



וְזָכַרְתִּי אֶת בְּרִיתִי יַעֲקֹב,
וְאֵף וְאֵת בְּרִיתִי יִצְחָק,
וְאֵף אֶת בְּרִיתִי אַבְרָהָם
אֲזָכֹר וְהָאָרֶץ תִּזְכֹּר

*And I will remember
My covenant with Yaakov,
and My covenant with Yitzchak,
and also My covenant
with Avraham will I remember,*

**AND I WILL
REMEMBER
THE LAND!**



יום העצמאות

Congregation Beth Israel
of the Palisades
עצמאות שבת, פרשיות תזריע ומצריע
April 21, 2018 | Iyar 6, 5778

TORAH STUDY

This Week: Shabbat Parashiot Tazria-M'tzora
Vayikra 12.1-15.33, pages 649-670

FIRST ALIYAH: A woman does not “produce seed” for her eggs, so why does the Torah use the verb tazria to describe childbirth—and what does a serpent have to do with it?

SEVENTH ALIYAH: Much has been made about the inequality of the laws of impurity as they apply to women. What laws here suggest that no inequality is intended?

The haftarah, M'lachim Bet 7.3-20, begins on Page 676.

Next Week: Shabbat Parashiot Acharei Mot-K'doshim
Vayikra 16.1-20.27, pages 679-704

SECOND ALIYAH: Verses 17.3-4 require that all animals must be slaughtered “as an offering” in the sanctuary before they can be eaten. Why is there such a rule and what is its import?

FIFTH ALIYAH: We can understand not joining a strong animal to a weaker one, and not planting a strong seed next to a weaker one—but what is wrong with mixing linen and wool?

The haftarah, Y'chezkel 20.2-20, begins on Page 714.

For haftarot, we follow S'fardi custom.

THE ISRAELITE PRIEST IS NOT A PHYSICIAN

As portrayed by Vayikra, the Israelite priest is not a physician. His role is entirely ritualistic; he does not attempt to cure tzara-at. [His role begins only after the skin has cleared up. In fact, nowhere in these two parashiyot or anywhere else is there even a hint that ritual of any kind will bring healing.—Rabbi Engelmayer] In this regard, Judaism differed from some ancient and modern religions. The Mesopotamian ashipu served as exorcist priest and physician. The Greek temples of Asklepios, god of healing, were centers of medical treatment, as well as religious observance. Among still other peoples, shamans have often combined the use of medications with their rites.

The Bible says almost nothing about medical practice. The cures performed by Eliyahu and Elisha are presented as miracles, and similar wonder stories are told various postbiblical personalities. In one case, Yishayahu directed that an inflammation be treated with a lump pressed figs, but this is only after he had announced God's promise that the patient would recover.

Ben Sira, writing about 200 years before the Common Era, pays a warm tribute to the physician. He urges the sick to seek medical care and, at the same time, to pray for divine help, “for healing comes from the Most High.” Indeed, God has appointed the physician for this beneficent task (Ecclesiasticus 38).

The Talmud, which specifically asserts that the practice of medicine is sanctioned by the Torah (based on Sh'mot 21.19), contains much medical lore.

Medieval and modern Jews have esteemed the medical profession highly. Some of the most notable teachers of Judaism have been distinguished practicing physicians, among them the poet and philosopher Yehudah Halevi, the philosopher and halachists Moses Maimonides (the Rambam), and Isaac Lampronti of Ferrara, the 17th-century compiler of a massive talmudic encyclopaedia. The contribution of Jews to the advancement of modern medical science has been outstanding.

—Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut, ל"ו, in *The Torah, a Modern Commentary*

CBIOTP STANDARDS & PRACTICES

1. Men must keep their heads covered in the building and must wear a talit when appropriate. Women may choose to do either or both, but it is not mandatory.
2. Anyone accepting a Torah-related honor must wear a talit, regardless of gender.
3. Only one person at a time may take an aliyah.
4. No one should enter or leave the sanctuary during a K'dushah. One should not leave the sanctuary when the Torah scroll is being carried from or to the ark.
5. No conversations may be held in the hallway outside the sanctuary, or while standing in an aisle alongside a pew.
6. The use of recording equipment of any kind is forbidden on sacred days.
7. Also forbidden are cell phones, beepers and PDAs, except for physicians on call and emergency aid workers (please use vibrating option).
8. No smoking at any time in the building, or on synagogue grounds on Shabbatot and Yom Kippur.
9. No non-kosher food allowed in the building at any time.
10. No one may remove food or utensils from the shul on Shabbatot. An exception is made for food being brought to someone who is ailing and/or homebound.

MAZAL TOV CORNER

[If we don't know about it, we can't print it;
if we can't print it, we can't wish it.]

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Today	Albert Chalom
Monday	Shaul Wachtel
Tuesday	Marleny Blanco
Wednesday	Eric Weis

This week's Shabbat Booklet
is being co-sponsored by

VIKTOR DAVID & ERIC WEIS

to mark the yahrzeit this week
of Viktor's late mother,

MELANIA DAVID, ז"ל

and to mark the yahrzeit last week
of Eric's late twin brother,

LAURENCE WEIS, ז"ל

may their memories be for a blessing

THE IMAHOT:

Following is the text adopted by the Ritual Committee
for use by the Prayer Leader in reciting the Amidah, and
those wishing to insert the Matriarchs in their Amidot:

ברוך אתה אֱדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵנוּ, אֱלֹהֵי
אֲבֹרָהּם וְשָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְרַבֵּקָה, וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, רַחֵל
וְלֵאָה. הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא, אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן, גּוֹמֵל
חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַפֶּלַל, וְזוֹכֵר חֲסָדֵי אֲבוֹת, וַיִּמְבִּיא
גּוֹאֵל לְבָנָי בְּנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה.

Recite this only between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur:

זְכַרְנוּ לַחַיִּים, מִלֶּךְ חַפֵּץ בַּחַיִּים, וְכִתְבָנוּ בְּסֵפֶר הַחַיִּים,
לְמַעַן אֲ-לֹהִים חַיִּים.

מִלֶּךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֱדֹנָי, מַגֵּן אֲבֹרָהּם
וְעֹזֵר שָׂרָה.

Присоединяйтесь к нам для
освящения и обед

This week's kiddush and luncheon sponsor is

HOWARD BARMAD,
to mark the yahrzeit of his late sister,

HELEN BARMAD SEITEL, ז"ל
may her memory be for a blessing

Please join Howard and us.



TOMORROW

GIVE MORE LIFE

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Give more of it.**

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Schedule your appointment right after Shabbat!



TO PLUNGE INTO THE MIKVEH: A CONTEMPORARY REFORM VIEW

To plunge into the mikveh is to plunge into fresh connections with Creation and with our spirituality.

The Rabbis derived their laws that require an immersion in the mikveh in large measure from Vayikra (see at 12.1-8, 15.16, and 11.36). They rooted the laws in a need to purify oneself ritually after certain conditions such as menstruation, male seminal emission, certain skin diseases, or contact with the dead. Removing impurities was a precondition for coming into contact with the holy, such as in approaching the Mishkan. With the destruction of the Temple, these laws remained mandatory for women and optional for men. While traditional Jews continue to use the mikveh for family purity, most liberal Jews rarely enter the mikveh. When they do, they often enter it for different reasons.

What might prompt liberal Jews to immerse in the mikveh's waters?

◆ **Creation.** The mikveh takes us back in time, as we immerse ourselves in the world of Creation. The root k-v-h that forms the word mikveh appears for the first time in B'reishit 1.9: "Let the waters beneath the sky be collected [yikavu] in one place." Further, in the next verse emerges the expression mikveh hamayim, one name given to the seas, where k-v-h connotes "the gathering." This first mikveh is filled with mayim [water].

