



**B'NAI SHALOM V'TIKVAH**  
**NEWSLETTER**

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**Welcome to the August 2020 Edition of our Newsletter!**

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### Messages from the President – Ron King

#### *In Recognition...*

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. As I am sure you are aware Rabbi Printz and the Board of Directors have been making extraordinary efforts to continue the life of B'Nai Shalom v'Tikvah during these extraordinary times. Hopefully you have been able to continue your "congregational life" by joining with service leaders for virtual services and enjoying social events such as the virtual trivia night and the virtual entertainment night.

As the High Holy Days approach our consultation efforts have intensified. Rabbi Printz, Cantorial Soloist Roz Keyes and the Board of Directors have sought advice from many online sources regarding best practices for conducting High Holy Day worship. We have engaged in many virtual meetings to discuss our findings and we have spent considerable time seeking the most meaningful and safest method for conducting High Holiday services for our congregation. This has included considerable discussion with the Board of Directors of St. Paul's United Church and consultation with the Durham Board of Health.

Your Rabbi Printz, Cantorial Soloist Roz Keyes and your Board of Directors have agreed on a service format that we feel will best meet the spiritual needs of our congregation. ***Please consult your membership package for the detailed information regarding High Holy Day services.***

As your president I have been privileged to work with this dedicated group of people. On behalf of the congregation I wish to express sincere thanks to Rabbi Printz for her initiative, flexibility and dedication in creating the virtual services and Torah studies in the past and continued efforts in planning for the future. In this regard I also wish to extend a huge thank you to the Directors of B'Nai Shalom v'Tikvah who have continued to make extraordinary efforts on behalf of our congregation.

YASHER KOACH

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### **What's in a name? – Of Vital Importance Today...**

Any person who is witness to the turmoil occurring in America is struck by the awakening of many Americans to the historical significance of their statues and place names. Statues honouring historical figures with racist beliefs, which have stood in public places for decades, have been removed due to citizen demands. Why?

History and the historical figures from that history are viewed to a greater or lesser degree through the lens of the narrators of that history. Of course, society views the events and the persons who shaped these events through a biased peephole. As time



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passes the creed that they championed and the actions they took to champion that creed take on lesser or greater significance and lesser or greater approval.

Recently this phenomenon was brought to the attention of the Board of Directors of this congregation. An article in the Ajax News Advertiser appeared recently and was brought to our attention by congregant Rona Siklos. (*see link to article below.*) The article explained that the street name GRAF SPEE had been rejected by the council of the Town of Ajax. Why?

The Graf Spee was the gigantic Nazis warship that was sunk at the Battle of the River Platt during World War Two. The H.M.S. Ajax was one of a number of ships from the British Navy that took part in the battle. The Town of Ajax has a mandate to name streets in the town after seamen who served on the H.M.S. Ajax and the names of other ships that were involved.

However, the developers of the subdivision being built adjacent to St. Paul's United Church took it upon themselves to name a street after the famous Nazis warship! Fortunately, Councilor Lee placed an objection to this street name pointing out that it did not come under the mandate that had been established since this ship was not a ship of the British Navy. In addition, he asked; should the Town of Ajax be honouring a Nazis vessel with a street!?!

Mayor Collier reminded council that B'Nai Shalom v'Tikvah rented space from St. Paul's United Church and he noted that the congregation may be offended by the honouring of anything Nazis with a street name.

The good news is that the council voted to have the name changed. (Although one councilor did vote in favour of the name because she felt the name had historical significance for the town.)

Upon learning of these proceedings, I wrote a letter to Mayor Collier (*see letter below*) on behalf of our rabbi, the Board of Directors and the congregation. (The letter is included in this newsletter and was viewed by Rabbi Printz and our Board of Directors and the president, Pekka Sinervo, of the Canadian Council of Reform Judaism.)



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I recently received a letter from Mayor Collier (dated August 19, 2020) thanking us for expressing “ our point of view “ on this matter and informing me that the decision to approve the street name had been made by the previous council. He further stated that the change of name will be made public, a special meeting of owners on the street will take place and the process (including the letter form B'Nai Shalom v'Tikvah) will be part of a package circulated to the Heritage Advisory Committee of the Town.

There is now more to this story, but readers will have to wait for part two to be published in our next newsletter to know more.

***Durham Region News article link:***

<https://www.durhamregion.com/news-story/10130982--crossed-the-line-a-little-bit-ajax-scuttles-naming-street-after-nazi-warship/?s=e>

***Letter to Ajax Mayor Collier***

## B'NAI SHALOM V'TIKVAH CONGREGATION

Ronald King  
President, B'Nai Shalom v'Tikvah  
105-360 Watson Street West  
Whitby, Ontario L1N 9G2

August 10, 2020  
Mayor Collier and the Town of Ajax Council  
65 Harwood Avenue South  
Ajax, Ontario L1S 2H9

Mayor Collier and Councilors,

I am writing to you with regard to a recent motion in council that has come to the attention of the Board of Directors of our congregation when a congregant read an article in the Ajax News Advertiser. The motion was concerning the naming of streets in



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the Town of Ajax and specifically the naming of a street in a new development on Kings Crescent adjacent to Saint Pauls United Church.

The street name in question was Graf Spee Lane. Being a former long-time resident of the Town of Ajax ( and serving on the Town of Ajax Diversity Committee for many years ) I am well aware of the historical significance of the town's past, its connection with the events of World War Two, the tradition of naming streets in the town after British seamen who served on the HMS Ajax and the contribution of the women and men who worked in Ajax in support of the war effort.

