



Shabbat Shalom

23 Kislev 5776
December 5, 2015

Parashat Vayeshev

This Week at Beth El Synagogue

Saturday, December 5:

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 |
| Federation Kickoff Event | 7:00 pm |

Sunday, December 6: 1st Night of Chanukah

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| Weekly Sunday Minyan | 9:30 am |
| Talmud Torah (Prek-7) | 9:30 am |
| Kitah Zayin Beit Midrash (Shabbat) | 9:30 am |
| Simchat Tot | 9:45 am |
| Hebrew Level I with Donna Goldstein | 10:00 am |
| Hebrew Level II with Donna Goldstein | 11:00 am |
| Kitah Gan Family Beit Midrash | 11:30 am |
| Kadima-Social Action Scavenger Hunt | 12:30 pm |
| AlephBet/PreKadima Chanukah Bash | 12:30 pm |
| Kitah Vav B'nai Mitzvah Parent Program | 12:45 pm |

Monday, December 7: 2nd Night of Chanukah

Tuesday, December 8: 3rd Night of Chanukah

Wednesday, December 9: 4th Night of Chanukah

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| Weekly Wednesday Minyan | 8:00 am |
| Talmud Torah (2-6) | 4:15 pm |
| School Candle Lighting-Parents Invited | 5:40 pm |
| Board Meeting | 7:30 pm |

Thursday, December 10: 5th Night of Chanukah

Friday, December 11: 6th Night of Chanukah

Candle Lighting—4:43 pm

Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Sat. 12/12 Shabbat Mishnah Study
- ✧ Sat. 12/12 Orthodox Kehillah Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 12/12 B'nai Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ✧ Sat. 12/12 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 12/12 Monthly Parsha Study
- ✧ Sat. 12/12 Children's Services
- ✧ Sat. 12/12 Chanukah Candle Lighting and Game Night
- ✧ Sun. 12/13 Sunday Minyan
- ✧ Sun. 12/13 Talmud Torah (PreK-7)
- ✧ Sun. 12/13 Kitah Zayin Family Beit Midrash
- ✧ Sun. 12/13 Hebrew Levels I/II with Donna Goldstein
- ✧ Sun. 12/13 Knitting Chevra
- ✧ Mon. 12/14 MoB Bowling with Spice
- ✧ Tue. 12/15 Va'ad Meeting
- ✧ Wed. 12/16 Weekly Wednesday Minyan followed by Shiur
- ✧ Wed. 12/16 Talmud Torah (2-6)
- ✧ Wed. 12/16 Sisterhood Board Meeting
- ✧ Thur 12/17 Shabbaton
- ✧ Fri. 12/18 Shabbaton

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.



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| 12/5 Vayeshev Isaac Price isaac@isaacprice.org | 919-886-5453 |
| 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 |

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is sponsored by:
*Robin & Moss Cohen, Ruth Dzau, Norma & Bob Gindes,
Jean & Barrie Hurwitz, Karin Shapiro & Ed Balleisen,
Marilyn Telen-Greene & Henry Greene, and
Rachel Werner & Neil Berman*

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 Vayeshev

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

A few weeks ago, Etgar Keret, an accomplished author on the Israeli literary scene, made a pilgrimage from his home in Tel Aviv to JTS's Schocken Institute in Jerusalem to address a group of rabbinical students from JTS and HUC. Among the many thoughtful and reflective insights he shared, he spoke of the need for Israeli society to reflect the best of Jewish values. As a stark illustration to the contrary, he pointed to the last Israeli election. Naftali Bennett's party, Habayit Hayehudi (the Jewish Home), campaigned under the slogan of *מפסיקים להתנצל* (Enough apologizing!). Bennett's message was that Israel should stop apologizing with regard to any of its behavior (misguided or not). It was a pride-filled message tailored for Bennett's nationalist constituency. Keret decried Bennett's slogan. "How could anyone call such a message Jewish?"

"Apologizing is a deeply Jewish value—and yet the party that called itself 'The Jewish Home' ran on a slogan that makes a mockery of Jewish values." Keret's point is well taken. Though Bennett sought to instill a sense of Jewish pride—it was a narrow-minded pridefulness that turned off most Israelis. In many ways, one could argue that Bennett sought to adopt an idea deeply foreign to the Jewish soul. In this week's parashah, Parashat Vayeshev, Joseph acts with the same misguided thinking propelling us to wrestle with the place of Jewish values in Jewish leadership.

