



Shabbat Shalom

21 Tevet 5776
January 2, 2016

Parashat Shemot

This Week at Beth El Synagogue

Saturday, January 2:

Havdalah—5:55 pm

NO SHABBAT MISHNAH STUDY

NO B'NAI MITZVAH TUTORING

Orthodox Kehillah Services 9:00 am

Main Sanctuary Services, 9:30 am

Dvar Torah given by Professor Jack Sasson

Sunday, January 3:

Weekly Sunday Minyan/Shiva Minyan 9:30 am

NO TALMUD TORAH (Prek-7)

Monday, January 4:

Tuesday, January 5:

Sisterhood Board Meeting 7:00 pm

Wednesday, January 6:

Weekly Wednesday Minyan 8:00 am

Talmud Torah (2-6) 4:15 pm

Thursday, January 7:

Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Greyber 11:30 am

Synagogue Life Meeting 6:45 pm

Friday, January 8:

Candle Lighting—5:00 pm

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is sponsored by:
Michaela Davidai, Sharon & Neil Freedman, Rhonda Klevansky & Neil Prose, Carol & Eric Meyers, and Marlene & Dr. Chuck Spritzer

Beth El is a welcoming community of members with diverse backgrounds, ideas, levels of knowledge, and observance. We are an egalitarian Conservative congregation, and a member of the Southeast Seaboard district of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), and the Orthodox Union.

Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Sat. 1/9 Shabbat Morning Mishnah Study
- ✧ Sat. 1/9 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 1/9 B'nai Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ✧ Sat. 1/9 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 1/9 Chavurah Minyan
- ✧ Sat. 1/9 Simchat Tot Havdalah in Pajamas
- ✧ Sun. 1/10 Weekly Sunday Minyan
- ✧ Sun. 1/10 Talmud Torah (PreK-7)
- ✧ Sun. 1/10 Pancake Palooza
- ✧ Sun. 1/10 Knitting Chevra
- ✧ Sun. 1/10 Hebrew with Donna Goldstein
- ✧ Sun. 1/10 Talmud Torah Mitzvah Project-MLK Mitzvah Project
- ✧ Sun. 1/10 Tutor Refresh Session
- ✧ Wed. 1/13 Weekly Wednesday Minyan
- ✧ Wed. 1/13 Board Meeting
- ✧ Wed. 1/13 Talmud Torah (2-6)
- ✧ Fri. 1/15 NC-wide Teen Shabbaton
- ✧ Sat. 1/16 NC-wide Teen Shabbaton
- ✧ Sat. 1/16 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Service
- ✧ Sat. 1/16 NO B'NAI MITZVAH PEER TUTORING
- ✧ Sat. 1/16 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 1/16 I.L.Peretz Course with Sheva Zucker

Gabbai Schedule

Contact the scheduled gabbai if you'd like to request an *aliyah*, other honor, or to volunteer to lead a service in the Main Sanctuary. Gabbaim will try to accommodate requests made on Shabbat morning (by 10:15am, before the Torah service) but we ask for your understanding if all honors have been previously claimed during the week.



1/2 Sh'mot
David Rubin
david_rubin@unc.edu 919-967-7725

1/9 Vaera
Jon Wahl
jmwahl@email.unc.edu 919-942-3827

1/16 Bo
David Kirsch
dkirsch@dm.duke.edu 919-286-4516

1/23 Beshalach
Diane Markoff
diane.markoff@earthlink.net 919-969-8953

Parashat Shemot

Adapted from <http://www.learn.jtsa.edu>

As legend has it, my great-grandfather quit school after the eighth grade. Apparently this decision had little to do with academics: my Grandpa Harry, ז"ל, was a smart man who went on to become a successful furrier with his own business in Manhattan. No, apparently it had everything to do with social pressure. As legend has it, he walked into school on the first day of the ninth grade, realized that no one at his new school knew him, and walked out.

I think of him every year as I encounter that powerful verse that launches the Exodus story: "A new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph" (Exod. 1:8). As particular as it is to the Joseph narrative and the story of our people, it is also strikingly universal. This tiny little verse describes such a powerful and typical human experience: the one of walking into a room full of strangers and feeling totally out of place. The unsettling moment where you go from being the most popular kid in school to the new kid on the block. That feeling of being unknown, and the riskiness of it—for who knows what happens when no one knows to think highly of you? This is the subtext of the verse, actually: had the new king known Joseph, we imagine, he never would have treated the Israelites that way. It is exactly what we tell ourselves in our own moments of loneliness and fear when surrounded by new people: "If they only knew me."

This interpretation is perhaps the one closest to the verse's peshat (literal) meaning. Along with it I offer two more. Together, the three readings offer a widening lens on how to handle some of life's challenges—and the beginnings of an answer that this book of Shemot might offer.

