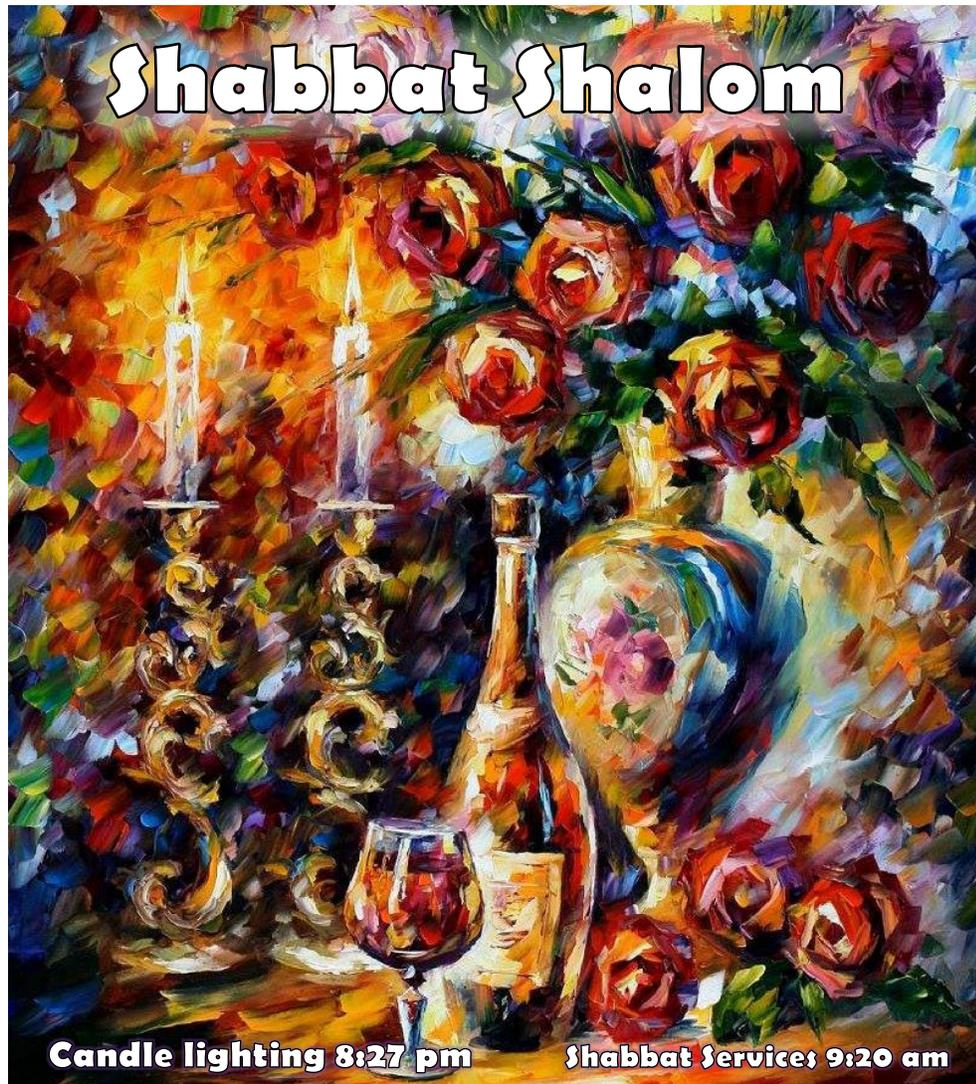




Carnegie Shul Chatter

July 18, 2018



Tisha B'Av Observed this Sunday

What was the saddest day of your life? For many it is the day on which we lost a loved one like a parent, or a spouse, or a child. But for the Jewish people as a whole, most believe it is the ninth of Av, Tisha B'Av. Below is an excellent article from chabad.org explaining why this day is so meaningful.



Weapons of Terror

Who would have thought that a kite or a balloon could be a dangerous weapon? It hasn't been getting much play in the daily papers, but Israel has been under attack for the last couple of months from its neighbors in Gaza, the terrorist group Hamas, and this time the weapons of choice, in addition to the usual rockets and mortars, have been, of all things, kites and balloons.

Not just any kites or balloons, mind you, but kites and balloons that are carrying incendiaries in order to set fields and farm land in Israel ablaze.

Egypt has this week negotiated a cease fire, but who knows how long that will last. And today there was a report that a falcon attached to a rope with flammable material was found near the Gaza Strip.

Apparently it's not enough to attack Israel with kites and balloons, now falcons are being used for terror as well.

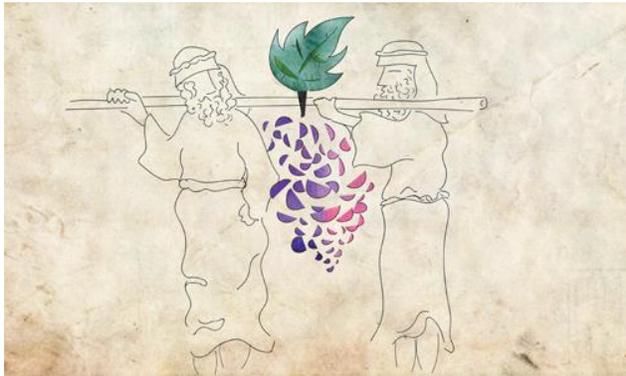
PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) has condemned the use of the bird.

Well, I guess having PETA as an ally is all that Israel will need to stop Hamas.

What Is Tisha B'Av?

