



December 2021
Kislev-Tevet 5782



**TEMPLE
B'NAI
ISRAEL**
THE SATELL CENTER
FOR JEWISH LIFE ON
THE EASTERN SHORE

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FROM THE RABBI'S DESK



Below is Rabbi Hyman's sermon delivered on November 12, 2021. These thoughts were strengthened through the scholarship of Rabbi Neal Cohen, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks and Rabbi Sam Levine.

What is it that made Jacob – not Abraham or Isaac or Moses – the true father of the Jewish people? We are "Congregation B'nai Israel," "Congregation of the children of Israel." Jacob/Israel is the man whose name we bear. Yet Jacob did not begin the Jewish journey; Abraham did. Jacob faced no trial like that of Isaac at the binding. He did not lead the people out of Egypt. He did not bring them the Torah. To be sure, unlike Abraham or Isaac, all his children stayed within the faith. But that simply pushes the question back one level. Why did he succeed where Abraham and Isaac failed?



It seems that the answer lies in this week's parsha and the next. Jacob was the man whose greatest visions came to him when he was alone at night, far from home, fleeing from one danger to the next. In this week's parsha, escaping from Esau, he stops and rests for the night with only stones to lie on and has an epiphany: He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it ... When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it." He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven." (Gen. 28:12-17) In next week's parsha, fleeing from Laban and terrified at the prospect of meeting Esau again, he wrestles alone at night with an unnamed stranger.

Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome" ... So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared." (Gen. 32:29-31) These are the decisive spiritual encounters of Jacob's life, yet they happen in liminal space (the space between that is neither starting point nor destination), at a time when Jacob was at risk in both directions, where he came from and where he was going to. Yet it was at these points of major vulnerability that he encountered God and found the courage to continue despite all the hazards of the journey. That is the strength Jacob gives to the Jewish people. What is remarkable is not just that this one tiny people survived

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Saturday, December 4, 10:00 a.m.
Torah Portion: Miketz
Genesis 41:1-44:17
Haftarah: Isaiah 66:1-24

Friday, December 10, 6:00 p.m.
Torah Portion: Vayigash
Genesis 44:18-47:27
Haftarah: Ezekiel 37:15-28

Saturday, December 18, 10:00 a.m.
Torah Portion: Vayechi
Genesis 47:28-50:26
Haftarah: 1 Kings 2:1-12

Friday, December 24, 6:00 p.m.
Torah Portion: Shemot
Exodus 1:1-6:1
Haftarah: Isaiah 27:6-28:13, 29:22-23



tragedies that would have absolutely seen the end of any other people: the destruction of two temples, the Babylonian and Roman conquests, the expulsions, persecutions and pogroms of the Middle Ages, the rise of Anti-Semitism in nineteenth century Europe and the Holocaust. Yet, after each cataclysm, we found the strength and resolve to rise from the ashes and establish and reestablish ourselves; scaling new heights, offering the world new achievements and saying, yet again, Hineni.

During the Babylonian exile we deepened our engagement with Torah. After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans we produced the Oral Torah: Midrash, Mishnah and Gemara - the Talmud. During the Middle Ages it produced masterpieces of law and Torah commentary, poetry and philosophy. And three years after the Holocaust we established the state of Israel, marking the Jewish return to history after the darkest night of exile.

You know, the first time I ever had a cardiac exam, the doctor put me on a treadmill. I asked him, is this a test to see how fast I can go or how long I can sustain this pace?" "Neither," he said. "What I want to see is how long it takes, once you are off the treadmill, for your pulse to return to normal." That exchange taught me something important. I realized that health is measured by the power of recovery. That is true for everyone but doubly so for leaders and for us, the Jewish people, "a kingdom of priests."

Leaders confront and suffer crises. That's a given of leadership. Bad things happen, and when they do, effective leaders must rise up, face those challenges and provide intelligent, stable, rational insight so that those they lead can assist in calming the waters and not contribute to the turbulence. Leadership, especially in matters of the spirit, is deeply stressful. Four figures in Torah - Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah and Jonah - actually pray to die rather than continue. Nor was this true only in the distant past. Abraham Lincoln suffered deep bouts of depression. So did Churchill, who called it his "black dog." Gandhi and Dr. King experienced depressive illness in adult life. The same was true of many great creative artists, among them Michelangelo, Beethoven and Van Gogh.

