



Beth Shalom Weekly Update

Thursday, March 23, 2023 to Wednesday, March 29, 2023
Hazzan Lance H. Tapper, Hon DMus Shabbat Parashat Vayikra

Shabbat Service March 24, 2023 - 7:30 p.m.

SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday Evening 7:30 pm

SYNAGOGUE OFFICE HOURS

The Beth Shalom office will now be open on Wednesdays and Fridays. Erica will work from home on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Our office phone and email will continue to be attended to Tuesdays through Fridays.

9:00a-4:00p Tuesday-Friday
562.941.8744
bswoffice@verizon.net

YAHREZEIT

Sidney Paul
in memory of mother
Mary Torren Paul

Hazzan Lance H Tapper
in memory of cousin
Sharon Tapper Miller

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.

~ Save the Date ~

Erev Pesah/First Seder
Wednesday, April 5th.
See flyer on page 3.

Shabbat Hol Hamoed Pesah

Friday, April 7th
&

Erev Pesah Yizkor
Tuesday, April 11th.
See flyer on page 4.

Clergy Schedule

Virtual Services: www.facebook.com/bethshalomofwhittier

**Services and events are once again open to in person attendance with proof of vaccination and a mask. Services will continue to broadcast on Facebook simultaneously for those who cannot attend in person.*

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

March 31--7:25 pm--Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty Woodward

April 5--Erev Pesah/First Seder--6:25 pm--Festival Prelude; 6:30 pm--Erev Pesah Service (for all) followed by First Seder (by reservation only)--Hazzan Lance and Ty Woodward

April 7--Shabbat Hol Hamoed Pesah--7:25 pm Festival Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty Woodward

April 11--Erev Pesah Yizkor--7:25 pm--Festival Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty Woodward

Do It Right

Torah Reading: Leviticus 1:1 - 5:26 / Numbers 28:9 - 15
Haftarah Reading: Ezekiel 45:16 - 46:18
Torah Portion: Vayikra

By Rabbi Edward Feinstein, posted on March 11, 2018

An auto mechanic working on a new model car opens the Chilton manual to learn the car's specifications and directions for its repair. A therapist encountering an unfamiliar problem consults the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. A tax accountant consults a stack of manuals detailing this year's deductions and allowances. Every profession has its "tech manual." Even rabbis. When I was ordained, I received the little black book with the words recited at the bris, under the Huppah, and at graveside.

A tech manual ensures the car is repaired properly, the proper remedy is prescribed, the tax return isn't flagged for an audit. The tech manual tells the professional how to perform a particular function. While there may be room for creativity and originality in the practice of a profession, the concern of the tech manual is to get the job done right. Its concern is purely procedural: What to do and how to do it. It doesn't say why. That's not the purpose of the manual. Tech manuals are useful; they're not deep.

The first eighteen chapters of Leviticus are essentially the tech manual for the ancient Israelite priesthood. The specifications of the sacrificial worship are spelled out in detail -- which animal is offered for which purpose in what way.

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Beth Shalom Services: We are now open for in person services. Vaccinated people with proof may attend in person. All others may watch on our Facebook page, **Beth Shalom of Whittier**. When there is a livestream taking place, you can click on it and watch. If you are not yet comfortable coming to services in person, please tune in virtually and feel free to leave a message of greeting to others who are watching.

Directions for viewing livestream services: If you are a current Facebook subscriber, you need only to go to our Facebook page, **Beth Shalom of Whittier**, to view these announcements and videos. If you are not a current Facebook subscriber, you need to go to www.facebook.com and sign up with a username and password and then you can access our page at that point. Always log in 5 minutes ahead of the video start time.

Rose Hills Cemetery Plots: If you want to do your family the mitzvah of pre-planning, please call the office. They can give you information as to what gravesites are available and what steps to take to secure your plot(s). Plots are \$3500 each.

Book Club: For April, we are reading the Whittier Public Library's Community read "Solito." A memoir by Javier Zamora. We will be meeting on Zoom, Tues, April 25th. On Thurs April 27th, the author will be here in Whittier, in person, to talk about his book. The book is available for purchase, in both English and Spanish, at both branches of the Library. For May we will be reading "Inheritance" by Dani Shapiro.

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

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

Happy Birthday

Cathleen Cavanaugh
March 23rd

Like any manual, the driving concern of Leviticus is technical. The Torah's term is *"l'ratzon"* (Lev 1:3-4) "do it right." Sacrificial worship, like auto repair and tax preparation, is highly technical, rule-bound, and articulated with meticulous specificity. The individuality of the worshipper or the creative flair of the presiding priest is not the concern, only the proper performance of the rite. And there is no explanation, interpretation or elaboration of the meaning of these rites, just a register of procedure.

