

Shabbat Shalom

27 Sh'vat 5776 February 6, 2016

Parashat Mishpatim

This Week at Beth El Synagogue

Saturday, February 6:

Havdalah—6:29 pm Shabbat Mishnah Study 8:45 am Orthodox Kehillah Services 9:00 am B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring 9:00 am 9:30 am Main Sanctuary Services, Shabbat Honoring Chevra Kaddisha Monthly Parsha Study 9:30 am

Sunday, February 7:

I.L. Peretz Course with Sheva Zucker

Weekly Sunday Minyan 9:00 am Talmud Torah (PreK-7) 9:30 am Simchat Tot 9:45 am Hebrew Level I with Donna Goldstein 10:00 am Sulam Session #2 10:15 am Hebrew Level II with Donna Goldstein 11:00 am

1:00 pm

Monday, February 8:

Sisterhood Meeting 7:00 pm MoB Movie Night 7:30 pm

Tuesday, February 9: Rosh Chodesh Adar I

Wednesday, February 10

Rosh Chodesh Adar I

Weekly Wednesday Minyan** 7:45 am Talmud Torah (2-6) 4:15 pm **Board Meeting** 7:00 pm

Thursday, February 11:

Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Greyber 11:30 am

Friday, February 12: Candle Lighting — 5:36 pm

Winter Kadima Kallah Kitah Zayin Beit Midrash 5:00 pm 6:00 pm Kabbalat Shabbat Services, Bat Mitzvah of Miriam Sage Starr Samuels

Minyan starts early due to Rosh Chodesh Adar I

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is sponsored by: Chevra Kaddisha

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.

Upcoming Events:

Sat. 2/13 Winter Kadima Kallah

Sat. 2/13 Shabbat Mishnah Study

Sat. 2/13 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services

✡ Sat. 2/13 B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring

Sat, 2/13 Shabbat Morning Services, Bat Mitzvah of Miriam Sage

Sat. 2/13 I.L. Peretz Course with Sheva Zucker

✡ Sat. 2/13 USY Girls Night

Sun. 2/14 Winter Kadima Kallah

Sun. 2/14 Weekly Sunday Minyan

Sun. 2/14 Talmud Torah (PreK-7)

Sun. 2/14 Kitah Vav Family Beit Midrash

Sun. 2/14 Knitting Chevra

Sun. 2/14 Walking with Mitzvot #3

Sun. 2/14 Hebrew Courses with Donna Goldstein

Tue. 2/16 Va'ad Meeting

Tue, 2/16 Ritual Committee

Tue. 2/16 Finance Committee

Wed. 2/17 Weekly Wednesday Minyan

Wed. 2/17 Talmud Torah (2-6)

Fri. 2/19 Kitot Bet/Gimel/Dalet Shabbat Services and Dinner

Fri. 2/19 USY Family Shabbat Dinner

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.

2/6 Mishpatim Roger Perilstein

rperilstein@hrc-pa.com

919-286-9814

2/13 Terumah Alan Mandel

andelcpa@gmail.com

917-589-5673

2/20 Tetzaveh

Isaac Price

isaac@isaacprice.org

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2/27 Ki Tisa

Jon Wahl

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Parashat Mishpatim

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

This week's parashah comprises a multitude of ordinances, providing an embarrassment of riches upon which to comment. Capital punishment, abortion, workers' rights—to name just a few of the issues suggested by the parashah—offer ample grist for the commentator's mill. Yet in this political year, with all of its focus on immigration, refugees, and minority rights, it would seem almost churlish to avoid addressing one of the key themes of the Torah reading: the treatment of the ger (stranger).

The seminal verse is Exodus 22:20: "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." The treatment of strangers is not merely the subject of a solitary legal command; it appears to be a leitmotif of biblical literature. In fact, it is probably not too much of an exaggeration to say that the Torah is fixated on the treatment of strangers. According to the Rabbis of the Talmud (BT Bava Mezia 59b), the Torah admonishes us about the treatment of strangers no fewer than 36 times, including both the verse quoted above and a similar verse found later in our parashah (Exod. 23:9): "You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the Land of Egypt." No other commandment is repeated so often.

What is more, this legal preoccupation with the stranger finds its counterpart in the full sweep of the narrative history of the Jewish people as depicted in the Torah, not simply the Exodus story. From the outset, Abraham becomes a stranger when he leaves his home and journeys toward Canaan. We also witness Jacob during a pivotal period of his life outside of the Land of Israel, in his uncle Laban's house, where he suffers the financial exploitation of an outsider. And then we follow Joseph as he spends virtually his entire adult life in Egypt, initially enslaved and then imprisoned before he attains high office (but still the Egyptians would not eat with him! [Gen. 43:32]). The notion of being a stranger appears to be embedded in the Jewish experience and internalized in Jewish identity. I would venture that this is true even in the State of Israel, which is still—for the most part—a nation of immigrants and the children of immigrants.

