

December Shabbat Service Schedule
December 5th Parashat Vayishlach

December 12th Parashat Vayeshev
Birchat Chodesh Tevet

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**CSH is joining with CHABAD of East Hampton  
and other East End synagogues for**

**CHANORAH**

**to help benefit the Local Food Pantries**

at the VERED Gallery in East Hampton, on **Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 – 7:30 pm**

**If it is your tradition to donate to the local food pantry at this time of year,  
please send a check to CSH earmarked "Canorah Project" and we will include the food in  
the CSH Canorah**

**Friday November 27th Candle Lighting 4:07pm**

**This week's Torah reading: Vayetze**

Annual (Gen. 28:10-32:3): (Etz Hayim, p. 166; Hertz p. 106)

Triennial (Gen. 31:17-32:3): (Etz Hayim, p. 181; Hertz p. 114)

Haftarah: Etz Hayim, p. 189 (A)

**Vayetze / Thanksgiving Musings**

**On Dreams -- A prayer for "he who has seen a dream and knows not what he has seen"**

"Lord of the Universe! I am Yours and my dreams are Yours; a dream have I dreamed and I know not what it is. Whether I dreamed concerning myself, or my fellows dreamed concerning me, or I dreamed concerning others, if they be good dreams, strengthen and fortify them (and may they be fulfilled) like the dreams of Joseph; but if they require to be amended, heal them as the waters of Marah were healed by the hands of Moses our teacher, as Miriam was healed from her leprosy, as Hezekiah from his illness, and like the waters of Jericho were sweetened by the hands of Elisha. And as You turned the curse of the wicked Balaam into a blessing, so do You turn all my dreams for me into good." <http://jhom.com/topics/dreams/jacob.html>

**Gam zeh l'tovah**

Leah named her fourth son Yehuda, a name derived from the word "to thank." Since the moniker "Jew" derives from the name "Yehuda," thanking is somehow integral to being Jewish.

But why did Leah wait until her fourth child to use this name? Wasn't she more grateful for her first child than her fourth?

Gratitude is a function not of how much we have, but rather of how much we have relative to how much we feel we deserve.

The Rabbi, citing classical commentators, explained that Jacob's four wives knew prophetically that they would give birth to the twelve sons who would become the progenitors of the twelve tribes of Israel. Since there were four wives, each one expected to give birth to three sons.

When Leah gave birth to her fourth son, she felt that she had received more than her fair share. So she named him Yehuda, saying, "This time I will thank God."

This teaches us something essential about gratitude. Gratitude is a function not of how much we have, but rather of how much we have relative to how much we feel we deserve.

Gratitude is a function not of how much we have, but rather of how much we have relative to how much we feel we deserve. The opposite of gratitude is a feeling of entitlement. The attitude of "I deserve it" turns every gift into a paycheck.

### **RECOGNIZING GOOD**

The Hebrew term for gratitude is "hakarat hatov," which literally means, "recognizing the good." The secret embedded in the Hebrew is that gratitude depends not on getting something good, but on recognizing the good that is already yours.

Thus, gratitude is totally a feat of consciousness. It requires a "back to basics" mentality, becoming cognizant of all the rudimentary things we usually take for granted. No matter how much we lack, no matter what difficult times we are passing through, every one of us can find a myriad of things to be grateful for.

If you've lost money in the stock market, but you still have your children, you can be grateful.  
If you've lost your job, but you still have your health, you can be grateful.  
If you can't move your legs, but you can move your arms, you can be grateful.

### **THE OBJECT OF GRATITUDE**

In addition to recognizing the good and experiencing what you have as a gift not a paycheck, gratitude requires one more ingredient. There is a fallacy which prevents many people from experiencing true thankfulness. Some think that thankfulness, like love, is a warm, fuzzy feeling inside, the way you feel when you've downed the second dessert of your Thanksgiving dinner. That good feeling, however, is not thankfulness, but satiation. It becomes thankfulness only when you realize that Aunt Rose toiled to make that apple pie, and you direct your appreciation to her.

Both thankfulness and love must have an object. True gratitude implies that I am grateful to the giver of what I have received. Gratitude without an object is like one hand clapping.

From a Torah perspective, all human beings are creatures. Life - and every part of it from the tiny hairs inside our noses to our thousands of enzymes - is a gift from our Creator. We are entitled to nothing. We are grateful to God for everything.

### **A RECIPE FOR GRATITUDE**

Here, then, are the 4 steps to gratitude:  
Recognize the good that you possess.  
Acknowledge that it is a gift, not something you deserve.  
Identify the source of the gift, whether God or a human being.  
Express your thanks.

