

Temple Beth El

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Rabbi's Message – Dov Gottesfeld

POINTING A FINGER

Shalom to all:

In the book of Exodus, right from the outset, Pharaoh the king of Egypt points his finger at the Jewish population and accuses them for being a fifth-column in the country; saying that when Egypt's enemies attack Egypt, the Israelites will join their enemies. (Exodus 1:10). The book of Exodus doesn't tell us why Egypt had enemies, or why the Israelite population which did so well in Egypt would want to topple the new Pharaoh.

As a history buff I learned that the political and social conditions in Egypt at the time were corrupt. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Pharaoh needed to point his finger and blame someone for those conditions. Finger pointing would follow the Israelites to the present time... and, sadly, I must say (or predict) for the coming future.



Dov Gottesfeld

Yet, pointing a finger to blame others for one's own failures is in the nature of those men and women who do not have self-expectation, and therefore project their socialization of guilt onto others. With the popularization of social networks – more and more people have given themselves the right to “vent” their negative opinions about themselves and assign it to others. Then the monster started growing, and became real.

*“The socialization of guilt or the art of avoiding responsibilities: . Our Judeo-Christian roots place good and evil within each person, regardless of their circumstances. However, since the evil inclination carries with it the seeds of guilt, feelings that we find unbearable, we try to project them outside of ourselves.” At the individual level, this projection of guilt is almost uncontrollable, barely conscious, and not very rational. However, on a social level it is often used consciously as a throwing weapon to hide one's own “sins”. Thus we end up pointing the accusing finger at others.”**

Continued on Page 2

January Schedule of Services:

January 3rd Kazzan Jonathan Kohan (7:30 PM)
January 10th Diane Borad-Mirken (7:30 PM)
January 17th Rabbi Dov Gottesfeld (7:30 PM)
January 24th Josué Medrano (7:30 PM)
January 31st Anita Friedman (7:30 PM)

Educational Activities

Etz Chaim Children's Religious School 10 AM

Continued from Page 1

I don't know at which point in time (or perhaps it will never happen) good people will rise above that ancient disgrace and augment themselves to their highest level for the benefit of humanity.

Blessings.

Rabbi Dov Gottesfeld

January 18, 2025

**Eisenberg, N. et. Al. (2000) Emotion, regulation, and moral development. Annu Rev Psychol; 51: 665-697.*

TBE Board of Directors for 2024-2025

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President's Column – Guest Columnist Anita Friedman

HEBREW STEPPING STONES

Yad – A Handy Metaphor

Hands are essential to our functioning as active human beings. We use our hands to do things, make things and break things; to help ourselves and to reach out to others. Those who are adept with their hands are handy. A part of an object designed to be grasped in the hand is a handle. Even the pointers on a clock are hands. Someone or something within reach is at hand. You may hand an object to someone else. When you complete a project you hand it over, perhaps in the form of a handbook.

Hand is also a metaphor. The right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing. Some strive for the upper hand. One who takes action without thought for others is highhanded; a devious person is underhanded. Combat may be hand-to-hand, preferably without ending up in the hands of the enemy. You may dismiss people disrespectfully by giving them the back of your hand. You may help people by lending a hand, distributing a handout, or giving a hand up. A generous person is open-handed. Hand waving may be a greeting, a farewell, a signal, or an attempt to evade providing a logical explanation.

People greet each other or seal verbal agreements by shaking hands. In some cultures, a marriage betrothal is called a handfast. A melodrama hero orders the villain to unhand the heroine. One who directs certain animals or people is called a handler.

Like English, Hebrew has many literal and metaphorical uses related to hand. The Hebrew word is yad, plural yadayim. A Torah pointer is also called a yad. It is usually made with a tiny hand and pointing index finger at the tip.

Something nearby or on hand is Al yad. Related Hebrew words are yadit – handle and miyad – immediately (off-the-cuff, literally from a hand). The Hebrew letter yod (rhymes with hood), is said to represent a hand.

