



IFR NEWS Adar I and II 5774

Volume 2 Issue 28



WHEN ADAR ARRIVES WE INCREASE IN JOY

There is a well-known Halacha of “Mi’she’nichnas Adar Marbim Be’simha” – “When Adar arrives, we increase our joy.”

Adar is an especially auspicious month for the Jewish people, and thus if a Jew is embroiled in a court case he should try, if possible, to schedule the trial for the month of Adar.

As this month is endowed with special Mazal (“luck” or good fortune), a person stands a better chance of emerging victorious in a legal battle during Adar.

In a leap year, when we have an extra month of Adar, do both months have this special quality, or only the second Adar – Adar Sheni – which is when we celebrate Purim? Essentially, this question relates to the issue of the zodiacal sign to which Adar Rishon corresponds.

The twelve months of the Jewish year correspond to the twelve signs of the zodiac, and the month of Adar corresponds to Pisces (fish).

The Sages teach that fish are not subject to the Ayin Ha’ra (evil eye), since they live underwater, and Adar corresponds to Pisces because during this month we are able to avoid the harmful effects of the Ayin Ha’ra.

The question becomes whether in a leap year, Adar Rishon follows the zodiacal sign of Adar Sheni – in which case it shares the special auspicious qualities of Adar Sheni – or if it has the same sign as the preceding month, Shevat.

This issue is subject to a debate. The Lebush (Rabbi Mordechai Yaffe of Prague, 1530-1612) maintained that Adar Rishon corresponds to the zodiacal sign of Aquarius, the sign of Shevat, and thus it does not have the special qualities of Adar Sheni.

A different view, however is taken by the Kedushat Levi (Rabbi Levi Yishak of Berditchev, Poland, 1740-1810), in a famous passage in Parashat Ki-Tisa, and by Rabbi Sadok Hakohen of Lublin (1823-1900). They note that just as the twelve months correspond to the twelve signs of the zodiac, similarly, the months correspond to the twelve tribes of Israel.

The month of Adar, which is under the sign of Pisces, corresponds to Yosef Ha’sadik, who is blessed like fish, and who, like fish, was free from the clutches of the Ayin Ha’ra.

Yosef was unique among Yaakov’s sons in that his two sons – Menashe and Efrayim – each formed a separate tribe (“Efrayim U’Menashe Ki’Re’uben Ve’Shimon Yiheyu Li” – Bereshit 48:5).

Accordingly, in a leap year, the two months of Adar correspond to the two sons of Yosef, Menashe and Efrayim, and, as such, both are represented by the sign of Pisces.

It thus emerges, according to this view, that both Adar Rishon and Adar Sheni share the special properties of the month of Adar, and Adar Rishon is indeed an auspicious time for success in court.

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IFR Mission Statement

The IFR is a professional organization of rabbis united by a commitment to Jewish tradition and a desire to facilitate the Jewish spiritual growth and life cycle needs of all.

IFR provides a progressive, pluralistic forum, linking member rabbis in a spirit of friendship and a sense of community.

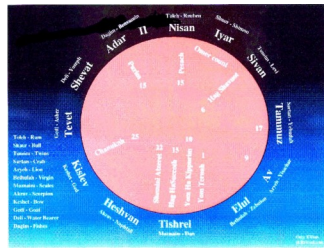
IFR provides support for members in their professional endeavors and offers continuing education. IFR encourages professional relationships with rabbis and other rabbinic organizations.



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adar

ZODIACAL SIGNS OF THE HEBREW MONTHS

Practically speaking, then, it is certainly preferable during a leap year to schedule one's court cases for Adar Sheni, which is an auspicious time according to all views, but if this is not possible, there is certainly value in scheduling the case for Adar Rishon.

It should be noted that Rashi (Rabbi Shelomo Yishaki of Troyes, France, 1040-1105), in his commentary to Masechet Ta'anit, indicates that this special quality continues through Nissan, as well. Commenting on the Halacha of "Mi'she'nichnas Adar Marbim Be'simha,"

Rashi explains that Adar is special because it ushers in the season of miracles, the season of Purim and Pesach. Significantly, Rashi mentions Pesach in this context, clearly indicating that Nissan, too, is an especially auspicious period.