In the most archaic Hebrew script, the letter mem is a zigzagging line, drawn like waves that recall water.

It is interesting to note that in many languages, the phoneme "m" is associated with "mother" (ima, umm, mutter, mere, madre, mama, etc.). The person who plunges

into the ritual bath of the mikveh—entirely surrounded by water, nude, without any barriers, and without touching its sides—resembles the fetus in the mother's womb. The immersion in the mikveh becomes a return to the sensations of the uterus, a return to our source, and an act of renewal.

You cannot know who you are without knowing whence you came. This return to what happened before is sometimes a way of softening the traumas of the past, to start anew after a difficult life experience. Conversely, sometimes it is a way to celebrate something precious in one's life or something new. The word kav means "to be strong" or "strength" in Aramaic. The return to our source reinforces us.

◆ **Spirituality.** Water appears first in the second verse of the story of Creation: "God's spirit (ruach) glided over the face of the waters" (1.2). Thus, from the very beginning, water is forever linked to the divine, to the spiritual. Spirituality in relation to water is not necessarily about "purity." Purity was originally attached to the mission of the Temple; since the Temple exists no more, purification need not apply to contemporary immersion in the mikveh. Going to a mikveh is only a means of washing away the past, of removing the legacy of some "sin," but also of preparing for the future. This is how the mikveh functions when used to prepare for Shabbat and festival days, or important moments in life such as an impending marriage. In this case, mikveh is practiced by both women and men.

Traditional Jewish law requires that only women go to the mikveh. However, when the immersion in a mikveh is part of a couple's sexual life, if both partners go to the mikveh,

they together assert that they are taking charge of their sex life. Making a visit to the mikveh a regular part of the cycle of a couple's sexual life does not imply a denial of sexuality, but rather a couple's decision to set temporal boundaries to their sexuality. Jewish tradition honors sexual impulses. The Babylonian Talmud (Yoma 69b) tells us that without passion, the world would cease to exist. However, sexuality, like water, must be channeled in order for life to flourish fully. Passion is exhilarating, but it is not a permanent condition. Moreover, it may gain in intensity when limits are set, as is true with music—where the silent notes underscore the melody. So it goes with sexuality: the downtime (which could be confined to menstruation in the case of women), punctuated by the mikveh utilized by both partners, is a form of suspension—a Sabbath—of sexuality. It can leave the space necessary to discover a different face of the other, in a more disciplined tension.

In Genesis 1, God creates the world by separating the waters and then withdrawing them to make space for earth and life to appear. The Akkadian root *kuu* (one of the possible antecedents of the Hebrew word *kav*) means “to wait for, to stretch, to underscore the tension of enduring or waiting.” Oscar Wilde said, “In this world there are only two tragedies;

one is not getting what one wants, the other is getting it.” Expectation is the romantic framework of love and desire. The mikveh reintroduces the other as a friend; the lover becomes a friend again—and the friend, a lover.

The mikveh likewise reintroduces spirituality into our lives in a habitual manner. The rabbinic sages capture the power of habits in their determination that frequently occurring rituals take precedence over infrequently occurring rituals. We are called upon, not to build life upon the exceptional, but rather to renew the ordinary; such is perhaps one of the secrets of one's being together with another in partnership.

When one plunges into the mikveh, the links with Creation and with our spirituality extend even further. When we remember that we are created in the image of God, the mikveh becomes a reminder of the infinite within the finite, the immortal within the human, the limitless options offered to humanity. It is not surprising, then, that the Torah is compared to water in rabbinic literature. To immerse in water is also to plunge into the “Universe of the Torah,” the infinite source of transformation of the world.

—Pauline Bebe, in *The Torah: A Woman's Commentary*

PROTECTING NEWBORN GIRLS THROUGH RITUAL

Parashat Tazria contains one of the most puzzling, even disturbing, passages in Vayikra, a book concerned with holiness. Tazria challenges us, for it places childbirth among the sources of ritual impurity from which one then needs purification, and it reckons the birth of a daughter at twice the length of impurity as the birth of a son.

