



# The Shofar

May-June, 2026

Congregation House of Israel

14 Iyar - 15 Tammuz, 5786

Please join us in celebrating  
**Congregation House of Israel's  
150th Anniversary**

**on Friday May 8th**

300 Quapaw Ave, Hot Springs, AR 71901

*6:00 pm*

Shabbat services to be held in the Sanctuary

*Reception to follow in Burgauer Hall*

For any additional questions, please contact: [info@hschi.org](mailto:info@hschi.org)

\*Sponsored by the Temple Sisterhood and the Rosenzweig Foundation for Interfaith Activities

See Sisterhood article on page 4 for celebration  
details

## Refuah Shlemah

*The following people are in our thoughts and prayers for healing. Please offer prayers that they have a full and complete recovery.:*

- Aria Baron
- Shoshana Baron
- Adam Bierman
- Terri Carr
- Diane Dove
- Francine Gordon
- Oded Grenman
- Sue Koppel
- Pat McCarthy
- Palma Ortiz
- Mike Richardson
- Lori Roslawski
- Steven West
- James Woodfork

### The Shofar

Published bi-monthly by:

Congregation House of Israel

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Hot Springs, AR 71903

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Submissions due the 15th of the prior month.  
Distributed free to members, prospective members, local clergy and other interested parties.

## Happy Birthday CHI

**By Sherrill Nicolosi**

This year in May marks the 150th Anniversary of Congregation House of Israel. It's been a busy, interesting, and incredible year for our Congregants and families. Here are some of the highlights:

- We've had major birthdays, including our Rabbi Sheldon Kleinman's 90th!
- We've had some births, including Mark and Patti Fleischner's first grandchild.
- We've welcomed a few new members, including Katie and Greg Gordon and Lisa Hamby.
- We've elected a new Sisterhood President, Laura Castillo.
- We have Dennis Williams doing a superb job as President of our Congregation.
- Our Hanukkah party in December was a fun and beautiful celebration.
- Purim was a "groggin" good time for all on March 3, 2026.
- Passover Seder on April 1, 2026 was enjoyed by all, as we honored our history of freedom from Egyptian slavery.

- The High Holidays in September and October, 2025 were an awesome time of reflection, atonement, repentance and forgiveness for Jews in our Congregation and Worldwide.
- Sukkot and Thanksgiving 2025 allowed all of us to celebrate the appreciation for all we have been given.
- Countless Shabbat services in the past year have given us food for thought, and reminded each of us of the privilege of being a Jew.

Our Sisterhood Shabbat Service will be May 8, 2026, followed by a Reception to celebrate CHI's 150th Anniversary. Open invitation to Churches (First Methodist, First Presbyterian, St. Lukes Episcopal and Grand Avenue Methodist, which all had recent anniversaries), and others will allow us to share the joy of our Congregation with so many.

Here's to another year of being blessed with dear friends and family of this great Congregation House of Israel.



# Gaslighting

The English language has changed a lot since the 1930s. A lot of the expressions and idioms from that era would confuse people today. For example, here are some turns of phrase from

the thirties that I would not understand without context:

- “He knows his onions” meant he is knowledgeable about something.
- “Hounds on an island” meant hot dogs with beans.
- “Canned soup” meant something of little value.
- “Chicago overcoat” meant a coffin

There is, however, one particular word from the thirties that has enjoyed a rebirth of sorts and is now extremely current slang. That word is “gaslighting.”

The term comes from the name of a 1938 play called “Gas Light” by Patrick Hamilton, and made into a 1944 movie starring Charles Boyer, Ingrid Bergman and Joseph Cotton.

The play and movie tell the story of a husband who dims the house’s gaslights and then denies that he did so, thus causing his wife to question her sanity. Nice guy, huh?

And today, that is exactly what gaslighting means. It’s the act of manipulating people to the point that they start to question their own sense of reality. It’s a form of lying, but it’s much worse than mere untruthfulness.

People lie all the time to protect themselves from the truth. It’s not a good idea, but it’s normal.

Gaslighters, by way of contrast, use lying not as a defense tactic but as a weapon, an instrument of destruction. The gaslighter wants to make his target feel insecure, terrified, guilty, even ashamed.