Is it greatness that leads to moments of despair, or moments of despair that lead to greatness? Is it that those who lead internalize the stresses and tensions of their time? Or is it that those who are used to stress in their emotional lives find release in leading exceptional lives? There is no convincing answer to this question in any of our sacred literature. But Jacob was a more emotionally volatile individual than either Abraham, who was often serene even in the face of great trials, or Isaac who was more than usually withdrawn. Jacob feared; Jacob loved; Jacob spent more of his time in exile than the other patriarchs. But Jacob endured and persisted. Of all the figures in Genesis, he is the great survivor.

The ability to survive, to recover and move forward is part of what it takes to be a leader. It is the willingness to live a life of risks that makes such individuals different from others. Said President Roosevelt in one of the greatest speeches ever made on the subject: "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat." Jacob endured the rivalry of Esau, the resentment of Laban, the tension between his wives and children, the early death of his beloved Rachel and the loss, for twenty-two years, of his favorite son Joseph. He said to Pharaoh, "Few and hard have been the years of my life" (Gen. 47:9). Yet on the way he "encountered" angels, and whether they were wrestling with him or climbing the ladder to heaven they lit the night with the aura of transcendence.

To try, to fall, to fear, and yet to keep going: that is what it takes to be a leader. That was Jacob, the man who at the lowest ebbs of his life had his greatest visions of heaven.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Joyce and I spent the week with family in Palm Springs, California with very nice desert weather. We missed seeing everyone here at home, however, and it's great to be back!

With December come the shortest days of the year and our lovely Festival of Lights! Everyone, join with us on the Temple pergola for our outdoor Menorah lighting ceremony on the last night of Hanukkah, December 5th. This is a special event not only for our members, but also for the Community.

On the flip side, we're so distressed reading about the Omicron variant of COVID-19, and we pray our members and friends will stay healthy throughout. We're continuing to monitor the situation because we all know how important it is for us all to return to the Temple for Oneg Shabbats and the Potluck Dinner that we're planning to hold in December.

Finally, don't forget to Zoom into the December 19th Lifelong Learning Engage! event where author and former White House speechwriter Sarah Hurwitz will lead a discussion on her book "Here All Along." I'm about halfway through it now and can report it is an amazing and moving treatise on the meaning of being Jewish – thoughtful, yet very readable and understandable!

Happy Hanukkah to one and all!

Ben Schlesinger

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



As I reflect on the year, I continue to be inspired by our members and leadership as we worked around the challenges faced with living through another year of the pandemic. I wish to share a number of the highlights:

- The "Old Temple" on Earle Avenue was sold, with thanks to Elaine Friedman's leadership
- Shabbat Services moved from virtual (thanks to Robert Styles) to both virtual and in-person
- Religious School began to meet in-person, led by Cantor Styles and Morah Anne Rosen
- Engage! Lifelong Learning virtual events continued to enlighten and edify, with thanks to Cheryl Kramer and her committee.
- Rabbi Hyman's Torah Class is now meeting both in-person and virtually
- Sandra Seitz, our Treasurer, has managed our finances to once again earn a clean audit
- Stephen and Jean Sand, Shofar Co-Editors, produced another year of interesting and informative newsletters
- Dorothy Drazal and Paula Gervis offered their time to teach Mahjong and Canasta
- Shirley Sallet continued to offer her Memoir Writing class, once again in-person
- High Holy Days services were offered in-person and virtually, with many thanks to Marcia Shapiro
- Our New Member "under the pergola" Onegs provided a way for old and new members to connect, with thanks to Susan Koh and the Membership Committee
- President Ben Schlesinger created a new Tikkun Olam Committee to support ecological and social justice issues, with co-chairs Dave Bobrow and Doug Levine
- Our Community Menorah Lighting on December 5 once again invites our neighbors to join us in celebrating the Miracle of Light.

Yes, Temple B'nai Israel had many Points of Light in 2021. Our most important Point of Light, however, is each of you. I am very grateful for your continued support and engagement.

Lari Ramsey

HANUKKAH 2021 Points of Light



As we say goodbye to another year that was dominated by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is easy to dwell on the challenges that all of us have faced. It's been a difficult year. Yet, during this time of Hanukkah, Temple B'nai Israel asks to reflect on the points of light in our lives, remembering the good things that happened to us in 2021.

For Hanukkah, we are asking members to make a donation to the Temple in honor of a Point of Light from 2021. Like those shared below, we will compile a list of Congregational Points of Light and share them in the January Shofar. Simply email Lori Ramsey at lsramsey@gmail.com with your Points of Light and then click "Point of Light" on our donation page here: <https://bit.ly/3nztllG>

Sandra & Bob Seitz

Our Grandson became a nationally certified EMT while still in high school. He is serving the community of Montgomery County, MD as a member of the Cabin John Volunteer Fire Department.

Barbara Spector

In honor of Len's 25th year of riding 200 miles across Massachusetts and fund raising for the Dana Farber Cancer Institute.

Susan & Barry Koh

Our Grandson received his Master's degree in Urban Planning from New York University.

Rabbi Peter Hyman

In honor of the 2nd birthday of Ayla Reese Hyman.

Norman & Paula Bell

Our Point of Light gift is for our two granddaughters both happily starting kindergarten - a milestone!!

Liz LaCorte

I have three Points of Light this year.

Ryan - for achieving his first pin as a Civil Air Patrol cadet

Max - for his excellent sportsmanship, making him one of the rare, double-rostered players.

And John, for just being awesome!

Familiar and New TBI Faces



Barbara Jo Saler- Ron Schechter
Jon & Amy Ostroff



Seth Schanwald



Alan Rosenthal - Ellen Schechter - Jim Altman



James Keene & Diane Tinney - Vicki & Mark Cotter - Judith & Jess Haberman



THE JEWISH KITCHEN

HOSTED BY RABBI HYMAN

In the November edition of THE JEWISH KITCHEN, Erin and Xani Podolny demonstrated how to prepare “your Bubbe’s” schmaltz and noodle kugel while sharing some family stories and anecdotes.



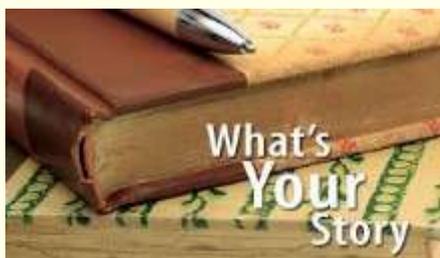
Curious how THE JEWISH KITCHEN is produced? Here’s a behind the scenes view of Catherine Barron preparing rugelach for the October KITCHEN.



Community Hanukkah Menorah Lighting

Join us for the Annual Community Hanukkah Menorah Lighting on **Sunday, December 5**, 5:00 p.m. outside under the pergola. Please RSVP to Nancy in the Temple office if you plan to attend.

Remember last year's drive-in lighting?



Memoir Storytelling and Writing

The Memoir Writers Group 1 meets once a month at 1:30 pm.
This month's meeting is **December 7**.

Engage!

A Conversation with Presidential Speechwriter and Author SARAH HURWITZ

SUNDAY, December 19, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM EST

Via Zoom - Register Here: <https://bit.ly/3lfodCL>



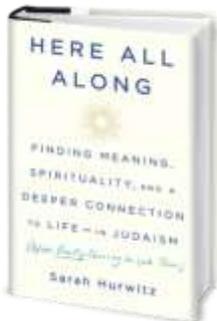
Sarah Hurwitz was a White House speechwriter from 2009 to 2017, starting out as a senior speechwriter for President Barack Obama and then serving as head speechwriter for First Lady Michelle Obama.

Sarah was the quintessential lapsed Jew—until, at age thirty-six, after a tough breakup, she happened upon an advertisement for an introductory class on Judaism. She attended on a whim, but was blown away by what she found: beautiful rituals, helpful guidance on living an ethical life, conceptions of God beyond the judgy bearded man in the sky—none of which she had learned in Hebrew school or during the two synagogue services she grudgingly attended each year. That class led to a years-long journey during which Hurwitz visited the offices of rabbis, attended Jewish meditation retreats, sat at the Shabbat tables of Orthodox families, and read hundreds of books about Judaism—all in dogged pursuit of answers to her biggest questions. What she found transformed her life, and she wondered: How could there be such a gap between the richness of what Judaism offers and the way so many Jews like her understand and experience it? She will share the profound insights she discovered on everything from Jewish holidays, ethics, and prayer to Jewish conceptions of God, death, and social justice.

Book Club - Via Zoom TEMPLE MEMBERS ONLY

December 20, 5 p.m.

