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**Congregation Beth Hamedresh – Beth Israel**

# BULLETIN

Editor: Stan Schaffer

## **July President's Message**

Friends,

It looks like summer is finally here. We had a long and beautiful spring and I hope we'll have an equally beautiful summer. Among the activities that everyone looks forward to are the picnics. We're going to have two this year.

On Friday, July 30th, we will have a joint picnic with Temple Beth Am, at Beth Am, before Friday evening services. We did this last year and everyone had a wonderful time. Come, enjoy yourself, see your friends, and make new friends. If you would like to volunteer to help out with set-up, cooking, clean-up or whatever else you can think of, call Judith Mercer. She is our picnic liaison person. Thanks, Judith.

We plan to have a Friday night barbeque to welcome potential new members in August. More details can be found below.

I want to also thank Andrea Paprocki. Andrea has been preparing some of our kiddush luncheons for awhile now. In addition, Andrea has become our "Office Person", going through the mail, handling messages, mailing out gift acknowledgements. Without volunteers like Andrea (and there are so many of you!), this shul couldn't function.

On a more serious note, Tisha b'Av will be commemorated on the evening of July 19<sup>th</sup>. We are planning to have a joint service with Temple Beth Am and Temple Beth David, as we did last year. At the time I'm writing this, the plan is to have the joint service at the JCC. Last year we had a really interesting discussion followed by a moving service. This year should be equally worthwhile. Please plan to attend.

Have a good July.

Shalom,

*Leon Metlay*

## **Joint Beth Am / BHBI Picnic**

Friday, July 30, 5:30 pm at Temple Beth Am

\$15/family or \$5/person if RSVP on/before July 23

\$18/family or \$6/person if RSVP after July 23

Plus PAREVE dish to pass. Add \$2/person, \$6/family w/o dish to pass.

RSVP by sending payment with a note to the Temple Beth Am office (Temple Beth Am, POB 177, Henrietta, NY 14467). Indicate your name, how many people, how many of each (for planning): vegetarian, hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken (more than 1 serving of each is permitted).

*Suggested dish to pass (must be pareve and have hechser other than "K"): pickles; olives; non-dairy dessert: Tofutti, cookies, Italian Ice; potato chips, pretzels, salsa, salad dressing; tabuleh; hummus/pita bread; soda; juice; carrot & celery sticks; non-dairy packaged dip; fresh corn; fresh fruit.*

## BHBI CALENDAR OF EVENTS – JULY 2010

Friday	July 2	7:00 PM	Shabbat Evening Service at Heather Heights in Pittsford Light candles at 8:35 PM
Saturday	July 3	10:00 AM	Joint Shabbat Morning Service with Temple Beth Am at Beth Am Torah: Pinchas
Sunday	July 4	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Friday	July 9	8:00 PM	Joint Shabbat Evening Service with Temple Beth Am at Beth Am Light candles at 8:32 PM
Saturday	July 10	9:30 AM	Joint Shabbat Morning Service with Temple Beth Am at BHBI with Rabbi Goldberg officiating. Torah: Matot-Masei Blessing for the new month.
Sunday	July 11	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Monday	July 12	7:30 PM	Monthly Meeting of the BHBI Board of Trustees
Wednesday	July 14	7:30 PM	Small Shul Collaborative Torah Study Session at BHBI
Friday	July 16	8:00 PM	Joint Shabbat Evening Service with Temple Beth Am at BHBI Light candles at 8:28 PM
Saturday	July 17	9:30 AM	Shabbat Morning Service Torah: Devarim
Sunday	July 18	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Monday	July 19	7:30 PM	Joint Tisha b'Av Study Session and Service with Temple Beth Am and Temple Beth David at the JCC
Friday	July 23	8:00 PM	Shabbat Evening Service Light candles at 8:23 PM
Saturday	July 24	9:30 AM	Shabbat Morning Service Torah: Vaetchanan
Sunday	July 25	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Friday	July 30	5:30 PM	Joint Picnic with Temple Beth Am at Beth Am followed by Shabbat Evening Service Light candles at 8:15 PM
Saturday	July 31	9:30 AM	Shabbat Morning Service Torah: Eikev

### TORAH STUDY

Join congregants from Temple Beth Am, Temple Beth David and BHBI for our monthly Small Conservative Shul Collaborative Torah Study session at BHBI on Wednesday evening, July 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. The discussion is always lively and engaging!

