

Book

TORAH  
PARASHOT

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF  
THE TRADITIONAL WEEKLY READINGS  
OF THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES #

WITH COMMENTARY

Designed to be used with the bible itself (Tanach)  
and specifically with the Chumash, or first five books of the Tanach,  
and commentators such as Plaut

Prepared for Temple Beth Am  
5950 N. Kendall Drive  
Miami, Florida 33156

by Rabbi Herbert Baumgard, D.H.L., D.D.

#Designed to motivate a more intensive study than this brief commentary provides.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Bereshith  
Noach  
Lech Lecha  
Vayyera  
Chayye Sarah  
Toledoth  
Vayyetze  
Vayyishlach  
Vayyeshev  
Mikketz  
Vayyiggash  
Vayyechi

THE BOOK OF EXODUS

Shemoth  
Va-ayra  
Bo  
Beshallach  
Yithro  
Michpatim  
Terumah  
Tetzaveh  
Ki Thissa  
Vayyakhel  
Pekudey

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

Vayyikra  
Tzav  
Shemini  
Thazria  
Metzora  
Acharey Mos  
Kedoshim  
Emor

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

Bemidbar  
Naso  
Behaalosecha  
Shelach Lecha  
Korach  
Chukkas  
Balak

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

Devarim  
Va-Ethchanan  
Ekev  
Re'eh  
Shofetim  
Ki Thetze  
Ki Thavo  
Nitzavim  
Vayyelech  
Haazinu  
Vezoth Ha-berachah





## Let's Study Torah

Note: Beginning this week, we begin a new series discussing the content of the Torah (the first five books of the Bible). We will follow the traditional cycle of reading as it is read in the Synagogue. A discussion is held every Saturday morning at our Torah Service at 11:15 a.m. All are invited.

Read Genesis (B'rashit), Chapter 1:1 - 6:8

At the Simchat Torah service, the last day of the festival of Sukkot, which occurs at this season, we read from the Torahs. It is a part of the "fun" of this service that we end the reading of one Torah with the last words in Deuteronomy, and we read the first words in the second Torah. In the former, we read of the death of Moses, and, then, the reader of the Torah (the Ba'al Koreh) reads about the creation of the world (traditionally, without taking a breath). The implication, of course, is that because of the power of God, there is really no death. Similarly, if Israel continues to live by and through the Torah, it will never die.

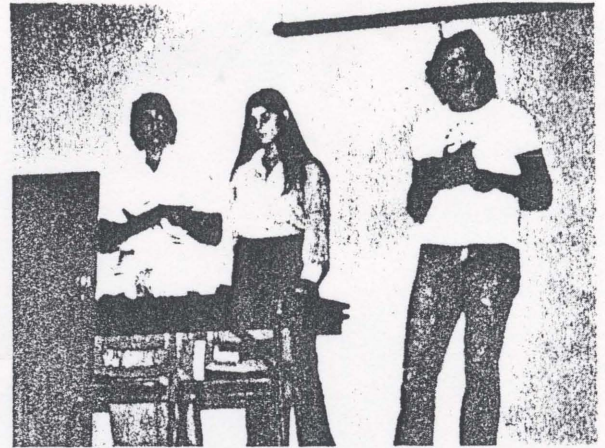
We living Jews make the Torah our own by constantly reliving its events. To study it is to become thereby an historian, a student of morality, a philosopher. Millions of people have come to God through the Torah and through it they have developed a new respect for man and for the people of Israel.

How are we to regard these first chapters of Genesis? Was the world really created in just this fashion? For centuries, people have argued over these words in relation to the theory of evolution. For many years, the view was that if you believed in evolution, you were invalidating the Torah, and vice-versa. Some traditional Jews (Orthodox) contend that the "days" described in Genesis are really millenia, long ages of time; so that even if we accept the idea that our fathers knew precisely how God created the world, and that He created it just as Genesis depicts, it is possible to square out the description with the theory that creation proceeded in evolutionary stages. As a Reform Rabbi, and as one who looks at the Torah with a critical view, as one who believes that it was written by inspired men and not by God, I would not be disturbed if there were a difference between the view of those who wrote the Torah and those who propose the theory of evolution. The truth is that noone knows how the world came into being, and all of us operate with theories!

The beauty of the Torah story, however, is its hypothesis. Our fathers hypothesized that **HOWEVER THE WORLD CAME INTO BEING**, it was created, it didn't just happen. Had our fathers really known how the world was created, surely they would have spent more than a few words on this tantalizing subject. Instead, they hastened to their conclusion which is that **THE WORLD IS THE PRODUCT OF A CREATOR-GOD**. The second point our fathers emphasize in this story is that God's creation has a **PLAN FOR MAN**. God says to Adam and Eve, in effect, "Here is the world . . . subdue it . . . and govern it . . . **AS I WISH YOU TO GOVERN IT.**" This is the meaning of the creation story. It is one vehicle whereby our Jewish fathers attempted to link God and man together in a continuing relationship with moral meaning.

For Jews, the key question is not-did the creation happen in just this way? The question is-do we accept the fundamental proposition that there is indeed a relationship between the Creator and man and that mankind has a profound responsibility to further the plan of creation in God's way.

## An Original Play By BAFTY



Left to right: Richard Sacks, Debbie Katz, Ross Goodman presenting an original play to first BAFTY meeting crowd.

## Cotillion Begins For 8th Graders

Cotillion will begin for all interested eighth graders on Tuesday evening, October 15, in our Social Hall. For only \$25.00 per child, a ten week course of the latest dances will be taught from 7:30 to 9:15 p.m. each Tuesday evening in our Social Hall. Refreshments will be served. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis.

Seventh graders will have an opportunity to join a cotillion class in January.



If your child is interested in cotillion now for eighth graders, please fill out the coupon below and mail to the Temple office. For further information, please call Mrs. Richard Litt (Bobbi), 235-2504, or Mrs. Howard Katzen (Barbara), 665-7693, co-chairmen.

NAME OF CHILD \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

*B'nai*  
*Mitzvah*

Saturday  
October 12  
11:15 a.m.

Stewart, son of  
Dr. and Mrs. Martin Liebling

Donald, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Baker

This is the perspective which we shall apply to the Torah and to the history which our fathers attempted to write.

Other important stories in this week's "parasha" (or portion) which you should read are: The Story of the Garden of Eden, Ch. 3; Cain and Abel, Ch. 4; Noah and the Flood, Ch. 6. These stories will be analyzed in this column in the future.





## 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 Utnapishtim 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 <sup>ancestors</sup> fathers put this story in their sacred literature?" The answer to the question is to be found in the changes our <sup>ancestors</sup> fathers made in the older Babylonian (Akkadian) version. A

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 <sup>Israelite</sup> former saw <sup>God</sup> 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 <sup>be administered</sup> 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





Let's Study Torah

*"The Torah" edited by Gunther PLAUT is a highly worthy commentary.*

(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 <sup>ancestors</sup> 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 Spierer





## Let's Study Torah

Va-yay-rah (Genesis 18:1 - 22:24).

What does it mean "to see God?" This "parasha" or segment of the Torah gives us an idea in this regard. The Torah tells us that "The Lord appeared" unto Abraham, "and...he... saw...three men..." These men, we discover, were hungry and thirsty and in need of help. "To see God," the text suggests, is to see human beings in need.

This week's portion also gives us the great story of the impending destruction of Sodom. Our fathers who wrote the Torah knew that there had been an ancient city which had suffered severe destruction. When you travel to modern Sodom, 1,300 feet below sea level, you cannot help but think, as you gradually descend from the hills to the lowest spot on earth, that there must have been an earthquake which uprooted this area long ago. The thought that occurs to modern travelers in Israel also occurred to the ancient Hebrews, and a legend of such a great upheaval was most common then. The old legend was re-worked by the authors of our Torah and the story of Abraham's intervention with God emerged.

In this story (Gen. 18:20-23), God despairs of the evil of the people of Sodom and determines to eliminate the city (an echo of the flood <sup>story</sup> city). Abraham, who cannot accept the contemporary notion that the gods are angry and punishing, intervenes. He dares to remind God that as the Judge of all the earth, He cannot destroy the righteous with the wicked. Were the story not so eventful for all mankind, we would have to say that it is quaint and almost ludicrous that a human being should have to remind God not to slaughter all the people in a city just because some of the people were evil.

The tremendous value of the story is that it describes the transition in the belief of, at least, one group of people (the Hebrews) that God is not punitive, but merciful. In this sense, the story is not quaint, but grand and revolutionary.

Abraham establishes the point through this story that the committed Hebrew must stand between man and impending catastrophe, even if this means arguing with God.

This parasha also tells us of the birth of Isaac, and Sarah's rejection of Hagar, her hand-maid, and her son, Ishmael (Ch. 21:1-20). It is touching to follow the story as it tells us that even though God wishes Isaac to be Abraham's heir, He befriends Hagar in her loneliness and takes care of her.

Most students of the Bible call the account of the "Sacrifice" of Isaac (Ch. 22) the highest part of this parasha. The scholars tell us that this event shows Abraham as a man of exemplary faith who was even willing to kill his "only son," Isaac ("only son" of Sarah), because God commanded it. The story says this, but I see its greater meaning as a transition story from human to animal sacrifice ~~and~~ means of worship (Ch. 22:13). Until Abraham, people thought that there was special piety in the sacrifice of the "only son" or "first-born son" to the gods. Abraham taught that God really doesn't want this and will accept animals as a substitute. Later on, the Prophets taught that God does not desire animal sacrifice either.

If you enjoy playing bridge, join the Sisterhood bridge group at its kickoff session on Wednesday, October 30, at 7:30 p.m., in the Youth Lounge.

The last Wednesday evening of each month will be bridge night at the Temple. During the intervening weeks, teams will play opposing teams at their convenience at home.

## Soviet Jewry BAFTY Concern

Did you know that over 120 young people turned out for the sock hop and that BAFTY rented a song-filled bus to the Soviet Jewry rally. Thanks to David Schwartz who strummed his fingers to the bone leading the bus in non-stop song.

If you missed the Shul-In and Creative Service, you missed a lot. A great amount of preparation went into the planning. Thanks to Beth Trilling and Ann Lesser. Watch for the next one coming soon.

Remember, it's not too late to join the New School, an exciting experiment in high school classes, run exclusively by teens every other Sunday. Call Patti Milberg at 233-3255 for details.

Don't forget Regional Convention is around the corner. It begins December 26 in Savannah, Georgia. You must be a paid-up member to be considered.

Mark October 27 and November 10 on your calendar. Dinner is at 5:30 followed by classes and an exciting program. Also, on December 1, we will show the "Dybbuk," a great film based upon ancient Jewish legend.

The following BAFTY Board Members are in need of your help: Project Committee, Barry Rosenberg, 233-0187; Program Committee, Debbie Kaiser, 233-1382; Religious Committee, Beth Trilling, 251-3579.

SEFTY applications for the ten day institute at Camp Coleman at the end of the summer are available from Rabbi Altman.

## Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Dr. Raymond and Miriam Cohen recently returned from a trip to Israel with their family. At that time, their son, Barry, was Bar Mitzvah at the Western Wall. . . . Kudos to Ben, son of Sheldon and Rosalie Weiss, who was awarded the Top Cadet Award for the Ranger Battalion at the University of Alabama. . . . Did you know that Chanukah is only a few weeks away? December 8 is the first night. Our Judaica Shop is so well stocked for this occasion. Buy early and don't be left out. Menorahs, fine jewelry, gift items for the youngsters, and decorations are now plentiful. The ladies of our Sisterhood, chaired by Florence Birchansky and Nancy Hirsh, inform us that the Judaica Shop is open during Religious and Hebrew School hours, Friday evenings after services, and until Chanukah will be open especially for you on Monday mornings from 9 to 12 noon.

Mazel tov to Sherri, daughter of Murray and Florence Birchansky, who has been elected treasurer at Rockway Junior High and to Janie, daughter of Dr. Stuart and Clara Jean Clein, who has been chosen president of the seventh grade at South Miami Junior High,

*Bnai  
Mitzvah*



Saturday  
November 2  
11:15 a.m.

William, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Herbstman  
Lisa, daughter of  
Mr. and Mrs. Harold Lang





## Let's Study Torah

(Note: Please use as additional commentary, "Pentateuch and Haftorahs," edited by Hertz, Soncino Press.)

Chayah Sarah, Genesis 23:1 – 25-18. Read these chapters and verses.

This "parasha," or segment, tells of the death of Sarah. What is especially interesting to us is that if one goes to Israel today and visits Hebron, one can find the plot of land, and, presumably, the very sepulchre where Sarah was buried. The site has been preserved in recent centuries by the Arabs as a holy site and as a Mosque.

The portion also tells of the death of Abraham. Just before his death, Abraham tells the manager of his enterprises, Eliezer, I want you to promise me that you will return to the land of my birth and obtain there a wife for my son, Isaac, since I don't want him to marry one of these Canaanite pagans (Ch. 24:1-9). It is interesting that even the very first Jew, Abraham, himself not born of Jewish parents, was concerned with the problem of inter-marriage. We are to understand here that the problem was one of conflicting cultures, not of blood. The Canaanites had no ethical religious orientation whatsoever. They practiced a fertility cult which encouraged all sorts of fornication as a kind of sympathetic magic. Such sexual intercourse involved not only people of the same sex, but men and animals, and man and the earth (impregnation of the earth so that it would produce good crops).

