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Temple Beth Shalom

From the Bima: Our Rabbi's Message.

Purim: Celebrate, but Remember!

The holiday of Purim is just around the corner. Beginning at sundown on Wednesday, March 4, and extending until sundown on Thursday, March 5, it is a time of joyous celebration for Jewish families the world over. We will observe the four *mitzvot* or commandments of Purim which are enunciated in the Hebrew Bible (Esther 9:20-22) and reinforced in the Mishnah (Mas. Megilah 2a): the reading of the *megillah* of Esther, *matanot l'evyonim*—giving money to the poor, *mishloach manot*—gifts of food to friends, and feasting. Our hearts will be filled with gladness! But, we should also take time to remember that Purim represents a very serious subject as well, the age long struggle of those who would stand for the good against the forces of evil. It is a sad fact that the enemies of Israel and of the Jewish people have a hatred so intense it seems unexplainable in terms of

normal human emotions. And, that hatred is both ancient and modern.

We read in the Torah, in the 25th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy, that as our people were coming out of Egypt, a tribe called Amalek laid in wait along the way and attacked Israel from the rear as they passed through. Amalek picked off the weakest members of the Israelite group, women, children, and stragglers. The Torah states that Amalek "did not fear God." A very stern pronouncement against Amalek occurs twice in the Torah, once in Deuteronomy, "It shall come about when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies in the land which the LORD your God gives you..., you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget." (vv. 17-19) This commandment appears to be a clarification of the more cryptic statement in the 17th chapter of Exodus, "Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.' And Moses built an altar and named it, 'The Lord is My

Banner.” And he said, “The LORD has sworn; the LORD will have war against Amalek from generation to generation.” (vv. 14-16)

Now, the connection between Amalek and Purim might not be immediately obvious to most readers. The evil Haman, whose hatred of the Jews defies rational explanation, leading him to seek the Jewish people’s annihilation, is referred to in the book of Esther as an Agagite (3:1). The connecting link to Amalek is found in the 15th chapter of the book of First Samuel. The newly crowned King Saul is leading the Israelites in a life and death struggle against the neighboring tribe of Amalek. God, through the prophet Samuel, had instructed Saul that God was about to punish Amalek for the crimes done to the people of Israel when they were on the way out of Egypt, and the judgment was to be harsh. Saul, in defiance of God’s command, spared the king of Amalek, Agag, the ancestor of the wicked Haman. (I Samuel 15:1-9)

Parallels to those who hate the Jewish people so intensely and who seek our annihilation, while difficult to comprehend or accept, can be found in almost every generation, most recently and egregiously in the acts of Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin. I have never been so moved by a Purim story as I

was recently by a story told by Lori Palatnik, a writer, educator, and the founding director of the Jewish Women’s Renaissance Project. She tells of a neighbor she had while living in Toronto whose name was Mr. Cohen. He was a holocaust survivor. As a youth of only 17, Mr. Cohen had been taken by the Nazis to Auschwitz. Knowing he would be there for a long time, if he survived, Mr. Cohen memorized the Jewish calendar for the next several years. He was known by his peers in the camp as a walking calendar. They would ask him, “When is Shabbat?” “When is Hanukah?” “When is Pesach?” And, Mr. Cohen would be able to tell them. When it was Purim, Mr. Cohen and a group of men met secretly in their barracks. They had smuggled a few bits of potato and bread crust as well as a book of Esther into their deplorable living area. The men stood in a circle as quietly as possible so as not to arouse Nazi suspicion, and they passed the bits of bread and potato from man to man in fulfillment of the *mishloach manot* commandment. The last to receive the morsels of food was Mr. Cohen, for it was he who was about to read the *megillah* of Esther. As they read the story of Esther under the harsh oppression of the Nazis, you can only imagine the joy it brought to their hearts to hear of the victory of the Jewish people over their

enemies on Purim over 2300 years ago. We ultimately gained victory over the Nazis as well, though many, many precious souls had to give their lives in the process. Still, the Jewish people survives, thrives, and prospers. Truly a modern miracle!! (http://www.aish.com/sp/lal/Purim_in_Auschwitz.html)

