



Beth Zion Congregation



SHABBAT ANNOUNCEMENTS

January 4 - 10
Parashat Vayigash

Shabbat – Shacharit - 9:00 am
Mincha – 4:10 pm followed by
Seuda Shelishit and Maariv
Shabbat ends – 5:15 pm

Weekly Sponsors

Elaine & Martin Labow
wishing a refuah shleima to
Chuck Millman

Mazal Tov Bar Mitzvah

Muriel Malka & Eric Benzecry
on the Bar Mitzvah of their son
Noam
grandson of
Yvonne & Raphael z"l Malka
and
Lisa & Felix Benzecry
brother of
Liora, Raphael, Ethan and Benjamin



Anniversaries

Evelyn & Laurence Farbstein 31 years
Seymour & Didi Silverman 54 years

Prayers for Israel

We pray for the safe return of all
Israeli soldiers
including children of Beth Zion
members who are serving in the
IDF and the safe return of all the
hostages



Sponsor - A Day

5 Tevet - January 5
Sandra & Ira Robinson in memory
of her father, Aaron Moskovitz
(Aharon ben Moshe Yitzhok) z"l

January 8
Paula Trefler wishing
Happy Birthday to her granddaughter
Jody Beth Grundman

Seuda Shelishit Sponsor

Rabbi Avi Swartz in memory
of his father, Wulfi Swartz
(Zev Ben Shalom) z"l

In Appreciation to

Ben Rubin
for davening

Bobby Shaul
for leining

Rabbi Avi Swartz
for delivering
the Dvar Torah
at Seuda Shlishit

Felix Benzecry
for preparing the
Sefardi dafina

Shacharit
January 5 - 10

Sunday - 8:00 am
Monday - 6:15 / 8:00 am
Tuesday and Wednesday - 6:25 / 8:00 am
Friday, Jan. 10 - 6:05 / 8:00 am

Mincha Maariv – Sunday to Friday @ 4:15 pm

Friday, January 10 - Candle lighting @ 4:13 pm

Asara B'Tevet
Friday, January 10

The fast of Tevet is to mourn the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylonia, an event that began on the 10th of Tevet and ultimately culminated in the destruction of the First Temple, downfall of the Kingdom of Judah, and the Babylonian exile of the Jewish people.

Fast begins at 6:10 am

Fast ends at 5:05 pm

Ashkenaz Minyan

Shacharit - 6:05 / 8:00 am

Mincha - 4:15 pm

Sefardi Minyan

Shacharit - 6:30 am

Mincha - 4:00 pm

Programming

Israel in the Parasha with Sharona Halickman on Zoom

Sunday, January 5 @ 1:00 pm

Topic – The Stars Go Down to Egypt

Shiur with Rabbi Ohayon on Thursday, January 9th, at 8:45 pm

Sara Ronis – Tuesday, Jan. 14, at 7:00 pm

Read the Womb! Fetal Personhood in the Babylonian Talmud
on Zoom

Shabbat Shalom! 

Vayigash

This week's parshah sees the reunion of Joseph and his brothers, and of their father, Jacob. We see at the outset Judah confronting Joseph, still unaware that this high-ranking Egyptian was his brother. The Torah tells us that Judah approached Joseph. The Alshekh asks 3 questions: What is meant by the word 'approached'? How could Judah, who had offered them all as slaves (and the thief to be executed), NOW be ANGRY that only one of them would become a slave and the others would go free? Why had Judah not used all the tear-jerking arguments before offering all the brothers as slaves in v.16? He answers that one has to note the formula Judah used, i.e. what can we say to my lord, what can we say, how can we justify ourselves? What he meant was that he knew that the theft of the goblet had nothing to do with its value since they had brought back far more money than the value of this trinket. He therefore said that their objective must have been the goblet with its magical powers. But they had toiled in vain since the magical powers of the goblet were exclusive to its rightful owner, to Joseph. Judah replied saying: "we can react in any of three ways: 1) friendly discussion, i.e. mah nomar, to calm you down. 2) mah nedaber, angry, outraged discussion at your repeated attempts to frame us. 3) Ha-elokim matza avon, we could resign ourselves by accepting God's punishment for something else we have been guilty of. Mah Nitzதாக, how could we claim to be tzaddikim or righteous people? Due to the latter consideration, we accept God's verdict, but it must apply to all of us. By saying gam anachnu, also us, he includes Reuben whose guilt had been marginal, and Benjamin, who had been completely blameless in the sale of Joseph.

When Judah saw that Joseph was intent on only keeping Benjamin, he realized that their present misfortune had nothing to do with the sale of Joseph, and was NOT Divine retribution. He was merely dealing with the caprice of the local authority. The Alshekh adds that Judah therefore decided to adopt a new line of argument. Up until now, an interpreter had conveyed Judah's words to Joseph in Egyptian. Now, vayigash, he stepped up close and told Joseph that if at first, he had accepted the judgement that they would all be slaves, it was because he could not picture himself as a free person, while Benjamin became a prisoner. He tells Joseph that bi adoni – the burden is on him rather than on his brothers because he was the one who guaranteed the safety of his little brother. He compared Joseph to Pharaoh who was legally required to master all languages. Therefore, Judah argued, I do not need to speak to you through an interpreter, since you understand quite well what I have to say. Had you not mastered every language, you would not occupy this exalted office and enjoy such authority.

Later on, in the parshah, when Jacob is about to travel to Egypt, we read that Hashem tells him: "Fear not to go down to Egypt" (Genesis 46:3). The question as to why Jacob was afraid to go to Egypt can be posed. Not only had he just found out that the son he mourned for 20 years was alive and well, but his son was a vice-regent of the realm. Nechama Leibowitz says that we should compare this directive to that written in Genesis 26:2, directed to Isaac, where it says: "Go NOT down into Egypt; dwell in the land, which I shall tell thee of. Leibowitz says that perhaps this is what Jacob was afraid of – that he would be violating an explicit Divine command issued to his father Isaac. But Jacob's concern is focused on the symbolic dread of the founder of the nation of the spiritual consequences of leaving the homeland and going to Egypt. Hizkuni explains that Jacob was concerned for the future of the nation as a whole, the future of his children in the Egyptian exile and the bondage to come. Though he knew full well that he was going to a land of plenty and to live in comfort, who would guarantee that his descendants would want to leave Egypt and return to the land of Canaan, which alone had been promised to his forefathers? Perhaps his children would forget their destiny as they wallowed in the plenty of Egypt and would not want to leave. His fear therefore, was based on the worry of what would happen to his people in the future, and not what would happen in the present time – when all was safe.

Devorah Abenhaim