

# Shabbat Shalom

8 Sh'vat 5777 February 4, 2017

Parashat Bo

# This Week at Beth El Synagogue

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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
Parasha Study	9:30 am
Havdallah	6:28 pm

## Sunday, February 5:

Talmud Torah (Pre-K-7th grade) 9:30	) am
Weekly Sunday Minyan 9:30	) am
Simchat Tot! 9:45	5 am
Kitah Dalet Family Beit Midrash 10:3	30 am
Unveiling Ceremony for May Segal 11:3	30 am
Kitah Vav Parent Only B'nai Mitzvah Program 12:3	30 pm

## Wednesday, February 8:

Weekly Wednesday Minyan	8:00 am
Talmud Torah (2nd-6th grade)	4:40 pm
BE Board Meeting	7:30 pm

#### Thursday, February 9:

CANCELED Tish at Rabbi Greyber's

## Friday, February 10:

Candle Lighting	5:34 pm
Kitah Zayin Class	5:00 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat Services (Bat Mitzvah of Tali	6:00 pm
Samuel-Devaney	<i>(</i> )
Kitah Vav B'nai Mitzvah Family Program &	7:15 pm
Potluck Dinner	·

## **Upcoming Events:**

- Sat. 2/11 Shabbat Mishnah Study
- Sat. 2/11 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- Sat. 2/11 B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- Sat. 2/11 Shabbat Morning Services (Bat Mitzvah of Talia Samuel-Devaney)
- Sat. 2/11 Healing Yoga
- Sat. 2/11 Children's Services
- Sun. 2/12 Talmud Torah (Pre-K-7th Grade)
- Sun. 2/12 Weekly Sunday Minyan
- Sun. 2/12 Annual Beth El and Red Cross Blood Drive
- Sun. 2/12 Knitting Chevra
- Sun. 2/12 Kitah Gimel Family Beit Midrash (Havdallah)
- Sun. 2/12 Planting Trees for Tu B'shevat
- Sun. 2/12 Teen Park Clean Up
- ☆ Mon. 2/13 Sisterhood Board Meeting
- ♥ Wed. 2/15 Talmud Torah (2nd-6th grade)
- Thu. 2/16 Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Greyber
- Thu. 2/16 Tish at Rabbi Greyber's
- ☆ Fri. 2/17 Got 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.

2/11 Beshallah-Shira

Elise Goldwasser

Elise.goldwasser@duke.edu 919-956-8871

2/18 Yitro

Roger Perilstein

rperilstein@hrc-pa.com 919-286-9814

2/25 Mishpatim-Shekalim

Shula Bernard

shulabernard@gmail.com 919-967-9393

3/4 Terumah David Kirsch

dkirsch@md.duke.edu 919-286-4516

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 Va'era

Adapted from http://www.jtsa.edu/jts-torah-online

"They tried to kill us, we won, let's eat."

This tongue-in-cheek summary of most Jewish holidays applies most strongly, perhaps, to the Passover Seder. We retell the story of the Exodus from Egypt, we praise and thank God for redeeming us, and then we eat a festive meal. Cast in that light, the story of the Exodus seems so straightforward. The Israelites are innocent victims, somehow pawns in God's larger plan. The Egyptians, and especially Pharaoh, are wicked, oppressing the Israelites with forced labor. God punishes the Egyptians with plagues and redeems the Israelites with signs and wonders. In our popular conception of the story, there's a clear distinction between good and evil, the Israelites and the Egyptians, those whom God favors and those whom God punishes. Indeed, in the beginning of the parashah, Moses and God define the Israelite community in relatively simple ways. Moses tells Pharaoh: "We will all go, young and old: we will go with our sons and daughters, our flocks and herds; for we must observe the Lord's festival" (Exod. 10:9). Men and women, adults and children, are all part of the story of the Exodus. God then adds future generations to Moses's definition of the Israelite community: "This day shall be to you one of remembrance: you shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord throughout the ages; you shall celebrate it as an institution for all time" (Exod. 12:14). The in-group is no longer only the Israelites who are experiencing the Exodus in real time, but all of their descendants in perpetuity.

Generally speaking, this is still the way we think about our own community. At the seder table, we reinforce the imagined direct familial link between ourselves and the ancient Israelites, proclaiming: "If the Holy Blessed One had not taken our ancestors out of Egypt, then we, our children, and our children's children would still be enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt." In upholding this model of Jewish communal identity, we assert that God favored our ancestors, and therefore us as well; just as the ancient Israelites are redeemed, so are we. Thus, we maintain the clear-cut dichotomies of self and other, Israelite and Egyptian.

But in studying Torah, as in living life, very little is so simple. As we continue reading the story of the Exodus in this week's parashah, those boundaries between who is in and who is out become much more blurry.

