

The Golden Calf Parable

Gary Wolfman, Religious Director

Once upon a time, there was a king who ruled his kingdom with a caring heart. He listened carefully to his people and had a court of advisors who came from throughout the kingdom. Both rich and poor were represented on this council.

A nearby kingdom wanted some of his land and the king sent an advisor to negotiate with the other kingdom. The king decided to do this because he was swayed by one of his advisors who was poor and Jewish. The Jewish advisor argued that both Abraham and Moses argued with God and were influential in God modifying his position. Abraham getting God to say if there are only 10 righteous people in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah I will not destroy them. With Moses, God agreed not to destroy the Jewish people in the wilderness even though they had built a golden calf out of their jewels. So the king sent this Jewish advisor to negotiate with this other king instead of declaring war on their kingdom.

The advisor came back with a compromise that allowed both kingdoms to cooperate and live peacefully with each other. They would gather together and work together to solve the issues between the two kingdoms. The king was delighted and gave a small fortune to his poor Jewish advisor.

The advisor had two grown sons with families and he decided to give all the gold to his sons and keep nothing for himself. After all, he had been poor his whole life and yet lacked nothing in his life. His spirit was at peace with God and he and his wife had excellent health.

One son decided to use his newfound wealth to acquire what he thought of as the best things in life. He built a new home with the latest inventions inside. He bought a herd of donkeys and lots of jewels for his wife. His children were given the newest clothes sewn by the most famous designer tailor in the kingdom. After a year, he felt that he was now contented with his life. His children had slaves to take care of them so he didn't have to, and he put all his energies into his job. After a few years went by, the man's wife became extremely ill. Despite spending all his money on medicines his wife did not recover. His son and daughter grew to adulthood and did not remain in contact and moved to a different kingdom.

The other son used his gold to make sure all his relatives and friends had food to eat. He became known as a wise man as he counseled people around him and helped them as needs occurred. He eventually took his father's place on the king's council of advisors.

Rabbi Sidney Greenburg wrote the following about worshipping the golden calf:

We make a graven image of God when we sacrifice our health for it, when we surrender our moral integrity for it, when we neglect our families for it, when we betray our principles for it. We worship the golden calf when we forget that some of the most precious things in life cannot be bought with gold. Genuine love, true friendship, a clear conscience, strength of character, peace of mind, serenity of spirit, self-respect – these are not listed on any exchange.

A Super Bowl lesson on ‘unforgettable forgiveness’

Avi Stern, President

As I write these words, the state of Wisconsin continues to immerse itself in the sweet, sweet *au jus* of the Packers’ World Championship. Victory is, indeed, delicious. Confronted by turbulent times (both at home and abroad), why shouldn’t we revel in something as uplifting as the David vs. Goliath nature of Green Bay’s entire season?

Die-hard fans and casual football onlookers understand instinctively that the Packers didn’t ascend to the top of their profession on sheer luck alone. As my family likes to say, “Those guys put their backs into it.” The players worked hard, both on and off the field, to create an expectation of excellence – and a willingness to sacrifice in order to achieve it.

And no one – according to ESPN commentator Rick Reilly – best embodied that ideal more than quarterback Aaron Rodgers. According to the journalist, Rodgers’ legacy will have nothing to do with his athletic skills or team leadership. Rather, the MVP QB will be best remembered for his “unforgettable forgiveness.”

By now, you’d have to be living in a cave to not have heard endless accounts of Rodgers’ early years in the NFL, particularly the time spent in professional purgatory sitting behind his ever-fickle predecessor, Brett Favre. Rodgers didn’t whine, pout or demand a trade; instead, he displayed seemingly limitless patience. But let’s move beyond yesteryear’s news and focus exclusively on Super Bowl XLV: When Rodgers’ receivers – seemingly one after another – dropped five “sure thing” passes during the biggest game of his life, the quarterback didn’t lash out, complain or – to paraphrase Reilly’s words – “bite a hole in their helmets.” He simply waited for the next opportunity to throw the ball and put it right back in the hands of his receiving corps.

“To err is human. To forgive is divine,” Reilly wrote. “To forgive in the Super Bowl? Even better.”

Rodgers’ state of grace might hold the best lesson for all of us who are part of a congregational family. There’s the old joke that “if you’ve got 12 Jews in a room, you’ll have 13 opinions” – so it stands to reason when you have as many Jews under a single roof as we do, many strong opinions and pointed remarks will get thrown around. That’s only natural. I have taken issue with others and, most certainly, others have taken issue with me. Mistakes get made, slights are made (intended and otherwise), nerves get frayed, etc. We have all, ahem, dropped the ball on occasion. That’s part and parcel of the Jewish congregational experience, handed down from one generation to the next.

