

"The Meaning of Eclipse in Judaism" with Rabbi Dr. Joel Zeff

Unless you are completely disconnected from media you know that the first total solar eclipse in the continental United States in 38 years will occur on August 21. Omahans will get to see 98% of the total eclipse beginning at 11:38 a.m., with maximum viewing at 1:04 p.m. and partial viewing ending at 2:30 p.m.



At Beth Israel, this special happening will be the focus on **Shabbat, August 19th** with guest speaker, Rabbi Dr. Joel Zeff. Rabbi Zeff will give the morning sermon titled "*Jerusalem: What's in a Name.*" He will also give a talk immediately after kiddush, "*The Meaning of Eclipse in Judaism.*" Shabbat services begin at 9am with the sermon at approximately 10:15am.

"As Jews, we are closely tied to the lunar cycle and most certainly that of the eclipse, or alignment. We follow the lunar calendar; that which waxes and wanes, that which goes up and down in our skies" shares Rabbi Ari Dembitzer. "Similarly, people have ups and downs, often in sync with that of the moon cycles as scientists have found. As a people, Jews never give up hope, there is always a tomorrow, just as there will always be another full moon."

Rabbi Zeff and his wife, Donna, who live in Israel, forward to experiencing in Nebraska. Rabbi Zeff holds a bachelor's degree in Hebrew Language, a master's degree in Jewish History, and received rabbinic ordination from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University. He has served as the spiritual leader of congregations in Los Angeles and Sacramento. The Zeff family moved to Israel in 1994 where Rabbi Zeff has held senior positions in the field of yeshiva education. Concurrent with his rabbinic work, he has completed a doctorate in Pastoral Counseling and advanced training in TEAM-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, exploring the interface between psychology, spirituality, and ethics. Rabbi Joel and Donna Zeff are the proud parents of nine children and grandparents to eleven.

August 19 will also feature Beth Israel's monthly simcha kiddush. For just \$25, join in the celebration of August birthdays, anniversaries, or other special occasions. Contact the synagogue office at (402) 556-6288 to be a part of the fun or for any other questions.

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There are many fun facts to learn about the solar eclipse before the big day. Take the time to study with your family and make sure you use an age appropriate and reputable web page. Here at a few times and facts to note. And remember to NEVER look at a partial eclipse, EVER *!

Monday, August 21, 2017 – Omaha, Nebraska

- * Eclipse begins 11:38 am
- * Eclipse at maximum 1:04 pm
- * Eclipse ends 2:30 pm
- * Duration 2 hours, 52 minutes

- * A solar eclipse occurs when the moon is directly between the sun and earth, casting a shadow on earth.
- * The entire continental U.S. should see at least a partial eclipse, with the moon covering at least 48 percent of the sun's surface.
- * Depending on a person's location, the total eclipse will last for as little as 30 seconds or as long as 2 minutes, 41 seconds.

- * The first viewing will be on the northwest Oregon coast.
- * The eclipse ends at the Atlantic Ocean's edge on the South Carolina coast.
- * States where the total eclipse will appear, in order: Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia and South Carolina.
- * A telescope is not needed. Totality is safe to view with the naked eye, as long as the moon's disk completely covers the sun. *** But any naked-eye viewing of a less-than-100-percent eclipse will damage eyes.**