The touching story whereby Eliezer finds Rebekah is a lovely novelette (24:10-67). She is immediately revealed as a kind and generous lady (24:17-18). She does not hesitate to give him, as a stranger, water for his camel and for himself. The loyalty (hesed) Eliezer shows his deceased master is also a dominant feature of this story. In spite of the difficulties of the journey and the obvious chances for coming back empty-handed, he fulfills his "brit," covenant or agreement, with Abraham. Laban, Rebekah's brother, who had assumed the responsibilities left by her deceased father, permits Rebekah to go back with Eliezer because he is shown Abraham's ring as a mark of identification (Ch. 24:29:30). Nonetheless, Laban, like a true older brother, has doubts about the whole thing and is reluctant to let his ward go with this stranger. He says to Eliezer, "Let her stay with us a few more days, at least ten, and then we will let her go with you." The servant is impatient, however, to return to Isaac, and finally the parting is arranged.

Rebekah obviously was taking a big chance, yet she knew that she would like Isaac. Why was that? The story tells us that when she first saw Isaac, he was walking in the fields, "meditating at eventide" (24:63-67). Isaac is consistently presented in the Biblical story as a thoughtful type, considerate and tender, and unlike the more aggressive older brother, Ishmael, who was a hunter and wanderer. Rebekah liked the fact that meditating in the field was one of his pastimes.

There is an interesting psychological insight revealed to us at the end of this particular incident (24:67). We are told that in marrying Rebekah, Isaac was "comforted for the loss of his mother." Without Freud, our fathers understood a few things about human relationships. As the son of Sarah's old age, Isaac was inevitably close to her. Her death must have been a great blow to him. Now, there was another woman in his house. True, she was his wife, but she also fulfilled some of the functions of mother. Doesn't every wife?

## New Telephone Numbers

The phone system at the Temple has been revamped. Among other things, we have installed a new number for the Nursery School and Primary School. In calling the Temple, please dial the numbers indicated below when trying to reach various departments. (Save for future reference).

- TEMPLE OFFICE . . . . . 667-5587  
 Rabbi Baumgard, Rabbi Altman, David Stuart, Administrator, Joan Schwartzman, Administrative Assistant, Yahrzeit Information, Bookkeeping, etc.
- RELIGIOUS SCHOOL . . . . . 666-2536  
 Rabbi Cook, Educator, Jean Gillis, Sec., Callie Loss, Hebrew School Principal.
- DAY SCHOOL/NURSERY SCHOOL . . . . . 665-6228  
 Sim Lesser, Director Lee Rogel, Secretary

## Temple Tupperware Party

On Wednesday, November 6, 7:30 p.m., in the Temple Youth Lounge, Sisterhood will sponsor a Tupperware Party.

Buy your top quality Tupperware goodies through Sisterhood and receive 15 percent donor credit on your purchase. Bring friends who are not Sisterhood members and earn donor credit on their purchases! Bring your mother-in-law; treat her to a night out.

Of course, we'll have coffee and cake and a fun time for all.

## Judaica Shop Features Artisans

Artisans Enid Rosen and Binnie Rosen will exhibit a selection of their Jewish Theme etched-on-metal pictures during the Oneg Shabbot following the service on November 8. In addition, their unique process can provide you, upon request, with a metal etching of any personal photograph of your choice. Your favorite Bas or Bar Mitzvah, wedding, or family photos, thus converted, would make unusually attractive and meaningful Chanukah gifts for family or friends.

*Bnai*

*Mitzvah*

Saturday  
 November 9  
 11:15 a.m.



Michael, son of  
 Dr. and Mrs. Fred Wasserman





## Let's Study Torah

Tol'doth--Genesis Ch. 25:19 -- 28:9

Chronology is very important to the authors of the Bible. Who gave birth to whom is a critical matter, for the ancient Hebrews believed that God chose designated individuals for particular purposes, just as He chose the Hebrew people for their special role. The differences between individuals and peoples was a vital matter to our fathers, quite in contrast to the modern trend which teaches that everyone is the same.

This parasha tells us that Rebekah, the wife of Isaac, gave birth to twins. Of the two, Esau was the first to emerge from the womb by a few minutes. Therefore, he inherited the right of the first-born, which is to receive the larger part of his father's estate, and, normally, the leadership of the tribe. The story tells us that God favored the younger son, Jacob, and through a number of events we learn how Jacob became the leader of the tribe when Isaac died. The first thing that the Bible is telling us is that God may go against prevailing custom. This is the theme when Isaac is chosen over Ishmael, and it is the theme when Joseph is chosen over all of his older brothers. There seems to be a bias, on God's side, in favor of the disinherited or the weaker person.

Who amongst us does not know the story of Esau selling his birthright (the right of the first-born) for a "mess of pottage" (perhaps chicken soup?), see Ch. 25:29-34. This part of the larger story is told not only to show how Jacob earned the privilege of succeeding his father. It also teaches a more general moral, i.e., don't give up an important future right for the sake of present enjoyment.

Later on (Ch. 27:1-40), we have a second story of how Jacob obtained Esau's right of the first-born. This is the famous tale whereby Rebekah conceives a plan to deceive the blind and dying Isaac so that he will bless Jacob with the right of being the tribal leader. Since Esau was a rough, hairy man, a hunter by avocation, Jacob is dressed in goat skin clothes so that he will smell and feel like Esau. Only later does Isaac discover what has happened, but once a blessing is given, it cannot be withdrawn. The story is beautifully told, for at one point, we seem to feel that the blind Isaac really knows that Esau does not stand before him, yet he continues with the blessing (Ch. 27:20-22). The words, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau" have become a commonplace to designate suspicion of deception.

It is interesting that the text tells us that Esau, the outdoor type, was his father's favorite, but Jacob was Rebekah's favorite (Ch. 25:28). This seemed to be true also in the case of Abraham's sons, Ishmael and Isaac. The former was the father's favorite. In each case, however, it is the mother who maneuvers her favorite to be the new tribal leader. Certainly, this shows that women had an important role in the ancient Hebrew society. One thinks of Tevye in "Fiddler on the Roof." He was the boss, or was he?

When Isaac learns of what has happened, he nonetheless calls Jacob back to him and reaffirms his original blessing (Ch. 28:1-4). This would seem to suggest that Jacob wasn't seriously unhappy about the turn of events. But Esau, we are told, hated his brother because he had been so deprived (27:41-45). Thus, Rebekah advises Jacob to leave the area until Esau's anger abates, and the tension begins to build up: what will Esau do to Jacob when next they meet? The Torah makes us wait until next week's parasha to find the dramatic and emotion-packed answer.

## Thursday Is Adult Sport Night

Starting at 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 14, the second floor sports area of the Teenage Building will be open for adults (over 18 years of age) to partake of basketball and/or volleyball. Come on Thursday nights with sneakers and shorts (and pep pills if you need them) ready to play. No organization as yet, but we will work out the details when we see the turnout. Any doctor who wants to serve as medical advisor and can administer oxygen to our older participants will be most welcome.

## Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Kudos to Bernard Braverman who has just been admitted to the Florida Bar Association. He should be commended because it took four years of night school to reach this marvelous goal! . . . Congrats to Steven, son of Joan Schwartzman, who has been elected to National Spanish Honor Society at South Miami Senior High. . . . Get well wishes to George Rosenberg, Ruby Josephson, Ethel Tumarkin, Morton Schoen, Yetta Rubenstein, Patti Klein, Beth Kaiser, Hollis Beck, Susan Rubin, Jack Newmark, Lee Efronson, Merrily Karter, Esther Winick, Barbara Arman, Frank Tryson, Mark Katzen, Paula Klein, Michelle Packar, and Susan Yankow.

Want to get involved? Why not volunteer your services with our new youth activities? For more information, contact Fran Schreiber, 661-0004, Elaine Newmark, 235-8101, or Irene Masel, 279-0400. . . . We love to print good news. Why not send yours in and share it with our congregants? . . . Latest with the Asher Marks family--son, Barry, graduated from Emory last June magna cum laude and recently received the news that he has been elected to Phi Beta Kappa at Emory. Presently, he's attending the University of Florida Law School while his wife, Shelly, attends undergraduate school. By the way, Barry has just had a poem published in the latest edition of a magazine called "Directions." Daughter, Sharyn, had a 4.0 this past semester and made the President's Honor Roll. Asher and Dorothy have much to be proud of. Their kids are quite something. By the way, Dorothy has attained an honor in her own right. After teaching ten years in the Dade County schools, she received word that her name was selected to appear in the 1974 edition of "Outstanding Elementary Teachers of America." She was also listed as such in the 1972 edition. That's quite a family.

Gerry and Felice Schwartz tell me that their son, Gregg, is playing on the University of North Carolina baseball team while son, Gary, is getting his Master's Degree at the University of Florida. Gary's wife, Lori, is graduating this year at the University of Florida in the field of broadcasting.

*Bnai*

*Mitzvah*

Saturday  
November 16  
11:15 a.m.



Michael, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Kohner  
David, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Birenbaum  
(No photo available)





## Let's Study Torah

Read "Va-Yish-Lach," Genesis, Ch. 32:Verse 4 to Ch. 36:40

In earlier chapters, we read that Jacob, the younger twin of Esau, had acquired the right of Esau, as the first-born, to the major share of the father's estate. Since there was some deception in this acquisition, Jacob left the area to escape Esau's wrath. Now, years later, Jacob's scouts tell him that Esau, a man of a military nature, is approaching with his army (ch. 32:7). Jacob fears the worst, so he prepares a generous gift for Esau (ch. 32:14-22), hoping that this will dilute his anger.

That night, Jacob sent his wives (the two sisters, Rachel and Leah) and his children across the river, while he stayed by himself. Alone and faced with the recognition of his deception against his brother, Jacob confronts his guilt in the famous dream where he wrestles with his conscience (32:23-33). The conscience is described as "a man," but the "man" seems to be one sent by God, or God Himself (symbolically represented).

In the morning, the two brothers met for the first time in many years. How would Esau act now that he had found the brother who had stolen his birthright? Jacob bowed low in submission before Esau, but the rough and tumble older brother ran towards Jacob, embraced him, and the two wept together (33:1-4). Jacob's fears were for naught.

Nonetheless, Jacob carefully avoids accepting Esau's offer of military protection (33:15-16) or travelling together (33:12-14), lest he and his family become submerged into Esau's more powerful entourage. In gratitude for his escape from danger, Jacob built an altar in Shechem when he arrived there (33:18-20). The modern city of Nablus, on the west bank of the Jordan, is believed to be the site of ancient Shechem.

In his new book, "The Arab Mind," by Rafael Patai, the author tells of the overwhelming concern of the desert nomads for the chastity of the women. The story of Dinah, daughter of Jacob, is evidence of the existence of this concern amongst the Hebrew nomads over 3,500 years ago (ch. 34:1-31). Whether or not the sons of Jacob actually "slew all the males" in Shechem (one wonders if a wandering tribe could impose so much damage on a relatively large city), the story remains as testimony to the vengeful nature of the nomad (bedouin) when the honor of the tribe was violated.

Patai tells us in his book that the desert tribes engage in raids upon one another almost as a sport, so we can understand that, given real provocation, a tribe could impose devastating damage on an enemy (34:27-29). It is worthy of note that Jacob severely criticized his sons (v. 30) for their excessive reaction to the sexual violation of their sister.

The text tells us that Rachel gave birth to Benjamin just before she died (35:16-20), and that she was buried in a town, now Bethlehem. Her tomb is to be found there today and is a pilgrim's shrine.

We are told that God appears to Jacob once more to renew the covenant (35:9-11) and identifies Himself as "El Shaddai," that is, "God Almighty." The name, "Shaddai," is frequently placed on mezzuzot and tefillin.

## BAFTY Basketball

The BAFTY basketball team elected Andy Sneider and Mike Phillips as co-captains for the 1974-1975 season.

A schedule of games will be announced within the next two weeks. The team has been practicing at the Temple Beth Am gymnasium under the direction of coaches Dr. Harvey Lozman and Stan Mintz. Other members of the team include Harlan Biele, Jeff Flesel, Steve Glick, Fane Lozman, Mark Millberg, Bruce Mizrach, Glen Mizrach, Steve Moser, Andrew Rappaport, Steve Schwartzman.

Any BAFTY members interested in participating as managers, timers, and score keepers, please contact Rabbi Barry Altman.

## Religious School Calendar Change

The parents' open house (Back to School) for the lower grades, K-4, which had been scheduled for December 14 and 15 has been changed to January 11 and 12. Similarly, the upper grade open house, 5-8, will be held February 22 and 23 instead of the previously announced January 18 and 19. We encourage all parents to participate in these programs. More specific information will be announced through the Religious School.

## Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Thought you'd be interested in knowing that our cantorial soloist, Henry LeClair, will sing in the tenor section of the Miami Opera Guild. His wife, Lucille Blackton LeClair, just won the trophy as best actress in a commercial voted by the Florida Screen Actors Guild--the S.A.G.A. Award. She has also appeared in recently released movies. They also appear professionally as the Singing Ambassadors throughout the greater Miami area. . . . Dr. Mel and Joan Schwartz just returned from a marvelous trip to Palm Springs where they visited her parents and went on to exciting Las Vegas. Hear tell it was a trip beyond belief.

How wonderful it was to have had the pleasure of listening to Helen Fagin at the recent Sisterhood Ideas through Books. This talented and very busy lady discussed literature concerning the holocaust. Those in attendance came away in awe. . . . Mazel tov to Mel and Barbara Weinkle, who have become grandparents for the second time. Born to their son, Richard, and daughter-in-law, Lynn, is Liesl, a healthy six pound young lady.

Saturday, November 30

9:30 a.m.

11:15 a.m.



Ronald, son of  
Mrs. Claire Parker and  
Mr. William Parker



Eric, son of  
Rep. and Mrs. Murray Dubbin



Neil, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Alex Richard

*Bnai*

*Mitzvah*





FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

## Let's Study Torah

Read "Va-yayshev," Genesis 37:1 - 40:23.

In this "parasha," we have the beginnings of the famous Joseph story. As we begin to read it, we must again remind ourselves that the Bible was more than holy scripture to our ancestors. It was also their literature and entertainment. Year after year, they read the Joseph story (or heard it read to them). They knew all of its nuances, but the story is so beautiful and so adeptly written that the retelling simply added deeper dimensions to it. Indeed, this is a story which can be read over and over again to the edification of the reader.

The scripture reads, "Now Israel (Jacob) loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age . . ." (37:3). How natural a thing it is for an aged father to adore his youngest child, for the child is more like a grandchild to him, more a sign of the old man's eternity. Joseph's brothers were not happy about the favoritism their father showed to Joseph, so they let the boy know how unwanted he was in their councils. So it was that the boy most admired by his father and rejected by his brothers became a dreamer. The authors of the story knew enough about human psychology to know that it is the rejected ones who become the dreamers.

As so often happens, the dreamer only makes himself the more hated when he tells of his dreams, and Joseph's brothers resented the lad all the more when he explained his dreams of ruling over them (37:6-11). It was then that the brothers decided to do away with Joseph. Fortunately, this decision was tempered, and Joseph was sold into slavery to a passing caravan of Midianites on their way to Egypt (37:12-36).

Joseph pleased his master, Potiphar, the captain of the guard for Pharaoh. In time, he became the manager of Potiphar's estate. Unluckily, Potiphar's wife had an eye for Joseph and urged him to sleep with her. Joseph refused; the spurned lady accused him of trying to seize her, and Joseph was thrown into prison (39:1-20). While in prison, Joseph correctly interpreted the dream of a fellow prisoner, Pharaoh's butler, who was extremely grateful to learn that he was to be restored to favor with the ruler. Joseph asked only one payment for his deed. He asked that the butler remember him when he was restored to power; but the butler, like so many people who make it to the top, forgot the man who helped him in his less fortunate days (40:1-15). Another prisoner, Pharaoh's baker, asked Joseph to interpret his dream, but this dream was bad news for the baker (40:16-22). Joseph's correct interpretation here also served to enhance his reputation.

We learn from this part of the Joseph story that the ancient peoples believed that the future was revealed in dreams. Anyone who could properly interpret these dreams had to be a person who was especially favored by the gods (or God). Joseph, in fact, insists that whatever power he has to interpret dreams comes from God (40:8). Today, we have learned from Freud and others that it is the past, not the future, which is revealed in dreams. This time orientation aside, it is still true today that the person who has insight into the meaning of dreams is considered to have special powers. We can then imagine the aura that Joseph reflected in his day.

In next week's parasha, it is Pharaoh himself who dreams a confusing dream, and the search begins for a man who is able to interpret it.

### ART DISPLAY BY TENTH GRADERS

The tenth grade art class will have a display of their work in the foyer of the Sanctuary starting December 6.

## Brotherhood Dinner Meeting December 4

A scrumptious Italian feast of pizza, spaghetti, lasagna, and the trimmings will be served beginning at 7:30 p.m., on Wednesday, December 4, in the Youth Lounge. A very brief meeting will follow, and then 1974 Dolphin highlight films. Please join us for a fun evening. Brotherhood members are admitted free; guests are \$2.00 each.

## How Have The Jews Survived?

Temple Beth Am will participate in an educational experiment on Wednesday, December 11, at 8:00 p.m., in the Youth Lounge. At that time, two professors from the University of Florida in Gainesville, Professors Barry Mesch and Sheldon Isenberg, will present a program on Jewish history. The program revolves around the question, "How Have the Jews Survived as a Minority Culture?"

At the same time, those who attend will discuss the tensions of group survival in the United States today.

The program, which is funded by the Florida Endowment for the Humanities, focuses on audience participation, who are present to consider current problems related to survival, intermarriage, quota systems, anti-semitism, etc.

To stimulate discussion, the professors will present dramatic readings depicting events from earlier periods of Jewish history. Those in attendance will be asked to analyze the facts and forces which fashioned that period of Jewish history and apply them to a modern situation.

Members of the congregation will take part in the discussion. The leaders of these discussions will include Barton Udell, Joseph Altschuller, and Margot Berman.

## Sisterhood Brunch December 18

Sisterhood presents Joan Schwartzman, our administrative assistant, on Wednesday, December 18, at 10:00 a.m., in the Social Hall. Joan will offer, live and in color, true and hilarious stories from her forthcoming novel, "Rabbi, You Never Promised Me A Swimming Pool."

If you've never heard Joan spin her tales of Temple antics and frantics, please come and enjoy. Trained tot sitting is available for \$1.25. The delicious brunch will cost \$3. Phone Terry Freedman, 270-0088, or Arlene Feller, 251-3863, to make your reservation.

## Minyan Committee

The Minyan Committee, which has been under the direction of Dr. Jack Hoffman, will be taken over by Brotherhood. Dr. Hoffman has handled this job with great efficiency and devotion, but the needs of the congregation have gone beyond his ability to handle all the requests for this type of service. Accordingly, Brotherhood will now be in charge of the Minyan Committee. All those who care to help in this worthwhile endeavor should contact Ira Pozen, Brotherhood president, or contact the Temple office to volunteer their services.

## Judaica Shop Features

Get ready to light the first Chanukah candle on December 8. Visit Sisterhood's Judaica Shop for your special Chanukah needs: menorahs, candles, decorations, dreidles, puzzles, games, records, candy gelt, children's books, wrapping paper, ribbon, etc. See meaningful gifts for the whole family: Jewish Art books, Israeli costume and fine jewelry, ceremonial objects, and a variety of attractive items perfect for any occasion (25 cents and up). Open Sundays 9:30 to noon, Mondays 9:00 to noon and 3:30 to 5:00, Wednesdays 3:30 to 5:00, and Fridays after services.





## Let's Study Torah

*Mi-Keitz*

Read Genesis 41:1 – 44:17.

Archaeological evidence tells us that a Semitic people came to Egypt around the fifteenth century B.C.E., and, eventually, some of these Semites came to be rulers of Egypt. In time, the Semites became slaves. Instead of telling us these historic facts in a simple and direct manner, our fathers, who wrote the Bible, present them through a beautiful story. It is the story of Joseph.

In the last Torah section, we learned that Joseph, although imprisoned in an Egyptian jail, established a reputation as a dream interpreter. Now Pharaoh, himself, is troubled by the meaning of a recurrent dream, and none of his famed interpreters are able to give him a satisfactory reading of the dream (41:1-8). It is now that the butler whom Joseph had helped remembers the imprisoned dream interpreter, and the butler recommends Joseph to Pharaoh (41:9-13).

Joseph is summoned from prison, and the mighty monarch tells his dream to the young man once sold into slavery. There were seven fat cows which were eaten up by seven lean cows. In a second dream (do we not repeat the same dream over and over when we are really troubled?), seven lean corn ears devoured seven succulent corn ears (41:17-24). Joseph understood that the two dreams were one, and he told Pharaoh that God (Who, it was believed, spoke through dreams) was telling Pharaoh that seven years of abundant crops would be followed by seven years of famine (41:25-32).

Not content with interpreting the dream, the lowly prisoner (whom his brothers thought to be arrogant) then advised the monarch how to solve the problem (41:33-36). The self assurance of Joseph pleased Pharaoh, however, and he appointed the young man as the overseer of his lands, charged with the responsibility of preparing for the great famine. At 30 years of age, Joseph was second in command only to Pharaoh (41:36-46).

Joseph stored grain and food in the good years. When the famine came, only Egypt, of all the lands, was prepared. Therefore, people from all over were forced to come to Egypt to plead for food. Among the entreaters were Joseph's brothers from the land of Canaan (41:47-57). When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he had changed so much (and wore such different clothes, perhaps) that they did not know him (42:1-9). Joseph now had several options with respect to his brothers. He could punish them severely for what they had done to him; he could make himself known to them and forgive them; or he could toy with them a little and make them pay just a little for their cruel action towards him. He chose the latter course.

Joseph accused his brothers of being spies and sent them to the guardhouse for three days (42:9-18). Then, he gave them a proposition. To prove you are not spies, he said, bring back to me the young boy you said was recently born to your father (Benjamin was the only other son of Rachel, Joseph's mother. All the other sons of Jacob were born to Leah or to the hand maidens of Rachel and Leah, following local custom). Meanwhile, Joseph proclaimed, one of you will stay here as a hostage (42:18-20). Joseph dearly wants to see his younger brother, of course, but he knows that he is touching a vulnerable nerve. The mention of Benjamin, the only surviving son of Rachel, is bound to stir up memories of what the brothers had done to Joseph, Rachel's elder son. The brothers

(Continued at bottom of adjacent column)

**BAFTY Baubles**

By MARK MINTZ

Congratulations to Debbie Katz on her election to the office of BAFTY executive vice president. Debbie was elected at a special meeting of the Youth Group.

The year is rolling right along and the excitement grows greater as Regional Convention quickly approaches. This year's convention is in Savannah, Georgia over the Winter recess. Because of our large size, BAFTY is sending more representatives than any other youth group.

Did you know BAFTY is a constant winner of the sermonette and song contest at the convention? Interested in entering? Call Rabbi Altman. Photography is now also a contest category.

Our latest community action project is a Chanukah party at one of the Jewish old age homes on South Beach. This is an annual project of ours and always brings enthusiastic support from our members and the old folks as well.

The BAFTY basketball team has started its season and looks to be headed toward the Super Bowl. Not only are our players the best in the nation, but our leggy cheerleaders are busting their buttons with enthusiasm.

Don't forget, our second New School term is soon to be starting. For more information, contact Patti Milberg at 233-4382.

There's a lot more fun yet to come this year and it's not too late to pay your dues. Shalom!

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react immediately with conscience-stricken thoughts (42:21-23). When Joseph heard them remonstrating to one another about their past misdeed, "He turned away from them and wept" (42:23-24).

The brothers had no choice but to accept Joseph's proposition. They took their provisions and left for Canaan. They had only begun their return journey when they discovered that their money had been returned in the grain sacks (42:25-28). When the father, Jacob, learns that Simeon has been retained as a hostage, he refused to let the brothers take Benjamin to Egypt (42:29-38); but the famine worsened, and the time came when another trip to Egypt to get food was necessary. Reluctantly, Jacob agrees that Benjamin may go to Egypt. To make certain that the "man" in Egypt is not angered, the returned money is to be given back to him along with additional gifts (43:1-13).

What was despair for Jacob was joy for Joseph. When Joseph saw Benjamin, he ordered that all of his brothers be brought to his personal residence for dinner. Simeon was returned to them. When Benjamin was introduced to Joseph, Joseph spoke to him briefly, and, then, retired--to weep! (43:29-31). Still, Joseph does not reveal himself (does not a good story heighten the tension until the rope seems to want to break of its own volition?).

After the dinner, Joseph orders the grain bags filled, secretly returns the purchase money, and places his silver goblet in one of the bags--Benjamin's, of course! (44:1-2). When the "theft" is discovered, Joseph makes as if to keep the "thief" as his slave (44:3-13). The rest of the brothers offer themselves as slaves, so conscience-stricken are they now, for they know all this is tied to the way they treated their other brother (44:14-17). It is in this state of utter despair for the brothers that this week's parasha ends. Whatever will next week's reading bring? How long will Joseph be able to play this cruel game so demanding on both him and his brothers?





Let's Study Torah

Va-Yi-Gash (read Genesis, Chapter 44:18 - 47:28.

I cannot read this parasha without shedding tears, for in this section of the Joseph story, the brothers are reconciled. How was this reconciliation to take place? The brothers had committed a heinous crime. They had sold their youngest brother into slavery, an unforgiveable cruelty. Joseph, for his part, is one of the great men of the world, second in command only to Pharaoh in mighty Egypt. He had toyed with his brothers, since he found irresistible the urge to punish them somewhat for their intent to harm him. How could he terminate this urge to pay them back in kind; yet, on the other hand, how much longer could he control his desire to reveal himself and to embrace them?

