

Temple Beth El Bulletin

VOLUME 51, No. 12
MAY 2020
IYYAR/SIVAN 5780



The Temple Beth El Bulletin is published monthly according to the Gregorian calendar.

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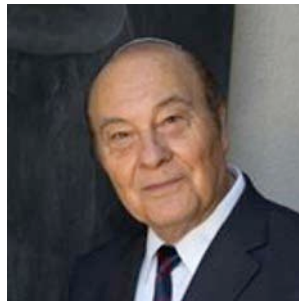
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Rabbi's Message ~ Dov Gottesfeld

"LOVE ME AS YOURSELF, I AM THE LORD"

The Torah portion Acharei-Kedoshim (In the aftermath of - Holy) is constructed from two portions. The first part "Acharei" deals with the G-d's warning against unauthorized entry into the Holy Ark's chamber inside the Tabernacle in the desert, and the rules concerning certain offerings, and prohibitions. The second portion "Holy" deals with the deeds the community needs to practice in order to become a Holy community. The common denominator which binds the two Torah portions together could be summed up in the dictum from Leviticus 19:18: "Love your fellowman as yourself."

The great sage Rabbi Akiba considered that phrase as the cardinal principle of the Torah. The famous Rabbi Hillel said: "This is the entire Torah, the rest is commentary." It sounds so sensible, trusting, and simple. That is until one begins to do, what anybody who is engaged in Torah studies should do - asking questions; questions like: "Why didn't



Dov Gottesfeld

Akiba quote the whole phrase from Leviticus 19:18? It reads: "Love your fellow as yourself, I am the Lord." Would it make any difference in the dictum's meaning? In my opinion it makes a considerable difference. "Love your fellowman as yourself" denotes feelings of brotherly love and equality coming from an individual, because we are all human beings who need to forgive human iniquities. "Love your fellowman as yourself, I am the Lord." Denotes that "Love your fellowman as yourself", which seemingly ends with a warning "or else" coming from a higher authority, suggesting that there would be adverse consequences without mediation if that "cardinal principle" is not followed.

The following is a biblical situation, which depicts: "Love your fellowman as yourself." It is an example where individuals attempted to assume an "unauthorized power position." In the book of Numbers 11:27, two men, Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the camp during the exodus from Egypt. Joshua, Moses's helper heard them and ran to tell Moses, and asked him to incarcerate them,

Continued on Page 2

May Schedule of Services:

No services scheduled until further notice due to COVID-19.

Educational Activities:

No activities scheduled until further notice due to COVID-19. Please see calendar at the end of this bulletin for Zoom platform meetings.

Continued from Page 1

(because they were not authorized or appointed to do so by God). Moses, feeling brotherly love, compassion and equality answered Joshua: "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all God's people become prophets..." (Numbers 11:28-29).

It is clear, from the Hebrew bible that God is the one who ordained prophets. Yet God chose not to intervene in that situation. We can hypothesize by offering numerous suggestions why He didn't. Eldad and Medad were not good enough. They did not speak in His name. People did not take them seriously. They did not threaten anybody. Or perhaps God was testing Moses to see how he would react. Or maybe he wanted to teach Joshua a lesson about leadership? Be it as it may, God did not punish Eldad or Medad.

The following biblical situation depicts: "Love your fellowman as yourself, I am the Lord." It is an example where two individuals also attempted to assume an "unauthorized power position". This time they were Nadav and Avihu, the sons of Aaron, the high priest. The two young men had been anointed by Moses to become priests and actively participated in their father's ceremonial activities.

During the sacrifices they collected and sprinkled the animals' blood on the altar. One day, after a sacrifice ceremony in which Aaron initiated a huge fire to materialize on the altar, "...and there came out [fire] from before the Lord and consumed upon the burnt offering and the fat," (Leviticus 10:24). That experience was overwhelming to the two young men and they decided to experiment on their own to reproduce the same effect. However, instead of producing a holy fire, they produced a "strange fire". "And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord," (Leviticus 10:3). The reason for that is in Leviticus 10:1, It is because they "offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not."

Continued on Page 5

Prayer for Medical Personnel in the Time of COVID-19 Pandemic

Ribbono Shel Olam – Sovereign of the Universe.