We Jews are the most gaslit people in world history, and the gaslighting has gotten dramatically worse ever since October 7th of 2023. It’s important to know that we are being gaslit, because otherwise we will lose our sanity and even start doubting our

own right to exist undisturbed.

Commentary Magazine had an article by Seth Mandel that addresses this issue explicitly. The headline is, “Extinguish the Gaslight Forever.” His main point is that the world gaslights us and claims that we are not the target of an antisemitic, murderous plot, when we most certainly are.

Calling out “From the River to the Sea” or “Free, Palestine” is so nakedly antisemitic, because it is clear that a state run by Hamas would not have any living Jews in it. How do we know this? Because they said so, and they said so many times.

Israel pulled out of Gaza years ago and gave them a beautiful state they could have made their own. They chose instead to use it as a launchpad for thousands of rockets and, finally, the mass murder of 1200 Israelis. There can be no Free Palestine because there already was a free Palestine, and they failed to use it responsibly.

I feel sorry for the Palestinians who are hungry. I feel sorry for the innocent Palestinians who died as a result of Israeli attacks, but I don’t feel ashamed. 100% of the shame belongs to Hamas.

Finally, we get to the last type of gaslighting, and that is the lie that Gaza is enduring the worst kind of human suffering on the planet. In reality, it isn’t even close.

Why isn’t there a movement to protest what’s happening in Sudan? Or China? Or any of a dozen other offenders? The answer is antisemitism.

Holding Israel and the Jews to a higher standard than everyone else is antisemitic. I don’t have time to address all the kinds of gaslighting we face. Holocaust denial, conspiracy theories about banking and the media, and even 9/11 itself are just some of the entries in our gaslighting encyclopedia.

Natural gas has no odor. The manufacturers add foul smelling ingredients so that we’ll notice it in case of a leak. Antisemitism has no obvious odor, and it can hide very well.

Gaslighting helps the enemy hide their true intentions.

## Sisterhood

**We Can Do It!**



### CHI 150th Anniversary

Excitement is building for our special Sisterhood Shabbat celebrating the 150th anniversary of our congregation! Hopefully all of our current members will be able to attend,

plus scattered family members and former members, and many invited guests from our local community.

We have asked the congregations of several downtown churches that also celebrate long histories in our community to come celebrate with us as well.

The Rosenzweig Foundation for Interfaith Activity has so graciously and generously agreed to sponsor the music for the service and the reception that will follow in Burgauer Hall.

Also a special thank you to our newest member, Lisa Hamby (of Service Liquor), for donating the champagne and glasses for the reception as well. Please look for her and her brother Greg Gordon, who will be serving as greeters at our front door to the sanctuary. As they welcome people in to the service, we can welcome them into our congregation!

## Thank You....

.... to Sharon Waxler for painting and refreshing the women's restroom at the Temple!

It's always nice to have a little refresh! Too bad that not all of our members and guests will get to enjoy it!

---to Irv Greenberg for the donation to our Temple library. It's a fascinating autobiography of Irv's life and his family history in Hot Springs: This is the Best Life I've Ever Had



## The Book of Ruth

By Rabbi Michael Gold

On the festival of Shavuot (*May 22 & 23*) we read the book of Ruth. It is a beautiful little book that touches on some powerful themes, the love and loyalty between a daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, a woman's conversion and commitment to the Jewish people, the rich helping the poor glean in their fields, and ultimately, a marriage that would lead to the birth of King David.

However, there is one theme that strikes me as central to the book, the very reason why the author wrote it. The book is a polemic against those who would classify people based on race and lineage. It is against those who would refuse to open the door to converts, or who would look at people and reject them because they are a "bad seed." It is against those like Ezra of each generation, who forced men who married out of the faith to reject their wives and children, without any opening for conversion. It teaches that even an impoverished Moabite girl can marry an aristocratic Israelite and become the progenitor of the king of Israel, and eventually the Messiah.

The central message of Ruth is not to look at bloodlines, at nationality, or at race, but rather look at character and values. Ruth was a Moabite, a people hated by the Israelites. The Torah teaches that "No Ammonite or Moabite shall be admitted into the congregation of the Lord, none of their descendants, even in the tenth generation shall even be admitted into the congregation of the Lord." (Deuteronomy 23:4) What irony that the ideal convert through the ages was a Moabite woman.