As God gives instructions about not eating or owning *hametz* during the festival of unleavened bread, the in-group becomes radically expanded: "For whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a citizen of the country" (Exod. 12:19). In this command, it would seem, those who might not identify as Israelites are still very much included as part of the community. This trend towards wider boundaries continues as the text describes that alongside the Israelites leaving Egypt, a "mixed multitude" left with them (12:38). According to the plain meaning of the text, it seems that it is not only the Israelites who are the good guys, whom God protects, but others as well, presumably Egyptians, who join their narrative.

Given these different definitions of who comprises the Israelite community, it is unsurprising that as God outlines the laws of the paschal lamb, the first element discussed is who may or may not consume it. The child of the foreigner may not partake; the circumcised slave may. The bound or hired laborer may not; the circumcised stranger may (12:43-49). The boundaries of the Israelite community, of the protagonist team of the Exodus, are clearly more complicated than our usual narrative allows for.

These specific categories do not all perfectly map onto the experiences of the contemporary Jewish world. Nonetheless, they raise important questions about the nature of our communal boundaries. Who is in and who is out? Are the answers different depending on the context? What are the relationships between ethnicity, religion, and peoplehood? What identities are we born with, and what identities do we choose?

Too often, we choose simple answers to these questions, preferring the comfort of black and white over the complicated nuances of gray. But people, and therefore communities, are complex, and Parashat Bo reminds us that the answers to those questions are not, and should not be, simple. The boundaries of the Israelite community are porous, with more gray area than perhaps we would always like to admit.

We say, "They tried to kill us, we won, let's eat." Using our sacred texts as our guides, let us remember to explore: Who are the "they" who tried to kill us? Who are the "we" who won? And who are we obligated to welcome to our seder table?

## Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

Batya bat Shprintza (Barbra Roberman)	Miriam Shifra bat Issur (Margaret Sachs)	Alvin Jacobson
Chana bat Malka	Ovadva ben Esther Malkah	Anne Boyd
	(Ovadya Fleishman)	Alan Marty
Chana Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman)	Sarah hat Hinda	Christine Walters
David hen Sarah	(Sylvia Dante)	Ezra Rapport
(David Leitner)	Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)	Helen Rosenberg
David Yosef ben Avraham v'Chana	Shalom ben Sprintze (Stanley	Jack Reich
(Donald Goldstein)	Ramati)	Jeff Shields
Esther bat Yankale Sura	Shimon ben Shlomo haLevi	Joyce Romm
Esther Malka bat Chaya Fruma	v'Sheyna (Stuart Levine)	Ken Walkters
(Elinor Fleishman)	Shira Batya bat Meirav	Lauren Schiro
Herschel David ben Aharon	Shmuel ben Shoshana	Netta Boswell
haKohen u'Bela Miriam	Shrage ben Devorah Leah (Phillip	Orrie Wilner
Israel ben Zalman u'Malkah	Samuel Ramati)	Richard Roth
Malka bat Leah (Meg Anderson)	Shraga Feivel ben Leib (Philip	Sidney Barker
Malka Chana bat Basha Rachel	Skoletsky)	
	Tuvia ben Shmuel v'Tziporah	
Masha bat Fanny (Marsha Schonberg)	(Tovia Lebovich)	
M'cor Eyshel bat Esther Tzvia	Tziporah bat Esther	
,	Yakov ben Sarah	Please contact the synagogu
Mishulamit bat Maryam (Marcia Hogan)	(Jacob Schonberg)	office with any additions or
Hogan)	Ya'akov Roni ben Margalit	changes to this list.

## Yahrzeits יארצייט

#### May their memory be a blessing

l	Frances Lynn	Eva Baden Slifkin	Teresa Man Koplowitz
l	Esther Margolese	Rae Korkin	Rabbi Nathan Levinson
l	Bartow Culp	Leon Kahn	Walter Schlesinger
l	Sarah Saffron	Esther Lebovich	
l	Jerry Ulrich	Gerard Rohde	
l	Sarah Saffron Jerry Ulrich Ernie Bronstein	Robert Pickus	
l	Gertrude Brown	Jim Wells, Sr.	
١	Alan Grossinger	Anita Halberstadt	

## **BE Remembered**

Beth El Synagogue extends condolences to Adam and Beth Goldstein and their family on the death of Adam's mother and Jared, Michael and Eliana's grandmother—Rita Wolfson (Rachel bat Israel Mordechai HaLevi)—who passed away Wednesday morning in Chapel Hill. The family will sit shiva in Atlanta and then return to Chapel Hill and have shiva minyanim at their home on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm.

Beth El Synagogue extends condolences to Ari and Diana Medoff and their family on the death of Ari's uncle—Philip Siber—who passed away on Sunday, January 22 in New Jersey.

Beth El Synagogue extends condolences to Jeff Spinner Halev, Elyza Halev, and their family on the death of Jeff's step-brother—Elliott Rosenbaum, Eliyahu ben Yisrael v'Rachel— who passed away on Jaunary 18, in Farmington Hills, MI.

May the Ever Present One comfort them among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

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: Noah Pickus