



Shabbat Shalom

21 Elul 5776
September 24, 2016

Parashat Ki Tavo

This Week at Beth El Synagogue

Saturday, September 24:

Havdalah—7:38 pm

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
NC Pride Parade Durham	1:00 pm
Selichot Services— at the JCC	8:15 pm

Sunday, September 25

Talmud Torah	9:30 am
Weekly Sunday Minyan	9:30 am
Kitah Zayin Family Beit Midrash (T'fillin)	10:00 am
Hudi Gross Memorial Lecture	5:30 pm
Speaker: Jon D. Levenson	

Monday, September 26:

Tuesday, September 27:

Wednesday, September 28:

Weekly Wednesday Minyan	8:00 am
Talmud Torah	4:40 pm

Thursday, September 29:

Rabbi Greyber's Siddur Class	7:30 pm
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Friday, September 30:

Candle Lighting—6:20 pm

Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Sat. 10/1 Shabbat Mishnah Study
- ✧ Sat. 10/1 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Service
- ✧ Sat. 10/1 B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ✧ Sat. 10/1 Shabbat Morning Service
- ✧ Sun. 10/2 Weekly Sunday Minyan
- ✧ Sun. 10/2 Erev Rosh Hashanah Babysitting
- ✧ Sun. 10/2 Erev Rosh Hashanah Services
- ✧ Mon. 10/3 Rosh Hashanah Day 1 Services
- ✧ Mon. 10/3 Children's Services
- ✧ Mon. 10/3 Teen Room Open
- ✧ Mon. 10/3 Rosh Hashanah Day 1 Babysitting
- ✧ Mon. 10/3 Erev 2nd Day Rosh Hashanah Services
- ✧ Tue. 10/4 Rosh Hashanah Day 2 Services
- ✧ Tue. 10/4 Children's Services
- ✧ Tue. 10/4 Teen Room Open
- ✧ Tue. 10/4 Rosh Hashanah Day 2 Babysitting
- ✧ Wed. 10/5 Weekly Wednesday Minyan
- ✧ Wed. 10/5 Talmud Torah

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.



9/24 Ki Tavo	
Bernie Fischer	
Bernie.fischer@duke.edu	919-493-0306
10/1 Nitzavim	
Diane Markoff	
Diane.markoff@earthlink.net	919-969-8953
10/8 Vayelech Shuva	
David Kirsch	
David.kirsch@dm.duke.edu	919-286-4516
10/15 Ha'azinu	
Jon Wahl	
jmwahl@email.unc.edu	919-942-3827

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is sponsored by:
Gail and Steve Grossman, Valerie Schreiber, Harriet and Michael Lakin, Musia Lakin, Harold Kohn and Jack Leiss

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

Parashat Ki Teitzei

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

At one of our Shabbat afternoon Talmud classes some 50 years ago, after the usual bout of eating, drinking, and singing, the topic under discussion was what it means to “enjoy” Shabbat and Yom Tov (Sabbath and Festivals). We discussed Rabbi Eliezer’s statement that Festival “rejoicing” is obligatory, as well as the two alternative ways he proffers for attaining pleasure: either by eating and drinking or by sitting and studying. Rabbi Joshua interjects that it should be half of one and half of the other (BT Pesachim 68b).

Our teacher then turned his attention to the notion that the characteristic joys of Shabbat and Yom Tov arise from how we differentiate holy days from ordinary weekdays. At that point a fellow student (a bit of a wag) inquired, “Rabbi, you study Torah all week and you study Torah on Shabbat, so what’s the difference?” The rabbi replied without missing a beat, “Ah, on Shabbat I *enjoy* it!” In our amusement at the rabbi’s response, we failed to recognize his intentional allusion to a passage in the midrash *Pesikta Rabbati*, ch. 23:

R. Berekiah taught in the name of R. Hiyya: Shabbat was given only for enjoyment. R. Haggai taught in the name of R. Shemuel bar Nahman: Shabbat was given only for Torah study. But there is no difference. What R. Berekiah said ... applies to scholars who exhaust themselves studying Torah all week and enjoy themselves on Shabbat. What R. Haggai said ... applies to working people who are busy with their work all week and occupy themselves with Torah on Shabbat.

Our rabbi evidently was having it both ways—learning all the time but with unalloyed pleasure on Shabbat. The upshot: one way or another, we are supposed to find enjoyment in the opportunities that Shabbat and Yom Tov provide for us to deviate from our daily routine.

In fact, it is a mitzvah that we enjoy those occasions, a mitzvah that manifests the Torah’s remarkable tendency to legislate feelings and emotions. For example, we are charged negatively not to covet, not to bear grudges, and not to harbor feelings of enmity towards our fellows. We also are instructed positively: to love God, our neighbors, and perhaps even ourselves. Legislation of this sort makes sense if one considers thoughts and feelings to be precursors to actions, especially if God’s omniscience takes in our thoughts as well as our deeds. In attributing this knowledge to God, the Torah seeks to encourage right action and discourage its opposite.