At the opening of our parashah, we are introduced to Joseph as the favored son of his father, Jacob. Jacob showers exceeding love upon Joseph and then foolishly gifts Joseph with a colorful tunic that rightfully triggers enmity and jealousy of his brothers. Joseph's ego inflates as he experiences two dreams of grandeur. First, we read of the image of the brothers binding sheaves of wheat. Joseph's sheaf stands upright and the others bow low to his sheaf (Gen. 37:7). Two verses later, he dreams a second dream, of the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowing down to him (verse 9).

Part of what shocks the reader is that rather than keeping these dreams to himself, Joseph recklessly shares these dreams with his brothers. Shouldn't he have had enough self-awareness to realize that such behavior would only increase the hatred and enmity between himself and his brothers? To be sure, Sigmund Freud famously remarks, "The virtuous man contents himself with dreaming that which the wicked man does in actual life" (The Interpretation of Dreams).

Additionally, Leon Kass brilliantly illuminates the import of Joseph's dreams in his book *The Beginning of Wisdom*. Kass asks the question, "What kind of a shepherd dreams of sheaves of wheat?" And then he continues, "The imagery of the dream belongs to another place, to a more fertile place, where one man does indeed command obedience from all around, namely Egypt. Joseph's dream is foreign" (517). Joseph is a model of reckless disregard for his brothers' feelings. And more than that, his delusions of power and domination echo an Egyptian ethos—as Kass points out so well.

Though a son of Israel (literally and figuratively), his essence is divorced from the Land of Israel. Very beautifully Kass goes a step further in contrasting Joseph's behavior with his brothers to Moses's interactions with his brethren. Moses, who ironically enough, is raised as Egyptian is endowed with an Israelite soul. Exodus 2:11 teaches, "Some time after that, Moses had grown up, he went out to his brethren and witnessed their labors. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren . . . and struck the Egyptian." Moses goes out to see his brothers and expresses his solidarity with them. He strikes down one of their oppressors.

And step by step, he spends his life building trust with his people. Far from alienation and intrigue, Moses lives in a world of connection and community. The brotherly bond is sacred to this leader. Moses sees far beyond the self while Joseph seems confined and bound by self. Kass quotes Yuval Levin in stating the case even more emphatically: "The fact that Joseph dreams Egyptian dreams in Canaan and seems to be an Egyptian long before he ever enters Egypt can perhaps tell us something about Egypt as well as about Joseph. How can Egyptian attitudes emerge amidst the people of the covenant? . . . Is Joseph a one-man Egypt? What causes this worldview to emerge in man?" (Kass, 519).

Too often, rootedness in home leads to a sense of pridefulness and triumphalism. The desire for security paves the way to security gone awry. We attribute our stability and growth solely to the work of our hands. Self-reliance becomes the guiding slogan, and a sense of mutuality and community diminish. Putting too much stock in one's self leads to idolatry, and worse, it is a slippery slope directly to the straits of Egypt.

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook shares an important insight related to Jacob commanding Joseph to go out and seek the welfare of his brothers in Shekhem: *lekh na re'eh et shelom achekha*. Kook reads *shelom* more literally, not as "welfare" but rather as "completeness."

Beth El Synagogue

1004 Watts Street

Durham, NC 27701

919.682.1238

info@betheldurham.org

www.betheldurham.org

Rabbi: Daniel Greyber

Rabbi Emeritus: Steven Sager

Synagogue President: Rachel Galanter

Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

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

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

Yahrzeits יארצייט

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| Della Guterman Brandt | Bernard Lee |
| Maurice D'arlin | Arthur Maislen |
| Harold Goldstein | Sidney Mintzer |
| Sally Greenberg | Sophia Reichwald |
| Ruth J. Halperin | Shirley Rosofsky |
| Michael Holub | Isaac Slifkin |
| Myron Kline | Susan Spritzer |

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 Craig, Rona, Justin and Max Spitzer on the birth of their daughter/sister, Summer Belle Spitzer, who was born on November 12th.

BE Mazel Tov

Mazel tov to Galia Goodman and Meredith Emmett on the legalization of their marriage!