### WHEELCHAIR LIFT

Please note that our wheelchair lift is now fully installed and operational. If you are someone who has stayed away from services because of difficulty climbing our stairs, know that there is now a safe, easy and convenient way to join us once again. Please come and give it a try! There is a conveniently located button to press should you need assistance. So don't delay any longer – join us at BHBI services and events! Of course, contributions to help with the expense of the lift are still welcome.



## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

By

### RABBI GEOFFREY GOLDBERG

July 2010

During the long days of Shabbat during the summer, it is the custom to study *Pirkei Avot*, traditionally translated as “Ethics of the Fathers” but in these days of gender sensitivity translated as “Teachings of the Sages” (at least in *Siddur Sim Shalom*). *Pirkei Avot* is a tractate of Mishnah, dedicated to the ethical teachings of the rabbis. Originally *Pirkei Avot* had five chapters, but when the custom arose of studying a chapter of *Avot* on each of the six Sabbath afternoons between Passover and Shavuot an additional chapter was later added. Ashkenazi Jews generally continue studying *Avot* until the Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah. You can find the text of *Pirkei Avot* in traditional *siddurim* following the Sabbath *Minḥab* service. However, to really engage with the text you should study from one of the many commentaries that are available, including *Or Hadaash: A Commentary on Siddur Sim Shalom*. I am currently studying *Avot* with the commentary of Rabbi Meir Matzliah Melamed, which was originally written in Spanish. It is a sheer delight to read.

If you want to learn about the ethical standpoints of Judaism as well as many of its theological concepts, there is no finer text to turn to than *Pirkei Avot*. Every time one returns to *Avot*, one learns new insights from this core rabbinic text of Judaism. Take, for example the very opening words of the first Mishnah of the opening chapter: “Moses received Torah from God at Sinai, and transmitted it to Joshua....” (etc.).

On Shavuot I raised some of the issues that these opening words raise. Why, for example, does the text say “received” with respect to Moses, and not “transmitted”? Why does the text say “Torah” and not “the Torah”? Why does the text here say that Moses transmitted the Torah to Joshua, but not to Aaron and his sons, when, after all, the priests were the guardians of the teaching? (The latter, by the way, is referred to in the *Koren Siddur*, translated, with commentary, by Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks who comments, “Interestingly, the Sages traced their provenance to the prophets rather than to the priests, who go unmentioned in the chain of succession.”)

Each phrase of *Avot* invites discussion, and that is one of its wonderful characteristics.

On the very first word, “received,” the *Torat Moshe* commentary of Rabbi Moses Alshekh, who lived in the Levant and Safed in the sixteenth century, is deeply insightful and a powerful refutation of a mechanistic view of Revelation:

“It is still the case that one only receives as much as he is prepared [or capable] to receive. Even in the case of Moses, therefore, it does not say that the Torah was passed to him by God....” [Alshekh continues] “But it is an impossible thing that Moses would receive Torah exactly as it was in the mind of God. The word “receive” may be used even in cases when what is received is not identical with what is in the possession of the giver.”

On the scope of the word “Torah” there is no agreement among scholars. Rabbi Meir Matzliah Melamed writes that “the commentators tell us that the Torah mentioned here refers to the Oral Law...” Professor Judah Goldin’s commentary to *Avot*, the one incorporated into *Or Hadaash*, disagrees, for Goldin wrote, “... the Torah meaning both the oral and the written tradition... These are polemical statements in which the Pharisees [the forerunners of the Rabbis] assert: Our tradition is the normative tradition; yours [that of the various sectarians, including the Sadducees] are wrong.”