In Deuteronomy, the Torah commands us no fewer than eight times to “rejoice” in the fulfillment of religious obligations. Two of those occurrences are in this week’s parashah. The first comes after bringing first fruits to the sanctuary and thanking God for the harvest:

And you shall **enjoy all the goodness** (*vesamahta bekhoh hatov*) that Adonai your God has bestowed upon you and your household, together with the Levite and the stranger in your midst (26:11).
The second, after constructing a shrine and an altar on Mt. Ebal to commemorate the entry into the Land of Israel:
You shall sacrifice there offerings of well-being and eat them, **rejoicing** (*vesamahta*) before Adonai your God (27:7, JPS translation with modifications).

Those two passages are followed by a third that is strange and discomfiting, warning us that we will endure terrible calamities should we fail to serve God “in joy and gladness”:

Because you would not serve Adonai your God **in joy and gladness** (*be-simhah u-vetuv levav*) over the abundance of everything, you shall have to serve—in hunger and thirst, naked and lacking everything—the enemies whom Adonai will let loose against you. He will put an iron yoke upon your neck until He has wiped you out (28:47-48).

Bahya b. Asher comments, “The joy in the performance of the mitzvah is a mitzvah in its own right.” He continues, “Aside from the reward for [fulfilling] the mitzvah there is reward for the joy; therefore, one who observes the commandment is punished for not performing it joyfully. And thus one must observe the mitzvot with joy and with complete concentration.” The spirit in which one performs mitzvot matters profoundly: perfunctory and joyless performance is not only insufficient; it justifies punishment.

The manifestation of “joy” necessarily entails more than just putting on a happy face. The manner in which biblically mandated joy finds expression is taken up in the Talmud. In a discussion of the music that accompanied Temple sacrifices, Rabbi Yehudah asks in the name of Rabbi Shemuel, “Where do we learn from the Torah the principle that song is obligatory?” Rabbi Mattenah responds by quoting Deut. 28:47 and asking rhetorically, “What is service ‘in joy and gladness?’” He answers his own question: “You should say that it refers to song, or you might say to words of Torah, as it is written [in Psalm 19:9], ‘The precepts of Adonai are just, rejoicing the heart’” (BT Arakhin 11a).

A lovely answer: serving God with joy means accompanying the performance of the mitzvot with both song and study. This text thus adds a third component to the joyous observance of mitzvot: to Torah study and a good meal (or vice versa), we add music. Indeed, what could be more pleasurable than fine food accompanied by words of Torah and heartfelt song?

Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

Avigal bat David haLevi (Alice Gold)	Tzvia	Yakov ben Sarah (Jacob Schonberg)
Avram Moshe ben Esther (Alan Mandel)	Mishulamit bat Maryam (Marcia Hogan)	Ya'akov Roni ben Margalit
Baracha bat Sarah	Miriam bat Rivka v'Natan (Miriam Sharp)	Yehuda ben David (Jerry Robins)
Batya bat Shprintza (Barbara Roberman)	Miriam Shifra bat Issur (Margaret Sachs)	Sidney Barker
Chana bat Malka	Mordechai ben Mathilda (Morty Berkowitz)	Anne Boyd
Chana Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman)	Ovadya ben Esther Malkah (Ovadya Fleishman)	Cynthia Brown
David ben Sarah (David Leitner)	Reuven ben Chanoch v'Dinah (Robert Feurst)	Alan Marty
David Yosef ben Avraham v'Chana (Donald Goldstein)	Sarah bat Hinda (Sylvia Dante)	Lorraine Morley
Eliyahu Chanan ben Sarah (Ed Gagnon)	Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)	Ezra Rapport
Esther bat Yankale Sura	Shira Batya bat Meirav	Jack Reich
Esther Malka bat Chaya Fruma (Elinor Fleishman)	Shmuel ben Shoshana	Helen Rosenberg
Malka bat Leah (Meg Anderson)	Shraga Feivel ben Leib (Philip Skoletsky)	Richard Roth
Malka Chana bat Basha Rachel	Tuvia ben Shmuel v'Tziporah (Tovia Lebovich)	Lauren Schiro
Mashah bat Fanny (Marsha Schonberg)	Tziporah bat Esther	Edward Thompson-Starkey
M'cor Eyshel bat Esther	Ty-Esther Tobi bat Tzeryl (Mindy Shapiro)	Christine Walters

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

Yahrzeits יארצייט

May their memory be a blessing

Jeanne Dreifus	Norma Lovins	Susan Cox
Sondra Gevarter	Kenneth Baker	Lewis Moss
Malvina Markman	Jill Goldstein	Irene Oakes
Malvina Markman	Lafrance	
Anne Levinsohn	Carol Bowen	
Julius Wienstein	Anna Grossman	
Nora Barth	Mollie Liptzin	
Carrie Gladstein	Jacob A. Ornstein	

BE Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to Sharon and Ed Halperin (Rebecca and Jonathan Grant) on the birth of their grandchild, Leilani Grant!

Beth El Synagogue

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