While I am pleased to read that the majority of members of council can draw a distinction between perpetuating events of historical importance as part of the council's goals, I was disturbed to read that some councilors fail to understand that the events of the past bear painful reminders. The naming of a street in the Town of Ajax after a Nazi commanding officer ( Hans Langsdorff ) and a Nazi vessel ( Graf Spee ) engaged in warfare on behalf of an infamous government bent on inhuman suffering is truly inconceivable. I am also pained to convey the hurt that these events have caused considering that B'Nai Shalom v'Tikvah congregation, which has been in actively engaged in Ajax community for twenty-six years, was not consulted on this matter.

As president of our congregation and on behalf of the Board of Directors and our rabbi, Irit Printz, I wish to thank those councilors who have acted to change the street names referred to above. It is our hope that in the future council understands that recognizing the concerns of minorities is vital to the spirit of harmony in a diverse society.

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### **High Holy Days 5780 – Special Requirements**

Hopefully over the past few months you have had the opportunity to join our congregation for one or more of our virtual Shabbat services. B'Nai Shalom v'Tikvah has used the ZOOM computer program to enable congregants to join virtually in prayer and study. However, Rabbi Printz, Cantorial Soloist Roz Keyes and the Board of Directors have decided that for the High Holy Days additional arrangements are required given the added significance of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Therefore, with the permission of St. Paul's United Church, arrangements have been made to conduct High Holy Day services in the sanctuary with a limited number of congregants attending and also stream these services, as has been done in the past, via ZOOM.

Congregants who wish to attend services in the sanctuary at St. Paul's United Church may do so by contacting Hartley Goldenthal ([hartley\\_g@yahoo.com](mailto:hartley_g@yahoo.com) or 905-839-2032) and indicate which service(s) you wish to attend. (please do so by Wednesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>)

**PLEASE NOTE: WHILE BSVT WILL BE FOLLOWING THE COVID PRECAUTIONS FOR ASSEMBLY INDOORS, CONGREGANTS ATTENDING SERVICES IN THE SANCTUARY WILL BE REQUIRED TO SIGN A WAIVER INDICATING YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN INDOOR WORSHIP ASSEMBLY AND THAT YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO WEAR A MASK DURING THE ENTIRE SERVICE.**

**Due to COVID indoor assembly guidelines and requirements by St. Paul's United Church the attendance in the sanctuary is limited. Therefore, the requirement to notify Hartley Goldenthal in advance. Seating will be distributed based on availability and distribution so that congregants who wish to attend services at the sanctuary are provided with the opportunity.**

Please realize that B'Nai Shalom v'Tikvah is one of only a few congregations that is providing the possibility of worship indoors. Your rabbi, cantorial soloist and the Board of Directors have arranged for this possibility despite the additional workload because we believe it is of importance for a number of our congregants to physically be present in a sanctuary during the High Holy Days. Also, we believe that those who view the High



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Holy Day services virtually will appreciate the significance of holding these services in a sanctuary.

**Note: All services will be available via ZOOM. Watch for ad hoc email messages for invitations with times and instructions for accessing virtual services via Zoom during COVID-19.**

**PLEASE CONSULT THE SERVICE SCHEDULE IN THIS NEWSLETTER FOR DETAILED INFORMATION.**

### High Holiday Service Schedule

**EREV ROSH HASHANAH – FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup> @ 6:15 PM**  
(This is a virtual service available on ZOOM)

**ROSH HASHANAH – SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup> @ 10:00 A M**  
(Attendance available and available for viewing on ZOOM)

**ROSH HASHANAH (DAY TWO – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup> @ 10:00 A M**  
(Attendance available and available for viewing on ZOOM)

**TASHLICH AND SHOFAR SERVICE – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup> @ 12:20 P M**  
(SERVICE TO BE HELD AT PARADISE BEACH, AJAX at the end of Pickering Beach Road)

**KOL NIDRE – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27<sup>TH</sup> @ 6:15 P M**  
(Attendance available and available for viewing on ZOOM)

**YOM KIPPUR – MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup> @ 10:00 A M**  
(Attendance available and available for viewing on ZOOM)

**YIZKOR SERVICE** will follow the YOM KIPPUR morning service



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**YOM KIPPUR AFTERNOON SERVICE – 5:15 P M**  
(This is a virtual service available on ZOOM)

**YOM KIPPUR EVENING SERVICE – 7:20 P M**  
(This is a virtual service available on ZOOM)

**HAVDALLAH SERVICE – 7:55 P M**  
(This is a virtual service available on ZOOM)

**PLEASE NOTE THAT SERVICE ATTENDANCE IS LIMITED**

**CONGREGANTS WISHING TO ATTEND A SERVICE MUST:**

1. CONTACT HARTLEY GOLDENTHAL ([hartley\\_g@yahoo.com](mailto:hartley_g@yahoo.com) / 905-839-2032)
2. INDICATE WHICH SERVICE YOU WISH TO ATTEND
3. CONGREGANTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO SIGN A WAIVER
4. CONGREGANTS MUST FOLLOW COVID PROTOCOL WHILE IN ATTENDANCE  
(wearing of a mask and sit in designated areas)





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### Recognitions Club – Paula Rudner

Hello, once again 🖐️

Hope everyone is well, and you and yours are all enjoying the last days of summer, despite Covid-19 limitations. Our special BSVT events that were held on Zoom, i.e. a successful fundraising “Trivia Night” and the “Virtual Variety Show”, with host John Stocker, Tech Host Howard Steinberg, and of course, all our volunteer entertainers, were fantastic and fun evenings! These evenings enabled everyone to have warm social contact with other members, encouraging chat and lots of laughs - just enjoying your time together! And of course, our Virtual “Shabbat Services” with Rabbi Printz, have been enjoyable and welcoming and will continue to be!

Before you know it, August is over, and Labour Day arrives (hmmm, the summer really has passed unbelievably fast!!). Then once again, we will be sharing our more regularly scheduled services. I have been missing everyone, so I look forward to being able to participate in upcoming Shabbat services and to any of the High Holiday services that will be on Zoom. For me, Zoom will continue be my doorway to BSVT services and I am so grateful for it.

