She [Rachel] conceived and bore a son, and said “G-d has taken away my disgrace.” Bereishis 30:23

What kind of disgrace is Rachel referring to? Rashi, the great biblical commentator, gives two interpretations. The first explanation of the “disgrace” Rachel is talking about is the fact that if she remained childless, she would eventually wind up as the wife of Esav. Then Rashi adds another interpretation based on a midrash which is hard to understand. The disgrace she will be saved from is that now that she has a child, she could blame the mishaps in the home on her son. Really! The great matriarch Rachel is overjoyed that she finally is blessed with a child so she can have someone to blame!? This seems preposterous but therein lies a fundamental principal of life which is that deep down the propensity to blame others and not take personal responsibility is a very powerful force in the human being.
Of course, Rachel’s greatness is beyond our comprehension but the Torah’s way is to magnify what might be a subconscious thought of Rachel, to teach us how much a part of the human dynamic it is to blame others for our own mistakes and how hard and difficult it is to own up to our shortcomings and say the buck stops with me. For in the end, the only way to better oneself and start a process of self-transformation is to realize that we alone are the masters of our own destiny and blaming our problems on others is not only an exercise in futility, but it is counterproductive to any type of personal growth.

(Thoughts of Rabbi Dr. Abraham Twerski)

Wishing you an inspiring Shabbos!  
Rabbi Moshe Gruenstein

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ANNUAL DINNER AND HONOREES

We are very pleased to announce our Honorees for this year's Annual Dinner, which will take place in our beautiful social hall on February 26, 2017.

Batya & Meir Cosiol  
Reuven & Iris Herssein

Our Honorees have devoted countless time and effort on behalf of our Young Israel, and certainly deserve our thanks. The Dinner will be chaired by Mali Schwartz, and we look forward to everyone's participation in the most important annual fund raising event of our Young Israel Congregation.
Congregational Family and Shul News

- Kiddush this Shabbos is sponsored by Joey & Bianca Senker.
- Mazel tov to Rabbi Dov & Marilyn Wolowitz on the birth of their new great-grandson, Eitan Zion.
- Seuda Shlishis this week is sponsored by David & Rachel Herman, commemorating the yahrtzeit of David’s father, Chanoch Henoch ben Yechiel Dovid z”l.
- Mazal tov to Salomon & Raquel Jurovieski on the birth of their great-grandson.
- Wishing Refuah Sheleimah to Fred Farbman.
- We regret to inform you of the passing of Heskel Izhak z”l, beloved father of our esteemed member Yoram Izhak. May the family be comforted amongst the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Building Fund

- Important! Please pay your building fund pledge at your earliest opportunity. Thank you.

Youth Program

- Father and Child learning on Motzei Shabbos starting at 7pm with pizza and prizes!
- High School teens are invited to Learning and Frozen Yogurt every Wednesday night. Please contact Rabbi Fried for timing and location details.
- We are looking forward to our annual YI/NCSY Partnership Shabbaton, which will take place on Friday & Saturday, December 23-24, 2016. In order to accommodate our NCSY guests, their advisors, staff and families, we are looking for homes that can each accommodate a few sleeping guests. Please specify how many males or females you can host for sleeping by contacting NCSY’s Board Chair Tammy Attias as soon as possible at 786-566-2102 or tammyattias@gmail.com.

If you are interested in sponsoring Kiddush or Seuda Shlishis, please contact Stuart Harris or Yakira at (305) 866-0203.
This year the Young Israel Congregation serving the communities of Bal Harbour, Bay Harbor Islands, Surfside and Indian Creek will be celebrating its 18th or Chai anniversary. Our shul was founded in 1999 and some of you may remember when minyanim were held in the Coronado Hotel which was located where the Grand Beach Hotel is today.

Bernie Lack z'l, a retired war veteran, Stephen Opert, and Allen Schloss all played a role in the founding of the Young Israel Congregation when they decided to join efforts to create a Modern Orthodox synagogue with nusach Ashkenaz. Although they had to overcome many hurdles that included zoning restrictions, getting town permits, and finding a place in which to hold services, they forged ahead.

We look forward to having the entire congregation attend the upcoming Young Israel Congregation Annual Dinner on Sunday, February 26, 2017 to pay tribute to dinner honorees Batya & Meir Cosiol and Iris & Reuven Herssein. Join us in celebrating our 18th anniversary!