We ask your blessings for all those in the medical profession, whose work and courage and commitment protect us.

Please protect the medical personnel of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties. Shield them from harm and pain and sustain their faith in the face of the formidable enemy that they confront daily. May all of their efforts be crowned with victory. May they be returned to the loving arms of their families and a grateful community - safely, speedily, and in good health.

Amen

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President's Column ~ Suzanne Levy



Suzanne Levy

Dear Members of TBE,

What a time we are living through! Though I know we are all finding it challenging, we are probably also enjoying aspects of it, like having the time to clean out our closets! For me it has been a time of reflection. I have thought a lot about the things that have kept me busy (since I retired two years ago) before all of this happened and the things that I want to keep me busy once our lives go back to "normal". Those of you that know me know that I have always volunteered for a lot of different things. Since retirement, I have also filled by days with mah jong and knitting groups. I realize that after over 40 years of being the organizer, that it is time for me to step back on some of my activities and let other people be in control. There are also some new things I want to pursue. For that reason, I will not be the president of the board for a fifth year in a row.

Finding new board members has always been a dilemma. We know the younger people are very busy with their jobs and families, and the older folks have done their share of being on boards, or are not driving at night, or are not interested in that type of service. I have always felt that if we have no one in a position, that specific job does not get done – it is not up to the other board members to fill in. As the treasurer Ron has said that we can keep the Temple going with just a treasurer and building person – let's hope it doesn't resort to that! What are we to do?

First of all, we are currently not able to have a spring general membership meeting to elect a new board. Some board members have suggested an online meeting, but I know not all of us have the technology for that. There is nothing in the by-laws that prevent us from voting by mail. What we will probably do then is to send out a ballot, with an envelope that will allow you to return it anonymously, if 20% of those ballots are returned then we will have had a successful election.

So now I need to know who wants to be on the ballot? We cannot have write-in votes; so only those of you who choose to run can be elected. If you are interested in ANY position, or want to share a position, please let me know by May 15. If you want to find out more about what the position entails, call me. We all need each other at this trying time; the temple needs you too. The Board positions are president, vice-president, treasurer, executive secretary, religious practices chair, ways & means chair, education chair, membership chair, buildings & grounds chair, and social actions chair.

Thank you to Oceana Heath, Mia Levy and Shayna Levy for volunteering to shop for others at this time. If you need their help, email Oceana or me. Also thank you to Raul Medina who helped board up a broken window for one of our members. I also want to thank Joel Balsurto, two of his daughters, three of his nephews, and Raul Medina, for working to clear the landscape in the Temple's front yard. We are so lucky to have skilled members who are there when we need them.

Suzanne Levy

Bulletin Briefs

May Anniversaries

31 Esther & Mel Kalish

May Birthdays

8 Steven Frucht
9 Bernice Gaon
9 Suzanne Levy
11 Deiter Sachs
18 Sheila Sales
23 Lourdes Vidales
28 Boots Hersh
30 Mel Kalish

Donations:

A tree was planted in Israel in memory of Larry Ratner by Ron and Suzanne Levy
A tree was planted in Israel in memory of Ilene Klass by Kenneth Wolf
A tree was planted in Israel in memory of Idella Moore by Leslie Kaver-Gomes and Anne Kaver
In honor of Rabbi Gottesfeld's recovery by Boots and Seymour Hersh
In honor of the Passover Basket by Boots and Seymour Hersh by Rick Feldman

Brotherhood

The Temple Beth El Brotherhood normally meets the first Sunday of the month. While the temple is closed due to the Corona virus, we will not meet formally. However, I will still be sending out articles of interest to members of the group. Any responses will be emailed to the rest for comment or interest.

Be well,

Gary Epstein, Seminar planner

Sisterhood

The Temple Beth El Sisterhood meets the second Tuesday of the month at the Jaffa Café in Santa Maria. We will not meet as long as social distancing is in effect. The Jaffa Café is still open for takeout. If you visit on the second Tuesday, May 12th, and write TBE at the top of your order form, the temple will still get 15% of your order as a donation.

Hope we will meet again before long.

Marsha Epstein

Exciting Fundraising Events coming to Temple Beth El

Please note that all these events are subject to change due to the COVID-19 situation.