It would thus seem that, according to Rashi, Nissan is also a time when one has a greater chance of success in his lawsuits.

It is advisable for a person facing a legal battle to schedule his case for Adar.

In a leap year, it is preferable to schedule the case for Adar Sheni, but there is value in scheduling the case for Adar Rishon. According to some sources, the auspicious quality of Adar continues during the month of Nissan, as well.

The Mazal of Adar

Each Hebrew month is ruled over by a "Malach"/Angel and a "mazal" or a zodiacal sign. As each month is ruled by a zodiacal sign, each sign is ruled by a planet. The planets Jupiter and Neptune are the "co-rulers" of the Sign "Dagim" (Fish/Pisces), the mazal of ADAR.

Adar Sheni and Amalek

Yehoshua was charged with leading the army to combat a formidable foe, the Amelekim. The classic commentaries to Tanach with regard to Shaul HaMelech's campaign against Amalek teach us that the Amaleki were proficient in the occult and were especially educated in the ways to harness the astrological forces to their benefit. Rabbeinu Bachye main-

Nisan	Aries	March 21 - April 20	Taleh
Iyar	Taurus	April 21 - May 20	Shor
Sivan	Gemini	May 21 - June 20	Teomim
Tammuz	Cancer	June 21 - July 21	Sartan
Av	Leo	July 22 - August 22	Aryeh
Elul	Virgo	August 23 - September 22	Betulah
Tishre	Libra	September 23 - October 22	Moznayim
Cheshvan	Scorpio	October 23 - November 21	Akrav
Kislev	Sagittarius	November 22 - December 20	Keshet
Tevet	Capricorn	December 21 - January 20	G'di
Shvat	Aquarius	January 21 - February 18	D'Ii
Adar	Pisces	February 19 - March 20	Dagim

tains that in the battle discussed in this week's parsha that Amaleki chose soldiers who were destined to live out the year based on their astrological sign.

By utilizing such a "draft", the Amaleki were confident that they could not be defeated since their soldiers were unable to be killed. Rabbeinu Bachye mentions that this is why it was necessary for Yehoshua to choose men to go out to war. The pesukim in our Parsha state that Yehoshua was charged with selecting men to go out to fight. Rabbeinu Bachye is of the opinion that this was not merely a command that Yehoshua assemble an army. Yehoshua was charged with finding people with the correct astrological signs so that the Israelite army would also be comprised of men who were unable to fall in war. This, says Rabbeinu Bachye, is why when Yehoshua's offensive was successful that the pasuk mentions that the enemy was weakened.

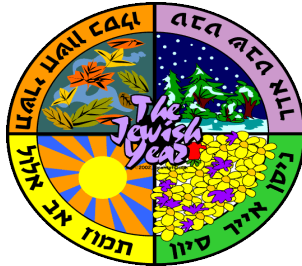
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אדר שני

They were only weakened because they could not be defeated entirely. The enemy soldiers became weak and tired of battle, but there were no actual casualties of war since the soldiers were unable to be killed in battle.

Rabbeinu Bachye makes it seem that the individuals mentioned had specific astrological signs and that is what protected them. The Chizkuni takes a slightly different approach. The Chizkuni also is of the opinion that the Amaleki were harnessing the forces of the astrological signs and that Yehoshua was charged with selecting Israelite warriors who had appropriate astrological signs to combat them. Unlike Rabbeinu Bachye's interpretation, the Chizkuni felt that the Amaleki were using the astrological forces directly to fight the Israelites. Therefore, the Chizkuni states that the men chosen to fight Amalek were not those who had specific astrological signs, rather, they were those who had no astrological sign whatsoever. Yehoshua was charged with gathering men who had been born in Adar II.

The Chizkuni maintains that Adar II has no mazal since all twelve have been assigned to the earlier twelve months. Since they were not bound by mazal, the Amaleki would not be able to use astrology to combat them.