What was true in ancient Israel is equally true today. We still tend to judge people based on biology and lineage. I do a huge amount of adoption counseling. How often have I been asked by couples considering adoption or their families, "How can I adopt a child of that race, that lineage, that particular background?" "How can I adopt at all; what if the child is a bad seed?"

"An apple does not fall far from the tree?" But a human being is not an apple; we are far more than our genetic background. We are created in the image of God and we need to look at human beings beyond mere biology.

This attitude begins with conversion. Judaism is not a race. On the contrary, the Jewish people come in all races and all nationalities. Judaism is open to any human being who is willing to say the words of Ruth,

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We are very proud and excited to be celebrating the 150th anniversary of our congregation this year! Our Sisterhood is working very hard on a special Shabbat service for Friday, May 8th, and we hope that all of our members will be able to attend. You are also welcome to invite any friends, family members, or neighbors who might be interested in celebrating with us.

There are several prominent churches in our community that are also celebrating milestone anniversaries this year:

**St. Luke's Episcopal (160 years)**

**First Methodist (164 years)**

**First Presbyterian (150 years)**

**Grand Avenue Methodist (101 years)**

**Roanoke Baptist (158 years)**

**Visitors Chapel A.M.E. (158 years)**

**St. Mary's Catholic Church (157 years)**

**St. John's Catholic Church (118 years)**

**Central Baptist (102 years)**

So in a spirit of community celebration we will also be inviting any of their members that would like to attend.

We are also working with the musical director from **B'nai Israel** in Little Rock to provide some very special music for our service.

It promises to be an exciting evening to see old friends, to meet new ones, and to enjoy a moving Shabbat in our beautiful sanctuary.

## Stop Shooting at Synagogues

By Rabbi Josh Weinberg

March 13, 2026

Dear World,

Please stop shooting at synagogues and taking your anger out on the Jews. Thank you.

In the past week alone, five synagogues have been targeted in attacks, including yesterday's assault on Temple Israel in West Bloomfield, outside Detroit. Jewish communities across the country are shaken, frightened, and exhausted. Once again, we find ourselves repeating a basic plea that should not have to be said in the twenty-first century: Jewish houses of worship are not legitimate targets for anyone's anger, grievance, or political protest.

If you have an issue with the Israeli government, that is legitimate—depending on what your issue is (as in critiquing Israel's policies or its existence). Democracies invite debate, criticism, and disagreement. But ramming your car into a synagogue preschool or opening fire near a Jewish community will not bring back relatives lost in Lebanon. It will not change Israeli policy. And it will not be seen as meaningful protest or legitimate policy critique. It is antisemitism, plain and simple.

Temple Israel in West Bloomfield has no sway over what Benjamin Netanyahu and the Israeli government decide to do in prosecuting a war. Nor does it control the decisions of the United States government in the Middle East. The families who pray there, send their children to preschool there, and gather there for holidays and life-cycle moments are simply American Jews living their lives.

When anger at the Israeli government becomes violence directed at Jews in suburban Detroit, the world is not witnessing political protest—it is witnessing antisemitism.

And the Jewish community is tired of having to explain this over and over again.

I recently asked my daughter's high school principal—an intelligent, thoughtful, and caring educator—how he would react if students of Chinese descent were blamed and ridiculed for the policies of the Chinese government, or if students with Russian-sounding names were harassed because of Vladimir Putin's war against Ukraine. He was

appalled by the thought. Then he paused and said quietly, "Oh, I see."

Thankfully, he affirmed that no student should ever be singled out because of their religion, ethnicity, or heritage. No one should have to hide who they are because of geopolitical events thousands of miles away.

That principle should apply to Jews as well.

Yet the reality of Jewish life today tells a different story. As an Israeli, I am conditioned to sit in restaurants and cafés, quietly keeping an eye on the door and noticing who enters. As a Jew in America, I sit pray in synagogue on Shabbat aware that we have undergone active shooter training. I know where the exits are. I look around the room, notice the elderly woman with a walker, and wonder how I would help her if something terrible were to happen. I glance at the children and imagine how we would protect them if—God forbid—the unthinkable occurred.

