



The Jewish Center

SHABBAT BULLETIN

JULY 31 - AUGUST 1, 2015 • PARSHAT VA'ETCHANAN, SHABBAT NACHAMU • 16 AV 5775

EREV SHABBAT

7:00PM and 8:00PM Minchah
7:56PM Candle Lighting

SHABBAT

7:45AM Hashkama Minyan (The Max & Marion Grill Beit Midrash)
9:00AM Shacharit followed by Special Shabbat Morning Briefing with Maurizio Molinari, *The Caliphate of Terror: The Emerging Middle East and the Coming Wars* (3rd floor)
9:15AM Hashkama Shiur with Rabbi Dovid Zirkind, *Everything Tastes Better With Bacon: Lessons From the First Jewish-Israeli Cuisine* (5th floor)
9:27AM Sof Zman Kriat Shema
9:30AM Young Leadership Minyan
10:00AM Youth Groups, 2-year-olds, 3-4-year-olds and 5-6-year-olds: Geller Youth Center; 2nd-3rd graders, 4th-6th graders: 7th floor
Community Kiddush (5th floor)

WITH THANKS TO OUR KIDDUSH SPONSORS:

Lori Zeltser & Leonard Berman in commemoration of the yahrzeit of Lori's father, Melvin Zeltser

4:00PM Bikkur Cholim/Bikkur in the Home (meet at 730 Columbus Ave.)
6:45PM Summer Lay Leaders Chaburah Series:
Sam Englander, *Professor Aumann's Game Theoretic Approach to Bankruptcy Problems in the Mishna*
7:00PM Israel Friedman Daf Yomi
7:45PM Minchah
Seudah Shlishit speaker: Rabbi Dovid Zirkind, *Lessons From The Life of Faigy Mayer*
8:55PM Shabbat concludes

DAILY SERVICES

Sunday, August 2

Daf Yomi 7:45AM
Shacharit 8:30AM
Minchah 7:55PM

Mon., August 3 -

Thurs., August 6
Shach 7 & 8AM
Daf Yomi 7:45AM
Minchah 7:55PM

Friday, August 7

Shach 7 & 8AM
Daf Yomi 7:45AM
Minchah 7:00PM
Candle Lighting 7:48PM

WOMEN'S TEHILLIM GROUP

Monday, August 10 at 7:15PM. Contact Joyce Weitz for more information at 212-877-1176.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

SPECIAL SHABBAT MORNING BRIEFING WITH MAURIZIO MOLINARI, *The Caliphate of Terror: The Emerging Middle East and the Coming Wars*

Shabbat, August 1



SUMMER LAY LEADERS CHABURAH SERIES

Please join us one hour before Minchah for our summer Chaburah series.

August 1: Sam Englander

August 8: Mark Segall

August 15: Malka Strasberg

August 22: Ira Tokayer

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANK YOU TO OUR USHERS

Thank you to our ushers **Michael Jacobs** and **Beth Schwartz** this Shabbat.

THANK YOU TO CSS

We would like to once again thank CSS and our dedicated CSS members for providing the security for our synagogue this week.

ONEG SHABBAT DONATIONS

Please help provide Shabbat meals for less fortunate families in our community by sending your donation to Oneg Shabbat at 650 West End Ave., New York, NY 10025 or visit www.onegshabbatny.org.

YOUTH DEPARTMENT UPDATES

YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE

10:00 - 10:30AM Free Play

10:30 - 11:00AM Daven, Parsha summary, questions, and snack

11:00 - 11:20AM Active Games

11:20 - 11:45AM Quiet Games

NEW SUPPLIES FOR GROUPS

The Youth Department is in the process of purchasing new toys, games and books for groups. If you have any suggestions or would like to sponsor this project, please email jennandgaby@jewishcenter.org.

PREPARING FOR THE HIGH HOLIDAY

Don't forget to reserve your High Holiday seats, order your lulav and etrog and complete your yizkor booklet form. Please visit our website for more information.

The American Zionist Community's Deepest Wound

Rabbi Daniel Fridman, Resident Scholar

Like so many other day school students of the nineties, my wife Chaya vividly recalls penning letters on behalf of Jonathan Pollard to the holder of the Oval Office. It was a name that, even as children, we had been taught to recognize, as the very embodiment of the mitzvah of *pidyon shevuyim*, redeeming captives. The announcement that Mr. Pollard will be paroled this November, more than two decades after the events which form these memories, and a full thirty years since his conviction, has reopened what is perhaps the most painful wound suffered by the American Zionist Jewish community during my lifetime.

