

# MOONLIGHT

The UK's Quarterly Rosh Hodesh e-Magazine

## EDITORIAL

The theme of our Chanukah edition is

**'Light up my life'.**

*I have tried to extend this metaphor in many directions, looking at how we, as committed Jewish women, can light up the lives of others, and how our own lives are lit up by the fires of learning, giving, doing and being.*

*Our contributors range from two young women, Ariella Lew and Amanda Bradley, living in England; to Yael Levine in Israel and our own Anna van den Bergh, founder editor, in Hong Kong; to Denise Phillips, world-renowned Jewish Cookery writer; and last, but by no means least, to Chava Lehman, who almost single-handedly set up the now famous Kisharon School in London, which is a byword for loving, caring provision for children with special educational needs, and who has now retired to Israel.*

*I have tried to be true to the concept pioneered by Anna, while at the same time moving it on, as Anna did with each edition.*

*For our next edition, which will be at Purim / Pesach, I would very much like to have a Reader's Section – a page or more, depending on your response, with your letters, quips, wise words, news and announcements.*

*Wishing you all Chanukah Sameach.  
Doreen Samuels*

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Oven-baked Salmon with Potato and Courgette Latkes and Cheese Pancakes (pictured below)



**STOP PRESS:**

**SEE ITEM RE CANDLELIGHTING VIGIL, IRANIAN EMBASSY, ON MONDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, ON PAGE 15**

## LIGHTS OF MY LIFE

The flame of a candle, flickering in the darkness, is an intrinsic symbol of our Judaism. Its flickering flame is evocative of the physical and the spiritual, of our past and our future. We see those flashes of remembrance, of the burning bush, the lights in the Bet HaMikdash, the flames of the inquisition and the holocaust, the family evenings gathered around the Shabbat table and the candles on the birthday cakes of our children and grandchildren. For a small flame can wreak destruction, or else sustain life and bring warmth and fellowship.

In a physical sense we light the Shabbat Candles each Friday night to welcome in the Sabbath and the following night we light the Havdalah candle to bid farewell to Shabbat and welcome in the new week with all its promise and hope to come. On Chanukah, we women have an obligation to participate in the lighting of the Chanukah candles and to desist from working while the flame is burning, to acknowledge our part in the Chanukah story.

In a spiritual sense, the flame of a candle represents the beacon of light that the Jewish people were called, by G-d, to be to the other nations; and, to us as Jews it also symbolises the Divine Spark that dwells within each of our souls and our Yiddishkeit.

The lights of my life are my family. My mother, who despite her years, is vibrant and energetic; my loving husband, who truly cares about all people, and will not rest until he has found a way to bring peace and hope to others; our children and grandchildren, who give me hope for mankind with their love of Torah and their warm and welcoming hearts. In the encroaching shadows of the world in which we live today, their values and attitude to life bring a ray of light into the darkness which surrounds us.

The miracle at Chanukah is possibly not whether the oil lasted eight days but rather why there was any oil there at all, how had it escaped contamination? The Temple had been looted and everything in it destroyed and yet one small jar had survived. Like the oil, we Jews have survived against tremendous odds. Nation after nation tried to destroy us, all of whom were far greater than us and yet we are here to tell the tale; we have overcome and continue to overcome the fiercest of foes and we can stand here and proudly cry, "Am Yisrael Chai". How sad it is that whilst we can unite against the hate and survive, we Jews have yet to learn to live in peace with our fellow Jew. In 1994 at the 'March for the Living' commemoration at Auschwitz, cradling a Sepher Torah in his arms as he spoke, Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, Rabbi Lau asked "We learned to cry together, when will we learn to live together?"

It is said that oil is like studying Torah in two ways:

"Oil is not a food we eat by itself and it is not necessary for our daily existence. It simply adds pleasure to our food and life, as does study of the Torah.

Oil has the potential to illuminate. If you stand in a dark room you can light oil to see the room around you. Study of Torah can also illuminate the world for us".

Sometimes our personal world becomes so limited emotionally or geographically that we think that our Yiddishkeit only exists in our immediate surroundings, whether it be in Golders Green, Stamford Hill, Brooklyn or Bnei B'rak. But that candle burns brightly across the world. In past generations many parts of the world were closed to us as Jews but today it seems that, with very few exceptions, we can travel to the far corners of the earth and stand proudly as Jews. No longer are other nations making our 'travel' arrangements for us!

So, as Chanukah approaches, I write to you from Hong Kong the 'City of Life' and a city of Jewish light and learning; a community as diverse as the city in which it dwells. In its own small way this Jewish community represents '*Kibbutz Galuyot*', the 'Ingathering of the Exiles', with Jews from all over the world living together in this small corner of Asia. But the flame of Yiddishkeit burns brightly here with its five synagogues, two thriving schools and a Jewish infrastructure that would be the envy of many bigger communities around the world. The chief asset here is the people.

At Ohel Leah, the oldest of the synagogues - where we now serve - the passion for Judaism and Israel is so penetrating that it illuminates the community. Ohel Leah has become a family to its members and each one feels that they have a part to play; everyone is a shining light in the Chanukah of our faith.

Just like the candles that burn so brightly on Chanukah each small flame represents the human soul, and its Divine Spark, increasing in number night by night, side by side, growing in *kedusha* (holiness) as each candle is lit. On the last night of Chanukah when the Chanukah is ablaze, it is as if the shomer watches over the lights of the flames, as G-d watches over his entire people.