An everyday example is the prayer for washing the hands: Baruch atah ... asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al n'tilat yadayim. Blessed are you ... Who has sanctified us by Your commandments, and commanded us concerning the washing (or raising) of the hands.

Examples from the Psalms and Torah are often metaphorical rather than literal.

“Potayach et yadecha – You [God] open Your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing.” (Psalms 145:16). Note the similarity to the English term open-handed.

The Torah contains numerous examples. “... kol asher lo b'yad Yosef” [Potiphar left] all that he had in the hand of (control of) Joseph (Gen. 39:6).

God tells Moses He will descend to rescue His people “miyad mitzrayim” from the hand of (power of) Egypt (Exodus 3:8).

These are the decrees, the ordinances, and the teachings that the Lord gave ... at Mount Sinai “biyad Moshe” by the hand of (through) Moses. (Lev. 26:46).

May you now have a yadit on this word and keep its meaning al yad.

Sources: 1) Chumash. ArtScroll. 2) Tanach. ArtScroll. 3) The Joys of Hebrew. Lewis Glinert. 4) Transliterated Linear Haggadah. Seif Edition. ArtScroll.

By Anita Friedman

SLO Hillel to present at Cal Poly:
Ashagar Araro - Feminist, Liberal, Black, and Proud Israeli
Monday, February 3, 8pm
Baker, Room 113
 and
Irene Shavit - October 7th Survivor of Kibbutz Kfar Aza
Tuesday, February 18, 7:30pm
University Union, Room 220

The first speaker of the month is set for Monday, February 3rd at 8pm in Baker Hall, room 113. Ashagar Araro is a prominent Ethiopian Israeli social media influencer and activist who immigrated to Israel from Ethiopia under the Israeli Defense Forces' Operation Solomon when she was an infant. Araro has served in the IDF, in public diplomacy, and recently established an Ethiopian Heritage center called Bettea. We will hear from Ashagar about her background, the history of Jews of Ethiopian descent in Israel, and her experiences with anti-Black racism and antisemitism.

RSVPs are required.

Please register online here: <https://forms.gle/hSyiLccdeFv9pD4f8>

SLO Hillel is also honored to bring to San Luis Obispo a survivor from the terrorist attacks on October 7th. Irene Shavit is a 23 years old Israeli from Bitzaron, an agricultural moshav. Irene was living in Kfar Aza, with her beloved fiancé, Netta, on October 7th, 2023. She will come to Cal Poly to share and shed light into the life of being a resident of the idyllic peace-loving community and young in-love couple's experience hiding in their bedroom on one of the most heavily massacred streets. Irene describes her survival story, all the way from hiding behind her fiancé's murdered body, to her now, deciding to continue living a life full of laughter and love. It's impossible not to be inspired by her remarkable way of persevering through life, the way Netta would have wanted. Irene's story is a beautiful combination of love, tragedy, and strength.

Irene will speak as part of Faces of October Seventh, a nonprofit organization aiming to combat antisemitism through speaker events. **RSVPs are required.** Please register online here: <https://forms.gle/ULwF9MjtqD3sVduN9>

Irene is available for interviews prior to the event. Please contact SLO Hillel to arrange for an interview.

Bulletin Briefs

January Anniversaries

31 Marsha & Gary Epstein

January Birthdays

7 Len Akronowitz
7 Abby Lassen
13 Tristan Romero
15 Guillermo Aguilar
19 Benjamin Epstein
22 Michael LeCover
23 Johanna Reese
24 Kimberly Goldstien
30 Ron Levy

Donations

Michael & Barbara Sachs
Myra Wapner
Joyce Ellen Lippman
Len Akronowitz

Weekly Torah Portion Discussions and Shabbat services at Temple Beth El for TBE members whose main language is Spanish.

