

A New Haven Tradition since 1892

BEKI bulletin

Congregation
Beth El-Keser Israel

Shevat-Adar 5781

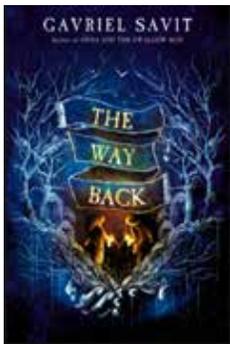
Vol. 27 Issue 2

Message from Rabbi Tilsen: Page 14

FEBRUARY SCHMOOZE NEWS

Wednesday, Feb. 3 at 8 pm

Gavriel Savit, New York Times Bestselling author and former BEKI member, will talk about his newest



Young Adult novel, *The Way Back*, which is a National Book Award finalist. The story follows

the spooky adventures of two 19th century Jewish kids, Bluma and Yehuda Leib, as they travel from the little shtetl of Tupik deep into the Far Country, the

land of Death and demons. Gavriel now lives in Illinois with his wife Livia and daughter Lilja. The BEKI Giftshop, giftshop@beki.org, is selling copies of the book.



Gavriel Savit

Wednesday, Feb. 10 at 8 pm

Steve Werlin, executive director of Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen (DESK) and a BEKI member, will talk about feeding people during this pandemic. He'll also tell us about DESK's recent purchase of a three-story building on State Street, which will include a drop-in center, where clients will be able to access resources such as healthcare, employment, or addiction services, or get assigned to a shelter bed that night.



Steve Werlin

Wednesday, Feb. 17 at 8 pm

Georgetown University history professors Adam Rothman and Marcia Chatelain will lead a discussion about their university's financial reliance on slavery, the research process in unearthing this history, the resulting truth and reconciliation process, and finally what steps Georgetown has made to atone for this past.



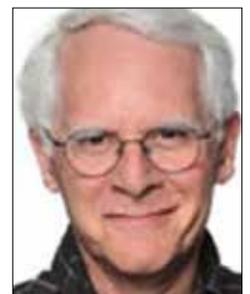
Adam Rothman

Wednesday, Feb. 24 at 8 pm

We're starting Purim festivities a day early with comedian Rabbi Bob Alper. You might have heard his jokes on Sirius/XM Satellite Radio or at one of his gigs at comedy clubs, conventions, synagogues, or colleges over the last 27 years. Bob will present "The Spirituality of Laughter," a new program that explores humor in ancient and modern Jewish tradition. It's an engaging and inspiring event -- while averaging two genuine belly laughs per minute!



Marcia Chatelain



Bob Alper

All events are at
Tinyurl.com/bekischmooze.





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BEKI Bulletin

The newsletter is published monthly by Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel for the benefit of its members.

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel is affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

To contribute articles or for inquiries regarding membership:

- Call the Synagogue office: 203.389.2108
- Write: 85 Harrison Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1724
- Email: bulletin@beki.org
- Visit our web page: www.beki.org

For advertising information, call the synagogue office.

Deadline for submission of ads or articles is the first of the month preceding publication.

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A Message from Rabbi Tilsen & Dear Rabbi
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When Adar Inaugurates, Joy Accumulates

משנכנס אדר מרבים בשמחה *Mishenikhnas Adar marbim besimha* – Talmud Eruvin 29a

Shalach Manot – Purim Bags

Be sure to reply about Shalach Manot by Wednesday, February 10. The order form, which was emailed to us on January 11, is at the website under RESOURCES > Forms. Pay by check or by credit card at ABOUT > Online Payments.

This year, we are unable to deliver. Bags can be picked up after the Megila readings February 25 and 26 and are available at BEKI until March 5 by making arrangements with the office (office@beki.org). If you choose not to pick up, you will receive a card in lieu of a bag.



The Five Mitzvot of Purim

- ☆ Megila Reading in Evening
- ☆ Megila Reading in Morning
- ☆ Matanot LeEvyonim (Alms to the Poor)
- ☆ Mishloah Manot (Food Gifts to Friends & Neighbors)
- ☆ Mishte (Feast and Party)

Shabbat Zachor

The “Sabbath of Remember!” occurs immediately before Purim, on February 20. This Sabbath is marked by reading the Biblical passage reminding us to remember the cruelty of Amalek. Hearing this reading is considered a mitzva unto itself.

The Fast of Esther

Taanit Esther (The Fast of Esther) is observed on Thursday February 25, immediately before Purim. While on Purim we joyously celebrate the failure of the plot and mock the racism of its hatches, on the Fast of Esther we fast and pray that we will bring the world to an era that does not know the threat of genocide. The Fast begins at dawn (5:20 am) and extends until 6:13 pm. That day’s *shaharit* service on Zoom (8:15-9:00 am) includes “Avinu Malkenu -- Our Father, Our King,” as on Yom Kippur. The Fast of Esther is a minor observance, and therefore those with any significant medical contraindication should not undertake the fast.

