

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

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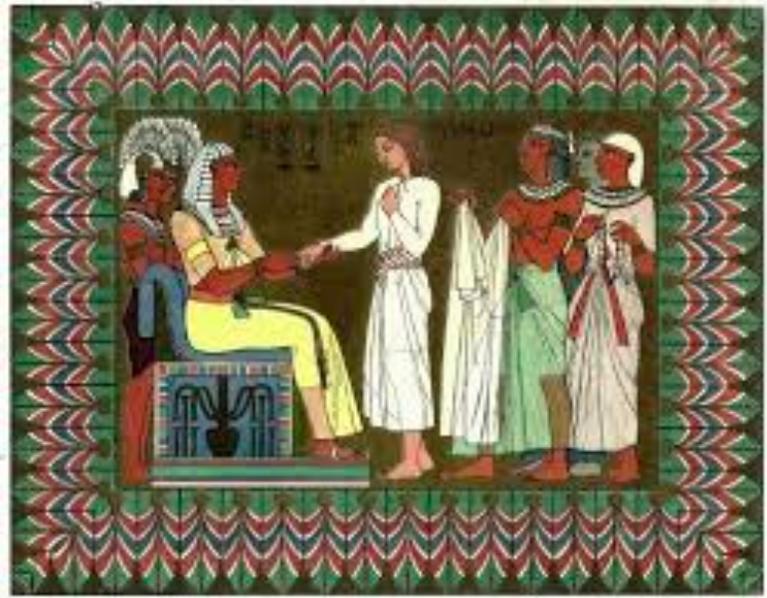
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Temple Beth Shalom
P.O. Box 9142
Hickory, North Carolina 28603
www.hickoryjewishcenter.com



From the Bimah: Our Rabbi's Message

Rabbi Dennis Jones

Lessons From the Story of Joseph



I hope everyone had a meaningful and memorable Thanksgiving. With everyone in the family vaccinated, except two-year-old Adora, we were all able to gather around the same table to share a delicious meal and thoughts on what we are each thankful for. I believe the pandemic has made us more appreciative of blessings we may have once taken for granted. Speaking of blessings sometimes taken for granted, I am looking forward to our Shabbat morning Torah reading on December 11th. We will be reading the last of the

three readings on the life of Joseph, *Vayigash*. This was our son, Jesse's, Bar Mitzvah portion, and we hope it to be our grandson, Pierce's, also as soon as the pandemic winds down a bit more. Although Joseph is just one of twelve sons and one daughter of Jacob, Leah, Rachel, Bilhah, and Zilpah, Joseph receives far more coverage in the Torah than any of his siblings. He is featured almost as prominently in the book of Genesis/Bereishit as Abraham and Jacob, his forbears. The story of Joseph unfolds in the Torah over the course of three portions, *Vayeshev*, *Mikeitz*, and *Vayigash*, (Genesis 37:1-47:27). Among the patriarchs and matriarchs in the book of Genesis, Joseph stands out as a dreamer and interpreter of dreams. Yet his speech and behavior always model a humility and abiding consciousness of Adonai.

Torah portion, *Vayeshev*, opens with Joseph as a youth of seventeen years. Unfortunately, perhaps due to the passion he felt for Rachel, the Torah makes it clear that Jacob did not hide his love and favoritism for Joseph: "Now Israel (Jacob) loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a multicolored tunic. And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers; and so they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms" (Gen. 37:3-4). To make matters worse, Joseph had a set of back-to-back dreams foretelling his rise to a position of leadership. In the first dream he and his brothers were binding sheaves in the field. Joseph states, "My sheaf rose up and also stood erect, and behold your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf." In the second dream Joseph relates, "The sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me" (Gen. 37:5-9). The telling of these dreams only increased his brothers' hatred for him all the more. Even his father seemed a bit roiled at the report of the second dream. He rebuked him, saying, "What is this dream that you have had? Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground?" (v. 10).

When Israel sent Joseph to check on his brothers who were pasturing their flocks in Shechem, the brothers saw it as an opportunity to punish Joseph. They debated killing him or just leaving him in a pit, but ultimately sold him to a caravan of Ishmaelite merchants who happened to pass by. The merchants, of course, took Joseph down to Egypt. Joseph's brothers took his multicolored tunic, dipped it in the blood of a goat, and gave it to their father Jacob, leading him to believe that Joseph had been killed by wild beasts. Jacob was beside himself with grief. The Torah reports, "Then all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. And he said, 'Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son.' So his father wept for him" (Gen. 37:35).

