



Shabbat Shalom

26 Nisan 5777
April 22, 2017

Parashat Shmini

This Week at Beth El Synagogue

Saturday, April 22:

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	8:37 pm

Sunday, April 23:

Chapel Hill-Carrboro CROP Walk	9:00 am
Talmud Torah (Pre-K-7th Grade)	9:30 am
Weekly Sunday Minyan	9:30 am
Simchat Tot!	9:45 am
Kitah Vav-Paperclips	10:00 am
Kitah Hay Family Beit Midrash (Yom HaShoah)	10:30 am
Talmud Torah Faculty Meeting	12:30 pm
Pre-Kadima Game Day	12:30 pm

Monday, April 24:

Yom HaShoah

Tuesday, April 25:

Sisterhood Potluck Dinner and Elections	6:30 pm
Va'ad HaChinuch Meeting	7:00 pm
Ritual Committee	7:30 pm

Wednesday, April 26:

Weekly Wednesday Minyan (Rosh Chodesh)	7:45 am
Talmud Torah (2nd-6th Grade)	4:40 pm

Friday, April 28:

Candle Lighting	7:42 pm
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Upcoming Events:

- ◊ Sat. 4/29 Shabbat Mishnah Study
- ◊ Sat. 4/29 B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ◊ Sat. 4/29 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ◊ Sat. 4/29 High School Senior/New Driver Shabbat
- ◊ Sat. 4/29 Teen Lunch and Learn
- ◊ Sun. 4/30 Beth El DIGs SEEDS
- ◊ Sun. 4/30 Last Day of Talmud Torah (PreK-7th grade)
- ◊ Sun. 4/30 End of Talmud Torah Ceremony/Siyum
- ◊ Sun. 4/30 USY & Kadima Kings Dominion Day
- ◊ Sun. 4/30 PreK-2nd Grade Mad Science Party!
- ◊ Sun. 4/30 Yom HaShoah Memorial Services for Durham-Chapel Hill
- ◊ Mon. 5/1 Yom Ha'zikaron
- ◊ Tue. 5/2 Yom HaAtzmaut
- ◊ Wed. 5/3 Talmud Torah (2nd-6th grade)- T'fillah Boot Camp
- ◊ Thu. 5/4 Synagogue Life Committee Meeting
- ◊ Fri. 5/5 Kabbalat Shabbat Services (Bar Mitzvah of Kol Resnick)
- ◊ Sat. 5/6 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ◊ Sat. 5/6 B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ◊ Sat. 5/6 Shabbat Morning Services (Bar Mitzvah of Kol Resnick)

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.



4/29 Tazria-Metzora

Alan Mandel

andelcpa@gmail.com

917-5895673

5/6 Aharey Mot-Kedoshim

David Kirsch

dkirsch@md.duke.edu

919-286-4516

5/13 Emor

Isaac Price

isaac@isaacprice.org

919-866-5453

5/20 Behar-Behukkotai

Shula Bernard

shulabernard@gmail.com

919-967-9393

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is hosted by:

Bernie & Ada Most, Gary & Beth Berman, Ron Grunwald & Lori Seibel, Lew & Judy Siegel, Jennifer Parkhurst, Steve Cassell, Sheldon Becker & Rita Lichtman, Sheva Zucker & Sandy Kessler

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 Pesah

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

This week's parashah includes the tragic story of Nadav and Avihu, Aaron's two eldest sons, who died, consumed by divine fire, after bringing an offering of alien fire within the sacred precincts of the Mishkan. Considering the dramatic nature of the narrative and its compelling pathos, the story is told with remarkable terseness. Nadav and Avihu place coals and incense in their firepans and offer it as a sacrifice, an act which they had not been instructed to do. Immediately, fire issues forth from God and kills them. Moses tells his brother rather cryptically, "This is what God meant in saying I will be sanctified by those close to me, and I will be glorified before the entire people." Aaron is silent. Moses then calls Aaron's two cousins to remove the bodies. He warns Aaron and his two remaining sons, Elazar and Itamar, not to show any outward signs of mourning lest they also die, nor to leave the sanctuary, again on pain of death. God then addresses Aaron directly, warning him to avoid intoxicating beverages prior to entering the sanctuary—once more on pain of death—and instructs him in further priestly duties. Final instructions from Moses to Aaron and his remaining sons are followed by Moses's discovery of a significant error of omission by Elazar and Itamar in their priestly responsibilities. Aaron offers an explanation and justification for his sons' errors, which Moses accepts (Lev. 10).

Commentaries through the ages have focused on the actions of Aaron's eldest sons, asking whether being slain by God's holy fire was, in fact, a punishment—and if so, what exactly it was that they were punished for. Most commentators conclude that the deaths of Nadav and Avihu were indeed punishment, but disagree as to the nature of their transgression: they were drunk when they entered the sanctuary; they were improperly clothed; they had not washed their hands and feet; they were unmarried; they had entered the holy place without authorization; or they had expounded the law before Moses, their teacher. What we can conclude from this plethora of possible explanations is that no one knows for sure why they were killed. Commentators are equally intrigued and perplexed by Moses's statement to Aaron, and Aaron's subsequent silence, in the face of this horrific tragedy.