Jewish author, Tracey Rich, tells a similar Purim story about Joseph Stalin. Rich relates the story from Chabad, the Lubavitcher Hasidic Jewish group, that in the year 1953 Joseph Stalin was planning to exile all of the Jews in the Soviet Union to camps in Siberia. At a Purim gathering of the Lubavitcher Jews that year, their Rebbe was asked to give a blessing on the Jews of the Soviet Union. Instead of a blessing, he told a story about a Jewish man who was in attendance at the election of a Soviet official earlier that year. The crowd was shouting, “Hoorah! Hoorah!” as the candidate stood on stage. The Jewish man did not want to validate the candidate by shouting, “Hoorah,” but neither did he want to draw the suspicion of the crowd. So, he indeed shouted, “Hoorah,” while knowing in his own heart that he meant “*Hu ra*,” which in Hebrew means, “He is evil!” Moved by the Rebbe’s message, the Jews at the Purim celebration began to shout in unison, “*Hu ra! Hu ra! Hu ra!*,” referring to Joseph

Stalin. Later that same night, March 1, 1953, Stalin experienced a stroke that led to his death a few days later. His plan to deport the Jews was never carried out. (<http://www.jewfaq.org/holiday9.htm>)

Rabbi Benjamin Blech reminds us that the meaning of Purim can be found not only in the great miracles of the ages, but also in the small miracles of everyday life. A common term for such everyday miracles is “serendipity.” Defined as “a fortuitous happenstance” or “a pleasant surprise,” serendipity can be thought of as a beneficial occurrence that seems to defy statistical odds. For example, one evening you have just been thinking of a friend whom you have not seen for many years and with whom you long to reestablish contact, and the next day you happen to bump into that friend at the grocery store. Or, you set an arbitrary date to meet with your friends based on your busy schedules, and then you find out in retrospect that the day you chanced to pick is, in fact, the anniversary of some important event that is meaningful to you and those friends. Rabbi Blech points out that some of the greatest scientific achievements of all time were made under the most serendipitous of circumstances. How does this relate to Purim? The miracle of Purim

is recorded in the Hebrew Bible in the book of Esther. Esther is one of only two books in the Bible which do not mention God or the name of God at all (the other being Song of Songs). And yet, one cannot read the amazing details of the hatred and plot against the Jews, the coming of a Jewish princess into a position of power disguised and against all odds, and the ultimate triumph of the Jewish people over their enemies, without sensing the power and the hand of God in the events. So it is with serendipity. God may not be working in overt, readily observable ways or in mighty miracles. But, according to Rabbi Blech, “Serendipity is God whispering to us; it is God’s still small voice that beckons us to be aware of God’s presence.”

(<http://www.aish.com/h/pur/t/dt/Purim-and-Serendipity.html>)

As we celebrate this year’s holiday of Purim and mark the final month of the Hebrew calendar, Adar, leading up to our beloved Pesach, it is my prayer for you that you too will find God working in your life, whether in the grand ways or small. *Ken yehi ratzon*—May this be God’s will.



President’s Corner

Barbara Laufer, TBS President

The luncheon to celebrate Elaine Zerden’s birthday and her support for our congregation was a huge success as 90+ people attended. A special debt of gratitude is owed to Robyn Diamond who designed the special invitation and Marsue Davidson who did almost all the planning with exceptionally elegant touches. Delicious food was prepared by Jan Robbins with welcomed help of Lin Gentry, Tiffany Hull, Marion DuBow, Mary Lee Tosky, Robyn Diamond and Ginny and Pete Sobotkin.

It was especially heartwarming to see almost a full house at services and how quickly everyone pitched in to convert the area to a sit down luncheon complete with silverware, silver candlesticks and roses.

The next special event planned for the congregation is the Seder on April 4th with a

registration deadline of **March 25th** (registration form on last page). Last year was such a success that the decision was to continue with home cooked foods. There will be brisket, chicken soup with matzo balls, kugel, Tzimmes, gefilte fish, charoses, honey cakes, fruit trays and traditional fixings made by sisterhood. Please join us to celebrate.

Purim, a celebration of Jewish deliverance as told in the book of Esther, is almost here. In January, Israel presented a successful bid to the United Nations General Assembly to hold first-ever meetings to discuss the rise of global anti-Semitism which was supported by a host of Nations. In February Thomas L. Friedman's op-Ed column pointed to a growing global trend of anti-Semitism.

Historically, Jewish communities around the world have Purim celebrations to commemorate their deliverance from threats of anti-Semitism and recent history indicates a continued need for vigilance. Freilichin Purim.

TBS Sunday School Program

Marsue Davidson, Sunday school Chair

The children have really enjoyed the teachings and activities of this year's Sunday School program. Our last session they learned about

Tu-Be Shevat which is the Year of Trees. They discussed the meaning and created Tzedakah boxes to collect money for a celebration at the end of the Sunday School year.

