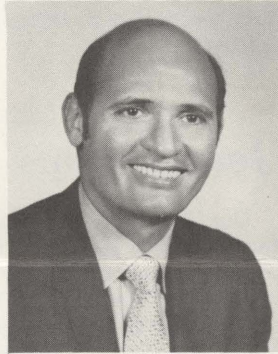


Beth Am COMMENTATOR

MIAMI, FLORIDA

OCTOBER 25, 1974

Alan Kessler Named To Executive Committee Of Union Of American Hebrew Congregations



Allan Kessler, a past president of our Temple, has been named to the executive committee of the National Board of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, parent body of Reform Judaism. Mr. Kessler will lead the delegation from Beth Am to the regional convention in Atlanta, Georgia on November 1 to 4.

Allan is currently serving as president of the Southeast Region of the UAHC and has served as president of the South Florida Federation of Reform Synagogues. He has been appointed co-chairman of the 1975 national biennial convention in Dallas, Texas.

William Sanes, president of Beth Am, will take a large group of Beth Amites to Atlanta for the regional convention where problems of our Southeastern congregations will be considered. Barton Udell, one of our past presidents, is chairman of the committee on resolutions and Rabbi Baumgard will moderate one of the work-shops on marriage problems.

Jerry Legow, Sisterhood president, will lead her delegation to Atlanta on October 31 when the Sisterhood convention gets under way.

Blood Bank Time Again

On Sunday, November 3, 1974, beginning at 9:00 a.m., the Temple Beth Am Blood Bank will hold its annual drive in our Social Hall. Brotherhood, of course, will provide the manpower, perform the required services, and donate hearty breakfasts to those who participate.

A few ground rules will help. If you have a cold, take
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Consecration Service, Fri., Nov. 1 At 7:30 P. M. In The Sanctuary

It is a custom at Beth Am to welcome all children attending Beth Am Religious or Day School for the first time. The tradition at Beth Am is to consecrate these youngsters in a beautiful and meaningful ceremony in our Sanctuary on Friday, November 1.

Consecration is the first of many steps that a student takes along the road to a greater Jewish understanding. Religious School plays an integral part in the development of a child's spiritual training. Consecration is a life cycle ceremony that dramatizes a child's entry into the congregational family. Bar or Bat Mitzvah and Confirmation are other steps along the same path to Jewish education.

During the Consecration service, the children are called forward and blessed. These new children to our Religious School will be given a gift of a miniature Torah symbolic of their entry into the world of Jewish education. This special Consecration service will include the new children in Kindergarten through second grade of the Religious and Day Schools.

We must know beforehand if your child will be participating, so please return the forms mailed to all new students. All of these children participating must attend a short rehearsal in the Sanctuary. If we do not hear from you at all by October 25, we will assume your child is not participating.

The Consecration service will take place on a Family Service night and will start at 7:30 p.m. Bring all of your family and all of your friends.

Guardians Of Our Youth

Neal and Gail Levine

The family listed above has joined the growing list of Guardians of Our Youth. Can you join this dedicated group?

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25
8:30 p.m.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Adult Choir will perform
Selma Baumgard, Choirmaster

RABBI BAUMGARD

'Self Fulfillment:
Freedom Or Enslavement?'



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26
11:15 a.m.

TORAH SERVICE



Let's Study Torah

(Note: Each week, this column will discuss the "parasha," or segment of the Torah which is read in the synagogue on the Sabbath. It is recommended that you read the full assignments indicated and that you read the notes in "The Pentateuch and Haftorahs," edited by J.H. Hertz, 2nd edition, Soncino Press, London.)

Lech L'chah (Genesis, Ch. 12:1 — Ch. 25:18)

Our fathers who wrote the Bible intended that it be a meaningful history of the world. Their primary concern, of course, was with the Jewish people. Having established the fact that God made a covenant, or brit, with mankind through Noah, the Torah now speaks of a special covenant, or brit, that God makes with the Hebrews through Abraham. A brit is two-sided. There are responsibilities on both sides. In the brit described early in the twelfth chapter, God promises to make a great nation of Abraham and his seed, while it is required of Abraham (and his descendents) that they be a blessing to the other peoples of the world (B'racha).

