



# Beth Am Commentator

January 20, 1978

Miami, Florida

**Rabbi Herbert M. Baumgard**  
**"FEMINIST MOVEMENT AND THE BIBLE"**  
**DR. HARRY ORLINSKY, Guest Speaker**  
**Friday, January 20, 8:30 p.m., RELIGIOUS SERVICE**  
**Saturday, January 21, 11:15 a.m., TORAH SERVICE**

## Hassidism Today Breakfast Topic Jan. 22

The next Brotherhood breakfast forum on January 22, at 9:30 a.m., in the Youth Lounge will be of great interest to all our members and friends. There will be a very interesting talk by the well-known Hassidic scholar, Rabbi Yitzhak Marcus of the Chabad House on 'HASSIDISM TODAY--A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.' Our Temple has been deeply involved in the study of the Hassidic movement. Many of the Temple rituals and songs are steeped in Hassidism. Beth Am has been referred to as the Hassidic Reform Temple. Many of its best-attended adult education courses concern themselves with topics relating to Hassidism. Rabbi Marcus will discuss Hassidism today and its relationship to the problems of today. Such problems of women's lib, abortion, etc. will be discussed in the context of today's Hassidic movement.

Admission to the breakfast forum is \$1.50 for Brotherhood members and \$2.00 for non-members. Your friends and neighbors are invited to enjoy both the discussion and the food. As always, all Brotherhood forums welcome the ladies.

## HAVURAH BOWL!

AT THE TEMPLE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 1:00 P.M.

All of the Beth Am Havurot will be assembling at the Temple on Sunday afternoon, January 22, at 1:00 p.m., for the first annual Havurah Bowl--an afternoon of picnicking, parades, fun and games, and especially an opportunity for all of our Havurot to get together and exchange ideas.

## TEMPLE CHOIR PRESENTS PUBLIC PROGRAM

"PATHWAYS THROUGH JUDAISM"

SUNDAY NIGHT, JANUARY 29, 8 P.M.

In cooperation with Ecumenical Festivals, an inter-faith music organization, the Temple Beth Am Choir will present a special musical program entitled "Pathways Through Judaism," on Sunday night, January 29, at 8 p.m.

Selma Baumgard, director of the Choir since its inception, informs us, "The program will be presented in the style of our highly successful 'Jewish Contributions to the Broadway Musical Stage,' although this program will include more choral participation." Rabbi Baumgard is writing the narration which will tie together the music.

The program will feature different examples of Jewish music from the ancient to the modern, from Yom Kippur to Purim, European, Israeli, and American. The entire choir will be present on the altar.

The Beth Am Choir includes some of the outstanding voices in Miami, including members of the University of Miami School of Music and members of the congregation. Beth Am members will be admitted free. In addition, Temple members may obtain two tickets for friends without charge. The tickets to non-members will be \$2 for adults and \$1 for children. A capacity turnout is anticipated.

## Dr. Orlinsky, Bible Scholar, Speaks Friday, Jan. 20 On The Feminist Movement And The Bible



Dr. Harry Orlinsky, Ph. D., Beth Am's annual winter visiting scholar, will speak at services on Friday, January 20, at 8:30 p.m. His topic this time is "The Feminist Movement and the Bible." He will address himself to such feminist charges as whether the Bible is guilty of male chauvinism and whether the Bible can be rewritten to meet the new understanding about the sexes, etc.

Dr. Orlinsky is perhaps the world's outstanding Jewish Bible scholar. He is known as the world authority on the oldest known Bible translation (into Greek). He is the editor-in-chief of the current Jewish Publication Society translation of the Bible. He is a past president of the Society of Biblical Literature. He is professor of Bible at our national seminary, the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

Dr. Orlinsky is a warm and humorous speaker, and has won the hearts of Beth Amites over the years. Come, learn, and enjoy yourself.



Rear (left to right): Barry Lindley, Merle Hamm, Cantorial Soloist Joseph Rubin, Dr. Robert Brewster, Dr. Gerson Sacks, Iris Rosen, Sheldon Weiss.

Front (left to right): Marvis Martin, Harriet Potlock, Bernice Anapol, Director Selma Baumgard, Sylvia Weinberg, Ann Aibel, Paulie Levine.

Missing: Roxanne Fines, Gary Kahn, Lew Gillis.





FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

A Fragile Light

Someone once said that the Jewish people constituted a fragile light burning in the darkness of human civilization, lighting the way not only for Jews, but for all peoples. Students of human history acknowledge that the Jews not only originated certain values for all mankind to adopt, but the Jews have held up these ideals down through the centuries when many of the people which had adopted them superficially cast them off. We live in a time when much of which Judaism has held to be holy is being challenged. There are some who tell us, "This isn't the old days. This is a scientific day. The lessons of the past do not apply to today." A student of history can only smile (painfully) when he hears a statement like this, for he knows that this is exactly the statement Jews have heard in every age over the last four thousand years.