Wear A Costume!

On Thursday, February 25 from 4:00 to 5:30 pm, children are invited to a Costume Parade



and Car-Nival in the BEKI parking lot. Drop by at any time to show off your costume, either on foot or through your car window. There will be prizes, surprises, and a chance to pick up your BEKI Shalach Manot order. Everyone over age 5 is asked to wear a face mask, unless you are inside a car.

Continued on **Page 4**

Purim

Continued from **Page 3**

Even if you're at home for the Megila Reading, we encourage you to wear a costume. Purim Night festivities will begin at 6:30 pm with a chance to "spotlight" your costume on the screen for all participants to see.

Megila Readings

The holiday of Purim commemorates the failure of a genocidal plot against the Jews in the Persian Kingdom over twenty centuries ago. The story is told in the Book of Esther, which is read at services on the night and morning of the holiday:

Thursday February 25, 6:30-7:30 pm, in-person in the Sanctuary/Social Hall or on-line. The two on-line options are:

- Via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9999101961>
- Via Facebook Livestream:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/bekicongregation>

Friday February 26, 7:00-8:00 am, in-person in the Sanctuary/Social Hall or on-line. The on-line options are the same as above.

Entrance to the Zoom meeting is moderated. If your extended family or friends wish to attend, please notify our technical hosts via bekitefilla@gmail.com.

Access to the Livestream is for those who have joined BEKI's Facebook page. To join, apply at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bekicongregation>.

If You Attend In-Person

Seating is limited for the Thursday Night Megila Reading. If you wish to attend, email bekitefilla@gmail.com or jjtilsen@beki.org. Seating is open for the Friday Morning Megila Reading. Medical masks and social distancing are required. Bring a noisemaker if you wish, though BEKI has a supply. For health reasons, no horns or other oral noisemakers are allowed.

Rabbi Tilsen adds: Persons dressed as Lady Gaga wearing meat suits should sit in the designated fleishig area and are advised to keep a distance of at least four *amot* (two meters) from people wearing M&Ms and other dairy costumes. Those dressed as fresh vegetables may sit in either section. Persons associated with Occupy Shushan, Occupy BEKI, or other Occupy groups, as well as people impeding pipelines, should remain behind barriers. Persian Lives Matter supporters and other peaceful advocates are very welcome but might want to wear a gas mask and helmet



just in case. Anarchists and Libertarians can sit anywhere they want. Members of the Proud Goys (an eating club) have a very special place reserved for them. Game show enthusiasts should sit in the social hall behind curtain number three.

The Megila Text

If you are at home, you will find the text in any Hebrew Tanakh as The Book of Esther. You can also follow on BEKI's Purim evening siddur: <https://www.beki.org/wp-content/uploads/Purim-Evening-Hebrew-English-Siddur-and-Megila-2019-First-Edition.pdf>. Or you can find the Hebrew-English linear Megila text on-line at Sefaria: <https://www.sefaria.org/Esther.1?lang=bi>

Library Receives Donation from Rader Family

Thanks to a generous donation by the family of the late Barbara Rader, who was a long-time member of BEKI's Board of Directors, we are making improvements to the Rosenkrantz Family Library. Plans include ordering many new children's books, expanding our young adult collection, and adding adult titles as well. The Art Committee has plans for improved décor, including a collection of prints by Gabor Peterdi entitled *A Genesis*. A camera system to livestream events from that room is an additional component of the project.



A print from Peterdi's *A Genesis* series

BEKI member Howard Gralla is working with Dennis Rader on the design for a book plate honoring his beloved Barbara, to be affixed in each new acquisition.

Michael Rader, their son, hopes to obtain copies for us of the Jewish books that Barbara edited at Greenwood Press. These include encyclopedias of Reform, Conservative and Orthodox Judaism in America, a number of books about the Middle East, and a student guide to *The Diary of Anne Frank*. These would be in addition to the 22-volume set of Encyclopaedia Judaica that the Rader family donated previously. We will also add to our adult collection a set of books by the late Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks.

Thanks to the Ari Nathan Levine Memorial Fund and other gifts, BEKI already has a fine collection of children's books, now arranged on recently expanded shelves in the Claire Goodwin Youth Room, but new titles are needed. The growing young adult collection will stay in the main library.

The current catalogs of children and young adult books are posted on the Library page of the BEKI website (LEARNING > Library) and will be updated as titles are added.

If you have suggestions for our library upgrade, please share them with Jay Sokolow, the chair of this project.

