

Beth Am COMMENTATOR

MIAMI, FLORIDA

FEBRUARY 9, 1973

Luncheon At Marriot Thursday, February 15

With love in their hearts, Sisterhood members are becoming Patrons and Philanthropists for the "Love is . . . our Children" Religious School luncheon Thursday, February 15, 11:00 a.m., at the Marriott Hotel.

Proceeds from the luncheon will be used to equip the Temple's new Teenage Building.

Co-chairmen Joan Hayet and Rosita Levy have planned a most elegant event. There will be a gourmet meal set at a beautifully appointed table with impressario Ray Garcia providing a pleasant musical background. A sparkling George Bernard Shaw comedy satire on marriage will be presented in full period costume by the Dramatics Arts Workshop Players Theater. Mrs. Robert Arrutt is the director of the play, "Overruled." Members of the cast are Linda Adler, Jerry Summers, Mary Luft, and Pat Sullivan.

A number of magnificent luxury articles will be raffled. Among them are a Sam Grodensky original oil, jewelry fashioned by Dorothy Bosco, a special item from Mayor's Jewelry.

If you have not sent your check to the Temple office, please do so today. A Patron's donation is \$12.50, a Philanthropist, \$20.

Selma Rappaport is in charge of reservations and table arrangements. Her number is 271-1712.

Rabbis At Intrafaith Meeting Feb. 13

Rabbi Solomon Schiff, Executive Director of the Greater Miami Rabbinical Association, and an Orthodox Rabbi, will be a guest at the Temple Beth Am Brotherhood meeting on Tuesday, February 13, at 7:30 p.m. Rabbi Irving A. Weingart, Interim Rabbi at Beth David Congregation, will represent the Conservative movement, while Rabbi Baumgard will represent the Reform movement. The three Rabbis will give brief remarks on the nature of their particular movement in Judaism, and then will answer questions.

This year, it was decided to make the meeting an intrafaith discussion rather than an interfaith meeting. Bring your friends to the meeting.



Know The Answer To Key '73 (Part II)

By Rabbi HERBERT M. BAUMGARD, D.H.L.

In the earlier part of this series, occasioned by the Key '73 attempt to convert Jews as well as others to Christianity, we talked about the way Jews differ from fundamentalist Christian approaches to Original Sin, Hell, Salvation by Faith, the After-Life, and other matters.

Now, we want to consider some of the actual Biblical texts that some Christians use in trying to make us believe that our Bible talks about the coming of a divine son of God (Christ).

ISAIAH 7:14. One of the key texts used in this kind of persuasion reads as follows, "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign: Behold, the young woman shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (translation from the Masoretic-Hebrew text by Jewish Publication Society, 1917. See also the translation from the edition known as Revised Standard Version-Protestant, T. Nelson and Sons, N. Y., 1953). Evangelical Christians and those seeking to convert non-Christians hold that this text refers to the coming of Jesus and that Christianity is but the fulfillment of the prophecy in our Bible. Apparently, this text is so meaningful to them because of the name, "Immanuel," which is Hebrew for "God is with us." The Christian argument is that Isaiah was talking about none other than Jesus when he made this prophecy. Most Christian texts, unlike the RSV quoted above, translates the Hebrew word, "B'tulah," not as "a young woman," but as "a virgin."

WAS ISAIAH REALLY TALKING ABOUT JESUS? Remember, Isaiah taught in the eighth century B. C. E. Let us look at the text. The quotation above is an integral part

(Continued on Page 2)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9
8:30 p.m.

Rabbi Barry Altman

'What Is Obscene?'

RELIGIOUS SERVICES



The Adult Choir will sing
Selma Baumgard
Choirmaster

o - o - o - o
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 11:15 a.m.

TORAH SERVICE

Know The Answer To Key '73

(Continued from Page 1)

of the rest of chapter 7 and probably of chapter 8 as well. We can prove almost anything by taking words and sentences out of context, but what do these lines mean IN CONTEXT?

Beginning with Chapter 7:1, the text tells us of an event occurring well over 700 years before Jesus. The king of Judah (Ahaz) is upset because the kings of two countries to the north are in alliance against him and are threatening his country. These kings are identified as Rezin (Syria) and Pekah (Israel). Remember, the Hebrew nation is divided into two parts now, to the north is Israel, to the south is Judah. The text then tells us that the prophet, Isaiah, is to go with his son to meet with the king of Judah (Ahaz) and to reassure him that all will be well. The name of the prophet's son is given symbolically as "Shear-yashub," that is, "a remnant will return," for the practice in those days was to give a child a symbolic name. This did not mean that the child himself was the remnant (the last part). The name had nothing to do with him as an individual. The name was representative of a broader event.