Please mark your calendars and SAVE THE DATES for the following great events. PCPA has a really good season this year and the Temple will be selling tickets for TWO shows. Our price is the same price you would pay at the PCPA box office. First, on Sunday, June 28th, the hilarious "Little Shop of Horrors" comes to PCPA. Second, on Sunday, July 26th, is a musical not to be missed named "Something Rotten". It is a really funny play taking place in Shakespeare's time. I have heard some of the music and it is SO funny! All of these will be in the Marian Theater right here in Santa Maria.

Our first concert this year will be on Sunday, November 17th at 3 PM. Barbara Wilson will be returning to Temple Beth El to put on another great show. She will be starting with "swing era Big Band music" and she will throw in some country and old standards. The second half will be audience participation and sing-alongs. She is a great entertainer, having performed on Celebrity Cruise ships, Las Vegas venues, Country clubs etc. One of our members, Mike Kaver, said "She is the best entertainment you've ever brought to the temple!" If Mike said it, it MUST be true. I will be selling tickets for these fun activities as the dates get closer.

Diane Borad-Mirken, Fundraising Chair

Are you ordering a lot from Amazon these days? If so, there are two ways you can help the Temple to raise money. The first is to by Amazon script from Mike Sachs. When you get the gift card (scrip), you can go into Amazon, enter the code on the back of the card, and Amazon will deduct from the card balance. The other way is to always use Smile.Amazon.com
<<http://Smile.Amazon.com>> . Amazon will donate directly to TBE. To do this, go into smile.amazon.com <<http://smile.amazon.com>> . Choose "Temple Beth El Santa Maria" as your charity. Then be sure to always order through Smile. The Temple really appreciates your support.

Continued from Page 2

There are other similar stories in which people wanted to assume higher religious positions in the new religion of those years, and ended up condemned to death by God – like Korach and his tribe.

In this portion of the week God tells Moses to warn Aaron about following His specific directions regarding entering the Holy Chamber. There is no mention of the penalty for not obeying the rules. However there is a clue on the opening line which reads: “And the Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron when they came near the Lord, and died. (Leviticus 16:1)

In some of the above stories the people had good intentions to serve their God in their own sincere way, only to lose their life for doing so. Yet, these are merely stories; stories which aim to teach humans what could happen when humans from one religion, do not have tolerance and acceptance or respect for people who worship differently in the same religion, or other religions. God in the above stories plays the part of the antagonist (the intolerant person) to teach humans lessons about what can happen when a human being dictates how to worship and love God.

Perhaps the phrase in the Torah should have been:

“Love me as yourself, I am the Lord.”

Rabbi Dov Gottesfeld

Who Knows Where the Time Goes

We are all in a box, and in those boxes we are grieving.

By Roger Cohen <<https://www.nytimes.com/by/roger-cohen>>

Opinion Columnist May 1, 2020

Absent any other marker, nature indicates the passage of time. Daffodils and hyacinths give way to roses. Blossoms fall, new leaves bud, pink petals are gone from empty New York streets. Frozen figures in rumpled clothes may note some slight change in the canvas. Who knows where the time goes?

We met in the warm season. We met in the cold season. It becomes possible to imagine time reordered in such a way. Oh, yes, in the warm season, I remember the peonies. A friend tells me her marker of time’s passage in Paris has become the advancing decomposition of a dead rat in the bike lane on her circumscribed daily outing. Who knows where the time goes<<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/03/opinion/coronavirus-pandemic.html>>

We are all in a box. A smaller or larger Zoom box, depending on the number of people in the conversation. A sidewalk box that sets appropriate social distancing. The box behind the new plastic panels in stores, the box of four too-familiar walls, a mental box of insistent yet unanswerable questions; and in those boxes we are all grieving.

Grieving for a loved one lost to the coronavirus, for lost cities, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/10/opinion/coronavirus-new-york.html>> for lost worlds, for America lost. The virus has revealed a nation in decomposition, incapable of coherence, un-led, angry, disoriented, scattered.

The pathogen itself becomes a political Rorschach test, perceived according to tribal allegiance. The vice president refuses to wear a mask on a visit to the Mayo Clinic <<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/28/us/politics/coronavirus-pence-mask.html>>, a wink to one of those tribes. Why the heck did the hospital break its own rules and let him in?