In this August Newsletter, we have September 2020 Recognitions, as well as October's, since there will not be a September Newsletter prior to the High Holydays. Celebrations included are birthdays and anniversaries, and we recognize and support our members who have Yarzheits. As of this time, I have not received notification of any Simchas, and have not even heard any rumours of an upcoming Simcha. But if you are planning one, or do have one coming up, and would like to share it with our BSVT family in a future Newsletter, please send me the relevant information, i.e. name, relationship to you (our member), the event, and the date. We would truly enjoy celebrating your good news, and wishing you ***Mazel Tov!!***

If you would like to be recognized in future Newsletters, but have never submitted yours or your children's or grandchildren's information, please read the "Reminder" below for



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details (the details include a note about simchas). We'd love to recognize you and yours for your special day!

On behalf of my mother, Bryna, and myself, Shana Tova to you and your family. We wish you a sweet and fruitful year filled with good health, love, happiness, and peace!

**שנה טובה ומתוקה**

*Paula Rudner, Ad Hoc and Recognitions*

**Warmest Birthday Wishes to:**

September 02: Ingrid Thompson

September 03: Bonnie-Jo Benaksas, daughter of Bryna Rudner and sister to Paula

September 14: Vivian Laiwint

September 18: Michael Chasler, Past President who still keeps in touch, but lives in the U.K.

September 22: Arlene Shulman

September 22: Joe Thompson, husband of Ingrid Thompson

September 26: Ellie Bryne Thompson, granddaughter of Ingrid and Joe Thompson

October 07: Aviva King

October 10: Renee Silberstein-Bortnick, granddaughter of Bryna Rudner and niece to Paula

October 10: Rebecca Kahn, daughter of Gayle Kahn



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October 25: Sandra Frumkin

*A very Happy Birthday to all of you!*

**Congratulations on your Wedding Anniversary:**

October 11: Sam and Beryl Apelbaum (45 years)

October 19: Ron King and Wenda Abel (12 years)

October 24: Cliff and Sandra Frumkin (7 years)

*Happy Anniversary! Wishing you many more years of happiness together!*

**Our thoughts are with you on your Yarzheit:**

September 05: Gayle Kahn, on the Yarzheit of your husband, Henry Kahn  
(Elul 21, 5775)

September 16: Beryl Apelbaum, on the Yarzheit of your father, Julius Geniele  
(Tishrei 6, 5760)

October 01: Bryna Rudner, on the Yarzheit of your father, Joseph Cohen  
(Tishrei 4, 5715)

October 02: Richard Shulman, on the Yarzheit of your father, Jack Shulman  
(Tishrei 21, 5749)

October 10: Bryna Rudner, on the Yarzheit of your mother, Rebecca Cohen  
(Tishrei 14, 5734)



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October 12: Joanie Gertler, on the Yartzheit of your sister, Bryna Brucha Comm  
(Tishrei 29 5776)

October 28: Sam Apelbaum, on the Yartzheit of your father, Leon Apelbaum  
(Cheshvan 16, 5776)

*May their memory be for a blessing.*

**Reminder:** If you are interested in joining our 'Recognitions Club', and allowing us to honour your immediate family's birthdays, anniversaries or Yartzheits in the monthly Newsletter, please email me at [pmrudner@rogers.com](mailto:pmrudner@rogers.com). It's so easy to do! Just send me the names and dates\* for yours, your children's, your grandchildren's or great-grandchildren's birthdays; yours and your spouse's names and the full date of your anniversary, and the same information for your children's or grandchildren's anniversaries; the name, relationship to you or your spouse, and the full Gregorian date of the person for whom you have Yartzheit (both the Gregorian and Hebrew date should be provided, but it's not a problem if the Hebrew date is unknown - we'll gladly convert it for you).

\*There is no need to provide the year for birthdays unless you wish to - just the month and day will be used, but as noted, the year must be provided for anniversaries and Yartzheits.

**Simchas**, including births, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, university graduations, engagements or weddings, are limited to you (i.e. BSVT members), your children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren. Details for each specific simcha are as described in the email headed "**Recognizing your Simchas**" that was distributed on December 9, 2017. If you have a simcha, but you no longer have a copy of the December 9th email, nor do you recall the details needed for publication, please email me, and I will be very happy to provide them to you. Your simcha will be included in the month the simcha will be, so details need to be provided to me with sufficient time to include it.

Please remember that all names should be provided as how you would like them to appear in the Newsletter. It's our honour and pleasure to celebrate you and yours!



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*L' Shana Tovah!*



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## Havdalah in the Time of COVID

On Saturday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, several BSVTers gathered at the home of Roz and Warren Keyes in charming Enniskillen Village for Havdalah at a distance. Everyone enjoyed their own picnic, then gathered around the firepit (at a distance!) to enjoy an evening of fellowship and conversation.





## *Always of Interest...*

**Article submitted by your Editor**

### **How can I celebrate the Jewish New Year when the planet is burning?**

By Eve Andrews on Sep 26, 2019

<https://grist.org/article/how-can-i-celebrate-the-jewish-new-year-when-the-planet-is-burning/>





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**Q. Dear Umbra:**

**As a Jewish and environmentally conscious person, how can I use the framework of Rosh Hashanah to combat climate change?**

**— Let's Contemplate How Atonement Instills Motivation**

**A. Dear L'CHAIM,**

Like any good Jewish girl, I spent seven years attending Hebrew school every week to prepare for my Bat Mitzvah. Jews have been around for a really long time! There's a lot of history to cover! And then at some point shortly post-Bat Mitzvah, I forgot most of it.