If, however, we look at the unfolding narrative in its entirety, a case can be made that the protagonists are not Nadav and Avihu, but Aaron. This story is about Aaron. It is a story about a parent-child relationship in the same tradition as the accounts of Abraham and Isaac, Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, Jacob and Joseph. Two elements of the story stand out: When Nadav and Avihu are killed, Aaron is silent. But the language the Torah uses, *vayidom Aharon*, is strong language. This is not mere silence, the absence of speech. It is a profound silence. Aaron is dumbstruck! We can picture him as virtually catatonic. Then, after his brother Moses tells him he must not show outward signs of mourning or leave the Mishkan, God speaks to him. It is one of only two times in the entire Torah that God speaks directly to Aaron, the other being after the death by fire of his cousins, Korah and his followers, in the desert insurrection. It is at this point in the narrative, when God speaks to Aaron, that Aaron undergoes a transformation.

William F. May, a Christian theologian, describes two kinds of parental love, *accepting love* and *transforming love*, that necessarily exist in tension with each other. *Accepting love* is unconditional. It is a love that accepts the child as she is. *Transforming love* promotes the well-being of the child. It is a love that wants the child to flourish, to be the best he can possibly be. As May notes, however, "accepting love, without transforming love, slides into indulgence and finally neglect. Transforming love, without accepting love, badgers and finally rejects." It is the need to find the balance between these two kinds of love that we find at the heart of this narrative.

Aaron has been busy, preoccupied with the preparation for and consecration of the Mishkan. Immediately after the week of consecration, Nadav and Avihu make a tragic error, perhaps with sincere and praiseworthy motivation. They make the offering of incense not as prescribed, but on their own initiative and in their own way. Does Aaron bear some responsibility? Has he been an enabler of his sons as he was in the incident of the golden calf? Is that perhaps why he is in a state of shock and cannot speak? The Torah never answers these questions explicitly, but leaves them for us to ponder.

Then God, for the very first time, speaks directly to Aaron. Is that act in and of itself meant as a kind of comfort? And what words does God speak? They are words of instruction, rules of behavior, and a charge to teach the Israelites God's laws as transmitted by Moses. Here, God is modeling what May called transforming parental love, the love that seeks the betterment of children, even as Aaron is charged with becoming the teacher-in-chief of the people. And then, when Moses learns of the transgression of Elazar and Itamar, Aaron comes to their defense, takes responsibility on himself, and mollifies his brother.

Aaron, it seems, finally comprehends the tension between *accepting love* and *transforming love* and the necessity of finding a balance between them. In doing so, he becomes our teacher and exemplar, showing us how we may instruct, exhort, and criticize our children, even at times saying "no," and still assure them of our accepting and unconditional love. It is a lesson all of us—parents, teachers, and community leaders—should take to heart.

Refuah Shleymah

Adelah bat Avrom v'Chenya (Adele Abramowitz)	Miriam bat Batya (Joyce Gudeman)	Alvin Jacobson
Bedonna Riva bat Ya'akov v'Sarah (Donna Goldstein)	Miriam Shifra bat Issur (Margaret Sachs)	Anne Boyd
Chaim Michael ben Flora (Howard Margolis)	Moshe Yosef ben Vishka Elka (Michael Perkins)	Alan Marty
Chana bat Malka	Ovadya ben Esther Malkah (Ovadya Fleishman)	Christine Walters
Chana Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman)	Sarah bat Hinda (Sylvia Dante)	Ezra Rapport
David ben Sarah (David Leitner)	Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)	Helen Rosenberg
David Yosef ben Avraham v'Chana (Donald Goldstein)	Shalom ben Sprintze (Stanley Ramati)	Jack Reich
Esther bat Yankale Sura	Shira Batya bat Meirav (Netta Boswell)	Jeff Shields
Esther Malka bat Chaya	Shmuel ben Shoshana (Orrie Wilner)	Richard Roth
Fruma (Elinor Fleishman)	Shrage ben Devorah Leah (Sidney Barker)	
Gittel bat Rachel (Gina Doocy)	(Philip Samuel Ramati)	
Herschel David ben Aharon hakohen u'Bela Miriam	Shraga Feivel ben Leib (Philip Skoletsky)	
Israel ben Zalman u'Malkah	Sura Malka bat Rivka (Molly Grossinger)	
Leah bat Miriam (Eileen Abramson)	Tuvia ben Shmuel v'Tziporah (Tovia Lebovich)	
Malka bat Leah (Meg Anderson)	Tziporah bat Esther	
Malka Chana bat Basha Rachel	Ya'akov Roni ben Margalit	
M'cor Eyshe bat Esther Tzvia	Yehoshua Heschel ben Tova (Gitel Joshua Shatz)	
Mishulamit bat Maryam (Marcia Hogan)	Yehoshua Yitzchak ben Ya'akov v'Sarah (Howard Goldstein)	Please contact the synagogue office with any additions or changes to this list.

yarzheits

Etta Bayer Liberman	Augusta Korkin	Martin Lakin
Ethel Berman Engel	Sadie Levine	George Berkowitz
Gedale Man	Julius Rosofsky	Lena Goldberg
Mary P. Siegel	Benjamin E. Thurston	Zelda Goldstein
Friedel Bachenheimer	Israel Rockman	Melvin Mack
Matilda Berkowitz	Sylvia Fridovich	Margolese
Bernard Epstein	Pauline Klein	

BE Remembered

Beth El Synagogue extends condolences to:

Roben Bloodworth and Lisa Springer, and their family on the death of Roben's uncle, John Hicks, who passed away on Monday, April 10 in Raleigh. Memorial services will take place in Raleigh.

Scott Snyder, Rachelle Bienstock, Julia, Shira, and their family on the death of Scott's father, Julia and Shira's grandfather—Barry Snyder—Benyamin ben David—who passed away on Friday, March 31, 2017 in New York City.

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

Beth El Synagogue

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Rabbi: Daniel Greyber
Rabbi Emeritus: Steven Sager
Synagogue President: Noah Pickus