

HAR HACARMEL

הר הרמל

TIFERETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE

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MOUNT CARMEL, PA.

KISLEV 5709

CHANUKAH

Chanukah, the Feast of Dedication, is one of our Minor Holidays. That means that it makes little change in the daily conduct of the Jew, although it is, next to Passover, the home festival par excellence. Its main observance consists in the lighting of the Chanukah lights, one on the first evening, two the second, and so on until the eighth evening. The significance of the lights lies in their symbolism of the miracle that occurred when, upon cleansing and rededicating the Temple in Jerusalem after three years of enemy occupation, the only remaining cruse of holy oil continued to burn in the Menorah for eight days, until a new supply could be provided.

The traditions connected with Chanukah are numerous and interesting. Best known of them is the custom of eating Latkes, or pancakes. Popular legend traces his custom back to the pancakes that the wives of the soldiers of Judah Maccabee prepared for them as a quick energy food before battle. In Talmudic times and later the Chanukah lights were placed at the doors of Jewish homes in order to remind all passers-by of the miracle of Chanukah. During the third century the Jews of Persia or under Persian rule could kindle their lights only at grave risk, because the Persian fire-worshippers would not permit the use of fire for any religious purpose but their own.

As the Jews throughout the ages irraditionally did not engage in the conventional graphic or plastic arts, their artistic talents found expression mainly in the creation of beautiful ceremonial objects. An important place among them was accorded to the Chanukah Menorah, the candelabra that holds the lights of Chanukah. There are some exquisite examples of this Jewish art to be found in Jewish museums and collections. Beside the standardized and usually not very artistic Menorahs common today there are beginning to appear new and beautiful creations of the artists of Israel. There is visual proof in these modern ceremonial objects from Israel that Jewish religious tradition can be combined with modern tastes to form an inspiring unit.

Chanukah this year begins on Sunday evening, December 26.

B. B. DRIVE A SUCCESS

Reports from the officers show that the B'nai B'rith National Youth Service (Wider Scope) Campaign has again been successful and it will insure the lodge of its continued support of activities for the coming year. Although only about half of the membership has been contacted, the same enthusiasm persists as in past years. Chairman Henry Wolfe will again contact those members who were not in attendance at the last meeting. The lodge is grateful to Dr. A. Liachowitz for his inspiring speech at the meeting.

The lodge wishes to announce that the sum of \$150.00 has already been paid to the Geisinger Hospital as its 1948 share. the sum of \$150.00 to the United Jewish Appeal and the sum of \$250.00 to the National Youth Service at Washington D. C.

Reports and personal visits show that Brothers P. Lippman and Abe Stern continue to improve. Keep up the good work.

Due to the holiday season, our next meeting will take place on Tuesday, December 28th. 9:00 P. M. at the Jewish Fellowship Club and another interesting program will be provided. Set aside this date—it always pays to be present.

CALENDAR

Candle lighting time is given for preceding Friday nights:

Dec. 18, Vayishlach	4:11
Dec. 25, Vayeshev	4:15
Dec. 27-Jan 3, Chanukah	
Jan. 1, Miketz	4:19
Jan. 1-2, Rosh Chodesh Teves	
Jan. 8, Vayigash	4:26

YORZEITS

Fannie Friedman	Jan. 10
Ab. Smigel	Jan. 14
Jennie Coplan	Feb. 17

The observance begins the preceding evening.

גידול-712

Our best wishes go to Anita Marateck and Harold Fogel, as well to Mrs. Mary Marateck and to Sanford and Millie, on their forthcoming marriage.

May your lives always be filled with joy.

FROM YOUR RABBI

Last month I stated in this space that the State of Israel is in need of the help and friendship of the American Jewish Community. This is a fact that no thinking Jew denies and that needs no further amplification. I also stated that in order to be good friends of Israel we must be religiously good Jews. This latter point I shall attempt to develop further today.

To speak of Jews as a unit other than religious is a fallacy. During the almost two thousand years since the dispersion of the main body of the people Jews have lived in almost every part of the world, have spoken almost every language and acted and dressed according to practically all standards that have existed since then. Scientific investigation has shown that there is no single characteristic, physical or mental, that can be called exclusively or even typically Jewish, Jews have black, brown, red and blond hair, brown, gray, and blue eyes, every possible type of body build, and there are colored Jews and Jews with typically Chinese features. The intelligence of Jews can be measured by standard means and their blood is of all known types. There is then no way to tell a Jew from a non-Jew from the point of view of strict science. Or, to put it another way, unless we want to accept the race theories of the Nazis, there is no Jewish race.

