

CONGREGATION BAIS TORAH

December 25, 2009 · 89 West Carlton Rd · Suffern, NY 10901 · (845)352-1343 · www.baistorah.org ח' טבת ערב שבת פרשת ויגש

Aufruf of Mattisyahu Yehudah Steinberg

ערב שבת פרשת ויגש
הדלקת נרות: 4:15 PM
מנחה: 4:20 PM
שקיעה: 4:33 PM
הלכות שבת Shiur: 8:15 PM

שחרית Weekday
**Sunday 7:45 AM
Mon. and Thurs.: 6:20 and 7:45
Tues., and Weds.: 6:30 and 7:45 AM
Fri: 7:45

שבת פרשת ויגש
דף היומי 8:00 AM
שחרית 8:45 AM
סוף זמן קריאת שמע 9:38 AM
Shiur גמרא 3:20 PM
מנחה 4:05 PM
שקיעה 4:34 PM
סעודה שלישית
מעריב 5:16 PM

מנחה-מעריב Weekday
Sun. thru Thurs.: 4:25 PM
Mon. thru Thurs.: 8:00 PM

ערב שבת פרשת ויחי
הדלקת נרות: 4:20 PM
מנחה: 4:25 PM
שקיעה: 4:38 PM

Fast of Teves, Sunday עשרה בטבת**

Fast begins: 6:08 AM
Shacharis: 7:45 AM
Mincha: 4:05 PM
Maariv: 4:55 PM
Fast ends: 5:15 PM

Shiurim

מנחה 45 minutes before שבת לז' פייגל בת מנחם מנדל group תהלים Women's
Sundays at 8:30 AM – מסכת סנהדרין – Rabbi Yisroel Gottlieb
Tuesdays at 8:15 PM – Partners in Torah
Tuesdays at 8:15 PM – Ladies' Mishnayos Class - Rabbi Avromy Fein
Wednesdays at 8:15 PM – מלכים ב' – Rabbi Yisroel Gottlieb.
דף היומי I, Monday through Friday 5:25 AM and Sunday at 6:30 AM – Mordechai Rudman
דף היומי II, Monday through Friday 7:00 AM – Rabbi Yisroel Gottlieb
דף היומי III, Sunday through Thursday 9:45 AM – Rabbi Yosef Fischer
Monday through Friday at 7 AM - ירושלמי - Mordechai Rudman
Monday through Friday after the second שחרית נבאים – Rabbi Yosef Fischer
Monday through Thursday at 9:45 AM - גמרא שיעור - Rabbi Leibel Reznick

Shul Announcements

The entire congregation is invited to this week's **kiddush**, sponsored by Shira Steinberg in honor of the Aufruf of her son, Mattisyahu Yehudah Steinberg
סעודה שלישית is sponsored by Yehuda Eliezri for the yartzheit of his father, Harav Avraham ben Harav Dovid, and Yossie Stern for the yartzheit of his father, Yitzchak Isaac ben Yosef Ben-Tzion and Phil Holtzer for the yartzheit of his father, Sholom Aryeh ben Yaakov Meshulam.
Avos U'Banim: Meets Motzoei Shabbos at **6:15 pm.** in the Bais HaMedrash. Bring your children and grandchildren for a wonderful evening of Torah learning, hot pizza and prizes for all. This week's learning is sponsored by the Levis, L'zecher Nishmas Kayla Bas Eliyokum. There are only a few weeks still available for **SPONSORSHIP**, if you would like to sponsor an evening of Avos U'Banim learning, act, now!! Please contact Jonathan Rosenstock at Jonathan.Rosenstock@ge.com
More information is also available at the shul website, www.baistorah.org
New collection date for **Kosher Food Pantry** is Wed., Jan. 6th
Please join us in the Simcha Room for a **breakfast on January 17th** featuring Rabbi Binyamin Hamburger, founder of Machon Moreshe Ashkenaz, who will speak about Minhagei Ashkenaz, the history and source of Ashkenazic tradition, which he has researched extensively and actively supports through his organization. Donation \$10, free to Bais Torah members.
If you would like to add a d'var torah, or sponsor the **Bais Torah Youth Newsletter, Toras Habayis**, please send all submissions to: torashabayis.baistorah@gmail.com

Mazel Tov

Saul and Phyllis Siegel on birth of granddaughter, Yardona Oreli, born to their children, Jeremy and Robin Siegel.