Even Sinai does not necessarily only have a geographical meaning! Note that the Hebrew text (*mi-Sinai*, not *be-Sinai*) actually means “from Sinai” rather than “at Sinai.” Accordingly, the Italian Rabbi, Ovadiah Bartenura (d. ca. 1500), whose commentary is included in all standard editions of the Mishnah, wrote that that *mi-Sinai* means, “from He who revealed Himself at Sinai.” In other words, Sinai is also an epithet for God.

One of the most delightful features of the *Pirkei Avot* edition of Rabbi Meir Matzliah Melamed is when he says, as he quite often does, “in my opinion, this means,” or better, “in my humble opinion, this means.” This learned rabbi is not afraid to share his own thoughts on this ancient text. Surely, he is also inviting us not to be afraid to express our humble opinions, too, when we engage with the text of *Avot*.

On these long Shabbat days of summer, take a few moments to study a little *Pirkei Avot*. Your reward will be great indeed!

Rabbi Geoffrey Goldberg

# Yahrzeits

At the following Shabbat Services, we will read the names of our late loved ones whose Yahrzeits will occur on that Shabbat or during the following week.

July 2-3	Tammuz	July 9-10	Tammuz-Av	July 16-17	Av	July 30-31	Av
Louis Edelson*	21	Hyman		Anna Berman*	8	Jennie Braime*	20
Bernard Sallerson*	21	Tannenbaum*	28	George Cohen*	8	Abraham I. Spector*	20
Max Goodman*	23	Celia Silverstein*	29	William Aaron		Alexander Aronov	21
David Gordon*	23	Sydney Gold	1	Bernstein*	9	Morris Ohl*	21
Nelli Ahuva Metlay*	24	Louis Schiff*	1	Haim Menachem Levy	12	Sarah Applebaum	
Ira Edward Potter*	24	Ray Bloch	2	Hyman Silverman*	12	Gastel*	22
Thelma Ring Smith*	25	Joseph				Israel Osband*	22
Irwin Bertman*	27	Greenbaum*	2	July 23-24	Av	Rose T. Cohen	26
Oscar Hart	27	Moses Berkowitz*	3			Jacob Osband*	26
Mark Rose	27	Dave Kovel	5	Frank Carper*	13	Joseph Teitel	26
Abraham Schriba*	27	Kathy Shur*	5	Sarah R. Spector*	13	Samuel Wechsler*	26
Ida M. Weiss	27			Samuel Gross	15		
				Abraham Heyman*	17		
				Phillip Boyarsky*	18		
				Bessie Gastel*	18		

\* Denotes name memorialized on BHBI Memorial Plaque

We pray that our mourners will be comforted among all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem and that the memory of the deceased continues to be a blessing to all who knew them.

## MEMORIAL PLAQUES

Memorialize a friend or loved one by purchasing a BHBI memorial plaque. For more information, contact Stan Schaffer at 473-8072 or [stanschaffer@frontiernet.net](mailto:stanschaffer@frontiernet.net)

## AMAZON.COM

The next time that you want to buy something from Amazon.com go to the BHBI web page at [www.BHBIRochester.org](http://www.BHBIRochester.org) and click on the Amazon.com link. Each time you make a purchase after linking to Amazon.com from our web page, BHBI gets a percentage of the purchase. Buy gifts or something for yourself or your family and support BHBI at the same time!!

