



Shabbat Shalom

18 Adar I 5776
February 27, 2016

Parashat Ki Tisa

This Week at Beth El Synagogue

Saturday, February 27:

Havdalah—6:50 pm

Shabbat Mishnah Study	8:45 am
Orthodox Kehillah Services	9:00 am
B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring	9:00 am
Main Sanctuary Services	9:30 am
Bar Mitzvah of Adam Kirsch	
Children's Services	10:30 am

Sunday, February 28:

Weekly Sunday Minyan	9:00 am
Talmud Torah (PreK-7)	9:30 am
Walking with Mitzvot #4	10:15 am
Kitah Gimel Family Beit Midrash	11:30 am
PreKadima at Skyzone	12:30 pm
Wine and Jazz Social Action Fundraiser	2:00 pm
Consider the Possibilities:	2:00 pm
Fun and Fitness for People of All Abilities	
Monthly Durham Community Café Dinner	5:30 pm

Monday, February 29:

Tuesday, March 1:

Hebrew Level I with Donna Goldstein	6:00 pm
Hebrew Level II with Donna Goldstein	7:00 pm

Wednesday, March 2:

Weekly Wednesday Minyan	8:00 am
Talmud Torah (2-6)	4:15 pm

Thursday, March 3:

Synagogue Life Meeting	6:00 pm
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Friday, March 4:

Candle Lighting—5:56 pm

Family Service	5:45 pm
Kitah Vav Family B'nei Mitzvah	6:30 pm
Dinner and Program	

Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Sat. 3/5 Shabbat Mishnah Study
- ✧ Sat. 3/5 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 3/5 B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ✧ Sat. 3/5 Shabbat Morning Services, School Pride Shabbat
- ✧ Sat. 3/5 Monthly Parsha Study
- ✧ Sat. 3/5 Visiting Artist, Debra Band, Lecture
- ✧ Sun. 3/6 Weekly Sunday Minyan
- ✧ Sun. 3/6 Talmud Torah (PreK-7)
- ✧ Sun. 3/6 Simchat Tot
- ✧ Sun. 3/6 Hebrew Level I with Donna Goldstein
- ✧ Wed. 3/9 Weekly Wednesday Minyan
- ✧ Wed. 3/9 Talmud Torah (2-6)
- ✧ Wed. 3/9 Board Meeting
- ✧ Thu. 3/10 Rosh Chodesh Adar II
- ✧ Thu. 3/10 Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Greyber
- ✧ Fri. 3/11 Sisterhood Shabbat (rescheduled from January)

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.



2/27 Ki Tisa Jon Wahl jmwahl@email.unc.edu	919-942-3827
3/5 Vayakhel David Kirsch dkirsch@dm.duke.edu	919-286-4516
3/12 Pekudei David Rubin david_rubin@unc.edu	919-967-7725
3/19 Vayikra Zachor Matt Diamond mattdiamond@mindspring.com	919-688-0377

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is hosted by:
David and Susan Sugarman Kirsch in honor of their son, Adam, 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 Ki Tisa

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

Where does our Torah come from? Did all the words of the Torah come from heaven, so that the Torah is a perfect divine work? If that is the case, then the tradition the Torah inaugurates is one that human beings should accept in its entirety without introducing any changes. Or is the Torah itself the result of human-divine collaboration? If that is the case, the tradition the Torah inaugurates may allow some change, at least by those Jews of each generation who accept the Torah and live by its commandments.

Several 20th-century Jewish thinkers—for example, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Franz Rosenzweig, and Louis Jacobs—endorse the second possibility. They propose a participatory model of revelation: the words we find in the Torah are human responses to God's command. Most people assume that pre-20th-century Jewish texts endorse only the first of the two possibilities: the Torah's wording comes directly from God; the role of Moses and the Israelites at Sinai was merely to receive passively, not to participate actively in the creation of Torah. But I don't think this assumption is correct. While the Torah's own descriptions of revelation at Sinai sometimes support the presumption that the Torah's wording comes from heaven, at several points these same texts hint at the participatory model. The Torah seems to want us to find value in both ideas as we contemplate where our religion comes from.

This week's parashah contains a fine example of this tendency to bolster both views. Exodus 31:18 tells us that God "gave Moses two tablets of the covenant, tablets of stone written with the finger of God." This verse teaches that the words on the tablets were heavenly in origin. So does Exodus 32:15-16: "Moses . . . descended the mountain, with two tablets of the covenant in his hand . . . The tablets were God's work; the writing was God's writing, inscribed into the tablets." These verses indicate that the wording of the Torah's laws, or at least of the Ten Commandments, comes directly from God.

The Israelites never had the opportunity to acquire direct knowledge of what was written on these tablets. Moses shattered them before any Israelites saw them (32:19). God then directed Moses to replace the tablets. The new set of tablets was to result from cooperation between Moses and God: "The LORD said to Moses: 'Carve two stone tablets like the original ones, and I shall write down on the tablets the words that were on the original tablets you broke'" (34.1). The writing is supposed to be God's, not Moses's.