As a parent, I worry that the next shooting could take place at my children's school. As a member of a Jewish day school board, we spend countless hours each year fundraising not for scholarships, programs, or teachers, but for security. There's no question that preparation is key to preventing tragedies. Rabbi Marla Hornsten of Temple Israel in West Bloomfield, MI, commented to me, "This is the thing that we had all prepared for and prayed that it would never happen, and then it did, and thank God that security was well prepared and that no one was hurt."

My own synagogue recently installed a sophisticated metal detection system at the entrance. It is technology that the many churches in our neighborhood simply do not need. I do not resent them for that—in fact, I pray they never will need it. But the reality is that Jewish institutions must now spend enormous resources simply to protect themselves.

Just imagine what Jewish communities—and society as a whole—could accomplish and contribute if those resources, personnel, and hours of vigilance were devoted instead to education, service, and community building.

Israel today spends an enormous share of its national resources on defense—well over five percent of its entire economy, one of the highest defense burdens of any developed country in the world. Much of that spending is necessary to defend its citizens from real threats posed by Iran and the network of armed groups it supports across the

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# ARZA- World Union

*Continued from page 6*

region. But every shekel devoted to missiles, interceptors, and fortifications is a shekel that cannot be invested in schools, housing, healthcare, or the social fabric of Israeli society. Imagine what Israel—and the entire region—could build if those resources were not consumed by the constant need for defense.

The truth is that antisemitism is not new. The modern Zionist movement emerged in part as a response to what was once called the “Jewish Question.” Theodor Herzl believed that the creation of a Jewish state would normalize Jewish existence. If Jews had a nation like every other nation, he believed, we would finally be accepted among the family of nations.

Others were less optimistic. Ze’ev Jabotinsky believed that hatred of Jews would not simply disappear. In his view, Jewish sovereignty was not only about national revival—it was about survival, about ensuring that the Jewish people would have the strength to defend themselves in the face of recurring hostility.

American Jews once believed that the promise of the American dream might offer another answer. In the great melting pot, Jews would assimilate, become fully American, and leave behind the old hatreds of Europe. Jews rose to remarkable levels of success and influence in American life—far beyond what our small numbers might predict.

And yet, here we are.

Today antisemitism is again rising from multiple directions. It appears on the far right and on the far left. It manifests as conspiracy theories about Jewish power, and as ideological rejection of Jewish nationalism. It appears in vandalism, harassment, and increasingly, in violence.

Part of the tragedy is that hatred of Jews has always been fueled by the same dangerous myths—that Jews are uniquely powerful, disloyal, or responsible for the world’s problems—and today those ancient conspiracies often merge with modern political anger at Israel. The Iranian regime has elevated this hatred into state ideology, openly denying Israel’s right to exist and repeatedly declaring that the “Zionist regime” must be eliminated, a position rooted in the revolutionary ideology that emerged after Iran’s 1979 Islamic Revolution and continues to shape its regional strategy today.

None of this is new to Jewish history.

On Purim we read how Haman described the Jewish

people to the Persian king:

“There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the nations... whose laws are different from those of every other people.” (Esther 3:8)

Difference itself became the accusation.

And on Passover we sing the haunting words of the Haggadah:

“Not only one has risen against us to destroy us, but in every generation there are those who rise against us.”

These words are not meant to instill despair. They are meant to remind us that hatred of Jews has appeared in many forms throughout history—and that Jewish survival has required resilience, solidarity, and moral clarity.

But when anger at the Israeli government turns into violence against Jews in Detroit, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, or anywhere else, it ceases to be a political protest. It becomes antisemitism.

Criticize Israel where warranted. I do, all the time. Debate its policies. Protest its government.

Democracies invite that. But know that your words and slogans are not just words or catchy chants. They are being taken to heart and translated into action. So choose them carefully.

Targeting Jews—our synagogues, our schools, our children—is not activism. It is hatred.

And it must stop.

Because a synagogue is not a battlefield. A preschool is not a proxy for geopolitics. And Jews—wherever we live—are not responsible for the decisions of a government thousands of miles away. In fact, targeting Jews only diverts attention away from the actual issues, unifies us, and prevents further empathy for the cause you claim to promote.

The world must finally learn this basic truth: attacking Jews will not bring justice to anyone. It will only repeat one of humanity’s oldest and most shameful patterns.