Judah provides the catalyst for release and brings the whole matter to a climax. It was Judah who had bargained with the brothers to sell Joseph into slavery rather than kill him. Now it is Judah again who steps forward to say to the Egyptian overlord (Joseph), "My lord, . . . we have lost one brother, and our father will die if you keep Benjamin for your servant, as you request . . . therefore, I plead with you, take me as your slave instead of Benjamin" (Ch. 44:18-34). This sacrificial expression on the part of Judah was more than Joseph could bear. He commanded his Egyptian servants to leave him alone (45:1-3). He revealed himself to his brothers, and he wept, saying, "I am Joseph, doth my father yet live?"

How would you expect the brothers to respond? In great rejoicing for his obvious affection for them? They were incapable of joy in this moment. Guilt and fear crowded their mind (45:3). In fact, they were more afraid of this leader as Joseph, whom they had wronged, than as a neutral Egyptian. Joseph tried to soften their fears by telling them that their actions were just part of God's plan (45:4-8), and Joseph grasped his younger brother, Benjamin (the only other son of Jacob and Rachel), and wept once again (v. 13). Only after Joseph had kissed all the rest of his brothers were they capable of talking with him at all (v. 15).

How did the Hebrews get to Egypt? One of them, according to this story, had risen to great power in that country and invited his father and family to come to reside in the land while the family lasted (45:9-11). Archaeologists tell us from unearthed Egyptian records that a group of Semites ruled over Egypt during this period and later they were overthrown and enslaved. Our Bible describes the good Semitic experience in Egypt in terms of this gentle and touching family story. Pharaoh, we are told, welcomed Jacob and his tribe (47:1-12). But, alas, a later Pharaoh was not so kind.

Friendship Circle Forming

Are you interested in reactivating our former Friendship Circle group for people age 50 years and over? Please fill out the form below and return to Temple office at 5950 N. Kendall Drive, Miami, Florida 33156, or call Hattie Cott after 6:00 p.m.

Mr. and/or Mrs \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Kamin

BAFTY Baubles

By MARK MINTZ

This week's article will deal entirely with an integral part of The Jewish educational system, "New School." The New School is in its third year of operation: The principle of the New School is to bring continuing educational and artistic courses to teenagers.

The New School classes (tenth through twelfth graders) meet every other week. College credit courses which meet every week.

The New School courses are listed below. Please fill out the attached enrollment form.

JEWISH UNIVERSITY

- A 1. Hebrew - Suggested for those going to Israel.
- A 2. Survey of Jewish Literature - The highlights of contemporary Jewish literature.

Both of the above courses meet for an hour and one-half every week and are for credit through Miami-Dade Community College.

SCHOOL OF JUDAIC LIBERAL ARTS

- B 1. Singing - Modern Hebrew songs.
- B 2. Israeli Dance - For those with some experience.
- B 3. Jewish Art - Metal sculpture and jewelry making.
- B 4. Drama - The group will present a play on a Jewish theme.

SCHOOL OF CONTINUING JEWISH EDUCATION

- C 1. Israel - A Survival Plan Through Military Brilliance - A course in military strategics taught by an Israeli officer.
- C 2. Book of Genesis: Fact or Fiction - Rabbi Altman will again teach his course on the Book of Genesis.
- C 3. Holocaust - The true dissemination of European Jewry, and psychological insight into Nazi anti-semitism.
- C 4. Who Is The Liberated Jewish Woman? - Open only to women; men may apply only with special permission of the instructor.

NEW SCHOOL CLASS SELECTION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



1st Choice \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Choice \_\_\_\_\_

3rd Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to BAFTY New School, % Temple Beth Am, 5950 North Kendall Drive, Miami, Florida 33156.

*Bnai*  
*Mitzvah*

Saturday  
December 21  
11:15 a.m.

Michael, son of  
Dr. and Mrs. Ralph Jacobson  
Craig, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Millard Suid





## Let's Study Torah

Read Genesis 47:28 to the end of Genesis for "Va-Yechi."  
Read Exodus, Ch. 1:1 — 6:1 for "Sh-mot."

(These two portions are combined because the COMMENTATOR issue covers two weeks.)

Why does Jacob make his sons pledge that he will be buried in Canaan? So important was Canaan (Israel) to all the Patriarchs that every major step they took was designed to reinforce their family's identification with this land. It was unthinkable to Jacob that his bones rest anywhere else. On his death bed, Jacob repeats the content of the Brit (Bris-covenant) which he made with God (48:1-4).

In blessing the sons of Joseph, Jacob gives the major blessing to the younger, Ephraim, in defiance of the tradition, which gave the eldest priority. Thus, each of the Patriarchs broke with this long-standing tradition, revealing themselves as liberals in this regard (48:8-14 and 48:17-20). There follows the very ancient saga-poem in which Jacob blesses all of his sons (49:1-27). In this B'racha, we learn something about each of the sons who were to become tribal leaders, according to tradition.

Jacob was embalmed, following the Egyptian custom, and taken to Canaan for burial (50:1-6). It is said that he was buried in the Cave of Machpelah, originally purchased by Abraham as a grave-site for the family (50:13). This "cave" is now encased by a famous mosque in Hebron.

The first chapter of the Book of Exodus (Hebrew-Sh'mot) tells us "There arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph." This is a direct way of telling us that the Hebrews were no longer in royal favor (Ch. 1:8). Indeed, the Hebrews were enslaved, along with other Semitic elements of the population. Egyptian records uncovered at Tel El-Amarna inform us that in the 14th century B.C.E., a people by the name of Habiru (forget the vowels) were part of the slave detachment that built Pithom and Raamses (see Ch. 1:11). There can be no question of the historicity of the Hebrew slave period, however much the story of the plagues may reflect folklore and the license of the story teller.

It is not important to us whether the baby Moses was actually found by Pharaoh's daughter (2:10), but he obviously was raised like one in a royal household, for his education was unusual for a commoner. Moses was not a goody-goody as the heroes of other cultures are sometimes presented. He was a man of strong feeling who actually killed (by accident, perhaps) an Egyptian who was striking a slave (2:11-12). Fearing that the incident had become known, Moses fled to Midian in the desert (2:13-15). He befriended the daughters of the priest of Midian by driving away certain shepherds who would not let them draw water from a well (2:16-17). Here again, we see the desire of Moses to help the underdog. The priest, Reuel (later identified as Jethro, see 2:18 and 3:1), invited Moses to stay with his family, and Moses married one of his daughters (v. 21, 22).

While tending his sheep, Moses has an encounter with God. He sees a bush which is clearly on fire, but the bush itself is not consumed. The burning bush is a symbol for God, whom the philosophic writer of this story saw as a source of power which was limitless. Moses seems to hear a "voice" (surely not a human voice) which first identifies itself as the God of the Patriarchs (3:1-7). Even though Moses has had a personal experience with God, that God is revealed as the God of history. He is also a God who cares, for He states, "I have

(Continued at bottom of adjacent column)

Saturday, December 28

9:15 a.m.



Barbara  
daughter of  
Mr. and Mrs.  
Don Frank

11:15 a.m.



Richard, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Sacks  
Michael, son of  
Mrs. Lennye Stein



Saturday, January 3, 11:15 a.m.



Susan, daughter of  
Dr. Marcia Klein



Miriam, daughter of  
Mr. and Mrs. David Zimmerman

*Bnai**Mitzvah*

seen the affliction of My people . . . and have heard their cry . . . for I know their pains . . . and I am come down to deliver them . . ." (v. 7, 8). Through this story of Moses and the burning bush, our fathers have expressed a revolutionary concept of God, completely different from that held by the pagans. He is the God of the lowly and oppressed, a loving God.

Now, the Egyptians had a religion of magic, and the Egyptian priests used the secret names of their gods to compel the gods, in spells and rituals, to do as the priests wished. When Moses asks God His name, God answers, "I am that I am." (also translatable, "I am He who will always be," or as Martin Buber suggests, "I am He who will be present."). Of course, this is also a philosophic name. God says to Moses, "Noone can control Me through magic. The only name I have is 'I Am.'" (3:13-14). Still, the story suggests that God is not just an abstract God. He is the same as the God of history (v. 15).

Moses has a real problem, however. The Egyptians honor only those messengers of the gods who can work magic. They have no concept of a God who cares about the afflicted. Moses brings his problem to God (Ch. 4:1). The story tells us that God understood the problem. He resolves to make Moses a better magician than the Egyptians so that Pharaoh will be impressed (4:2-9). But Moses complains that he is really not too articulate of speech (v. 10-12), so God agrees that Aaron, the brother of Moses, will be his spokesman (v. 14-16). It is in this way that the priesthood, with Aaron as its progenitor, acquires a key role in the future history of Israel.

Together, the two brothers now address themselves to the Egyptian king. The Pharaoh is not able to understand a God who stands with the poor, so he redoubles the task of the slaves (5:1-14). In turn, the slaves attack their "leaders," Moses and Aaron (5:19-21), insisting that they are only making the lot of the slaves worse. To whom can Moses turn? To God Himself. And it is to God that Moses expresses his fear that his mission will fail utterly (5:22-23).





## 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





## Let's Study Torah

Parasha "Bo," Book of Exodus. Read Chapter 10:1-13:16.

This reading continues the tale of the contest between Pharaoh and Moses. Already, there are signs that many of Pharaoh's advisers want to end the conflict which has cost Egypt a great deal because of the plagues. They advise the monarch to let the slaves go (10:7). Pharaoh heeds their advice, but he is not willing to surrender completely. Cautiously, he asks Moses, "If I let your people go, what will you take with you?" (v. 8). In other words, the negotiation for a settlement is on. Moses replies, "We will go with our young and with our old ~~and~~ with our flocks and herds . . ." (v. 9). Pharaoh's answer is stylized, but, apparently, he agrees only to let the men go (not the women, nor the young ones, nor the flocks), and he drives Moses from his presence, as if his request is ridiculous and insulting (v. 10, 11).

God tells Moses to respond with the plague of locusts (v. 12-15). This is sufficient to bring Pharaoh to his knees (momentarily), and the king pleaded with Moses to withdraw the plague (v. 16-21). Once again, the Pharaoh's "heart is hardened," however, and he refused to let the people go (v. 20). The plague of darkness follows and Pharaoh says, "All right, take your little ones and your flocks with you." (v. 21-24).

As a typical negotiator, however, Moses now raises his demands. Pharaoh has held out too long. The old offer had been withdrawn. Moses now wants the king to give the people the necessary sacrificing animals for their festival to be celebrated at that season (the Spring festival), see verses 24-25. Pharaoh is too much the monarch, too accustomed to giving orders, to let Moses tell him anything, so, in spite of the continuing punishment of his people, he refuses this little extra request (v. 27-29). In fact, he tells Moses that if he ever enters the royal court again, he will be killed (v. 28. Moses is not afraid. He knows he has the upper hand (v. 29).

The last plague describes an ancient belief that goes far beyond the Egyptian-Hebrew encounter. The ancient Semites believed that the first fruits of field and man belonged to the gods. This was translated pragmatically in that the harvesters brought the first fruits of the trees and harvest to the temple for the use of the "gods" (or for those who represented them). Also, the first born male was given to the Temple as a worker, or in some societies, actually sacrificed to the god. The Hebrews outgrew this latter custom relative to the first born male. We have evidence of this in the story of Abraham and Isaac (who was not sacrificed) and in the present story whereby the first born of the Hebrews are spared while the first born of the Egyptians are taken in the final plague (Ch. 11). Modern traditional Jews observe the ceremony of Pidyon Ha-ben, or redemption of the first born son, which is a legal fiction whereby the son is given to God, but he really isn't. Reform Jews do not observe this practice. We say even the legal fiction is not necessary. See further Chapter 13:1, which is the ancient law restated.

Chapter 12 describes the way in which the first Passover was observed and the way in which the Hebrews escaped from Egypt, finally.

## Is There Still Anti-Semitism?

By Rabbi JULIAN COOK

Is there still anti-semitism? Can the oppression of previous generations occur once again in this land of liberty, justice and prosperity? Are Jews still thought of as the pariah people, oddities of creation? These questions may seem strange to many who have come to regard a once-common phenomenon as strictly passe. Children have grown up never knowing the meaning of anti-semitism, believing that the holocaust was part of ancient history, and thinking that Jews are the most respected group of people in our society.

We certainly don't want to frighten people into thinking that a great catastrophe is upon us, but we need to realize that life as a Jew entails guarding against complacency. It is important to take notice every once in a while of what other people are saying. Take, for example, the following excerpt from a letter recently received by the Temple:

"You conspired with the Gentiles and killed god in his own city 2000 years ago, didn't you? Then you were dispersed around the world to be mistreated and killed by Gentiles for 2000 years, didn't you? Why? You know why. You killed God's son by turning him over to the Gentiles. . . . Now the Arabs want your land. Who do they turn to? America. America ha ha ha. . . . Can't depend on America. She buys her life by giving Russia wheat and Arabs reactors. . . . Your enemies want one thing - to exterminate you and all Jews. . . . The U.N. said the land was yours. Do they back your claim? No. Why? America needs oil. People are afraid of nuclear war. . . .