The Ishmaelite merchants sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's bodyguard. Even in his servitude it must have been very evident that God was present with and blessing Joseph. Potiphar noticed it: "Now his master saw that the LORD was with him and how the LORD caused all that he did to prosper in his hand" (Gen. 39:3). Potiphar was so impressed with Joseph that he made him his personal steward and put him in charge of all the affairs of his household. That proved to be a

wise decision on Potiphar's part because the Torah tells us, "The LORD blessed the Egyptian's house on account of Joseph; thus the LORD's blessing was upon all that he owned, in the house and in the field" (v. 5).

Perhaps the hardships he suffered gave Joseph a greater consciousness of the Divine. We begin to see evidence of that when he was confronted with the temptation of Potiphar's wife. She was obviously enamored with Joseph and approached him boldly requesting intimacy with him. He rebuffed her with the statement, "How then could I do this great evil, and sin against God?" (v. 9). According to the biblical account, that did not stop her. She continued to pursue Joseph. Once when they were alone, she "caught him by his garment." He fled, leaving his garment with her. Potiphar's wife used the incident to concoct a false accusation against Joseph, landing him in prison.

Even in prison Adonai's blessing upon Joseph was so pronounced that it was noticed by others. "The LORD was with Joseph and extended kindness to him and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer. And the chief jailer committed to Joseph's charge all the prisoners who were in the jail" (Gen. 39:21-22). It was in prison that Joseph first displayed his unique ability to interpret dreams. He accurately interpreted the dreams of the Pharaoh's chief cupbearer and baker. Joseph, however, did not take credit for the interpretation for himself, but rather explained, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (Gen. 40:8). It was this ability to interpret dreams that brought Joseph to Pharaoh's court. Pharaoh had a recurring dream, and no one was able to interpret it. It was then that the chief cupbearer remembered that Joseph's interpretation of his dream, while in prison, had in fact come true.

Joseph's awareness of and devotion to God are evident in his words to Pharaoh, who at that time would have considered *himself* a god. When Pharaoh tells Joseph that he had a dream that no one was able to interpret he states, "I have heard it said about you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it." Joseph humbly replies, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer" (Gen. 41:16). Upon hearing of Pharaoh's dreams of the seven plump cows grazing along the Nile who are eaten by seven gaunt cows and seven full years of grain which were eaten up by seven withered ears, Joseph tells Pharaoh, "God has told Pharaoh what God is about to do" (v. 25). Joseph then informs Pharaoh that the dreams indicate that there will be seven years of plenty in Egypt followed by seven years of famine. The fact that the dream was repeated twice "means that the matter is determined by God and God will quickly bring it about" (v. 32). Joseph's interpretation must have resonated strongly with Pharaoh. Pharaoh tells his servants, "Can we find a man like this in whom is a spirit of God?" And, Pharaoh tells Joseph, "Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you are" (vv. 38-39). Pharaoh, of course, goes on to appoint Joseph as the ruler of all Egypt, second only to Pharaoh himself.

Perhaps Joseph's reverence for Adonai is most pronounced in the graciousness with which he deals with his brothers' wrong toward him. You recall that the sons of Jacob had to go down to Egypt to get

grain because there was no food in Canaan. The brothers deal with Joseph not knowing that it is, in fact, their lost brother. He, however, recognizes them. Once he reveals his identity to them they are quite fearful. Joseph tells them not to be angry or grieved, insisting that it was God’s plan for him to be where he was. Joseph makes multiple statements to that effect, for example, “God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God” (Gen. 45:7-8).

In his book, **Lessons in Leadership*, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks asks what it was about Joseph that enabled him to become second in command of what would have been the greatest superpower of the ancient world at that time. The answer, according to Rabbi Sacks, is that Joseph combined three abilities that many people have separately, but that few have together. First is the ability to dream, as dreaming can give direction and meaning to an individual’s life. Second, is the ability to interpret the dreams of others. By articulating the dreams and aspirations of others, you place yourself in a position of respect in their eyes. Third, and perhaps most importantly, is the ability to translate dreams into *concrete actions* that accomplish the dreamed goal. Rabbi Sacks uses the more recent examples of Theodore Herzl and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to support this three-fold ability combination. In the Rabbi’s own words, “Dream dreams, understand and articulate the dreams of others, and find ways of turning a dream into reality – these three gifts are leadership, the Joseph way. (*Lessons in Leadership*, p. 50)

* *Lessons in Leadership*, Maggid Books, Jerusalem, 2015

President’s Message

Susan Goldstein, President

Looking for a way to support Israel? I recently subscribed to *Lev Haolam*, an organization that supports local Jewish business owners in Judea and Samaria who are suffering because of the anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (“BDS”) movement. Each month I receive a Surprise Monthly Package filled with seven to eight unique items that are produced by companies in Judea, Samaria, and Golan Heights. The products in each package vary every month, and can include honey, chocolates, tea, wine, oils, spices, dried fruits and vegetables, organic cosmetics, Judaica items, jewelry, handmade artisan crafts, decorative household items, and more. Please note the photo of my new apron! If you’d like to learn more, visit www.levhaolam.com.



Are you interested in exploring the Jewish history of North Carolina cities?

Have you heard about The Jewish Heritage North Carolina (“JHNC”)? Visit www.jewishnc.org to sign up for virtual tours exploring Jewish History in Asheville (Sunday, December 19, from 4:00 pm until 5:00 pm) and Charlotte (Sunday, January 23, from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm). These Zoom events are free, but registration is required.

And, of course, the Shalom Hartman Institute (www.shalomhartman.org.il) continues to offer lectures and podcasts free of charge. Limmud North America (www.limmudna.org) always has a new program on the horizon. Check out the website for the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte (www.jewishcharlotte.org) for in-person or virtual opportunities. More to come.....

See you in shul -- in-person or virtually.

L'Shalom,

Susan

TBS Sisterhood

Sheri Stock, Sisterhood President

Our Craft Fair and Hanukkah Fair were huge successes! We all had a lot of fun schmoozing, crafting, and enjoying snacks and drinks together! Everyone made such cute things! A big shout out to Kathy Jones for being the creative force behind this terrific event! I definitely see more craft days in our future! The Hanukkah Fair brought by Temple Beth El was also a hit! Thank you to everyone who shopped, both in person and virtually and a huge thank you to TBE for coming!

I will be baking challah again on Friday January 7th. Please join me! You will leave with between 6 to 8 loaves of challah. Or you can bake 1-2 loaves of gluten free challah. It is a lot of fun to bake (and maybe even enjoy an adult beverage) together!

I look forward to seeing you all again soon....both in person and on Zoom.



TBS Sunday School Program

Kathy Jones, Sunday School Principal

Sunday School students are still hanging in there with our Zoom meetings. Learning Hebrew is difficult under the best of circumstances, but doing it virtually is especially demanding. We thank all of the students and parents for their continued commitment to our faith and heritage. Fortunately, they were at least able to enjoy some Hanukkah baskets of goodies and crafts this month and then to win some prizes at our virtual Chanukah Bingo game on Sunday, December 5th. Thank you to everyone who joined the game with us. It made it *almost* as fun as the “in-person” version! And a big thank you goes to the Stock family who has driven over-time to deliver challah, Chanukah baskets, and bingo prizes to everyone!

Our next class will be Sunday, December 19th, at 10 AM. If you would like to know more about the TBS Sunday School, please contact, Kathy Jones, SS Principal, at krsjones2002@yahoo.com.

Harriet Sederholm Scholarship Fund



The Harriet Sederholm Scholarship Fund was established by a long-standing Temple member, Burt Sederholm, to honor his wife Harriet, who died shortly after her retirement after 25 years with the Catawba County Department of Social Services. Mr. Sederholm's efforts provided the initial funding from generous family members and friends and it 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 nor Jewish to apply. The scholarship fund dividends are used to provide scholarship awards. Candidates may submit an essay to any one of the committee members. The essay will explain who the candidate is, what they are doing currently, what their plans are for the future, how the scholarship funds will be used and, if applicable, what the connection may be to Jewish life.

Interested students should submit their essay by April 30th. The scholarship season runs from May 1-April 30. All applicants will be notified in writing if their application has been approved or declined by May 15th. Awards should be mailed to recipients by May 31st.

The essay should be emailed to any of the committee members: Lin Gentry, Karen Ferguson, or Sandy Guttler. Naturally, the committee encourages everyone to make a tax-deductible donation to the Scholarship Fund at any time.

Temple Board

Our next board meeting will be Wednesday, December 15th at 6:30pm via Zoom. Board meetings are open to all temple members. Contact Susan Goldstein if you wish to join the meeting. Board members are:

Officers:

Susan Goldstein, President

Barbara Laufer, Past President

Tiffany Hull, Vice President

Susan Rieder, Treasurer



Lin Gentry, Secretary

Members at Large:

Liz Correll

Mary Lee Tosky

Karen Ferguson

Derek Cooperberg

Sheri Stock

Susan Tiger Huitt

Jodi Lavin-Tompkins

Donations

In memory of Elaine Zerden

John and Kelly Meier

Karl and Shirley Thomason

Lindsay Nell Smith

Kingston Residence

Deane Griffin

Forrest and Rebecca Ferrell

James and Carl Dickson

Steven and Jane Mull

Raymond and Judy Goldman

W. Stine Isenhower

Dale and Brenda Cline

Nancy Wilfong

Gary and Sheila Pearson

The Elam family

Marilynn and Charles Rivkin

Mr. and Mrs. Gary Stafford

Rochelle Rudo and Emily Datnoff

**TBS Gives through
Donations**

Our donation for the month of November was sent to Hickory Family Care Center. December's was sent to Kwanzaa Family Inn.