This approach of the Chizkuni is fantastic because based on Rashi (Rosh Hashana 11b) and the Ibn Ezra (Reishis Chachma and Sefer HaTaamim) it would seem that the astrological signs are based on the solar calendar and that which we state that the lunar months align with the signs is only based on the average years. In a solar calendar there are always twelve months and all months are assigned a sign. The Chizkuni would seem to argue with this premise and state that the signs are based on the lunar months. Perhaps the Chizkuni would actually maintain that the nations of the world who only have the solar calendar would have their signs based on the solar calendar, but the Jews would be based on the lunar calendar. If that is true then this technique of Yehoshua was a surprise defense that the Amaleki had probably not counted upon.

The Amaleki, only familiar with the solar calendar, would have no understanding of what it would mean to have a person that has no mazal since they have no such month of Adar II. Yehoshua, on the other hand led an army of signless warriors and routed this archenemy of ours.

Something written by Rav Dovid Cohen in his Masos Kappai. Rav Cohen points out that Ephraim and Menashe were compared to fish by their grandfather Yakov when he blessed them in Parshas VeYechi.

Sometimes we find that Ephraim and Menashe are considered like one Shevet and are referred to as Shevet Yosef, and other times we find that they are two and called by their own names. This is similar to Adar, symbolized by the astrological sign of fish, which is sometimes one month and other times, like this year, two. It is important to note that Yehoshua was a scion of Ephraim and it was he who led this army.



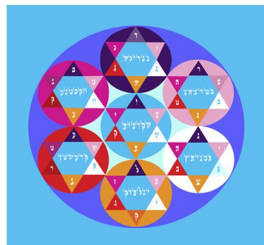
This image portrays an episode from the Book of Exodus in which the Israelites fought the Amalekites in the desert. Moses stood on a mountain overlooking the battlefield. When Moses' arms were raised, the Israelites prevailed and when they were lowered the Amalekites had the advantage. In order to insure an Israelite victory, Aaron and Hur supported Moses arms so that they remained raised.

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Adar

Mystical Thoughts on the Month of Adar

What allows us to know someone's mind by looking at their face and see that which is hidden? Sometimes you can tell what's on the mind of, or in a person's heart at times. This month is all about revealing the unseen.

Just as children like to play peek-a-boo or hide and seek, adults also get pleasure out of finding what is hidden. It's in our nature to seek what we can't see. The U.S. is spending billions trying to find intelligent life on other planets. What is the source of our curiosity for the concealed? It may very well be something G-d implanted in us to cause us to seek Him.

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto writes that a healthy mind craves truth, and is bothered when a piece of the puzzle is missing. We need to have our questions about life answered or else we're left agitated. Being ignorant of an aspect of reality does not bring bliss, it causes annoyance. We want to find out the truth that is veiled, not merely out of curiosity, but out of a desire to resolve a conflict within. When we do find the missing piece, when we are convinced that G-d exists, or any element of truth, then we experience pleasure and joy. The sages say, "There is no joy like resolving a doubt."

The month of Adar is most noted for the holiday of Purim. Hiddenness pervades this special day. G-d's name is only hinted at in the scroll of Esther, never mentioned explicitly. The unusual events surrounding Mordechai, Esther, and Achashverosh all form a story that reads as divine intervention, yet no miracle was performed, no laws of nature were abrogated. Masks, pretending to be someone else, and putting on plays, are all traditional ways of celebrating Purim. All these things express the concepts of hiding and revealing.

The custom of drinking wine also reinforces this as it allows a part of one's personality that's usually under wraps to come out. The main focus of these activities is to help us feel joy. Rabbi Avigdor Miller says that

every person has a reservoir of infinite joy inside.

We need to take away the barriers that block this source from pouring forth.