Professionals typically keep their tech manuals hidden in their desk, or behind solemn black leather covers on their office bookshelves. This preserves the authority of the professional and the mystery of the professional domain. The determination to publish the priestly tech manual at the heart of the Torah - revealing it to the entire people - is a profound statement of spiritual democracy. It fulfills the promise "you shall be *mamlechet kohanim* -- an entire nation of priests" (Ex 19:6). Even in its most technical expression, this religion is not meant to be esoteric. It is not the secret, guarded domain of the initiated. And God is not remote. There is no exam or licensure separating anyone from addressing God. Not even priestly or rabbinic ordination. God is "near to all who call upon God, to all who call in truth" (Ps 145:18)

But there is a danger in exalting a tech manual. It encouraged an obsession with the technical details of performance of worship which allowed for spiritual vacuity and moral obliviousness. This is precisely what enraged the Biblical prophets. Worship became a species of tax-preparation -- a debt to be paid off with no particular sense of loyalty. The prophet Isaiah railed:

"What need have I of all your sacrifices?" Says the LORD.

"I am sated with burnt offerings of rams, and suet of fatlings, and blood of bulls; and I have no delight in lambs and he-goats. You come to appear before Me— Who asked that of you?

Trample My courts no more!

Bringing oblations is futile,

Incense is offensive to Me.

New moon and sabbath, proclaiming of solemnities,

Assemblies with iniquity, I cannot abide.

Your new moons and fixed seasons fill Me with loathing;

They are become a burden to Me, I cannot endure them.

5 And when you lift up your hands, I will turn My eyes away from you.

(Isaiah 1:11-14)

"Who asked that of you?" That's a remarkable question after eighteen chapters of blood and animal parts in Leviticus. But the point is made: If the tech manual becomes the totality of faith, you have missed the purpose of worship. Too easily is religion reduced to ritual Jiffy Lube - regularly scheduled, technically precise, "auto service" - guaranteed in and out in ten minutes.

When the Temple was destroyed, the Rabbis imported the Leviticus tradition of a technical, rule-bound, articulated structure into the practice of Jewish prayer. Mishna Brachot is the tech manual for davening. Its first words signal this priestly attachment to technique: "From what time can the evening Shema be recited?" (Brachot 1:1) But within the Mishna's terse articulation of the rules, the spirit of Isaiah surfaces again. In chapter four, the rabbis debate the rules for the daily Amidah prayer. It's all technical: Rabban Gamliel requires a full recitation of all eighteen blessings. Rabbi Yehoshua affords leniency -- an abbreviated form of the prayer. For Rabbi Akiba, the requirement is relative to the worshipper's fluency. Then comes Rabbi Eliezer who explodes the whole discussion: "When worship is made *keva* -- fixed, routinized - it is no longer genuine prayer [*aino tahnunim*]." Worship rendered statutory is Jiffy Lube. Prayer must have structure, and worship form. But technically precise performance cannot become its totality. Isaiah would be proud.

The tech manual has its place. But occasionally, someone needs to come and burn it. What Isaiah did to Leviticus, and Rabbi Eliezer did to Mishna Brachot, the medieval masters of *piyyut*, the composer Solomon Rossi, the Hasidic tradition would come in their time and repeat. This is the historical process that grows our worship tradition. The cocoon must be shed so that the chrysalis may emerge and take flight. It continues today in the creative inventiveness of a thousand new expressions of Jewish prayer sprouting about us. This dance between the old and the new is our tradition. It is *l'ratzon*, it is the right way.

Memorial Plaques: we have brought all of the memorial plaques into our office, from the storage unit. If you would like a family member's plaque, please contact the office and let us know the name on the plaque. We will find it and arrange for you to pick it up. If you know of anyone who might have had loved one's plaques on our memorial board, please let them know that they are available to be picked up.

*BETH SHALOM OF WHITTIER
INVITES YOU TO*



OUR FIRST NIGHT PESAH SERVICE AND SEDER

*HAZZAN LANCE H TAPPER, HON DMUS, OFFICIATING
TY WOODWARD, ACCOMPANIST*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2023

AT

FIRST FRIENDS

PESAH PRELUDE AND SERVICE FOR ALL

BEGINS AT 6:25 PM IN THE SANCTUARY

FOLLOWED BY THE SEDER IN THE SOCIAL HALL FOR RESERVED GUESTS

**THE PRELUDE AND SERVICE ONLY WILL ALSO BE STREAMED
ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE: BETH SHALOM OF WHITTIER**

**RESERVATIONS ARE A MUST FOR THE SEDER
PLEASE CALL THE TEMPLE OFFICE AT (562) 941-8744**

SEDER IS COMP FOR MEMBERS PLUS ONE GUEST.

NON-MEMBER OR ADDITIONAL GUESTS \$70/PERSON, PREPAID BY RSVP DATE.

DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS IS MARCH 24, 2023

BETH SHALOM OF WHITTIER
INVITES YOU TO CELEBRATE WITH US
SHABBAT HOL HAMOED PESAH AND PESAH YIZKOR



SHABBAT HOL HAMOED PESAH SERVICE

Friday, April 7—Pesah Organ Prelude—7:25 pm, Service—7:30 pm

PESAH YIZKOR SERVICE

Tuesday, April 11—Pesah Organ Prelude @7:25 pm, Service @7:30 pm

HAZZAN LANCE H TAPPER, HON DMUS, OFFICIATING
TY WOODWARD, ORGANIST

**BOTH SERVICES WILL BE HELD IN-PERSON
AT FIRST FRIENDS
AND SIMULTANEOUSLY STREAMED ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE:
BETH SHALOM OF WHITTIER**