



# Shabbat Shalom

6 Iyyar 5776  
May 14, 2016

Parashah Kedoshim

## This Week at Beth El Synagogue

### Saturday, May 14:

*Havdalah*—8:56 pm

Shabbat Mishnah Study	8:45 am
Shabbat Service Leaders Session	9:00 am
Orthodox Kehillah Services	9:00 am
B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring	9:00 am
Main Sanctuary Services	9:30 am
Monthly Parashah Study	9:30 am
Shabbat Service Leaders Session	1:15 pm
Simchat Tot Shabbat Picnic	3:30 pm

### Sunday, May 15:

Sunday Minyan	9:00 am
Annual Meeting, Volunteer of the Year and BBQ	10:15 am

### Monday, May 16:

Sisterhood Board Meeting	7:30 pm
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### Tuesday, May 17:

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

### Wednesday, May 18:

Weekly Wednesday Minyan	8:00 am
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### Thursday, May 19:

### Friday, May 20:

*Candle Lighting*—8:01 pm

### Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Sat. 5/21 Shabbat Morning Mishnah
- ✧ Sat. 5/21 Shabbat Service Leader Session
- ✧ Sat. 5/21 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 5/21 Last B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ✧ Sat. 5/21 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 5/21 Chavurah Minyan
- ✧ Sat. 5/21 Healing Yoga
- ✧ Sat. 5/21 Torah Reading Skills Meeting
- ✧ Sun. 5/22 Sunday Minyan
- ✧ Sun. 5/22 Shabbat Service Leader Session
- ✧ Sun. 5/22 Taste of Kitah Gan
- ✧ Sun. 5/22 Sisterhood Stroll in the NC Botanical Gardens
- ✧ Tue. 5/24 Hebrew Levels I/II with Donna Goldstein
- ✧ Wed. 5/25 Weekly Wednesday Minyan
- ✧ Wed. 5/25 Shabbat Service Leader Session
- ✧ Thu. 5/26 Lag B'omer
- ✧ Thu. 5/26 Lag B'omer Campfire at Rachel Galanter's Home
- ✧ Fri. 5/27 USY Spring Convention
- ✧ Sat. 5/28 USY Spring Convention
- ✧ Sat. 5/28 Shabbat Mishnah Study
- ✧ Sat. 5/28 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 5/28 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sun. 5/29 USY Spring Convention

### 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.



5/14 Kedoshim Bernie Fischer Bernie.fischer@duke.edu	919-493-0306
5/21 Emor Sally Laliberte selaib@gmail.com	919-302-0035
5/28 Behar Diane Markoff diane.markoff@earthlink.net	919- 969-8953
6/4 Behukotai Roger Perilstein rperilstein@hrc-pa.com	919-286-9814

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is sponsored by:  
*Beth and Gary Berman, Steve Cassell,  
Rita Lichtman and Sheldon Becker, Ada and Bernie  
Most, Jennifer Parkhurst,  
Lorisa Seibel and Ron Grunwald,  
Sheva Zucker and 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 Kedoshim

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

There are many exhortations in Leviticus 19, but only two of them conclude with “you shall fear your God, I am the Lord.” We will focus on Leviticus 19:14—  
 You shall not curse the deaf, and before the blind you shall not place a stumbling block;  
 rather you shall fear your God, I am the Lord  
 —and five traditional Jewish interpretations, to examine how the phrase “you shall fear your God” informs our understanding of the injunctions not to curse the deaf and not to place a stumbling block before the blind.

Ibn Ezra (Rabbi Abraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra, 1093-1167, Spain) offers a literal interpretation:

Don’t curse the deaf [just] because you have the power, and similarly, do not [literally] place a stumbling block before the blind [just because you have the power]. Fear God, who can punish you and make you deaf or blind.

For Ibn Ezra, the phrase “fear your God” is intended to instill the fear of God’s imminent punishment for such egregious offenses.

Not so Rashi (R. Shelomo Yitzhaki, France, 1040-1105). He, instead, offers a metaphorical reading of “before the blind you are not to place a stumbling block”:

Before someone blind in the matter [at hand], you shall not give advice which is unsuitable for him.

Eschewing the literal interpretation, Rashi is suggesting that “placing a stumbling block” means giving unsuitable advice—i.e., taking unfair advantage of a person who is intellectually blind, so to speak, and does not possess the knowledge or experience to make an informed decision. What is the textual justification for Rashi’s figurative reading? He writes:

“Fear your God,” since people are unable to determine if the intent of the person [giving the advice] is for good or for bad, and he is thereby able to evade [the charge of evil intent] by saying, “My intent was for the best.” Therefore, it is said concerning him, “Fear your God”—the one who is cognizant of the [nature] of your thoughts.

In other words, Rashi is saying that people may not know your true intentions, but God certainly does — so don’t give bad advice.

Rashi’s metaphorical reading and Ibn Ezra’s literal one affect the theological implications of their comments: Rashi emphasizes God’s omniscience (God discerns our inner thoughts); Ibn Ezra emphasizes God’s omnipotence (God has the power to punish us). For Rashi, “fear of God” means we need to internalize God’s will so it can prompt us to do what is right; for Ibn Ezra, “fear of God” is the fear of some tangible external punishment. Rashi’s theology may reflect a more conceptualized and mature understanding of God, and Ibn Ezra’s a younger person’s or a less nuanced one. Or perhaps, the theology one embraces may depend on the moment, on one’s life situation.

