



# BULLETIN

## Rabbi's Message



### The Western Wall Controversy

As we enter the period of the Jewish calendar known as the Three Weeks, Jewish spirituality focuses on the destruction of the Temple and its significance for Jewish belief. The period of the three weeks commences with the Seventeenth of Tammuz (July 11, 2017) which commemorates the encircling of the walls of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. The period concludes with Tisha B'Av, the Ninth of Av (August 1, 2017) which recalls the destruction of the First and Second Temple. The memory of the destruction of the Temple sealed itself on the soul of the Jewish people as Jews prayed for Jerusalem throughout their wanderings. The period of the Three Weeks became a time of mourning and melancholy. The Seventeenth of Tammuz is a half-day fast while Tisha B'Av is a full fast day in the Jewish calendar. During the first eight days of the month of Av, Jews are to abstain from the eating of meat.

Ironically, our rabbis taught that while the First Temple was destroyed because of Israel's faithlessness to G-d, the Second Temple was annihilated because of the internecine strife among Jews themselves. The rabbis called this inner strife "sin'at hinam", groundless hatred. Our rabbis wisely noted that the inner quarrel among Jews was as great a threat to Jewish survival, if not greater, than the threat from the imperial might of Rome.

Today, that strife has reemerged in the political tensions over the Western Wall. This tension is not the denial of the Jewish connection to the Wall which was sadly codified by the United Nations and unfortunately supported by President Obama. Rather, this dispute is between religious traditionalists and modern Jews over the type of Jewish worship that should be embraced at the Western Wall. Traditionalists assert that the Western Wall is similar to any Orthodox place of worship and that contemporary expression of Jewish prayer – i.e. "egalitarianism – is wrong. The traditionalists feel that it is their prerogative to impose their understanding on others as "G-d is on their side". Modernists claim that the Wall is the possession of the entire Jewish people. As such, the religious pluralism that exists in the Jewish community today should

### General Service Schedule

Friday—7:00pm; Saturday—10:00am

### July Events

July 16 @10am Book discussion

July 31 @7pm Tisha B'Av service

### Shabbat Candle Lighting Times

July 7- 8:11

July 14- 8:08

July 21- 8:04

July 28- 7:58

Tisha B'Av commemorates the destruction of the First Temple by the Babylonians in 586 BCE and the Second Temple by the Romans in 70CE. Tisha B'Av is the most important fast day of the Jewish calendar after Yom Kippur. The Book of Lamentations, "Eicha", which describes the destruction of Jerusalem, is chanted in a melancholic, low voice.

**Tisha B'Av service will be held on Monday evening, July 31 @7pm.**

*Rabbi's Message, Continued ...*

allow for men and women to pray together. Most Israelis, who see religious concerns as totally irrelevant to their personal lives, nevertheless believe that a modern country must allow for freedom of religious expression.

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Originally, a compromise was achieved where a special designated prayer pavilion was established that allowed for men and women worshipping together. However, recently due to political pressure on the Netanyahu government from powerful voices in the religious parties, Prime Minister Netanyahu has reneged on the earlier agreement. As a parliamentary democracy, the ruling political power in Israel is often dependent upon smaller, marginal parties to maintain their coalition. Building a political coalition is the key to survival in a parliamentary democracy like Israel. Prime Minister Netanyahu, who prides himself upon being a political survivor (Israelis are amazed that he is still in power), was willing to accommodate the perspective of the religious traditionalists with regards to the Wall. Their political allegiance to his government was more important to him than the outcry from liberal voices in the Israeli government and the Reform and Conservative Movements in the United States. After all, American Conservative and Reform Jews do not vote in Israeli elections.

Underlying the tensions of this conflict is the struggle over the identity of the Western Wall for Judaism. Is the Western Wall similar to any other Orthodox synagogue where the traditional rabbis determine the religious policy for the congregation? Or is the Western Wall the possession of the entire Jewish people and should the permitted worship reflect the diversity of opinion among contemporary Jews? Ironically, while Jews struggle with one another over this issue, the Palestinians and the United Nations (as well as the American State Department) claim that the Western Wall is Arab property!

As our rabbis warned us in the time of the Second Temple, internecine strife which pits brother against brother and sister against one another can be far more threatening than an outside force. This struggle weakens the Jewish people from within. Our rabbis were always contemplating paths of compromise and negotiation to find a pathway through difficult tensions. "Both this opinion and that opinion are the words of the living G-d" is quoted as the rabbinic maxim to uplift the value of respect and tolerance. Our sages knew all too well that inner tensions would serve as an opportunity for the outside enemy to take advantage of the situation. As we commemorate the destruction of the Temple this summer, we would do well to heed the wisdom of our rabbis. The strife within the Jewish community can result in devastation. Compromise is a better path to ensuring our survival.

Please join us for our Tisha B'Av Service on Monday evening, July 31, 2017 at 7 p.m.

--Rabbi Bienstock

**Unveiling of Monument & Reception**

**For Harriet Owrutsky**

United Hebrew Cemetery Inc.