**Warm Welcome to New Members**

We would like to welcome the following new members:

- **Moshe & Jana Banin**
- **Oded & Diana Ben-Arie**
- **Steven & Susan Goldstein**
- **Sandy & Chava Klein**
- **Barry & Jade Lustig**
- **Stanley & Marcia Reiter**
- **Mark & Cynthia Soloway**
Classes and Upcoming Events

- Ladies Tehillim Group – Mondays at 10:30AM in the Beis Midrash.
- Beis Midrash Night – Thursdays at 7:00PM.
- Father and Child – Motzei Shabbos at 7:00PM.
- Special series of classes about Shabbat for Young Adult Women, parts 2 & 3:
  2. Tuesday, December 20, 8-10PM at Batya Cosiol's home – “How to Create a Beautiful Shabbat Table” presented by Gloria Sterental;
  3. Tuesday, January 3, 8-10PM at Tammy Attias's home – “How to Prepare a Shabbat Menu with Tam (Flavor)” presented by Chef Shaike Korlansky. This class is open to all women, but space is limited, So please RSVP to Tammy Attias at 786-566-2102 or tammyattias@gmail.com.
- Monday, December 12 at 11:30AM – Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Gruenstein.
- Tuesday, December 13 – Shaare Zedek Luncheon 11:30am at Young Israel, honoring Moj Khaghan, Abraham A. Galbut, and Marcos Lapciuc.
- Wednesday, December 14 at 8:00PM – Lecture by Dr. Hillel Abramson – “The Surprising History Behind Chanukah: More than Dreidels and Latkes.”
- Wednesday, December 21 at 8:00PM – Lecture by Rabbi Dr. David Nesenoff – “A Funny Thing Happened to Me at The White House.”
- Thursday December 22, 10:00AM-12:00PM – Rebbetzin Rucha Bauman.
- Wednesday, December 28 at 6:30PM - Chanukah Extravaganza
- Save the Date: Monday, January 9, 2017 – Breakfast with Dr. Erika Brown.
- Save the Date: Wednesday, February 1, 2017 – Sisterhood event: Fashion & Beauty Day. Raffles, gifts and prizes.

Upcoming Scholar-in-Residence Shabbatons

- Rabbi Zecharia Walerstein: December 16-17 – Friday Night Dinner for Young Couples.
- Rabbi Shmuel Goldin: January 21-22, 2017 – Friday Night Dinner
- Rabbi Yitzchak Shochet: February 17-18, 2017 – Friday Night Dinner
There will be a breakfast in our Social Hall on Monday, January 9th starting at 8:45 a.m. with acclaimed educator, Dr. Erica Brown. The event is sponsored by our Young Israel and the Greater Miami Jewish Federation. She will be discussing A Jewish Approach to Friendship. An official flyer about the event will be forthcoming. Dr. Erica Brown is an associate professor at George Washington University and the director of the Mayberg center for Jewish Education and Leadership. She is the author of eleven books; her forthcoming book is entitled Jonah: The Reluctant Prophet (Koren/OU, 2017). She previously served as the scholar-in-residence at both The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Boston. Erica was a Jerusalem Fellow, is a faculty members of the Wexner Foundation, an Avi Chai Fellow, winner of the Ted Farber Professional Excellence Award, and is the recipient of the 2009 Covenant Award for her work in education and the 2012 Bernie Reisman Award (Hornstein Jewish Professional Leadership Program, Brandeis University). Erica has degrees from Yeshiva University, University of London, Harvard University and Baltimore Hebrew University. You can subscribe to her blog, Weekly Jewish Wisdom at Erica@ericabrown.com.
End of Year Statements and Tax Planning

Just a reminder that we are rapidly approaching the end of the calendar and tax year, and as such, account statements have been mailed. Given the approaching year end, this is an excellent time to clear your account, while simultaneously supporting our shul.

Also, given the news that tax reform may take place in the coming year, the current tax year may be an especially good opportunity to donate before year end, depending on your personal situation. In addition, Young Israel now offers the opportunity for families to directly donate appreciated stock, which may offer additional tax benefits; if you are interested, please contact the office. In all cases, of course, please check with your tax adviser.

Your support is greatly appreciated.

The Young Israel Congregation of Bal Harbour has an extensive Torah Library both in Hebrew and English. Our English Torah lending Library is located in the conference room and will be open Monday-Thursday 9:00AM-5:00PM. The Torah library has been made possible through the generous sponsorship of Andrew and Basya Lowinger in memory of Maurice Lowinger z”l.

We can now accept on-line donations via our shul website directly through PayPal. Please use this link http://www.yicbh.org/payment.php, or first go the website, www.yicbh.org, and click on Membership & Donation and press Donate.

Please note it is very important you indicate in the “Payment Notes” the specific donation that is being paid for (membership, kiddush, aliyah, etc.).
New Mailing Address: 9580 Abbott Avenue, Surfside, FL 33154
P.O. Box 545985, Surfside, FL 33154-5985

Shabbos/Holiday Schedule:
To view the schedule, please go to our website, www.yicbh.org and click on Holidays/Shabbos Info.

Email Addresses:
To contact Rabbi, Office, Youth Director or Gabbaim, please email

Rabbi@yicbh.org;
yakira@yicbh.org;
Rabbifried@yicbh.org;
gabbai@yicbh.org

We now have photo gallery available online.
Please go to www.yicbh.org and click photo gallery on the left bar. Enjoy!

We ask everyone's cooperation and understanding in not leaving personal handbags or knapsacks unattended anywhere in our synagogue building.

Please submit all insertions for the Shmooze News to yakira@yicbh.org by noon on Thursday.