



Shabbat Shalom

14 Cheshvan 5776
October 24, 2015

Parashat Lech-Lecha

This Week at Beth El Synagogue

Saturday, October 24:

Havdalah—7:10 pm

Shabbat Mishnah Study	8:45 am
Orthodox Kehillah Services	9:00 am
B'nai Mitzvah Peer Tutoring	9:00 am
Main Sanctuary Services (Bar Mitzvah of Dov Bearman)	9:30 am

Sunday, October 25:

Weekly Sunday Minyan	9:30 am
Talmud Torah	9:30 am
Walking with Mitzvot #1	10:30 am
3rd Annual MoB Brunch	10:30 am
Kadima Cookie Creation Competition	12:30 pm
6th Grade B'nai Mitzvah Parents Only Hopes and Dreams Program	12:45 pm

Monday, October 26:

Tuesday, October 27:

Wednesday, October 28:

Weekly Wednesday Minyan followed by shiur	8:00 am
Talmud Torah	4:15 pm

Thursday, October 29:

Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Greyber	11:30 am
Social Action Committee Meeting	7:00 pm

Friday, October 30:

Candle Lighting—6:03 pm

Kabbalat Shabbat Services Bat Mitzvah of Leah Samuel-Devaney	6:00 pm
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Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Sat. 10/31 Shabbat Mishnah Study
- ✧ Sat. 10/31 Orthodox Kehillah Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 10/31 B'nai Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ✧ Sat. 10/131 Shabbat Morning Services (Bat Mitzvah of Leah Samuel-Devaney)
- ✧ Sun. 11/1 Daylight Savings Time Ends (Clocks back 1 hour)
- ✧ Sun. 11/1 Sunday Minyan
- ✧ Sun. 11/1 Talmud Torah (PreK-7)
- ✧ Sun. 11/1 Hebrew Level I and Hebrew Level II
- ✧ Sun. 11/1 PreKadima Fun Run Olympics
- ✧ Sun. 11/1 USY on Franklin
- ✧ Wed. 11/4 Weekly Wednesday Minyan followed by Shiur
- ✧ Wed. 11/4 Talmud Torah (2-6)
- ✧ Thur. 11/5 Ari Shavit at Duke
- ✧ Thur. 11/5 Synagogue Life Committee Meeting
- ✧ Fri. 11/6 USY #Shabbat

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.



10/24 Lekh Lekha David Kirsch dkirsch@dm.duke.edu	919-286-4516
10/31 Vayera Sally Laliberte selaib@gmail.com	919-302-0035
11/7 Hayyei Sarah Isaac Price isaac@isaacprice.org	919-886-5453
11/14 Toledot Shula Bernard shulabernard@gmail.com	919-967-9393

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is sponsored by:
Howard & Suzanne Bearman and Lois & Richard Sobel
in honor of their grandson
Dov Bearman becoming a Bar Mitzvah.

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.

Parashat Lech-Lecha

Adapted from <http://www.conservativeyeshiva.org/>

Abraham, the First Jew - Why?

by Rabbi Daniel Goldfarb, CY Faculty

With Parshat Lech Lecha the Torah narrows its focus, to the genesis of the Jewish people. It's worth asking why God chose Avraham Avinu to be the first Jew.

Avraham was a monotheist. The Midrash tells how he broke his father's idols and we read this week that he "built an altar to the Lord and invoked the name of the Lord." (Gen 12:8). But it's far from clear that he was the first monotheist. Back in the time of Enosh, the son of Seth (our common link back to Adam and Eve), people "began (huchal) to invoke the Lord by name" (4:26). Rashi interprets huchal negatively, "profane" (from chilul), thus preserving the monotheism copyright for Avraham. But other classic commentators - Ibn Ezra, Sforno and Onkelos - interpret the word favorably (Onkelos: "in his day people began to pray in the name of the Lord"). And Noah also "built an altar to the Lord" (8:20) on which he brought burnt offerings, a form of worship well known in the Torah.

There's a good chance that Avraham was the first humanitarian. Whereas Noah raised no protest against God's plan to destroy the world with the flood, Abraham challenges God not to kill the innocent in Sedom (18:22+). Abraham takes his household to battle to rescue Lot, the first instance of pidyon shevuyim (redeeming captives) (14:14+), and he treats the slaves of the kings he liberated as "people," not as rechush ("property"), which was the prevailing custom amongst the neighboring peoples (compare 14:11 with 14:16).

