



Beth Shalom Weekly Update

Thursday, January 16, 2025 to Wednesday, January 22, 2025
Hazzan Lance H. Tapper, Hon DMus Torah Portion Shemot

Shabbat Service - January 17, 2025 - 7:30 p.m.

SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday Evening 7:30 pm

SYNAGOGUE OFFICE HOURS

Erica will work from home Tuesday - Friday, 10:00a-4:00p. The Beth Shalom office will now be open by appointment only. Our office phone and email will continue to be attended to during office hours.

10:00a-4:00p Tuesday-Friday
562.941.8744
bswoffice@verizon.net

Yahrzeit

Miriam Brookfield
in memory of mother
Dora Fleischmann

Mina Cano
in memory of grandmother
Socorro Torres

Susan Lieberman
in memory of uncle
Max Moskowitz

Hazzan Lance H Tapper
in memory of grandfather
Harold Louis Tapper

David Weiss
in memory of father
Elliot Weiss

Michelle Hess
in memory of
Leigh Hess, father in law
Julius Schwartz, uncle

If you know of someone who is ill, had surgery, or just needs a call now and then, please let us know so we can reach out. Thank you.

Clergy Schedule

Virtual Services: www.facebook.com/bethshalomofwhittier

*Services and events are once again open to in person. Services will continue to broadcast on Facebook simultaneously for those who cannot attend in person.

January 17--7:25 pm Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty

January 24--7:25 pm Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty

January 31--7:30 pm Service--Rabbi Ken

February 7--7:30 pm Service--Rabbi Ken

February 14--7:25 pm Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty

What Did He Know, and When Did He Know It

Torah Reading: Exodus 1:1 - 6:1
Haftarah Reading: Isaiah 27:6 - 28:13, 29:22 - 23
Torah Portion: Shemot

By Rabbi Adam Greenwald, posted on December 19, 2018

One of the great mysteries of Moses' life is when he learns his own origin story. We, the readers, know that the infant Moses was saved by a collection of rebellious women – the midwives who deliver him and do not turn him over to the authorities, the mother and sister who hatch a desperate plot of place him in a basket on the Nile, the princess who takes a foundling child into the palace and raises him there as a son.

However, the Torah is silent on when and how the young Moses discovers his slave origins.

While we read that the daughter of Pharaoh hires Moses' actual mother, Yocheved, to be his wet nurse, we do not know what she might or might not have told the child. Did she whisper the secret of his birth to the baby at her breast? Did he call her "mother" when there was no one around to hear? Or, did she keep the secret buried deep inside of her, knowing that her child was safe and his safety depended upon his ignorance? We simply do not know.

All we learn is that at some point in Moses' early adulthood he suddenly responds to the slavery that must have surrounded him every day with an act of desperate violence:

Service Attendance

If you are not a member, coming with a member or known to someone who will be at the service, please call the office before coming to any of our services. We do have security guards at all of our services and events.

Beth Shalom Services: We are open for in person services. If you are not yet comfortable coming to services in person, please tune in virtually by visiting our Facebook page, **Beth Shalom of Whittier**. When there is a livestream taking place, you can click on it and watch.

Book Club: This month's discussion about the Briar Club was very interesting. Our next book club meeting will be Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 1:00pm. The book will be, "Making it So". It is an autobiography by Patrick Stewart, otherwise known as Captain Picard on Star Trek. For more information contact Michelle

Simcha Sharing Let the office know of your good news and we will share it in the next weekly. Weddings ★ Births

Tribute Cards To send a Tribute Card, please contact Michelle Hess. Her e-mail is: michelleh3532@gmail.com

PayPal Donations: Paypal donations welcome: bswoffice@verizon.net

Lunch and Learn

Saturday, January 25, 2025
12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Must have made a reservation.

Happy Birthday

Suruba Wechsler - January 18
Susan Lieberman - January 19

“When Moses had grown, he went out to his kin and saw their suffering, and he witnessed an Egyptian man striking an Israelite man, one of his kin. And Moses looked this way and that, and determined that there was no one there, and he killed the Egyptian and buried his body in the sand” (Exodus 2:11-12).

Fully understanding this incident, one of the defining moments in the life of Moses, is impossible without the context, which the text withholds from us.

Had Moses known his origin story for many years, holding his shame and anger at bay, until one day he snapped and could not take it any longer? Alternatively, had Moses just that very morning learned of his true beginnings, and this fateful encounter happened as he fled the palace in disgust and despair? Or, perhaps most intriguingly of all, did Moses still not know the full circumstances of his birth on that day, but over time came somehow to identify more with slaves than with than with his own class, to see them as “kin” regardless of bloodline, to recognize injustice and feel compelled to act?

The Torah is an elusive book – for all of the meticulous details it gives about the proper dimensions of the curtains in the desert sanctuary or the precise way that the blood an offered he-goat needs to be sprinkled on the altar, it does not answer some of our most burning narrative questions. In these “white spaces between the black letters,” we find the fertile soil for reflection and creative interpretation.

Writing personally, I find myself most drawn to scenario number three, in which Moses does not know that he is an Israelite at the moment when he intervenes to save the slave receiving the beating. In that case, Moses’ worthiness to serve as a leader of the Israelites comes precisely from his capacity to feel empathy and outrage, even on behalf of those he does not yet know are his brothers and sisters. Such a morally sensitive individual is indeed an excellent choice to play the role of our liberator and champion. However, then again, we cannot know for sure.