The second interpretation is less literal than the first. It wonders: what if the "new king" wasn't really a new king? Rashi reminds us of the midrash found in the Talmud:

Rav and Shmuel differed in their explanations of the verse. One said that he was actually a new king; the other, that new decrees were issued by him. But if so, how can the verse go on to say, "Who knew not Joseph"? Because it seemed as though he was not aware that Joseph ever existed. (BT Sotah, 11a)

In other words, it is not that there was actually a new person now ruling Egypt, but that he had changed. His attitude had changed—and his love of Joseph and Joseph's kin. Things were so different, in fact, that it felt as if there were a new king on the throne, one who had never even known Joseph, much less brought him and his descendants into his trust.

Isn't that what much of life is about? Living with ever-changing relationships? The brother who was your closest ally in childhood who no longer speaks to you. That group of friends you couldn't live without with when your kids were young—now that the children have grown, you never see them anymore. The best friend who lost interest in the friendship—in you—over time. Sometimes it feels like that person who once knew you so well now doesn't know you at all. As the midrash envisions it: it was the same king all along, but his heart had changed. He knew not Joseph.

In Netivot Shalom, Rabbi Shalom Noah Berezovsky (the Slonimer Rebbe, born Belarus in 1911 and died in Israel in 2000) offers a third—and very different—reading.

This verse is the beginning of galut, the story of exile . . . Galut (exile) is always a matter of our separation from God. Galut is the inner state of a person not feeling God's nearness in times of trouble . . . And redemption (ge'ulah) is a person's feeling God's presence again, in every moment . . . This is what is meant by "who knew not Joseph." Joseph represents holiness, and the king of Egypt represents the broken shards (kelipot) of God's presence.

In other words: it is taking place within us. The "new king" who did not know Joseph is part of ourselves. The "new king" is that feeling that arises within us from time to time, at the times of life when we don't feel God's presence, when we wonder if there is a God at all. According to this interpretation, Joseph's dying (in the verses preceding ours)—that is our own faith dying, the loss of our sense of God's presence in our daily lives. The "new king" that arises after that is the voice in our head at times, whispering: "there is only fear and pain and suffering in this world." Redemption (ge'ulah), according to this reading, is also internal: it is what happens when the fog lifts, when we are able to see God's miracles all around us, to feel God's presence again and have faith even during dark times. According to the Netivot Shalom, everything in this verse is happening inside of each of us.

Beth El Synagogue

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Rabbi: Daniel Greyber

Rabbi Emeritus: Steven Sager

Synagogue President: Rachel Galanter

Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

Adelah bat Avrom v'Chenya (Adele Abramowitz)	Reuven ben Chanoch v'Dinah (Robert Feurst)	Elinor Fleishman Ilene Jacobson
Aharon ben David u'Miriam (Alan Goldman)	Rifka bat Idel v'Elka Rut bat Sarah (Suzanne Furst)	Jennifer Krunkosky Inez McFarling
Aliza Chana bat Leah	Sara bat Hinda (Sylvia Dante)	Ezra Rapport Jack Reich
Baracha bat Sarah	Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)	Michael Rockman
Ben-Zion ben Sarah	Shira Batya bat Meirav	Pearl Rohde
Chana bat Malkah	Shmuel ben Shoshana	Richard Roth
Daronit Esther bat Tuvia v'Leah (Jennifer Greyber)	Sprinya Simcha bat Yehudah v'Chana (Susan Rosefelde)	Carmen Sadowsky Lauren Schiro
David ben Sarah (David Leitner)	Tuvia ben Shmuel v'Tziporah (Tovia Lebovich)	Susan Tolchin Christine Walters
Gershon Yonah ben Tevya haKohen v'Chanah Leah haLevi	Tziporah bat Esther Yehudit bat Rachel	Sharon Welensky Orrie Wilner
Hannah Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman)	Lee Ballen	Amy Wolf
M'cor Eyschel bat Esther Tzvia	Lucretia Bell Sonia Berman	
Malka Hannah bat Basha Rachel	Anne Boyd	
Miriam Shifra bat Issur (Margaret Sachs)	Cynthia Brown Anna Crollman	
Ovadya ben Elinor (Ovadya Fleishman)	Lydia Cowan Davis	

Please contact the synagogue office with any additions or changes to this list.

Yahrzeits יארצייט

Arlene Ammerman	Alfred Korkin
Jerry Becker	Irene Lyons
Herman Bernard	Pat Marcus
Arnold Grier	Sam Markman
Mary Hart	Moshe Shweky
Ann Jackson	

BE Remembered

Beth El Synagogue extends condolences to:

*Eileen Abramson and her family on the death of Eileen's mother and long-time Beth El member, May Segal, who passed away early morning, December 20th, at 102 years old.

Shiva minyan for our beloved May Segal will take place as follows: Shacharit (morning): Sunday morning at 8:00 am.

*Lewis and Alice Gold and their family, and Andrea, Kevin, Dreizin and Nathan Ginsberg on the death of Emily B. Gold -- Lewis's mother, Andrea's grandmother, and Dreizin and Nathan's great-grandmother -- who passed away on Tuesday, 12/22.