Because there are no rules anymore. Who would have thought it is possible to become nostalgic for alternate-side New York parking, that implacable marker of the days? Anything is possible; the proof is before our eyes.

Grieving is not missing. We miss conviviality. We grieve for life. For loves lost and retraced, for the precious moment unappreciated. Perhaps at root we grieve for the failure of our imaginations.

That is to say for our inability to grasp what W.G. Sebald, the German writer, called “the ghosts of repetition,” the ever-recurring patterns of dislocation and disaster that punctuate human history until they impose themselves on the present.

A middle-aged woman sits on the steps of a synagogue sobbing. A young woman props her bike against a fence and sobs. It seems indelicate to intrude on such grief. The loss of time itself can engender a terrible emptiness. I see the clock without hands, and the face without features, in the deserted streets of the shattering nightmare sequence in Ingmar Bergman’s “Wild Strawberries.” Who knows where the time goes?

Speaking of dreams, here is another one. A friend finds herself in a cumbersome crude contraption that looks like a beekeeper’s bonnet but is made of sheets of clear plastic screwed together with wood framing. She cannot figure out why it is there, until she learns that banks now require clients to box their faces in this way to get money from an A.T.M. Perhaps, in intimate circles, the box-bonnet bump will replace the elbow bump.

In our boxes, the great health-versus-wealth debate rages. How, when and where to restart the economy, the appropriateness of this or that trade-off. As if the great trade-offs that produced this dysfunctional America had not already happened.

The trade-offs that disempowered the body politic and democratic practice, and empowered special interests and the wealthy; that starved a health system that might have helped people survive better; that conferred sanctity on soaring executive compensation but not on a decent living wage for the mass of Americans; and on and on and on.

The pandemic is also an urgent call for national and personal reinvention and rebalancing. After the Black Death came the Renaissance. From the depths of economic horror came Roosevelt’s New Deal. From this horror, so far, come the senseless twists and turns of the orange Narcissus.

Bandits hold sway. I have visions of Howard Beale in “Network,” and his I’m-as-mad-as-hell-and-I’m-not-going-to-take-this-anymore that brought screaming Americans to their windows.

“All of humanity’s problems,” said Blaise Pascal, “stem from man’s inability to sit quietly in a room alone.” We are learning. Seeing frenetic consumption for what it was, shuddering at the frantic quest for distraction and status in the time before.

I have been listening to “Who Knows Where the Time Goes?” Fairport Convention, 1969, wonderful song, transporting. Turned time’s arrow backward for me, listening to Pink Floyd in Hyde Park in 1968. An ache, we all feel it now.

A cemetery may seem an unlikely source of solace, but Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, ranging over 478 acres, is a beautiful sanctuary. At the main entrance, a large colony of blue-green parrots has established itself. Urban legend has it the birds escaped from a transport at J.F.K. I watched them for a while swooping in mesmeric patterns with twigs in their mouths to add to a multistoried nest that appears to need no additions whatsoever. The parrots get on with their D.I.Y. anyway. Stir, breathe, look around, do something. Who knows where the time goes? The birds know.