The Pilgrims of the first Thanksgiving obviously traversed these four steps. They were grateful not for their high standard of living, but simply that they had survived their first winter in the New World. Deeply religious people, they felt gratitude to God. The first Thanksgiving feast was their way of expressing that gratitude to God.

According to Judaism, gratitude is the basis of everything: faith, joy, awe, and love of God. Only when we recognize how much God has given us and how little we deserve it, can we come to a place of faith and love.

Little wonder that a Jew is supposed to start every day with an expression of thankfulness for life itself, the recitation of the modeh ani. If you want to incorporate this small exercise into your life, here is how to do it:

Upon first waking up, as soon as you've turned off your alarm, while you're still lying in bed, say these words: "Modeh ani lefanecha Melech chai v'kayom, shehechezarta bee neshmati b'chemla,

rabba emunasecha." In English, it's: "Thankful am I before You, living and eternal King, that You have returned my soul within me with compassion, abundant is Your faithfulness."

<http://www.aish.com/sp/so/48930392.html>

For those of you who would like to begin or conclude your Thanksgiving meal with a Jewish meditation, try this translation of a beautiful paragraph of our grace after meals. In it, we acknowledge our historical redemption, the gift of Israel, our covenant with God, spiritual guidance and the food before us:

**We thank You, Adonay, our God, for the gift of our heritage that You gave to our ancestors: a land which is desirable, good and spacious. For Your bringing us out, Adonay, our God from the land of Egypt, and redeeming us from the house of bondage; for Your covenant which you sealed in our flesh; for your Torah which you taught us; for your statutes which You have made known to us; for the life, favor and kindness which You grant us; for the provision of food with which You nourish and maintain us constantly, every day, at all times and in every hour.**

<http://www.shalomdc.org/page.aspx?id=52055>

### **"WHO KNEW?" -- Let's talk turkey**

The Hebrew word for turkey is *tarnegol hodu* - often shortened to *hodu*. *Hodu* is the Biblical word for India, and therefore *tarnegol hodu* means "Indian chicken". This is the name for the bird in many European languages - Russian *indiuk*, Polish *indyk*, French *dinde* and Yiddish *indik*. Even in Turkey they call the bird *hindi*. Of course, the bird originated in North America; so why the association with Turkey or India?

The English name "turkey" comes from an incorrect identification of the bird with an African guinea-fowl, which entered Europe through Turkey. The connection to India was due to another misunderstanding - as is well known, the first Europeans who reached the Western Hemisphere thought they were in India (hence the name Indians for the native peoples.)

As I mentioned earlier, *Hodu* is the Biblical name for India, appearing once, in the first verse of Esther. The name derives from the Persian word *Hindu*, but as often happens, the nun dropped out in Hebrew. The area called *Hodu* actually refers to the regions near the Indus river (actually in today's Pakistan, not India), from where it gets its name. The river and the region are known in Sanskrit as *Sind*, but the Persian "h" is cognate with the Sanskrit "s".

An interesting coincidence is that we eat turkey on Thanksgiving, and a common biblical Hebrew term for "Give thanks!" is *hodu*. We see that phrase often in Tehilim (Psalms), and a related verse in Divrei HaYamim I (16:8) starts the *Pesukei D'Zimra* section of the morning prayers (for Nusach Sefard and Edot HaMizrach). Because of this, people will often mark the schedule by the start of "hodu".

Uri Orbach quotes a saying of religious soldiers:

6 AM and *hodu's* in the air meaning they will start their prayers exactly on time.

[http://www.balashon.com/2006\\_11\\_01\\_archive.html](http://www.balashon.com/2006_11_01_archive.html)

**For rabbinic responses to the debate of whether turkey is kosher go to:**

<http://www.kashrut.com/articles/turkey/>

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Yom Huledet Sameach

Jed Supnick ~ David Brous

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**Quote of the Week**

Kindness trumps greed: it asks for sharing. Kindness trumps fear: it calls forth gratefulness and love. Kindness trumps even stupidity, for with sharing and love, one learns. Marc Estrin

Both abundance and lack exist simultaneously in our lives, as parallel realities. It is always our conscious choice which secret garden we will tend... when we choose not to focus on what is missing from our lives but are grateful for the abundance that's present -- love, health, family, friends, work, the joys of nature and personal pursuits that bring us pleasure -- the wasteland of illusion falls away and we experience Heaven on earth. --*Sarah Ban Breathnach*

Shabbat shalom.

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