

Beth Am COMMENTATOR

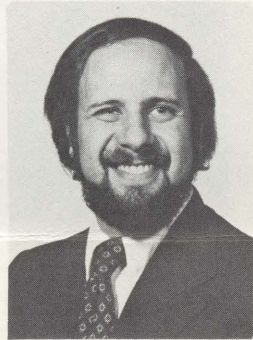
MIAMI, FLORIDA

OCTOBER 18, 1974

Rabbi Julian Cook

Assumes Post As

Beth Am Educator



Mr. William Sanes, President of Temple Beth Am, announces that Rabbi Julian Cook, the first full-time educator in the history of Beth Am, is now in charge of the Beth Am religious school. Rabbi Cook's official title is, "Associate Rabbi for Education." He will have direct responsibility for the Saturday and Sunday religious schools, for the Monday and Wednesday Hebrew schools, and for the Monday night confirmation program.

Rabbis Baumgard and Altman will continue to conduct the services and to handle religious functions such as weddings and funerals. Rabbi Cook will have no responsibilities in this area.

Rabbi Cook comes to Beth Am directly from the position of director at the Union Camp Institute in Zionsville, Indiana, which is the camp for Reform Judaism in the midwest region of the country. During the two years that he was director of the camp, he was also director of youth activities for the Ohio Valley Federation of Temple Youth, serving a five state area in the midwest. In that capacity, he was a member of the staff of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which is the parent body of Reform Judaism. Hundreds of Beth Am children knew him when he served as program director at Camp Coleman in the years 1970 and 1971.

Rabbi Cook brings with him to the Miami area his wife, Susan, and two sons, Alan and Steven. He was ordained in 1972 at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Part of his training was a year of studies in Jerusalem.

While he was still at the Seminary, Rabbi Cook decided that his main interests were in the area of camping. While he has specialized in informal Jewish education, he considers his new position in formal education as an allied field and will

Building Drive Nets \$100,000

LIBRARY DEDICATED BY PETER AND YISKA MOSER

CLASSROOMS DEDICATED BY
NORMAN AND IRMA BRAMAN
AND NEIL AND NANCY BRAVERMAN

Our Capital Fund Raising Chairmen, Cliff Suchman and Marshal Rosenberg, announce that over \$100,000 was raised for the new Teenage Building during the High Holiday season.

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Moser are dedicating the library. Mr. and Mrs. Norman Braman and Mr. and Mrs. Neil Braverman are each dedicating a classroom. The Mosers have been "Guardians" since the start of the Teenage Building.

Joining the Bramans and Bravermans as new "Guardians" are J. Arthur and Linda Goldberg, Jay and Ellie Kaiser and Sam and Edith Stark.

As previously announced, the Chapel will be dedicated in memory of Edith Schild. A classroom has been dedicated by the Suchman family. This leaves only a few classrooms available for dedication, and the assembly hall upstairs.

A total of \$550,000 has now been pledged to the new building, and \$100,000 is still needed to cover the cost of the building.

All the families who contribute to the new building, irrespective of the amount they contribute, will be recognized in a brochure on the building to be published when it is officially dedicated. This is expected to be around the first of the year. Work now is being completed on the special floor on the assembly hall, and the rendering on the front outside wall is steadily moving towards completion. The Capital Fund Raising Committee is seeking ten additional Guardians for the Menorah Wall (the left side) of the building. Their names will be part of the design on that wall.

try to bring to the Beth Am religious school a more flexible approach to Jewish education.

Rabbi Cook's responsibilities will include the supervision of all the religious school teachers and the development of curriculum. His office is located adjacent to the Temple main office. Sima Lesser remains the director of early childhood education, and her specific responsibilities remain the same, the supervision of the daily Nursery-Kindergarten School and the Beth Am Day School.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18
8:30 p.m.

**RELIGIOUS
SERVICES**

RABBI BAUMGARD

'Have The Young People Got
Something To Tell Us?'



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19
11:15 a.m.

TORAH SERVICE



Let's Study Torah

(Note: This is the second in a continuing series on the readings of the Bible. We are following the weekly portions as they are read in the synagogue on Saturday morning. Read the chapters as they are called for. Mine are just partial comments as this space allows for further study in "The Pentateuch and Haftorahs," Joseph H. Hertz, and "Understanding the Bible," by Dr. Harry M. Orlinsky).