The Spanish-speaking portion of our membership meets just about every Saturday morning at the temple starting at 9:30 am. We use a Spanish/Hebrew prayer book and hold a Shabbat service and a discussion of the weekly portion in Spanish. We are not a separate group from the temple (TBE) membership but are members of it whose main language is Spanish and feel that this space creates for us a comfortable way to immerse ourselves in the study of the Torah. Everyone is welcome to join with us, even the English speaking who are striving to learn Spanish as well as our Jewish heritage. We are pleased that we have a space to accommodate our needs and we thank the Board of Directors who encouraged this. The leader of our group is Raul Medina (805) 922-4171 or (805) 868-8153).

Discusiones semanales de la porcion de la Tora y servicios de Shabat en el Templo Beth El para los miembros de TBE cuyo idioma principal es el español. Los miembros de habla hispana de nuestra sinagoga se reune casi todos los sabados por la mañana en el templo a partir de las 9:30 am. Usamos un libro de Rezos en espanol / hebreo y celebramos un servicio de Shabat y una discusión de la porcion semana en español. No somos un grupo separado de la sinagoga (TBE), sino que somos miembros de el cuyo idioma principal es el español y sentimos que este espacio crea para nosotros una manera comoda de sumergimos en el estudio de la Tora. Todos son bienvenidos a unirse a nosotros, incluso los de habla inglesa que se esfuerzan por aprender espanol, asi como nuestra herencia judia. Nos complace tener un espacio para acomodar nuestras necesidades y agradecemos a la Junta Directiva que permita esto. Para mas información comunicarse con Raúl Medina al 805-868-8153.

Sisterhood

The Sisterhood is resuming our dinner meetings in February! Diane Borad-Mirken has taken the helm and will be organizing our meetings on the second Tuesday of each month. Our February meeting will take place on Tuesday, February 11th, 6:00 PM, at La Villa Mexican restaurant (owned by the Aguilar family). The address is 1115 W. Main St. Everyone is invited; bring friends along. Please RSVP to Diane: (805) 478-1463 so we know how many to expect.

We're looking forward to resuming these dinners and the chance to get together after a long hiatus.

Marsha Epstein

Brotherhood

The next Brotherhood meeting will be held on Sunday, February 2nd, 9:00 AM at the Temple. (We used to start a half hour earlier so here's your chance to sleep in.) Join us for our famous breakfast of lox and bagels, eggs, muffins and extras.

As usual, I will send out articles of interest to members of the group. Our seminar conversations have been lively, interesting and informative and all interested people, men and women, are welcome to join us.