And Abraham is the only person for whom the Torah uses the word chinuch (education): "...and he mustered chanichav ("his retainers/trained men"), the ones born in his house" (14:14). Rashi explains: "he educated them l'mitsvot." And this was not the first time. Earlier, at God's command, Avraham left Haran with his wife, Sarai, his nephew, Lot, "vet hanefesh asher asu b'charan" ("and the persons they had acquired in Haran" [12:5]). Onkelos translates this as "the souls they brought into the realm of the Torah," and Rashi brings the Midrash that Abraham converted the men and Sara the women. The Chizkuni, a commentator from 13th century France, goes one step further. On the phrase "the souls they made in Haran" he says "kan matchil matan Torah," the Giving of the Torah starts here. Not with Moshe at Sinai, but with Avraham, the mechanech (educator), back in Haran.

Avraham was so special because he was the first person who took the words of Pirkei Avot 1:2 seriously. "Al shlosa dvarim ha'olam omed," Shimon HaTzadik tells us: "On three things the world stands," and Abraham engaged in them all. Al HaTorah - he educated people l'Torah u'mitsvot; al HaAvodah (on serving God) - he built altars and called on the name of the Lord; v'al Gemilut Hasadim (and on helping people) - he acted to save those in danger and he fought to have even slaves considered as persons, not property. Such a person deserves to be the first Jew.

Beth El Synagogue

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Rabbi: Daniel Greyber

Rabbi Emeritus: Steven Sager

Synagogue President: Rachel Galanter

Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

Aharon ben David u'Miriam (Alan Goldman)	Ovadya ben Elinor (Ovadya Fleishman)	Anna Crollman Lydia Cowan Davis
Aliza Chana bat Leah	Reuven ben Chanoch v'Dinah (Robert Feurst)	Elinor Fleishman
Baruch ben Shalom v'Raisel (Bernard Leibel)	Rifka bat Idel v'Elka	Ilene Jacobson
Baracha bat Sarah	Rut bat Sarah (Suzanne Furst)	Jennifer Krunkosky
Ben-Zion ben Sarah	Sara bat Hinda (Sylvia Dante)	Inez McFarling Ezra Rapport
Chana bat Malkah	Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)	Jack Reich
Daronit Esther bat Tuvia v'Leah (Jennifer Greyber)	Shira Batya bat Meirav	Michael Rockman
David ben Sarah (David Leitner)	Shmuel Ariyeh ben Karit	Pearl Rohde Richard Roth
Dovid ben Shayna Etta (David Riceman)	Shmuel ben Shoshana	Lauren Schiro Susan Tolchin
Eliezer David ben Feigel (Larry Berger)	Sprinya Simcha bat Yehudah v'Chana (Susan Rosefielde)	Christine Walters Sharon Welensky
Eliyahu Chanan ben Sarah (Ed Gagnon)	Tuvia ben Shmuel v'Tziporah (Tovia Lebovich)	Orrie Wilner
Gershon Yonah ben Tevya haKohen v'Chanah Leah haLevi	Tziporah bat Esther	Amy Wolf
Hannah Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman)	Yehudit bat Rachel	Lee Ballen Lucretia Bell
M'cor Eyshele bat Esther Tzvia		Sonia Berman Anne Boyd
Miryam bat Rivkah (May Segal)		Cynthia Brown

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

Yahrzeits יארצייט

Stanley Barclay	Sara Lieber
Harold Barth	Anna Marck
Pearl Ellman	Treasure McClain
Chaim Mordecai Finkel	Florence Mintzer
Moshe Friedman	Joseph Morrison
Marylu Goldberg	Nathan Rafterman
Sadie reenberg	Sid Rancer
Freda Leiss	Harry Segal

BE B'nai Mitzvah

Mazel tov to Dov Bearman on becoming a bar mitzvah!

BE Remembered

Beth El Synagogue extends condolences to the following: Laura and Harold Strauss and their family on the death of Laura's mother, Frances Rothstein, who passed away on Thursday morning in Buffalo, NY.

Marc Brettler on the death of his father, Sidney Brettler - Shalom ben Moshe Tzvi, who passed away on October 10 in Jerusalem. Burial took place on October 12 in Jerusalem.