My prayer is that the light of Chanukah will continue to burn brightly in each of us this coming year and light the future for the generations to come.

Anna van den Bergh and her husband Rabbi Martin van den Bergh recently moved from Wembley United Synagogue to Ohel Leah Synagogue in Hong Kong. She was the founding editor of Moonlight and is now a member of the Editorial Board.

## **KISHARON - STORY OF A SCHOOL**

Life in Kisharon was never quiet for long! Hardly a day went by without our learning something new.

As the first Jewish Day School for special needs in the UK, we were sailing in uncharted waters in a world in which, in 1976, "Special Needs" was a subject rarely discussed.

We began with three children in two rooms and a few cast iron rules. Firstly, we would dedicate our programme to identifying and fulfilling the individual needs of each child. Secondly, the school would be run to a high professional standard in an Orthodox Jewish environment and ethos. Parents would be our partners in helping the children cope with the tasks and activities of daily living that, understandably, they found so difficult, while, at the same time, helping us to discover the special talents and ability of each child. Hence the name - KISHARON -the Hebrew word for talent or flair.

Our programme therefore was wide and varied. The children had access to all the usual school subjects, plus music, music therapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy. Sports, swimming and horse riding were an important and popular part of the programme, as was integration with several of the local schools.

The Limmudei Kodesh programme permeated our entire school day, preparing the children to participate with confidence in all aspects of our Jewish way of life, at home and in the community. The children were taught in small groups each led by a qualified secular and Limmudei Kodesh teacher. Occasionally a child would need special support, and then an extra classroom assistant was appointed.

The children in our care thrived on the specialised help in a warm and caring atmosphere. Every moment was a learning moment. Lunchtime was one of my special times with the children. The tables were nicely laid and the children learned to wash for Hamotzi and say Birkat Hamazon after the meal.

Sitting nicely, using a knife and fork (or spoon where necessary) correctly were important parts of the lunch hour, with the aim in mind that the children would then sit at the family table on Shabbos and YomTov and behave in a socially acceptable way. I was wryly amused to hear from parents, that their learning-disabled child often had better table manners than the other children in the family. There was a member of staff at each table, to encourage conversation, passing food around and generally to make it a pleasant experience. The full bensching took ten minutes, but was well worth the effort because gradually the children learnt the words by heart. Many children could read Hebrew, but not fast enough to keep up with the average pace in most homes. Similarly we encouraged the children to daven by heart, so that they could join in and follow the services in Bet HaKneset. Fortunately, our prayers are the same each day and each Shabbos, so the children gained great confidence when they heard familiar words and tunes and could join in. Parents and siblings all expressed their delight, when the children came home knowing about the sedra and Yom Tov, and brought home appropriate art and craftwork.

Once a year we took the children on holiday to Kent for a week, and once a year they stayed in school for a Shabbaton. These were the highlights of the year, greatly enjoyed by both children and staff. For the parents, the break gave them a chance to relax a little from their difficult task of caring for a child who needed a great deal of attention, and it also gave them time to concentrate on the other children in the family.

If these events were the annual treats, the Oneg each Friday was the weekly one. Again we used the opportunity to teach the children the songs they would sing round the Shabbos table or hear in Bet HaKneset, while the dancing we did prepared the children to be able to join in when they went to various simchas. Recently, one of our girls got married and as I danced with her in the middle of the circle of dancers, she hugged me and whispered "thank you for teaching me to dance".

Each week pupils from Menorah Primary School joined in with our Oneg, to the delight of our children.

From the first week of opening Kisharon we were well supervised by the Department for Education and the various local education authorities. We also always had an advisor who came in each week to help us and was a very useful sounding board for me. Over the years we had some wonderful advisors and non Jewish therapists who took our religious ways to their hearts. Our music therapists were wonderful at picking up and playing all the zemirots and songs the children loved. Their playing enhanced our weekly Oneg and all the various Bar and Bat Mitsvos we made for the children, and Sheva Brochos for members of staff.

On one occasion a psychologist was going round testing all the children. He came to my office with a worried frown on his face. "Mrs Lehman" he said, "I don't understand it. I show the children a picture of an apple and I want them to tell me if it is a fruit or a vegetable, and they all say the same thing: "You dip it in honey!" " I had to control my laughter as I explained that next week was the Jewish New Year.....

Similarly, I accompanied one of our older girls to have some tests. Her first language was Yiddish, but she could speak English quite well. I watched the test through a two-way mirror and could hear the psychologist giving her a word and asking her to give him the meaning. She did very well until he gave her the word "A patch"; "A smack" she replied, without hesitation!

This incident, though very funny at the time, highlights a very real problem in the Jewish community. If we want to give our children and young adults with special needs the education and care they so richly deserve, we must train teachers and therapists to understand our lifestyle. We must also widen the provision so that parents do not have to agonise over where to send their children for the best possible help. Each child has unique problems and needs the right educational setting to be able to achieve their potential.

As these children grow up and become adults, the problems do not go away and the community must include them in all aspects of communal life. You may never dance at their weddings unfortunately, but you can make sure that those brave people who are planning long term residential care and respite facilities are given every encouragement and financial help. You can perhaps keep a look out for someone in your street who has a child with special needs and offer to look after the child, so that the mother can go to Bet HaKneset occasionally or shopping in peace.

