

As we enter into the month of November which of course contains the great American holiday, Thanksgiving, a cultural holiday that cuts across all religions.

I thought it would be appropriate to share with you some of what I am thankful for. Let me start with from a congregational perspective, how thankful I am that so many of you responded to our High Holiday Appeal – the Shield of David. In spite of the tough and uncertain economic times we are facing, I am pleased to report that at the time of writing this column, we were approaching \$100,000 and since this campaign is still being conducted, we are not sure what the final total will be. Whatever the final tally is, these funds will go along way towards closing the budget gap. While I am thinking about the shul, I also want to thank our outstanding Rabbi for everything he does and let me extend that to our entire professional staff. I am thankful for all the support the executive committee provides and for all the hard work of our board of directors and volunteers.

On a personal note, I am thankful for having found my soul mate – Linda or as our lovely grandchildren know her – Gimmel. I am thankful for the two daughters I have and for the fact that the one who has decided to give us grandchildren lives so close to us. I am thankful for the close relationship I have with that daughter – Jessica and am happy that she also found love with a wonderful man after we came to Texas.

Looking further afield, I want to shift my attention to Israel. I have just finished the book *Six Days of War* by Michael B. Oren. While reading it, I was struck by how fortunate we are to have lived to not only see the rebirth of our home state, but to watch as it successfully carved its niche in the world order, through both brawn and brain. The six day war demonstrated that Israel could defend itself without the active involvement of a superpower. It is also clear that we have a lot to be thankful for in the sense that there was a modern day example of the Tower of Babel at work behind the scenes during the actual conduct of the war. For example, the Arab press was putting out falsehoods daily touting how they were drubbing the IDF while in fact, the opposite was true. However, because their battlefield communications were in such shambles, the field commanders got their military information from the same sources as the general public. Thus many decisions that were favorable to Israel were made because the Arab generals believed the falsehoods prepared for the general populace. It is mind boggling to me that Israel was able to successfully take on three Arab armies and come out victorious. If one is looking for modern evidence of the existence of God, one needs look no further. Of course, many Israeli lives were lost but the boundaries that resulted from the war made Israel's long term survival much better. Also, we did regain Jerusalem and unrestricted access to one of our holiest sites. Having been to Israel this past June, I am truly grateful to all those who made it

possible for us to walk safely in the Old City and to pray at the Wall.

Now is the perfect time of the year to help Israel as we approach Hannukah. You have plenty of time to let your fingers go surfing for unique presents from Israel via the web. There is plenty to select from and you will certainly receive the items you order long before Hannukah arrives. Let us show our continuing support of Israel by buying directly from Israel this year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck". The signature is written in a cursive style with a capital 'C' and a capital 'C' at the end.