

BHBIRochester.org
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Congregation Beth Hamedresh – Beth Israel

BULLETIN

April President's Message

Dear Friends,

I was very happy to see so many of you at our Purim celebration at the JCC along with Temple Beth Am. I hope you had as much fun as I did. With Purim behind us, Passover is just ahead. Passover is a hectic time, with house cleaning and Seder preparations. Don't forget to sell your chametz! Rabbi Goldberg can sell it for you, you'll find the form on page 5 of this bulletin. This year we will again be celebrating the holidays by having joint services with Beth David and Beth Am. Check the calendar on page 2 for details.

Passover has such a plethora of laws that even the most knowledgeable people sometimes get confused. This is a good time of year to decide to learn more about Judaism in general as well, perhaps, as learning some of the laws. There are lots of different ways you can learn. What fits one person might not be best for someone else.

Taking a class is the way many of us are used to learning. There is a teacher or leader available to guide us. There is discipline involved in getting to a class at a specific time. The Rochester community has many classes available, on many subjects. Some are free, some cost a fee. You can find a comprehensive listing of local classes on the Federation's web site, <http://www.jewishrochester.org/page.aspx?id=221033>. The very first class listed, Rabbi Gutterman's Talmud class, is very enjoyable. I've been attending for the last year. There are many others. Take a look.

Some of us, including very emphatically myself, like to curl up with a book. Reading a book on Judaism can be done a few minutes a day, or a few hours. I looked up the keyword "Judaism" on the catalog of the public library. Just in the Brighton branch there are almost 400 titles! There are books about every aspect of Jewish life and culture. If you want to get started I might suggest: Hayim Donin: [To live as a Jew](#); Hayim Donin: [To pray as a Jew](#); Alfred J. Kolatch: [The Jewish book of why](#); Alfred J. Kolatch: [The second Jewish book of why](#); Joseph Telushkin: [Jewish literacy](#); Joseph Telushkin: [Jewish wisdom](#).

One good way I have found to study a book is to take turns reading it to a friend and being read to. The two of you can discuss it as you go along. This is a very effective way to learn.

Finally, if you want to go online, you can find articles about just about everything. Go to your favorite search engine (I recommend going to the BHBI web page at: <http://bhbirochester.org> and click on the banner at the lower left for Goodsearch.com so that our shul reaps some benefit from your study). Type your question in the search window and click "search". Then you can choose among numerous answers.

There are a number of web sites I visit. Here are a few. Check them out:
http://www.jtsa.edu/Conservative_Judaism/JTS_Torah_Commentary.xml
<http://shamash.org/trb/judaism.html>
<http://www.jewishfreeware.org/>
<http://nuviewtalmud.blogspot.com/>

Well, however you choose to do it, I hope this Passover season sees you enlarging your understanding. When you see me in shul, I'd like to hear what you're learning. Maybe you'll find something that I'd like to learn, too.