Hamokom Yenachem

Shmuel Zentman on the p'tira of his father, Rabbi Avraham Zentman
Edie Rosenkranz on the p'tira of her mother, Rebetzin Esther Pasternak
Joyce Kurz on the p'tira of her mother, Mrs. Melvina Lampell

Refuah Shelaimah

חיים מאיר יחיאל בן מלכה לאה - Henry Shapiro
מנחם מונש בן חנה פרידא - Manny London
שלמה יעקב יונתן בן חנה רייזל - Tova Eizik's grandson
אסתר מלכה בת קילה - Esther Lutwak
חיים ראובן בן הענדל יהודית - Bob Schore
יוסף בן שרה - Suzie Kirshenbaum's father
יצחק אייזק שמחה בן פייגא בילא - Eddie Tager
בנימין בן בילה - Ben Zauderer
מנחם בן קילה - Manny Mayerfeld

Joel Rosenwasser's mother -
פשע לאה בת שפרינצא
אריה לייב בן רבקה - Larry Seligson
הילני בת רחל - Leni Loebenstein
חיים יונה בן חנה - Eileen Frommer's father
יצחק מרדכי בן בלימה - Irwin Citron
פיגע בת חיה רבקה - Bella Helprin's mother

How to Reach Us

Rabbi Yisroel Gottlieb 357-3913, rabbigottlieb@gmail.com – Daytime emergency 362-8362

President Allen Nussbaum president@baistorah.org

Treasurer Barry Lifschitz, 352-0226, Fax 352-0841 or barry@lifschitz.net

Maintenance Yis Helprin 494-7446

Shul Secretary Aviva Schmutter 352-1343 aviva@baistorah.org M-TH 9:00-3:00

Simcha Room Reservations/Kiddushim Jack Gross, 357-4121

Bikur Cholim Eveline Kranzler, 352-8410 and

Eiruv 362-4302

Chosh Levy, 425-6827

Mikvah 425-6101

Chesed Committee Charlie Grandovsky, 425-4683

Youth Michael Kronenberg 368-1064

Sisterhood Liaison Betty Schloss, 369 – 1833

Hachnosas Orchim Facility for homeless, Shea Jacobs 425-9617

Lost and Found Michael Loebenstein, 425-8895

Chevra Kadisha Steve Fessel, 425-1713, Ephraim Pessin, 914-420-6714 or Gloria Gordon, 425-1276

Sisterhood Tribute Cards, Mona Selzer 356-0129

Bais Torah Bulletins Email baistorahbulletin@gmail.com, or call (845) 371-5337. To receive e-mail updates, write to baistorah@gmail.com. This bulletin is downloadable from the web at www.baistorah.org.

In Case of Emergency

The **red Hatzolah phone** is in the hallway on the wall between the rear washing station and the Simcha Room.

The **defibrillator** is in a cubby in the coat room opposite the Hatzolah phone.

Parshas Vayegash– 5770

A Reminder of Chanukah

Parshas Vayegash begins with a confrontation between two spiritual giants: Yehudah and Yoseph. Yoseph, who had been kidnapped by his brothers, had risen from slavery to royalty in Egypt. He realized that this might be the first step in the actualization of the Prophecy of enslavement of the Children of Israel and their Exodus from Egypt to a great spiritual and moral leap for Mankind when the Jewish People would receive the Torah at Mt. Sinai. He was ready to forgive his brothers for their cruelty towards him with his whole heart. But he had to see that they had done “Teshuvah,” had indeed repented, and when brought to the same situation in which they had sinned in the past, as the Rambam explains in Hilchos Teshuvah (2:1), this time they would not sin.