The constellation of this month is the fish, Pisces. Fish are a symbol of blessing in Judaism, no doubt stemming from G-d's blessing on the fifth day to the fish. (see Genesis 1:22) Traditionally there has been a custom to get married on this day because of that blessing. The kabbalists also point out that since fish are hidden from view, they are impervious to jealousy. The feeling of jealousy is somewhat dependent on sight. This is the source of the concept "ayin harah", the evil eye, so common as a Jewish "superstition." The sages say, "Blessing only falls on that which is hidden from the eye." Someone who sees your blessing may feel jealous, and that feeling causes a judgment on you. This can have a negative consequence on the blessing. That is called "ayin harah".

This month is ideal to meditate on the important questions you have. It is a good time to seek out the hidden mysteries. You can also tap into the spiritual power of the month by revealing the good inside your heart.

Now is the time to reveal the joy hidden inside you. Now is the time to uncover the love you have for all humanity. If we can do these two things even a little bit, we can expect some major changes in the world.



Ravenous Ravens



Rabbi Frank Tamburello's column featuring
Jewish holiday Eats and Treats

Adar I and Adar II EATS



I had recently attended a lecture by Rabbi Abraham Skorka at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York regarding his relationship with Pope Francis, who is one of his dearest friends, and their collaboration on the book On Heaven and Earth.

One of his anecdotes had Skorka, the premier representative of the Jewish community in Argentina, visit the pope's residence, a hotel in Rome. He said that, at the pope's insistence, the entire kitchen of the hotel was kashered to accommodate the rabbi. Why not try something Argentinian this Purim?

Sweet and Savory Argentine Empanadas

Ingredients

- 1/2 lb. very lean ground beef
- 1/2 c. chopped onion
- 1/2 c. California raisins
- 1/2 c. chopped pimento-stuffed green olives
- 1/2 c. prepared salsa
- 1-1/2 tsp. Mexican seasoning blend
- 1-1/2 tsp. smoked paprika
- 1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 16 sheets (14 x 9-inch) filo dough, thawed
- Nonstick cooking spray (olive oil or butter-flavored)
- 1 Egg, beaten



Adar rishon/sheni Recipes

- 1 Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with foil or parchment paper; set aside.
- 2 Cook ground beef and onion over medium heat in nonstick skillet for 10 minutes or until onion is very soft, breaking up beef with a wooden spoon.
- 3 Stir in raisins, olives, salsa and seasonings. Unroll filo sheets and cover with a damp cloth. Place 1 sheet on a flat surface.
- 4 Spray with cooking spray and top with another sheet. Repeat to layer 4 sheets.
- 5 Cut stack into 6 equal pieces and brush edges with beaten egg. Place heaping tablespoon of filling in the center of each piece of filo and fold over to enclose filling and make triangular shapes.
- 6 Press edges tightly together to seal and cut away points to make semi-circles. Repeat until filo sheets and filling are all used.
- 7 Arrange on baking sheet and brush with beaten egg.
- 8 Bake for 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Serve warm or at room temperature.



Ravenous Ravens



Rabbi Frank Tamburello's column featuring
Jewish holiday Eats and Treats

Adar Leap Year Recipe



Erev Purim 5695 is the yartzheit of Shosh's maternal great grandmother Augusta Smilovici.

Her version of "Jewish Penicillin" has been passed down five generations. Yes, even the male family members have used this recipe. Easy, delicious and inexpensive.

Prep Time: 1/2 hour

Cook Time: 4 hours

Total Time: 4 hour, 30 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1/2 stock pot water
- 4-5 chicken Bullion Cubes (crumble into water)
- Large Yellow Onion (cut up)
- 1/2 Clove
- Garlic (cut up)
- 1 large LEEK (cut up)
- 2 Parsnips (cut up)
- 2 Turnips (cut up)
- 1 Stalk Celery (cut up)
- 3 -4 Large Carrots (cut up)
- 3 lbs Chicken thighs (remove skin)
- Kosher Salt (to taste)
- 1 Tablespoon peppercorns (or ground pepper)
- Sprig Fresh Thyme
- Fresh Parsley
- Fresh Dill



Preparation:



1. Fill Stock pot half full with cold water.
2. Boil water, place 4 cubes of chicken bouillon in boiling water, add thyme, parsley and dill. Add salt and peppercorns, add cut up garlic, onion, leek, parsnips, turnips, celery, and carrots, boil for 10 minutes uncovered.