Here All Along, by Sarah Hurwitz (who happens to be the featured speaker at the Engage! Lifelong Learning session on December 19.)



“Sarah Hurwitz was Michelle Obama’s head speechwriter, and with this book she becomes Judaism’s speechwriter. In a time when many people have lost faith, her timeless wisdom and graceful writing will delight even the most steadfast skeptics of organized religion.”

—Adam Grant, New York Times bestselling author of *Give and Take* and *Originals*

For details, contact Elaine Friedman at f1027@gmail.com

Sneak Preview!

New TBI Programming in 2022

First Fridays-Holla for Challah!

Led by Merry Danaceau and Sue Shotel, the first Friday of each month we will be opening up TBI's beautiful kitchen and making challah for Shabbat services, the Talbot Interfaith Shelter, and one for you to take home too! We will have all of the ingredients on hand, we ask that you bring a large bowl and a cookie sheet. More information to follow!

CAN YOU HELP?

Talbot Interfaith Shelter
Shelter • Stability • Support • Success

We are looking for volunteers to provide a Christmas day meal for families at the Talbot Interfaith Shelter.

Click here to sign up: 

For more information contact Belinda Frankel at belindakarl@gmail.com.

Engage! Lifelong Learning 2021-2022



Sunday, December 19, 2021: 7:00 - 8:00 pm

"Here All Along: Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life—in Judaism (After Finally Choosing to Look There)"

A Conversation with Presidential Speechwriter and Author Sarah Hurwitz

Saturday, April 9, 2022: 6:30 - 9:30 pm

Spring Into Dance: The Israel Ballet Encore Performance - Paquita & Serenade

**Intermission: An Interview with Claire Bayliss, Artistic Director, Israel Ballet
Champagne Dessert Reception**

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Some Hanukkah Potpourri



It wouldn't be the holiday without **Six13** dropping their annual Hanukkah parody. The Jewish a cappella group captures the spirit of *West Side Story*.

Click here to view it: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiskf_IZXv8

Why is this pillow from **BED BATH & BEYOND**

Different from all other Hanukkah pillows?



Answer: Because the designer of the pillow included this reference to Passover

The pillow has since been removed from the Bed Bath & Beyond catalog. By the way, the company was founded by Warren Eisenberg and Leonard Feinstein, both Jews!



Chanukablanca

(sung to the tune "As Time Goes By")



*You must remember this,
A bris is still a bris,
A chai is just a chai.
Pastrami still belongs on rye,
As time goes by.*

*With holidays in view,
A Jew is still a Jew,
On that you can rely.
No matter if we eat tofu
As time goes by.*

*Old shtetl customs, never out of date.
All those potatoes someone has to grate.
One flame in the window,
keep counting till there's eight
To light the winter sky.*



*In the Bronx or in the Mission,
It's still the same tradition,
That no one can deny.
We roam, but we recall our birthright,
As time goes by.*

*Dreidels and chocolate, never out of date.
Ancient Semitic glories to relate.
Blue-and-white giftwrap, ain't this country great,
And festive chazerai!*

*It's still the same old Torah,
It's still the same menorah,
We've latkes still to fry.
December's when I feel most Jewish,
As time goes by.*



"Play it again, Moishe"

Women In Hanukkah - The Stories of Hannah and Judith

With each occurring Jewish holiday we rarely stress the role that women played in the historical events. Hanukkah, however, is an exception. During Hanukkah, we tend to recall at least two women who stood out for their devotion and courage. For generations following the Maccabean revolt, their brave deeds have inspired thousands, including artists, playwrights, composers and authors.

The first is **Hannah**, whose story is recorded in the Book of Maccabees, one of the books of the Apocrypha, attributed to the period of the Second Temple and not included in the Biblical canon. The second is **Judith**, whose story also appears in the Apocrypha, in a book appropriately named after her.

The Second Book of Maccabees relates how the comes across a Jewish woman and her seven sons. Although the actual name of this woman is not by a 16th century Spanish-Jewish scholar.



Greek ruler of Judea, Antiochus Epiphanes IV, sons and orders them to eat a pig in public. recorded, the name Hannah was accorded to her

Fortified by the religious convictions that their refuses to eat the meat, and is tortured and put stands in front of Hannah and her last surviving the little boy to eat the pig's meat and be saved.

mother installed in them, each son, in turn, to death in front of Hannah. Finally, Antiochus three-year old child and appeals to her to direct

However, the young boy astounds the Seleucid ruler. He replies that he is only sorry that he had to wait so long to show his love of the Torah. Hannah praises the boy - and he, too, is killed. The courageous mother then follows in the footsteps of her seven sons. According to one version of the story, she threw herself off the city walls in her grief at the death of her sons.