May Yarzheits

5/1/20	Harry Berkowitz			Uncle of Gary Epstein
5/1/20	Morris Feller			Grandfather of Niki Eschen
5/2/20	Paul Friedman			Brother of Anita Friedman
5/2/20	Joe Perez			Husband of Stella Perez
5/3/20	Dan Chern*	12	Iyar	Husband of Trudy Chern
5/4/20	Terry L. Cohen Schwartz			Daughter of Edgar Cohen
5/4/20	Marion Friedman			Mother of Anita Friedman
5/4/20	Berta Geiger	10	Iyar	Mother of Tom Geiger
5/5/20	Eva M. Stern			Mother of Howard Stern
5/5/20	Helen Weiser*			Mother of Sid Weiser
5/7/20	Sophie Braun	15	Iyar	Cousin of Gary Epstein
5/7/20	Chaia Sarah Lubin*			Mother of Jerry Lubin
5/8/20	Oscar Resnick*			Father of Sam Resnick
5/10/20	Bernice Becker	6	Iyar	Aunt of Marsha Epstein
5/10/20	Mary Resnick*			Mother of Sam Resnick
5/12/20	Lester Burg	23	Iyar	Father of Sam Burg
5/12/20	Rosalind Perlman*	21	Iyar	Wife of Al Perlman
5/13/20	Barbara Simon	19	Iyar	Cousin of Seymour & Boots Hersh
5/15/20	Esther Lesser*			Mother of Sylvia Lesser
5/16/20	Rebecca Wapner	22	Iyar	Mother of Irwin Wapner
5/17/20	Marian Borad*	8	Iyar	Mother of Diane Borad-Mirken
5/17/20	Mark Stone	8	Iyar	Friend of Phyllis Green
5/20/20	Marilyn Epstein			Cousin of Gary Epstein
5/20/20	Abe Bereskin*	26	Iyar	Father of Shep Bereskin
5/20/20	Max Gollub	26	Iyar	Uncle of Myra Wapner
5/21/20	Shirley Sper			Mother of Corinne Bernstein
5/23/20	Mel Bilow			Father of Aaron Bilow
5/25/20	Martin Becker			Cousin of Marsha Epstein
5/25/20	Samuel Fishman*			
5/26/20	Michael Andrew Rothman	3	Sivan	Cousin of Judith Klinger
5/27/20	Carmen Vergara Hovey			Mother of Juan Hovey
5/27/20	Sarah Meltzer Wilson	4	Sivan	Sister of Lori Meltzer-Sutton
5/28/20	Dorothy Miliman	5	Sivan	Mother of Yael Gott
5/28/20	Rebecca Rosen	5	Sivan	Mother of Boots Hersh
5/29/20	Isadore Kaver	6	Sivan	Father of Mike Kaver
5/30/20	Dan Davis			Brother of Trudy Chern
5/30/20	Sidney Kalison	25	Iyar	Cousin of Corinne Bernstein
5/30/20	Louis Lesser*			Father of Sylvia Lesser
5/31/20	Ruth Spivack*	6	Sivan	Mother of Niki Eschen

Months of Mourning

Syd Hershfield		8/5/19
Lil Klempfner	Sister of Seymour Hersh	9/4/19
Miriam Gaon	Daughter of Bernice Gaon	10/9/19
Emily Hoffman McGinn	Historian of SLO Jewish community	12/12/19
Joanna (Joey) Bilow	Mother of Aaron Bilow	1/22/2020
Ilene Klass kline	Mother of Linda and Karen Goldstien	4/15/2020

Calendar for May:

Friday, May 1: No Shabbat services

Saturday, May 2: No Etz Chayim religious school

(Etz Chayim has a page on Facebook and they're sharing information that way.)

Sunday, May 3: No Brotherhood breakfast meeting

(Email comments on Seminar articles being shared over the May/June period.)

Monday, May 4:

Tuesday, May 5: Adult Conversational Hebrew class to be done on Zoom

also: TBE Board meeting to be done on Zoom (7:00 pm)

Wednesday, May 6:

Thursday, May 7:

Friday, May 8: No Shabbat services

Saturday, May 9: No Etz Chayim religious school (

Etz Chayim has a page on Facebook and they're sharing information that way.)

Sunday, May 10:

Monday, May 11::

Tuesday, May 12: Adult Conversational Hebrew class to be done on Zoom

also: Sisterhood has no dinner meeting; Pick-up food at Jaffa Cafe

Wednesday, May 13:

Thursday, May 14:

Friday, May 15: No Shabbat services

Saturday, May 16: No Etz Chayim religious school

(Etz Chayim has a page on Facebook and they're sharing information that way.)

Sunday, May 17:

Monday, May 18:

Tuesday, May 19: Adult Conversational Hebrew class to be done on Zoom

Wednesday, May 20:

Thursday, May 21:

Friday, May 22: No Shabbat services

Saturday, May 23: No Etz Chayim religious school

(Etz Chayim has a page on Facebook and they're sharing information that way.)

Sunday, May 24: Spring General Membership Meeting canceled

Monday, May 25:

Tuesday, May 26: Adult Conversational Hebrew class to be done on Zoom

Wednesday, May 27:

Thursday, May 28:

Friday, May 29: No Shabbat services

Saturday, May 30: No Etz Chayim religious school

(Etz Chayim has a page on Facebook and they're sharing information that way.)

Sunday, May 31: