

# TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

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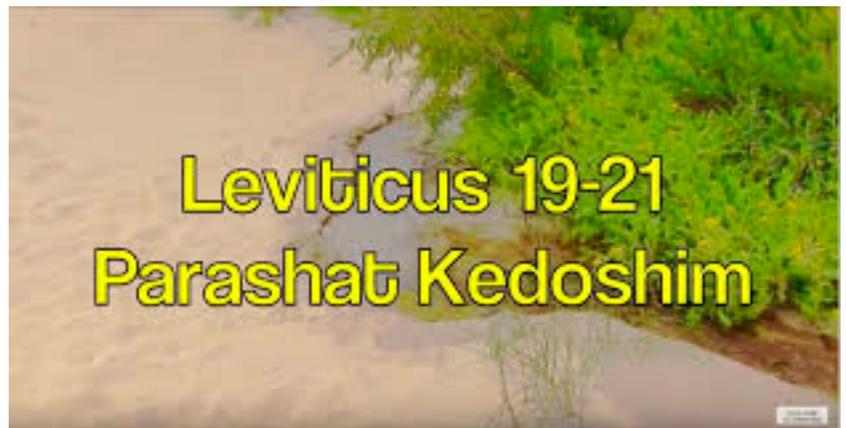
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## From the Bimah: Our Rabbi's Message

Rabbi Dennis Jones

**“Holiness” – What Exactly  
Does That Mean???**



As we enter the sixth week of Governor Roy Cooper's "stay at home" order here in North Carolina, I want to remind all members and friends of Temple Beth Shalom what the Talmud teaches us in *Mishnah Sanhedrin* 4:5: "...if anyone has caused a single life to perish..., it is deemed by Scripture as if that one had caused the whole world to perish, and anyone who saves a single life..., that one is deemed by Scripture as if to have **saved the whole world.**" Preserving life is central to all the mitzvot/commandments of Torah. This time of taking measures to slow the progression of the Coronavirus has caused many of us anxiety, anguish, and even fear. I want to join the growing chorus of psychologists, religious, and secular leaders who are calling upon us to **stop** using the term "social distancing" and to substitute instead, "physical distancing—

while staying socially connected.” The physical distancing is truly a mitzvah, even if we save only one life, it is as if we had saved the whole world. But, I believe that by taking these measures we can significantly slow down the progression of COVID-19 and save many hundreds, if not thousands of lives. The important thing is to stay socially connected during this critical preventative endeavor. You know that I talk often about how blessed we are as a people to live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century United States of America. We enjoy a level of prosperity, plenty, technological advancement, and civil liberties unparalleled in human history. Let us use these resources, particularly the technology, to reach out to one another.

I am thankful to have a lovely house to shelter in, surrounded by plenty of food. But my heart does go out to all those who are not so fortunate. What are our responsibilities toward them? Well, that is exactly the subject of this week’s Torah portion, and, you guessed it, one of my favorites—**Kedoshim**!! The concept of **holiness** is addressed often in the Torah, but perhaps nowhere more forcefully and succinctly than in this Torah portion. Kedoshim is the 30<sup>th</sup> weekly portion in the Torah reading cycle, and the 7<sup>th</sup> reading in the book of Leviticus (19:1-20:27). At 64 verses, it is one of the shortest portions in the Torah reading cycle. Kedoshim is read twice a year, both as part of the weekly cycle and as the special reading on the afternoon of Yom Kippur. Some of you may recall that *Kedoshim* is also the title of the fifth order in the *Mishnah* and *Babylonian Talmud*.

The Torah portion begins, “And Adonai spoke to Moses saying, ‘Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, *you shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.*’” Now, I have said in jest many times that the Almighty did not choose us, the descendants of Abraham and Sarah, because we make good bagels, although we do. The Torah is very clear that their descendants were called for a very specific purpose, to be *a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*—“You shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex. 19:6). The Creator apparently saw in Abraham and Sarah the qualities of loyalty to God, to God’s laws, and to God’s plan for humankind. And the Almighty must have known that these qualities would carry on in Abraham and Sarah’s descendants. I like to call this the “Family Plan” for spreading the Torah message to all humankind. As the descendants of Abraham and Sarah role model these lofty statutes and ethics, the Prophets tell us that eventually all humankind, indeed every nation, will adopt the Creator’s laws and plan. This will lead to a time when war, sickness, and famine will be completely done away with according to the Hebrew Prophets.