Beginning with verse ten in this same chapter, the Prophet encourages King Ahaz of Judah to ask God for a sign that the doom of his enemies will come to pass. The prophet provides the promise (a sign) that a child will be born whose symbolic name will be Immanuel (God is with us). Then the text goes on, and says in effect, "before this child is old enough to tell the difference between right and wrong, those two kings of whom you are afraid will be deposed and their lands deserted" (this is the clear meaning of 7:15-17). Even beyond these immediate verses, the meaning is further emphasized. The child whose name will be Immanuel (God is with us) is to be born in the near future and within his earliest years, the two living enemies of King Ahaz will be overthrown. The prophet is thus referring to an immediate historic event, not to an event to take place in 700 years.

The prophet continues to talk about the same subject in chapter 8. He says that he had sexual relations with his wife and she bore a son. This son would have the symbolic name of "Maher-shallal-hashbaz," which means "The spoil speeds, the prey hastes" (Ch 8:1-3). Clearly, the child is not identical with the spoil. His name has meaning only as reference to what God is going to do. Then the Prophet continues to say that before this child is old enough to say "mommy" or "daddy," the two northern kingdoms (Israel and Syria) now threatening Judah will be taken captive by still another country (7:4), ". . . for before the child knows how to cry 'My father' or 'My mother,' the wealth of Damascus (capital of Syria) and the spoil of Samaria (capital of Israel) will be carried away before the king of Assyria."

Chapter eight reinforces chapter seven. It is crystal clear what the prophet is talking about. He is concerned with a weighty present problem. Even if the child named Immanuel in chapter seven is considered a different child from the son named Maher-shallal-hashbaz in chapter eight, the meaning is not changed. The prophet speaks of events to occur very soon in the life of each of these children which will have symbolic, but real, meaning for three nations. Many scholars, Christian as well as Jewish, understand that the prophet is speaking only of one child and that each of his names is symbolic and parallel. That is "the spoil speeds . . ." because "God is with us." He is with us in these present events, 700 years before Jesus. In brief, the birth of this child (or children) has nothing at all to do with an event in the distant future.

A "VIRGIN" WILL CONCEIVE. The Gospel, according to Matthew (1:22-23), contends that Jesus was born of a virgin and that this virgin birth was predicted in Isaiah.

We have seen from the textual discussion, above, that even if Isaiah did say this, he could not have been speaking about Jesus, because he was concerned about a child being born in his day (the prophet's day). In this sense, the virgin argument is meaningless. Nonetheless, we ought to know that the Hebrew word, "B'tulah," as used in this context, means "a young woman" and not a virgin. This meaning (a young woman) is the preferred reading in the Revised Standard Version (Protestant) of the Holy Bible.

We ought to know that when Alexander the Great was born, his mother said that he was born of her "union" sexually speaking, with a "god," and that his birth was heralded by an appearance of a "great star in the sky." The historian, Josephus, speaks of the Greek belief that a woman could go to a Greek temple, and in the darkness of the night, near the altar, have sexual relations with a "god." Alexander was born in the 4th century before Jesus. The significance of a virgin birth precedes Jesus. It was part of the folklore of the Greek-Roman world. It was not part of the Jewish world.

When the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek, the word "B'tulah" was translated as "parthenos" which can mean "virgin." Hence, the possible confusion in the reading. But we have shown that even if the baby "Immanuel" was born of a virgin, he was already born in the days of the prophet, Isaiah. Hence, the discussion on the meaning of this word is not vital. (See "The Hebrew Scriptures" by Sandmel, A. Knopf, 1963, N. Y., p. 88)

Educator Speaks At Breakfast

Pat Tornillo, Executive Director of the Dade County Teachers Association (DCTA) is the featured speaker at our Congregational Breakfast on Sunday, February 18, 1973. The time is 9:30 a. m., and the place is our Social Hall.

Born in Orange, New Jersey, Mr. Tornillo attended schools in Newark, New Jersey, received his B.A. degree at Seton Hall University, and took graduate work both at Montclair State Teachers College, the University of Miami, and Barry College. He is married, has four children, has been a resident of Miami since 1956, and is a veteran of World War II, serving in the U.S. Navy.

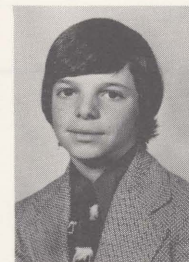
Mr. Tornillo taught in the public schools of Newark, New Jersey, and the Dade County System until 1963, when he was appointed Executive Director of the DCTA in 1963, a position he still holds.

The activities of Mr. Tornillo were not solely confined to the field of education, even though an educational theme runs through all of them. To list a few, he is a past president of the Tiger Bay Club, as well as the National Committee of Educators for Human Rights. He is a member of the Interfaith Agency for Social Justice, the Urban League, and was a delegate to the National Democratic Convention in 1972.

Brotherhood members are admitted free of charge. Other members of the congregation and the public will be admitted at a minimum charge for breakfast.

B'nai Mitzvah

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10
11:15 a. m.



Joseph, son of
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Pallot



Jordan, son of
Dr. and Mrs. Gerard Kaiser