But if we appreciate the fact that we are *all* trying to make Congregation B’nai Israel the best place it can be, we create an atmosphere of mutual respect. And when that respect becomes the norm, it allows us all to look beyond each other’s trespasses.

This is the “unforgettable forgiveness” best embodied by Aaron Rodgers.

Other Business:

Siddur Sponsorships

Our campaign to seek sponsorships for the new prayer books is off to a great start with nearly half of our copies already spoken for. Book dedications cost \$36 (double Chai) and help us cover the cost of acquiring the Reform Siddurs. If you are interested in sponsoring a book for a family member or other loved one, please send a check made out to “Congregation B’nai Israel” to:

**Lorrene Schreiber
2414 Forest Manor Court
Neenah, WI 54956**

Please print clearly when spelling the names as you want them to appear.

Passing the Torch

I want to take a moment to personally thank Steve Freschl for his countless years of service to our congregation, many of which he served tirelessly as our treasurer.

There are too many words to describe a guy like Steve, but I'll attempt to sum him up with this credo: "You can buy a nice house. You can buy a nice car. You can buy nice clothes. But you can't buy class." Steve remains one of the classiest gentlemen in our synagogue family and I can think of no higher compliment.

Recently, Steve decided to conclude his tenure as treasurer; but I'm delighted that we will continue to benefit from his wisdom and good humor as he retains his seat on the synagogue board.

As part of this reconfiguration, I'm pleased to announce that Kaye Solomon will be taking on many of Steve's former financial and administrative duties (as well as several new ones). This transition began several weeks ago and will continue as we move forward. We are creating an onsite office for Kaye in the vacant Sunday school classroom. I am confident that all of you will be delighted by Kaye's blend of professionalism, good humor and optimism.

We are blessed to have individuals of Steve and Kaye's caliber working on our behalf.

Congregation Board of Trustees

Officers:

President	Avi Stern	(920) 727-9797 lstern@new.rr.com
Vice President	Ed Klug	(920) 733-0268 eklug@new.rr.com
Treasurer	Marty Finkler	(920) 735-0714 mdfinkler@netscape.net
Secretary	Barbara Kuhn	(920) 235-3753 barbara.ivria@sbcglobal.net

Board Members:

Margaret Bernstein	Myra Krhin
Steve Freschl	Julie Kurutz
Dawn Fritzell	Ellyn Lahr
Jason Hirschberg	Lorrene Schreiber
Jeff Kent	

Classroom Corner

It is hard to believe that we are entering the last quarter of the Religious School year. Time does seem to fly when you are learning and doing so many wonderful things!



The Jewish calendar is full again in the springtime with many observances and holidays that bring families together. In March, we have our annual Purim Celebration on March 20th. We will be sending information home with the students regarding making of Hamentaschen (yum!) and the Purim Carnival.

In the month of April, we have our Model Seder on the 17th of the month. If you would like to help organize, set up, serve or clean up, please contact julie.sheehan@aurora.org for more information.



Thank you to the Hirschberg family for organizing our Purim Carnival and to the Kent family for organizing the Model Seder. Many hands are needed for both events to ensure their success, so please plan to be there for the fun! Also, parents are always invited to our large group time to sing songs and hear Mr. Wolfman's wonderful stories!

In May, our School year will end with our Recognition Day on May 15th. This is a nice time to hear the teachers tell of the things your student has been doing all year.

Thank you to the many volunteers who help with our family events. We truly could not do all of this without YOU.

Community Notes

Synagogue Contact Information

Please note the following updated contact information for the synagogue office:

Mailing address:

Congregation B'nai Israel

1121 Algoma Blvd.

P.O. Box 904

Oshkosh, WI 54903-0904

Email: congregationbnaiisrael@hotmail.com

Phone: Kaye Solomon (920) 850-1240

OR in the synagogue building (920) 235-4270 and leave a voice mail message.

Sisterhood Dinner

All adult women of the congregation are invited to attend (we're trying this again and hoping for better weather) dinner at Solea (off the Breezewood/Bell exit in Neenah) on Thursday, March 10th at 6 p.m. This is a social gathering to get acquainted/reacquainted. Hope you can make it. If you are able to come, please RSVP to Lorrene Schreiber at lmschreib@aol.com.

Sunshine Committee

The Sunshine Committee would like to acknowledge members that are ill whether in the hospital or at home. Also, let us know when there is a special birthday, anniversary, graduation, new baby, award etc.

We cannot acknowledge what we don't know.