Kedoshim is the masculine plural form of *Kadosh*—holy. But, what exactly does holiness mean as the term is used in the Hebrew Bible? When one thinks of holiness one usually envisions a monk, cloistered in a medieval monastery, reading holy writings, meditating on heavenly things, and abstaining from most of the joys of everyday life, such as eating, drinking, etc. This view derives from a Greco-Roman concept of holiness, often referred to as a dualistic worldview. In it the heavenly realm, the spiritual, is deemed to be good, but earthly things, the physical, is considered to be inherently corrupt or tainted. That is *not* the Hebraic view. At the time of creation, Adonai saw *six times* that those things which were created were good. Upon the completion of God’s ultimate creation, man and woman, the Hebrew Bible tells us, “And God saw everything that God had made, and behold, it was *very good*” (Gen. 1:32). So it is, in Jewish

tradition, that holiness is not entailed in abstaining from enjoying those elements of creation that God has graciously given to us, but rather in their judicious and moderate use. As summed up in *Talmud, Yevamot* 20a, we are instructed, “Sanctify yourself also regarding that which is permissible to you.”

Holiness in Judaism is not so much a state of mind, and *definitely not* a system of belief. Rather, it is the demonstration of very specific behaviors toward God and toward our fellow human beings. Those behaviors cannot be done in seclusion. That is why many sages have pointed out that the opening words of this Torah portion, “speak to *all* the congregation of the children of Israel...,” have the implication that holiness is not something done while cloistered away, but is something that is engaged in *with* and *for* the community. The specifics of the behaviors that define holiness are not left to subjective choice. Fortunately, they are very clearly spelled out in the Torah and in the later writings of the Jewish sages. Chief among the enumeration of those laws would, of course, be the Ten Commandments, given in the Torah in both Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. In the *Midrash Rabbah*, Rabbi Levi shows us that **all** of the Ten Commandments are, in fact, restated in Torah portion Kedoshim:

1. “I am the Lord your God,” is stated here also (Lev. 19:3).
2. “You shall have no other gods before me,” appears as “Nor make to yourselves molten gods” (19:4).
3. “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain,” is written here as, “And you shall not swear falsely by my name” (19:12).
4. “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” is restated as, “And keep my Sabbaths” (19:3).
5. “Honor your father and mother,” is rendered here as “Every man shall fear his mother and his father” (19:3).
6. “You shall not murder,” is conveyed in the passage, “You shall not stand by the blood of your neighbor” (19:3).
7. “You shall not commit adultery,” appears here as, “Both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death” (19:10).
8. “You shall not steal,” is written here as, “You shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie to one another.” (19:11).
9. “You shall not bear false witness,” is entailed in “You shall not go about as a talebearer” (19:16).
10. “You shall not covet anything that is your neighbor’s,” is more than reflected in, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (19:18).

(Translated in “Parshat Kedoshim in Depth,” [www.chabad.org](http://www.chabad.org))

It has always impressed me that in this “holiness code,” as it is often called, relatively few of the verses are devoted to our relationship with the Creator and to holy things such as Sabbaths and offerings. The vast majority of verses are devoted to our relations with fellow human beings. The level of compassion given to that topic in this portion is palpable. Think for a minute about such seemingly simple, but powerful, actions

as not reaping to the corners of your field so that there will be gleanings left behind for those who are in need (v. 10). And, not allowing the wages of someone hired to remain with you even overnight (v. 14). Also, not allowing injustice in judgment even to the extent of being partial to the poor nor deferring to the great (v. 15). And, not going about as a talebearer, or in other words slanderer, among your people (v. 16). And then, of course, there is the *ultimate commandment*: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (v. 18). This principle has become a cornerstone of most of the world’s major religions. And, lest one think that one’s neighbor *only* refers to fellow countrymen or women, the Torah is crystal clear: “The *stranger* who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you; you shall love him as yourself; for you were aliens in the land of Egypt” (19:34).

