



# Beth Am COMMENTATOR

MIAMI, FLORIDA

JANUARY 10, 1975

## A New Year Code For Beth Amites

By Rabbi HERBERT M. BAUMGARD

Recognizing that the survival of the Jewish people and the survival of Judaism are threatened, as never before, I hereby take it upon myself to:

Make myself a vessel of Judaism, so that I will reflect Jewish learning and values to all who meet me.

Observe in my home the Sabbath on a regular basis so that it will bring the spirit of peace and love to the members of my household.

Observe the Festivals and Holidays of Judaism in my home in such a way that it will deepen the allegiance of my children and bring joy to all our lives.

Make such sacrifices as may be necessary in my life style to attend and support the synagogue as the community unit so essential to the survival of our people.

Translate into dollars immediately my pledges to the Combined Jewish Appeal and to Israel Bonds.

Take such courses at the Temple as will enable me to observe at least a minimum core of rituals in my home.

Impress upon my children that they carry within them the seed of Jewish survival, and that they must make certain that they physically produce and spiritually educate Jewish children.

## Beth Am Art Auction January 11 At 9 P.M.



Selecting art for Beth Am art auction are (from left) Carol Clein, Fran Blumenfeld, auctioneer Richard Reiser, Betty Gold, and Sisterhood President Gerri Legow.

(Photo by Phil Hayet)

Mrs. Carol Clein, Mrs. Fran Blumenfeld and Mrs. Betty Gold, co-chairmen, have finalized plans for Temple Beth Am Sisterhood's art auction. It will be an exciting art happening combined with an open house to be held in the new Teenage Building gymnasium at 9 p.m. on Saturday, January 11.

To kick off the evening of festivities and bargains, a scrumptious wine and cheese tasting preview will be held starting at 8 p.m. The public is invited, so bring your relatives, bring your neighbors, bring your friends, and, most of all, bring yourselves. Cost is \$5 per couple. Fabulous door prizes will be given.

The art auction, to be conducted by well-known local connoisseur and art expert Richard Reiser, will feature signed and numbered lithographs, oils, watercolors, and sculptures. Original works of art from the Art Scene Art Gallery at the Kings Bay Shopping Center will be auctioned off. There will be wall hangings and pieces in all price ranges to fit all pocket-books. No sale will be made at over the regular retail price.

## Sisterhood To Visit Vizcaya Jan. 15

Sisterhood will tour Vizcaya, the splendid Renaissance Palace and gardens, as its Wednesday, January 15 program. Members are to meet in the Social Hall promptly at 9:30 a.m., then travel by bus to Vizcaya.

The outing price is \$3 and includes transportation to and from Vizcaya and the Temple. Bring your own lunch. You may buy a drink or food at the Vizcaya snack bar.

There will be no sitting service. As bus space is limited, no one may come without a reservation. Call by January 10 to reserve a seat. Phone Terry Freedman, 270-0088, Arlene Feller, 251-3863, or the Temple at 667-5587.

Be on time; buses are on schedule.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10  
8:30 p.m.

### RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Adult Choir will perform  
Selma Baumgard, Choirmaster

RABBI ALTMAN

### 'Mitzvah-Commitment Or Commandment'



A Report From The Youth Convention

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11  
11:15 a.m.

TORAH SERVICE

### Bible Made Easy!

Follow the weekly Bible readings interpreted by Rabbi Baumgard on Page 2. This is an easy way to study the Torah.



## Let's Study Torah

Vah-Ay-Rah. (Read Exodus 6:2 – 9:35).

This parasha begins with the reaffirmation of the Brit, or Covenant. God tells Moses that He is the God who covenanted with the Patriarchs to give them the land of Canaan (Israel). If it is necessary to deliver them from Pharaoh in order to accomplish this purpose, then this will be done (6:2-8).

Moses tries to encourage the enslaved people by informing them of what God has told him, but they were so crushed by their tasks that they seemed to be beyond hope (6:9). In spite of the fact that the people had no faith in him, Moses goes to Pharaoh and delivers the message from his God (v. 10-13).

Inserted into the text here is an account of the families and tribes (v. 14-27). Frequently, the story line is interrupted so that details of this type can be entered. Scholars believe that this is so because there were different editors of the Torah from time to time with different points of concern and emphasis. Here, also, the position of Aaron in the story is highlighted (6:28-30 and 7:1-3). Aaron is known as the progenitor of the priestly establishment, so it is important for the later authority of the priests that he have a place in the critical episode of the Exodus. These passages establish that fact. Aaron is to be the spokesman for Moses (7:1-2).