The kids have been working so hard and learning their letters, prayers and our older kids are continuing to prepare for their special day. Please encourage your children to participate at home in our traditional prayers and share their experiences with the family.

Another special event is the Purim service on Friday night March 6th at 6:00pm. Pizza party, dress-up, games and service readings with lots of noise! Join us all for this fun event!

This weeks session, we reviewed the meaning of Purim, made mask and crowns, and practiced the Megillah. Next session, March 8th we will continue to review our letters and have further discussion about the Megillah reading. Then on the March 22nd we will be studying about Passover and preparing for our Temple wide Seder.

We all love that Rabbi Dennis is encouraging all of us to incorporate the children in the evening services in order for the children to understand and implement the teachings they have learned over this Sunday school session.

Special thanks to Kathy Jones and all the parent teachers of TBS. Kathy has been a wonderful leader and guiding all of us in this first year and her creativity and enthusiasm is greatly appreciated.

Thank you Dennis for your continued dedication to our families, temple members and continued spiritual leadership you have shared over this past year.

Temple Beth Shalom Life Cycle Events

Birthdays

Susie Jones 3/2
Sarah Jones 3/3
Jesse Jones 3/5
Kathy Young-Shugar 3/5
Elizabeth Powell 3/9
Ben Kane-Eames 3/16
Josh Schneider 3/16
Bonnie Gold 3/22
Bud Tosky 3/22
Matthew Bonfield 3/24
Sara Gold 3/25
Kenneth Huitt 3/26
Mark Faruque 3/26
Sue Cohn 3/28
Sonia Pelzer 3/2

Anniversaries

Cangemi 3/6
Shubin 3/15
Freiman 3/18
Shugar 3/24

Yahrzeits

William Miller 3/16
Else Simons 3/20
Albert Ifergan 3/28

Temple Beth Shalom Event Calendar 2015

March 2015 hosted by MaryLee and Aaron Tosky

6th at 6:00pm Purim Pizza
Party followed by Megillah
Reading
7th at 10:00am Morning
Services
8th and 22nd at 10:30am
Sunday School studying about
Passover

April 2015 hosted by Sisterhood and Stephen and Marsue Davidson

4th Passover Seder
12th at 10:30am Sunday
school studying about
Counting the Omer
17th at 7:00pm Evening
Service
18th at 10:00am Morning
Services
19th at 10:30am Sunday
School studying Yom
Hatzma'ut/Israel
Independence Day

May 2015 hosted by Larry and Barbara Laufer

3rd at 10:30am Sunday School
will be studying Mothers and
Judaism
15th at 7pm Friday night
services
16th at 10am Saturday morning
services
17th at 10:30am Sunday
School will studying Shavuot
23rd at 7:00pm Erev Shavuot
services

June 2015 hosted by Susan Rieder in celebration of Andrew's Bar Mitzvah

7th at 10:30am Sunday School
studying Kashrut
19th at 7:00pm Friday night
services
20th at 10:00am Andrew Igdal
Bar Mitzvah
22nd Sunday School
Celebration

Looking for Something to Do...

Come Celebrate Purim!!

This Friday night, March 6, is Shushan Purim. Everyone is encouraged to attend and fulfill the four mitzvot! Please come in costume (we will have masks and crowns at the door also) and be prepared to have fun! We will start with a pizza dinner at 6:00 PM and games for the children. At 7:00 PM, we will begin the Megillah Scroll Service and there will be much noise making with groggers and stamping of feet. Please bring a dessert as your mishloach manot food gift for your synagogue friends and a canned or dry boxed food to donate to the hungry at the Hickory Soup Kitchen. (RSVP to Kathy Jones, at krsjones2002@yahoo.com or (828) 632-9261 by Thursday, March 5th, if you plan to attend the pizza dinner, so that we can be sure to order enough.)

Looking for a benevolent Tzedakah opportunity?

Jaimi Jones, daughter of student Rabbi Dennis Jones, has just the way for you to fulfill this mitvah! She is currently interning with the Alexander County Department of Social Services Child Protective Services Unit, and is seeking donations of goods or money to create "care bags" of necessities to

accompany the infants and toddlers that come into DSS care. Too often, children who come into care have nothing. Placing children with capable relatives or foster parents usually requires immediate action, which gives little time for the family to prepare. Jaimi is seeking donations of diapers of all sizes, baby wipes, ointments (i.e. Desitin), (new) bottles, "sippy" cups, other infant/toddler eating accessories, bibs, and pacifiers. These items will facilitate these children to be able to have a meal, and to be comfortable and safe during these stressful transitions. Jaimi will be collecting donations through the end of April at services, and hopes to acquire enough supplies to create at least 50 "care bags." Monetary donations will be accepted, and used to purchase the previously stated supplies. For more information, or to give donations outside of services, you may contact Jaimi Jones at jonesjl2@email.appstate.edu.