The level of devotion to one’s neighbor and compassion for those in need found in this Torah portion connects strongly with the constant theme of the Hebrew Prophets, *social justice*. Micah sums it up best, “*What does Adonai require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God*” (6:8). The fact that “love your neighbor as yourself” has become a core belief of so many world religions is proof to me that the Almighty’s “Family Plan” *is* working. When the adherents of those religions *truly apply* those lofty principles, putting them into action through their behaviors (behaviors laid out so specifically in this Torah portion), humankind will surely enter the time spoken of by the Prophets. When nations will “beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isa. 2:4). It is my prayer that we might live to see this fulfilled in our day. *Ken yehi ratzon*—may this be God’s will.

## President’s Message

Barbara Laufer, President

### TEMPLE MEMBERS - WATCH YOUR EMAIL and YOUR MAIL

Due to the pandemic; sheltering in place; and the uncertainty of being together in groups, the TBS annual meeting scheduled on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, may be via Zoom. We will keep you abreast of how this year’s annual meeting will be done. If necessary to meet online, Rabbi Dennis will notify all of us by email as to how to access Zoom for the annual meeting.

One of the most important things done during our annual meeting is voting on next year’s board. In view of this, ballots have been mailed to you inclusive of a stamped return address envelope. Returned ballots must be RECEIVED NO LATER THAN MAY 27th. Aaron Tosky will be receiving the ballots and establishing that the required quorum has been met, so it is critical that each of you respond. We are fortunate that Susan Huitt and Jodi Lavin-Tompkins have agreed to serve on the board as members-at-large and Susan Goldstein as President.

When we do get back to temple again, **please consider pairing with a board member(s) to host a weekend at Temple Beth Shalom.** When members contribute to the life of our synagogue in this way, we all feel a part of our Jewish community and an active participant in assuring its well-being. There is a sign up sheet and ‘what to do’ list posted in the kitchen that make it easy. And please remember that all members present will be helping you in any way possible. Volunteers are greatly appreciated.



Please take care of yourselves during this time and be thankful that it hasn't been frogs, lice and/or boils!



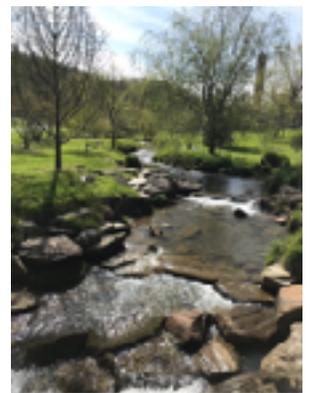
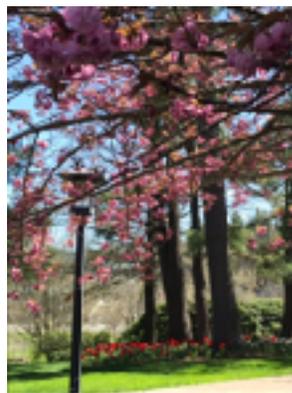
### TBS Sisterhood

Lin Gentry, Sisterhood President

Hi everyone!

Ok, in light of the current situation, let's forgo the May meeting and move the next sisterhood meeting to Wednesday, June 24th and see how that goes. We'll meet at the temple instead of a restaurant at 6:30pm. I've said this before, but it bears repeating—we may be physically apart right now, but we don't have to be socially or spiritually apart. We'll have the chance to be physically together in some way later, but right now we can take the time to

reach out to one another. Call, text, share a funny video, email, or even send a note in actual mail. I am sharing here some pictures from my walks around campus and in town, and a cartoon. If you have something to share with us, please send it to me before the next newsletter deadline, which is June 6th. It'll



help you feel less isolated during this time. As 'sisters' and as members of the community, it's something

we can do to feel connected since right now we can't have a Game Night, Movie Night, kugel bake off competition, or a field trip to a local art museum.

Right now—take a couple deep breaths. Stretch. Listen to the birds sing. If you go out, use a face covering. Wash your hands. If you sing Oseh Shalom, it takes about 30 seconds! I was sitting on a bench by a lake the other day, just enjoying the sunshine, and a lady was walking by with a really cute dog. I said to her,



“that’s an interesting looking dog you have there.” She said, “thanks, he’s interbred.” Just then a duck walked passed and said, “guess who else is into bread...”. I may be getting like my dad and telling stories over and over, so I apologize if you heard that one before. But then again, if you smiled a little, it was worth it!

