

# The Agudagram

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Shevat/Adar I 5782

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## **Shabbat Candlelighting**

2/4- Parshat Terumah- 5:07 pm candlelighting  
2/11- Parshat Tetzaveh- 5:16 pm candlelighting  
2/18- Parshat Ki Tisa- 5:24 pm candlelighting  
2/25- Parshat Vayakhel- 5:32 pm candlelighting  
**Purim is in Adar II!**



Calendars should arrive at your homes this week. Be prepared to see an extra Hebrew month! Two Adars making the time between Chanukah and Purim a month more apart, and maybe making winter seem longer. This year is a Jewish Leap Year, but what does that mean???

## Five fascinating facts about the Jewish leap year

August 25, 2021

**By Deborah Fineblum**

Buckle your seatbelts; we're heading in.

With the arrival of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish world is being thrown headlong into the leap year of 5782.

But the leap year of the Jewish variety may not be exactly what you think a leap year is. In the Gregorian calendar, the leap year is no big deal, just an extra winter day (unless you happened to be born on Feb. 29)

But the Jewish people are not ones to do things in half-measure, so we add an entire month to our leap year.

And, what's more, whereas the rest of the world has a leap year every four years like clockwork, in the Jewish world it comes whenever it's needed, seven times in 19 years (more on the math later).

In fact, if you see way-early high holidays like next month when the Jewish New Year arrives at sundown Monday, Sept. 6, you can pretty well expect that you're heading into a 13-month year. And to get us ready, here are five fascinating facts about the Jewish leap year:

### 1 Why was it necessary?

Passover in July and Rosh Hashanah in January? That's what could happen were it not for the ingenious invention of the Jewish leap year. That's because lunar calendars like this one work beautifully until the end of the year when the 12 lunar months will inevitably miss the solar year by an 11-day shortfall. It wouldn't take long for such a disparity to wreak havoc with the holidays; hence, the specter of a snow-covered Rosh Hashanah.

And the Torah makes it abundantly clear: Passover must be "in the month of springtime" (Deuteronomy 16:1) and Sukkot must fall at harvest time when "God will have blessed you in all your crops and in all your handiwork." (Deuteronomy 16:15).

But why do these holidays need to be timed in these ways?

Ours is an agricultural tradition, says Rabbi Rachel Ain, religious leader of the Sutton Place Synagogue in New York City. "So, on one level the pilgrimage holidays all reflect the agriculture cycle of the year."

But there's another layer of meaning here too, says Ain. "Just as spring is the coming out of the darkness of winter into the sunshine, Passover celebrates our people's sense of renewal, emerging from the darkness of slavery into the bright light of freedom."

### 2 Who can we thank?

Tradition has it that it was the great sage Hillel, head of the Sanhedrin from 320 to 385 C.E. who created the Jewish calendar through some pretty sophisticated mathematical and astronomical calculations. The result: A 19-year cycle with seven leap years to anchor the holidays in their rightful place.

In the far distant past, the Jewish people relied on nature to tell them when a leap year was needed. If the weather, the animals and the crops weren't yet acting "spring-like" and if the spring equinox didn't arrive before mid-way through the month of Nissan, then the judges of the Sanhedrin knew the leap year with its extra month would be needed to keep Passover in its rightful place. The extra month, Adar I, was added to the third, sixth, eighth, 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th years of the cycle.

"This is as relevant today as it was nearly 2,000 years ago," says Rabbi Morrie Wruble, a longtime Jerusalem-area Torah teacher. "And only two peoples have a lunar calendar: us and the Arabs."

But unlike the Jewish calendar, the Arab one doesn't adjust the dates to keep holidays in place, "which is why Ramadan can be in the winter, fall, spring or summer," explains Wruble. "We can't do that because we're guided by our Torah, which says Passover must come in the spring when we plant, and that things need to be growing

during the time of Shavuot and harvested during Sukkot. Hillel realized that, if we stayed strictly lunar, things would soon get out of kilter, and he put in a system to fix that with the leap year.”

### 3 How did they do it?

*(Calling on math and physics buffs)*

Here are the heavenly calculations: Since unlike the Gregorian, the Jewish calendar relies on three factors: the Earth’s rotation (24 hours), the moon’s revolution around the Earth (29½ days) and the Earth’s revolution around the sun (365¼ days), by factoring them all in, Rav Hillel and friends came up with a 19-year cycle containing seven leap years of 13 months each.