When Moses prepares the second set of tablets, however, the information our parashah provides moves in a different direction: "He was with God 40 days and 40 nights; he ate no food and drank no water; and he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments" (34:28). The subject of the verb wrote, like the subject of the preceding three verbs, seems to be Moses. (The Karaite biblical commentator Abū al-Faraj Hārūn ibn Faraj discusses the syntax we find here, explaining that in a series of verbs, the subject remains the same unless a new subject is introduced.) This verse contradicts the plain sense of God's command in 34:1. Many scholars, ancient, medieval, and modern, attempt to avoid this problem by asserting that the real subject of the verb write in 34:28 must be God, even though wording of the verse does not indicate a change in subject. (This interpretation appears, for example, in the classical medieval commentaries of Rashbam, ibn Ezra, and Ramban.)

Other interpreters, however, maintain that Moses, not God, wrote the second set of tablets (see, for example, Exodus Rabbah 47:2). These interpreters explain the contradiction between 34:1 and 34:28 by suggesting that in verse 1 God does not intend literally that He will write the second set, but that Moses will do so on His behalf. According to this reading, the verb back in 34:1 was in the first person only to show that God approves what Moses writes or that God provides Moses strength to carry out the writing. (On these interpreters, see Saul Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, 80-82, and Menahem Kasher, *Torah Shelema*, 22:126-27.) Grammatically, this is a stronger interpretation: Moses took on what was originally supposed to be God's role, and he participated in place of God in producing the words on the tablets the Israelites received.

Even according to the simplest reading of 34:1, the second set of tablets was to result from cooperation between Moses (who carved the tablets out of stone) and God (who was supposed to write on them). But 34:28 goes further: it tells us that both the tablets and the writing are the work of Moses.

Several medieval rabbinic commentators (Isaiah of Trani, Moshav Zekenim) point out a significant difference between the way Exodus describes the first and second sets of tablets: while it specifies that the writing on the first tablets was divine (31:18), it refrains from providing this information in regard to the second set of tablets. This contrast weakens the attempt of commentators like Rashbam to import God as an unspoken subject into 34:28.

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

Aharon ben David u'Miriam (Alan Goldman)	Malka Hannah bat Basha Rachel	Sonia Berman
Aryeh ben Tziporah	Miriam Shifra bat Issur (Margaret Sachs)	Anne Boyd
Baracha bat Sarah	M'cor Eyschel bat Esther Tzvia	Cynthia Brown
Bedonna Riva bat Sara	Ovadya ben Elinor (Ovadya Fleishman)	Elinor Fleishman
Ben-Zion ben Sarah	Reuven ben Chanoch v'Dinah (Robert Feurst)	Ilene Jacobson
Chana bat Malkah	Rut bat Sarah (Suzanne Furst)	Jennifer Krunkosky
Hannah Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman)	Sara bat Hinda (Sylvia Dante)	Inez McFarling
Daronit Esther bat Tuvia v'Leah (Jennifer Greyber)	Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)	Ezra Rapport
David ben Sarah (David Leitner)	Shira Batya bat Meirav	Jack Reich
David Yosef ben Avraham v'Hannah (Donald Goldstein)	Shmuel ben Shoshana	Michael Rockman
Eliyahu Chanan ben Sarah (Ed Gagnon)	Springa Simcha bat Yehudah v'Chana (Susan Rosefeldt)	Richard Roth
Gershon Yonah ben Tevya haKohen v'Chanah Leah haLevi (Harlan Gradin)	Tuvia ben Shmuel v'Tziporah (Tovia Lebovich)	Carmen Sadowsky
Malkah bat Leah (Meg Anderson)	Tziporah bat Esther	Lauren Schiro
	Yehudit bat Rachel	Susan Tolchin
		Christine Walters
		Derick Williams
		Orrie Wilner
		Amy Wolf

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

Yahrzeits יארצייט

Stephen Fisher Alexander	Jack Mlyn
Saura Bartner	Florence Rosenstein Moel
Shirley Becker	Jacob Most
Gussie Becker	Blume Pas
Harry Brown	Dora Rosenblatt
Julius Kramer	Rita Sager
Sadie Lipton	Alex Satinsky
Rachelle Malley	Ben Segal
Sigmund Meyer	Irving Sosensky

BE Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to Adam Kirsch, who is becoming a Bar Mitzvah this Shabbat!

Mazel Tov to Randi and Scott Smith! Their daughter, Allison, recently became engaged to Michael Kalmykov.

Mazel Tov to the following Beth El members on their birthdays! Sandra Cohen, Anita Farel, Pat Fischer, Judith Marks, Daniel Weinreb, Melanie Mintzer, Martin Poleski, Karin Shapiro, Darryl Zeldin, Jennifer Parkhurst, Lois Price, Barbra Roberman, Lewis Gold, Anthony Weston, Jennifer Greyber, Marsha Horowitz, Edy Parker, Valerie Schreiber

BE Remembered

Beth El Synagogue extends condolences to:

Eric Cohen, Sandi Kronick and family on the death of Linda Cohen--wife of Jeffrey Cohen, mother of Eric Cohen and Sandi Kronick, and grandmother of Ella and Nate. Funeral service were held on Friday 2/19.

Adam and Beth Goldstein and their family on the death of Adam's aunt and sister to his mother, Sonia Levin who passed away the evening of February 10, 2016.