

The Scribe

December 2024



TEMPLE EMANU-EL

Happy Hanukkah!





THE RABBI'S STUDY

Rabbi Jonathan L. Jackson



This image is *tzurat ha-daf*, a page of Talmud. It is an incredible technology; it is a single page that holds the history and diversity of us as Jews. One line of it comes from the year 200 CE, and from our Mishna. That stands at the center. It is followed by four hundred and possibly more years in the civilizational era of the Talmud. This was our great efflorescence of questions, debates, opinions, incidentals, disagreements, majority opinions, and minority opinions. These form the center of the page. Closest to the book's spine are Rashi's explanations of languages, terms, and cultural and legal concepts that are now lost to us. Wrapping around the pages are the continued debates, disagreements, varied opinions, and on and on—conversations and relationships, really, is what they are. First there is the stratum of Rashi's children and then grand children, and the halachic decisors (*posekim*), and then biblical citations found by moderns in the ancient words.

We are all on that same page, that *tzurat ha-daf*, but we are not of the same opinion, which is why at all times and in all places we need three things: One, we need each other. Two, we need a generous heart that assumes best intentions. Three: we need an ear that hears things just as they were said, and with that ear a mouth that articulates our own mind kindly and with patience, but with honesty and clarity—none of us the same, all of us on the same page.

The Tower of Babel is taught in our Christian culture to be a punishment. But that Talmud page you hold in your hand is a proof to you that the story of the Tower of Babel was not and must never be viewed as a punishment in Jewish culture. It is the blessing of us, a mixed multitude as we are called in the Exodus (12:38)—none of us the same, and all of us together.

The story you know: Humanity in its arrogance built a tower to touch heaven. Let the tower represent whatever you want—power, culture, art, knowledge, science, arrogance and ego. We aspired by constructing this metaphorical spire to heaven. Let heaven represent the perfection of ever-unfolding eternity. Perfection is not ours as humans and that is the point. Gd destroyed the tower. We were unified in the error of its construction, represented by our common language in the myth in the Torah. We weren't on the same page; we were enslaved to the singular task of an idolatrous monument—a thing meant to be everything that could not hold everything. Only Gd can do that. It is solely the One whose nature is eternal and without boundness can do that.

We were made different in how each of us thinks, perceives, and expresses ourselves by the different language that Gd put onto each tongue. Gd gifted us by truly making each of us different. We don't need the unified task of the tower; we do not need hyper-intensified focus on one thing at the expense of all else in the world. What we need instead are all of our diverse occupations, skills, or challenges in life. We need each to be in our own lines, together, we together make the page of Talmud. Lines on the same page, words, letters, comments, questions, and disagreements, but we need, we must, as a community be on the same page of life.

To be a community, Gd's gift of us to the world for who we are in all of our disagreement, we need three things: One, we need each other. Two, we need a generous heart that assumes best intentions. Three: we need an ear that hears things as they were said, and a mouth that articulates our own mind kindly and with patience, but with honesty and clarity. None of us the same, all of us on the same page.

Remember, the most profoundly valuable thing in Judaism is **מחלוקת לשם שמים**, *makhloket le-shem shamayim*, disagreement for the sake of heaven. Respectful and honest and gentle and generous sharing, listening, learning—real and deep relationships. These are the steps to Heaven, to boundless knowledge, hope, and peace. These are the things that as your Rabbi, I urge you to attend. These are the only things that truly matter in this world.

Yahrzeit Observances

December 6

Abraham Orovitz
Abe Leo Blitz
Abraham Leib Ben Zelig
Eva B. Kraselsky
Edith Sukoff
Jack Nathan Janis

December 13

Morris Berman
Barbara Rood Kraut
Helene Heyman
Hyman Cutler

December 20

Marc David Nomberg
Ira Cossin
Barbara R. Grossman
Dr. B. David Polis
Label Bender
Leba Judith Cutler
Temi B. Wolf

Birdie Louise Fulford
Jennie T. Rudderman

December 27

Sara Greenberg
Morris G. Rosenberg
Israel Kraselsky
Benjamin Rubin
Loeb Kraselsky
Samuel & Rose Chapman
Ann G. Zeff

May the beauty of their lives shine forever, and may we always bring honor to their memories."



SIMCHAT SHABBAT
DECEMBER 2024

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

01 - BARBARA MINSKY
02 - JOANN MADDOX
09 - HELON CUTLER
13 - GLORIA BLOCK
22 - DAVID GREENBERG
23 - AUDREY BERNSTEIN
28 - NATALIA CUMMING

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

13 - NATHAN & JENNIFER CUMMING
30 - MICHAEL & DEBRA MANN

SIMCHAT SHABBAT IS TYPICALLY CELEBRATED ON THE FOURTH FRIDAY OF THE MONTH.

MI SHEBERACH

A PRAYER FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEALING

EDA FELDMAN

PETER FELDMAN

SARA LOZANO

GILBERT LOZANO

MIKE STUFFEL

KATHY STOUT

JINIESE CRAWFORD

MARCUS WOODWORTH

ADAM JETTER

JUDY ANN DEAL

DEAN MITCHELL

GABE TUFANO

PHILLIP RAY

JANE YECHLI

JOE RUGGIERO

EDDA BECK-GILMORE

ERIC GILMORE

REGINA STEVENS

BEVERLY BUGDA

ALLEN MANNING

PAT GLAZER

DOTTIE BROWN

DEBRA SANSONE

BERYL COSSIN

LISA HOLLAND

ROBERTA MARBLESTONE

STEPHEN HOLLAND

LENARD CARROLL

PATRICIA FRANCIS

KELLI PETERSON

ROSE CANIGLIA

MICHELE STUFFEL

STEPHANIE OWENS

JANICE STEFFEN

TEMPLE EMANU-EL TZEDEKAH, MITZVAHS & MAZELS

TEMPLE EMANU-EL GENERAL FUND

Charles S. Heyman, Jr.

In blessed memory of his wife, Judy Heyman

Dianna Sue Bryant

Gary Wakstein

Yahrzeit of David Wakstein

Ann Black

Yahrzeit of Michael Horowitz

RABBI DISCRETIONARY FUND

Anonymous donation

Les Kraut

Hanukkah Dates

December 25th: Erev Hanukkah
(1st candle)

December 27th:

5:30 p.m. Hanukkah Potluck

7:00 p.m. Shabbat Hanukkah
Service (doors open at 5:00 p.m.)



2024

Happy Hanukkah

DECEMBER

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1	2	3	4	5	6 Shabbat Services 7pm	7 Morning Services 9:30am Torah Study 10:30am
8	9	10	11 Board Meeting 7pm	12	13 Chanting Service 6:15pm Shabbat Services 7pm	14 Torah Study 10:30am
15	16	17	18	19	20 Shabbat Services 7pm	21 Torah Study 10:30am
22	23 The Scribe	24 Temple Office Closed	25 Temple Office Closed Erev Hanukkah (1st candle)	26	27 Hanukkah Potluck 5:30pm Shabbat Hanukkah Service-7pm	28 Torah Study 10:30am
29	30	31				



TEMPLE EMANU-EL LEADERSHIP 2024-2025



BOARD OFFICERS

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RABBI	JONATHAN LEE JACKSON (781) 206-7939
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TEMPLE OFFICE INFORMATION

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