BEKI USY Solves the Mystery

BY ANNIE NORMAN-SCHIFF, YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR

BEKI teens remain creative in finding ways to connect online while we cannot gather in person. This month's edition of our Virtual Lounge Night had a mystery theme. First, we took advantage of some of Zoom's features for an ice breaker that kept everyone guessing: we turned off our cameras, changed every on-screen name to a Jewish holiday, and had to guess who was who based only on our voices.

Then, USY board member Helen Gerber led us through a rollicking online version of the murder mystery game "Mafia." Some of us wore sunglasses at night, for maximum mysteriousness. We finished up with some hard-fought, head-to-head charades.

BEKI USY is in the midst of a year-long Color War, with every teen on either the Red or the Blue team.

Team games at Virtual Lounge Nights earn points, but so do Tikkun Olam events and attending minyan. If you

catch a BEKI teen doing something points-worthy, let me know at anormanschiff@beki.org.



Helen Gerber, top left, leads a game of "Mafia"

PURIM IS COMING!

FOR TEENS

On Sunday, Feb. 21, the Purim excitement begins! BEKI teens should check their doorsteps for a touch-free shalach manot delivery. The packages will include Purim goodies as well as materials to use at our online Purim Party. Join the fun on Zoom from 7:30 to 9 pm at bit.ly/usypurim

FOR FAMILIES

On Thursday, Feb. 25 from 4 to 5:30 pm, join us for a Purim Costume Parade and Car-Nival! Drop by the BEKI parking lot at any time to show off your costume, either on foot or through your car window. There will be prizes, surprises, and a chance to pick up your BEKI Shalach Manot order. Everyone over age 5 is asked to wear a mask, unless you are inside a car.

Please join the congregational Megila Reading at 6:30 pm (see details in prior pages). The event will begin with a chance for everyone on Zoom to "spotlight" your costume on the screen for all participants to see. This is a fun opportunity to see one another, even for younger families who might not stay online for "the whole Megila."

Children's outdoor Shabbat services will continue for whoever feels like bundling up and gathering in (safe) community. Each Thursday, if the weather looks decent, we'll schedule a "Pop-Up Style" Shabbat morning service. If you'd like to receive the email newsletter that gives updates about Pop-Up Services, email anormanschiff@beki.org.

המקום ינחם

HaMaqom Yinahem

With sorrow we note the passing of

Lila Zlotoff, mother of Ronald Zlotoff (& Donna Kemper)

Miriam “Mikki” Ratner, mother of Betsy Ratner (and the late Arthur Ratner)

Susan Birn, mother of BEKI Past-President Harold (& Stephanie) Birn

May the Almighty comfort those who mourn



Mikki Ratner

Mazal Tov to

Susan Voigt and Carlos Eyzaguirre & Jane Coffee on the naming of their granddaughter and niece Simone Petra Schott, *Shimona Hadara*, daughter of Clararose & John

Easy Fundraiser

The BEKI office sells Stop & Shop gift cards, which are debit cards for groceries or gasoline. This is an ongoing fundraiser that costs you nothing. Contact Peggy office@beki.org to arrange safe pickup.

Message from President Yaron Lew

Adapted from his message on December 31



Liora Lew dances at the 2018 Taste of India event

Liora Lew Endowment for the Advancement of Youth Education and Youth Activities



Yaron Lew

On Saturday I came to BEKI for Shabbat morning services. As I was sitting in the sanctuary, my mind started wandering. I was trying to recall all the things Liora loved about BEKI. She loved the community, the comradery, the schmoozing, putting up the Purim decorations and helping drive elderly congregants to and from services. But without a doubt, Liora’s greatest passion at BEKI was youth education and youth activities. She spent many years helping at the BEKI religious school, she was instrumental in establishing the B’nei Mitzvah Program, and she loved leading Shabbat Havura.

As I was contemplating all the things she loved about BEKI, I was thinking of ways to honor Liora’s memory at BEKI. She already has a leaf on the Tree of Life, but I wanted something more. I decided to establish an endowment in her name to support youth education and youth activities at BEKI. I wanted to ensure that what she liked so much will have additional funding to grow and expand. There is no doubt in my mind that Liora would have enthusiastically supported this cause, and I’m sure BEKI will put these funds to good use.

I’ve always appreciated how our endowments help keep BEKI financially strong and help advance the many causes our members feel passionate about. If you are interested in establishing an endowment, or adding to an existing one, feel free to contact Finance Chair Donna Levine.