Less able and more able people can give so much to each other and it behoves all of us to be grateful if our children don't need extra help, and to be helped if they do. Each one of us is unique and special with G-d given talents and each one of us will benefit and grow by sharing and caring one with the other.

Chava Lehman founded Kisharon in 1976 and worked there until her retirement 6 years ago. She and her husband Manny now live in Jerusalem.

## THE GIRLS' ROSH CHODESH

In Jewish communities in North Africa, Rosh Chodesh Tevet acquired the specific appellation "Rosh Chodesh ha-Banot" – "The Girls' Rosh Chodesh", or "Chag ha-Banot" – "The Girls' Festival", and on it special ceremonies took place for girls and women. The source for these festivities is not definitely known, nor is it known when this day was first marked.

One of the most widespread views is that these celebrations date back generations upon generations, and are intended to emphasise the part played by Judith in the victory of Chanukah as, according to this view, the salvation of the Jews came through her actions, on the eve of Rosh Chodesh Tevet, as a result of her killing the army general Holofernes.

It should nevertheless be pointed out, that the traditional view of researchers is that this incident took place in the Persian era, approximately two centuries before the Hasmonean era. Rabbi Yosef Chaim of Baghdad (1833 or 1835 – 1909) in his book "Ben Ish Chai" wrote that although the story of Judith took place some time prior to the main miracle of the Chanukah story, nevertheless since the enemy in that story was one of the kings of Greece who also wanted to prevent the Jews from practising their religion, we also recall this miracle during the days of Chanukah.

Different types of celebrations and events connected with this day are mentioned in various writings. After lighting the seventh candle of Chanukah, the girls and women used to gather for a special celebration. They would eat dairy foods, drink wine and would dance. A folk song which they used to sing on this evening, has also passed down to us: "Chanukiah your aunt is dancing, Chanukiah your grandmother is dancing". In Tunisia, the housewife would bake honey cakes and other sweet things in honour of this day. There was also a custom to send portions of food and to give presents to the girls. In every house they used to hold a festive meal in memory of Judith's act of heroism.

In Libya the young girls would visit each other on Rosh Chodesh Tevet and would hold parties. On the island of Djerba, "Rosh Chodesh of the Girls" celebrations were mainly for single girls. They would gather in the house of one of the girls and would hold a party which would include the eating of festive foods, cakes and pastries and the singing of folk songs. Participating in this party was considered to be a "segula" (charm) for finding a good match during that year.

In other communities including those of Morocco and Tunisia, there was also the custom that on Rosh Chodesh Tevet, the boys who were engaged to be married, would bring presents to their fiancées. The parents of the engaged girl would invite her fiancé and members of his family to their house for a Chanukah celebration, and at times they would also make an evening meal for the fiancé and those accompanying him. In Morocco, friends of the bride would come to see her presents. However, it should be pointed out that a similar custom prevailed on other festivals in the communities of North Africa. In Salonika and other Greek communities, the girls would make peace between themselves on this evening, in the same way as is the custom on Erev Yom Kippur. A number of excerpts of folk tunes associated with this ceremony have passed down to us. It should, however, be noted that there was a similar custom amongst the young men during the days of Chanukah.

We have detailed evidence of a “Rosh Chodesh for Girls” ceremony which took place in Tunis in 5516 (1755) in which Rabbi Eliyahu Shapira participated. [Rabbi Eliyahu Shapira, who died in 5527 (1767), was a Torah scholar of Polish extraction who settled in Tunis in 5487 (1727) and opened a Yeshiva which continued to exist until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.] In 5516 a number of young girls in the Jewish community died. 5516 was a leap year and Rosh Chodesh Tevet fell on a Friday. The mothers and grandmothers came to the Synagogue of the Rabbi in great numbers and during the reading of the Torah they pushed into the Synagogue and prayed for the welfare of their daughters. After the reading of the Torah, the Rabbi arose and delivered an enthusiastic speech about the merit of righteous women who had saved the Jewish nation. He mentioned Deborah and Yael, the glory of Queen Esther, the holiness of Serach, daughter of Asher, Bruria, the wife of Rabbi Meir and the heroic deeds of Judith. He emphasised that the source of “Rosh Chodesh of the Girls” was a tradition going back to the time of the Macabees when the story of Judith had taken place and therefore it was fitting that this day should be a festival for the girls.

Rabbi Shapira also held a specific ceremony in honour of the day. All the women at the gathering passed in front of the Ark and kissed the Sefer Torah. He raised his hands above them and recited a special text of the “mi she-berach” prayer which he had composed for the welfare of the girls. A seudat mitzvah took place to celebrate a siyyum for the learning of Masechet Shabbat as it was Rabbi Shapira’s custom to hold a seudat mitzvah in honour of the completion of the Talmudic tractate which was connected with the festivals or with Rosh Chodesh. On Rosh Chodesh Tevet his custom was to complete Masechet Shabbat since the subject of Chanukah is included therein. The women of the community would prepare various foods in honour of the seudot mitzvah. In 5516 the women took slices of the leftover meat as a “segula” (charm) to ward off illnesses with which the community had been afflicted. From that time onwards the women in Tunis would make a special meal on this day for the talmidei chachamim, who would pray for the welfare for the girls of the city.

In 5686 (1925) the Heads of the Tunis community decided to establish on this day each year a joint Bat Mitzvah ceremony for all the girls of the “Kol Yisrael Chaverim” schools in order to bring these girls closer to the Jewish tradition. A detailed description of the ceremony which took place in the first year has survived.