So I'd like to thank you for sending me a golden opportunity to brush up on my Jewish knowledge. I'm sure *you* know all this, but for our Gentile friends reading this: The period that starts with Rosh Hashanah and ends with Yom Kippur is considered the most important time of the Jewish year. It's called the High Holidays, the Days of Awe if you're feeling dramatic, *or* the Days of Repentance if you love to focus on the negative!

Basically, on Rosh Hashanah we celebrate the start of the New Year. But because nothing in Judaism comes without a little existential angst, it's also the kickoff of a ten-day period where you examine your soul (that is the command!), make your apologies for all the ways you've fallen short, and make your commitments to improving in the year to come. Then on Yom Kippur, you fast for 25 hours as you *really* focus on all your misdeeds and how to atone for them.

Look: No one can say that Jews don't know how to have a good time!

Those ten days are an audition for the Book of Life vs. the Book of Death, which are pretty much exactly what they sound like. If you've done good by God and the world, you go in the Book of Life. If you've spent the year doing evil things, you go in the Book of Death. If you've been kind of in-between, as the vast majority of us are, you're supposed to use the Days of Awe as an opportunity to atone for the bad you've done and hope that the good shines through. And if all goes well, you can make it into the Book of Life by Yom Kippur, when "it is sealed."



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It doesn't escape me that that's the exact language that's used by some climate activists to discuss the 2030 deadline to drastically reduce climate emissions. But the whole thing seems like a metaphor for climate change obvious enough to make Herman Melville roll his eyes: If you do the right thing — (forcefully) push your elected officials to enforce climate action, properly punish businesses that subvert it, and all of the smaller but crucial daily things you can do in between — we're all more likely to live. If you don't, we'll all die. There's a line in the Rosh Hashanah service that literally asks, "who shall perish by water and who by fire?" More and more by both, to be sure, especially if everyone continues to wander around in this sort of pervasive denialist daze!

It would be easy to take an extremely Old Testament (shame-y, bleak, hard to process) approach to the High Holidays as a framework for your approach to climate change. But I do not want to paint the High Holidays in terms of the death and darkness we're all trying to avoid; I want to observe them in spirit of the life we're trying to build.

This is where your question starts to get personal for me. I'll be going home to Pittsburgh for the High Holidays for the first time in a few years, and this particular Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur carry a great deal of weight for me, my family, and my congregation. Last October, a white supremacist terrorist invaded our temple in the deadliest and highest-profile attack on the Jewish community in American history. The former president of our congregation is dead. It is bizarre to have such a keystone of your home and your upbringing become internationally known for the violence it has endured, particularly when you're watching it all from thousands of miles away.

When Rosh Hashanah comes around, our services will not be held in the Tree of Life temple because it's been closed since the attack. Dor Hadash has always been an itinerant congregation, so a change of setting isn't out of the ordinary, but I have no idea what it will be like to be somewhere new knowing why we had to leave our last home.

I had a hard time trying to see the bright side of Rosh Hashanah on my own. So I called Rabbi Cheryl Klein, who lead Dor Hadash as a cantor for my entire upbringing, and of course she helped me, like she did when I was thirteen years old stumbling my way through the *haftorah*.

Klein pointed to the three values that are supposed to get us into the Book of Life: *teshuvah*, *tefillah*, and *tzedakah*. *Tzedakah* is what a lot of people tend to translate



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as “charity,” but it really means “justice”; it’s just that giving money or time to good causes is often seen as the most effective way to achieve that justice. *Tefillah* means prayer, and *teshuvah* is a little more complex; it refers to recentering yourself around to your true values, to your most righteous self.

“These three things together, they allow us to have a fresh slate,” Klein explained. “*Teshuvah* means ‘to return.’ How do we return to those things that are so basic in terms of our humanity, our values, our moral compass? It’s an action — we have to physically put ourselves onto the physical, emotional, and spiritual path that will allow us to make better choices.”

The Jewish environmental organization Hazon is actually recognizing the new year, 5780, as the [Year of Environmental Teshuvah](#). “It’s totally true that so many parts of this are so messy and overwhelming, but I think Jews, in general, are able to hold paradox in our tradition,” says Isaiah Rothstein, Hazon’s resident rabbi. Rothstein explains that while the realities of climate change — both the distressing consequences and the degree of international collaboration necessary to avoid them — can be paralyzing, the choice to live in accordance with your values day-to-day is very straightforward. Addressing climate change can be simultaneously a huge social challenge and a matter of personal choice.

All this is to say that Rosh Hashanah is supposed to remind you how to *live*, in the simplest and most basic sense. There’s a book about using the Days of Awe as a period of self-transformation, and I didn’t read it to answer your question because there’s a waiting list at the library and my values prevent me from ordering unnecessarily from Amazon. See! I’m refusing to lie to you, which is a mitzvah. But honestly, I think the title is enough, and it’s [This Is Real and You Are Completely Unprepared](#). That’s in reference to the process of self-reckoning and -examination that the Days of Awe require, but it’s also a *great* slogan for climate change. It *is* real. You and I and everyone else *are* completely unprepared. It’s the ideal time to put yourself, as Klein says, on the right path.

So: Do you want to support forces of death, or do you want to strengthen forces of life? People love to say that climate change is this huge, complicated, overwhelming issue, but it’s actually as straightforward as that.



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The ways in which you approach and deal with climate change are more nuanced, to be sure. Every day you are going to face decisions whose answers aren't quite clear. And I'm no rabbi or spiritual leader or even that wise, when it comes down to it; but if you come to me, I promise you that I'll do my very best to help you make those decisions. That's my commitment.