Rabbenu Bahye (Bahye ben Asher, 1255-1340, Spain) understands deafness and blindness in this verse paradigmatically—whereby the blind and deaf are emblematic of all those we do not fear:

And the purpose of this [admonition not to curse the deaf] is so that a person may become restrained in his speech and not accustom his soul to a negative [character] trait; and the prohibition is not intended for the protection of the victim; rather it is for the protection of the person doing the cursing: for if a person restrains himself from [cursing] the deaf, all the more so concerning one who can hear. [Cursing] the “deaf person” serves as a paradigm for all other [similar offenses] . . . [where people take advantage of others] since they do not fear them.

Rashi and Ibn Ezra both explain the injunction from the perspective of the victim: the Torah is trying to protect the helpless. Bahye, on the other hand, explains the injunction from the perspective of the potential curser, stating that “the prohibition is not for the sake of the victim but rather for his [the curser’s] own sake.” Bahye is suggesting that the prohibition is intended for the purpose of spiritual/ethical training, extolling the virtue of restraint—i.e., restraining from negative speech even when it will have no direct effect on another person. Bahye’s comment is psychologically based.

Why, according to Bahye, does our verse conclude with the phrase “you shall fear your God”? For Bahye, “people curse the deaf and cause the blind to stumble since they do not fear them. That is why [the verse] concludes, ‘You shall fear your God.’”

Bahye is, in effect, saying that the person who commits these offenses is a cowardly person; the reason he might feel free to afflict the deaf or blind is that he is not afraid of them. But the afflicter had better fear God, because God is aware of the offense, even if no one else is. That is why Bahye concludes his comment as follows:

And that is the intention of the statement of our Rabbis of blessed memory in Avot 2:1: “Know what is above from you: a seeing eye, a listening ear, and all your deeds being inscribed in a book.”

Abarbanel (Isaac ben Judah Abrabanel, 1437-1508, Portugal/Italy) adds an entirely new theology, stating that all the prohibitions mentioned in Leviticus 19:11-14 are juxtaposed, one following the other,

so one should see that [even though] [these laws could be logically deduced and legislated by an enlightened society] since they are humane, [they are, nevertheless, included in the Torah] in order to caution that one should not refrain from robbery, swearing falsely, dealing dishonestly, cursing the deaf because logic dictates, but rather because God has forbidden them . . . that the [reason] you refrain from doing any of these repulsive things should not be that they would be prohibited by humanly/logically derived law, but rather because God commanded them for the sake of complying with God’s will.

# Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

Aharon ben David u’Miriam (Alan Goldman)	Reuven ben Chanoch v’Dinah (Robert Feurst)	Faye Davis Rapp Gordon Rapp
Baracha bat Sarah	Sara bat Hinda (Sylvia Dante)	Ezra Rapport
Batya bat Shprintza (Barbra Roberman)	Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)	Jack Reich
Ben-Zion ben Sarah	Shira Batya bat Meirav	Michael Rockman
Chana bat Malkah	Shmuel ben Shoshana	Richard Roth
Hannah Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman)	Tuvia ben Shmuel v’Tziporah (Tovia Lebovich)	Carmen Sadovsky Lauren Schiro
David ben Sarah (David Leitner)	Tziporah bat Esther	Susan Tolchin
David Yosef ben Avraham v’Hannah (Donald Goldstein)	Yaakov Roni ben Margalit	Edward Thompson-Starkey Christine Walters
Eliyahu Chanan ben Sarah (Ed Gagnon)	Anne Boyd	Derick Williams
Malkah bat Leah (Meg Anderson)	Cynthia Brown	Orrie Wilner
Malka Hannah bat Basha Rachel Miriam Shifra bat Issur (Margaret Sachs)	Elinor Fleishman Sammy Follodor	Amy Wolf <i>Please contact the synagogue office with any additions or changes to this list.</i>
M’cor Eyshel bat Esther Tzvia	Jennifer Krunkosky Inez McFarling	
Ovadya ben Elinor (Ovadya Fleishman)	Lorraine Morley	

# Yahrzeits יארצייט

Ida Behar	Albert Markoff
Esther Cassell	Maude Mordant
John J. Johnson III	Helen Rosenzweig
Edith Klapper	Annie Saltz
Abraham Leiss	Leon Arthur Zeiger
Joseph Libman	
Thelma Margolis	

# BE Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to the following Beth El members on their birthdays!  
 Adele Abramowitz, Judy Byck, Alice Gold, Lane Golden, Arthur Marks, Syd Miller, Michele Pas, Noah Pickus, Shai Posner, Michael Reed, Joel Schwartz, Ariel Tichnor

Mazel Tov to Dr. David Kirsch on being awarded a prestigious Outstanding Investigator Award at Duke Health, from the National Cancer Institute.

Mazel Tov to Mary Joan and Alan Mandel on the birth of their granddaughter, Sylvia Grace Mandel, born on May 5 in New Jersey.

Mazel Tov to Miriam and Shai Posner on the birth of their son, Gilad Shimon, born on Sunday, May 1.

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Rabbi: Daniel Greyber  
 Rabbi Emeritus: Steven Sager  
 Synagogue President: Rachel Galanter