



Shabbat Shalom

30 Kislev 5776
December 12, 2015

Parashat Miketz

This Week at Beth El Synagogue

Saturday, December 12: 7th Night of Chanukah

Havdalah—5:43 pm

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| Shabbat Mishnah Study | 8:45 am |
| B'nai Mitzvah Peer Tutoring | 9:00 am |
| Orthodox Kehillah Services | 9:00 am |
| Main Sanctuary Services | 9:30 am |
| Monthly Parsha Study | 9:30 am |
| Children's Services | 10:30 am |
| Chanukah Game Night | 6:00 pm |
| Federation Kickoff Event | 6:30 pm |

Sunday, December 13: 8th Night of Chanukah

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| Weekly Sunday Minyan | 9:30 am |
| Talmud Torah (Prek-7) | 9:30 am |
| Hebrew Level I with Donna Goldstein | 10:00 am |
| Knitting Chevra | 10:00 am |
| Hebrew Level II with Donna Goldstein | 11:00 am |
| 5th Grade B'nai Mitzvah | 11:30 am |
| Date Selection Meeting | |
| Chanukah Candle Lighting and Matisyahu Concert | 7:15 pm |

Monday, December 14:

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| Bowling with Spice | 7:00 pm |
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Tuesday, December 15:

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| Va'ad Meeting | 7:00 pm |
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Wednesday, December 16:

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| Weekly Wednesday Minyan | 8:00 am |
| Talmud Torah (2-6) | 4:15 pm |
| Sisterhood Board Meeting | 7:00 pm |

Thursday, December 17:

Shabbaton

Friday, December 18:

Candle Lighting—4:45 pm
Shabbaton

Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Sat. 12/19 SHABBATON
- ✧ Sat. 12/19 Orthodox Kehillah Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 12/19 NO B'NAI MITZVAH PEER TUTORING
- ✧ Sat. 12/19 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 12/19 Healing Yoga
- ✧ Sun. 12/20 SHABBATON
- ✧ Sun. 12/20 Sunday Minyan
- ✧ Sun. 12/20 NO TALMUD TORAH
- ✧ Wed. 12/23 Weekly Wednesday Minyan followed by Shiur
- ✧ Wed. 12/23 NO TALMUD TORAH
- ✧ Sat. 12/26 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 12/26 NO B'NAI MITZVAH PEER TUTORING
- ✧ Sat. 12/26 Shabbat Morning Services

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.



12/12 Miketz
(Rosh Hodesh and Chanukah)
Diane Markoff
diane.markoff@earthlink.net 919- 969-8953

12/19 Vayigash
David Kirsch
dkirsch@dm.duke.edu 919-286-4516

12/26 Vayehi
Alan Mandel
andelcpa@gmail.com 917-589-5673

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

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is sponsored by:
*Shula & Stephen Bernard, Alice & Sid Levinson,
Michele Pas, Ellen & Phil Singer, and Debbie & Jon Wahl*

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 Miketz

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

Ruminations about assimilation come naturally to Jews in North America during the winter holiday season. How much should a parent insist that Hanukkah is part of public school celebrations that give students a heavy dose of Christmas? How often should one remind store clerks who innocently ask Jewish children which gifts they hope to receive from Santa this year that there are other faiths observed in our communities, and other holidays? Intermarried couples are familiar with conversations about having a Christmas tree at home, or going to midnight mass, or allowing their kids to open gifts Christmas morning under the tree at their cousins' home. The Hanukkah story is the perfect stimulus for such reflections, especially when read, as some historians do, not as a conflict between Jews and a tyrannical government, but as a dispute among Jews themselves over which Greek customs are acceptable and which cross the line to assimilation or apostasy.

How much distinctiveness should Jews maintain in a society and culture like ours that offers unprecedented opportunity and freedom? How much distinctiveness can we maintain without putting our acceptance in jeopardy? And—perhaps the most difficult question on the communal agenda these days—how much distinctiveness can Jews afford to sacrifice without losing Jewish children and grandchildren to the ways and identity of the majority?