He set the scene with brilliance. And Yehudah rose to the challenge. He described how he had persuaded his father to allow him to take Binyamin by undertaking a commitment of eternal consequence. If he would succeed in bringing Binyamin back, then well and good. But if not, he would have sinned against his father in This World and the Next. He saw inconsolable grief and the death of his father if he returned without Binyamin. So now, when it seemed that he had failed in that commitment, as a punishment by HaShem for his lack of leadership in the case of Yoseph, he was determined not to let it happen again, and he was **ready to sacrifice his own freedom**, and be the slave of “Tzaphnas Pa’aneach,” if only the Egyptian Viceroy would free Binyamin and allow him to return to his father. This spirit of **self-sacrifice** lies at the root of Jewish heroism, **and was mirrored by Yehudah HaMaccabee**, when he responded to the challenge of his father, “All who are faithful, follow me!”

Now let’s roll the clock back to December 11, when the N.Y. Times featured David Brooks (representing the “Jewish point of view”) as its Op-Ed columnist, writing on “The Chanukah Story.” In this case, unfortunately, Mr. Brooks seems to have gone astray. He writes, “Tonight Jewish kids will light the menorah, spin their dreidels and get their presents, but Hanukkah is the most adult of holidays. It commemorates an event in which the good guys did horrible things, the bad guys did good things ...”

Pause: I realize even-handedness in conflicts is a great virtue; that is why there are referees and umpires at sporting events and judges at trials. Somebody is “Safe!” and somebody is “Out!” – one party is “Innocent!” and the other party is “Guilty!” But even-handedness is not a universal principle of morality. As in the Chanukah story, where the author asserts that the “good guys” (presumably he is referring to the Maccabees, rather than the Greeks) did horrible things! **What horrible things?** Using clever strategies, and relying upon the help of HaShem, defeating the enemy who wanted to destroy their religion? And what “good things” did the “bad guys” do?

Brooks continues, “At its best, Hellenistic culture emphasized the power of reason and the importance of individual conscience. It brought theaters, gymnasiums and debating societies to the cities...” What is so great about gymnasiums? Places where men and women wore little or no clothing when competing against each other? The abandonment of “Tznius,” Modesty, is not what I would consider an advance in civilization.

Brooks adopts a conciliatory tone with respect to the enemies of the Jews; “In 167 B.C., however, the Seleucid King, Antiochus IV, issued a series of decrees defiling the Temple, confiscating wealth and banning Jewish practices, under penalty of death. **It’s unclear why he did this.**” Unclear? Maybe he did it because he was in a bad mood, he’d gotten up on the wrong side of his bed, or perhaps he had indigestion.

“In the town of Modin, a Jew who was attempting to perform a sacrifice on a new Greek altar was slaughtered by Mattathias, the old head of a priestly family. Mattathias’s five sons, led by Judah, then led an insurgent revolt against the regime.” Sounds like a fair enough statement of the facts. But now comes the analysis. “The Maccabees are best understood as moderate fanatics...They created a festival to commemorate their triumph (which is part of Greek, not Jewish culture)...” Well, at least, they were only **moderate fanatics!** And in what way is Chanukah part of Greek culture?

Now Brooks shows his greatest historical insight: “They were not the last bunch of angry, bearded religious guys to win an insurgency campaign against a great power in the Middle East, but they may have been among the first. They retook Jerusalem in 164 B.C. and rededicated the Temple.” All beards are the same; all religions are the same; all insurgency campaigns are the same. There is no heroism, no legitimate expressions of love of G-d, of bravery unto death for a true spiritual cause.

And Brooks takes a nasty swipe against the Talmud; “Rabbis later added the lamp miracle to give G-d at least a bit part in the proceedings.” He can only be referring, without much comprehension, to the Gemara in Maseches Shabbos 21b, “What miracle does this holiday commemorate? ‘Our Rabbis taught, ‘On the twenty-fifth of Kislev, the Holiday of Chanukah was established, celebrated for eight days, in which no eulogies are offered and fasting is not permitted. This reminds us of the time that the Greeks entered the Temple, and defiled all the oil found there. And when the Dynasty of the Chashmonai Priests overcame them, they searched and found only one cruse of oil that bore the seal of the High Priest, and there was only enough in it to last for one day. A Miracle was performed with it, and they lit from it for eight days. The next year, they established a Festival of Praise and Gratitude to G-d.’ ” Thus, the “Al HaNisim” Prayer focuses on the miraculous military victory, and the Talmud focuses on the eight day Miracle of the Light in the Temple.

L’Illuy Nishmas beni, Aharon Baruch Mordechai ben Pinchas Menachem