Shanah tovah,

Umbra





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**Article submitted by John Stocker**

*Ah-h-h-h-h, a lighthearted article amidst all the doom and gloom.  
Besides, it is my favourite condiment!*

John

## How Mustard Became the King of Jewish Condiments

Its delicious legacy stretches from the corner deli all the way back to Abraham

**BY EDIE JARLOM**

AUGUST 18, 2020

<https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/food/articles/mustard-king-of-jewish-condiments>

Barry Levenson is serious about mustard—and also funny about it, in a borscht belt kind of way. The founder and curator of the [National Mustard Museum](#) in Middleton, Wisconsin, Levenson is fond of telling stories like this one: “When I was in Katz’s Deli on the Lower East Side, I saw a woman ask for mayonnaise for her pastrami sandwich. I harassed her about it and got arrested. I was tried and acquitted because the court decided the real crime was the woman who wanted to put mayonnaise on a pastrami sandwich.”

Bada boom.

The story’s punchline depends on a universally acknowledged truth: Mustard is the unofficial condiment of Jewish deli, the only acceptable complement to corned beef and knishes. Its culinary clout is disproportionate to its sidekick status.

I discovered mustard’s superpowers when I was a teenager, meeting the mother of my high school boyfriend, Victor, for the first time. A divorcee, she was not inclined to like anyone competing for the affection of her only son. The three of us sat around a Formica table in Brightwater Towers, a soulless Coney Island high-rise, making stilted conversation over unadorned sandwiches of limp bologna on thin white bread.



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The next day, I asked Victor what his mother thought of me. Sheepishly, he conveyed her only comment: “That girl uses mustard like there’s no tomorrow.”

No lies detected. I’d found solace in a Nathan’s Famous squeeze bottle, a welcome emissary from the hot dog emporium on the nearby Coney Island boardwalk. Liberally applied, the golden-brown elixir transported my taste buds to a friendlier, more flavorful place.

But the link between Jews and mustard predates the Ashkenazi food traditions of Central and Eastern Europe. The word “mustard” never appears in the Hebrew Bible but it is mentioned more than 200 times in later Talmudic commentaries on the text. Thus we learn that the three angels who came to announce the birth of Jacob to Abraham were served tongue in mustard sauce (Genesis 18:6-7).

Why this particular dish? Susan Weingarten, food historian of the Talmudic era and author of [\*Haroset: A Taste of Jewish History\*](#), says tongue with mustard sauce was a great delicacy, generally reserved for kings and priests. Abraham’s choice of main course meant he was conferring the height of desert hospitality on his guests, even without knowing they were heavenly messengers.

“About 50 to 75% of the food in Talmudic times was bread, and it was boring,” said Weingarten. “You’d want something tasty like mustard to go with it.”

Mustard seeds were used as seasoning in many parts of the Old World for millennia. Cultivated mustard plants were found in China around 4000 BCE, for example, and the seeds were unearthed in Egyptian tombs. It’s likely they were chewed with meat in many ancient cultures to cover up the taste of less-than-fresh flesh, their tangy essential oils released when the seed hulls were cracked open with the teeth and mixed with saliva. As mustard maven Levenson put it, “In a sense, the mouth became a mustard factory.”

But the Romans were the first to popularize the process of grinding the seeds and mixing them with liquid—usually, wine or vinegar—to create a spreadable paste used as a condiment or cooking ingredient. And from the third to sixth centuries CE, when most of the Talmudic commentaries were penned, the land of Israel was a Roman province.



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How would the mustard of Talmudic times compare to the type slathered on rye bread today? “It’s difficult to know,” Weingarten said. Current classifications of the seeds derived from the plants of the *Brassicaceae* (mustard) family fall into three main groups, going from mild to hot: *B. alba/Sinapis alba*, white/yellow; *B. juncea*, brown; and *B. nigra*, black. The problem with matching the references in early texts with current recipes, Weingarten said, is that “the Talmudic literature uses different categories, wild mustard and cultivated mustard, and plain mustard and Egyptian mustard. There’s no consensus among modern scholars as to which varieties are which.”

That said, mustard mixed with honey is mentioned several times in the Talmudic literature, and Weingarten believes that the milder white seeds were likely to have been preferred over the hotter black or brown ones.

Black seeds are rarely used commercially these days, but the brown and white varieties remain the basis for the myriad mustards now produced internationally; the National Mustard Museum showcases more than 6,000 examples. The annual World-Wide Mustard Competition hosted by the museum gives out prizes in 17 categories, including fruit, spirit, and classic Dijon (smooth). The mustards judged in the deli/brown group are defined by the use of spicy brown seeds, coarsely ground and usually mixed with vinegar, salt, and a little turmeric, which gives all types of mustard their yellow color.

Within those basic guidelines, recipes vary. Levenson took an informal survey of New York Jewish delis and got conflicting opinions on the topic (surprise!): “Some places insisted deli mustard has to have horseradish in it, while others said it has to have garlic,” he reported.

Levenson notes that the taste can be deceptive in all styles of sharp mustard, including Dijon. “You may think a high-quality deli mustard has horseradish in it when it doesn’t,” he said. “That’s because mustard seed and horseradish root are in the same family and contain the same essential elements, a colorless oil that’s responsible for the kick and nose hit.”

Of course, it’s not only New Yorkers who have strong feelings about cured meat and condiments. Chicagoans, many with deep Polish and German roots, have plenty to say on the subject, too. As detailed in the book *Never Put Ketchup on a Hot Dog* by Bob Schwartz, a genuine Chicago hot dog must be topped with mustard as well as relish,



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onions, and pickles, with nary a trace of any paste with a red tomato base. In 2018, the Illinois Department of Transportation installed an electronic traffic board on Interstate 90/94 in the city that read, “No Texting. No Speeding. No Ketchup.”

Chicago hot dogs are conventionally topped with mild American yellow mustard—the most popular kind in the United States, ubiquitous at ballparks. Made with white seeds and given its bright color from a generous use of turmeric, the creamy condiment was introduced by the French brothers at the St. Louis World’s Fair in 1904.