There follows a series of events which we have known in the tradition as the "plagues," but which must be understood as a continuing contest of magicians (7:8 and continuing). The text reads, "When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying: Show a wonder . . .; then . . . take thy rod . . ." (7:9). Here it is assumed that Pharaoh will require that Moses demonstrate his prowess as a magician. One cannot understand why this would be so, unless one knows that the ancient Egyptians understood the gods only as master magicians. Those who claimed to represent the gods, or to have power over the gods, had to be able to perform magic. This explains why Pharaoh had so many of his "religious" leaders ready to perform startling feats of magic in the contest against Moses. It was Pharaoh who laid down the rules. The choice of "weapons," so to speak, was his own. In Pharaoh's mind, how could one determine if the God of the Hebrews had any significance at all unless his representatives could perform superior magical feats. It is in this light that one must now read the story of the plagues. They were part of a contest between the gods, as Pharaoh understood it (7:8 – 9:35).

Traditional Jews believe that the plagues occurred just as the Bible states. Reform Jews look for naturalistic explanations. For us, religion is not a matter of magic. It would seem that Moses also was against the association of Judaism with magic, as we shall see in the story involving the obtaining of water from a rock in the wilderness journey. Since Pharaoh understood no other language, the reluctant Moses (and Aaron) played "the only game in town." They became miracle workers in order to convince Pharaoh that great harm would come to him unless he released the slaves.

### WE NEED NAMES OF COLLEGIANS

The Collegian Committee needs names of all Beth Am collegians. We are trying to update our list in time for Rabbi Baumgard's visits to the various campuses.

## BAFTY Baubles

By MARK MINTZ

One of our best programs was a mystery bus ride. Only the executive board knew where we were going and all the members were really surprised. A & M School Bus Service donated a bus for this great program.

Our basketball team so far is ahead of any other Temple team. We scored a very close 58-56 victory over Beth Shalom in a fantastic show of coaching and playing ability. Our coaches, Harvey Lozman and Stan Mintz, really made the difference in this game.

Our next game was a defeat for the Beth David team, and a close victory over the Temple Israel team as well. Our only loss this season was to the very tough La Salle High School Junior Varsity.

THE NEW SCHOOL (tenth through twelfth grades) is offering courses in Hebrew, Jewish literature, singing, dancing, Jewish art, drama, Israel, the Book of Genesis, the holocaust, and liberated Jewish women.

Please select the courses you want and come to classes on Sunday nights.

## Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Kudos to Jill, daughter of Charles and Lynne Brooks, who has graduated from Northwestern with honors in the field of speech pathology. She will seek her master's degree from the University of Wisconsin. . . . It was so nice to see our college kids during the winter break. . . . So much has been written about Madge Rosenbaum that I just had to share it with our congregants. Madge, who is blind, but not one to give up, has been awarded the following: Personalities of the South honoring America's leaders; Certificate of Merit for distinguished service; and part of Helping Others, a book on new rehabilitation helping others. She has been written up in the Miami Herald and the Miami News. She never quits and she is a wonder to behold. She makes others who are blind like herself to reach for new horizons, has written library books, cook books, etc.

Sisterhood wishes to thank Millie Draizer for her piano accompaniment at the December 18 Sisterhood luncheon. Talented Millie did it again. . . . Kudos to the following teenagers who have volunteered their time to our Pre-School and Day School: Julie Snow, David Ceppos, Susan Foreman, Beth Berkowitz, Sharon Terr, Laurie Rich, Shelly Rubin, Ann Lesser, Sherry Lipton, and Mindy Karns. . . . Get well wishes to Dorothy Werner, Sheila Miller, Robert Snider, Edna Stein, Ethel Manekin, George Aibel, who have been hospitalized recently. . . . Congratulations to Cal Rosenbaum who was promoted to 4th corporate vice president upon his eleventh anniversary with Wometco. . . . Also to Sy Pawliger who was elected president of the Tamiami Kiwanis.

Saturday, January 11, 11:15 a.m.

*Bnai*

*Mitzvah*



January 4  
Sanford, son of  
Dr. Donald Altman  
and Ruth Altman  
(No photo available)

Michael, son of  
Dr. and Mrs. Melvin Levinson  
Reese, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Weingarten