"The only person to help you is God, but obviously you're out of favor or else you wouldn't have Arabs at you. . . . Now 2000 years of exile you are back in your land. But you never confessed your sins of 2000 years ago. . . . Convert. . . . Tell my people down below, convert the Jews to Jesus Christ, and woe unto any man who interferes, Jew or Gentile - Christmas Eve brings the fall of judgement."

Some may dismiss such letters as the work of crazy men, ridiculous nonsense that nobody could possibly take seriously. A few moments reflection will call to mind that "ridiculous nonsense" has often been taken quite seriously. Can you afford to let that happen once again? Can you afford not to let your children know the potential consequences of these sentiments and how they can deal with them? We suggest that how Jews react to such hate propaganda is a serious matter for family discussion. Won't you help your children understand the need to prevent history from repeating itself?

## Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Mazel tov to Joy and Harold Goldstein, who have become grandparents for the first time. Born to their son, Sam, and daughter-in-law, Sandy, was Brian Richard, weighing in at 7 pounds, 12 ounces.

*Bnai  
Mitzvah*



Saturday  
January 18  
11:15 a.m.

Daniel, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Goldstein  
Eric, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Lieberman





## 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





## Let's Study Torah "A Holy People"

Read the portion "Yitro," Exodus 18:1 – 20:23.

Yitro, or Jethro, is the father-in-law of Moses. Apparently, he had a strong influence in the life of Moses. He is identified as "the priest of Midian," a small land near Mount Horeb. When Moses was leading the escaped slaves through the desert, Jethro went to meet him. After hearing all the wonderful things that had happened to the people, Jethro apparently decided to join the group. We might say that he decided to convert. The sign of this formal combining of the two groups is the meal that was eaten together (before God, Ex. 18:12). It was a custom in ancient times that when animals were sacrificed (killed as an offering to the god) and eaten by a group dedicating itself to a common principle, the act of eating together (God was deemed to be present) constituted the welding together of the group in a covenant or bris. The story makes it clear (Ch. 18:1-12) that it is Jethro who is joining himself and his followers to the Hebrews. The New Testament seems to indicate that the "Last Supper" was this kind of covenantal meal between Jesus and his followers.

With verse 13 (18:13), we begin a new situation. Now the older man, Jethro, is in the position of an advisor. He tells Moses that Moses cannot judge all of the people by himself. He must appoint judges for less significant cases at each of several lower levels (18:3-26). From these passages, we know that the ancient Hebrews had a very detailed and democratic judicial system, which was later referred to and copied in early America.

When the Hebrews had come to the "mount" (presumably Sinai), they entered into a binding agreement, or contract, with God. In return for God's special intimacy with them, they are to "hearken unto My voice and keep My covenant" (19:5). They are to accept the obligation of being "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (v. 6). This is an awesome responsibility, and the people are free to decline it. Through their representatives, and again by personal testimony, the people considered the offer and accepted it (v. 7, 8). Here again, we have evidence of an extraordinary democracy. Even the relationship with God was based on popular consent!

Every Jew ought to read and know the description of how the Ten Commandments were given and ought to memorize the commandments, for they are the heart of the covenant, or bris (19:11 – 20:15). Consider, while you study these passages, why it is that for Jews the first commandment is "I am the Lord, thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt . . ." Why is this considered the foundation on which all the other commandments are built (20:2)?

## Brotherhood Basketball Tournament

Thursday evening, February 13, 1975, beginning at 7:30 p.m., the Brotherhood will hold a three man team basketball tournament. The tournament is open to all members of Brotherhood. Teams will be chosen by tournament chairman, Marty Rubin. Please call Marty at 271-0355 if you wish to play. Trophies will be awarded to the first and second place teams. In the event that there are too many teams, finals will be held the next Thursday night.

## Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Mazel to Bev and Bernie Weksler, proud grandparents. Born to their daughter, Roni, and son-in-law, Peter Bermont, is a son, William Allen. . . . Another proud set of new grandparents are Estelle Kfare and Stanley Goldstein. Born to their daughter, Sharon, and son-in-law, Jordan Baum, is a daughter, Elizabeth, weighing in at 7 pounds, 7 ounces. . . . Get well wishes to Sanford Susman, Charles Davis, Sheryle Hellman, Ann Aibel, April Scherer, William Baker, Steven Block, Jenny Klein, Lea Wieder, Stephen Mach who have been hospitalized recently. . . . Glad to hear that Sheryl Pincus is up and about after recent surgery. . . . Get well wishes to Herman Rosenberg, Gussie Green, Jeffrey Langer, Elisa Furman.

Kudos to Stephen Snyder who has been named winner of the 1974 National Council of Teachers of English Achievement Award in Writing. Besides being a National Merit semifinalist and valedictorian at Palmetto Senior High, Steve is president of the National Honor Society. He is the son of Dr. Gilbert and Natalie Snyder. . . . Have you seen the Judaica Shop's showcases all lit up? Many thanks from our gals to David Dalke for his electrical skills. . . . Kudos to Randy, son of Dr. Mel and Joan Schwartz, who was elected vice president of Southeast Federation of Temple Youth at the recent regional convention in Savannah, Georgia.

We are delighted to share the good news that Mikki Futernich has been chosen as a member of the outstanding women in America. . . . Congrats to Darcy, 11 year old daughter of Dr. Mel and Barbara Becker, who has just won the Bikes for Breath award for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. This young lady brought in the most money in the Dade County area. . . . Get well wishes to Hattie Kott, Bobbi Emanuel, Elaine Friesner, Edward Loeb, Dr. Martin Gold, Marcie Aronow, Hedy Carlin, Herman Brams, Ellen Kaplan, Minnie Berkowitz, Celia Shapiro, Harris Cohen, Robert Gavrinn, Gary Wasserman, Dr. Mark Snider, Carl Kaplan, Adrienne Darlow, and Peter Swartz who have been hospitalized recently. . . . Kudos to Michael, son of Martie and Adrienne Darlow, who has just been elected president of the Florida region of A.Z.A.

## W. C. Fields Film Festival Feb. 5

Wednesday, February 5, 1975, beginning at 7:30 p.m., in the Youth Lounge, the Brotherhood will hold a short business meeting. Dinner will be served and followed by a W.C. Fields film festival and, if time permits, a special mystery guest speaker. Brotherhood guarantees that all who attend will have a fun time. \$1.50 for members, \$2.50 for guests.

## EASY RIDER

Need a ride or want company with whom to come to services on Friday or Saturday? Want to join a group with whom to come to Sisterhood meetings? Call Sandy Simon, 665-5995. We promise you won't be required to ride on a bicycle built for two.

*B'nai*

*Mitzvah*

Saturday  
February 1  
11:15 a.m.



Stacey, daughter of  
Dr. and Mrs. Evan Katz



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK



### Let's Study Torah

## MISHPATIM

Note: This parasha was read in the synagogue last Saturday.  
Read Exodus 21:1 - 25:2.)

Mishpatim, this parasha, includes a large body of civil law. For the ancient Hebrews, civil law was based on religious sanction; that is to say, it also was considered as having been derived from God. Another way of saying this is to say that the Jewish religion involved all events that encompass the process of living.

Included in these civil laws are those laws which would be called "torts" in American law. The law of negligence, prevailing in America today, prevailed in ancient Israel. The basic thrust of this law is that if a reasonable man ought to have anticipated a problem for a certain action, the person acting in a certain way is responsible for all of the damage caused by that action. For example, if an ox was not previously known to be a killer, and he kills a person, the owner of the ox is not liable for damages (21:28); but if the ox had a previous record of harming people, and its owner ought reasonably to have known that the ox was potentially harmful, and the owner did not take reasonable steps to contain the ox, the owner is responsible for the future damage that the ox causes (21:29). This principle is extended to the person who creates a danger by excavating a pit (21:33), or by causing a fire (22:5). These basic laws in the Torah are further developed in the Talmud, which is the main law book developed by the Jews over the centuries.

What happens if a person harms another physically? The Torah teaches, "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" (21:23-24). No law has been more misunderstood in modern times than this. Even in the Code of Hammurabi, dated about 1800 B.C.E., the expression, "an eye for an eye," means, except in the case of murder, the payment of money damages (i.e., the value of an eye in money). Since Moses lived around 1250 B.C.E., and the Hebraic law is generally more developed than that of the Hammurabi Code, we must assume that this law refers to money damages (the Talmud so interprets it). Even in the case of murder, degrees of responsibility and punishment are indicated. For example, if a person kills a thief when the latter is "breaking in," there is no punishment involved (22:1). If a man kills another by accident, and not by premeditation, he is not guilty of murder (21:13), but premeditated murder earns the death penalty (21:14), as does dealing in slave traffic (21:16). Laws concerning theft are also dealt with in this section (Ch. 22).

In addition to the specific law here, there are general proclamations, which we call apoditic law, which are not found in other law codes. For example, this section teaches: "A stranger thou shalt not wrong, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child . . . for if they cry unto Me, I will surely hear their cry . . ." (22:20-22). "If thou lend money to any of My people . . . thou shalt not be to him as a creditor, neither shall ye lay upon him interest" (22:24). "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil . . ." (23:2), etc.

There are laws here compelling a person to help the donkey or ox "of his enemy" (23:3), or requiring a person to help an animal oppressed by its burden, even if the animal belongs to one's enemy (23:5). There are injunctions against favoring the rich in court (23:6) or favoring the poor (23:3), for the court

(Continued at bottom of adjacent column)

## BAFTY Sponsors Shabbat Dinner February 28

BAFTY's first annual Shabbat Dinner will be held on February 28 at 6 p.m. in the Social Hall. A catered dinner combined with refreshing entertainment will provide an enjoyable evening for the entire family. Tickets are \$5.50 for adults and \$3.50 for children under 12. Reservations must be made by February 21.

Use the coupon below to make your reservations. Call Bruce Katzen, 665-4318, or Debbie Kaiser, 238-6188, if you have any questions.

### BAFTY DINNER RESERVATION FORM

Mail to Temple office, 5950 N. Kendall Drive, Miami, Florida

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make a reservation for BAFTY's Shabbat Dinner.

\_\_\_\_\_ Adults \_\_\_\_\_ Children

Check enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Adults, \$5.50; Children (under 12), \$3.50



### Youth Groupers Honored By National Academy

Rabbi Allan L. Smith, head of the Department of Camp and Youth Programming, has informed Beth Am that six of our young people have been certified and received credits at the National Academy, at Kamp Kutz, in Warwick, New York. Receiving credit are Eric Bender, Kim Feigenbaum, Bonnie Goldman, Sheryl Grossman, Mike Sacks, and Barry Rosenberg.

These young people have taken and received credit in diverse courses such as Survey of Jewish Literature, Advanced Folk Dance, Hasidism, Jewish/Christian Polemics, Group Dynamics, Jewish Survival in the Diaspora, Yiddish Literature in English Translation, and short stories of recent American Jewish fiction.

*B'nai*  
*Mitzvah*

Saturday  
February 15  
11:15 a.m.

William, son of  
Mrs. Arlette Glaser  
Bennett, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Radcliff

is the place for impartial justice for all. Bribery for a judge is considered a weighty sin (23:8).

The legal section then blends into the historic narrative. We are told that Moses was not the only one to meet with God on Mount Sinai. The "elders," the congress of ancient Israel, also were there (24:9-11). We must note here that several traditions are involved in this story. One has Moses meeting alone with God. The other involves a larger number of people. How to resolve these conflicting traditions? Place them alongside one another.





Let's Study Torah

T'ZAVEH AND  
KI TISAH

(We are combining this week's parasha and next week's parasha, as they will be read in the synagogue in order to leave space next week for a discussion of important questions concerning current problems. Read, therefore, "T'zaveh," Exodus 27-30:10, and "Ki Tisah," Exodus 30:11-34:35.)

"T'zaveh"--In this section, we learn that the "Nare Tamid, The Eternal Light," was in the original Tabernacle of Moses. There, it was not electrified, of course, but burned with olive oil as its fuel. This parasha is generally dedicated to the establishing of the role of Aaron and the priesthood of ancient Israel. Moses gave the people the moral laws. While the ritualistic laws are usually ascribed to him also, they seem to have been the special province of the priesthood. Moses is essentially a prophet, not a priest. His concern is not the cult, the elaborate system of sacrificial worship which was substantially like that of other nations in the Near East (with important differences). The Torah tells us that Aaron and the priests wore special garments (Ch. 28) like the ephod and breastplate of judgment. On this breastplate were the names of the tribes, and when Aaron wore this breastplate, all Israel was represented by him (28:15-22 and 28:30). Sacrificial worship involved the cooking of an animal, brought by the worshipper, and the eating of a meal, together with the "community of Israel" which included the priestly representative and, theoretically, God Himself. This meal was covenantal. It united all concerned in a pact (Ch. 29). For us in modern times, some of the incidents of this worship, blood sprinkling, etc. seem curious if not odious, but we must remember that their meaning goes back far beyond the time of the Hebrews, and it is to the credit of the Hebrews that, as time went on, they outgrew this whole system with the help of the later prophets, like Amos and Isaiah.

