



Shabbat Shalom

September 16, 2017
25 Elul 5777

Parsha Nitzavim
Torah Reading - 1086
Haftarah - 1202

Parsha Vayeilech
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IN THE WEEK AHEAD
Saturday, Sept 16

Shacharit.....	9:00 a.m.
September Simcha Kiddush.....	11:30 a.m.
Insights into the Weekly Torah Reading.....	6:10 p.m.
Mincha/ Seudah Shlishit	6:55 p.m.
Havdalah.....	8:14 p.m.

Sunday, Sept 17

Selichot.....	8:30 a.m.
Shacharit	9:00 a.m.
Bagels & Beit Medrash - High Holiday Prep Class.....	9:45 a.m.
Kevor Avot Services	
Golden Hill	12 p.m.
Beth Israel/Mt. Sinai	1 p.m.
Fisher Farm.....	2 p.m.

Monday, Sept 18

Shacharit	7:00 a.m.
Talmudic Tales w/Rabbi Shlomo	12:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept 19

Shacharit.....	7:00 a.m.
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Wednesday, Sept 20 - Erev Rosh Hashanah

Shacharit.....	7:00 a.m.
Mincha/Ma'ariv/Candle Lighting	7:07 p.m.

Thursday, Sept 21 - Rosh Hashanah - 1st Day

*Kiddush sponsored by Julee Katzman for the
yahrzeit of Rick Katzman*

Shacharit	8:00 a.m.
Torah Reading.....	9:30 a.m.
Sermon, followed by shofar	10:00 a.m.
<i>See Page 4 for JYE BI programming schedule</i>	
Mincha/Ma'ariv	7:00 p.m.
Earliest Candle Lighting.....	8:06 p.m.

Friday, Sept 22 - Rosh Hashanah - 2nd Day

Kiddush sponsored by Helene & Jack Shrago

Shacharit	8:00 a.m.
Torah Reading.....	9:30 a.m.
Sermon, followed by shofar.....	10:00 a.m.
<i>See Page 4 for JYE BI programming schedule</i>	
Mincha/Ma'ariv/Candle Lighting	7:04 p.m.



Mazel Tov to Those Celebrating This Week

Birthdays

Todd Gerber	Sept 16
Crystal Epstein	Sept 20
Evan Stoler	Sept 20
Esther Silver	Sept 20
Jordan Stoler	Sept 20
Helene Shrago	Sept 21
Nathan Feldman	Sept 22

Anniversaries

Kathy & Harry Weiner	Sept 18
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Celebrating a special simcha next month? The next Simcha Kiddush will be October 21st. The cost is just \$25. Call the office or speak to Bette Kozlen to be included.



...the many volunteers for helping make the JYE BI Kickoff event such a great success.

...to Jordana Kurtzman, Anna Goldberg, Dani Shrago, Linda Potash and other volunteers for their continuing work with the planning, shopping, baking, and clean-up

for kiddush and Seudah Shlishit.

...to Shirley Goodman, Harry Weiner, Max Weiner, and Nancy Rampey-Biniamow for being a part of the Beth Israel Cemetery Committee.

In Memoriam

Beth Israel extends condolences and wishes of comfort to community members who have recently lost loved ones

Phyllis Anne Roffman

Dr. Sol Kutler

Ha'makom yenachem etkhem betokh she'ar avelei Tziyon vi'Yerushalayim



It's Time to Order Your Lulav and Etrog

Place your order to take part in this beautiful mitzvah during Sukkot. Cost \$52 per set.

Orders needed by Monday, September 18.

Order through the synagogue website, email bethisrael@orthodoxomaha.org, or calling (402) 556-6288.

Midwest NCSY Fall Sr Convention

Faige and Yaakov Jeidel along with Sr. NCSYers Ariel Rife, Joshua Kurtzman, Isaac Kurtzman, Zoe Berman, Lior Nicholson, Gavin Smith and Devlin Smith hit the road Thursday evening to attend the first NCSY youth weekend of the year. The group were hosted in Kansas City overnight then joined the Kansas City bus for the remainder of the travel to St. Louis. They return to Omaha on Sunday.



