



# Beth Am COMMENTATOR

MIAMI, FLORIDA

JANUARY 24, 1975

## Summer Program Plans Expanded



The summer program at Temple Beth Am is in the planning stage. Under the direction of Rabbi Baumgard, Gil Tendler, and Michael Wexler, co-chairmen of the summer program, extensive improvements in the summer program are contemplated. The addition of several sports specialties and of additional facilities are being worked into the program for the coming year.

Summer program will run for eight weeks, starting Wednesday, June 18. There will be full day activities for four to 14 year olds. You can send your child for a four week session, or for the full eight weeks. Temple members will receive first preference in registration and in fees. In an effort to help fight inflation, the fees for the coming year were kept virtually the same as last year.

Further details will be forthcoming in the summer program brochure which will be mailed to all members in the next few weeks. Call Rhoda Bernheimer in the Temple office, 667-5587, for more information.

## Purim Carnival Sunday, February 16

Sunday, February 16, will mark the celebration of Purim at Temple Beth Am. All members of the congregation and all children should plan to attend the Carnival on Temple grounds that day from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

For the kids, we will have all sorts of games, prizes, pony rides, clowns, puppet shows, balloons, etc.

For the adults, we have a fabulous arts and crafts sale and a used book sale.

And for all, we have FOOD, FOOD, FOOD!

## Guardians Of Our Youth

In last week's issue of the COMMENTATOR, we listed two new families who have become "Guardians of Our Youth."

The current campaign for "Guardians," which started in September, now lists nine families who have joined this esteemed group. At the start of this campaign, we were searching for a total of 18 new "Guardian" families to augment the original 40 families who are "Guardians" from our 1972 campaign.

The "Guardian" families who have joined the current campaign are listed below:

**Norman and Irma Braman**

**Neil and Nancy Braverman**

**Robert and Barbara Gittleman**

**J. Arthur and Linda Goldberg**

**Drs. Melvin and Nancy Greenfield**

**Gordon Jones**

**Jay and Ellie Kaiser**

**Neal H. and Gail Levine**

**Sam and Edith Stark**

Can you help to bring this total to 18?

## Dedication Of TEENAGE BUILDING Sunday Evening, March 9, 1975

*Honorable Richard B. Stone*

*U. S. SENATOR*

**WILL BE THE DEDICATORY SPEAKER**

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24

8:30 p.m.

## RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Adult Choir will perform  
Selma Baumgard, Choirmaster

RABBI BAUMGARD

'On The Passing Of Jack  
Benny and Richard Tucker'



SATURDAY, JANUARY 25

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

B'shalach-Shirah. Read Exodus 13:17 - 17:16.

Two parashot, or Torah readings, are combined for this week. The first parasha, B'shalach, describes the journey our fathers took upon leaving Egypt. These readings are still tinged with some of the magical elements of the contest with Pharaoh. The text tells us that God went before the Hebrews in the form of a "pillar of cloud" by day and a "pillar of fire" by night (13:21). One recalls the story of the burning bush and how frequently the ancient Hebrews saw the spirit of God behind natural phenomena. God was not equal with nature (as the pagans thought), but He could use nature to accomplish His purposes.

The battle of magic with Pharaoh in his court was but the foreshadowing of a greater battle. The oldest writings in this section tell us there was a great military battle between Pharaoh and the Hebrews (15:1-4). Perhaps the battle came first and the rest of the story was reconstructed later, including the story of the plagues. Nonetheless, it is the crossing of the Sea of Reeds (not Red Sea) which is the more ancient story. It is told in the Shirah (or ancient ballad) which is found in the fifteenth chapter. The earliest historical records are maintained in this musical form, for all cultures.

Any good story must have a climax, and this is the culmination of the Moses-Pharaoh confrontation. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart by God was all designed for this explosive result (14:1-8). Picture, if you can, the ex-slaves cowering and complaining to Moses as they saw the chariots of the mighty Pharaoh approaching (14:10-12). Moses, in turn, complains to God (14:13-14). God answers Moses with a call to courage, "Wherefore criest thou unto Me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." (v. 15). Here again, we have the echo of a main theme of our Bible. If the people have the courage to go forward, help will come to them, but, first, they must take the initiative.

The division of the Sea of Reeds (marshland) upon the waving of the rod of Moses (14:16-22) is clearly a continuation of the spirit of the story of the plagues. The issue still is who is the greater magician, the God of the Hebrews or the gods of the Egyptians? But we know that it was not quite so magical that the Hebrews, travelling light, walked through the marshland, and the Egyptians in their heavy chariots were sunk in the mud. All we have to add to this is a flash rain (so common at certain seasons in the Near East), and we have the water rising and the Egyptians engulfed (v. 23-31). From the Shirah itself, chapter 15, we must suspect that there was an actual battle here, and the Hebrews prevailed. No doubt, the terrain was favorable to them and prejudicial to the Egyptians.

In chapter 17, we see the attempt of Moses to break out of the role of the magician. The people want him to work still another miracle. They want him to make water come out of a rock. Moses had to be a magician to Pharaoh. He wants to be a law-giver to his people. He resists their urging. Because of this, tradition holds, Moses was not privileged to enter the land of Canaan. On the contrary, I think that this is the finest moment of Moses. He wants to lead his people to an understanding of religion based on the moral law. The story tells us that Moses succeeded in bringing water from the rock (v. 6), but there are many legends on this story which throw light on its more basic meaning. The people strove with God here (v. 7), that is, they wanted God to be the magician once again. The editors who tell us that God yielded to this demand may not have understood why Moses wanted to oppose the people in this respect.

## Coffee House Attracts Youth

On Saturday night, January 4, BAFTY (Senior Youth Group) played host to Reform youth groups from around South Florida at the BAFTY Coffee House. Over 125 teenagers attended. Debbie Kaiser, although down with bronchitis, did a tremendous job in planning the evening. Beth Amites, such as Elliot Katz, Bonnie Goldman, Audrey Rosen, Robbie Kessler, Cindy Gold, and Lynn Goldsworth, were among the best of some very talented acts.

### SENIOR YOUTH GROUP BASKETBALL TEAM



BAFTY, the senior youth group at Beth Am, has fielded a fine team this year. Under the excellent coaching of Dr. Harvey Lozman, BAFTY has defeated Beth Shalom, Beth David, Temple Israel, and other area synagogue teams.

## Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Mazel to Ellie and Al Ziegel and Dr. Sam and Lillie Ditkowsky upon the engagement of their children, Joanie to Dr. William Ditkowsky. A March wedding is planned. . . . Kudos to Nancy Greenberg who had her recent paintings exhibited at Security Federal during the month of December. . . . Glad to tell you all that our former cantorial soloist, Steve Dubov, was chosen to sing a part in the Broadway show, Shenandoah. . . . Congrats to Jeffrey and Sharon Mart upon the birth of their son, Andrew Nathan. . . . Also to Gaye Gompers who graduated F.I.U. with honors in the field of psychology. . . . Randy, son of Dr. Mel and Joan Schwartz, was elected president of Retzeh A.Z.A.

Congratulations are in order to Marge Pearlson who won the Outstanding Citizen of Dade County award for her efforts in behalf of community schools programming.

*B'nai  
Mitzvah*



Saturday  
January 25  
11:15 a.m.

Mark Alter, son of  
Mrs. Bertram Schild  
Randy, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kurland