Thank You for Operation Isaiah

“On behalf of JFS and the JFS Food Pantry, we would like to thank you all for the donation of gift cards totaling \$3,700 to the pantry! Your collection of gift cards during the High Holidays will help our clients tremendously. We are planning to distribute these cards to our families as needed in the coming months. We sincerely appreciate the mitzvah you have done on behalf of our many needy recipients.” *Amy Rashba & Sandy Hagan*

Thank You for a Food Drive

“On behalf of the staff and guests of Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen, I want to thank you for your in-kind contribution as well as for your continued support. By supporting our work, you are taking an active role in your community, enabling DESK to fulfill its mission of serving people experiencing homelessness or living in poverty. Every day, I am consistently reminded that it truly takes a village to do this work. Your contribution will provide nutritious meals, groceries, and a critical point-of-contact for our guests at a time when the health of our entire community is at stake.” *Steve Werlin*

Sunday Food Collection February 7

The next drive-by food collection will be Sunday, February 7 from 10 to 11 am in the BEKI parking lot. Please provide a bag or box of non-perishable food, and share this information with friends. This month’s food will go to the Jewish Family Service Food Pantry. The Pantry accepts non-perishable foods of all types, including canned

foods, boxed foods and bagged foods. Call 203.671.4705 to arrange for Rob Lettick to be in the parking lot to receive your donation. The next food drive will be on the first Sunday of March. If you have any questions, please write to Rob at robolettick@aol.com.

Refugee Resettlement Update



Jewish Community Alliance
For Refugee Resettlement

The news from JCARR is uplifting even during these difficult times! One family just had their finger-printing appointment and now are waiting to receive their Green Cards. Another JCARR refugee will be receiving her CNA certificate this month after many months of studying and training to become certified. The father of four now has a high school diploma and is hoping to go on to earn college credits! JCARR’s asylum-seeking family expressed heartfelt thanks for JCARR’s help and guidance this year, and both parents now have part-time employment. JCARR’s commitment to each of these families is ongoing.

For more information about how you can help, contact BEKI’s JCARR Liaison Madeleine Kleinman madk117@gmail.com.

Torah for the Hungry Mind

Sundays

Parashat HaShavua

From 10 to 11 am via Zoom, an opportunity to dive into the new week’s Torah reading, with Rabbi Tilsen & guests.

- February 7 with Steven Fraade
- February 14 with Jon Mohr in Jerusalem
- February 21 with Becky Seashore May



Steven Fraade



Jon Mohr



Becky May

Mondays

Rashi Study Group: II Kings

From 8:00 to 8:30 am adults meet via Zoom to read Rashi’s commentary.

Thursdays

Mini Morning Learning Service

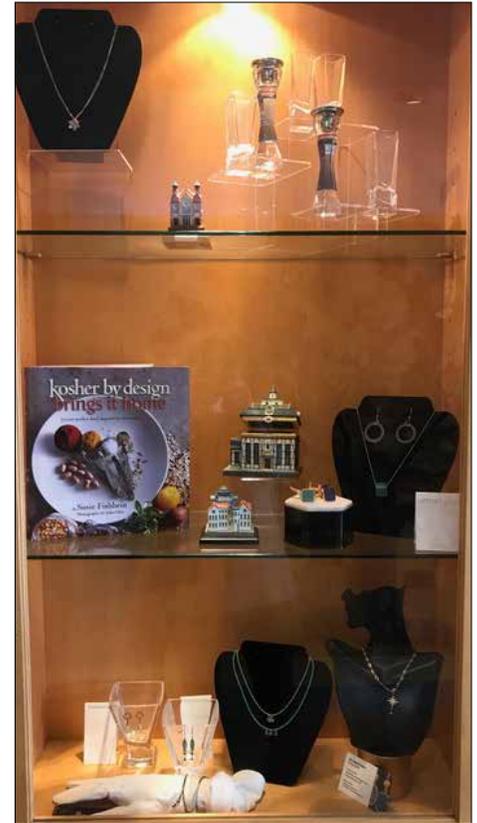
From 8:15 to 9:15 am, this later morning service via Zoom usually includes a d’var Torah by Captain Becky May or another volunteer.

Talmud Berakhot Study Group

From 10:00 to 11:00 am, a weekly online study of Talmud B. Masekhet Berakhot with Rabbi Tilsen.

You can find links to all of these groups at www.beki.org/calendar-events/news-happenings-and-beki-bulletins/

HOLIDAY ITEMS AT THE GIFT SHOP



Here's a preview of the Gift Shop's display windows in the entrance from the parking lot.

The entryway windows are a safe and easy way to look at the highlights we have to offer. We also have new kip-pot, mezzuzot, cookbooks, and activities to brighten your holiday celebration.

As always, a personalized shopping experience is made possible by Karen or Harriet, who are usually at the in-per-

son minyanim on Sunday mornings and Monday evenings. Just reach out for no-contact shopping and free local delivery: Karen 203-430-2182 kekassap@gmail.com, Harriet 203-675-8607 hfrfriedman@gmail.com. Also look for posts on the BEKI Facebook page.