JYE BI Rosh Hashanah Schedule

Sept 21 - Rosh Hashanah - 1st Day

10-11am - Ages 6-11 years with Shimmy Mensch

Shofar with Shimmy

10-11am - Ages 12 & older with Faige Jeidel

The True Meaning of Tesuvah

11-11:45am - Ages 12 & older with Mimi Friedman

Happy Birthday, World

11am-12pm - Ages 6-11 years with Shimmy Mensch

Torah & Fun

11:45am-12pm - Ages 5 & under with Faige Jeidel & Mimi Frideman

Rosh Hashanah Tots

12pm - All ages

Bang, Bang, Clappers

Sept 22 - Rosh Hashanah - 2nd Day

10-11am - Ages 6-11 years with Shimmy Mensch

Birthday Celebration

10-11am - Ages 12 & older with Faige Jeidel

How to Improve Ourselves with the Shofar

11-11:45am - Ages 12 & older with Mimi Friedman

Improving Our Middot

11am-12pm - Ages 6-11 years with Shimmy Mensch

Torah & Fun

12pm - All ages

Bang, Bang, Clappers



Beth Israel Tashlich and Dinner

Monday, September 25 5:30pm

Meet on the northwest end of the Boys Town Lake for tashlich and dinner including hot dogs, chips, salad, fruit and dessert. Cost \$9 for adults, \$5 for ages 4-12, free for 3 and under. Reservations needed by September 18.

Don't miss Rabbi Ari's weekly message. Look for "Rav Kook with Ari - Torah from Omaha, Nebraska" on Facebook or for a Friday afternoon email.



Beth Israel's Scholar-in-Residence Rabbi Shlomo Abramovich

Friday Learning Series - The High Holidays

Fri, Sep 15 & 29 - 11:15am

*All of above held at the Kripke Jewish Federation Library.
Presented by the Community Engagement and Education
arm of the Jewish Federation of Omaha*

Gift Card Drive for Houston

Beth Israel Synagogue is doing a gift card drive in support of the United Synagogues of Houston, located in one of the many areas of catastrophic flooding that recently occurred due to Hurricane Harvey. This is the third round of flood damage in recent years for OUC, the largest Orthodox synagogue in the Southwest. When contacted regarding the drive, Jeff Klein, OUC Executive Director said these cards would be a great help to his congregation for the massive rebuilding work ahead.



Please purchase gift cards to Home Depot, Target, Walmart, or Amazon and deliver to the synagogue office by September 26. The cards will then be sent to Houston for distribution to those in need. Thanks in advance for your generosity!

It's about time we stopped making excuses and took responsibility for who and what we are. It's long overdue. Here we are at the threshold of a new-year and it's all about being honest with ourselves. The degree of our commitment to Torah and Mitzvos will be in direct proportion to how many excuses we make for ourselves in avoiding commitment. The more the excuses, the less the commitment. As Moshe continued his final discourse, he confronted the primary excuses we all use in avoiding commitment and responsibility.

1st Aliya: Moshe presented the entire nation with the basis for our covenant with G-d. Starting with the promise to the forefathers and stretching across 500 years of history, our relationship with G-d had been substantiated through miracle after miracle. Yet, future generations might deny their personal obligation for continuing the relationship and its attendant responsibilities. Therefore, Moshe makes it absolutely clear that each generation is obligated to educate their children and train them to accept the covenant with G-d. No subsequent generation should be able to excuse their responsibilities for Torah and Mitzvos due to ignorance.

The next excuse Moshe confronted was the modernization of Torah. In every generation there are those who see Torah as archaic and outdated. "Only by grafting new ideas and practices to the stale practices of Torah will Judaism continue to exist and flourish." This excuse for changing Torah's eternal truths will result in the destruction of Torah observances, our land, and our people.

2nd and 3rd Aliyot: As history tragically proved, Moshe's warnings would be ignored. Subsequent generations would wonder about the destruction and desolation and, in their search for answers, return to the uncompromised truths and practices of their forefathers. The benefits in doing Teshuva (repentance - returning) will be the fulfillment of all the blessings that G-d had promised. As a generation of Baalei Teshuva (those who have returned) find their way back, many will be overwhelmed by the seemingly inaccessibility of Torah knowledge. Moshe reassures us that Torah is accessible to all those who truly desire it. Ignorance and a lack of opportunity for learning should never be an excuse.

4th Aliya: Finally, Moshe presented the bottom line. Endowed with free will we must choose properly. In the end, we are responsible for what happens. Parshas Vayelach was said on the 7th day of Adar, 2488, the last day of Moshe's life. Exactly 120 years earlier the world was graced with the birth of a child who brought redemption to his people and the light of Torah to the world. He became a prophet of unparalleled greatness who led his nation through a miraculous 40-year journey to the edge of the promised land. Trials and tribulations, rebellions and conspiracies, disillusionment and questions were his lot in life. Yet, Moshe never gave up. He nurtured the Jews "like a mother cares for her child". He confronted man and G-d in protecting his charges, and succeeded in bringing the people, both physically and spiritually intact, to the fulfillment of a 500-year old promise. It was time to put his affairs in order, finish his work, and insure an unquestioned transition of leadership to his student Yehoshua.