3901 Washington Blvd.

Halethorpe, MD 21227

Sunday, July 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am

If you are planning to attend, call Marcie at 410-227-5059

### **Member-to-member**

- Congratulation to Jacob Berman for earning the rank of Eagle Scout of the Boy Scouts of America. Eagle Scout is the highest achievement or rank attainable in the Boy Scouts of America. Only four percent of Boy Scouts are granted this rank.
- Beth Israel Congregation extends its sincerest condolences to the members of the Wieder family upon the sudden passing of our beloved member Cory Wieder. Funeral arrangements are pending. We extend the words of comfort of our tradition to the Wieder family, "May G-d comfort you among your fellow members of Zion and Jerusalem. May G-d spare you from further sorrow and grant you the gift of healing."

### **Donations:**

#### **General Fund**

James Hatley

#### **Yahrzeits**

Marlene Lustig

Yahrzeit of Arthur Goldstein

#### **Beautification Fund**

Mona Janis

Yahrzeit of Pearl Woorman

Lenora Cohen

Yahrzeit of Morris Rosenberg

#### **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**

Andrea Kahn

Yahrzeit of Abner Gnatt

#### **Holocaust Commemoration Program**

Dena Hirsh

Yahrzeit of Litman Litow

Leon Litow

Yahrzeit of Litman Litow

### **BIC Birthdays:**

Faith Tarpley- July 1	Jaimi Hall- July 6
Julie Gittelman- July 2	Noah Tyler- July 7
Evan Caplan- July 2	Dayna Tyler- July 19
Aaron Davis- July 5	Gabe Berman- July 31

\*Emma Lazarus (Jewish Poet)- July 22

### ***Yahrzeits: July***

EDITH H DAVIS	Jul 7-8, 2017
THEODORE BERMAN	Jul 7-8, 2017
EUNICE GIVARZ	Jul 7-8, 2017
HELEN HYMAN 7/11/07	Jul 7-8, 2017
SHIRLEY EHRLICH	Jul 7-8, 2017
RONALD KAHN	Jul 7-8, 2017
ISRAEL BERGER	Jul 7-8, 2017
GEORGE GRAHAM	Jul 7-8, 2017
JEAN LITOW	Jul 7-8, 2017
ELIZABETH WHITE DOBIN	Jul 14-15, 2017
MELVIN L FINE	Jul 14-15, 2017
IDA JOSEPH	Jul 14-15, 2017
GILBERT BERS	Jul 14-15, 2017
ROSLYN PEARL JAFFE	Jul 14-15, 2017
ISRAEL BILOFSKY	Jul 14-15, 2017

BEATRICE BERGER	Jul 14-15, 2017
BEN KRAVITZ	Jul 14-15, 2017
IRVING LUSTIG	Jul 14-15, 2017
FRANCIS NEUMAN	Jul 14-15, 2017
HERBERT WOORMAN	Jul 14-15, 2017
WILLIAM FELDMAN	Jul 21-22, 2017
HARRY BENJAMIN	Jul 28-29, 2017
AARON FASS	Jul 28-29, 2017
MAX LOUIS KESSLER	Jul 28-29, 2017
SOLOMON ISADORE GERBER	Jul 28-29, 2017
FRANCES MILLER	Jul 28-29, 2017
FANNIE BILOFSKY	Jul 28-29, 2017
JACK AMELSON	Jul 28-29, 2017
MURRAY GOTTHEIL	Jul 28-29, 2017
MARTIN WAHLBERG	Jul 28-29, 2017

The Beth Israel Book Club will meet on Sunday, July 16 at 10:00am. We will be discussing "Rabbi Akiva": A New Biography.

Everyone is welcome to attend.



### **Beth Israel Cards**

***Appropriate for every occasion and affordable, BIC Cards can be purchased in the Office.***

### ***Beth Israel Staff***

Rabbi: Arnold Bienstock

Office Manager: Julie Thompsen

### ***Board of Governors***

President: Todd Berman

Vice President: Susan Tilghman

Secretary: Arlene Miller

Treasurer: Shari Miller

Youth Education: Sara Stivelman

USY: Ella Davis

Religious: Teri Quigley

Membership: Ella Davis

Ways & Means: Jaimi Hall

House: Joe Beatus

#### Contact Us

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General Information: [bicsecretary@verizon.net](mailto:bicsecretary@verizon.net)

Shabbat Services: Friday, 7:00 p.m.; Saturday, 10:00 a.m.

*Affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism*

*The mission of this Congregation shall be to establish and maintain a Synagogue and such educational, religious, social and recreational activities as will help further the cause and objectives of the Synagogue and Conservative Judaism.*

**Established 1926**

Would you like to honor a loved one?

There are many ways to acknowledge your loved ones at Beth Israel.

Consider a leaf on our Tree of Life, displayed in the lobby. This is a wonderful way to commemorate a special event or to honor or remember a special person. The cost of a leaf is \$500.

You may also wish to consider purchasing a Yahrzeit Memorial Plaque for your loved one. The cost is \$360 and will be displayed in our Sanctuary.

Or maybe you'd like to purchase a chair for the social hall in the honor/memory of a loved one. The cost for a chair is \$50.

Please contact Julie at the Synagogue Office and she'll be happy to assist you with your tribute.



### **Do you love ONEG?**

Who doesn't? So come celebrate a simcha, remember a yahrzeit or just make it a great end to a long week by hosting one! It's easy and quick. Call Julie in the BIC office for details. 410-742-2564.