In Vayikra, the commandment of purification after childbirth is consistent with the biblical insistence that blood contains or represents the life force. The priestly authors of Vayikra believe that blood, whether menstrual or post-partum, is so powerful as a source of life that only purification rituals can allow those who come into contact with it to rejoin their community. These rituals serve to contain the life force that places contaminated people outside the normative community, by returning them to a state of purity in which they can re-enter God's holy community.

Regardless of whether a woman bears a son or a daughter, the rituals of purification are the same. Why, then must a woman spend twice as long in a state of impurity following the birth of a girl than following the birth of a boy? Traditional interpreters have assumed this is because the birth of a girl creates a kind of double

impurity, possibly because newborn girls contain the latent capacity for menstruation and reproduction. But another point is also important here: In ancient Israel, baby girls arguably faced lives filled with more risks than did baby boys. Israel was a society in which economic value accrued primarily to sons. They remained part of their fathers' households even when they married, inherited their families' ancestral lands, and cared for their aging parents. In contrast, there is evidence to suggest that girls were sometimes thought of as expendable. In times of need, famine, and war, baby girls might suffer hunger and neglect, or even be abandoned and left to die.

The priestly authors seem to be concerned about this situation and try to avert such tragedies by ensuring that baby girls stay in their mothers' protective care for an extended period of time. This not only allows mother and daughter to bond tightly, but also ensures that the child is nursed and cared for. Thus, this troubling passage can be understood not as discrimination against women, but as a way to promote God's loving community—and to guarantee that women and men, both created in the divine image, are nurtured and protected.

—Beth Alpert Nakhai, in *The Torah: A Woman's Commentary*

May He who blessed | מי שברך

May He who blessed our ancestors bless and heal all those whose names are listed here, those whose names will be called out, and those whose names we do not know because either we are unaware of their illness or they are. We pray He mercifully quickly restore them to health and vigor. May He grant physical and spiritual well-being to all who are ill. אמן

Sydelle Klein	Rifkah bat Chanah	Avraham Akivah bat Chanah Sarah
Bonnie Pritzker Appelbaum	Sarah Rifka bat Sarah	Avraham Yitzhak ben Masha
Deenah bat Sarah Leah	Shimona bat Flora	Aharon Hakohen ben Oodel
Rut bat Esther	Sura Osnat bat Alta Chayah	Chaim ben Golda
Miriam Zelda bat Gittel D'vorah	Tzipporah bat Yaffa	Ezra ben Luli
Miriam Rachel bat Chanah	Yospeh Perel bat Michlah	Gil Nechemiah ben Yisraela
Harav Mordechai Volff ben Liba Miryam	Michelle Blatteis	Harav R'fael Eliyahu ben Esther Malkah
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Simchah bat Zelda	Ruth Hammer	Yisrael Yitzhak ben Shayndel
Adina bat Freidel	Goldy Hess	Yitzhak ben Tziviva
Baila bat D'vorah	Fay Johnson	Yonatan ben Malka
Chavah bat Sarah	Micki Kuttler	Yosef ben Flora
Chayah bat Flora	Katie Kim	Zalman Avraham ben Golda
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HaRav Ilana Chaya bat Rachel Esther	Robin Levy	Shannon Johnson
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Masha bat Etil	Kathleen McCarty	Adam Messing
Masha bat Rochel	Gail Schenker	Gabriel Neri
Matel bat Frimah	Linda State	Jeff Nicol
Mindel bat D'vorah	Mary Thompson	Fred Sheim
Ninette bat Aziza	Michelle Lazar	Mark Alan Tunick
Pinyuh bat Surah	Norma Sugerman	Jay Yorke
Ruchel Leah bat Malkah	Julia Yorke	
Rita bat Flora	Susan Yorke	

We pray for their safe return...