Moshe emphasized G-d's continued presence and protection, even though,

Moshe himself would not be with them any longer. Ever since assuming the leadership of Israel, Moshe had the conflicting job of fostering the nation's dependency upon G-d while de-emphasizing their dependency upon him as a leader and provider. Now, as he prepared his final goodbye, it was clear that by day's end, with his death, the nation would have no other choice but to reassess their dependency on Moshe and direct their attention to G-d. However this was far more complex than it first seemed. True, on the one hand, Moshe's death would be a definitive "cutting of the apron strings," forcing the nation to depend on G-d and not Moshe. However, on the other hand, living by the laws of nature, rather than miracles, would de-emphasize G-d's overt role in all aspects of their lives and present them with the illusion of their own independence.

5th Aliya: By writing the entire text of the Torah, entrusting it into the care of the Kohanim, and explaining the unique mitzvah of Hakhel (gathering), Moshe hoped that the people would retain the perspective of their dependency upon G-d. The Kohanim represented the continued presence of "G-d in the midst of the camp". As teachers and role models, they kept an otherwise dispersed and decentralized nation focused on their national and individual missions. Once every 7 years, the entire nation was to gather in the Bais Hamikdash in a reenactment of the giving of the Torah. This national expression of devotion would serve as an essential reminder that adherence to the Torah is the reason why the nation occupied and retained the land.

6th and 7th Aliyot: Moshe and Yehoshua were summoned to the Ohel Moed (meeting tent) and told the harsh future of their charges. In spite of all the warnings, the people would sin and lose sight of their dependency upon G-d. They would be punished, and instead of accepting responsibility for the consequences that their neglect of G-d's commandments caused, they would have the chutzpah to blame G-d's absence and neglect for the calamities and disasters that have befallen them. (31:17) It would then be the words of this "Song" (the Torah) which would testify to the reality of their defection from G-d and the inevitable consequences which had been forewarned in this Torah. Yehoshua was encouraged to be strong and courageous and lead the nation with the same devotion that Moshe had displayed. The Torah, written by Moshe himself, was then placed in the Ark as proof of the conditions by which the Jewish people would live or die.

Parsha Questions

1. Who is included in the covenant at the beginning of Parashat Nitzavim?
2. In this week's parsha, how old was Moshe when he spoke to the people?
3. Moshe said that Hashem's laws were not too hard for the people nor too far away. Where were they?
4. What might be a reason for B'nai Yisrael to forget Hashem?



WELCOME TO BETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE

We are delighted to welcome you to Beth Israel Synagogue. A passage from Deuteronomy 30:11-14 inspired the art work in the sanctuary. "For this commandment that I command you today - it is not hidden from you and it is not distant. It is not in heaven, [for you] to say, 'Who can go to the heaven and take it for us so that we can listen to it and perform it? Nor is it across the seas, [for you] to say, 'Who can cross to the other side of the sea for us and take it for us, so that we can listen to it and perform it?' Rather, the matter is very near to you - in your mouth and your heart - to perform it." Mitzvot are obtainable.

- ◆ The focal point of the sanctuary is the Menorah Window, which frames the Ark and is shaped in the form of the six branched candelabrum. To the right, brilliantly colored window has forms that reflect the heavens, while the left side depicts the seas.
- ◆ The message is completed in a frieze, the horizontal painting on wood mounted on the wall. The background of the frieze symbolically and abstractly represents the relationship between G-d and the people of Israel through the Covenant. The perochet, or curtain over the Ark, completes the symbolic composition, with an expression that intertwines the Torah and the letter Aleph, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, of the Ten Commandments, and of G-d's name in Hebrew.
- ◆ As is traditional, the sanctuary has 12 windows, representing the 12 tribes of Israel. These windows contain the name of each tribe in flowing, organic letters. The windows are located above the continued frieze, which includes two central texts of the revelation at Sinai - "If you will keep my Covenant, you shall be precious to me," and "You shall be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." This composition expresses the unity of Israel as the people stood together at Sinai and accepted the Torah.

Beth Israel Synagogue strives to perpetuate the legacy of Torah Judaism in the modern world. Beth Israel welcomes all persons of the Jewish faith to join and accepts the diversity of practice and thought among its members.

Rabbi Ari Dembitzer, Senior Rabbi

Toba Cohen-Dunning, President

Mary Sue Grossman, Executive Director

Rabbi Shlomo Abramovich, Visiting Scholar

Leo Fettman, Cantor Emeritus

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