But without an advanced degree in mathematics or physics, you may not be able to predict when they will arrive (hint: The last one was three years ago). So, what’s the only way to know if a certain year is destined to be a leap year? It’s by knowing the year’s place in the current 19-year Metonic cycle. Try dividing the number of the Jewish year in question by 19 and find the remainder. If that number is a 3, 6, 8, 11, 14, 17 or 0 (representing the 19th year), then you’re looking at a leap year.

“Hillel and his friends were pretty good at math,” says Mitchell Bogart, a New Haven, Conn.-based engineer and avowed physics buff.

“Nearly 2,000 years ago, they were sharp enough with their calculations to realize the Jewish calendar had to have a 19-year cycle to keep that 11-day difference at bay. It was the only way to stop the holidays from shifting more than a couple weeks here and there, nothing significant.”

All done without a calculator.

By the way, on a practical level, figuring out when an Adar Hebrew birthday or a yahrzeit or bar or bat mitzvah would fall in a leap year can get a bit complex and depends on when the birth or death occurred. You might want to check with your neighborhood rabbi on that one.

### 4 How is it like being a little bit pregnant?

Why exactly is the Jewish leap year called shanah me’uberet, literally “a pregnant year”? That’s because it’s simply fuller – and longer – than any other year.

Instead of the standard 365 days, the Jewish world is looking at anywhere from 383 to 385 days, depending on whether in a given year the months of Cheshvan (in the fall) and Kislev (at Chanukah time) each have 29 or 30 days. The upcoming year 5782, for instance, will have 384 days.

Among those most profoundly impacted by this “pregnant” year are the farmers in Israel who are keeping the Torah commandment of shmittah – stopping all cultivating to let their fields rest for a year as a Sabbath for the land. And though the mitzvah (only in effect in the Jewish homeland) rolls around every seven years, this time it happens to fall on a leap year, prolonging the farmers’ time away from working the land from the typical 12 months to 13.

But the good news is that although the leap extends the year in such ways, there is one process that remains unchanged: the nine months of pregnancy.

“That’s a good thing,” says Delia Lev Ari, a London native who’s expecting her fifth child and whose air conditioning is getting her through the toasty Israeli summer.

“The trust and letting go which is so much a part of pregnancy is easier for me knowing there is that double Adar joy to look forward to this spring,” says Lev Ari, whose work as the Israel representative for a birthing-pool company also puts her in touch with lots of other Israeli women who are expecting. “That extra Adar is waiting there for all of us this year,” she says.

### 5 What’s the leap year’s biggest blessing?

And, due to the nature of the month that gets added – an extra Adar – one thing the leap year is pregnant with is an extra helping of joy, blessing and mazal (“luck”) for the Jewish people. As the sages taught, “When Adar enters, we increase in joy.”

“We know that the 30 days of Adar are the happiest of the year for the Jewish people, so in a year when we double the number of Adar days to 60, we’re also bound to double our joy and our good fortune,” says Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles, co-founder of the Ascent seminar center in Tzfat, Israel, and director of Kabbalaonline.org. But does the Adar joy have the power to help reverse the sadness, the losses and the fear of the last year-and-a-half?

Absolutely, answers the rabbi. “As the Lubavitcher Rebbe taught us, in Jewish tradition when the good-to-bad ratio is 60-to-one or more, the good swallows up the bad. So the 60 days of happy-go-lucky Adar can ‘swallow up’ any unpleasant occurrences during that time period.”

And, adds Tilles: “As the official lucky month of the Jewish people, every cause of pain, sadness, discouragement or dejection, even pandemics, are nullified and sublimated by the transformative joy of a double Adar.”



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Colleyville rabbi who escaped synagogue hostage situation: ‘It’s safe to go to shul’  
BY [ANDREW LAPIN](#) JANUARY 19, 2022 2:49 PM

Rabbi Charlie Cytron-Walker talks to reporters outside of Whites Chapel United Methodist Church following a special service on January 17, 2022 in Southlake, Texas. The service was arranged after a 44-year-old British national over the weekend stormed into the Congregation Beth Israel synagogue in Colleyville with a gun and held four people hostage for more than 10 hours. (Emil Lippe/Getty Images)



(JTA) – Rabbi Charlie Cytron-Walker, [the man at the center of the Colleyville, Texas, synagogue hostage crisis last weekend](#), says that he is looking for another job, but wants the world’s focus to remain on his congregation’s trauma and healing process rather than his career.