In certain circles, the ongoing imprisonment of Mr. Pollard, for years, and even decades, longer than some convicted of espionage on behalf of enemies of the United States, was clear evidence of anti-Semitism. Moreover, the stories which emerged out of the federal prison in North Carolina in which Mr. Pollard was languishing (including one anecdote in particular which I remember hearing as a child of his *tefillin* being confiscated which I found profoundly disturbing), which conveyed unusually harsh treatment, were certainly distressing, to say the least. Images of his long suffering wife Esther pleading for her husband's release tugged at the heartstrings, I can only imagine, of every warm blooded Jew. Even if one assumed that, as many with access to classified government information have repeatedly claimed, the sheer amount of information which the Jewish state received from Mr. Pollard was far in excess of any other intelligence leak in American history, that the information leaked required the United States to completely revise its method of transmitting signals based intelligence¹, and that much of the Pollard information eventually made its way to Moscow, gravely endangering other clandestine agents overseas, it was certainly a commonly held sentiment that 'enough was enough'. His seemingly interminable incarceration for protecting Jewish people in Israel made him, within these circles, a Jewish hero, a modern day martyr.

Yet, in retrospect, there was that which they did not tell us in day school. While we had been educated that Mr. Pollard did what he did for the safety of every man, woman, and child in the State of Israel, we were not told he was paid handsomely for his work. While we were told that Israel had 'the right' to all of the information which was shared, we were not told that he had contacted other countries (purportedly South Africa) concerning accessing his information. Finally, we certainly were not made aware of the degree to which aspersions of divided loyalties have dogged Diaspora Jewry for centuries, if not millennia. In committing his crime, Mr. Pollard was substantively compromising the standing of the Jewish people in the United States, not to mention harming the US-Israel relationship, which itself served to protect Jewish people in Israel.

As such, as this terrible saga appears to be coming to an end this November, very reasonable, well-intentioned American Jewish citizens with strongly held Zionist sentiments, can certainly disagree about the last thirty years. I do not possess, nor do I believe any rabbi possesses, special insight into this deeply painful chapter

in American Jewish history, nor its connection with, or independence of, the Iran negotiation. However, there is one element of this issue, a halakhic one, that I do believe must be pointed out, and preferably, from the ranks of the rabbinate.

The term with which I was introduced to this tragic matter, the term **פְּדִיּוֹן שְׁבוּיִים**, redemption/freeing of Jewish captives, is a very specific halakhic term, replete with halakhic implications, including diverting communal funds from other vital projects, to justifying violation of the Sabbath. Maimonides,² on two occasions, emphasizes that there is no mitzvah of comparable stature to redeeming captives, **אין לך מצווה רבה כפדיון שְׁבוּיִים**. As such, we must be rigorous and precise in our usage of this term, all the more so in educational contexts, as we present this matter to our children and students. Even if one is, in the final analysis, convinced that Jonathan Pollard has served his time, and then some, as I am, his incarceration is unequivocally not 'captivity' in the sense implied by the term **פְּדִיּוֹן שְׁבוּיִים**. In my opinion, this term, with all that it implies, cannot be extended to include an individual convicted of a serious crime and sentenced in a legitimate, if necessarily imperfect, judicial system.

Tragically, the annals of Jewish history are literally overflowing with blameless Jews, guilty of no crime whatsoever, let alone treason, being cynically kidnapped, never to see their loved ones again. Jonathan Pollard, it must be stated clearly, was not one of them. The saintly memory of those martyrs, throughout the ages, and their tortured families, demands of us at least this modicum of discrimination.

¹ In this instance, a specialized form of radio transmitted signals used by U.S. operators, known as RAISIN.

² See *Hilkhot Matanot Aniyim*, Chapter 8:10. Maimonides has already privileged the commandment of *tzedakah* above all other positive commandments. In privileging redeeming captives even above conventional *tzedakah*, and in doing so twice, Maimonides is exalting redeeming captives into truly rarified territory.



Israel Update

July 31, 2015

House Dem: Iran deal 'simply too dangerous'

A House Democrat on the Foreign Affairs Committee came out against the Iran nuclear deal Wednesday, as the White House seeks to gather Democratic support. According to The Hill, Rep. Grace Meng (N.Y.) said the "deal before us now is simply too dangerous for the American people." "I strongly believe the world could and should have a better deal than that set forth in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which I will therefore oppose," said Meng, who is a member of the Foreign Affairs subcommittee on the Middle East. Meng added that she would continue to study the finer points of the deal, but said, "they will not be dispositive for me." Her remarks come a day after she questioned Secretary of State John Kerry and other top administration officials during a panel hearing on Tuesday. Meng called the inspections procedures "flawed," and said leading nuclear experts have asserted that inspectors would "not necessarily know" if Iran was manufacturing uranium components for a nuclear weapon. "This is unacceptable," she said.

Our Synagogue partners with AIPAC, America's pro-Israel lobby, in educating our community on issues affecting the U.S.-Israel relationship. We encourage you to learn more by contacting AIPAC at synagogue@aipac.org or by visiting www.aipac.org.

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