

October 27, 2017

Dear BQLI Region Friend,

“Mah Tovu ohalecha Ya’akov, mishkenotecha Yisrael — How good are your tents, O Jacob, Your dwelling places, O Israel.”



Balaam, the Moabite prophet who had been summoned by Balak, the King of Midian, to curse the Israelites, instead utters these words of blessing. As he gazed upon the Israelites encamped in their tents, Balaam was overcome with awe and reverence.

Ya’akov, also known to us as Jacob or Israel, was recognized in the Torah as a mild-mannered scholar. His *tents* were, therefore, interpreted to mean schools and synagogues. So, it is most appropriate for Balaam’s words of exaltation to be recited as the opening prayer of every morning service. His words capture the magnitude of blessing we feel upon entering a holy place.

Mah Tovu reminds us that we need to strive to make our tents, our synagogues and Conservative/Masorti Institutions of higher learning, like the tents of the Israelites in the wilderness. Our tents must serve as places to pray and learn while being places to gather and schmooze, places where we can connect with each other, with community, with Judaism, and with God.

Women’s League for Conservative Judaism, through the Torah Fund Campaign, provides us with the ability to ensure the continuity of our faith, as well as the opportunity to offer generous support to our five institutes of higher learning. BQLI Region is proud to present YOU with an auspicious occasion when, on Sunday, November 5th, we will gather as a community at Jericho Jewish Center, to learn about the historic synagogues of New York City! Of course, there will be time to schmooze and nosh, too!

Mah Tovu! Oh, how good it will be to come together as a region to celebrate our synagogues and Torah Fund!

B’Shalom,
Grace