“My congregation, Congregation Beth Israel, and Colleyville have just undergone a traumatic experience. I’ve just undergone a traumatic experience,” he told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. “And that’s where the focus needs to be.”

Cytron-Walker was responding to an article published earlier Wednesday in [the Forward reporting that the rabbi had resigned from his congregation last fall](#), possibly amid discord about whether he should remain.

The synagogue is advertising for a new rabbi on the Reform movement’s jobs board, its search committee met twice this month and Cytron-Walker made an oblique joke about the situation from the stage of a healing service held Monday night.

“I am looking for another opportunity after dedicating over 15 years of my life to a congregation,” Cytron-Walker told JTA, adding that he is leaving with many positive feelings about the only pulpit he has held since graduating from rabbinical school. “I love the congregation. I love the people. I love the community.”

Cytron-Walker said he also wants Jews to know that despite what happened to him, he would stress to Jews everywhere that “it’s safe to go to shul” – and that synagogues should continue to make themselves sanctuaries for all.

Cytron-Walker’s 12-hour ordeal with an antisemitic gunman on Saturday, which ended with him [throwing a chair at the hostage-taker to allow himself and two congregants to escape safely](#), drew international attention to his congregation, as well as to himself. The rabbi said that it’s been “incredibly overwhelming to see the level of support that we have received from our local community, our national community and the global community. I can’t tell you how much it means to me and the congregation.”

At the same time, he added, Beth Israel is still struggling to figure out how to heal.

“We’re really trying to figure out what we need to do,” he said. “We’ve got repairs to make to the congregation and we’re making arrangements so that we can have services this weekend.” He’s also encouraging his congregants to seek out therapy if they need it.

The newfound scrutiny on the congregation has come with some discord, including a man identifying himself as a former congregant who criticized the rabbi on social media for, he claimed, forbidding congregants to carry guns inside the building and for calling Israel “an apartheid state.” Both claims, Cytron-Walker said, were untrue.

Though Beth Israel requests that visitors to its synagogue not carry firearms openly, he said, concealed carry – hiding a firearm on one’s person in a public setting with the proper license – is permitted.

“And I would have hoped that one of the people in the synagogue that morning, one of the members from the synagogue, had had a gun on them to have ended things a little bit earlier,” he said. (Texas is an open-carry state, but “we don’t feel that open carry should be a part of a synagogue service,” the rabbi said.)

And, Cytron-Walker said, he does not believe Israel is an apartheid state. “When I teach about Israel, I teach about how Israel is complicated. I’m a huge supporter of Israel,” he said, noting that [the synagogue’s education program works with the Ofek Learning Hub](#) to have Israeli teachers leading online learning for youth programs, and that “we sing ‘Hatikvah’ [the Israeli national anthem] at the end of every religious school.”

The hostage crisis has caused many Jews the world over to once again have heightened concerns for synagogue security, as congregation leadership weighs how to balance personal safety with the Jewish commandment to “welcome the stranger.”

“It’s such a random occurrence, and the percentages are so low” of an antisemitic incident occurring at services, he said.



Congregation Beth Israel synagogue is shown on January 17, 2022 in Colleyville, Texas. (Emil Lippe/Getty Images)

“I have literally led thousands and thousands of services at Congregation Beth Israel, and this was the first time we had such a traumatic incident,” Cytron-Walker said.

At the same time, the rabbi acknowledged, “We have to be hospitable and we have to be secure. And we have to find ways to strike that balance.”

Smaller congregations such as Beth Israel, he noted, don’t have the means to hire security officers for every service, particularly when, as in Saturday’s Shabbat morning service, they attract so few people. Only four people were in the building Saturday morning when the attack began.

Cytron-Walker instead encouraged synagogue leaders and congregants alike to undergo security training akin to drills he had run with the Anti-Defamation League and Secure Community Network in recent months – [exercises that he has credited with saving his life](#).