Donations Thanks....

Our heartfelt thanks you to Deane Griffin for the TBS donation in honor of Elaine Zerden.

Florence and Jeff Mackie gave a wonderful donation in loving memory and thanksgiving for the life of Henry Rosenfeld father of Linda Guttler.



TBS Sisterhood

Lin Gentry, Sisterhood President

Our next Sisterhood meeting will be Thursday, March 5th at 6:30pm at DaVinci's Restaurant. We will continue with our Passover Seder planning.

Temple Beth Shalom Sisterhood is an auxiliary organization of multigenerational women dedicated to family, synagogue, and community. From the very beginning, the women of Temple Beth Shalom recognized the need for an organization where women of all ages, lifestyles and interests could gather. The dues are presently \$36 per year (Sept-June).

Harriet Sederholm Scholarship Fund Announcement

The Sederholm Scholarship was established by a long-standing Temple member, Bert Sederholm to honor his wife, Harriet, who died shortly after her retirement from work in Hickory. Mr. Sederholm provided the initial funding that has been added to over the years. The scholarship is available to students. Temple

members are looked upon favorably but one does not need to be a temple member or Jewish to apply. The scholarship fund is fully invested and the dividends are used to provide scholarship awards.

Interested students should submit an essay explaining their interests and desire for scholarship support by June 15, 2015. The essay can be sent to any of the committee members:

- Lin Gentry
- Julie Owens
- Sanford Guttler

Naturally, the committee encourages anyone to make a tax-deductible donation to the Scholarship Fund at any time and a check can be sent to Temple Beth Shalom and earmarked for the Sederholm Fund.

Temple Board

Our next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 3rd. All board meetings are open to all temple members. Please join us and find out the new and exciting direction for TBS.

TBS Member Business Directory

Dr. Ron Dubow
Internist, Geriatric Specialist
(elderly care), Pediatrician

2651 Morganton Blvd SW
Lenoir, NC 28645
828-757-8950

**Dr. Laura Faruque of
Womens View PA**

915 Tate Blvd SE
Suite 170
Hickory, NC 28602
828-345-0800

**Dr. Mark Faruque of
Bethlehem Family Practice**

174 Bolick Lane Suite 202
Taylorsville NC 28681
828-495-8226

**Marsue Davidson, RN DCS
Unifour Nursing**

805 W. 25th Street
Newton, NC 28681
828-464-0244
www.unifournursing.net

**Robyn Diamond, Certified Health and
Wellness Coach, Specializing in
Digestive
Health and Stress Management**

843-991-6338
Robyn@HealthHappyYou.com
www.HealthHappyYou.com

Professor Gitlin Hebrew Lessons

109 6th Ave NE
Hickory, NC 28601
828-328-9443

**Alice Guy of
The Hickory Wine Shoppe**

238 Union Square NW
Hickory, NC 28601
828-334-4441
Info@HickoryWine.com

**Michelle Oxenberg Jordon
Managing Director of Design**

3166 Main Ave. S.E.
Hickory, North Carolina 28602
828.322.3480 Ext. 271
michelle@robertabbey.com
www.robertabbey.com

**Scott and Julie Owens of
Taste Full Bean**

29 2nd Street NW
Hickory, NC 28601
828-325-0108
www.tastefullbeans.com

SISTERHOOD OF TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

invites you to attend the April 4, 2015 Seder
at 6:00 P.M.



EVENT WILL BE HOME COOKING FROM SISTERHOOD WITH ALL YOUR FAVORITES.

All RSVPs and checks need to be in by deadline of March 25, 2015 or a late fee of \$5 will be assessed.

We can't provide refunds and may not be able to accommodate walk-ins.

Prices are as follows for Temple Beth Shalom Members and their families:



- All children under age 5 free!
- Aged 6-12 will be \$15.00
- Aged 13 and up \$25.00
- Guests (non-members of TBS) \$30.00



Please remit with check made out to Sisterhood Temple Beth Shalom to:



Barbara Laufer
5231 Peninsula Drive
Granite Falls, NC 28630



Please put a number of attendees in proper space.

5 and under free _____

6 and up \$15.00 _____

13 and up \$25.00 _____

Guests to TBS \$30.00 _____



Name: _____

Please indicate if you have any "table-mate" preferences as there will be assigned seating