Tisha B'Av, the 9th day of the month of Av (July 21-22, 2018), is the saddest day on the Jewish calendar, on which we fast, deprive ourselves and pray. It is the culmination of the Three Weeks, a period of time during which we mark the destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

What Happened on 9 Av



1313 BCE: The **spies returned from the Promised Land** with frightening reports, and the Israelites balked at the prospect of entering the land. G-d decreed that they would therefore wander in the desert for 40 years.

Both **Holy Temples in Jerusalem were destroyed** on this date. The First Temple was burned by the Babylonians in 423 BCE and the Second Temple fell to the Romans in 70 CE unleashing a period of suffering from which our nation has never fully recovered.

The **Bar Kochba revolt** against the Romans in 133 CE ended in defeat: The Jews of Betar were butchered on the 9th of Av and the Temple Mount was plowed one year later on the same date.

Later on in our history, many more tragedies happened on this day, including the 1290 **expulsion of England's Jews** and the 1492 **banishment of all Jews from Spain**.

How 9 Av Is Observed

The fast begins at sunset of the 8th of Av and concludes at nightfall the following night. During this time, we do not

- eat or drink
- wear leather footwear
- bathe or wash ourselves (washing only until the knuckle when mandated by *halachah*)
- apply ointments or creams
- engage in marital relations or any form of intimacy
- sit on a normal-height chair until *chatzot* (the time when the sun has reached its apex)
- study Torah (except for the "sad" parts that deal with the destruction of the Temples, etc.)
- send gifts, or even greet one another (you may respond to greetings)
- engage in outings, trips or similar pleasurable activities
- wear fine, festive clothing



What We Do



Starting from midday on 8 Av, we limit our Torah study to the few allowed topics that are of a sad nature or pertain to the Temples' destruction.

We eat a square meal in the afternoon, before Minchah services. Then, late in the afternoon, a "separation meal," *seudah hamafseket*, is eaten. It consists of bread and a hard-boiled egg dipped in ashes, accompanied by water. This meal is eaten alone, sitting on a low stool.

The meal must be over by sundown, when all the laws of Tisha B'Av take effect.

Tisha B'Av evening services are held in synagogue, where the ark has been stripped of its decorative curtain and the lights dimmed. Evening prayers are followed by the chanting of Eichah (Lamentations).

Morning prayers are held without *tallit* and *tefillin*, since both are considered adornments. Most of the morning is occupied by the reading of Kinot, elegies marking the various tragedies that befell our people.

Work is permitted on Tisha B'Av, but discouraged. On this day, one's focus should be on mourning and repentance. If one must work, it is preferable to begin after midday.

It is customary to give extra charity on Tisha B'Av, as on every fast day.

After midday, it is permissible to sit on chairs, and *tallit* and *tefillin* are worn during the afternoon prayer. In the synagogue, the ark's curtain is restored to its place before the afternoon prayers.

Many communities have the custom to clean the house and wash the floors after midday, in anticipation of the Redemption, which we await.

After the Fast

When night falls, before breaking the fast, one should perform *netilat yadayim* (hand-washing), this time covering the entire hand with water, but without reciting the blessing. It is also customary to perform Kiddush Levanah at this point, celebrating the rebirth of the moon, and our hoped-for national rebirth.



The Temple was set ablaze on the afternoon of the 9th of Av, and it burned through the 10th. Therefore, the restrictions of the Nine Days (such as not eating meat, swimming or laundering clothing) extend until midday of the 10th of Av.

The Joy Within the Sadness



Even as we mourn, there is an element of joy and comfort. Indeed, the reading of Eichah concludes with the verse “Restore us to You, O L-rd, that we may be restored! Renew our days as of old.” There is also a custom among many to use flimsy paperback Kinot booklets, hoping that they will not be needed next year.

It is by no accident that Scripture refers to this day as a *mo'ed*, a holiday, and Tachanun (prayer of repentance) is not said today. May the time soon

come when we look back with the clarity of hindsight to see how all our suffering was but a prelude to happiness and goodness, with the coming of Moshiach. Amen!

MVP

Well, the baseball All Star Game was this week and in case you missed it, the Most Valuable player was Alex Bregman of the Houston Astros. Yes, the Jewish Alex Bregman of the Houston Astros. Bregman led off the 10th inning with a homer to left field, and it proved to be the game-winner in the American League's 8-6 victory in the All-Star Game. A few minutes later, Bregman made history by becoming the first Jewish player to win the MVP award in the All Star Game.

Bregman probably should have been the second Jewish player to be the MVP because in 1954 Cleveland's Al Rosen had 2 homers and 5 RBIs in one of the best All-Star Game performances ever. He also had a single, giving him 9 total bases for the game. Unfortunately they didn't name an MVP until 1962 so Rosen did not get the Award.

Yahrzeit Plaques

Commemorate a loved one by dedicating a yahrzeit plaque in his or her memory at the Carnegie Shul. These beautiful plaques, mounted on the sanctuary walls, are lit on the loved one's yahrzeit, Yom Kippur, and days when Yizkor is recited. The names are also read aloud from the Bimah during services on the Sabbath of the yahrzeit and on Yom Kippur. To purchase a plaque, for only \$175, please email Mike Roteman at mrmike7777@yahoo.com.



Please consider sponsoring a Kiddush in honor or in memory of a loved one, for only \$36. Your sponsorship will be announced from the bimah and in the weekly Chatter. To sponsor a Kiddush, email mrmike7777@yahoo.com.