So don’t be surprised to find mellow yellow mustard at Jewish delis in the Midwest alongside the sharper types, though the latter are held to be the far better match with pastrami. [Manny’s Cafeteria and Delicatessen](#) in Chicago, founded by Manny Raskin in 1942, bottles its own deli mustard, which incorporates horseradish. “We wanted to be able to provide the same product that we served in the restaurant for decades to other people,” said owner Dan Raskin, the fourth generation of the family to run the business. “It was trial and error, but we had the recipe produced for us at a mustard manufacturer. We sell a lot of bottles in the store and online from all over the country.”

One of the reasons for mustard’s popularity, Raskin added, is that it’s “one of the healthier condiments. Mayonnaise is obviously not good for you and ketchup has lots of sugar, so many people prefer mustard.”

It’s true. You can minimize the guilt of eating fatty meat or dense potato pockets by telling yourself that at least the mustard doesn’t add calories. And with sharp deli mustard, your arteries may be clogged but your sinuses will be clear.

Although mustard doesn’t play a major role in the lighter fare typical of Israeli and other Sephardic food traditions, there’s one exception: Jewish French cuisine. The Roman fondness for the condiment remained particularly influential in the province that was formerly Gaul. The great biblical scholar Rashi was born in 1040 CE in Troyes, only about 100 miles from the city of Dijon, and he was a winemaker. It would hardly be a stretch to suggest that mustard played a part in his Shabbat feasts.

Ironically, it is 13th-century [French rabbinical scholars](#) who are generally credited with—or blamed for—the fact that mustard is banned from Jewish homes on Passover. Or at least from Ashkenazi Jewish homes. This stricture is based on the principle of *kitnyot*,



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the notion that certain grains and legumes may be confused—or accidentally mixed—with the forbidden *chametz* (leavened bread).

How mustard came to be included in this group and why Sephardic Jews eschewed the *kitnyot* ruling is much too complicated to get into. And for some people, the prohibition was always a Halachic bridge too far.

As Levenson put it, “I’m originally of Ashkenazi stock, but for Pesach all of a sudden I become Sephardic so I can have my mustard.”



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**Submitted by John Stocker**

## **9 Common Jewish Symbols and the History behind these emblems.**

Aug 1, 2020 | by [Dr. Yvette Alt Miller](#)



Is there a universal Jewish symbol? Around the world people associate a plethora of signs with Jews and Judaism, from the Star of David to the menorah to the hamsa hand symbol. Here are some symbols that are commonly identified as Jewish, along with their history and symbolism.

### **Star of David**

The [Star of David](#), the *Magen David*, is one of the most recognizable Jewish symbols. It appears on many Jewish tombstones and is the central symbol on the Israeli flag. Surprisingly, given its widespread popularity, the Star of David is fairly recent and has only been associated with Jews for a few hundred years.



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While the six-pointed Star of David might be more recent, the term *Magen David* is old. The Talmud mentions *Magen David* – literally, the Shield of King David – protecting King David and his descendent, the Messiah (Pesachim 117b). This beautiful image is also found in Jewish liturgy: each Shabbat after we hear the Haftarah read in synagogue, the reader refers to the Divine as *Magen David*, the protector of David and the Jewish people.

There is a legend that King David indeed did carry a six pointed star with him, in the form of his shield and the shields his soldiers carried. These were said to comprise two triangles, one pointing up and one pointing down, joined in the middle, forming a six pointed star. This construction is said to have made King David's shield more sturdy than his opponents.

Some symbolic explanations for the six-pointed star being identified with Judaism include Kabbalistic explanations of it representing two arrows, one pointing up to heaven and one down to earth. The Star of David also has twelve individual sides, corresponding to the twelve Tribes of Israel. It also can be seen as a correlation to Shabbat, with a central core (corresponding to Shabbat) surrounded by six points, corresponding to the six other days of the week.

Six pointed stars have been found in Jewish settings for hundreds of years. [A Jewish tombstone in southern Italy](#) dating from the Third Century CE is decorated with a six pointed star. In 1354, King Charles IV of Bohemia bestowed a red flag with a six pointed star on it to the Jews of Prague, and the star was adopted by the Jews of Prague as their symbol. A Jewish prayer book printed in Prague in 1512 features a beautiful Jewish star on its cover with the quote "Each man beneath his flag according to the house of their fathers...and he will merit to bestow a bountiful gift on anyone who grasps the Shield of David."

The Jewish star soon spread to other Jewish communities, and synagogues and Jewish tombstones featured Jewish stars as ornaments. During the Holocaust, Nazis forced Jews to wear yellow patches of the six pointed Star of David. Yellow had long been used

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as a distinctive, humiliating color that European Jews were forced to wear in some European communities, and the Star of David was by then seen as the quintessentially Jewish symbol.

### **Menorah**

The official emblem of the State of Israel, the Menorah is a key Jewish emblem. The Torah relates how God Himself gave Moses instructions for building this holy seven-branched candelabra on Mount Sinai: "You shall make a menorah of pure gold..." (Exodus 25: 31-40)



The golden menorah was placed in the *Mishkan*, the very first Jewish house of worship. When Jews conquered Jerusalem and built the ancient Temple there, they moved the menorah to the Temple, where it was kept lit all the time. The holiday of [Hanukkah](#) commemorates re-lighting this precious candelabra after it was desecrated by occupying Greek soldiers and Jewish soldiers recaptured and restored the Temple in the year 139 BCE.

111 years later, in 70 CE, Roman soldiers, led by Titus, sacked the Temple and took the beautiful Menorah with them back to Rome. To this day, the Arch of Titus stands in the center of Rome, depicting that day and showing the menorah being carted away.