Don’t forget that my tenure as President will be up at the end of July. I was recently reminded of just how long my tenure has been. The next President certainly doesn’t have to lead the group as long as I did, but we do need a leader. Everyone pitches in to help, so it’s not a one-person show. Let me know soon if you’re interested.

Tiffany and I were scheduled to host the weekend of our May services. Since we won’t be physically together, here’s a recipe for chocolate cake that I would have made. We can all have a piece after the Friday night services if you make it too!

<i>1 package devil’s food or dark chocolate fudge cake mix</i>	<i>1 cup sour cream</i>
<i>1 package (3.9 oz) chocolate instant pudding mix</i>	<i>1/2 cup warm water</i>
<i>4 large eggs</i>	
<i>1/2 cup vegetable oil, such as canola, corn, safflower, sunflower, or soybean</i>	
<i>1 1/2 cups semisweet chocolate chips (sometimes I mix chocolate chips and peanut butter or butterscotch chips—your choice!)</i>	

—Rack in center of oven, preheat to 350 degrees. Lightly mist with spray, or grease and dust with flour, a 12-cup Bundt pan.

—Place the cake mix, pudding mix, eggs, sour cream, warm water, and oil in a large mixing bowl. Blend with an electric mixer on low speed for 1 minute. Stop the machine and scrape down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula. Increase the mixer speed to medium, and beat 2-3 minutes more, scraping the sides down as needed. The batter should look thick, and well combined. Fold in the chips, be sure they’re well distributed throughout the batter. Pour the batter into the bundt pan and smooth the top.

—Bake the cake until it springs back when lightly pressed with your finger and just starts to pull away from the sides of the pan, 45-50 minutes (you may want to check on it before 45 minutes just in case).

—Remove the pan from the oven and place it on a wire rack to cool for 20 minutes. You can invert it onto a plate to let it cool 20 minutes more, or slice and serve warm.

—Store the cake in an airtight container, foil, or plastic wrap at room temperature for up to 1 week, or it can be frozen wrapped in plastic wrap and foil for up to 6 months (if you can wait that long). Thaw the cake overnight on the counter before serving. (I’ve frozen half of this cake before, and it was still moist when I took it out of the freezer.) Enjoy



### Temple Board



Our next board meeting will be **Wednesday, May 27th at 4:30pm via Zoom**. Board meetings are open to all temple members. Contact Rabbi Dennis if you wish to join the meeting.

TBS Board members are:

**Officers:**

- Barbara Laufer, President
- Susan Goldstein, Vice-President
- Susan Rieder, Treasurer
- Tiffany Hull, Secretary

**Members at Large:**

- Liz Correll
- Marion DuBow
- Lin Gentry
- Amy Hedrick
- Linda Greenfield
- Mary Lee Tosky
- Karen Ferguson
- Kathy Jones

**Donations**

A donation of \$100.00 was made to the Hebrew Immigration Aide Society for the month of May.

**Please consider these funds for your next donation:**

<b>Building and Grounds</b>	<b>Security</b>
<b>Sunday School</b>	<b>Community Relations</b>

**Do you have a favorite charity you would like us to donate to? Let us know.**

### **TBS Community Mitzvah Projects**

The TBS Community Relations and Social Action Committee (CRSAC) has continued to reach out to those in need in our community during the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis. This month, the CRSAC donated \$500 to the Hickory Soup Kitchen to help feed the homeless and families experiencing financial hardships due to the loss of their jobs. We also helped a family devastated by a home fire which resulted in the loss of everything they owned. We were able to contribute hygiene and cleaning supplies as well as some household items to enable them to cook and clean in their new housing. They were very grateful! If TBS members know of other local organizations or individuals in need of support during this trying time, please contact the CRSAC Chairperson, Kathy Jones, at [krsjones2002@yahoo.com](mailto:krsjones2002@yahoo.com).

### **TBS Message Board**

*The board sends wishes of healing and hope to all who are affected by the COVID 19 pandemic, at home, at work, and in hospitals and nursing homes.*

If you wish to post a message to acknowledge a special event or achievement, condolence, or send a get well message, give or send your message and a \$5 donation to Temple Beth Shalom Message Board, PO Box 9142, Hickory, NC 28603. A greeting card will be sent acknowledging your donation and your message will appear here in the next issue of the TBS Bulletin.

