



## A Message from Rabbi Rachel

*Sharing, Seders & The Shofar: Coping with COVID-19*



### Sharing:

Connection is more important now than ever, so, first of all, thank you for reading and sharing. One of the main teachings of Judaism is that we can do more together as a community than we can as individuals. When things get tough, it's sometimes tempting to

"just take care of #1." Judaism rejects this idea; when things get tough is when we need to reach out to take care of each other, and this is a part of self-care, too. I want to share: Call someone who lives alone! Write a letter to someone who may feel isolated! Then call and email more people! Learn — and teach others — how to FaceTime and Facebook and Zoom and Skype. We have a human need to share, and Judaism encourages us to do just that, especially at times like these.

### Seders:

The word "Seder" means "order". One of the pieces of advice that I keep hearing, that resonates personally and Jewishly, is the importance of order in our lives right now. Days blur together — keeping Shabbat by making it different and special is an antidote. It's too easy to focus on our restrictions and to struggle with sadness and depression. Giving thanks to a greater power at every sunrise and sunset helps. Time seems odd now; marking time with the holiday of spring helps us internalize that spring is here.

Many of us feel at a loss this year because we are not together with family for Seder. Passover teaches us that liberation (at least part of it) is internal, and that we can find ways to feel free, even when we are physically constricted. What can you do, now, to feel free? Find the silver lining in having free time so you can organize? Play the music loud and dance? Drink

some wine on Passover, and connect — even virtually — with yourself and others?

*Seder note:* Wednesday evening is the first Seder; Thursday evening is the second. Even if you've never done a Seder without extended family before, consider doing one this year. You CAN do this, even by yourself, or perhaps with a friend by phone. It's meaningful and a way to create order, and peace. There's lots available online, but if you aren't used to hosting, and want something incredibly short and easy, that you CAN DO, consider this ten minute Seder — click [here](#). (It's enclosed for those reading the printed *Shofar*.)

For Seder on the second night of Passover, do join CBTBI on Zoom or via phone.

### Shofar:

I love that *The Shofar* is the name of this publication. Before technology, sounding the shofar was the way the Jewish people let each other know about a special event, such as a new month. These days, we're finding that communication is more important than ever. Thank you for staying in touch with CBTBI!

Sending blessings of health and peace to all, and a wish for a Happy Passover,

— Rabbi Rachel



חג פסח שמח



## Zoom Into Passover

CBTBI will host a virtual Community Passover Seder on Thursday, April 9, at 6:30 PM on Zoom. For more information, or to receive an invitation with a link to the Zoom event, contact Debbi Judlowitz at [debret13@gmail.com](mailto:debret13@gmail.com).

## From the President's Desk by Joshua Meyer

### 2020 Perfect Vision, Perfect Year



In the perfect world of CBTBI, we would have been greeting each other with “Shabbat shalom” at services, socializing at our onegs, driving our children to religious school, shopping for Passover foods, springing out of our homes everyday, running from here to

there and back again, and most importantly, interacting with our families and friends.

But that was back in early March, before we were advised to close our building, and before our world changed. Now we remain at home except for those who must go elsewhere to work, visit doctors, buy food, or take walks (maintaining a fair distance from a passerby).

Perfect world? Somewhat of a paradox. This is the year 2020. 20/20 in the language of the eye specialist is considered “perfect vision” (well, almost) because no aids are required. No glasses or contacts. But, even a person with perfect vision can get something in his or her eye or develop an infection.

Here’s the deal: We — the world — just got smacked in the eye by an invisible virus called COVID-19. Regardless of who we are or how perfect are our lives and body parts, universally we now share a disability. We may not proceed with everything we do as those tiny microscopic obstacles now block our paths. Previously, we knew people who struggled with challenging medical issues, but now, we are all in the game. Every one of us may or may not encounter this out-of-control virus; something insignificant may take place or something harrowing. We won’t know until we know. So, in the interim, we wash our hands, don’t even think of scratching our noses, stay home, eat properly, exercise, read, watch movies, complete that overdue project, eat, drink, and relax.

At some point this obstacle will fade, but with G-d’s blessing we will remain stronger, better, and closer to our families, partners, and friends. We will have learned many various and interesting ways to communicate and

will have developed a greater appreciation for the things we do in our daily lives.

What will not fade is what we should always remember: Remember that our eternal flame still burns above our ark. Remember that Rabbi Rachel wishes us a GOOD SHABBOS from the bimah with the same love for Torah and spiritual enthusiasm she does when we are all present in our pews.

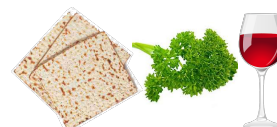
Remember that Educational Director Wendy Marder continues to lead our teachers as they continue to teach our youngsters their heritage. Remember that Executive Director Steve Blocker is working behind the scenes, managing our closed building and writing grants. Remember that Assistant Administrator Judy Finneran is serving our congregation, working with all staff members and keeping us organized. Committees are meeting on Zoom, continuing their work on behalf of all of us and moving forward. Nothing at CBTBI is faded; rather, it is all moving ahead positively. There is definitely a sense of order.