3. Add chicken thighs, continue to boil for 10 more minutes uncovered.

4. Add more water (fill to 3/4 of pot) bring to boil again, stir with large wooden spoon.

Turn heat down to low simmer COVERED for 3-4 hours.

45 minutes prior to serving soup:

Bring Soup to a rolling boil

Hand roll refrigerated matzah mixture into tablespoon size balls. Slowly put matzah balls directly into soup. Use up mixture-Continue to boil for 5 minutes.



Reduce heat to simmer COVER for another 35 min.

Serve soup and matzah balls directly from stock pot into soup bowls,

FLUFFY Matzah Balls

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of Matzah meal
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup water
- Parsley cut up (or flakes)
- 4 EGGS

Preparation

1. Combine and mix well: Eggs, Matzah Meal Oil, Water, and Parsley.
2. Refrigerate one hour.



IFR Rabbis News & Shmooze

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Now is the time to renew your membership in the IFR. Payment via Paypal is \$122.00

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The International Federation of Rabbis

Send your renewal to the IFR President

Rabbi Suzanne H. Carter
5091 Washington Road
Delray Beach, Florida 33484



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IFR Conference 2015!

Exact date TBD

Duncan Conference Center
Delray Beach, FL

www.intfedrabbis.org/tamar.html

Donations

B'Todah to the following Rabbi who have made donations over and above his membership dues to the IFR:

Rabbi Robert Schreibman

Typhoon Relief Philippines

In Honor of Rabbi Pearlman and Joy Eckerling

In Honor of Rabbi Suzanne H Carter

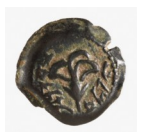
ADAR 7

Yahrtzeit of Moshe Rabbeinu 1273 BCE
(Jewish year 2488), on the same day of
his birth 120 years earlier. (Consequently,
"May you live to 120" has become a com-
mon Jewish blessing.)

IFR Conference 2013 Duncan Center-Delray Beach FL.



IFR Conference 2011 Duncan Center-Delray Beach FL.





Unique Baby Namings

Rabbi Suzanne H Carter-Delray Beach, Florida

Rabbi Carter's interactive baby naming ceremony for baby girls and for baby boys has developed over the past 20 years. Each family member reads a welcome blessing /candle lighting and participates in the service. Each baby receives a personalized Sefer Chayim, or "Book of Life" of approximately 50 pages. The book is beautifully illustrated including pics of baby and family members -with decorative covers and used as the "siddur" during the baby naming service and gifted to the baby for a lifetime keepsake. Baby Naming Ceremonies are typically held in a private home or clubhouse, or on SKYPE (for out of towners)



I had the great fortune of having Rabbi Carter name my most precious first born granddaughter. She gave an incredibly moving, meaningful ceremony filled with love and joy. She also provided an amazing baby book, The Book of Life, filled with the lore and knowledge of our religion. There were photos of our 4 generations as well as a gorgeous cover with a picture of our precious baby girl.

We have all read this baby book again and again and know that it will be a treasured heirloom that will stand the test of time. All of us attending said we had never, ever experienced a Rabbi with such warmth, enthusiasm, interest and dedication. Rabbi Carter is everything a Rabbi should be. We loved everything about the naming and everything about her. Thank you again, Rabbi, for making our ceremony memorable beyond words. -Janice Ash

Rabbi Carter performed an amazing baby naming service for our granddaughter Emma Reese. Her connection to the families and guests was amazing. The Sefer Chayim that Rabbi Carter prepared will always be treasured. It will be a constant reminder to Emma of the importance of family through her entire life. We are most appreciative that Rabbi Carter was able to share and make special this day for our entire family. Sheila & George