When Israel was born, about 1800 B.C.E., the scientific country of the time was Babylonia. The Babylonians had made a real science out of the study of the stars. Astrology is hardly a new thing. Most of what we know about the movement of the major planets and stars was discovered by the Babylonians. And into their precise calculations they wove a science of religion. They believed that the gods spoke through the stars. When two stars or planets reached a certain position in relation to one another, then it was propitious (or not) to do certain kinds of activity. (Modern astrologers use this same system). When the Judeans were captured by the Babylonians and taken into exile (about 586 B.C.E.), they were awed by this more "modern" and advanced country. The Judeans did not have the large cities, the complicated building techniques, the libraries, or the highly developed governmental machinery of their conquerors. It would have been a simple thing for them to have been assimilated into this more advanced civilization. How does the old saying go, "How can you keep them down on the farm after they've seen Patee?"

The Judeans did survive, as a distinct culture within Babylonia, however. They had one thing the Babylonians did not have. They had the Torah. They were bound to a higher moral system and their people were too steeped in that system to give it up for what turned out to be only a pseudo-scientific culture after all. The Jews turned their backs on the astrology and the materialism of Babylonia and lived their own lives within the larger pagan society. That is why you and I are Jews today.

A MODERN CHALLENGE

Jews in America face a similar crisis today, but of much more serious proportions. The ancient Judeans solved their crisis by moving closer together as Jews and becoming more strict in their daily observance in order to maintain their identity against the competitive life style. Ancient Babylonia, the bright star of the ancient Near East, would hardly be a candle light against the sun of America's glittering culture. The call to modern American life-styles is so strong that few among us are not ensnared in some way by the new ethical and sexual mores. After all, America is the essence of scientific development. The best of all human discovery is concentrated here. The position in which the Jewish community finds itself in 1978 in America is precisely our situation in Babylonia except that we came to America willingly, and the American civilization is much more compelling and absorbent than the Babylonian civilization.

In 586 B.C.E., the Judeans managed to move closer to their own center. They deliberately set about intensifying the Jewish experience in the home and in their daily work. Are we American Jews capable of a similar heroism? Or has the Jewish

RABBI MITCHELL CHEFITZ TO RECEIVE BROTHERHOOD MEDALLION AWARD FOR 1978

Temple Beth Am Brotherhood President Michael Weisberg is happy to announce that Brotherhood will honor Rabbi Mitchell Chefitz as the recipient of its 1978 Medallion award.



Rabbi Chefitz, as Associate Rabbi of Temple Beth Am, has helped Brotherhood plan its worship services, has participated in its inter-faith dinner, and has spoken several times at the monthly Brotherhood breakfasts. For the Temple at large, he has encouraged active formation and participation in Havurot. Rabbi Chefitz exemplifies the modern Reform Jew by living Jewish ethical values and belief in the moral law.

Rabbi Chefitz came to Temple Beth Am in 1975 upon his graduation from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Prior to that, he had served in the U.S. Navy, and had taught at the University of California in Berkeley. He is married to the lovely Walli who is the mother of his two children, Uri and Joshua.

RABBI BAUMGARD DELIVERS THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The keynote address for the medallion dinner will be given by Rabbi Herbert M. Baumgard, the senior Rabbi of Temple Beth Am.

The medallion dinner will be held on Saturday, February 11, at 7:30 p.m., in the Social Hall. All proceeds of the dinner will be donated to Temple Beth Am's new Learning Center in the name of Rabbi Chefitz. This will be a catered sit-down dinner. Your contribution for the dinner will be \$15.00 per person. Please return the reservation card you receive with your formal invitation.

Marriage Congratulations To:

Norman and Diana Elson upon the recent marriage of their daughter, Ilisa Stern, to Dennis Golub. The young couple were married in the Temple Sanctuary.

Bnai

Mitzvah

Saturday  
January 21  
11:15 a.m.



Staci, daughter of  
Mrs. Dianna Lipcon  
Mr. Mitchell Lipcon

ethic, the Jewish concept of life and home and family, finally met its match in the opulent palaces, the extravagant bazaars, and the naked sirens of scientific America?

Thomas Jefferson is one of my "saints." He envisioned an America of farmers, small towns, and highly cultured people, that is, a highly personal and responsible society. I think that if Jefferson were allowed a few moments to return to his country today, he would marvel at the bright lights and the airplanes and wonder whatever happened to the simple American ethic.

There is another America which somehow we must find again in the debris of modern America. I believe that to the extent American Jews become Jews once again, returning to the simple faith and self-awareness (as a people) that has kept Judaism alive for four thousand years, we will help to find that other America.

Early Americans called themselves "The new Israelites." The ideals the founding fathers pursued were those held aloft by the Jews in the Bible. To the extent that American Jews try to rediscover themselves as Jews, they will help to rediscover the soul of idealistic America.