"Ki Tisah"--The priestly description continues in this segment, but one of our most dramatic stories breaks into the narrative suddenly. The editors choose to retell the story of Mount Sinai with Moses descending with the Ten Commandments (31:18). Below, at the foot of the mountain, the people are impatient and they press Aaron to make them a visual representation of their God. Aaron, being a priest and not a prophet, yields to the wishes of the people, and helps them make the golden calf. The people danced around the calf and prayed, "This is thy god, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt" (32:1-8). As Moses descended the mount, Joshua being with him, they heard the clamor arising from the celebrating below. Joshua thought it was the sound of war, but Moses said, "It is the sound of a people broken loose" (32:15-18). The thing that Moses cherished most, moral discipline, had been abandoned by the people. They became no different from their neighbors in their reckless abandon.

The anger of Moses caused him to drop the tablets. He destroyed the calf and punished those who had led the people astray (but not Aaron) (32:19-35). One wonders why Aaron was let off so easily, but we have here a lesson about those religious leaders who do not have their own convictions, but simply do what the people want them to do. It was necessary now to restore the people to God's grace (33:10-16), and Moses climbs Sinai again to obtain the Commandments anew

(Continued at bottom of adjacent column)

**BAFTY Sponsors Shabbat Dinner February 28**

Use the coupon below to make your reservations. Call Bruce Katzen, 665-4318, or Debbie Kaiser, 238-6188, if you have any questions.

**BAFTY DINNER RESERVATION FORM**

Mail to Temple office, 5950 N. Kendall Drive, Miami, Florida

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make a reservation for BAFTY's Shabbat Dinner.

\_\_\_\_\_ Adults \_\_\_\_\_ Children

Check enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Adults, \$5.50; Children (under 12), \$3.50

**Joan's Gems**

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Oops, we made a boo-boo. Congrats to Elaine and Arthur Friesner upon the birth of their daughter, Courtney Ann. We listed Elaine as being under the weather. Everyone should have such a blessing. . . . Guess what. Another boo-boo. David, not Randy, was made vice president of SEFTY. He is the son of Dr. Mel and Joan Schwartz. We like to keep our information correct. . . . We are indeed proud of Jay and Ronald, sons of Joe and Bobbie Emanuel. Jay won an Eagle Scout award and Ronald won a Life award. . . . Congratulations to Harold and Joy Goldstein upon the engagement of their son, Jack, to Miss Jenny Blank. The young couple plan a fall wedding.

Ah, Beth Amites have started a new "club." It's called the "tennis-elbow surgery club." Participants include the following klutzes--Byron Cherkas, Woody Weiser, Neil Schiff, and Harry Weinberg.

Saturday, February 22

9:30 a.m.

11:15 a.m.



Adam, son of  
Mr. and Mrs.  
Jeffrey Wershil



Matthew, son of  
Dr. and Mrs. Bernard Silverstein



David, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Kurt Singer

*Bnai Mitzvah*

(34:1-4). The Torah reminds us over and over again that such strides as Moses made in behalf of the Hebrews and of mankind were not easy. Failure marked his early efforts and he had to fight against the urge of the masses to be just like other peoples. This is why the Torah lists such stringent laws against entering into covenant with the pagans and showing tolerance for their laws and activities (34:10-17). If a new kind of religion and people was to be developed, it could be done only if this people held itself aloof from others and recognized that it had to be different and much more disciplined. Is there a lesson here for us in today's churning world?





Let's Study Torah

(Want to learn the Bible the easy way? Read these columns as we follow the reading in the Torah, as it is read in the Temple every Saturday morning. Read the indicated chapters as you go along. Read in the Book of Exodus the portion, "Va-yakhel-P'kuday," (Ex. 35:1 - 40:1-38), which will be read in the synagogue this week and "Va-yikrah" (Lev. 1:1 - 5:26) which will be read next week).

Va-yakhel-P'kuday--These are two parashote joined together. They are separated when calendar needs require. They deal with the preparation of the Tabernacle in the time of Moses and primarily with the priestly service. We are here told precisely how the Tabernacle was made, what the holy equipment was, and where each piece was placed. The Tabernacle was made from offerings brought by the people, both money and materials themselves (Ex. 35:4, 21, and 36:5). Each family brought what it could afford, as the spirit moved them. So much was brought that the people had to be restrained from giving (36:5). To us, the content of the Tabernacle may seem strange, but let us remember that the priestly service of the Hebrews was patterned in form after that of the other semitic peoples (the Canaanites, in particular). The Hebrews worshipped a different God, but the form of their worship was that of the ancient Near East. Later, of course, the prophets and Pharisees changed the form of worship. The chief architect of the Tabernacle was Bezalel (35:30, 37:1-25). In the 37th chapter, we get some idea of the artistry of the builders. The candle sticks, for example, the fore-runner of our Menorah, was made with almond blossoms and other flowers (37:17 ff.). The altar (37:25-29) was a place where animals were killed and cooked for the communion kind of meal. All of those who ate together (this could include the entire congregation) were considered to be bound in a covenantal relationship. A religious service was thus a binding together of the worshippers to specific tasks. The garments worn by the priests, the ephod, and breastplate of judgment (among others), had symbolic meanings. On the breastplate (hoshen mishpat) were stones representative of each tribe. The high priest was thus the living representative of all of the tribes when he wore this breastplate (39:2-21). It was a common belief in the ancient Near East that such a priest had enormous powers. Upon him depended the fact that the people would be forgiven for their sins or not. Whether or not the people stood in favor with their god depended in many ways on the prayers and offerings of the priest. Gradually, the prophets and others weaned the Hebrew people from these beliefs held by all the other nations of that time.

Va-yikrah--With this reading, we begin the third book of the Bible, known in the Hebrew as Va-Yikrah, in the Greek as Leviticus. This book especially contains priestly material. Perhaps, it began as a private book of the priesthood and was later included in the broader Bible. In spite of the ritualistic nature of the book, there are also some of the more significant ethical passages of the Bible interwoven into its narrative. They are worth waiting for. Jews have not applied any of the laws or rituals discussed in this passage since the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Their value to us is that they tell us how ancient man, the Hebrews amongst them, attempted to deal with the unknown. No records of any priesthood are as well preserved as these, but since the Hebrews developed their priesthood following the

(Continued at bottom of adjacent column)

Calling All Boston Area Collegians

Rabbi Baumgard will be in Boston to meet with Beth Am collegians and their friends the weekend of March 14-16 at the Sheraton-Prudential.

SEND IN YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS IMMEDIATELY!

We are available for appointments. Join us at dinner March 16.

Pre-School-Day School Registration

REGISTRATION NOW FOR MEMBERS ONLY

Pre-school half day (ages 3-5), kindergarten full day (age 5) day school (grades 1-6). Call school office, 665-6228, for information and application. Priority for members ends April 1.

Brotherhood Meeting Wed., March 5

The Brotherhood meeting on Wednesday, March 5, will concern Jewish Chataqua Society, its program and purpose. We will be showing several commercial spots to be shown on national TV and the award winning film, "Beyond the Mirage." Meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. in the Youth Lounge.



An Evening In Israel

Sponsored by the Israel Government Tourist Office and El Al Airlines. There will be live entertainment and a film. There will be no admission fee and no solicitations. The date is Thursday, March 6, at 8:00 p.m., in the Youth Lounge.

*Bnai*

*Mitzvah*

Saturday  
March 8  
11:15 a.m.

Glenn, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Sanford Freed

Michael, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. I. Jay Steinhardt

patterns of the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Canaanites, we must assume that they all had much in common. There are, of course, certain important differences. The Hebrew priestly laws do not include most of the magical superstitious elements of the others, but often there are some fascinating remnants of the older ideas. Sometimes, the way an older idea was outgrown was this. The older ritual is retained, but the newer procedure is placed alongside it. We shall be discussing some of these interesting developments. For now, let us note that there were different kinds of offerings for different purposes. There were burnt offerings, meal offerings (Ch. 2), peace offerings (Ch. 3), and special atonement offerings. The details of what a priest did after killing an animal may seem gruesome to us, but let us remember that these practices were observed by priests for thousands of years, and they attributed to them important meanings. Especially was the blood important in the matter of substitutionary atonement. Christianity, to this day, teaches that sinful mankind was redeemed by the blood that Jesus shed. Jews gave up the idea of blood-forgiveness two thousand years ago, along with the entire sacrificial way of worshipping.





## Let's Study Torah

### "Tzav"

(A Jew who is ignorant of the Bible misses the heart of his identity. Read along with me. We are following the traditional cycle of reading the Torah as it is read in the Synagogue. This weekend, we read "Tzav," in the Book of Leviticus, Chapter 6:1 to 8:36. Next weekend, we read from the Book of Exodus the story of our liberation from Egypt (33:12 - 34:26), as previously discussed in this column. Also on March 29, we will read from the Song of Songs in the Temple. This book is read to indicate the coming of Springtime.)

"Tzav," Leviticus. This parasha continues with a discussion of the types of priestly offerings in the Temple worship. We must understand that the ancient worship was far different from ours. Our service concentrates on verbal prayers and singing. Both of these were elements of the original service in the Temple, but they were not the heart of the Temple service. The distinguishing part of that service was the cooking and eating of animal flesh and "cakes." At the Seder service in our homes, we get an idea of what an eating service is like. The ancient Temple service had less of a folksy atmosphere and more mystery about it.

Remember that most of the Israelites or Judeans did not go to Temple regularly. They lived too far from Jerusalem, the Temple site, to be able to do that. The people came to Jerusalem on the pilgrimage festivals, Sukkot, Pesach, and Sh'vuot. They came for a week, in the case of the first two holidays, and for a few days in the case of Sh'vuot. Coming from afar, they had to be fed, and it was natural that the Temple worship include the pragmatic matter of eating, only the eating was done in an atmosphere of reverence. In the ancient Semitic society, and still today in the Near East, people who eat together are covenant brothers. They are bound together in indissoluble bonds. Further, God Himself was assumed to participate in the community meal, and all present were bound together with Him as one family, responsible for one another.

There were certain prohibitions about eating. Fat was prohibited (7:23-25). The eating of blood was prohibited (7:26-27). We do not know precisely why these prohibitions were there. We can assume that even this ancient people knew that the eating of fat had its digestive complications and health hazards, but many of the pagan peoples employed the drinking of blood as part of their worship rites. Perhaps it is exactly this reason which was the foundation of the Israelite prohibition. If the pagans worshipped their gods by drinking blood, then the Israelites could not possibly imitate the pagans. We know that our forefathers would not mix meat and milk because this is what the pagans did as part of their fertility rites where mixing was considered to have the power of sympathetic magic. Almost all of the priestly worship of the ancient Israelites was derived from pagan sources, but certain practices were omitted. In time, the Prophets led the people away from the entire priestly cult. The cult endured in Israel because it served a practical purpose. It provided the pageantry and mystery that attracted a relatively unsophisticated group of farmers to the religion. The moral law alone did not have such a lure for the people. Moreover, all peoples of ancient times, the Greeks included, worshipped through the use of animal sacrifices. It remained for the Prophets who addressed a more sophisticated urban people to speak of a God who neither desired nor was tolerant of sacrifices. Said Micah (about 825 BCE), "Thus saith the Lord . . . take away from Me the  
(Continued at bottom of adjacent column)



Beth Americans, under the direction of Harriet Potlock, performed for the Jewish War Veterans at Bayfront Park on February 9. The Beth Americans will perform at Dadeland on March 9, at 2 p.m., in conjunction with the YMHA. They will also be choir of the month on April 4.

## Confirmation Class Offers College Credit Course

The third term of the college credit course being offered for Beth Am's Confirmation Class will be a most varied and interesting one. The course for the year, for which the young people are receiving three college credits at Dade Junior College, which are also transferable to other colleges, is on the Bible.

The third term will feature a number of distinguished guest lecturers. Rabbi Baumgard will be the supervising teacher, while the guests will include Rabbi Richard Davis, Hillel Director at the University of Miami, who will teach two weeks on the Book of Proverbs; Mrs. Elaine Silverstein, former instructor at Dade Junior College, who will teach two weeks on the Book of Job; and Mr. Alfred Boas, instructor at the University of Miami, who will teach two weeks on influences of the Bible on world literature. Rabbi Baumgard will introduce and conclude the term.

## Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Kudos to Debbie, daughter of June Friedman, who has made Dean's List at Georgia Tech. . . . Congrats to Peter Moser who has been elected to the Board of Directors of Dade Federal Savings and Loan.

*Bnai*

*Mitzvah*

Saturday  
March 22  
11:15 a.m.



Richard, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Irvin Berman  
Bradley, son of  
Dr. and Mrs. Allen Katz



stench of your sacrifices . . . what doth your Lord require of you but that you do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God."