Rabbi Carter did a wonderful baby naming ceremony for my daughter and son. Everyone there loved how intimate she made it. My in-laws said that they have never been to one like it and thought it was one of the best ceremonies that they have ever gone to. My side of the family who is not Jewish said that they loved how Rabbi Carter explained why certain aspects of the ceremony were done. The wonderful momento from that day was the book she made for us with the kids names and the meaning behind them along with the pictures of the family members that they were named after. It is something I will treasure forever. Dave & Nicole

Rabbi Carter is a remarkably warm and inspirational Rabbi, and she guides each ceremony with generosity of spirit, love and the greatest attention to your family history and relationships. She is radiant, leads without any judgment, respects all people, and has an abundant sense of humor.. Most recently, Rabbi Carter lead our daughter's baby naming. We live out-of-state, so we waited until we had time to bring our entire family together in Florida with Rabbi Carter to conduct Marielle's naming ceremony. The Rabbi created a gorgeous naming ceremony album expressly for Marielle. The book features our immediate family members in photos, flanked by the readings and prayers we said at the ceremony. It is a book that our daughter can look at for all time to remember the start of her life. We are so grateful for meeting Rabbi Carter, and we feel stronger in our faith and our appreciation for family every time we speak with her. She is understanding, sincere and compassionate. We think of her often and with love. — The Spiller Family



Recent Testimonials

Dear Rabbi Carter:- The book was fantastic and the fact that you were able to do the baby naming via skype was great. As always we feel that you're part of our family and hope that the future will bring us all healthy and happiness. Thanks for all your support. Love, Syd

Rabbi Carter's warmth and grace came through on every page of our Book of Life. She could not have been any more meticulous in putting the book together. She was sensitive to how we wanted to do the ceremony and went above and beyond our expectations. She made the ceremony come together in a very meaningful way, even while presiding via Skype. We could not be more grateful. - David Abel

Rabbi this is truly a treasure that Jake will keep forever. I can't believe the thought and work that you put into this. We are eternally grateful. -Betty

NOTE:

Is it a lot of work? YES !-Do I charge more? YES!

Is it worthwhile? ABSOLUTELY.

-shosh

Unique Baby Namings

Rabbi Frank Tamburello NYC

Baby Naming Structure



(I use the same ceremony for boys or girls. Several couples opt-out of circumcision for boys, so we call this ceremony Brit Shalom)

3 appropriate opening meditations
Welcoming blessing

2 Lessons

Lesson 1 is an adaptation from Proverbs 4, 10-15; 20, 2.

Shema Yisrael!

Hear and keep these words my children, that the years of your life be many. For you have been taught the ways of wisdom, and have been led in the paths of justice and honor.

When you walk, your step will not be hampered; and if you run, you will not stumble. Keep hold of your instruction. Guard it, for it is your life.

Do not follow the ways of evildoers; turn away from their paths.

My child, be attentive to these words, and incline your ears to these sayings. Do not let them escape from your sight, and keep them within your heart.

For they are life to those who find them, and healing to their flesh. Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flows springs of life.

Put away from you all crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you. Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze straight before you. Guard carefully the paths of your feet, and your ways will always be sure.

Lesson 2 - The story about the sage and the old man who plants the carob tree.

Shehecheyanu

Conferring and Explanation of Hebrew name.

Parents / Grandparents etc. personal words

Brit Blessing:

כאשר אנו מקדמים בברכה את (הילד, הילדה) לתוך בית ישראל, רשאי הוא / היא להתברך מתנות של אהבה, חוכמה, בריאות, ושמחה.

As we welcome this child into the House of Israel, may he / she be blessed with the gifts of love, wisdom, health, and joy.

Kiddush with drop of wine place on baby's tongue.

9. Final Blessing

N., we, your parents, your grandparents, all who love you, rejoice in this day. May our lives be an example for you of love, hope, and dedication. May we always support you and encourage you to be what you really are: a unique and creative individual.

N., you are a special gift, meant to bring beauty and grace into our world. And all that you see in this world: streams, mountains and hills, birds and beasts, trees and flowers, oceans and stars, are brothers and sisters to you. May you learn to live in harmony with them, and with all those who share the earth with you.