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



When we all get back to temple in person 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.

Please consider these funds for your next donation:

Building and Grounds

Security

Sunday School

Community Relations and Social Action



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/>.

TBS Community Mitzvah Projects

This month we were able to donate winter coats to two ladies at a local shelter and we donated 2 dozen hoodies, hats, gloves, and boots to a coat give-a-way by the Bridge Community (a private non-profit agency) in Stony Point, NC. We have been having some unseasonably warm days recently, but those temperatures won't stay! So, if you have some gently used winter coats, hats, gloves, scarves, sweatpants, sweatshirts, hoodies, and socks, that you no longer need, please consider donating them to our Community Relations and Social Action Committee! We will make sure that they go to those in need!

Thank you to Jodi and Rhett Lavin-Tompkins for their donation of a dinette set this month. It will surely be needed by a family soon!

If you have items or funds for our on-going tikkun olam work, please contact Kathy Jones, krsjones2002@yahoo.com

Temple Beth Shalom Life Cycle Events



November Birthdays

Rachel Faruque 11/4
 Rachel Engelmann 11/7
 Jon Levinson 11/8
 Susan Huitt 11/9
 Alec Davidson 11/10
 Mary Lee Tosky 11/13
 Jenna Gold 11/15
 Laura Levinson 11/15
 Sarah Levinson 11/16
 Raeann Cangemi 11/19
 Aline Cooperberg 11/27
 Sue Cole 11/28

November Anniversaries

Liz and Jim Correll 11/22

November Yahrzeit

Samuel Lippe 11/7
 Doris Davidson 11/8
 Clara Gitlin 11/9
 Werner Cohn 11/9
 Bert Yelin 11/9
 Murray Asch 11/10

December Birthdays

Nick Weatherly 12/3
 Roberta Atkins 12/3
 Kathy Jones 12/5
 Pete Sobotkin 12/6
 Herman Garrick 12/12
 Pam Axler 12/12
 Hannah Davidson 12/13
 Barry Sobotkin 12/16
 Ginny Sobotkin 12/18
 Ben Setser 12/21
 Eva Reed 12/28
 Andrew Weatherly 12/29
 Donnie Powell 12/30
 Sarah Peltzer 12/31

December Anniversaries

Larry and Barbara Laufer 12/28
 Henry and Linda Greenfield 12/31

December Yahrzeit

Joseph Brisbane 12/5
 Ruth Morewitz 12/7
 Herman Davis 12/9
 Helene Tiber 12/16
 Justine Lavin 12/27
 Arnold Simons 12/30

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

Scott and Julie Owens
Taste Full Beans Coffeehouse
29 2nd St NW
Hickory, NC 28601
828-325-0108
www.tastefullbeans.com

Dr. David Peltzer
Newton Family Physicians
767 West First Street
Newton, NC 28658
828 465-3928
www.newtonfamilyphysicians.com

Local and Regional Events



For information about upcoming events check out:

<https://holocaust.appstate.edu/events>



**SHALOM
HARMON
INSTITUTE**

Follow this link for information about upcoming online events at SHI: <https://www.hartman.org.il/programs/>

Schedule for Rabbi Services and Sunday School 2021-22

For event updates, email: info@hickoryjewishcenter.com

DATE		EVENT	BULLETIN DEADLINE
December	11	Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	December 4
	12	Sunday School 10:00 AM	
	17	Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
	19	Sunday School 10:00 AM	
January	8	Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	January 1
	9	Sunday School 10:00 AM	
	21	Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
	23	Sunday School 10:00 AM	
February	12	Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	February 5
	13	Sunday School 10:00 AM	
	25	Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
	27	Sunday School 10:00 AM	
March	12	Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	March 5
	13	Sunday School 10:00 AM	
April	9	Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	April 2
	10	Sunday School 10:00 AM	
	16	Passover Community Seder 6:00 PM (Saturday)	
	22	Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
	24	Sunday School 10:00 AM	
May	14	Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	May 7
	15	Sunday School 10:00 AM	
	22	TBS Annual Membership Meeting 10:00 AM (Sunday)	
	27	Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
	29	Sunday School 10:00 AM	
June	5	Shavuot Morning Service 10:00 AM (Sunday)	June 4
	11	Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	
	12	Sunday School Final Session/Party 10:00 AM	
	24	Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
July	9	Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	N/A
	22	Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	

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