## TBS Member Business Directory

*Let us know if you would like to list your business here in the Bulletin. It is a free benefit of TBS membership*

**Dr. Laura Faruque**  
A Woman's View  
915 Tate Blvd SE  
Suite 170  
Hickory, NC 28602  
828-345-0800

**Dr. Mark Faruque**  
Bethlehem Family Practice  
174 Bolick Lane Suite 202  
Taylorsville, NC 28681  
828-495-8226

**Ghiora Mehler**  
The Southern Chickpea  
Falafel Truck  
[thesouthernchickpea.com](http://thesouthernchickpea.com)  
828-999-0496



## Temple Beth Shalom Life Cycle May Events

### Birthdays

Grayson Cohn 5/2	Ross Guttler 5/18
Rick Crater 5/4	Ariel Cohn 5/19
Eileen Cangemi 5/6	Terri Berndt 5/20
David Engelmann 5/7	Damian Blankenship 5/21
Linda Guttler 5/8	Amanda Garrick 5/24
Clyde Ferguson 5/9	Kevin Huitt 5/26
Gabriela Cantore 5/10	Mark Sobotkin 5/30
Michael Sullivan 5/15	

### Anniversaries

Aaron and Mary Lee Tosky 5/4  
Ron and Sue Cohn 5/6  
Bud and Connie Tosky 5/24

### Yahrzeits

Ruth Laufer 5/15  
Richard Fox 5/15  
Sam Griffin 5/17

### Member Business Directory

Scott and Julie Owens  
 Taste Full Beans Coffeehouse  
 29 2nd St NW  
 Hickory, NC 28601  
 828-325-0108  
[www.tastefullbeans.com](http://www.tastefullbeans.com)

Dr David Peltzer  
 Newton Family Physicians  
 767 West First Street  
 Newton, NC 28658  
 828 465-3928  
[www.newtonfamilyphysicians.com](http://www.newtonfamilyphysicians.com)

### Local and Regional Events



Pete Sobotkin is team captain for the Catawba County Fraternal Order of Police team for the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life All Night walk, which will be re-scheduled for later in the year. Its purpose is to raise money for a cure for cancer and to support cancer patients. If you would like to donate to this very important charity, it will be greatly appreciated. All donations are 100% tax deductible. Cash or checks made out to the "American Cancer Society" can be mailed to: Pete Sobotkin, 1004 N Center St, Hickory, NC 28601.



Temple Beth Shalom has an active membership in the Catawba Valley Interfaith Council, where Rabbi Dennis serves as president. You can find out more about this organization and its activities at: <https://www.facebook.com/CVICNC/>.

**Shavuot** is a holiday known for blintzes and cheesecake. Looking for some new recipes you might try this year, since most of us now have the time to bake?! Here are some websites you might want to try out to find just the right creamy, delicious recipes for your stay at home holiday celebration.

[myjewishlearnign.com](http://myjewishlearnign.com)

[busyinbrooklyn.com](http://busyinbrooklyn.com)

[thespruceeats.com](http://thespruceeats.com)

[chabad.org](http://chabad.org)



## Schedule for Rabbi Services and Sunday School 2020

Date	Event	Bulletin Deadline
<b>May</b>		
9	Services Sat. 10:00am via Zoom	May 2
15	Friday Night Service 7:00pm via Zoom	
17	Sunday School 10:00am via Zoom	
29	Erev Shavuot/Friday Night Service 7:00pm via Zoom	
31	TBS Annual Membership Meeting 10:00am via Zoom	
<b>*June</b>		
7	Sunday School Final Session 10:00am	
19-20	Services (Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10:00am)	June 6
<b>*July</b>		
17-18	Services (Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10:00am)	N/A

\*At the time of this publication it is uncertain whether we can safely be back at the temple for Services, Sunday School and other events in June and July. Please check the website for event schedule changes.

Want to contribute to the TBS Bulletin? Send entries to Karen Ferguson at [karen.sederholm@gmail.com](mailto:karen.sederholm@gmail.com). All entries are reviewed by the TBS Board before publication.