Enough.

*Note: Rabbi Josh Weinberg serves as the Vice President of the URJ for Israel and Reform Zionism and is the Executive Director of ARZA, the Association of Reform Zionists of America.*

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

### Anniversaries

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Jerry and Fran Rephan         | May 3   |
| Les and Diana Surfas          | May 18  |
| Ira and Stephanie Kleinman    | June 8  |
| Mark and Patti Fleischner     | June 12 |
| Anthony and Sherrill Nicolosi | June 14 |
| Ross and Ruth Sedler          | June 16 |
| David and Cheryl Cohen        | June 27 |

### Birthdays

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Ira Kleinman              | May 13  |
| Mark Fleischner           | May 14  |
| Sharon Waxler             | May 14  |
| Elaine Wolken             | May 16  |
| Patti Fleischner          | May 17  |
| Glenda Kirsch             | May 23  |
| Rachel Schulman           | May 26  |
| Sheldon (Shelly) Kleinman | June 4  |
| Michael Richardson        | June 4  |
| Laura Castillo            | June 6  |
| Andrea Parker             | June 9  |
| Randy Lewis               | June 12 |
| Linda Leibowitz           | June 18 |
| Mary Klompus              | June 20 |
| David Cohen               | June 21 |
| Yossi Baron               | June 28 |



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## Thank You....

.... to **Lisa Hamby**

Who provided the Israeli wine for all attendees of the Congregation Seder.

The gift was unprecedented, and deeply appreciated by everyone who attended.



# The Book of Ruth

*Continued from page 4*

“Your people will be my people, your God will be my God.” (Ruth 1:16) Adoption has also opened up the Jewish people to children of all colors. I have converted children to Judaism who are white and black, Asian and Hispanic, born in Eastern Europe, in India, in Latin America, and throughout the United States. To be a Jew is to be part of a people living in a covenant with God. This covenant is open to any human being who desires to join.

The message of Ruth is not just about conversion. It is also about judging other people. To quote Martin Luther King Jr., “I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.” Ruth was a Moabite, a people despised by the Israelites. Yet, through her kindness to her mother-in-law, she was able to enter the people Israel and eventually give birth to the grandfather of a king. We all need to look at character, not at lineage, when judging other people.

The author of the book of Ruth had an agenda, to change the attitude of the Israelite people. The Rabbis who established the sacred canon accepted this book, despite its controversy. Ruth came to teach us that we are more than mere genes, born of a particular father and mother. We are each uniquely valuable, created in the image of a loving God. We deserve to be judged by our actions, not by our lineage.



# Who Is Truly Rich

One day, a very rich father took his son on a trip to the country to show him what it was like to be poor. They stayed for a few days and nights on a farm where a very poor family lived.

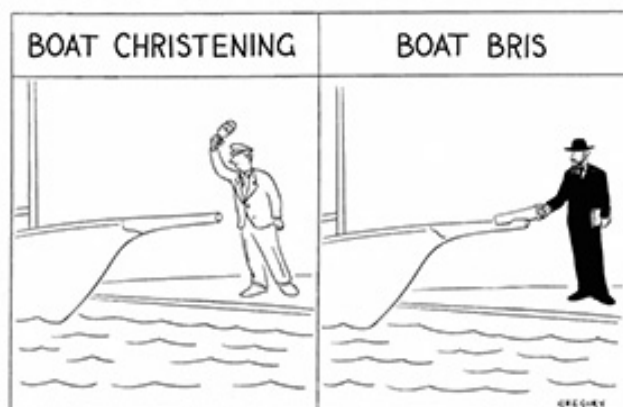
After they returned home, the father asked his son how he liked the trip. “It was great, Dad,” the son replied. “Did you see how poor people can be?” the father asked. “Oh yeah,” the son answered.

“So what did you learn from the trip?” asked the father. The son thought for a moment and said, “I saw that we have one dog and they have four. We have a pool that goes halfway across our garden, and they have a creek that never ends. We have fancy lanterns in our garden, and they have the stars at night. Our patio is big and reaches the front yard, but they have the whole horizon.

We have a small piece of land, but they have fields that go as far as you can see. We have servants who work for us, but they serve others. We buy our food, but they grow their own. We have walls around our property to keep us safe, but they have friends to protect them.” The father was silent, then the son added, “It showed me just how poor we really are.”