May He who blessed our ancestors bless, preserve, and protect the captive and missing soldiers of Tzahal—Ron Arad, Zecharia Baumel, Guy Chever, Zvi Feldman, Yekutiel Katz, and Zeev Rotshik—as well as those U.S. and allied soldiers, and the civilians working with them and around them, still missing in Afghanistan and Iraq, and all other areas of conflict, past and present.

And may He bless the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces and Tzahal, and those who serve the United States and Israel in foreign lands in whatever capacity, official or unofficial, members of our community or related to members, and their colleagues and companions. Guide them in peace and return them speedily to their families alive and unharmed. אמן

Are we in your will? Shouldn't we be?

When people prepare their wills, they usually look to leave a mark beyond the confines of their families. Thus it is that general gifts are left to hospitals, and other charitable organizations. All too often ignored, however, is the synagogue, even though its role in our lives often begins at birth, and continues even beyond death. We come here on Yom Kippur and other days, after all, to say Yizkor, the prayer in memory of our loved ones. Our Virtual Memorial Plaques remind everyone of who our loved ones were, and why we recall them. All of us join in saying the Kaddish on their yahrzeits.

Considering this, it is so unfortunate that, in our final act, we ignore the one institution in Jewish life that is so much a part of us. The synagogue is here for us because those who came before us understood its importance and prepared for its preservation. By remembering it in our wills, we will do our part to assure that the synagogue will be there for future generations, as well.

Think about it. We have always been here for anyone who needed us in the past. Do not those who need us in the future have the same right to our help? Of course they do. Do not delay! Act today! Help secure the future of your communal home.

Yahrzeits for Today Through Next Friday

זכרונום לברכה — May their memories be for a blessing!

<p>21 Howard J. Roth* Paul Leo Hoffman* Ida Stern Jennie Hinda Lieberman* Anna Stickman* Bassie Rachel Jacobs* Anna Silk, <i>cousin of Nettie Fox</i> Herman Silk, <i>cousin of Nettie Fox</i></p>	<p>24 Fred Hochheimer Jeffrey Breitman Friedman, <i>son of Robert Friedman</i> Moses Slotz, <i>father of Ralph Slater</i> Urian Weishaus, <i>husband of Corinne Weishaus</i> Benjamin Zerman* Charles Garment*</p>
<p>22 Annie Zwirn* Janet Rubin* Bernard Krooks* Lefcourt, Helen, <i>wife of Ronald, mother of Jeffrey</i> Bertha Sprinz* Max Barnett*</p>	<p>25 Frieda Zelmanowitz Hyman Tunick* Kurt Stern* Joseph M. Goldstein* Herman Weissbard* Esther Potack, <i>mother of Debrah Fingar-Siegel</i> Ida Teger, <i>aunt of Audrey Morganstein</i></p>
<p>23 Melania David, <i>Viktor David's mother</i> Henry Martin Hammer*, <i>husband of Ruth Hammer</i> Jacques Eliat*, <i>Annette Messing's brother</i> Charles Schein, <i>father of Corinne Weishaus</i> Anna Hinda Levy* Herman Fox* Rae Atkins* Lt. Col. Sherman J. Umansky* Dr. Benjamin D. Silverstein* Mary Rubenstein*</p>	<p>26 Ruth Hoffman* David Tischler* Lev Bronstein Harry Safro* 27 Isidor Kaiser* Sarah Rubenstein* Frances Levine*</p>

* A plaque in this person's name is on our memorial board.

Is there a yahrzeit we should know about?

Kaddish list

Robert Cohen	David Rosenthal
Nancy Friedlander	Lenore Levine Sachs
Evyatar Shebbetai Gidasey	Evan Schimpf
Jay Greenspan	Bila Silberman
Susan Jane Greenberg	Paul Singman
Lisa Beth Hughes	Leah Solomon
Harvey Jaffe	Abe Tauber
Judith Lorbeer	Regina Tauber
Qingshui Ma	Randolph Tolk
Norman Harry Riederman	Francine Feder



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