Judith was a beautiful woman who single-handedly saved the Jewish town of Bethulia during the Hasmonean revolt.

Holofernes was an evil Syrian general who laid siege to the town. All seems lost until the widow, Judith, tells the town's elders that she has a plan to defeat the enemy. At first, the elders scoff at her but as the situation becomes increasingly desperate, they finally condescend to let her leave the camp for one day.

Judith dresses provocatively and prepares a sack of food and wine. She approaches the enemy camp and is immediately captured and brought before Holofernes. Impressed with her beauty and her prediction of his defeat of the Jews, he invites her to celebrate alone with him.

Once alone with Holofernes, Judith feeds him with salty cheese which induces the general to drink and finally sleep. She then takes his sword, cuts off his head, and returns through the slumbering enemy camp to Bethulia. When the Greek troops see the head of their leader hanging from the town's walls, they lose heart and retreat. The siege was over.

Some Hanukkah Humor

Miriam goes to the post office to buy stamps for her Hanukkah cards. She says to the cashier, "Please may I have 50 Hanukkah stamps?"

The cashier asks, "What denomination?"

Miriam says, "Oy vey, has it come to this? Okay, give me 6 Orthodox, 12 Conservative, and 32 Reform."

My mother once gave me two sweaters for Hanukkah. The next time we visited, I made sure to wear one. As we entered her home, instead of the expected smile, she said, 'Aaron, what's the matter? You didn't like the other one?'

A guy bought his wife a beautiful diamond ring for Hanukkah.

After hearing about this extravagant gift, a friend of his says, "I thought she wanted one of those sporty four-wheel-drive vehicles."

"She did," he replies. "But where was I going to find a fake Jeep?"

During the first day of Hanukkah, two elderly Jewish men were sitting in a wonderful deli frequented almost exclusively by Jews in New York City. They were talking amongst themselves in Yiddish - the colorful language of Jews who came over from Eastern Europe. A Chinese waiter, only one year in New York, came up and in fluent impeccable Yiddish asked them if everything was okay and if they were enjoying the holiday. The Jewish men were dumbfounded. "Where did he ever learn such perfect Yiddish?" they both thought. After they paid the bill they asked the restaurant manager, an old friend of theirs, "Where did our waiter learn such fabulous Yiddish?" The manager looked around and leaned in so no one else will hear and said... "Shhhh. He thinks we're teaching him English."

December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 NO religious school Erev Hanukkah 1st candle	29 Hanukkah	30 Hanukkah	1 Hanukkah Torah Class In person and via Zoom 12:00 pm	2 Hanukkah Communications Committee In person & via Zoom 10:00 am	3 Hanukkah 4:24 pm candle lighting	4 Hanukkah Shabbat/Birthday Service In person & via Facebook 10:00 am
5 Hanukkah Religious School Hanukkah party 10:00 am Community Menorah Lighting 5:00 pm	6 Last day of Hanukkah	7 Memoir Writers Group 1 1:30 pm	8 Torah Class In person and via Zoom 12:00 pm	9 Membership Committee Meeting 10:30 am	10 4:24 pm candle lighting Safety & Security Committee Meeting 4:00 pm Shabbat Service in person and via Facebook 5:30 pm	11
12 Religious School 10:00 am Board meeting Via Zoom 10:00 am	13	14	15 Torah Class In person and via Zoom 12:00 pm	16	17 4:26 pm candle lighting	18 Shabbat Service 10:00 am in person and via Facebook
19 Religious School 10:00 am LLL Engage! Here All Along 7:00 pm	20 Book Club Via Zoom 5:00 pm	21	22 Advancement Committee Meet- ing 10:00 am Torah Class In person and via Zoom 12:00 pm	23	24 4:29 pm candle lighting Office closed Christmas eve Shabbat Service in person and via Facebook 5:30 pm	25
26 NO Religious School	27 Lifelong Learn- ing Committee Meeting via Zoom 10:00 am	28	29	30	31 Office closed Happy New Year!	1 Shabbat Service 10:00 am in person and via Facebook

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