Rabbi Meir Mazuz, Rosh Yeshiva of “Kisei Rachamim” mentioned another reason for the marking of the day as “Rosh Chodesh of the Girls” in addition to it being in memory of Judith’s actions. Rosh Chodesh in general is a festival given over to women because of their non-participation in the sin of the golden calf, but Rosh Chodesh Tevet stands out over the other days of Rosh Chodesh in that it is the only one on which the full Hallel is recited.

As opposed to the reason given in the various sources to the effect that “Rosh Chodesh of the Girls” was a memorial to Judith, the folklore expert Yom Tov Levinsky raised another theory as to its source, which is connected to a much earlier incident in the history of our nation. In his view, the origin of the designation of Rosh Chodesh Tevet is to remember the expulsion of the foreign women in the days of Ezra, in that the decision to separate from them was accepted on Rosh Chodesh Tevet and its performance was completed on Rosh Chodesh Nissan. One ought to mention another incident which happened on Rosh Chodesh Tevet, namely the election of Esther to reign in place of Vashti.

In relation to the communities of Libya and Tunisia, it is known that the women did not work on Rosh Chodesh Tevet. This custom was connected with the custom of women not to work on Rosh Chodesh, but one also has to put it into the specific context of Chanukah, where there are different customs as to the abstention of work by women at different periods on Chanukah. The widespread custom is not to work as long as the lights are burning. Another custom is not to work on the first and last days – as a parallel to the prohibition of work on first and last days of Succot and Pesach and an additional custom has been mentioned that one does not work throughout Chanukah.

A number of reasons have been given for the abstention from work whilst the lights are burning, and amongst them is a reason which is equally applicable to men; namely that it should act as a recognition that it is forbidden to use the lights of the candles to work by.

As to the custom not to work throughout Chanukah, there is a dispute amongst the Poskim whether women should adopt this custom. In the “Shibbolei ha-Leket” of Rabbi Tzidkiyahu Anav, one of the sages of Rome in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, it is mentioned that women in his town had the custom not to work throughout Chanukah and one should not be lenient about this because, having adopted this custom, they have accepted it upon themselves as an obligation.

As against that, in the “Orchot Chaim” of Rabbi Aharon ha-Cohen of Lunel and in the “Kol Bo” which is the first edition of the “Orchot Chaim” there is opposition to this custom on the basis that lack of work leads one to boredom (and therefore to licentious activity). In the book “Tzeidah la-Derech” of Rabbi Menachem Ben Zerach, of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, it mentions that there are those who do not work whilst the lights are burning and others who do not work throughout Chanukah, because the miracle came about through a woman and one should not be lenient about this custom. A similar view is taken by Rabbi Moshe of Premysla (approximately 1551–1606) in his book “Mate Moshe”, where it is mentioned that anyone who has the custom not to work throughout Chanukah should not be lenient about this custom and that the women took this upon themselves more strictly than the men because the salvation came through a woman. As a result of this, Rabbi Avraham Gombiner (approximately 1637-1683) the “Magen Avraham”, in connection with the reference in the Shulchan Aruch that women have the custom not to work as long as the lights are burning says in the name of “Mate Moshe”, that the reason is because the miracle came about through them.

There are a number of additional reasons for women not working whilst the lights are burning; reasons which are connected with other incidents concerning women. Thus in the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, the decree made against Jewish girls that on marriage, they were obliged to consort first with the local ruler before living with their husbands, is given as the reason for women not doing work at this time.

A Kabbalistic reason mentioned in “Ben Ish Chai” of Rabbi Yosef Chaim of Baghdad is connected with what is said in “Sha’ar ha-Kavanot” of Rabbi Chaim Vital, the foremost disciple of the Ari, namely that on Chanukah as on Rosh Chodesh, there is an additional dimension of sanctity in the Sefira of Malchut (Royalty) as supposed to that prevailing on weekdays. “Therefore they made an addition for themselves in the prohibition of doing work in order to sanctify themselves through this abstention, at the time when the lights are lit.”

On the basis that Rosh Chodesh Tevet was designated as “Rosh Chodesh of the Girls” in order to recall the heroic acts of Judith, it seems fitting that we should renew and reinforce this custom so that it becomes widespread throughout the Jewish world, it being a beautiful custom, which gives force to the image of the heroic woman. However, one ought to give it a fresh dimension so that the celebration should have a more Torah-based character by the introduction of spiritual programmes so as to reflect the current tendency to increased Torah study amongst women.

**Yael Levine** holds a Ph.D. from the Talmud Department of Bar-Ilan University, and has published numerous articles in scholarly journals, focusing on issues related to women and Judaism. She has composed various *tefillot*, among them a prayer for women prior to the Study of Torah, and prayer for women who have been murdered by their spouses. She is also the author of the seder companion *Midreshei Bitya bat Pharaoh* (Jerusalem 2004).

## TRYING TO LIGHT THE DARKNESS WITH SMILES

For those of us fortunate enough to have always been healthy and to have been blessed with healthy children, the pain of finding out that our child has been diagnosed with cancer, or another life threatening illness such as cystic fibrosis or muscular dystrophy, is unimaginable.

Our sages teach us "Simcha Poraitz Geder": "Happiness in the world breaks all boundaries." This is the philosophy of Camp Simcha.