Micah particularly inveighed against the pagan practice of the sacrifice of the first-born son. Christianity still speaks of the sacrifice of Jesus, "The first-born son of God" that men might be forgiven for their sins.





## Let's Study Torah

Sh'mini (Lev. 9:1 — 11:47)

In this parasha, we move from a description of required priestly actions to a description of what foods a good Israelite may or may not eat. The core of the laws concerning "Kashrut" are found here (11:1-46). Basic to these laws is the instruction that Israelites:

1) may eat only those animals that have true hoofs (with clefts through the hoofs).

2) and those animals that chew the cud (11:2). (Thus, an animal that chews the cud, like the camel, but does not also have true hoofs, may not be eaten).

3) may eat anything in the water that has fins and scales (11:9).

4) may not eat swarming things (11:9, 11:23) like the mole, the mouse (11:29), or anything that crawls on its belly (11:42), that walks on all fours (with paws), or has many legs (11:27, 11:42).

5) may not eat predatory birds, like the eagle, vulture, or sea gull (11:13).

The prohibitions about eating are found elsewhere. They apply primarily to mixing milk and meat and to eating the wild boar (pig).

The five prohibitions described in "Sh'mini" have a number of different sources of origin, which cannot be completely separated yet by scholars. Fundamental to the reasons, however, is the goal of holiness (11:44). The group which tries to imitate God in His Holiness must have a table ethic that points to this holiness.

Predatory animals should, therefore, not be present on one's table; nor should animals that have a tendency to filth and disease, such as swarming things.

Some of the eating prohibitions were designed for health reasons and some were designed to steer the Israelites away from pagan practices. The Phoenicians in the coastal cities had certain fish-oriented rituals, but we do not know exactly what they were or which of the Israelite prohibitions regarding prohibited residents of the sea were involved (perhaps the crustaceans?).

We do know that the god Tammuz (Adonis) was often pictured as a wild boar (hazir) and eaten in pagan worship ceremonies while the nomads mixed meat and milk as a fertility rite dedicated to their god. ~~We shall discuss these at length later.~~

The point we ought to underscore here is that one of the main reasons Jews have survived as a distinct religious culture is that they had a table ethic that sharply distinguished them from other peoples. The table ethic was a constant reminder that the Jew ought to carry his life perspective into every detail of his daily routine. "Ye shall be holy, because I, the Lord your God, am Holy" (11:44). This was the call to greatness. It was a call the ancient Jew heard when he ate and worked, when he rose up and slept, when he saw the sun rise or set. One could not be a Jew and escape God, because God's laws covered every aspect of Jewish living.

In modern times, with the "pagans" no longer a threat, and with new sanitation codes, many Jews no longer maintain the old table ethic. What have they got to replace it as a forceful reminder that a Jew must carry the moral view into every detail of his life experience? Do we need a new table ethic? (In my opinion, any religion which hopes to survive must have such a detailed over-view. Can we develop one as valid for our time as our fathers developed for theirs?)

## Beth Am Collegians Have Boston Tea Party

Nineteen collegians from the Boston area met with Rabbi Baumgard for dinner at the Sheraton Hotel in Boston in the first collegian meeting ever held for Beth Amites in that area on Sunday, March 16. The collegians dined with Rabbi Baumgard and then went to his room for a discussion that lasted for several hours.

Among those present were Gary Blick, from Clark University, and Steven Goodman, from Rensselaer Polytech Institute. From Wellesley, there were Karen Rosen and Lisa Esserman. From Brandeis University was Daniel Goodman; from Harvard, Jeff Potash, Laura Esserman, Samuel Dubbin, and Melissa Berman; and from Boston University, Mindy Milberg and Lynn Welt. Students visited in a separate meeting at Brandeis included Karen Lindau, David Udell, and Margery Kates.

All in all, those attending the various meetings with Rabbi Baumgard included 95 percent of those young people known to us as attending colleges in the Boston area. Those unable to attend, but who were contacted by phone, included Ken Sanes, Lorie Newman of Smith, and Sara Beth Harris.

## Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Congratulations to Ruth and Phil Fruitstone upon the birth of their granddaughter, Cheryl Elaine, born to Helen and Mark Hauser. Helen is Phil and Ruth's daughter. . . . Ah, another mazel to Charlie and Sandi Simon upon the birth of their daughter, Shannya. . . . Get well wishes to Marian Katzin, Helene Zimmerman, Howard Shapiro, Edythe Freeman, Estelle Kfare, Carl Spero, Jacqueline Edelson, Daniel Leeds, Patti Layton, Bernard Lash. . . . Mazel to Lois and Leonard Waldman who have become grandparents. Born to their daughter, Kathy, and her husband, Kerri DuPree, is a boy, Scott Joseph.

Congratulations to David and Janice Stuart upon the marriage of their son, Scott, to Laura Tatum. David is our executive director. . . . Did you notice the new directories on the Temple property? We would like to tell you that they are the gift of the 1974 Confirmation Class. . . . Congratulations to Sam and Phyllis Rosen upon the engagement of their son, Gary, to Helene Bekoff. The couple plan a summer wedding. . . . Our good wishes to Scott, son of Morton and Mickie Orbach, who is a Silver Knight nominee in the field of speech at South Miami Senior High. . . . Mazel tov to Ruth and Steven Shere upon the birth of their daughter.

Stuart, son of Dolly and Ernest Harris, is really something. Through his scholastic achievements, he will be accepted into the M.D. Ph.D. program at Duke University, which means that he has received full scholarship for the next six years, at which time he will graduate as a M.D. and a Ph. D. in research. He has also been named a Phi Beta Kappa at Duke.

*Bnai*

*Mitzvah*



Saturday  
April 5  
11:15 a.m.

Jeffrey, son of  
Dr. and Mrs. Melvin Schwartz





## Let's Study Torah

Acharay Mote — K'doshim, Lev. 16:1 — 20:27.

(This Torah portion should have appeared last week.)

Acharay Mote--This parasha contains the priestly description of the ancient "scapegoat" sacrifice. Aaron, as High Priest, took two goats. Over one of the goats, he confessed the sins of the people Israel, then, slaughtered the goat ritually, and sprinkled its blood on the horns of the altar, thereby ritually atoning for the sins of the people. The second goat was released "L'azazel," as a sign of the people released from condemnation and freed from death (16:1-10).

Atonement by substitution was a part of the worship of all ancient peoples. The Hebrews, however, outgrew this practice, and for at least 2,000 years have not observed the sacrifice of the "scapegoat." We teach today that each person is responsible for his own sins. With the Prophet Isaiah (825 B.C.E.), we say that God forgives readily. "Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as snow," said the prophet. As the prayer book says on Yom Kippur, three things are required for forgiveness and these only--prayer, sincere repentance, and righteous deeds.

Christianity has at its heart the doctrine of substitutionary atonement. It teaches that Jesus was the "scapegoat." Through his death and the shedding of his blood, those who believe in him will be forgiven for their sins. Others are condemned to Hell.

This section also contains the laws of incest, since the ancient nomadic society was a highly organized family society. Prohibition against Canaanite sexual practices are here also (20:21-23). The Canaanites would be called today "swinging" sexual practitioners and much of the Hebraic firm stand on sex was in revulsion to the unfettered practices of the Canaanites.

**K'doshim** (Ch. 19:1 — 20:27). This section is one of the highlights of our Bible. It tells us that to be an Israelite, one must try to imitate God in His holiness (19:1-2). Judaism, then, is that religion which teaches that one must try to imitate God. But this is not an abstract teaching. It is defined in detail (19:3 and following). When you reap your harvest, you must leave the corners of the field for the poor and the fallen fruit for the orphan (19:9, 10). It is unholy to steal, to make a promise and fail to keep it (verses 11, 12). It is unholy to take advantage of those who are handicapped or weak (19:14), to wrest justice in the courts (15), to spread malicious gossip (16), to hate your brother in your heart (17), to take vengeance (18), to cut yourself when your dead lie before you (28), to make your daughter a harlot (29). It is holy to keep the Sabbath as a day of rest (30), to honor the aged (32), to help the stranger (33), indeed, to love the stranger as yourself (34), to be honest in your business (35, 36). We can see that the concept of holiness went far beyond ritualistic notions. It crept into every corner of daily living.

It is also unholy to abuse God's sexual gift to you (20:10-20). To be holy meant one had to strive to be different from the rest of the peoples around. "Ye shall not walk in the customs of the nations . . ." (20:23). Clearly, our fathers tried to establish an elite people who were willing to set themselves apart from others in the effort to establish a superior culture. What a contrasting message this is to that chosen by so many Jews today. They rush to be "like the others," especially in pursuing the art of pleasure.

(Continued at bottom of adjacent column)

## Univ. Of Florida Collegians Dine With Rabbi

Forty-eight of Beth Am's collegians from the University of Florida and their guests dined with Rabbi Baumgard at the University Inn, in Gainesville, on Sunday night, April 6. Following the dinner, there was a discussion on problems confronting American Jews and especially Jewish collegians. Rabbi Grafstein, Hillel Director at the University of Florida, was a guest and spoke briefly. The attendance of 48 broke the old record for Beth Amites at this dinner. This annual dinner is financed by gifts to the Rabbi's Fund.

Among those in attendance were Helene L. Bekoff, Gary Rosen, Sue Redstone, Sacha Rubin, Steven Sablowsky, Taffy Blackton, Wendy Levin, Gary Farbish, Lynn Weinsoff, Dawne Weiner, Amy Jeruss, Joy Kaplan, Barry Schwartz, Lane Genet, Fred Shorthouse, Judy Vogel, Nancy Miller, Marion R. Trazenfeld, Mitch Menoker, Bruce Cynamon, Jeff Koren, Joanne Harvest, Marta Goldberg, Mindy Hayet, David Rogel, Eric Brockman, Susan Feuer, Marilyn Teitelbaum, Leonard Mindlin, Mona Beth Altman, Wendy Guberman, David Ross, Danny Baumgard, Linda Waitz, Shelly Guberman, Michael Givel, Michael Cohn, Barbara Spiegel, Keith Block, Bob Farbish, Eliot Kleinberg, Neil Freeman.

## Friends Unlimited Have First Birthday



Esther Kessler, vice president of our Temple, is happy to relate that our group of people called "Friends Unlimited" (30 to 50 years of age) has just celebrated their first birthday.

The success of this new group was due to the efforts of its first chairman, Nomee Furman, with the guidance of Esther Kessler and the cooperation of the original steering committee. Hard work and cooperation was an everyday word amongst this successful group that meets every Friday after services. Their program has been most diversified. Because of the initial need, two other single age groups of varied interests are now meeting at Beth Am.

For the coming year, we look forward to their continued participation. If you would like to be a part of our new steering committee, please contact Esther Kessler at 666-4049. We need your ideas and your interest. During the summer months, a coffee house will be held every Friday evening after services.

*Bnai  
Mitzvah*

Saturday  
April 26  
11:15 a.m.

Tracy, daughter of  
Mr. and Mrs. Myron A. Berezin  
David Jon, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Herschel Levy

Jesus, obviously, was well versed in this portion from Leviticus, for he quoted it regularly. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (19:18), and "Thou shalt not take vengeance" (same verse) are amongst the statements he borrowed. The "golden rule" is, after all, very Jewish, but Judaism is not merely the golden rule. That is the beginning, not the end.





Let's Study Torah

Read your Bible along with me, following the traditional cycle of reading.

B'har B'chukotai — Leviticus, Ch. 25:1 to the end of the Book.

The parasha known as "Ba-har" begins with a discussion of two customs relating to the land. The first of these relates to a "Sabbath" for the land. Every seventh year, the land was to remain fallow, uncultivated, so that it would have the opportunity to recover its chemicals and be enriched. It is interesting that the concept of the "Sabbath," previously developed for humans and animals, is now extended to the land. Everything in existence, our fathers taught, is entitled to its period of rest and reorganization. Neither human strength nor the strength of the land can be forever drained and depleted. (Ch. 25:1-7).

What is obvious here is that our ancestors clearly understood the inter-relationship between man and nature. In other sections of the Bible, we are told that when a Hebrew army invaded a land, it was not to destroy trees and plants; when a hungry person came upon a mother bird sitting on eggs, the eggs might be taken, but the mother must be left alone, (for reproductive purposes?).

The second custom involving the land also relates directly to human beings. Every 50 years, in the Jubilee Year, land, originally distributed to a family and sold by it because of a debt or hardship, must be returned to the original owner or to his family. In this way, the sharp division between classes, so dominant in other nations, was to be avoided. The economic structure of ancient Israel was based on the concept that approximately equal wealth makes for the maintenance of equal rights. Where land is concentrated in a few hands, power shifts to the wealthy, and the poor soon are oppressed. Indeed, this is what eventually happened in Israel; and it is to this evil that the Prophets constantly address themselves.

The related custom is that in the Jubilee Year, a person who had sold himself to another person as an indenture slave, i.e. bound for a certain number of years to work out a debt, would be freed. The Biblical statement is (v. 10), "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim Liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof . . ." This statement, "Proclaim liberty, etc." is found on the United States Liberty Bell in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, where the Continental Congress met to consider revolting against England. This is one of many teachings in our Bible which gave strength to the founders of America.