So what does Exodus 22:20 mean, and to whom does it apply? The term ger can refer to a convert (ger tzedek) or a resident alien (ger toshav). While some biblical commentators interpret the verse as focusing on converts, the author of Sefer Hahinukh gives it a much more expansive reading: "The precept applies at all times and places . . . We should learn from this valuable precept to show compassion to anyone not in his (or her) hometown, far from friends, just as we observe that the Torah admonishes us to show compassion to all in need." Note that the command makes no distinction between the stranger who resides in the Land legally and one who arrived illegally. All are deserving of our compassion.

Turning from its scope to its substance, we must ask: What does it mean to "wrong" and "oppress" a stranger, and how do those two concepts differ? According to the Mekhilta, to "wrong" relates to verbal abuse, while "oppression" refers to monetary matters (Mishpatim, Mas. Nezikin, 17).

The economic exploitation of resident aliens—particularly those who are not here legally—is a serious problem which ties directly to the Israelites' experience of slavery in Egypt. Just as we remember that we were forced to labor for no wages in arduous conditions, so it is that we must be sensitive to the strangers in our midst who are compelled by force or circumstance to work in unsanitary or unsafe conditions for substandard pay. Recent news articles about immigrant nail technicians working in inadequately regulated salons and about migrant workers exploited in agricultural settings provide but two examples of this form of oppression. No one who takes seriously the Torah's repeated concern with the treatment of strangers can turn a blind eye to these forms of oppression.

But the current political environment should also cause us to react vigorously and unequivocally to the other form of mistreatment of strangers in our midst: verbal abuse. When the political discourse devolves to generalizations about Muslim immigrants being terrorists and Mexican immigrants being rapists, we are called by the Torah to remember that Jews, too, have been the subject of such pernicious generalizations and therefore we "know the feelings of the stranger" (Exod. 23:9). They are feelings of isolation and, often, helplessness. The Torah commands us to combat those feelings by standing with the strangers among us and speaking on their behalf.

Beth El Synagogue

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

Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

Refuah Shleyma	רפואה שלמה h	
Adelah bat Avrom v'Chenya	M'cor Eyshel bat Esther Tzvia	Anne Boyd
(Adele Abramowitz)	Ovadya ben Elinor	Cynthia Brown
Aharon ben David u'Miriam	(Ovadya Fleishman)	Elinor Fleishman
(Alan Goldman)	Reuven ben Chanoch v'Dinah	Ilene Jacobson
Aliza Chana bat Leah	(Robert Feurst)	Jennifer Krunkosky
Aryeh ben Tziporah	Rut bat Sarah (Suzanne Furst)	Inez McFarling
Baracha bat Sarah	Sara bat Hinda	Ezra Rapport
Bedonna Riva bat Sara	(Sylvia Dante)	Jack Reich
Ben-Zion ben Sarah	Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)	Michael Rockman
Chana bat Malkah	Shira Batya bat Meirav	Pearl Rohde
Hannah Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman)	Shmuel ben Shoshana	Richard Roth
Daronit Esther bat	Sprinya Simcha bat Yehudah v'Chana	Carmen Sadowsky
Tuvia v'Leah (Jennifer Greyber)	(Susan Rosefielde)	Lauren Schiro
David ben Sarah	Tuvia ben Shmuel v'Tziporah	Susan Tolchin
(David Leitner)	(Tovia Lebovich)	Christine Walters
Eliyahu Chanan ben Sarah (Ed Gagnon)	Tziporah bat Esther	Orrie Wilner
, ,	Yehudit bat Rachel	Amy Wolf
Gershon Yonah ben Tevya hakohen v'Chanah Leah haLevi (Harlan Gradin) Malkah bat Leah (Meg	Yisrael Yitzhak ben Yosef u'Malka (Ronald Cumin)	Please contact the synagogue office with any additions or changes to this list.
(3		

Yahrzeits יארצייט

Malka Hannah bat Basha

Anderson)

Rachel

Neil August	Muriel Modell
Anne Cohen	Bob Roberman
Paul Gidwitz	Alex Rubin
Sarah Berg Hoffman	Julius Saffron
Bernie Kessler	Louis Saper
Shmuel Lebovich	Herb Shatzman
Dora Levine	Bert Weaver
Hannah Libman	Marie Whitehurst Wells
Sidney Markman	

Lucretia Bell

Sonia Berman

BE Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to the following Beth El community members on their birthdays! Orit Szulik, Terri Tyson, Anne Derby, Pearl Levine, Dr Howard Rockman, Abby Zarkin, Laura Brody Weaver, Arlene Bergman, and William McCartney

BE Remembered

Beth El Synagogue extends condolences to: Sarah and Scott Bryce and their family on the death of Sarah's sister-in-law, Rabbi Deborah Katz Slavitt (HaRav Devorah bat Yitzhak HaCohen v Ilene) who passed away on January 31, 2016 in South Carolina.

Noah Pickus, Trudi Abel and family on the death of Noah's father, Robert Pickus who passed away on January 23, 2016 in California.