Tree of Life Awaits Your Leaf

The Tree of Life at the entrance to BEKI is a collection of gold-colored leaves that honor people and moments in our lives. For \$118 you can add a leaf. Contact Marjorie Wiener at 203.387.6278 or marjoriewiener@yahoo.com

**BEKI's Tree of Life
graces the wall
directly across from
the display windows.**



Rabbi's Tzedaka Fund (minimum \$25)

- In memory of Maurice "Moe" Miller by Sandy & John Balayan
- In memory of Helen Olenik Miller by Sandy & John Balayan
- By Louis Petrillo

Chai Fund (minimum \$18) to support synagogue operations

- To Alan Lovins & Trish Loving in appreciation for helping with his conversion by George Dumigan
- To Lev Bronstein, David Hirsch & family with sympathy on the passing of Bentsion "Boris" Bronstein by Linda Schultz & Howard Gralla
- To Yaron Lew in honor of Daphne's wedding by Julie Cohen
- To Yaron Lew in honor of Daphne's wedding by Rachel Bashevkin & Eric Dunsker
- To Rachel & Steve Wizner in honor of their new granddaughter Niki by Julie Cohen
- To Shula Chernoff in her honor by Carolyn Lester
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Elia, Kian & Ramin Ahmadi and Roya Hakakian
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Yaron Lew
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Rhoda Zahler Samuel & Al Samuel
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by the Rothman family
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Raina Sotsky & Morris Bell
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Trish Loving & Alan Lovins
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Rachel Bashevkin & Eric Dunsker
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Steve & Rachel Wizner
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Carl Goldfield & Gaylord Bourne
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Madeleine Kleinman
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Barbara & Murray Akresh
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Linda Schultz & Howard Gralla
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Helen Rosenberg & Keith Richter

- To Darryl & David Kuperstock with sympathy on the passing of Andy Rotman-Zeid by Julie Cohen
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Julie Cohen
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes
- To Darryl & David Kuperstock with sympathy on the passing of Andy Rotman-Zeid by Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes
- To Darryl & David Kuperstock with sympathy on the passing of Andy Rotman-Zeid by Rachel Bashevkin & Eric Dunsker
- To Ron Zlotoff & Donna Kemper with sympathy on the passing of Lila Zlotoff by Len & Barbara Stern
- To Ron Zlotoff & Donna Kemper with sympathy on the passing of Lila Zlotoff by Rachel Lovins & Andrew Hogan
- To Ron Zlotoff & Donna Kemper with sympathy on the passing of Lila Zlotoff by Steve & Rachel Wizner
- To Ron Zlotoff & Donna Kemper with sympathy on the passing of Lila Zlotoff by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To Ron Zlotoff & Donna Kemper with sympathy on the passing of Lila Zlotoff by Rachel Bashevkin & Eric Dunsker
- To Ron Zlotoff & Donna Kemper with sympathy on the passing of Lila Zlotoff by Trish Loving & Alan Lovins
- To Ron Zlotoff & Donna Kemper with sympathy on the passing of Lila Zlotoff by the Rothman family
- To the BEKI community by Joshua Safran

Synagogue Fund (minimum \$10) to support synagogue operations

- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Betsy Ratner
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Diane & Dan Krevolin
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Susan Jacobson & Mike Teitelbaum
- To Ron Zlotoff & Donna Kemper with sympathy on the passing of Lila Zlotoff by David & Darryl Kuperstock

BEKI Religious School

- To the Bronstein family with sympathy on the passing of Bentsion "Boris" Bronstein by Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow
- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow
- To Ron Zlotoff & Donna Kemper with sympathy on the passing of Lila Zlotoff by Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow

Ari Nathan Levine Children's Library

- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family

with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Sid & Donna Levine

- To Darryl & David Kuperstock with sympathy on the passing of Andy Rotman-Zeid by Sid & Donna Levine

Barzillai Cheskis BEKI Youth Israel Scholarship Fund

- To Jessey & Joe Palumbo and family with sympathy on the passing of Chana Rosmarin by Rena Cheskis-Gold & Marty Gold