We work to make the pain caused by illness slightly more bearable for those Jewish families affected, by bringing a smile to their day. We work to improve the quality of life for these children and their families. Everything we do is tailor-made according to the needs of each child and their family.

Our family liaison officers work directly with the families and offer support and assistance in whatever area it is most needed. Some examples of the things we do include hospital transportation and learning support in schools. We have also ensured that children receive various forms of head coverings such as wigs, bandanas and even false peyot to help children maintain their normality and dignity.

At the heart of everything that we do is the "big brother" and "big sister" volunteer programme. These very special young men and women get involved, many at the start of their university career, and try to bring some fun into these children's lives. Whether it is taking them for a pizza, playing computer games or being there to talk, these remarkable people give of their time and become integrated into these families. Very often there will also be a volunteer for the siblings as they also find themselves in a scary place whilst mum and dad can be very pre occupied caring for the child who is unwell.

No event ever passes without a party. A hospital stay is not just a hospital stay. We try to make sure that the Camp Simcha Hospital Clowns pay a visit, or that the child receives some balloons or another treat whilst they are there.

Camp Simcha also thrives on unforgettable experiences. We take the children to theme parks, to theatre outings and on limousine rides.

Our family retreat is one of the highlights of our year. This year in June we took over one hundred people to a hotel in Oxfordshire where the mums could be pampered, the dads had time to chill out, and the children had treats such as helicopter rides. An unbelievable time was had by everyone. We take with us fully-qualified medical practitioners which ensures that even our children who are very unwell can join us.

All our children, irrespective of their condition, are also offered the opportunity to attend a fully medically equipped camp for two weeks in the summer. This is set in the Catskill Mountains outside New York.

A few weeks ago, I went to Great Ormond Street Hospital to deliver some balloons. The smiles on the children's faces when receiving their brightly coloured balloons was truly humbling, and it is easy to forget how something so small can have such a huge impact on someone's day.

At Camp Simcha we know, through everything we do, that a smile really does make a very big difference and hopefully we are able to shine a light into the lives of these children who have suddenly encountered some darkness.

For further information on how to get involved with Camp Simcha or on how to donate please visit our website on [www.campsimcha.org.uk](http://www.campsimcha.org.uk) or call 0208 731 6788.

**Ariella Lew trained as a Paediatric Nurse and still works part time in hospitals. In her work for Camp Simcha she works with hospital staff and in the wider Jewish community to raise awareness of the charity's work.**

## BETWEEN LIGHT AND DARKNESS

The taste of the wine, the smell of the spices, the glow of the candle; havdalah stimulates all our senses. Yet it is so much more than a cheering ritual. An understanding of the real meaning of havdalah will shed light on our whole lives, providing us with inspiration more tangible than the lingering scent of spices.

The word 'havdalah' means separation; when we make havdalah, we separate Shabbat from the new week. But according to the Torah, havdalah is not a simple division between things which are obviously different. It is *discrimination*; painstaking differentiation between things which seem so similar as to be easily confused. It is a procedure which demands a clear head, as seen in the warning given to Aaron the high priest and his sons in Vayikra, chapter 10, verses 8 – 10:

*And G-d spoke to Aaron saying: Do not drink wine and alcohol, neither you nor your sons so that you will be able to distinguish (havdil) between the holy and the mundane, the impure and the pure.*

When we insert havdalah into the evening amidah, we include it in the blessing of *da'at*, which Rabbi Hirsch translates as knowledge, recognition, differentiation. The Mishna Brura notes that *"the reason why we say havdalah in this particular blessing is because da'at refers to the ability that man has to distinguish (mavdil) between one thing and another."* Making havdalah is a difficult process.

But why make havdalah at all? If distinguishing between day and night is difficult, we could easily wait until it is totally dark. The holiness of Shabbat ends when it gets dark on Saturday, just as it begins when it gets dark on Friday. Sure, reciting havdalah and lighting the Shabbat candles are enjoyable, but wouldn't Shabbat begin and end even without our rituals?

Well, maybe not. The Mishna Brura quotes Maimonides that *"the obligation of havdalah is from the Torah, like that of kiddush, and it is included in the commandment 'remember the Shabbat to make it holy'; it is necessary to remember it (Shabbat) and to make it holy when it begins and equally when it ends. When it begins, one sanctifies it with kiddush. When it ends, one sanctifies it with havdalah. Ie, it is mavdil (separated) from the other days for holiness at its beginning and its end."*

This passage makes it clear that havdalah does not just mark the end of Shabbat. By linking havdalah to kiddush, we see that havdalah is part of making Shabbat holy in the first place.

And maybe Shabbat does not 'go out' on its own. Halachically, if one forgets to make havdalah, one can make it up until Tuesday. Had Shabbat already 'gone out', there would be little point in this. And while one can say *'hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol* and then do work immediately after Shabbat, one is not allowed to eat or drink until after hearing havdalah in full. So we see an extension of the Shabbat holiness, which does not depart automatically at nightfall.

Of the many elements of havdalah, I would like to focus on the candle. The Talmud (Pesachim 54a) tells us that we should use a newly-lit candle for havdalah, because light was created on motzei Shabbat. But any schoolchild can tell you that G-d created light on day one, so what was *that* light? The Talmud discusses this question, and concludes that G-d created three kinds of light. On the first day, He created a special light, which burned for only 36 hours before, according to some authorities, being hidden away for tzaddikim to use in the World to Come. Another teaching says that it is revealed for us to enjoy during Shabbat.