Noah (ch. 6:9)

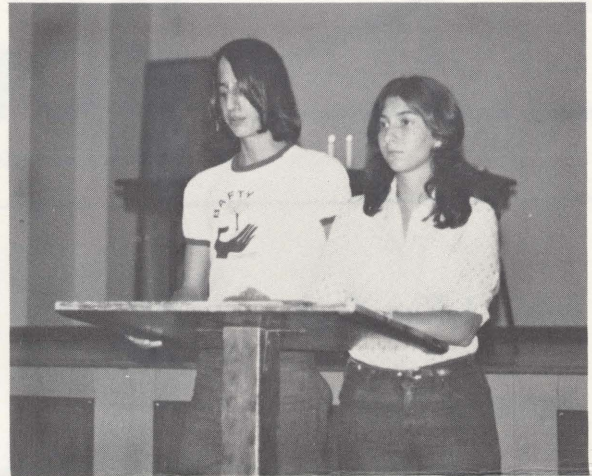
This parasha contains the story of the flood and Noah's Ark. The basic ingredients of the story are much older than the Bible and older than the Hebrew people. The authors of the Torah no doubt heard the story of Uthapishtim and the flood from their grandfathers who heard it from their grandfathers, etc. Most modern readers of the story ask, "Was there ever such a devastating flood?" While there is some archaeological evidence of a great flood, the key question for us as modern Jews is, "Why did our fathers put this story in their sacred literature?" The answer to the question is to be found in the changes our fathers made in the older Babylonian (akkadien) version.

The original story of the flood does not suggest why such a disaster occurred. The contemporary cultures (and older civilization) amongst the Hebrews did not ask, "Why do the gods act as they do?" The pagans never thought the gods were associated with moral purpose or that they acted other than whimsically in a mood of passion or anger. For them, the flood came because it came. There were other ancient legends wherein the gods killed men for sport or in a fit of drunkenness. The Biblical version of the flood makes it clear that God sent such devastation only because men had been unbearably immoral (ch. 6:11-12). We see in this twist what the Hebrews were after in contradistinction to their neighbors. The search for morality is what distinguished the Israelite from the pagan culture.

But is God indeed such an angry and punitive Being? This is the second question that bothered the authors of the Torah. The Israelite concept of God differed from the pagan concept in that the former saw Him as forgiving and compassionate. What could be done with the ancient story to teach this new and revolutionary concept? The second Israelite twist comes at the end of the tale (ch. 9:8-17). God makes a covenant (Brit, contract) with all mankind, through Noah, that never again will He send such devastation and the rainbow is to be the outer sign of that covenant, the reminder. In such a way did Israelites try to teach the world that it need not continually fear the wrath of an all-consuming god, as the pagans taught.

Other interesting stories in this parasha: The Tower of Babel, ch. 11:1-9. (This material may not be republished without permission.)

BAFTY Board Members Speak



BAFTY board members Debbie Kaisen and Barry Rosenberg speak to the first youth gathering.

Judaica Shop Features

Sisterhood's Judaica chairmen will special order The New Union Haggadah (beautifully illustrated by Baskin) upon your request. The new printing should be available about November, in time for gift giving for Hanukkah. The hard cover deluxe edition costs \$17.50. The paperbacks cost \$4.00. Posters of Baskin illustrations cost \$3.00. These editions, published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis, are limited in quantity, so please order early.

A beautiful laminated walnut plaque of our Temple's "David and Bathsheba" tapestry has been especially created for the Judaica Shop, where it is on display. Suitable for hanging in any room of your home, it is available by special order only. Approximate size is 11½ inches by 6¼ inches and the price is \$12.00.

Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Get well wishes to Jacqueline Zevlin, Howard Kowitz, Edith Baron, Deena Birenbaum, Adele Klugerman, and Richard Kaplan who have been hospitalized recently. . . . Mazel tov to Linda and Bill Tweedie who are the proud parents of a boy, Jared Brent, weighing 8 pounds, 6 ounces. . . . Congratulations to Babette Odessky upon the engagement of her daughter, Carol, to Dr. David Pariser. . . . Get well wishes to Martin Rubin, Marlane Shore, Alice Emerick, Laurie Aberman, Ann Aibel, and Lillian Abisch who have been hospitalized recently.

Bnai

Mitzvah

Saturday
October 19
11:15 a.m.



Andrea, daughter of
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Gavrin



Andrew, son of
Dr. and Mrs. Richard Rubinson