



# Beth Am COMMENTATOR

MIAMI, FLORIDA

OCTOBER 27, 1972

## RELIGIOUS SERVICES



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27  
8:30 p.m.

Rabbi Barry Altman  
**Magic vs. Religion**

The Adult Choir Will Sing

o - o - o - o

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28  
11:15 a.m.

TORAH SERVICE

## Holiday Sermons Available

Copies of Rabbi Baumgard's sermons, given over the holidays, are now available through his office. Available are:

The Sun Is Setting--The Need  
To Return  
Lessons Learned At Munich--  
The Jew Is Different  
To Thine Own Self Be True  
Violence--A Jewish Attitude

## Guardians Of Our Youth

Since the last issue of the COMMENTATOR, the following family has come forth to request the privilege of being a "Guardian."

### The Beth Am Sisterhood

This category of giving to the youth building is drawing to a close. If you contemplate becoming a Guardian, now is the time to make that decision before the final details of design are finalized.

## New Platform For Reform Judaism

The officers, board, and executive personnel of Beth Am will be in Orlando this weekend holding work shops on issues important to the future of Reform Judaism. Rabbi Baumgard will present a plan to the assembled delegates from over 40 congregations concerning a new "Platform" for Reform Judaism in America which will then be discussed. Similar discussions are being held at regional conventions around the country. The culmination of these discussions will take place at the next national biennial convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, our national body.

Joseph Altschuler, a past president of Beth Am, will present a paper on "Revitalizing the Concept of the Sabbath." Alan Kessler, past president of Beth Am, will serve on the panel with Joseph Altschuler. Barton Udell, immediate past president of the Temple, will serve as chairman of the Social Action Committee. Dr. Maxwell Dauer, president of the Congregation, will serve as chairman of the Temple Board Workshop. Rabbi Herbert Baumgard will conduct a panel on religious schools.

Among the questions to be considered at the regional convention, October 27 to 29, are Who Is A Jew?, Should Reform Judaism Have A Set of Required Rituals and Beliefs?, Should Jews Become Missionaries?, Should Rabbis Perform Inter-marriages?, What Is the Mission of the Jew Today?, and How Can We Make Prayer More Dynamic for Our Time?

## Hasidic Rabbi Coming To Beth Am To Speak At Tuesday Adult Program

All members are invited to hear one of the Rabbis in the "Lubavitscher" movement here at Beth Am on Tuesday evening, November 7, at 8 p.m., in the Youth Lounge. The Rabbi, who is one of the leaders of the mystic movement dedicated to religion through joy, has agreed to come to Beth Am provided that the ladies sit separate from the men, and provided that the men wear hats. You will be asked to follow these requests.

The Rabbi's appearance is part of our regular Adult Ed Institute programming on Tuesday evenings. Also featured at 9 p.m. is a course on how to raise your children with Dr. Harry Graff, psychiatrist, and Ruth Frankenstein, psychologist, as co-leaders and planners. Others appearing to help parents with their problems in raising children are Dr. Morton Notarius and Dr. Evan Katz.

Courses on Israel, Jews in the Soviet Union, and Hebrew are also offered on Tuesday evenings.

## What Is Chavurah?

A "Chaver" is a friend and a "Chavurah" is a group of friends joined in a close community and interested in each other and in our Jewish sources of learning. Rabbi Altman is organizing a group of Post-Confirmants in a non-directive and informal study atmosphere.

In this type of program, there is no teacher. Rather, each chaver participates in a total learning experience. Subject matter and methodology are issues to be decided by the group.

Our next experience will be on Saturday, October 28, at 1:30 p.m., at Rabbi Altman's house, 9952 N. Kendall Drive, Apartment 3K. If you are simply curious, please come and find out what a "Chavurah" is. We promise that it will be different, a really new experience in Jewish learning.

The pre-BAFTY ninth grade youth group will meet on October 29, Sunday night, at 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. The group will meet outside the Social Hall.

NOTICE: THE NINTH GRADE MEETING SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, IS CANCELLED.





## Humanism, A Growth From Judaism

The following is an excerpt from the Rabbi's sermon, "To Thine Own Self Be True," given at the High Holidays. Copies are available from his office.