In order that Abraham become a great nation, it is necessary that he leave his father's house and the land in which he was born. Implied in this statement is that Abraham must also abandon the culture and laws of the people amongst which he has lived. What he is to undertake is a revolutionary feat. He is to be part of something radically new. It is to be noted that the promise of a new land (Ch. 12:7) is part of God's inducement to Abraham. So the land of Israel is associated with the very beginning of the Hebrew people. The content of the covenant is further amplified in chapter 17, verses 1-9. The act of circumcision is here described as the outer sign of the covenant (verses 10 and following, ff). This is why the circumcision rite is called "Bris" or "Brit."

This parasha describes some of Abraham's early wanderings. First, he went to Egypt, as a sort of foreshadowing of his people's sojourn there. Then, he wandered amongst the Canaanite kings. Some were friendly, like Melchizedek, king of Salem (14:18 ff), and others were warlike, like Amraphel, king of Shinar (14:1 ff). Abraham, for the most part, is not presented as a great warrior. He resorts to military tactics only to save his kinsman, Lot (14:12-16).

This portion of the Torah tells us how Abraham fathered Ishmael, who was given birth by Hagar, hand-maid of Sarah. Amongst Abraham's people (the Chaldeans, Babylonians, Arameans), if a wife did not give children to her husband, she could be divorced, but if she gave her hand-maid (her personal property) to her husband, the children of the hand-maid were counted as the children of the wife. For this reason, Sarah gave Hagar to her husband, and Hagar gave birth (Ch. 16:1-3). When Hagar conceived, she held her mistress in contempt, and it became necessary for Hagar to flee to the desert (v. 4). There, God meets her and assures her that her son will be the father of a great people and that He will be with her also.

Later on, Sarah becomes pregnant, even though she is well advanced in years. God informs Abraham that the covenant will be carried forward through Isaac, and not Ishmael (17:15-21). To this day, the Arabs, who claim descendency from Ishmael, contend that the covenant really descended through Ishmael, the first born.

Lee Martin's Prints At Judaica Shop Oct. 25

Artist Lee Martin will exhibit a group of his Israeli-inspired lithograph prints at the Judaica Shop in the Social Hall following Friday night services on October 25. Ideal for gift-giving, Mr. Martin's appealing and amusing vignettes of Israel depict the many folkloric charms of this historic and colorful country.

Mr. Martin studied fine art at the Columbus Art Gallery, Commercial Art at Cooper Union, and graphics at Dartmouth College.

Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Our Beth Am kids are the greatest. Dick and Sis Reuben have much to shout about their son, Martin, who is the only undergraduate to receive a teaching position at Rochester Institute of Technology. Martin will serve as full professor in the field of color photography. Isn't that something! By the way, his assistant is seven years older than he is. . . . Any high school senior who will complete requirements for graduation by January and who is interested in a unique program of Jewish studies for the spring semester should consider "Ma'ayan" at the UAHC camp in Wisconsin. Space is limited and the program is exceptionally good. For more information, contact Rabbi Cook at 667-5587.

We are happy to quote a recent telegram: "Heartily congratulate Rosh Hashanah. Wish all best to all our friends. Varnavitsky Family, Leningrad, Russia." In case you didn't know, that's the Russian family Beth Am sponsors and is trying to help emigrate to Israel. . . . Interesting fact about Leo Gelber. Leo is one of the actors for training films for trial attorneys. . . . Mazel tov to Arnold and Eleanor Simon, who became grandparents for the first time! A son, Steven Bernard, was born to their daughter and son-in-law, Linda and George Kaplan. . . . Hear tell Art Conn received a life membership in the Jewish Chatauqua Society.

How I love to print good news. Another grandmother for the first time is Honey Pearson. Her daughter, Cheryl, and son-in-law, Stan Elbrand, are the proud parents of a daughter, Melissa. Mazel tov. . . . Harold and Joy Goldstein proudly announce the engagement of their daughter, Susi, to Bruce Rein. The young couple plan a summer wedding. . . . This must be New Grandparent Week. We congratulate Gloria and Carl Kaplan, who are grandparents for the first time. A little girl, named Susan Merrille, was born to their daughter, Diane, and son-in-law, Raul Gonzalez. Mazel tov. . . . Get well wishes to Susan Yankow, Leatrice Switchkow, Linda Morgan, and Harry Sherman, who have been hospitalized recently.

Bnai

Mitzvah



Saturday
October 26
11:15 a.m.

Janet, daughter of
Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Lewis
Peter, son of
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Spirer