Gary Epstein

January Yarzheits

1/1/25	Diane Kaunfer	1	Tevet	Mother of Al Kaunfer
1/2/25	Laurie Wikes	20	Tevet	Friend of Boots and Seymour Hersh
1/2/25	Rubin Klinger*	2	Tevet	Father of Judith Klinger
1/3/25	Katie Goldstien	3	Tevet	Mother of Sid & David Goldstien
1/3/25	Janet Hirsch	3	Tevet	Cousin of Boots and Seymour Hersh
1/4/25	Morris Klempfner			Brother-in-law of Boots & Seymour Hersh
1/4/25	Gertrude (Trudy) Resnick*	23	Tevet	Sister of Rose Shrogin
1/5/25	Freda Kunarsky*	5	Tevet	Mother of Diana Bereskin
1/6/25	Caroline Barnett*			Mother of Bert Barnett
1/7/25	Cheryl Lynn Pinckard*	6	Shevat	Daughter of Terri Ellen & G. Thomas Pinkard
1/7/25	Dorothy Herscovitz	7	Tevet	Mother of Lyn Meltzer
1/9/25	Sheldon "Shep" Bereskin	9	Tevet	Father of Sari & Abby
1/9/25	Florence Wall*	9	Tevet	Wife of Leo Wall
1/9/25	Emma Wiessenberg	9	Tevet	Aunt of Lori Meltzer-Sutton
1/11/25	Jerome F. Lubin*	11	Tevet	Husband of Evelyn Lubin
1/12/25	Maurice Lafferty			Father of Sherry Semiatin
1/12/25	Ruth Sylinski*			Wife of Contrad Sylinski
1/14/25	Jacob S. Gollub*	14	Tevet	Father of Myra Wapner
1/15/25	Morris Shulman	19	Tevet	Father of Bernice Gaon
1/15/25	Rachel Smith			Mother of Deanna Hart
1/16/25	Morris Akronowitz	16	Tevet	Father of Len Akronowitz
1/19/25	Louis Klein*			Father of Ruth Roth
1/20/25	Irwin Wapner*	20	Tevet	Husband of Myra Wapner
1/21/25	Edith Greenberg*			Mother of Sandra Sussman
1/21/25	Lily Korklin	21	Tevet	Aunt of Michael LeCover
1/22/25	Joanna (Joey) Bilow			Mother of Aaron Bilow
1/22/25	Bernice (Boots) Hersh			Wife of Seymour Hersh
1/22/25	Rosa Mora			Grandmother of Josue Medrano
1/23/25	Nathan Novak	23	Tevet	Uncle of Michael Sachs
1/24/25	Yankel (Chester) Holstein	2	Shevat	Grandfather of Eric Berge
1/25/25	Trudy Andross*			Wife of Norman Andross
1/25/25	Al Feinblatt	14	Shevat	Friend of Gary & Marsha Epstein
1/25/25	Paul Goldiner			Husband of Mary Goldiner
1/25/25	Samuel David Kellman	21	Shevat	Grandfather of Gary Epstein
1/25/25	Tillie Kaplan	25	Tevet	A founding member of Temple Beth El
1/26/25	Louis Vincent*	26	Tevet	Grandfather of Kenneth L. Wolf
1/27/25	Naomi Gerber			Niece of Diane Borad-Mirken
1/27/25	Marvin Morris	7	Shevat	Cousin of Seymour Hersh
1/27/25	Shirley Simon*			Sister-in-law of Nancy Evans
1/27/25	Rae Schklair	27	Tevet	Grandmother of Suzanne Levy
1/29/25	Bonny LeVine	17	Shevat	Aunt of Gary Epstein
1/31/25	Millie Kring			Wife of Ray Kring
1/31/25	Bess Perline	2	Shevat	Sister of Irwin Wapner

Months of Mourning

Mel Kalish	Husband of Esther	7/30/24
Willis Oren Wagner	Father of Randy Wagner	8/30/24
Phyllis Green	Mother of Steven Green	9/17/24

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Hanukkah Party (5 PM)	2	3 Kazzan Jonathan Kohan will lead Shabbat service (7:30 PM)	4 Kazzan Jonathan Kohan leads Shabbat service & Torah study (9 AM)
5 Brotherhood Breakfast & 183rd Seminar (9 AM)	6	7 TBE Board meeting (7 PM)	8	9	10 Diane Borad-Mirken will lead Shabbat service (7:30 PM)	11 Raúl Medina leads Shabbat service & Torah study (9:30 AM) Also: Amber Medina leads Etz Chaim class (10 AM)
12	13	14	15	16	17 Rabbi Gottesfeld will lead Shabbat service (7:30 PM)	18 Rabbi Gottesfeld leads Shabbat service & Torah study (9:30 AM) Also: Raúl Medina leads Shabbat service & Torah study (4:30 PM) Also: Amber Medina leads Etz Chayim class (10 AM)
19	20	21	22	23	24 Josué Medrano will lead Shabbat service (7:30 PM)	25 Raúl Medina leads Shabbat service & Torah study (9:30 AM) Also: Amber Medina leads Etz Chaim class (10 AM)
26	27	28	29	30	31 Anita Friedman will lead Shabbat service (7:30 PM)	