This reading contains many compassionate statements concerning the poor. It was not considered charity to uphold the poor; it was a matter of legal responsibility (v. 35). Further, if you lent money to an Israelite, it had to be without interest (v. 36). Christianity took over this provision and taught that just as no Jew could lend to another Jew on interest, so no Christian could lend to another Christian on interest. Christian kings, however, hired Jews to be their representatives in lending to Christians, and this is how the Jews got into the money lending business. Their own highly compassionate law ultimately led them to be Christian representatives (the Shabbas goy in reverse) as money lenders, and, in time, the Jews got into the business for themselves.

(Continued at bottom of adjacent column)

Youth For Israel Walkathon On Sunday, May 4

All youth group members are asked to participate in the Youth For Israel Walkathon on Sunday, May 4. The group will leave from Temple Beth Sholom at 8:30 a.m., and walk for ten miles around the south part of Miami Beach. There will be three rest stops along the way for drinks. Wear a hat, your group T-shirt, sneakers and socks. The severity of Israel's explosive situation makes your efforts an absolute necessity. Take a solid step toward strengthening Israel. Contact 264-8000 for details.

Joan's Gems



By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Mazel tov to Jackie and Barry Cohen upon the birth of their son, Jeremiah Moshe. . . . Congratulations to Dr. Sidney and Florence Fox upon the engagement of their daughter, Sherry, to Harry Speizer. . . . And to Arthur and Natalie Lyons upon the recent marriage of their daughter, Sara, to Kenny Burns. . . . Lyn, daughter of Mrs. Pauli Levine, has been inducted into National Honor Society at Killian Senior High School. . . . David, son of Gene and Rita Essner, has been chosen salutatorian at South Miami Senior High School.

Betty and Millard Suid have become grandparents for the first time. Born to their son, Steven, and his wife, Julie, is a boy, Richard Elliott. . . . Congratulations to David, son of Dr. Mel and Joan Schwartz, who is president of the Key Club at Killian Senior High and vice president of the South East Federation of Temple Youth. . . . Rose Potlock graduated from Southwest Senior High and plans to enter Dade South. Rose is a young 69 years of age. . . . Harriet Potlock has been nominated for the Delta Kappa Gamma Society, the honor society for women educators. . . . Congratulations to Minnie and Hy Gorsetman upon the birth of their grandson, Seth Jason, born to Sheryl and Errol Eisinger.

We are proud to share the news that Michael Clein has been appointed regional associate for the National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods. . . . Mazel to Rhoda and Kermit Bernheimer upon the birth of their granddaughter, born to their son and daughter-in-law, Linda and Martin Bernheimer. . . . And to Paul and Millie Draizier, grandparents for the first time. Born to their daughter, Rochelle, and her husband, Eric Doepke, was a son, Benjamin.

*B'nai*  
*Mitzvah*

Saturday  
May 3  
11:15 a.m.

Richard, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Alman  
Steven, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Goldin

There are some beautiful passages opposing slavery which ought to be read and known by every Jew (v. 39 and following). The pattern of developing idealistic and merciful laws in ancient Israel was as follows. First, a law was established making it illegal to enslave an Israelite. Later, this law was extended to the non-Israelite. Modern Jews (and non-Jews) are not always mindful that most of the western world's concern for human beings came out of the experience and genius of the Jewish people.





## Let's Study Torah

(Read ~~the Torah~~ along with me. Read "Ba-midbar," Numbers 1:1 - 4:20, and "Naso," Numbers 4:21 - 7:80.)

Numbers (Ba-midbar, literally "In the Wilderness") is the fourth book of the Torah. Essentially, it contains the "numbers," or census taking of the ancient Israelites. No government can function without a clear knowledge of its membership, so the Israelites had to discover the strength of their people. The book tells us that the people was divided and numbered into tribes, clans, and families. Their names, to the last detail, are recorded here for all posterity. In modern times, with such emphasis on the importance of the individual as separated from his family and group, the Biblical emphasis on the meaning of the individual, as tied to his family and group, is in sharp contrast.

Here again (3:40-46), we have reference to the significance of the first-born son in ancient times. Amongst the pagans, the first-born was actually given to the "gods," either sacrificed or given for service in the temples. Here we are told the God of the Israelites merely asks that as a substitute for the gift of the first-born to Him, He be given the tribe of Levi for service in His Sanctuary. This theme of substitution for the first-born is woven throughout our Bible. It is also at the heart of Christianity, as we have indicated before.

Naso (Numbers 4:21 - 7:80).

What is one to do when he has wronged his brother? The ancient Israelites had a specific system whereby restitution might be made and forgiveness acquired (5:5 and following). There was no harboring of guilt amongst them, and there was no toleration of failure to correct a wrong. In our day, when deception is a part of the game and covering up is an incidental part of our activity, we have lost almost entirely the need to set things right with our friends, our co-participants, our family members and business associates. This is a measure of how far we have come from the simple and "straight" life of our ancestors.

There is no doubt that our forebearers had a double standard with respect to sex. We have described in Ch. 5:11-35 the manner in which a wife suspected of infidelity was tried in court. It is noteworthy that the man with whom she was suspected of having extra-marital relations was not similarly tried. It was the woman who had to be above suspicion. It is wrong to say that women in ancient Israel did not have a worthy and high role, but in the matter of sexual attitudes, she definitely did not have the freedom women have today. The story here places emphasis on the question of the father of the child the woman was carrying. The basic problem is, "who is the father of the child?" If the woman were unfaithful, how could parentage be established and all the rights and privileges attached thereto?

Samson was a Nazarite. A Nazarite was one who made a special pledge to God to partake of no alcohol, not to shave, and to have no contact with the dead (6:1 and following). This was a special sect of "holy" men. Apparently, people took this vow for certain reasons, perhaps, to atone for a misdeed. The Nazarite was greatly respected for his abstinence. Note, sexual abstinence is not among the requirements. The Israelites did not develop monks.

## Youth Program Finishing Good Season

Our youth directors, Barry and Gail Friedman, under the chairmanship of Iris Franco, announces that the first annual foul shooting basketball tournaments were held on May 4 and 11. High scores among the 12 and under division was Ross Seidler. Fourteen and under outstanding shooter was Honor Rapaport, and 16 and under high scorer was Bill Pearson.

The next youth program special is scheduled to be a basketball one-on-one tournament and finals will be held on Sunday, May 18, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in our gym.

## Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Kudos to Ken, son of Gunther and Shirley Karger, who was recently installed as a member of National Honor Science Society at Palmetto Senior High, and to Steven, son of Joan Schwartzman, who was elected to National Spanish Honor Society at South Miami Senior High. . . . Congrats are in order to Randi, son of Dr. Mel and Joan Schwartz, who has been elected vice president of the Miami Council of the B'nai Brith. . . . Fane, son of Dr. and Mrs. Harvey Lozman, was a winner at the regional South Florida Science and Engineering Fair held in Jacksonville. He received second place award from the Florida State Audubon Society.

Shaynna, the one month old daughter of Charlie and Sandi Simon, has been made honorary member of the Jewish War Veterans Auxiliary Post at Beth Am. . . . Congrats to Eric, son of Leonard and Selma Rappaport, who has been elected to Dean's List at Emory University. . . . Were you among the many that saw and heard Dr. Ross Davis, a neurosurgeon, on local T.V. recently? We are happy to share his great progress with victims of cerebral palsy by the means of a new pacemaker for very young patients. . . . Our retiring president, Bill Sanes, was nominated as Outstanding Citizen of the Year by the Shalom Lodge of B'nai Brith. Bill and Beth Am are so proud to be honored in this way. Here's hoping he wins this well deserved award.

Get well to Alan Kessler, Celia Winkleman, Nathan Cynamon, Rose Goldstein, Bernice Saval, and Suzanne Peltz. . . . Mazel tov to Virginia and Joe Altschuller who became grandparents for the first time. Born to their children, Mr. and Mrs. Gilner, is a son, Joshua Michael. . . . How about this! Beth, the 11 year old daughter of Aaron and Elaine Perlman, was the 1975 State of Florida piano solo winner in the elementary category competition held in Winter Park and won the duet division with Shelley Baer. . . . Mazel tov to Dale, daughter of Mickey and Phil Kaplan, upon her engagement to Robert Stein. Dale has also made the Dean's List at the University of Florida three times in a row!

Kudos to the following young people nominated for Silver Knight awards: Charles Liebling for science, Leslie Brooks for citizenship, Steven Snyder for scholarship, Jeff Cutler for athletics, Michael Sacks for speech.

*B'nai*

*Mitzvah*



Saturday  
May 17  
11:15 a.m.

Jane, daughter of  
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Glick  
Philip, son of  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hecker





## Let's Study Torah

Read the Bible along with me. Read "~~Nasoh~~" Numbers 4:21 — 7:89. Then read my column in the COMMENTATOR of May 16. We review now B'halotechah, Num. 8:1 — 12:16, which will be read in the Synagogues on May 31.

B'halotechah — This parasha begins with a description of the original Menorah in the Tabernacle of Moses. Contrary to the cliché that the ancient Hebrews had an aversion to art work in their Houses of Worship, the Bible tells us that the Menorahs had beautiful flowers made of beaten metal.

We also have a description of the ceremony for making atonement, whereby the Levites, who were assistants to the priests, placed their hands on the head of a bullock and offered him as an atonement (Num. 8:10-14). The Levites, we are again reminded, are "given" to God for service in His Tabernacle in place of the first-born of the Israelites, who, under most ancient law dominant in the Middle East, are appropriately "given" to the gods (8:14-19).

We have here the mixing of two ideas, the ancient idea that the first fruits of field and womb belong to the gods, and the idea of substitutionary atonement, whereby one human being (or an animal) is sacrificed to eliminate the sins of many. Judaism eliminated the notion of human sacrifice immediately (this is the meaning of the story of the sacrifice of Isaac), but it is retained in Christianity. In the latter religion, we are told that God gave His first-born son (i.e. Jesus) so that the sins of many might be forgiven.

The notion of human sacrifice was eliminated from Judaism in the teaching of its founder, Abraham. The notion of animal sacrifice was attacked repeatedly by the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, etc. It was left to Micah to teach that God detests animal sacrifices and seeks from us only that we "do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God."

The greatness of our Bible is that it does not erase older ideas even though they are later supplanted by newer and broader ones. The old teaching remains as evidence of what our fathers used to do, and as evidence of what other peoples did before Judaism came on the scene.

In this parasha, we have a description of how the Passover is to be observed (Ch. 9). The story of the march through the wilderness continues with a description of how "manna" provided the food needs for the people (11:1-9), and how quail was later provided (11:31-35). We learn also that when the people rebelled against Moses, the congress, or Sanhedrin of 70 elders, was created to share the load of authority (11:16-30). In early America, the colonists pointed to this institution as the inspiration for their congress.

Ultimately, Aaron and Miriam, too, revolted against Moses, and it was necessary for God to take His stand beside Moses (Ch. 12). We learn from this chapter something of how a prophet gathered his knowledge from God (12:5-8). One cannot help but wonder about Aaron's fickleness, evidence for which occurs again and again.

## Youth Group Elects New Officers

We are proud to announce that B.A.F.T.Y., our senior youth group, has chosen its officers for the coming year. At recent elections, Debbie Kaiser was selected president of the 140 member organization. Executive vice president will be Cathy Futernick. Committee vice presidents were elected as follows: Project, Joan Weiner; Program, Debbie Liebling; Religious, Pam Abelson; Publicity, Jan Rosenberg. Robbie Kessler was elected treasurer, and Janet Franco is the new secretary. The new board also chose Bruce Katzen to be their Junior Advisor. Rabbi Cook will serve as the organization's advisor for the 75-76 year.

The youth group will conclude its busy calendar of events with its final banquet, to be held on May 25. The new board is already at work planning next year's exciting program.

## Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Mazel tov to Larry and Beverly Marks upon the arrival of their baby boy, Edward Hadley, on April 14. . . . Were you among the many who attended our Cabaret Night? Wasn't it fun to get reacquainted? . . . Eric, son of Marvin and Norma Lieberman, won third place in the Dade County Social Studies Fair in the category of political studies. He attends Glades Junior High School. . . . Get well wishes to Sidney Gorchov, Lois Goldstein, Bernice Kowalsky, Lena Ragois, Honey Burwick, Norma Stone, and Sol Cohen who have been hospitalized recently. . . . Mazel to Harvey and Rebecca Slavin upon the birth of their daughter.

Congratulations to Steven, son of Dr. Gil and Natalie Snyder, who has won the Silver Knight award in general scholarship and is a National Merit finalist and will attend Princeton in the fall.

9:15 a.m.



*Bnai*

Deborah, daughter of  
Dr. and Mrs. David Weisfeld  
Andrea, daughter of  
Mr. and Mrs. Jack Winston

*Mitzvah*

Saturday  
May 24

11:15 a.m.



Fran, daughter of  
Dr. and Mrs. Erwin Lesser  
Rochelle, daughter of  
Mr. and Mrs. Ed Rubin