What about a Jewish nation? Until May 15 of the past year there was none. Speaking in the accepted sense of the word, Jews formed no nation or national unit. They were citizens of many nations, and loyal citizens at that, and many of their sufferings can be traced to the fact that they could not claim allegiance to any nation that would protect them. Jews could equally form no cultural unit for the only common feature of their lives in the various countries of the earth was the religious one. That is a fact which no amount of demagogy or wishful thinking can eliminate. To state it once more: The only thing that identified Jews to one another or to Gentiles is their religious allegiance. No matter what other means of identification are thought up by bigots, Gentile or Jewish, there are none that can truly and unmistakably distinguish a Jew. Thus, to be good Jews we must be religiously good Jews, otherwise our Jewishness is fictitious. And to be truly good friends of Israel we cannot but be good Jews.

This brings me to a point that has been raised recently in public controversy, namely whether the State of Israel should or should not be a religious state. It has

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been said, officially and unofficially, that Israel will be governed by democratic principles and procedures and that, therefore, it will insist on separation of Church and state, on the American model. This is more easily said than done. In fact, upon serious consideration it appears that the Jewish state cannot separate itself from the Jewish religion and still remain a Jewish state. Even taking for granted now that citizenship in Israel will be conferred on every resident regardless of his religion and that public office and participation in the political life of the state will not be dependent on one's faith, it is evident that Israel cannot consistently claim that religion, or the Jewish religion to be precise, can be a matter of indifference to it.

Just what does complete separation of Church and state imply? First and foremost it means that the state can neither establish nor recognize any particular religion as official or preferred. That would be a restriction which would prevent the execution of an important aspect of Israel policy and would make the work of the most important American Jewish organizations meaningless. Israel has repeatedly declared that it considers unrestricted Jewish immigration basic. Now, if Israel, true to its intention of completely separating religion from its official affairs, were to withdraw its preference of immigrants of the Jewish faith, its whole immigration policy would collapse. It could not defend its claim that it wants to offer a home to any and all Jews who need it, for if it confined immigration to Jews by religion (and thereby give the Jewish religion a preferred status), it would not be separating Church and state, and if it were truly consistent in its separation, it might find itself swamped by D.P. immigrants of all faiths and persuasions who would soon change its character of a Jewish state. To go a step further, even to the most ardent supporter of complete separation it would be unthinkable to have Israel inhabited by, say, a Christian majority. This is not a matter of prejudice or intolerance, but rather of logic. If it were a question of pure humanitarianism, our Jewish youth in Israel would not shed its blood to merely establish another state, and the funds

raised in this country and throughout the world for resettlement in Palestine could have been used more efficiently elsewhere. The state of Israel was founded as a haven for Jews, and despite statements to the contrary cannot find Jews without considering their religion of prime importance.

All this talk, then, about separation of Church and state in Israel must be taken with more than a grain of salt. True, Israel can establish itself as a secular state, and no doubt will do so. Its government will not be composed of rabbis as such, except if they should be chosen by the popular will. Its laws may not always coincide with the Jewish religious code, and it will certainly guarantee freedom of worship to all. But it cannot escape the logic which by definition makes it a state created by and for people of Jewish religious persuasion.

And one more point here. We are all overanxious to prove to ourselves and to the world that Israel will be a worthy newcomer in the family of nations. That is why we overlook the fact that democracy and individual freedom are not dependent on, or require absolutely, the separation of Church and state as contained in the First Amendment to the Constitution. There can be democracy and the Four Freedoms in spite of the existence of a state church. England is a good example of that. We can be sure that Israel is, and will be, a democratic country. We can be equally sure that a separation of Church and state, such as we know it in this country, is impossible in Israel. What Israel will do about the status of religion in its official affairs we can confidently leave to its citizens to decide. But we must realize and never forget that being a devout Jew means being a better citizen of any country, and that Judasim in its religious teachings is the source from which Western civilization has flown.

Democracy requires, perhaps, that we give people a chance to be bad Jews, if they want to be, but it can never mean that anyone should shy away from the profession of Judaism, and least of all the Jews of Israel.

Rabbi Arthur Oles.

THE REBBETZIN'S CORNER

This month has been designated by the Jewish Book Council of America as Jewish Book Month. The purpose of this project is to awaken in us a stronger interest in books of Jewish content so that we may be better informed about the history, the culture and the heritage of our people. We are the Am Hasefer, the People

of the Book, and throughout the ages the book has been our strength and our inspiration.

When, in the year 70 C. E., the first Temple was destroyed and our spiritual center Jerusalem threatened with complete annihilation, Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakai was determined that Jewish life must go on. At the risk of his own life, he left the city and went before the emperor with only one wish: to be permitted to establish a Talmudical Academy at Yavneh. How else can Jewish life and Jewish values be preserved if not by the promotion and intensification of Jewish study? We may attribute our survival as a people to Rabbi Yochanan's Yavneh and to all the Yavnehs that have since been created. Those seats of Jewish learning have been the backbone of our strength and are responsible for our continued existence as a people to this day.