Harold & Arthur Ratner Memorial Fund

- In memory of Murray E. Kahn by Richard Kahn
- **Yahrzeit Fund** (\$5 minimum) to support synagogue operations
- In memory of her beloved father Julian Cohen by Carol & Marc Weitzman
- In memory of Samuel Adam Margolis by David Margolis
- In memory of Anna Altman by Bruce Altman & Darcy McGraw
- In memory of Peter Altman by Bruce Altman & Darcy McGraw
- In memory of Forest London by Ihrie Means
- In memory of Linden Bentley Arthur by Marilyn Katz
- In memory of Mary Belle Rogan Arthur by Marilyn Katz
- In memory of Elizabeth Meade Arthur by Marilyn Katz
- In memory of Sydney Weinstein by Dan A. Goldberg
- In memory of Lawrence Moscovitz by Mike Moscovitz
- In memory of Abraham Goldman by Martin & Judy Shore
- In memory of Rita Moscovitz by Mike Moscovitz
- In memory of Edith Fields by Stanley Saxe
- In memory of Carl Hoberman by Judith Hoberman
- In memory of Fred M. Shure by the Gross family
- In memory of her mother Mollie S. Nuht by Joan Gelbert
- In memory of her father Jack Nuht by Joan Gelbert
- In memory of Dr. Samuel Gelbert by Joan Gelbert
- In memory of Mona S. Zitomer by Joan Gelbert
- In memory of Sarah Schwartz by Joan Gelbert
- In memory of Joseph Schwartz by Joan Gelbert
- In memory of Adolph Weisberg by Joan Gelbert
- In memory of Elsie Hodes by Lynn & Jeff Heisner and Joyce & David Popowski
- In memory of Sarah Schnitman by Edward & Helene Schnitman Vanderhoef
- In memory of Morris Feldman by Lois K. Feldman
- In memory of Mary Astor by Carl & Sharon Astor
- In memory of Milton Cohen by Doris & Stephen Brody
- In memory of Helen Silverman by Marc Silverman
- In memory of Julius Brody by Fran

- Goldberg-Cohen & David Cohen
- In memory of Deborah Mendelson by Myra & Andrew Harris
- In memory of Pearl Weiner by Joanne & Steve Rudof
- In memory of her father Sheldon Wolpin by Ellen Wolpin
- In memory of her dear grandmother Yetta Gray by Toby & Alan Ignal
- In memory of Samuel Shelnitz by David & Barbara Shelnitz
- In memory of Rose Cohen by Dorothy & Steven Spellman
- In memory of Barbara Rader by Dennis Rader
- In memory of Marjorie Golden Weiss Simson by Marshall & Joan Weiss
- In memory of Irving Weinstein by Elaine Weinstein
- In memory of Anne Mushin Venetianer by Allen & Sheila Mushin
- In memory of William Victor Mushin by Allen & Sheila Mushin
- In memory of Benjamin Spivak by Sheila & Allen Mushin
- In memory of Jeanette Spivak by Sheila & Allen Mushin
- In memory of Jacob Cohen by Carol J. Cohen
- In memory of Phyllis Rogoff by Jonathan Eagan
- In memory of Benjamin Levine by Lillian Gross
- In memory of Jacob J. Cohen by Lewis & Renee Cohen
- In memory of Sophie Abelson by Gitty Cohen
- In memory of her parents Jacob & Helene Pepper by Marilyn & Basil Friedman
- In memory of Michael & Sarah Franzman by Lawrence & Susan Franzman
- In memory of Mildred Israel by Robert Sagerman
- In memory of Rose Alderman by Sonny, Bernie & Lynn Alderman
- In memory of Norman Alderman by Sonny, Bernie & Lynn Alderman
- In memory of Kate Weinstein by Suzanne Weinstein
- In memory of Abraham Goldberg by Fran Goldberg-Cohen & David Cohen
- In memory of Diane Lee Kaufman by Lewis & Minna Kaufman
- In memory of Lester Feldman by Lois K. Feldman
- In memory of Samuel Mendlestein by Rissa Mendlestein
- In memory of Freda Virshup by Richard & Georgi Virshup
- In memory of her mother Esther Heller by Rhoda Lemkin
- In memory of David Shapiro by Lawrence Shapiro
- In memory of her mother Ida Caminer Levine by Bernice Margolis
- In memory of Sidney Yaffe by David Yaffe
- In memory of Esther Siegelbaum by Rissa Mendlestein
- In memory of Jack Nankin by Sheldon & Sandra Nankin
- In memory of his father Sidney Yaffe by Cliff Yaffe
- In memory of Louis Rochlin by Kranie & Earl Baker

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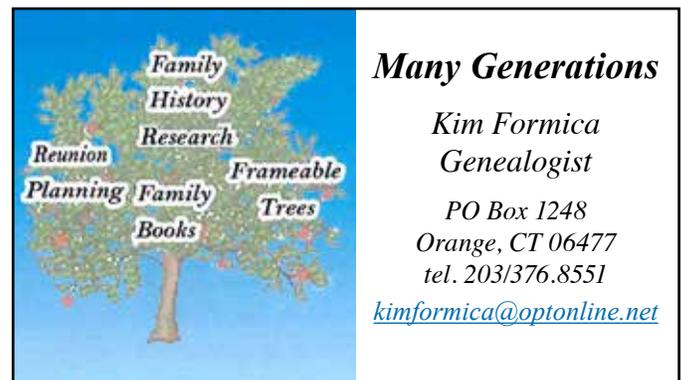


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A Purim Message from Rabbi Tilsen: In Praise of Tyrants

A newly elected Illinois Representative to Washington was roundly criticized for quoting a particularly despised German Chancellor saying something “wise.” It is reminiscent of the lukewarm praise of Mussolini, “At least he made the trains run on time.” Indeed, Emperor Qin Shi Huang sure knew how to build a wall.