Doing that training, Cytron-Walker said, helped him assess the risks of Saturday’s situation even as he was able to attend to what he initially thought was an innocuous visitor.

“While I was providing hospitality, I was also analyzing the situation,” he said, while acknowledging that he had been thrown off initially because the assailant’s behavior at first didn’t match the training. “This guy didn’t exhibit the nervousness, the looking in all different directions. He looked me in the eye. ... I didn’t see any of the things that indicated falseness in that initial encounter.”

What congregations cannot do, the rabbi emphasized, is cease welcoming the stranger.

“I’ve welcomed people into the congregation that don’t look like your stereotypical visitor to a Jewish synagogue, over and over and over again,” he said. “And people are looking to pray. People are looking for community. And they’re asking the question, ‘Do I belong?’ And we need to stress to them, and the whole community has to be able to stress to them, that yes – you belong.”

One of the most visible ways the congregation has worked to heal itself was with [a special service Monday evening](#), at which Cytron-Walker stood on the bimah next to synagogue leaders and preached directly to his congregation, as well as the broader community – a show of unity, healing and love, regardless of any internal strife.

Cytron-Walker said the service “was really valuable for me, to be able to stand and see so many – not just my congregation, but also so many other people in the community that I care about, that I love.”

Asked whether the events of the past week have changed the dynamics of the congregation at all, the rabbi said, “That sense of unity, it usually lasts for a little while. But let’s be realistic, right?”

He added, “We need to be able to know that [‘kol arevim zeh bazeh,’ that each of us are responsible for one another](#). And if we can live that value, beyond any other disagreements that we may be experiencing, then, I mean, that’s the space that we need to live in. That’s the value that we need to live.”

**SHEILA IS RESIDING AT ST. LUKE’S PAVILION. VISITATION AT ST. LUKE’S IS NOW OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. PLEASE WEAR A MASK SHOULD YOU LIKE TO VISIT AND REFRESH HER MEMORY OF HER LIFE WITH US! LAURIE TEVLIN KLEMOW VISITS SHEILA WEEKLY. PLEASE EMAIL HER AT [LTEVLIN@PTD.NET](mailto:LTEVLIN@PTD.NET) WITH ANY MESSAGES YOU’D LIKE TO PASS ON TO SHEILA OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEND HER A CARD, YOU MAY SEND IT TO:**

**SHEILA MOYER  
C/O ST. LUKE’S PAVILION  
1000 STACIE DR. ROOM 227A  
HAZLETON, PA 18201**

February (Shevat/ Adar I) Yahrzeits

*May the memory of the righteous endure as a blessing.*

The yahrzeit plaque lights are on in the sanctuary in memory of our departed loved ones.

\*Numbers before each name correspond to the Hebrew date of their passing. The date after each name is the secular day of the yahrzeit. Yahrzeit candles should be lit the evening before this date burning through the day of their passing. Kaddish should be said the evening before and the day of the date of passing.