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**So far our TOPS Gift Card fundraiser has been quite successful.  
Remember, TOPS Gift Cards are now available through BHBI in \$50 denominations.  
To purchase TOPS Gift Cards, contact Stan Schaffer  
at 473-8072 or by e-mail at [stanschaffer@frontiernet.net](mailto:stanschaffer@frontiernet.net)**

**TO OUR DONORS – THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

**WHEELCHAIR LIFT FUND**

*Joe Yudelson*

*Ben and Muriel Hobel*

In memory of Max Vogelstein  
*Esther Vogelstein*

**GENERAL FUND**

In honor of Nina Klionsky's birthday  
*Katie Metlay*

In memory of David Gordon  
*Phil and Annette Garver*

**TORAH FUND**

In honor of Shavuot  
*Ben and Muriel Hobel*

In memory of Rabbi Aaron Solomon  
*Naomi Cowen*

In honor of Felix Weilacher's bar mitzvah  
*Joe Yudelson*

**THANK YOU TO OUR KIDDUSH SPONSORS  
FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE**

- June 12<sup>th</sup>            The Congregation
- June 19<sup>th</sup>            Katharine Metlay in honor of Nina Klionsky's birthday; Stan and Elaine Schaffer in honor of Aviva's graduation from Brighton High School
- June 26<sup>th</sup>            The Congregation

**DO YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO IS UNAFFILIATED AND INTERESTED  
IN JOINING A CONGREGATION?**

Let them know about BHBI's special free 3 month trial membership (available to prospective first-time new members only). Have them contact BHBI at 244-2060 or BHBI@frontiernet.net and we will be happy to give them information about BHBI and this great offer!!

**GOODSEARCH.COM**

Goodsearch.com is an on-line internet search program that pays non-profit organizations like BHBI a fee every time someone uses their search service. Go to [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com), enter the search term that you want and put in BHBI on the line where it says Who Do You Goodsearch For? BHBI will collect a fee for each search you make!



**JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL**

This year's film festival runs from July 25<sup>th</sup> to August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Have you purchased your tickets or a festival pass for the JCC's Ames-Amzalak Rochester Jewish Film Festival yet? If not, get them today at the JCC or on-line at <http://www.rjff.org/>

**THE RABBI GOLDBERG FUND**

Contributions to the Rabbi Goldberg Fund enable us to engage Rabbi Goldberg to lead additional services at BHBI during the year. Whenever the funds in the Rabbi Goldberg Fund reach a predetermined level, we will schedule an additional service with Rabbi Goldberg. To contribute to this purpose, please send a check in to BHBI with a notation that the contribution should be used for the Rabbi Goldberg Fund.

**OFFICE:** The synagogue office is checked regularly for mail and messages. The synagogue phone is 244-2060. For urgent issues, call Steve Teitel at 473-5741 or Stan Schaffer at 473-8072. You can also e-mail us at [BHBI@frontiernet.net](mailto:BHBI@frontiernet.net)

**WANT TO REMEMBER OR HONOR SOMEONE OR A SPECIAL OCCASION?**

*Consider sponsoring a kiddush or making a donation to any one of our funds* (General Operating, Kiddush, Library, Torah, Rabbi Aaron Solomon Scholarship, Our Youth, Special Events, Rabbi Goldberg Fund or the Sam Malina Memorial Fund). Please indicate which fund you would like your donation to go to and we will send out an acknowledgement card as you indicate and print an announcement in this bulletin. A standard sponsored kiddush at BHBI costs just \$40 while a larger enhanced kiddush is just \$50.

**BULLETIN CONTENT**

What do you enjoy reading in the BHBI Bulletin? Is there something that you would like added (or taken out)? If so, please let Stan Schaffer know. We always appreciate feedback.

**DID YOU MISPLACE YOUR BULLETIN?**

Don't worry. BHBI Bulletins going back several months can now be found on our web page: [www.BHBIRochester.org](http://www.BHBIRochester.org)

**WANT TO GET YOUR BULLETIN HOT-OFF-THE-PRESS?** Consider having us e-mail it to you!

Contact Stan Schaffer at: [stanschaffer@frontiernet.net](mailto:stanschaffer@frontiernet.net)

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