He also created the light of Hell, which is the second kind of light

Finally, there was the light with which we see every day, which the Talmud goes on to discuss:

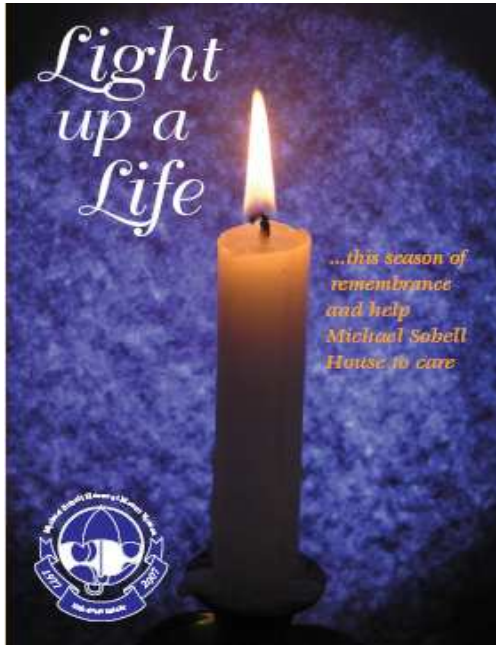
*"We are taught: Rabbi Yosi says: There are two things that G-d decided to create on erev Shabbat, but did not (actually) create until motzei Shabbat. On motzei Shabbat, G-d gave da'at - knowledge - to Adam, like that of the One above (G-d). Adam brought two stones and rubbed them together, and fire emerged. And he took two animals and harnessed them together, and a **pered** - mule – emerged. (Pesachim 54a)".*

Although Rabbi Yosi does not specify, we can infer that the 'two things' were light and mules. This is interesting, because a mule (born from a horse and a donkey), is an example of *kilayim*; a forbidden mixture of two things which are similar, but essentially different. Mixing wool and linen (shatnez) is *kilayim*. Creating all manner of crossbreeds is forbidden because of *kilayim*. The Talmud then brings an alternative teaching, that the first mule was actually made by Anah, who was the son of a union between his brother and his mother. Such a union is forbidden mixing - *kilayim*. What is more, note that the word 'pered' literally means to sever or disintegrate; also an aspect of separation, but a negative one. These teachings are not contradictory; rather, together they demonstrate the vital role of havdalah. We need to take great care to discriminate accurately between what is the same and what is merely similar. When two manifestations of the same thing are brought together, they emit light, but when two things which are subtly, but essentially, different are brought together, the result is a sterile mule.

Moreover, how do we understand that G-d began creating light on erev Shabbat, but Adam finished creating it on motzei Shabbat? Rashi explains (on Bereshit 1:14) that G-d created all the parts to the universe on the first day, but then put them together each on the right day, and only then were the parts 'activated'. Similarly here; G-d did create light on erev Shabbat, but it was not until motzei Shabbat that it was activated. It is important to note that it was not activated by G-d this time, but by man. And not by the unsullied, unsinning Adam, but by imperfect man who had already sinned. Only *after* expulsion was Adam given his own da'at '*like the da'at of G-d*', the prerequisite for havdalah and for becoming an independent being. G-d did not just run out of time before Shabbat. He wanted man to be part of the creation of the world, because Creation set the parameters for the future. By including Adam in His act of creating light, G-d enabled us all to act in partnership with Him in perfecting the world.

This is the true significance of havdalah. When we say 'hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol...bein yom hashvi'i l'sheshes yemei hama'aseh - Who distinguishes between the holy and the mundane...between the seventh day and the six days of creation', we are not merely recognising the end of Shabbat. We are actively discriminating between Shabbat and non-Shabbat, between kodesh-time and non-kodesh time. As mentioned earlier, on Shabbat G-d reveals again the special light of the first day of creation, which is replaced at the end of Shabbat by the light which Adam created in partnership with G-d. When does Shabbat truly end? Only when we make Havdalah. And so, every time that we make havdalah, we effect the transformation from one kind of light to the other. We are thereby participating in a divine act, and reaffirming our position as partners with G-d.

**Amanda Bradley is a professional mother and passionate about learning and educating! She and her husband have recently returned from a year's learning in Israel. She is now a student on the Bradfield programme at LSJS, and sharing her learning with other women in her home community of Borehamwood.**



At this time of year, the Hospice Movement has a campaign entitled "Light up a Life".

"Light up a Life" enables donors to make a dedication in memory of someone special, whose name will be recorded in the Book of Memories.

The campaign reflects the concept that lights are symbolic and central to many religions and cultures and bring a particular comfort during the darker months of the year.

However, the idea of remembering someone by perpetuating their name with a light is already integral to Jewish tradition. By extending the virtuous circle of remembrance to include a donation to a hospice in memory of those who lit up our lives, we are enhancing the mitzvah.

This space is for **you** .....

Do you have any comments about "Moonlight"?

Do you have news of events, organisations, charities?

Do you know of a website that may be of interest to our members?

Would you like to make a contribution, share a poem, a song, a wise or funny story?

PLEASE write in, with your full name. Our next edition will be for Purim / Pesach 5767 / 2007.

If you enjoy "Moonlight" and would like to extend your exploration of Jewish Women's issues, try JOFA, the Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance, [www.jofa.org](http://www.jofa.org).