**Adar I**

2 Bertha Casuto 2/3

2 Sam Goldberg 2/3

2 Ben Singer 2/3

2 Douglas Silver 2/3

2 Esther Snyder 2/3

3 David Sugarman 2/4

3 Maurice Williams 2/4

4 Ethel Koplin 2/5

4 Hannah Brown 2/5

4 Marilyn Harris 2/5

4 Gretl Schwabe 2/5

7 William Chercass 2/8

7 Morton Cohn 2/8

8 Morris Chenetz 2/9

9 Reuben Zimet 2/10

10 Martha Buchbinder 2/11

10 Henry H. Cohn 2/11

12 Grace Klemow 2/13

12 David Kaminoff 2/13

12 Bernie Staffin 2/13

14 Harry Brenner 2/15

15 Bernard Bergstein 2/16

15 Rebecca Chaskin 2/16

15 Beatrice Miller 2/16

15 Murray Spiegel 2/16

16 Lillian Frumkin 2/17

17 Jeffrey Bloch 2/18

17 Goldie Kaplan 2/18

17 Isadore Schwartz 2/18

18 Jacob Narrow 2/19

19 Esther Smulyan 2/20

19 Joseph Spector 2/20

19 Sadie Shaiman 2/20

20 Stella Kauffman 2/21

20 Dov Weidenfeld 2/21

21 Sidney Jacob Scharf 2/22

21 Bradford Stuart Kline 2/22

21 Sol Rockman 2/22

21 Ruth Albright 2/22

22 Max Burkat 2/23

22 Goldie Lande 2/23

22 Lillian Cohn 2/23

23 May Chercass 2/24

23 Florence Kashinitz 2/24

24 Frank Bowman 2/25

26 Martin Blau 2/27

27 Milton Ziff 2/28

27 Edward Kanner 2/28

28 Bessie Kanel 3/1

29 Bella Aronoff 3/2

Prayers To Recite When Lighting the Yahrzeit Candle

“I light this candle to bring peace to the soul of \_\_\_\_\_ (insert Jewish name) ben/bat (son of/daughter of) \_\_\_\_\_ (insert father’s Jewish name).”

The human soul is a light from God. May it be your will that the soul of (*insert name*) enjoy eternal life, along with the souls of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, and the rest of the righteous that are in Gan Eden. Amen.

*Neir Adonai Nishmat Adam. Yehi Ratzon Milfanecha, Adonai Eloheinu Veilohai Avoteinu, Shetehei Nishmat (insert name) Tzerurah betzeror hachayim, im nishmot Avraham Yitzchak ve’Ya’akov, Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel VeLeah. Tehi Menutchatah kavod, Selah*



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### *From*

Lisa Gordon Matyas  
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Dotty Taub  
Dotty Taub  
Dotty Taub  
Dotty Taub  
Endowment Fund

Thank  
You

We greatly appreciate donations for yahrzeits, life events, and other celebrations! They truly keep the shul running and show how strong our congregation is.

If you'd like information about making a donation, please email us at [agudasisraelhazleton@gmail.com](mailto:agudasisraelhazleton@gmail.com) or call the shul.

## Yahrzeit Donations

### *From*

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Jeffrey & Meryl Perkins  
Jeffrey & Meryl Perkins

### *In Memory of*

Father, Nathan Kline  
Mother, Pauline Frumkin  
Uncle, Hyman Gold  
Father, Samuel Mednitsky  
Mother in Law, Betty Bohard  
Father, Louis Kaminoff  
Mother, Mildred Gildenberg Jaye  
Grandfather, Morris Cohn  
Mother, Jennie Matlow  
Grandfather, Edward Gildenberg  
Mother, Gussie Ruttenberg  
Husband, Max Aronoff  
In memory of my beloved mother, Anna Moskowitz  
Mother, Ruth Feller  
Sister, Phyllis Putter  
Classmate & Friend, Max Aronoff  
Dentist, Dr. David Wagner  
Grandfather, Lazur Rabinowitz  
Father, Irving Cohen  
Mother, Jennie Matlow  
Mother, Esther Perkins  
Father, Abraham Perkins  
Mother, Jean Kaminoff

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## Cemetery Fund Donations

Rhoda Wolff  
Gail Aronoff



## FEBRUARY PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Shalom,

I am elated to share that I had successful cataract surgery the past two weeks, I am now seeing without glasses, something I have not done since the fourth grade. It is pretty remarkable for me. At least there are some perks to aging gracefully!

In light of the recent hostage situation in Texas, Marlene Leonard and a few others have talked to me about including more security measures and applying for more grants to defray these costs. Since our cameras were installed last year, we now have a newly added monthly service fee.

Therefore, I would like to add a new category to our donations list for security costs. I want to set up more training sessions for our members also. If you have any recommendations regarding security, please email them to [Agudasisraelhazleton@gmail.com](mailto:Agudasisraelhazleton@gmail.com).

Unfortunately, antisemitism is on the rise, and we must be mindful about it.

By now you should have received our 2022 calendars which were recently mailed out. If you ordered one and did not receive it or would like to order one, please contact Christina in the office by phone or email. The Calendar Committee did an amazing job comprising all the information and I want to thank those involved for their time and efforts. Moving forward in the coming months, Christina will be working on updating our website.

It was very nice to see so many on zoom this past week for Shabbat services. January has been a very cold month for us, however; the countdown is on and there are only 48 days until spring. Until then, stay warm and healthy!

All the best,

*Debbie Walker*