Rabbi Elazar (Talmud Sotah 41b) condemns those who praise the wicked: “Any person who has flattery in him falls into Gehenna, as it is stated: ‘Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil’” (Isaiah 5:20). Not everyone agrees with Rabbi Elazar; it is an old argument. It is also a contemporary argument, as we discuss whether Confederate generals deserve a place of public honor—presuming it is not the fact of their dedication to that namesake cause itself that is the intent of the honor.

Elsewhere, the sages argue over who exactly is on the list of “evil people,” given that they assume most people are neither wholly good nor wholly evil (see Sanhedrin chapter 10). Berurya, wife of Rabbi Meir, explicitly distinguishes between the deed and the doer; in her view, we should focus on the evil deed, not the doer; any person is potentially redeemable.

The sages also suggest, following scripture, that the names of false gods should never be uttered; but of course they have to list the names so we will know which names to avoid.

The underlying idea may be found in the seemingly self-contradictory *mitzva* to “blot out any reference to (or sign of) Amalek” (Deut. 25:19). That passage is the



Jon-Jay Tilsen

special *maftir* scriptural reading on the Shabbat before Purim. Some contemporary journals decline to mention the names of mass murderers and those responsible for other atrocities, the thought being that such people do not deserve celebrity or to have their names remembered; instead, we should keep alive the memory of the victims.

Even the worst of the tyrants, traitors, and troublemakers did something right. But whatever role Mussolini played in railroad efficiency, surely the credit for the system’s merits must go to a good number of people involved. If a tyrant said something true and good, it would seem likely that another person coined or popularized the epithet or slogan. Being bad may mean losing the credit for good deeds. We don’t want to say about bank robber John Dillinger, “at least he donated some of the money to charity.”

We have an unusual tradition of separating an idea from the person who says it. Many of our sages are effectively known by the title of their works, with the thought that their biography is of little relevance. While we are required to quote our sources by name, such attribution is for the purposes of scholarship, not aggrandizement. Traditionally, students of the rabbinic texts knew the “works” but not the authors. While Masorti-Traditional scholarship does study biographies with the thought that context sheds light on the teachings, it avoids making the personages the center of the discussion.

There is some point, though I don’t know where it is, that the worst of the worst needs to be actively forgotten in this way. That is not to say that anyone who says a stupid thing needs to be “canceled” or that people should not be accountable. It just means that there comes a point where we need to extract the good and dump the evil, to throw out the bathwater and keep the baby.



Adapted from Yaron Lew’s message to the congregation on January 18:

Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen has been this congregation’s rabbi for over 27 years, and we thank him for his many years of service. BEKI is now engaged in the process of looking for a new rabbi for our congregation. We wish Jon-Jay all the best for his future, wherever it leads him. He will always have a very warm spot in our collective

hearts. His last day at the office will be February 28.

You can trust that the Board will arrange coverage for all rabbinic duties starting March 1, and I will be in touch about those plans. Please remember that you may contact me with any issue that needs my attention at President@beki.org.