Shalom,

Leon Metlay

BHBI CALENDAR OF EVENTS – APRIL 2011

Friday	Apr 1	7:00 PM	Shabbat Evening Service at Heather Heights in Pittsford Light candles at 7:18 PM
Saturday	Apr 2	9:30 AM	Shabbat Morning Service Torah: Tazriah
Sunday	Apr 3	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Friday	Apr 8	8:00 PM	Joint Shabbat Evening Service with congregants from Temple Beth Am at Beth Am Light candles at 7:26 PM
Saturday	Apr 9	9:30 AM	Joint Shabbat Morning Service with Temple Beth Am at BHBI with Rabbi Goldberg officiating Torah: Metzarah
Sunday	Apr 10	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Monday	Apr 11	7:30 PM	Monthly Meeting of the BHBI Board of Trustees
Wednesday	Apr 13	7:30 PM	Joint Torah Study with members of Temple Beth Am and Temple Beth David at BHBI
Friday	Apr 15	8:00 PM	Shabbat Evening Service Light candles at 7:34PM
Saturday	Apr 16	9:30 AM	Shabbat Morning Service Torah: Acharei
Sunday	Apr 17	9:00 AM	Service and Discussion
Tuesday	Apr 19	9:30 AM	Joint Passover 1 st Day Morning Service with congregants from Temple Beth David and Temple Beth Am at Beth David
Wednesday	Apr 20	9:30 AM	Joint Passover 2 nd Day Morning Service with congregants from Temple Beth David and Temple Beth Am at BHBI
Friday	Apr 22	8:00 PM	Shabbat Evening Service Light candles at 7:42 PM
Saturday	Apr 23	9:30 AM	Shabbat and Passover Morning Service
Sunday	Apr 24	9:00 AM	Service, Breakfast and Discussion
Monday	Apr 25	9:30 AM	Joint Passover 7 th Day Morning Service with congregants from Temple Beth David and Temple Beth Am at Beth Am
		8:00 PM	Joint Erev Passover 8 th Day Service with congregants from Temple Beth Am and including Yizkor at Beth Am with Rabbi Goldberg officiating
Tuesday	Apr 26	9:30 AM	Joint Passover 8 th Day Morning Service with congregants from Temple Beth Am and including Yizkor at BHBI with Rabbi Goldberg officiating
Friday	Apr 29	8:00 PM	Shabbat Evening Service Light candles at 7:50 PM
Saturday	Apr 30	10:00 AM	Joint Shabbat Morning Service with congregants from Temple Beth Am at Beth Am with Rabbi Goldberg officiating. Blessing for the New Month. Torah: Kedoshim



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

By

RABBI GEOFFREY GOLDBERG

April 2011

I am sure that it would never occur to any of us to count the number of words in a book! Nowadays this can be done quite easily with a computer. But I don't think any of us would have the time and patience to go physically go through an entire book and laboriously count every word! Now just imagine if, out of some masochistic perversity, we did manage to count the words of an entire book, starting again to figure what was the middle word of the book?

Well, that is exactly what the rabbis did. So great was their reverence and love of the Torah that rabbis of the post-Talmudic era known as the Masoretes, the group of scholars who guarded the transmission of the Torah, fixed all the rules regarding the transmission of the text, counted all the words in it and found out where the middle of the Torah was.

The rabbis declared that the middle of the Torah was to be found in *Parshat Shemini*. The middle word or group of words occurs in Leviticus 10:16 in the verse "And Moses diligently inquired" *darosh darash* Moshe. It really is a remarkable coincidence that the middle words of the Torah happen to be these two words, *darosh darash* (an "infinitive absolute"), which means something like "diligently inquired," or literally, "inquired exceedingly."

Coincidence though this may be, it has been suggested, with good reason, that these two words express a whole philosophy of Judaism. At the very heart of the Torah is the idea that the revealed word of God is more than what appears on the surface. Diligent inquiry for the purpose of deeper understanding and ever-fresh application of the message of the Torah is not a mere option, but is the essence of the Torah. An entire body of literature known as the Midrash is none other than looking beyond the surface of the Torah so as to look deeper at the text and examine the text from every possible perspective.

Not only that, but the very word Midrash denotes inquiry, searching for the truth, studying the inner meaning of the Biblical texts and their further application to life. The word midrash is, in fact, derived from the same root, *darash*, "to inquire."

Nothing illustrates Judaism's open-endedness and its stress on asking questions, how, what or why, than the Passover Seder. The key opening passage is that of the Four Questions, the *Mah nishtanah*. Four simple questions yet no simple answers. The Haggadah takes its time trying to answer them completely. In Judaism the asking of questions is perhaps more important than finding the answers. Further, the questions of one generation are not necessarily those of a later generation. We see this in the evolution of the Passover seder itself. The questions are somewhat different from their formulation in the Mishnah which presents the questions in the context of the Temple, but Judaism demanded different questions and answers when the Temple was no more.

This phrase, *darosh darash* serves as wonderful and beautiful way of describing the authentic character of Judaism, Jewish culture, and the ideal Jew.

Wishing you all a *bag kasher ve-sameah*.

