9:00	SH 6:55 MA 9:00 <i>Bedikas Chometz</i>	<i>Erev Pesach</i> <i>Taanis Bechorim</i> <i>Eruv Tavshilin</i> SH 6:45 MN 7:19	<i>Pesach 1</i> SH 9:00 MN 7:19	<i>Pesach 2</i> SH 9:00 MN 7:21	<i>Pesach 3</i> SH 9:00 MN 7:21, MA 8:22
4/12/09	4/13/09	4/14/09	4/15/09	4/16/09	4/17/09	4/18/09
<i>Pesach 4</i> SH 8:00 MN/MA 7:25	<i>Pesach 5</i> SH 6:30 MA 9:00	<i>Pesach 6</i> SH 6:30 MN 7:25	<i>Pesach 7</i> SH 9:00 MN 7:25	<i>Pesach 8</i> SH 9:00 Yizkor 10:30 MN 7:25 MA 8:27	SH 6:55 MN 7:00	SH 9:00 MN 7:28, MA 8:29

SH = Shacharis    MN = Mincha    MA = Maariv