We often forget how much we have and focus on what we don't have. What one person thinks is worthless, another person might treasure. It all depends on how you see things.

Sometimes, it takes the perspective of a child to remind us of what really matters.



## March - April Yahrzeits

### Kaddish Recited May 1

**Moria Viner**

*Sister of Cynthia Rephan*

**Hannah Taub**

*Grandmother of Betty Feir*

**Robin Rans**

*Niece of Fred Korngut*

### Kaddish Recited May 8

**Mark Cohen**

*Father of David Cohen*

**Samuel Kirsch**

*Grandfather of Steven Kirsch  
Grandfather of Mark Fleischner  
Grandfather of Stuart Fleischner*

**Serena Kirsch**

*Mother of Steven Kirsch*

**Helen Kleinman**

*Mother-in-law of Betty Kleinman  
Grandmother of Ira Kleinman*

### Kaddish Recited May 15

**Arthur Harris**

*Grandfather of Barbara Morgan*

**Frances Koppel**

*Mother of Hal Koppel*

**Leanora Ballard Haynie**

*Mother of Laura Castillo*

**Nathan Davis**

*Grandfather of Rachel Schulman  
Grandfather of David D. Reagler*

### Kaddish Recited May 22

**Louise Levi**

*Mother of Larry Levi*

**Morris Reagler**

*Grandfather of David D. Reagler  
Grandfather of Rachel Schulman*

**Shirley Sedler**

*Mother of Ross Sedler*

### Kaddish Recited May 30

**Irwin Kleinman**

*Brother of Sheldon Kleinman*

**George Thornton Ginsburg**

*Brother of Millie Baron*

**Norman "Dick" Franklin**

*Step-father of David Cohen*

### Kaddish Recited June 5

**Nancy Kleinman**

*Mother of Sheldon Kleinman*

**Tikva Baron**

*Mother of Yossi Baron*

### Kaddish Recited June 13

**Dora Korngut**

*Mother of Fred Korngut*

**Tillie Creim**

*Great Aunt of David D. Reagler  
Great Aunt of Rachel Schulman*

**Faye Kirsch**

*Grandmother of Steven Kirsch  
Grandmother of Mark Fleischner  
Grandmother of Stuart Fleischner*

**David Lockwood**

*Grandfather of Susan Siegel  
Grandfather of Diane Goltz*

**Charles Bellin**

*Father of Ruth Sedler*

### Kaddish Recited June 19

**Estee Klompus**

*Mother-in-law of Mary Klompus*

**Sterling Francis Gottlieb**

*Uncle of Barbara Morgan*

### Kaddish Recited June 27

**Vicki Seligman**

*Mother of Diana Surfes*

**Morris Nathan Bauman**

*Father of Cynthia Rephan*

## May Parshiot

### Emor

May 2, 2026

The second part of Emor lists the annual Callings of Holiness—the festivals of the Jewish calendar: the weekly Shabbat; the bringing of the Passover offering on 14 Nissan; the seven-day Passover festival beginning on 15 Nissan; the bringing of the Omer offering from the first barley harvest on the second day of Passover, and the commencement, on that day, of the 49-day Counting of the Omer, culminating in the festival of Shavuot on the fiftieth day; a “remembrance of shofar blowing” on 1 Tishrei; a solemn fast day on 10 Tishrei; the Sukkot festival—during which we are to dwell in huts for seven days and take the “Four Kinds”—beginning on 15 Tishrei; and the immediately following holiday of the “eighth day” of Sukkot (Shemini Atzeret).

### B’har - Bechukotai

May 9, 2026

On the mountain of Sinai, G d communicates to Moses the laws of the Sabbatical year: every seventh year, all work on the land should cease, and its produce becomes free for the taking for all, man and beast.

Seven Sabbatical cycles are followed by a fiftieth year—the Jubilee year, on which work on the land ceases, all indentured servants are set free, and all ancestral estates in the Holy Land that have been sold revert to their original owners. Additional laws governing the sale of lands, and the prohibitions against fraud and usury, are also given.