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*The Arch of Titus*

When the State of Israel was declared in 1948, the new country asked artists to submit ideas for a national symbol. Maxim and Gabriel Shamir were celebrated graphic designers. Born in Latvia, they each studied art in Germany before moving to the Land of Israel in the 1920s and establishing a popular graphic design studio in Tel Aviv. They suggested the emblem that is familiar to millions of Israelis today for the national seal: a modern rendering of the ancient menorah.

"After we decided to use the menorah," Gabriel Shamir later recalled, "we looked for another element and concluded that olive branches are the most beautiful expression of the Jewish people's love of peace." They flanked the menorah in their design with olive leaves, reminding the world of the Jewish people's ancient heritage in the Land of Israel.

### **Priestly Blessing Hands**

This distinctive two-handed symbol is sometimes found on tombstones of Jews who were members of the Cohen priestly clan, descendants of the *Cohanim* who were descended from Moses' brother Aaron, and who served in the ancient Temple in Jerusalem. It reflects the unique hand positioning used by Cohens both in ancient times and today when they recite key beautiful blessings on the Jewish people.

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*Cohanim* continue to bless the congregation in synagogues around the world, just as their ancestors thousands of years ago did in the holy Temple in Jerusalem. Making this ancient sign with their hands, they bless the congregation using the very same words that God told Aaron to recite soon after the Jewish people's departure from slavery in Egypt: "May God bless you and safeguard you. May God illuminate His countenance for you and be gracious to you. May God lift His countenance to you and establish peace for you" (Numbers 6:22-26).

Since it's customary to refrain from making this hand symbol unless one is a Cohen and actively reciting the Cohens' blessing, this ancient Jewish symbol has remained rarely used, and is mostly seen on Jewish tombstones and in books.

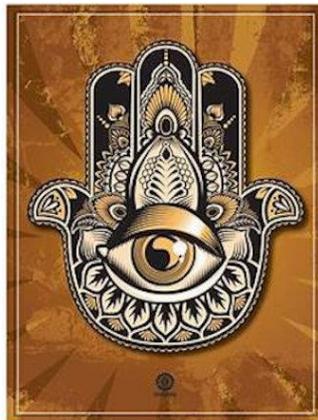
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[Leonard Nimoy](#), who played Spock in *Star Trek*, took this gesture and used it for the Vulcan salute.

## Hamsa



This depiction of a single hand has many names: *Hamsa* (from the Arabic word for "five"); *Yad* (the Hebrew word for hand); Hand of Miriam; and Hand of Fatima. Hamsas have been popular throughout the Arab world since the Middle Ages. Though it's primarily seen as a Muslim symbol, hamsas have also been embraced by Sephardi Jewish communities and today are a popular symbol for Jews and others worldwide.



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Some hamsas today contain pictures of eyes to ward off the “evil eye”. Some say hamsas bring luck or ward off the “evil eye”. This isn’t a Jewish world view, as the Torah cautions us against believing in lucky talismans or omens, and explains we ought to place our faith in God instead

### **Grapes – Israeli Ministry of Tourism Symbol**



The symbol of Israel’s Ministry of Tourism is a stylized depiction of two men carrying a bunch of grapes that is so large they have to use a pole with one man holding up each end to transport it.

This picture depicts the famous Biblical story of The Ten Spies. After God brought the Jewish people out of Egypt He led them to the borders of the Land of Israel, the Jews asked for permission to scout out the country. Twelve men slipped into Israel and were amazed at what they saw: pomegranates, figs, grapes and other delicious fruit grew throughout the area. They brought back an enormous cluster of grapes to show their brethren. Ten of the spies in the end brought back an evil report, showing the grapes as proof of giants living in the land, whereas and Joshua and Caleb, the other two spies, brought back a positive report.

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## Lion of Judah – Jerusalem City Council Logo



The official crest of the city of [Jerusalem](#) is a lion pictured against a background of the stones of the Western Wall, surrounded by stylized olive leaves, representing peace. It refers to the tribe of Judah, one of the twelve ancient Jewish tribes.

When our Biblical patriarch Jacob was about to die, he bestowed one final blessing on each of his twelve sons who founded the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel. When Jacob blessed Judah, he compared him to a lion and said that one day his descendants would be among the most prominent Jews: “A lion cub is Judah; from the prey, my son, you elevated yourself. He crouches, lies down like a lion, and like an awesome lion, who dares rouse him? The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a scholar from among his descendants” (Genesis 49:8-10).

After the reign of [King Solomon](#) in the 10th Century BCE, the ten northern tribes split off from the nation of Israel and were eventually lost. Only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained and were known in later antiquity as the kingdom of Judea. The area of the



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tribe of Judah encompassed Jerusalem, which was its capital, making the image of the Lion of Judah a particularly fitting emblem for the city of Jerusalem today.

## **Chai**



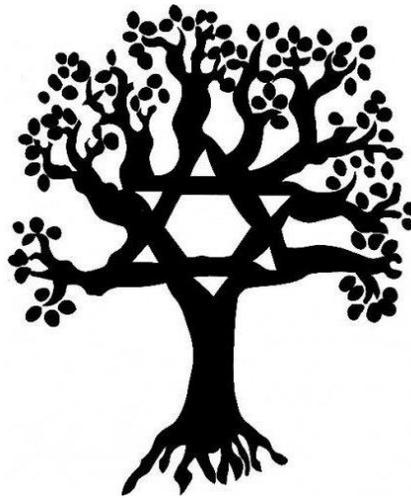
*Chai* means "life" in Hebrew. This uplifting word is often found in Jewish jewelry and other Judaica objects, affirming one of the most important values in the Jewish religion: preserving and celebrating life. A common toast on Jewish occasions is *L'Chaim*, meaning "to life!"