N., may you appreciate the wisdom and culture of your people(s); and may you value learning and education. May you in turn pass these teachings on to future generations as they have been given to you.

And N., may your life be a blessing to us forever, as we wish you all good things. And let us say, Amein and Mazal Tov!

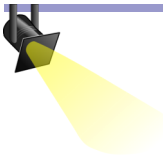
One of my families came to us with a creative way to honor the Naming. They created a short blessing with the child's Hebrew name, and framed it for the baby's room.

תמה

To our beautiful, new daughter

As you are given the name of your grandmother May your life be filled with wonder and surprise as your name suggests.

And may you be blessed with all good things. Amen.



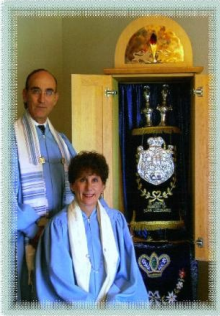
SPOTLIGHT

Featuring Rabbi David Degani
Spiritual Leader for 14 years of
Congregation Shirat Shalom in

West Boca Raton, FL

What drew you to become a rabbi?

I felt drawn to the rabbinate. It was a classic feeling like many people who have had successful careers, I felt something was missing and wanted to connect to religion, God, and people. I had a sense of mission. I was ordained in my mid forties.



Give us one example of job satisfaction.

My biggest satisfaction is when I see our Hebrew school students return to our school as volunteers and stay

to help for a year or two. I am also so happy when these same young people go on to join a Jewish youth group and then go on to college where they involve themselves in Jewish activities. Most of our kids do this. It is my greatest satisfaction.

Give us one example of job frustration.

Time. For example, often when I make my hospital visits, I am on the road all day. Or I get a call from someone who wants to chat and I don't have the time. It is difficult to bring the kind of spirituality to Judaism that I need and want to do, because daily life is so frantic. It's challenging to bring people back to the core of Judaism and that takes time. People are looking for honesty and sincerity and they learn this through watching our behavior. My objective with "tikkun olam," for example is not only talking but doing – and that takes time.

What part of the Shabbat service touches you personally?

The lighting of the candles because they remind me of holiness and the power of Shabbat and the light that Judaism brings to the world. Especially in services, with all the children around, as they place their hands to the light and then spread their hands to share the light of God with the world, for me this is the most beautiful part of Shabbat.

What is Judaism's biggest challenge in 2014?

To create a path to make sure that our the children of interfaith marriages remain loyal to Judaism – this doesn't mean that they must practice Judaism. But we need to assure that these interfaith children remain loyal to Jewish causes and to Israel. The Jewish religion needs flexibility to survive – such as accepting the children of Jewish fathers and non-Jewish mothers as Jewish.

We need to accept these children as Jewish. Remember for the "kohanim," the passing of the priesthood, (which is historically our most holy activity), goes

from father to son so how can we say that these children of Jewish fathers are not Jewish?



Read any good books lately?

Tell us about a favorite read.

Let's see. I'm reading "Crown of Sovereignty" one of the lesser known works featuring God and creation, by Shlomo ibn Gabriol.

I am also re-reading "From Time Immemorial," by Joanne Peters, which is a "documentary" about Jewish sovereignty and which demonstrates the legal and moral Jewish sovereignty of Judea and Samaria. It's an eye-opener!

7. Rabbi work is very stressful.

What do you do to relax?

(laughter) Relax? We all know how hard it is to find time to relax! I enjoy gardening, some running, and reading, but it is our garden that is filled with ponds and waterfalls, that brings me back to Mother Earth.

Would you like to be the next SPOTLIGHT Rabbi?

If so, email rabbi@rabbibarbara.com to schedule a short interview.



Note from shosh: I've known Rabbi David Degani since 1997. I cannot tell you how much I admire Rabbi David and his wife Cantor Lee. They are devoted to their profession, to their people Israel, and are exceptional parents to Michael and Rachel Degani. Rabbi David Degani has been a member of the IFR since 2002. He serves as an IFR officer and on the Board of Directors as Rosh Beit Din.