### Bamidbar

May 16, 2026

In the Sinai Desert, G d says to conduct a census of the twelve tribes of Israel. Moses counts 603,550 men of draftable age (20 to 60 years); the tribe of Levi, numbering 22,300 males age one month and older, is counted separately. The Levites are to serve in the Sanctuary. They replace the firstborn, whose number they approximated, since they were disqualified when they participated in the worship-

ping of the Golden Calf. The 273 firstborn who lacked a Levite to replace them had to pay a five-shekel “ransom” to redeem themselves.

When the people broke camp, the three Levite clans dismantled and transported the Sanctuary, and reassembled it at the center of the next encampment. Before the Sanctuary’s entranceway, to its east, were the tents of Moses, Aaron, and Aaron’s sons.

Beyond the Levite circle, the twelve tribes camped in four groups of three tribes each. This formation was kept also while traveling. Each tribe had its own nassi (prince or leader), and its own flag with its tribal color and emblem.

(May 23 - 2nd day of Shavuot)



(c) 1999 Sarah Kravitz

### Naso

May 30, 2026

Completing the headcount of the Children of Israel taken in the Sinai Desert, a total of 8,580 Levite men between the ages of 30 and 50 are counted in a tally of those who will be doing the actual work of transporting the Tabernacle.

God communicates to Moses the law of the *sotah*, the wayward wife suspected of unfaithfulness to her husband. Also given is the law of the *nazir*, who forswears wine, lets his or her hair grow long, and is forbidden to

become contaminated through contact with a dead body. Aaron and his descendants, the *kohanim*, are instructed on how to bless the people of Israel.

## June Parshiot

### Behalotecha

June 6, 2026

A “Second Passover” is instituted in response to the petition, “Why should we be deprived?” by a group of Jews who were unable to bring the Passover offering in its appointed time because they were ritually impure. God instructs Moses on the procedures for Israel’s journeys and encampments in the desert, and the people journey in formation from Mount Sinai, where they had been camped for nearly a year.

The people are dissatisfied with their “bread from heaven” (the *manna*), and demand that Moses supply them with meat. Moses appoints 70 elders, to whom he imparts of his spirit, to assist him in the burden of governing the people. Miriam speaks negatively of Moses, and is punished with leprosy; Moses prays for her healing, and the entire community waits seven days for her

recovery.

### Shelach

June 13, 2026

Moses sends twelve spies to the land of Canaan. Forty days later they return, carrying a huge cluster of grapes, a pomegranate and a fig, to report on a lush and bountiful land. But ten of the spies warn that the inhabitants of the land are giants and warriors “more powerful than we”; only Caleb and Joshua insist that the land can be conquered, as God has commanded.

The people weep that they’d rather return to Egypt. God decrees that Israel’s entry into the Land shall be delayed forty years, during which time that entire generation will die out in the desert.

### Korach

June 20, 2026

Korach incites a mutiny challenging Moses’ leadership and the granting of the *kehunah* (priesthood) to Aaron. He is accompanied by Moses’ inveterate foes, Dathan and Abiram.

Joining them are 250 distinguished members of the community, who offer the sacrosanct *ketoret* (incense) to prove their worthiness for the priesthood.

The earth opens up and swallows the mutineers, and a fire consumes the *ketoret* offerers. A subsequent plague is stopped by Aaron’s offering of *ketoret*.

Aaron’s staff miraculously blossoms and brings forth almonds, to prove that his designation as high priest is divinely ordained

### Chukat - Balak

June 27, 2026

After forty years of journeying through the desert, the people of Israel arrive in the wilderness of Zin. Miriam dies, and the people thirst for water. G-d tells Moses to speak to a rock and command it to give water. Moses gets angry at the rebellious Israelites and strikes the stone. Water issues forth, but Moses is told by G-d that neither he nor Aaron will enter the Promised Land.

Balak, the king of Moab, summons the prophet Balaam to curse the people of Israel. On the way, Balaam is berated by his ass, who sees, before Balaam does, the angel that G-d sends to block their way. Three times, from three different vantage points, Balaam attempts to pronounce his curses; each time, blessings issue forth instead. The people fall prey to the charms of the daughters of Moab, and are enticed to worship the idol Peor. When a high-ranking Israelite official publicly takes a Midianite princess into the tent of the Tabernacle, Pinchas kills them both, stopping the plague raging among the people.