In Mount Carmel we are fortunate to have our own Jewish Community Library. It was started two years ago and so far we have close to one hundred volumes of the newest and best Jewish books. You can find anything to your liking in our library, fiction and non-fiction, history and biography. Among the latest and most noteworthy additions to our library are the following: A Treasury of Jewish Folklore ed. by Nathan Ausubel. This is a collection of the most representative stories and legends that have been created by the Jewish people themselves. There you can find stories about the Chassidim, about historic personalities, and about Jewish life in various parts of the world. There is humor and tragedy in these pages which are a mirror of the thoughts and emotions of Jews throughout the ages. To give it a personal angle, you will find two stories of my father's, Eliezer Schindler, which the author has included in this unique collection of Jewish Folklore. Destination Palestine by Ruth Gruber. This is the story of the Hagana ship Exodus 1947 whose passengers were already in Palestinian soil whence they were sent back by the British to France and then to the D.P. camps of Germany. The tragic story of the suffering and heroism of these people is masterfully depicted by the author.

Report on Palestine. This is the complete report submitted by the Special Committee on Palestine to the General Assembly of the United Nations. It is a historic document and its main value lies in the objectivity with which the members of the commission have analyzed the situation and described the conditions.

Until next month,

YOUR REBBETZIN.

HADASSAH HAS THE ANSWERS

Regional Education Meetings:

Jan. 13, Harrisburg—Van's Route 222
Jan. 20, Bethlehem—B'rith Sholom Center.

Jan. 20, Carbondale—American Hotel
Board members and active workers are invited to attend.

The Chanukah meeting is December 16 at 9:00 o'clock. Everybody bring a 25c gift. Intimate, first-hand, eye-witness account of Annual Hadassah Convention. Singing! Refreshments!

Do You Know . . .

That Hadassah was the Hebrew name of Esther, the heroine of the Purim story. It was chosen because Hadassah was organized on Purim in 1912.

That since 1934 Youth Aliyah has rescued and brought to Israel over 30,000 boys and girls from Europe. There are still 60,000 waiting to come in.

That Mrs. Louis Cohen has taken over the job of Mrs. Abe Weinkle as Corresponding Secretary. Lots of luck to both of you!

That Reba Miller will Baby Sit! Phone 107-R.

That the radio talk your president gave on Henrietta Szold must have impressed the listeners, as the Region has asked for copies so that other chapters can use it.

That the Donor Luncheon is planned for March 9. When you come to this affair you will not only enjoy yourself but will hear an outstanding speaker who will leave with you a message worth remembering. Come and help "build with the builders."

That we had a bake sale on November 23. Thank you, ladies, for your fine baked goods, and let's make the next one bigger and better.

That a Tel Aviv street bears the name of the late mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia of New York, formally conferred upon it at a special session of the Tel Aviv Municipal Council.

Back Israel, the world's youngest democracy. Remember: Freedom is everybody's business. Public relations is a state of mind in which we must all participate. Give the average individual the facts and you can depend upon it that he will come to the right conclusions. Israel is a miracle of 2,000 years of faith and devotion. But above all it is the miracle of our Jewish youth, which knows no retreat and for whom no sacrifice is too great in the service of their people.

Happy Chanukah to everybody!

The Gift of Gab:

PONZI IS IN GOOD SPIRITS

The reports we've been getting this past month have been so few that we're seriously worried about our job with this newspaper. After all, our readers demand something to sink their teeth into, and that doesn't mean Doc Ufberg's waste basket. What we are going to do for them we don't know yet, what with New Years coming on Friday night, ergo there being no binges this year.

All we can do at this moment is talk about talk, since we've had a fair amount of that on Wednesday nights, courtesy of Station WISL. In case there was too much static the other night, this is a reminder that the Voice of Israel can be heard weekly at 7:15. The guest speakers have been terrific. Lena Wolfe reports an offer of a permanent job on WISL, and Sam Douglas says he's going to have a mike right in his store. We'll hear more of you, boys and girls!

Among the names we forgot in our list of unmentioned people last time is one from Oak Street that according to good old Nicodemus will also join the parade soon. We hereby correct our oversight and leave her unnamed here and now. And since we are on Oak Street again, we wish to report unofficially the loss of a pair of tonsils from the lower apartment on 129. The initials are B. G. and Joe Levine is the happy grandfather.

If you were at the recent rehearsal of the joint L.A. & B.B. Lotke Company you know what this department, having temporarily run short of ace reporters, unfortunately had no way of personally finding out, namely that this town has an unusually good supply of outstanding Thespians. They are so anxious to show their art that the cast has to be changed from time to time to accomodate everybody. Even Bernie Reiss has discovered histrionic talents within himself and now has Evelyn beaming.

A certain mansion on Third and Vine has installed regular bus service for four hands. That's the pinochle of sociability. And on the subject of sociability, that virtue is getting a big boost from the cozy nook installed above Henlee's. It has its own model railroad, model cash register, and a good assortment of full-size containers of the nectar of hospitality. You can even get ginger ale there.

So that's that for the time being. We'll be seeing you in 1949, unless you're all off to Florida, or maybe on that new cruise Israel. Please leave your forwarding address.

So long,

GAB.