Spelled with the Hebrew letters *chet* and *yud*, the word *chai* has the numerical value of 18 (*Chet*=8, *yud*=10). Because of this it's common for Jews to give gifts or donate to charity in amounts that are multiples of 18.

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## Tree of Life



The Torah and its commandments are compared with a "Tree of Life". King Solomon wrote "It is a tree of life to those who grasp it, and its supporters are praiseworthy" (Proverbs 3:18). The term is first used in Genesis when God tells Adam and Eve that they can eat from any fruits in the Garden of Eden, with two exceptions: the Tree of Life, and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Seduced by the evil snake, Adam and Eve broke this command and ate fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. (The Tree of Life remained untouched.)

In later works, the Tree of Life is used as a metaphor for the Torah. The famous 16th Century book *Etz Chaim* by Israeli Rabbi Chaim ben Joseph Vital is a classic work of Jewish mysticism and expounds on the relationship between the spiritual and material worlds.



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## **Dove and Olive Branch**



In Genesis, the Torah describes a mighty flood that covered the entire Earth, wiping out almost all life. The only people and animals to survive were those saved by Noah, who built a mighty ark and gathered together his wife, his sons, daughters in law, and pairs of every type of animal into the ark with him. For forty days and nights a horrendous storm flooded the earth; when it was over not a single spot of land or piece of vegetation was visible.

One can only imagine the misery and despair Noah and the others with him on the ark felt. He tried to find land, sending out a raven to see if the bird could see a place to land and rest. The raven circled in vain around the ship, never finding land. Noah waited another week then sent out a dove to find a place to rest and food to eat: the dove could not and returned to the ark empty handed. Finally, Noah waited another week and sent out the dove again to scout the land for vegetation. This time, the dove returned with a piece of an olive tree in its beak. At last, the earth was habitable once again (Genesis 8).

The image of a dove holding an olive branch in its beak recalls this moment of profound hope and joy, when Noah realized his many long months of living in a dark cramped ark were behind him and life could begin again.



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**DON'T WORRY  
BE JEWISH**

## On the Lighter Side...

Submitted by Harley Saltzman

### The First Jewish President



The year is 2028 and the United States has elected the first woman as well as the first Jewish president, Sarah Goldstein.

She calls up her mother a few weeks after Election Day and says, "So, Mom, I assume you'll be coming to my inauguration?" "I don't think so. It's a ten-hour drive, your father isn't as young as he used to be, and my arthritis is acting up again."

"Don't worry about it, Mom, I'll send Air Force One to pick you up and take you home. And a limousine will pick you up at your door."



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"I don't know. Everybody will be so fancy-schmantzy; what on earth would I wear?" Sarah replies, "I'll make sure you have a wonderful gown, custom-made by the best designer in New York."

"Honey," Mom complains, "you know I can't eat those rich foods you and your friends like to eat." The President-to-be responds, "Don't worry Mom. The entire affair is going to be handled by the best caterer in New York; kosher all the way Mom, I really want you to come."

So, Mom reluctantly agrees and on January 20th, Sarah Goldstein is being sworn in as President of the United States. In the front row sits the new President's mother, who leans over to a senator sitting next to her and says, "You see that woman over there with her hand on the Torah, becoming President of the United States?" The senator whispers back, "Yes, I do." Mom says proudly, "Her brother is a doctor."

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### **Submitted by Heather Talbot**

On his way to work each morning, Moishe paid a short visit to his mother. It was like clockwork. He'd arrive each day right at 7:45 am, and he'd always stay for about 15 minutes.

One day, 7:45 am passed without Moishe's arrival, and his mother started to worry. 8:00 am came and went, as did 9:00 am, and 10:00 am, and he finally showed up at about 10:45 am.

His clothes were dusty and torn, his face was scratched and badly bruised, and his glasses were cracked and bent. He limped painfully as his mother invited him inside her apartment.

His mother: "Oy vey iz mir! Sit down and tell me what happened to you my dahlink?"  
Moishe said, "I tripped and rolled down two flights of stairs in the subway. I nearly killed myself!"

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His mother looked at him with a look of disdain and said, "And to roll down two flights of stairs took you a whole three hours?"



A Jewish grandmother is walking on the beach in Miami with her young grandson. A huge wave comes in and her grandson is swept away and disappears into the ocean. She immediately looks to the heavens, and prays, "Dear G-d, my young grandson means the world to me. Please, please, return him to me and I will be truly forever grateful."

On the next incoming wave her young grandson is miraculously washed back onto the shore at her feet, totally unharmed.

She looks up to the heavens and says, "He was wearing a hat!"



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**Dates for BSVT Services – May 2020 – December 2020**

September 12, 2020	Shabbat
September 18, 2020	Erev Rosh HaShanah – 6:30 p.m.
September 19, 2020	First Day Rosh HaShanah – 10:30 a.m.
September 20, 2020	Second Day Rosh HaShanah – 10:00 a.m. Tashlich – 9:30 a.m.
September 27, 2020	Kol Nidre – 6:30 p.m.
September 28, 2020	Yom Kippur – 10:00 a.m.
October 3, 2020	Shabbat
October 10, 2020	Erev Simchat Torah – 7:30 p.m.
October 24, 2020	Shabbat
November 14, 2020	Shabbat
November 28, 2020	Shabbat
December 12, 2020	Shabbat
December 19, 2020	Shabbat

**Notes:**

Shabbat morning services commence at 10:00 a.m. Torah Study follows

**Watch for ad hoc email messages for invitations with times and instructions for accessing virtual services via Zoom during COVID-19.**



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## *G'mar Hatimah Tovah*



*To those I may have wronged,  
I ask forgiveness.*

*To those I may have helped,  
I wish I had done more.*

*To those I neglected to help,  
I asked for understanding.*

*To those who helped me,  
I thank you with all my Heart...*

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*May You Be Inscribed  
in the Book of Life*