This American organisation seeks to 'expand the spiritual, ritual, intellectual and political opportunities for women within the framework of *halakha*. We advocate meaningful participation and equality for women in family life, synagogues, houses of learning and Jewish communal organizations to the full extent possible within *halakha*. Our commitment is rooted in the belief that fulfilling this mission will enrich and uplift individual and communal life for all Jews.'

For those of us fortunate enough to be within commuting distance of LSJS, the London School of Jewish Studies, there is a treasure house of learning opportunities available.

How about next week -

Centre for Jewish Ethics Chanukah Lecture, Wednesday 20 December, 8:00 - 9:30 pm. Fee: £8

"Excellence and Obedience in the Thought of the Rambam: Chanukah Reflections on the Encounter of Philosophy and Torah"

Professor Lawrence Kaplan of McGill University is a leading expert on Maimonides' philosophy and on the thought of Rav Joseph Soloveitchick and translated *Halakhic Man*.

There are many other wonderful opportunities, including a one day seminar in January run by Rabbanit Chana Henkin, entitled **Power or Persuasion? The Art of Jewish Women's Leadership**

See [www.lsjs.ac.uk](http://www.lsjs.ac.uk)

## Chanukah Recipes

### CHEESE PANCAKES

In my family we tend to get together for Chanukah tea, light the candles and exchange gifts and these cheese pancakes are perfect with a cup of tea. They make a pleasant change from latkes. Chanukah re tells the story of the miracle of the oil in the Temple during the times of the Greek /Syrian empire. The oil miraculously lasted 8 days instead of one and fried food has subsequently become symbolic at this festival.

Lighting the Chanukah Menorah also acts as a symbol and message of the triumph of freedom over oppression, of spirit over matter, of light over darkness.

These sweet cheese pancakes taste delicious with apple sauce, honey or sour cream.

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Makes: 20

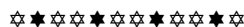
#### Ingredients:

3 eggs  
100ml milk  
225g cottage cheese  
150g plain flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
2 tablespoons sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
4 tablespoons vegetable oil - for frying

#### Method

1. Place all the ingredients except oil together in a food mixer and whiz together until smooth.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large frying pan. Using a large spoon, drop the batter into the hot oil. Fry 2 to 3 minutes on each side, until lightly browned. Continue until batter is used up, adding oil when necessary.
3. Place the cooked pancakes on absorbent kitchen paper to soak up any excess oil.
4. Heat the oven to 200 C/400F/ Gas mark 6. Place the cheese pancake on a tray lined with baking parchment paper. Re heat in the oven for a maximum of 10 minutes before serving.

To serve the stylish way: Top with sour cream, applesauce, honey or maple syrup.



### OVEN BAKED SALMON WITH POTATO AND COURGETTE LATKES

It is traditional to have fried food during Chanukah to commemorate the fact that the oil in the temple miraculously lasted for 8 days instead of one. Latkes and donuts are the most popular festive fayre. Only the very best olive oil was used in Biblical times and even today we have a graded selection system, the higher the grade of oil, the lower the level of acidity. Also the better the olive oil the stronger the flavour and deeper the colour which make them more appropriate for enhancing food rather than cooking with it. Italian, Spanish and Greek seem to be most popular but each country and within each region they vary considerably according to their olive variety. During one of my cookery classes we did a blind tasting and were pleasantly surprised by their unique tastes!

The kosher olive oils are the ones that are pure and not combined with other oils.

**My Chanukah recipe includes a unique new latke served with a succulent piece of fish. Potato and courgette latkes go wonderfully with salmon – or use Seabass or fresh tuna for a change. Using your food processor to grate the vegetables will speed up your preparation.**

Preparation Time: 20 minutes Serves 4 Cooking Time: 35 minutes

Can be made in advance Pesach Friendly

#### *Ingredients*

#### For the salmon

**4 Salmon fillets 170g (6oz) each, skinned and pin-boned**

150 ml (1/4 pt) dry white wine  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

### **For the Latkes**

450g(1b) courgette grated  
450g (1b) potato grated  
4 eggs – beaten  
4 tablespoons plain flour  
3 garlic cloves – peeled and finely chopped  
2 tablespoons fresh coriander – finely chopped  
2 teaspoons dried coriander  
150g (5 oz) cheddar cheese – grated  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
8 tablespoons vegetable oil

### **Garnish**

4 tablespoons Extra virgin olive oil – for drizzling  
15g (1/2 oz) fresh coriander  
4 tablespoons of sesame oil – Use olive oil for Pesach  
4 heads of pak choi (Chinese cabbage) shredded

### **Method**

#### **For the Latkes**

- 1) Pre-heat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas mark 4.
- 2) Remove the excess water from the grated potato and courgettes by squeezing dry in a clean tea towel or kitchen paper. This is best done in batches.
- 3) Add the remaining ingredients; the eggs, flour, garlic, fresh and dried coriander, salt and black pepper and cheese and mix very well.
- 4) Heat the vegetable oil in a large frying pan. Place heaped tablespoons of the mixture into the pan, flatten with a palette knife and cook for 4 – 5 minutes. Turn over and cook for a further 4 minutes. Try not to disturb them whilst cooking so that a good crust forms.  
NB . Change the oil and clean the pan out if it starts to burn and leaves black crumbs.
- 5) Remove the latke once cooked and place onto kitchen absorbent paper before completing the cooking in the oven on a baking tray lined with baking parchment.
- 6) Complete by finishing in the pre-heated oven for a final 10 minutes to crisp up.