February 2021

19 Shevat 5781 - 16 Adar 5781

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 8:00am Rashi Study Group: Zoom with Rabbi Tilsen 5:45pm Courtyard Service & Zoom 19 Shevat	2 20 Shevat	3 8:00pm Author talk with Gavriel Savit on his YA novel "The Way Back" via Zoom 21 Shevat	4 10:00am Talmud Berakhot: Zoom with Rabbi Tilsen 22 Shevat	5 4:56pm Candle Lighting 6:00pm Qabbalat Shabbat (Sanctuary-Social Hall) 23 Shevat	6 9:30am Outdoor Shabbat Service 10:15am Pop-Up Style Children's Outdoor Services 24 Shevat
7 9:00am Courtyard Service & Zoom 10:00am Drive-By Food Collection 10:00am Parashat HaShavua with Rabbi Tilsen & Steven Fraade 25 Shevat	8 8:00am Rashi Study Group 5:45pm Courtyard Service & Zoom 26 Shevat	9 27 Shevat	10 8:00pm Keeping People Fed During the Pandemic with Steve Werlin via Zoom 28 Shevat	11 10:00am Talmud Berakhot: Zoom with Rabbi Tilsen 29 Shevat	12 Rosh Hodesh I 5:05pm Candle Lighting 6:00pm Qabbalat Shabbat (Sanctuary-Social Hall) 30 Shevat	13 Rosh Hodesh II 9:30am Outdoor Shabbat Service 10:15am Pop-Up Style Children's Outdoor Services 1 Adar
14 9:00am No Religious School 9:00am Courtyard Service & Zoom 10:00am Parashat HaShavua with Rabbi Tilsen & Jon Mohr from Jerusalem 2 Adar	15 9:00am Office Closed/Presidents' Day 9:00am Zoom Shoharim (Federal Holiday) 10:00am Rashi Study Group: Zoom with Rabbi Tilsen 5:45pm Courtyard Service & Zoom 7:00pm Executive Board Meeting 3 Adar	16 4 Adar	17 8:00pm Georgetown University's Financial Reliance on Slavery with history professors Adam Rothman & Marcia Chatelain via Zoom 5 Adar	18 10:00am Talmud Berakhot: Zoom with Rabbi Tilsen 6 Adar	19 5:13pm Candle Lighting 6:00pm Qabbalat Shabbat (Sanctuary-Social Hall) 7 Adar	20 Shabbat Zakhor 9:30am Outdoor Shabbat Service 10:15am Pop-Up Style Children's Outdoor Services 8 Adar
21 9:00am No Religious School 9:00am Courtyard Service & Zoom 10:00am Parashat HaShavua with Rabbi Tilsen & Becky Seashore May 9 Adar	22 8:00am Rashi Study Group: Zoom with Rabbi Tilsen 5:45pm Courtyard Service & Zoom 10 Adar	23 11 Adar	24 8:00pm "The Spirituality of Laughter" with comedian Rabbi Bob Alper via Zoom 12 Adar	25 Fast of Esther 10:00am Talmud Berakhot: Zoom with Rabbi Tilsen 4:00pm Costume Parade & Car-Nival in BEKI's parking lot 6:30pm Purim Megilla Reading (Zoom, FB Livestream & in Sanctuary-Social Hall) 13 Adar	26 Purim 7:00am Purim Megilla Reading (Zoom, FB Livestream & in Sanctuary-Social Hall) 5:22pm Candle Lighting 6:00pm Qabbalat Shabbat (Sanctuary-Social Hall) 14 Adar	27 Shushan Purim 9:30am Outdoor Shabbat Service 10:15am Pop-Up Style Children's Outdoor Services 15 Adar
28 9:00am Courtyard Service & Zoom 10:00am Parashat HaShavua with Rabbi Tilsen & Guests 16 Adar	<p>Mark Your Calendar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shabbat Para (Sabbath of the Cow) March 6 • Shabbat HaHodesh (Sabbath of the Moon) March 13 • Rosh Hodesh Nisan March 14 • Fast of the Firstborn / Taanit HaBekhorot March 25 • Shabbat HaGadol / First Seder Night March 27 • Second Seder Night March 28 • Shabbat Pesah April 3 • Pesah Eighth Day April 4 • LaG BeOmer Night April 29 					

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- **Sunday 9:00 to 9:30 am** (outdoors* & via Zoom)
 - Sunday 5:45 pm (via Zoom)
 - Monday 7:00 am (via Zoom)
 - **Monday 5:45 to 6:00 pm** (outdoors* & via Zoom)
 - Tuesday 7:00 am (via Zoom)
 - Tuesday 5:45 pm (via Zoom)
 - Wednesday 7:00 am (via Zoom)
 - Wednesday 5:45 pm (via Zoom)
 - Thursday 8:15 am (via Zoom)
 - Thursday 5:45 pm (via Zoom)
 - Friday 7:00 am (via Zoom)
 - **Friday 6:00 to 6:40 pm** (inside: sanctuary)
 - **Saturday 9:30 to 11:00 am** (outdoors*)
- Potential in-person service opportunities are **boldface**
* Weather permitting (in sanctuary in inclement weather)

Please wear face masks and keep six feet distancing. Prayer books and chairs are provided, or bring your own. Weekday outdoor services are in the courtyard, Saturdays in the parking lot.

So that we can anticipate the size of the group and keep records for possible contact tracing, RSVP to jjtilsen@beki.org, bekitefilla@gmail.com, or the minyan captain. Please be aware that there might be changes to the in-person service plans in response to public health conditions or other circumstances. For the latest information, please check the weekly BEKI Happenings or email us about the specific date you are interested in.

Since any group gathering has inherent risks, participants need to make their own informed choices as to what is best for them.

Facebook Digest Available

Everyone is encouraged to join the [BEKI Facebook group](#). You'll enjoy the humor, community information, and links to cultural opportunities.

For members who do not have a Facebook account but want to see the notices, links to articles recommended by congregants, conversations, and jokes posted there, just email bulletin@beki.org to request the weekly Facebook digest, sent each Friday.