Many Jews, however, are not moved at all by this prayer. They say, "I am a humanist. I believe in the glory of man. I don't believe in God, and I don't need religion." When I hear such a statement, I get two kinds of reaction. First of all, I am delighted to hear that any person feels so strongly about mankind, and I hope that he is really sincere. Secondly, I know such a person is ignorant of Judaism, otherwise, he would acknowledge the immense debt that the humanist philosophy owes to Judaism, which is the humanist religion par excellence. The closest that the contemporaries of the ancient Hebrews could get to humanism was a statement found in a Babylonian priestly text. It reads, "The king is like the shadow of a god, and man is like the shadow of the king." It remained for the Hebrews to teach that man is created in the "image of God" Himself. The Rabbis have interpreted this to mean that man has the potential to grow in mind and spirit in the image of infinite love, justice, and mercy. Through all the long centuries when Christian teachers maintained that man was born in original sin and could be saved only "in the shadow" of a certain man-god, throughout all these centuries, Jews taught that man was not born in original sin, that, on the contrary, he had the capacity to make noble choices and to live the moral life. If one is, indeed, a humanist today, let him, at least, acknowledge that his entire movement stands on the foundation built by courageous Jews.

One of the better known modern humanists, Erich Fromm, has made this acknowledgment in his book, "Ye Shall Be As Gods." Fromm is an outstanding lay psychoanalyst, author of books like "The Art of Loving." In his new book, Fromm retells many of the stories he learned in an Orthodox Yeshivah, stories which influenced his choice to enter the field of psychoanalysis. For reasons similar to those motivating Erich Fromm, Jews have been drawn to those professions which seek to help man develop his faculties and to live the more noble life. It is not by accident that so many Jews are doctors, psychiatrists, teachers, researchers, and lawyers. From contact with the Jewish group, and with our own family members, we have somehow learned that it is our duty to help man in his difficult sojourn on earth.

## Must We "Kill" God?

There are an increasing number of social commentators who speak of the present age as the post-Christian age. They mean by this that this is the post religious age, an age in which man is deified and God is eclipsed. Some of the foremost leaders of the "Death of God" movement have been Christian religious figures like Altizer at Emory University, and William Hamilton, formerly of Colgate Divinity School, and now, at the New College in Sarasota. Theologians of this type have contended that since Christianity has given to God all the glory and the power while depicting man as sinful, weak, and completely dependent on God, the only way to elevate man is to reverse the equation, if not to eliminate God entirely. When I appeared with the Reverend Hamilton on the same platform at Florida State University, he admitted, under close questioning, that he had become merely a humanist, surrendering any real belief in God.

Judaism has been different from Christianity in this regard. It never held man in low esteem. On the contrary, Jews have regularly thanked the God who gave them the responsibility for fulfilling extremely difficult moral tasks. This is the whole meaning of the B'rachah, or blessing, which goes "Asher Kidshanu B'Mitzvotav." It is an expression of gratitude that God has considered us noble enough to perform the most exacting duties. Even the story of creation in the Book of Genesis affirms the view of our fathers that God gave man the world in all of its beauty and charged man "to have dominion" over the earth, to harness it, and to help order it. There has been no comparable "Death of God" movement in Judaism, perhaps, for the simple reason that Jews do not have to kill God to elevate man. We have never taught that man is saved only by the grace of God. We have always taught that God has given man the responsibility of helping to save himself by building the good society on this earth and by fulfilling his God-given potential.

## Brotherhood Plans Father-Child Dinner

Under the chairmanship of Alvin Rose, our annual Father-Child dinner will take place in the Social Hall beginning at 6:30 p.m., on Wednesday, November 22, 1972. As usual, there will be prizes, entertainment, and surprises for all the children. Attendance, however, will be limited to the first 300 reservations made.

The essay contest that was such a success last year will be repeated again. A child must complete the phrase "My father is the greatest father in the world because . . ." Limit your answers if possible to no more than one paragraph. An engraved trophy will be awarded to the winning father and a \$25.00 savings bond will be awarded to the child who prepared the best answer.

This is important: All entries must be in the Temple office on or before November 13, 1972. The quality of the answer, and not grammar or spelling, are the factors which will decide the winner.

Because some fathers are not available, this year, mothers may bring their children. So, let us make this a happy, memorable occasion.

Reservations for adults are \$2.50 for each father, and \$1.50 for each child. Make your reservations as soon as possible by calling the Temple.

# Plan Ahead

Beth Am Sisterhood  
Chanukah Book and Game Festival

November 15, 16, 17, 19  
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Patronize your friendly  
local Sisterhood

## *B'nai Mitzvah*

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28  
11:15 a.m.



Scott Lee, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Blumenthal