#### **For the Salmon**

- 7) Place the salmon into a deep casserole dish. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Pour over the wine and cook covered for approximately 20 minutes or until cooked – the flesh is no longer bright pink and is firm to touch.
- 8) Heat the sesame oil in a wok or frying pan and stir fry the pak choi for 3 minutes.

#### **To serve the stylish way :**

Place some pak choi onto a warmed plate, followed by one latke, then sit the salmon fillet on it and topped with another latke. Drizzle some extra virgin olive oil over the salmon and plate. Garnish with some coriander leaves.

Denise Phillips is a professional chef, who trained with renowned restaurateur Prue Leith before setting up a successful catering business offering distinctive food, at affordable prices but with exceptional style and visual look. Her quest to improve the quality of Jewish cooking led to a number of highly successful 'hands-on' cookery demonstrations all over the country. She has written three books (with another on the way) that have established her as the leading name in modern kosher stylish cooking.

Please read about Denise's other ventures in her Chanukah newsletter on the next page.

## CHANUKAH NEWSLETTER

Looking for inspiration for the next Jewish Festival ? Why not try some new recipes to add to your repertoire. I have created some new courses that are ideal for you – or even better as gifts for that special friend.

I look forward to seeing you soon and sharing some great cooking ideas.

### GIVE THE GIFT OF GOOD COOKING

**Is it someone's Birthday, Chanukah or Simcha ?**

Treat a friend or relative to a Cookery School Voucher and they come on any of my hands-on inspirational courses in 2006.



To order a personally signed Jewish Cookery Gift Voucher call 01923 836 456 or [denise@jewishcooking.com](mailto:denise@jewishcooking.com). It could change more than just the food that you eat !

### COOKERY SCHOOL- At home with Denise Phillips

My courses run from 10am -1.30pm and will teach you some new cooking skills as well as great recipes. We then get to enjoy the food we have cooked with a glass of wine and good company. Treat yourself and see what a difference it will make to your cooking.

Stylish Dinner Party Cooking	Weds 22 & Thurs 23 Nov
Gourmet Buffet Meals	Weds 6 & Thurs 7 Dec
Thinner Dinners	Weds 24 & Thurs 25 Jan
Easy Chinese	Weds 7 & Thurs 8 Feb
Jewish Mamas Favourites	Weds 7 & Thurs 8 March

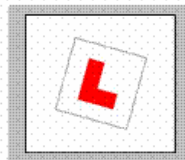
Cost: £55. To book please call me on 01923 836 456.

### SHALOM FM SCHOOL- 101.4 FM or listen via [www.shalomfm.co.uk](http://www.shalomfm.co.uk)

Yes, I have my own show in Shalom FM every Friday at 2pm. The topic is naturally food, and I will have a series of special guests, delicious recipes and other tantalising morsels to appeal to listeners of all ages. So do join me – every Friday at 2pm on 101.4FM until the end of Nov. Or call me live on air on 020 8455 5322 with your culinary questions.

### HEN NIGHTS

This is a variation on Date On A Plate, and has been very successful and great fun for several soon to be married women and their friends. Learn new skills whilst sipping fine wines & having a laugh. You pick the date and the menu ideas, and I will do the rest. Next month I am using a similar format for a 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday !



### BOOKS FOR CHANUKAH

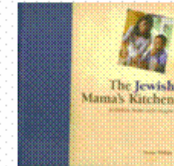
A cookery book can provide a whole year of inspiration for family meals, fun dinner parties and special occasions.

But then I would say that, wouldn't I – but see for yourself. Order one today and I will personally sign it : The Book of Modern Jewish Cooking



100+ great easy to follow recipes done in my trademark stylish way. £17 inc P & P

Or Jewish Mama's Kitchen :



Over 90 of the best in traditional recipes. £17 inc P & P

**TO ORDER COPIES –personally signed, call 01923 836 456 or [denise@jewishcooking.com](mailto:denise@jewishcooking.com)**

**SUNDAY 19<sup>th</sup> Nov.** Meet me at the ZF Israel Chanukah Fair at Wembley, on the Jewish News stand between pm - 4pm.

### For Bookings / Enquiries

Call 01923 836 456 or [denise@jewishcooking.com](mailto:denise@jewishcooking.com)

**STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS**

The Board of Deputies of British Jews are coordinating a special candle lighting vigil in Kensington, London, opposite the Iranian Embassy to highlight the plight of Ehud Goldwasser, Eldad Regev and Gilad Shalit, who were abducted from inside Israel. The three Israeli soldiers have been held prisoner since the summer with no information to date regarding their condition or location.

Parliamentarians and Christian groups are expected to join members of the Jewish community at the vigil on **Monday 18 December at 5.45 pm, directly opposite the Embassy of Iran, 16 Prince's Gate, London SW7 1PT**. The candle lighting, which will take place on the fourth night of the Jewish festival of Chanukah, traditionally celebrates religious freedom.

Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev were captured by Hizbollah in northern Israel on 12 July. Gilad Shalit was captured by Palestinian terrorists on 25 June. Iran is a known supporter of Hizbollah and its kidnapping of Goldwasser and Regev sparked Israel's war against Hizbollah during the summer.