Please contact:

Audrey Gorwitz

(920) 235-0047

Sally Gloyd

gloyd@uwosh.edu

Save the Date: Congregation Cleanup Day!!!



Come and lend a hand after the Board meeting on Sunday, March 6th, to do a little spring cleaning at B'nai! We will be going up into the choir loft, into the storage rooms, and any other spots that can use some tidying up and clearing out!

Bring some "work clothes" and join in the Mitzvah event! Work will begin around 10 am. Be a mensch – lend a hand.

Youth Group Reminders

Saturday, March 5th: Youth Group Get Together in Appleton with youth group members from Appleton and Green Bay. 6:30 - 10:00 p.m.

RSVP to Myra Krhin at (920) 426-2465 or email Morgan Krhin at mkmkrhin@gmail.com.

Sunday, March 6th: Meet from 11:30 - 12:00 to plan our March 11th evening service.

Friday, March 11th: Help conduct our Shabbat Service and stay to make blankets for The Christine Ann Women's Center. This is a project that we have done in the past and has been very well received and very much appreciated.

Please Note! Schedule Change

The service scheduled for April 30th has been changed to 4:00 p.m. This is also Rachel Fritzell's Bat Mitzvah service. Previously the schedule had indicated 10:00 a.m. There will be no 10:00 a.m. service that day.

**Holocaust Survivor Henry Golde
to Visit B'nai Israel**

**Friday May 6th
6:30 p.m.**

Please join us on Friday May 6th to hear from Henry Golde as he shares his experience as a Holocaust survivor. Henry was born in Poland in 1929. In 1939, Henry's family was forced to move to a Jewish ghetto and then in 1940 Henry was separated from his family and moved to serve in forced labor in an ammunitions factory. Henry never saw any member of his family again and spent the next five years in concentration camps in Poland, Germany and Czechoslovakia. After being liberated by the Russian army in 1945, Henry was part of a group of children airlifted to England where with the help of Jewish organizations, he was taught a technical trade and became a tailor. Henry married and immigrated to the U.S. in 1952. He lived in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and then came to Wisconsin in 1954. He has lived in the Appleton area since the 1980s.

Henry is a frequent speaker for schools and organizations in the Valley. He most often speaks with middle school and high school age children to share his story. As part of his discussion, Henry likes to reflect on love vs. hate and point out what hate does to people and a society. He enjoys taking questions. I had the opportunity to listen to his presentation recently and both Ken (10) and Rachel (13) attended. While I believe his talk is appropriate and meaningful at this age level, parents should consider whether or not this discussion is appropriate for their own children. The audience for the discussion I attended was 6th grade students and the group asked great questions. While his talk is not graphic, it is frank and tells it like it was.

In addition to special consideration for the content, I ask parents to exercise discretion when considering whether or not to bring younger children. We need to be sensitive to

the seriousness of the topic and avoid distractions.

I look forward to your presence as we show Mr. Golde our respect for what he has endured. His discussion will be part of the Friday night service in place of our usual discussion. An oneg will follow.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Dawn Fritzell

Contributions

The congregation gratefully acknowledges the following contributions:

From Gary Wolfman & Laura Sindberg to the Building Fund

From Robert & Cheri Fishelson to the Building Fund

From Juan & Jeanne Gutierrez to the Building Fund

From Barbara Kuhn to the Holocaust Memorial Gardens

From Dr. Marc & Kathy Blum & Family to the Holocaust Garden Fund in loving memory of Bernice Kaufman

From Morton Pharmacy through the Morton Members customer appreciation program for the last half of 2010

Newsletter

The deadline for submissions to the **May-August 2011** newsletter is **April 23, 2011**. All members are welcome to submit articles and news to:

Vince Salvia
vinces@cadreservices.com



Purim Services and Carnival

Please join us on **Sunday, March 20th** for Purim FUN!

Children will attend religious school from 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

Purim Services from 10:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Lunch will be served from 11:00 – 11:30 a.m.

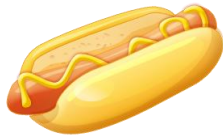
Carnival after lunch.

Menu:

Hotdogs, chips and soda/juice

Adults @ \$4.00

Children 12 and under @ \$2.00



Please bring a salad or side dish to share.



Wanted: Hamantaschen Makers

Please come and help us make our Purim Party something special!

When: Sunday, March 13th at 9:00 a.m.

Where: Temple Kitchen

Bring: Batch of pre-made dough, filling and rolling pin.



Any questions? Contact Jason Hirschberg at (920) 385-1115.

