



"A Temple of Friends"

# Connections

Spring 2017 - 5777

## Make Some Noise!

Rabbi Jonathan Hecht, Ph.D.

On **Purim**, we read the **Scroll of Esther**. It tells the story of how the evil Haman cast "lots" or, in Hebrew, **Purim** to determine the day on which the Jews of Shushan, the ancient capital of Persia, would be killed. Through the courage and cleverness of Esther and her Uncle Mordecai, the heroes of the story, a reversal took place and it was Haman who was defeated instead!

The word "Purim" appears five times in the Scroll of Esther. This corresponds to the five things we do on this day: we read the Scroll of Esther, send gifts of food to friends, send gifts to the poor, party like royalty, and avoid fasting.

Reading the Scroll of Esther is not a passive experience! Many people come dressed in costume and, of course, cheer for Esther and Mordecai. But the most important part of our observance is that everyone in attendance makes lots of noise when Haman's name is read aloud.

We use a grogger to drown out Haman. Grogger is a Yiddish word meaning "rattle." The traditional grogger, which dates back to the 13th century, is a percussion instrument known as a Ratchet. It has a gear wheel and a flat board attached to a handle, like the one I am holding in the picture. The player holds the handle and swings the instrument around so that the flat board clicks against the gear wheel making a rattling noise.



Today there are various types of groggers, from simple plastic to ornate metal. At our synagogue, we encourage Purim celebrants to bring a box of pasta or dried beans to use as noise makers. We will be collecting these "groggers" and donating them to the Jewish Communal Food Pantry at the Mid-Island Y JCC. In this way, we fulfill **two mitzvot: hearing the Scroll of Esther and sending gifts to the poor.**

Using a grogger is one of the most profound parts of Purim and also something that we can relate to in our lives today. Haman was an enemy from ancient times, but today there are still Hamans in our world! Throughout the ages we have encountered evil many times. When we come together on Purim as one community and drown out Haman's name, we are saying that **good can be louder than evil.** We are acknowledging that there is always some-

thing we can do to overcome evil. We can be "louder and stronger."

It is so easy to become discouraged and cynical today. Purim reminds us that, working together, we can make the world a better place. We can be like Esther and Mordecai—relentless and determined to fight against evil. We can work together to be louder. So, make some noise" this Purim!

**See you March 12. Come wearing a costume!**

**All 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Graders  
Are Welcome & Urged to Attend**

**Leading On the College Campus  
Facing Anti-Israel & Jewish Sentiment**

**Tuesday, March 28  
6—8pm**

**Be Prepared & Empowered  
For Your College Experience**

- ♦ Gain a framework & find out what actions you can take
- ♦ Learn how to connect with campus Jewish organizations
- ♦ Learn simple & effective messaging
- ♦ Learn where to find information from many perspectives

**Pizza Dinner Served — Tell Us if You Need Gluten Free**

**NO FEE but RSVP: [Louise@Templechaverim.org](mailto:Louise@Templechaverim.org)**

## Yom HaShoah Service

**Holocaust Remembrance Day  
Sunday, April 23 @ 10am**

Learn the Incredible Story of  
Courage, Love & Survival

Helen Mermelstein & her Sister  
Esther Mermelstein Weiss

**The Beloved Aunt & Mother of Congregant Judy Weiss**