Rabbi Geoffrey Goldberg

TORAH STUDY

Join us for an interactive session of Torah study with our friends from Temple Beth Am and Temple Beth David at BHBI on Wednesday evening, April 13th at 7:30 p.m. The discussion is always lively!

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.

April 1-2	Adar II-Nissan	April 8-9	Nissan	April 22-23	Nissan	April 29-30	Nissan - Iyar
Mollie Wolk*	29	Gertrude Kleinstein*	5	David Morris*	20	Arthur Weinberger	26
Sam Wolk*	29	Rachel Weinstein*	5	Jacob Weinrib*	20	Alexander Greenbaum*	27
Lena Levi*	1	Flora Priceman*	7	Beatrice Goldstein*	21	Esther Gurian*	27
Lester Miller*	1	Esther Bertman*	8	Benjamin Ritter	21	Ethel L. Goldstein*	28
Benjamin Braz*	2	Max Block	8	Yetta Levine*	22	Rose Lewis*	28
Dr. Charles Cohen*	2	Seymour Ouzer*	10	Evelyn Maimon	23	Hyman Rothschild*	29
Eli Gerber*	3	Sadie Leitman	11	Simon Finkelman	24	Louis Goldberg*	1
Bessie Friedman		Morris Lipman*	11	Blanche Levitz	25		
Reicher	3	Harry Veeder	11	Louis Priceman*	25		
Esther Rosenthal	3			Dorothy Riwkin*	25		
Morris Sherman*	3	April 15-16	Nissan	Samuel B. Spiller*	25		
Jacob Shiffman	3						
David Gross*	4	Stanley Solomon	13				
		Helen Neiman					
		Goldman*	14				
		Harry Toker	14				
		Leo Beechbinder*	15				
		Sol Levin*	15				
		Rose Jossem*	16				
		Judith Potter*	16				
		Eliahu Louis Cohen*	18				
		Harry H. Levinson	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

You can also memorialize a friend or loved one by purchasing a BHBI memorial plaque. Our memorial plaques are very reasonably priced. For more information, contact Stan Schaffer at 473-8072 or stanschaffer@frontiernet.net

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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

TO OUR DONORS – THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

GENERAL FUND

In memory of Freda Yudelson
Joe Yudelson

In memory of Muriel Hobel
Paul and Rose Israel and Family
Rabbi Josef Solomon

In memory of Harry Aranow
Dennis and Eileen Kovel

In memory of Max Levy
Paul and Rose Israel

In memory of Lea Kron
Tanya Landau

THANK YOU TO OUR KIDDUSH SPONSORS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH

March 5	The Congregation
March 12	The Congregation
March 19	The Congregation
March 26	The Congregation

THE RABBI FUND

Contributions to the Rabbi Fund enable us to engage Rabbi Goldberg to lead additional services at BHBI during the year. Whenever the funds in the Rabbi 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 Fund.

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!!

CONTRACT FOR SELLING YOUR CHAMETZ

Know ye that I, the undersigned, fully empower and permit Rabbi Geoffrey Goldberg to act in my place and stead, and in my behalf to sell all chametz possessed by me (knowingly or unknowingly) as defined by the Torah and Rabbinic Law (e.g. chametz, possible chametz, and all kinds of chametz mixtures). Also chametz that tends to harden and to adhere to inside surfaces of pans, pots or cooking and usable utensils. And to lease all places wherein the chametz owned by me may be found, especially in the premises located at:

and elsewhere. Rabbi Geoffrey Goldberg has the full right to sell and to lease by transactions as he deems fit and proper for such time that he believes necessary in accordance with all detailed terms and detailed forms as explained in the general authorization contract which has been given this year to him. He has full power and authority to appoint a substitute in his stead and to sell and to lease as provided therein. The above given power is in conformity with all Torah, rabbinical regulations and laws, and also in accordance with laws of the State of New York and of the United States. To this I hereby affix my signature on the ____ day of ____ in the year 5771/2011.

Signature _____ Name _____

Address _____

Please fill out and mail this form to Rabbi Goldberg, BHBI, 1369 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14610 so it is received no later than Friday, April 15th.

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

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 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 6 years can now be found on our web page: 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

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