March

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
		1	2	3	4	5 Youth Group 6:30 p.m. Appleton
6 Religious School 9:00 a.m. Cleanup Day 10:00 a.m. Youth Group Shabbat service planning meeting 11:30 a.m.	7	8	9	10 Sisterhood Dinner 6:00 p.m. Solea Neenah	11 Tot Shabbat 6:30 p.m. Shabbat Service 7:00 p.m. Youth Group blanket project to follow	12
13 Religious School 9:00 a.m. Hamentaschen Making 9:00 a.m. Adult Ed 10:00 a.m.	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Religious School 9:00 a.m. Purim Service 10:00 a.m. Lunch and Carnival to follow	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

2011

April

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Religious School 9:00 a.m.	11	12	13	14	15 Shabbat Service 7:00 p.m.	16
17 Religious School 9:00 a.m. Model Seder	18 Pesach begins at Sunset	19 Community Seder 6:00 p.m.	20	21	22	23
24 Religious School 9:00 a.m. Adult Ed 10:00 a.m.	25	26	27	28	29	30 Shabbat Service Rachel Fritzell Bat Mitzvah 4:00 p.m.

2011

Yahrzeits

This Yahrzeit list reflects all the information we have received from members and some from the synagogue Yahrzeit plaques. Please forgive any errors or deletions – just let us know and it will be corrected. Yahrzeits can be sent to Liz Stern at (920) 727-9797 or lstern@new.rr.com.

NEW MEMBERS: please send us your Yahrzeit information and we will add your loved ones to this database.

March 2011

Date	Loved One	Member's Name	Relationship
3/1	R. Betty Blum	Dr. Marc Blum	Mother
3/1	Hugh Goldstein	Michele Missner	Father
3/2	Karen Tegley	Paulette Glassheim	Aunt
3/3	Michael Cook	Member	Member
3/4	Alfred Israel	Member	Member
3/4	Arpad Neuman	Lisa Weiner	Father
3/5	Sally Palow	Member	Member
3/6	Sam Tvert	Member	Member
3/8	Ely Boschwitz	Member	Member
3/9	Goldye Nathan Baker	Charlotte Baker Richmond	Mother
3/9	Besse Rakita Zimmerman	Dr. Marc Blum	Cousin
3/11	Sam Gorwitz	Joyce Gorwitz	Husband
3/14	David Gazerowitz	Member	Member
3/15	Abraham Kagan	Member	Member
3/17	Hugh Goldstein	Michele Missner	Father
3/18	Bernard Nemschoff	Member	Member
3/19	Bessie Zimmerman	Dr. Marc Blum	Great Aunt
3/19	Roy L. Emanuel	Dr. Marc Blum	Great Uncle
3/20	Joseph Friedman	Claire Round	Father
3/20	Dr. Jacob Shapiro	Member	Member
3/22	Mabel Evan Rasmussen	Member	Member
3/23	Ruby Hirschber	Member	Member
3/24	Isadore Borsuk	Member	Member

April 2011

Date	Loved One	Member's Name	Relationship
4/4	Marie Baum Callin	Member	Member
4/5	Sally Palow	Ann Dreyfus	Mother
4/5	Max Gorwitz	Member	Member
4/6	Millie Rosner Israel	Member	Member
4/6	Yetta Rosenstein	Member	Member
4/6	Irving Weiner	Phil Weiner	Father
4/7	Samuel Finkler	Marty Finkler	Father
4/9	Louis Urdan	Sidney and Charlotte Richmond	Member
4/9	Rose Pass	Member	Member
4/11	Keith Baker	Charlotte Richmond	Brother
4/11	Kay Ansfield	Paul Ansfield	Mother
4/12	Lillian Elegant	Member	Member
4/12	Ernst Rosenberg	Member	Member
4/13	Louise Israel	Member	Member
4/13	William Richmond	Sidney M. Richman	Brother
4/15	Nathan Edelson	Member	Member
4/15	Walter Benjamin Goldstein	Avi Stern	Grandfather
4/15	Shirley Horky	Barbara Kuhn	Mother
4/16	Mollie Levin Rosenberg	Member	Member
4/17	Abe Penn	Member	Member
4/22	Antonia Nacinovich	Angie Lipschutz	Mother
4/22	Rose Stern	Avi Stern	Grandmother
4/23	Sally Palow	Ann Dreyfus	Mother
4/25	Samuel Finkler	Mary Finkler	Father
4/28	Samuel Myers	Member	Member
4/28	Kay Ansfield	Paul Ansfield	Mother
4/29	Jerome Kitizis	Mark Kitizis	Father
4/30	Gertrude Horowitz	Member	Member
4/30	Kitty Friedman	Claire Round	Mother

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