#### O V P A E S S R

20/20 vision is not really perfect. But we can still see the letters in front that are not in any special order. We cover one eye and then the other to call them out...but.. without order things just don’t make sense. Without order this virus will continue to be a monumental challenge to a perfect year or a perfect anything.

No, not a perfect year. But yet there are many blessings. We are blessed with the ability to remain strong and vigilant. Stand tall and stay home to defeat the virus. Stand tall and be supportive of all the people in your life. Stand tall and remember that CBTBI sits high on that small hill on East Holly Drive and is waiting for us all to return as the eternal flame shines on the bimah. As we read the letters above, we are bidden to rearrange them in order as our Seder represents. This chaos will end and order will prevail.

It will  
PASSOVER!



## A Message from Wendy Marder, Educational Director



We have a lot on our mind these days. Why did this virus happen? How long will it last? Who will get it? Will they die? Who do we know who has it? What can I do? Lots of questions and some answers won't be so easy.

The Hebrew month of Nissan just began as I write this and normally a different set of questions would be front and center in my mind and teaching. Passover is upon us, the holiday of spring, of matzoh, of freedom, and of commemorating the Pascal lamb sacrifice, but do these things have any meaning this year in the midst of the Coronavirus? Ah, another question to ponder.

I happen to have a lot of pondering time these days. I'm reading a lot of articles on Facebook, listening to concerts, visiting museums, attending services, traveling, teaching, singing, celebrating, enjoying healthier meals, walking, and keeping in touch with friends and family. Yes, all remotely, but emotions run extreme all day and night as the news and newsfeeds ping pong us back and forth.

Most of you know that we have been fighting our own personal plague in the Marder family since November, with my husband Ami's brain cancer diagnosis. We have asked the many questions and gone through the many stages of treatment and surprisingly still find ourselves facing the challenges of COVID-19, which means Ami is still alive and well enough to miss visiting our children and family and friends and the new twin babies, our great-niece and nephew who were born the same week we got the horrendous diagnosis. It means he already beat the odds and was well enough after surgery and radiation to enroll and complete a clinical trial, well enough to miss going out to eat, going to the shore, going to the movies and to services.



We had already begun to isolate, to forgo some of those favorite times and to distance from large crowds and to maintain cleaner hands and be less demonstrative with friends. So, in a way, perhaps we were more prepared than you. I bring this up because I said I had a lot of time to ponder. Indeed, life threatening events tend to do that to you since you ponder instead of sleeping. We are indeed living as slaves, to rules that are unprecedented. Yes, many of us are living well despite losing our roaming, socializing, and shopping freedom, but even those needs are met fairly well by the electronic world. We are living in bitter times where just being in the wrong place at the wrong time can make you sick and watching thousands die each day is a horror that will scar us forever. Restricting our eating by eating matzah on Passover instead of all kinds of breads and cakes is

represented in how we restrict ourselves by eating what we shopped for weeks ago and by cooking at home instead of going out to eat with family and friends.

Holiday of freedom? Hardly, one might say, since we can't go anywhere or do anything. But we are NOT slaves because even though we are restricted and not as free as before this plague of a virus, we are living, communicating, learning, and loving, and are free to choose to let it get us down or let it help us find all the positives and beauty in life.

**Nissan and spring** bring renewal and hope and beauty — look around at the trees and

greening scenery and hear the good stories of people being generous and kind. Realize all the new things you have learned and good qualities you have internalized that will help you in better times and appreciate those around you who have taught you patience and spontaneity.

**Pesach, the sacrificial lamb** — by staying at home we are sacrificing a little for the good of the whole, to stop the spread. Take the time to speak about the people

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## A Message from Wendy Marder

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who are in the front lines of this battle risking their health and sacrificing their time with their families.

**Matzah, bread of affliction**, humble food, poor bread — we're fortunate to have an opportunity to nourish our bodies and minds at this difficult time even if not from your favorite restaurant or bakery.

**Freedom**, making the best of this situation and feeling blessed to have good health and celebrate those who are with you physically and virtually and be grateful to be home and safe.

May we all be blessed to get through this time alive and be better for it, and *refuah sheleimah* to all who are ill and in need of our help and blessings.

— Wendy



## The Shofar

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## Check In with Rabbi Rachel

During these difficult times, Rabbi Rachel is conducting online check-in sessions on Zoom for all CBTBI members. If you would like information on how to join a session, please contact Lisa Parker.

## Join Us Every Friday and Saturday — Virtually

Our building may be temporarily closed, but our religious services go on! Visit the [CBTBI Facebook page](#) for live-streamed Shabbat services every Friday night at 7 PM and Saturday morning at 10 AM. Kinder Shabbat also will be live-streamed here. The next service for the little ones will take place on Friday, April 10 at 6:15 PM, followed by the adult service at 7.

After Shabbat ends, Ami and Wendy Marder lead a Havdalah service at 8 PM on the [CBTBI Members-only page](#). All CBTBI members are invited to join the group.

## Bob's Garage

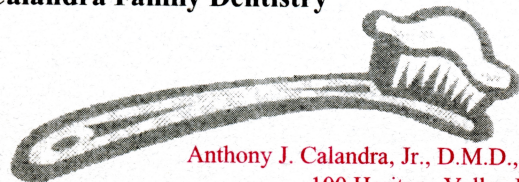


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