Joseph—the most important figure among the first generation of the children of Israel—struggles with a version of these same dilemmas as he rises from one prison-pit after another to the height of power at the court of Pharaoh. Of all the dramatic moments in the gripping story of his reconciliation with the brothers who once betrayed him, none is more poignant, I think, than when Pharaoh tells Joseph that he will have absolute power limited only by the Pharaoh himself. The astute ruler had taken the measure of Joseph and realized immediately that this “shrewd and perceptive” Israelite was perfectly suited to the nasty work of gathering up all the grain of Egypt during the seven years of plenty, and selling it back to them during the seven years of famine. (Gen. 41:38-44) He immediately gives Joseph two gifts that can be read as heart-wrenching examples of the price he will pay for that power. Joseph will have an Egyptian name, Tsafanat Pane'ah—“the sustainer of life”—and an Egyptian wife, Asenat, the daughter of a priest, Poti Fera. (41:45)

The story that follows reads differently because of those moves by the king to forcibly integrate Joseph into Egyptian society and culture. Joseph himself testifies to the pain of his situation as the highest outsider in the land. When (vv. 50-52) “two sons were born to [him] by Asenat the daughter of Poti Fera, the priest of On, Joseph called the first-born Menasheh, because ‘God has made me forget completely my hardship and the house of my father.’ And Joseph called the second son Ephraim, because ‘God has made me fertile in the land of my affliction.’” We will soon learn that he has not forgotten the pain suffered in his father's house. When the brothers arrive to purchase grain, he at once recognizes them and—seeing them bow before him—remembers the dream in which they symbolically had done exactly that. (42:6-9) He has not forgotten his father either: when the brothers return home empty-handed, having left Simeon behind as a hostage, they tell Jacob (43:7) that the man in charge of distributing grain had asked them if their father was still alive—and, in next week's portion Vayigash, when Joseph finally breaks down in tears and reveals himself to his brothers (45:3), the very first question out of his mouth will be, “Is my father still alive?”

Consider the irony: the survival of the children of Israel is secured by this child of Israel who, married to the daughter of a gentile priest, brings his family down to Egypt, where he and they loyally serve the Pharaoh. The survival of the Children of Israel in a later generation will be secured by another Israelite, that one from the tribe of Levi, also married to the daughter of a gentile priest, who will lead a rebellion that liberates his people from Pharaoh's service/slavery. (The Hebrew word for “slavery” and “service” is the same.) Had Joseph and Moses not been at home at Pharaoh's court, wise in the ways of ministers and kings, skillful at magic arts beyond the capacity of Pharaoh's magicians (dream interpretation and the working of miracles), and gifted with the right word at the right time and inside knowledge of Egyptian society and culture; and had they not, despite all this, retained a strong sense of divine mission and purpose—they would not have been able to perform the redemptive tasks assigned them.

We might say, in contemporary terms, that a certain measure of assimilation was required for their success, as was a measure of resistance to assimilation. Contemporary Jews know from experience that the balance is difficult to calibrate correctly. That has been all the more true of the Jews who have served gentile kings and courts over the centuries—and by so doing, served their people and their God. From the poet and general Shmuel Hanagid at the Spanish court to Henry Kissinger at the Nixon White House to the many humble tax collectors in Polish domains populated by Ukrainian peasants, the Joseph story has time after time repeated itself.

Beth El Synagogue

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Rabbi: Daniel Greyber

Rabbi Emeritus: Steven Sager

Synagogue President: Rachel Galanter

Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

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|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 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 |
| Baracha bat Sarah | Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo) | Jack Reich 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 |
| Eliyahu Chanan ben Sarah (Ed Gagnon) | Tziporah bat Esther Yehudit bat Rachel | Sharon Welensky Orrie Wilner |
| Gershon Yonah ben Tevya haKohen v'Chanah Leah haLevi | Lee Ballen Lucretia Bell | Amy Wolf |
| Hannah Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman) | M'cor Eyshel bat Esther Tzvia Sonia Berman | |
| Malka Hannah bat Basha Rachel | Anne Boyd | |
| Miryam bat Rivkah (May Segal) | 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

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|--------------------|-------------------|
| Harriett Bailin | Samuel Levy |
| Alfred Feiler | Eva Markman |
| Carolyn Flicker | Max Meyer |
| Estelle Fox | Sarah Meyer |
| Philip J. Goldberg | Sabrina Morris |
| Arthur Gutman | Eli Nachamson |
| Ruth Halberstadt | Nathan Rosenstein |
| Irving Levine | Meyer Zucker |

BE Remembered

Beth El Synagogue extends condolences to:

*Sylvia, Kevin and Ann Leibel and their family on the death of Sylvia's husband and Kevin's father and Beth El member, Bernard Leibel who passed away Friday, 11/27.

BE Babies

Mazel tov to Sally Laliberte on the birth of her grandson, Elliot Price Kerner born 11/28/2015 to her son Jacob Kerner and his wife, Lindsay Moody in Philadelphia. Mom and baby are well and healthy and everyone is excited to welcome him to the world! Best wishes can be sent to Sally via email at selalib@gmail.com.