

Why Bad Things Happen to Good People

by Rabbi Michael Lotker

When Bad Things Happen to Good People is the title of a best selling book (which I highly recommend) by Rabbi Harold Kushner. Why bad things happen to good people is the question that we ask during times of global crisis (such as that of the earthquake/tsunami in Japan) or personal tragedy. It is also the most difficult question that religion has to face. Simply put, if God is all good, all powerful and all just, how is it that bad things happen to good people?

God knows! This is a very simple and very glib and not so satisfying answer but one that we must start with. We must begin with theological humility. No person should claim to know completely the mind or ways of God. In fact, I think much evil comes from those who are certain that they know exactly what God thinks about most everything. But God gave us a brain and the desire to seek to understand. I believe it's entirely kosher to ask for answers to these questions.

First, let's be clear; the problem before us is tragedy not evil. For me the question of evil is answered by God's granting us free will. We can use our brains and technology to build hospitals or gas chambers. The question is not "Where was God at Auschwitz," but "Where was humanity at Auschwitz."

Understanding tragedies is far more troubling. How to understand:

- a tsunami that kills thousands or even hundreds of thousands (the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami killed over 230,000 people in 14 countries)?
- the Haiti earthquake that killed some 200,000 and left 2 million homeless?
- the illness or accident that hurt or killed someone you love?

Broadly speaking, I can think of two answers that are consistent with

Jewish tradition. The first suggests that God is really in charge and has a grand plan addressing all such things that we mere humans cannot understand. A small child getting a vaccination thinks he is suffering unjustly but we know a wonderful medical miracle is really the result of his momentary pain. Could it be that from God's perspective, the apparent tragedies that we see are somehow part of a grand master plan? Perhaps those who suffer in this life will be rewarded in the next. Some mystics would even say that suffering in this life is a way of paying for sins incurred in prior incarnations or past lives. God knows.

I, however, align myself theologically with a very different understanding, that of Rabbi Harold Kushner, who as a young rabbi watched his innocent son sicken and die at age 14 of progeria, a disease that causes a young person to rapidly age. Rabbi Kushner concluded that God's power is limited; that God does not override natural law to work miracles. The way I think of it is that if someone shoots a bullet in the air, where the bullet comes down is addressed by my old career (physics) and not my new career (theology). The earthquake happened because of geological forces that built up and not because God decided to inflict suffering on Japan.

This might lead you to ask "Who Needs God?" It turns out that Rabbi Kushner has also written a book with this exact title. We need God not as a miracle worker but as a teacher and inspirer. God may not work magic in the world but God's influence is magical, teaching us that we should strive to solve the problems of the world, use our intelligence to cure disease, track destructive storms, make buildings earthquake tolerant, make peace, etc. and not to make war and inflict suffering. God also comforts us in prayer and study and in the people that our religions send to comfort and help in times of trouble.

One of our youngest Temple members, 10 ½ year old Ben Scheerger, recently asked his mom "Why does God make diseases?" Here was my response.

To put it as simply as possible, God makes us God's partner in making the world a better place. If God did everything for us, if the world were perfect (no diseases, no war, no poverty, etc.), what would our job be?

Maybe, we could explain it as "How would it be if mommy and daddy always did everything for you kids? We would bathe you and feed you and select your toys and friends. You would never have to do a thing, never lift a finger and never solve a problem. This might work when you are little, but it's important for you to do things for yourselves to be grown up. So too, I think that God so respects us that God only took the creation of the world so far and left it to God's partners, that's us, to complete it."

The Torah teaches us that we are made in God's image. I believe that this means that we have truly significant work to do in the world; that we are to work with God in perfecting and completing creation. But it's up to us to decide whether or not to be God's partner. God doesn't force us to do the right thing, only begs us (actually commands us) to do so.

The question so often heard is "Why me, why her, why them?" It's not a helpful question in no small part because there is no truly satisfying answer. In my experience the helpful question is "What should I do now? How can I help?" This is a question that we can answer and, in answering it, bring comfort, help and healing to our troubled world. This is how I believe God works in the world.

May God bless and strengthen everyone facing pain and tragedy, and send God's partners to them in order to make their world and ours a happier, healthier place!



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Temple Ner Ami - A Place to be Human

by Nadine Frankel, ELT

Today we scramble to fit ourselves into a culture

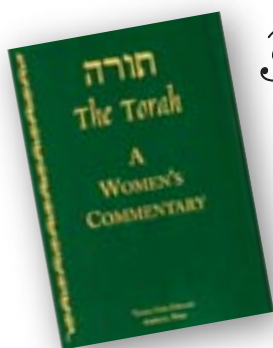
driven by technology and consumerism. Adults work longer and longer hours, using our cell phones, laptops, and remote network connections, to perform work that may not be at all personally fulfilling. Even those of us lucky enough to have jobs that give us satisfaction spend a good portion of our time with mandatory nonsense such as answering multitudinous e-mails and following government regulations. Children spend hours playing virtual games. Teenagers flirt by sending electronic icons to each other. We sometimes expect ourselves to function like machines, and consider basic human activities as a luxury we try to fit in when we can. However, that tiny spark of the Divine within each of us, that we call our soul, is **real**. It cannot be experienced in a virtual world, nor be converted to a digitalized format. Our modern world does not nourish our souls.

At Temple Ner Ami, we participate in the same activities that humans have always done, that are natural for us and make us feel alive and in harmony with the world. We gather with members of our tribe to sing and share bread and wine, to welcome new members, those just born and those who choose to join us, to celebrate the rite of passage to

adulthood, to mourn and honor our dead, and to pass on our knowledge and our faith to our children. We have festivals to celebrate the renewal of spring and the reaping of the harvest in fall. And here we practice the most quintessentially human activity of all: the conscious seeking of G_d.

Of course there are many ways that humans seek G_d, but our Jewish way is the best way, for us. Why has a little band of Semitic nomads survived through all the millennia, against all odds, and powerful enemies, to spread to all corners of the earth, to thrive, and to give light to the world? Where are all the other peoples in the Bible: the Philistines, the Canaanites, the ancient Romans and Greeks, the Babylonians and all the rest? They are all gone, but we are still here. The only thing that we have that they did not is our Jewish beliefs and traditions. These can best continue to sustain us in the context of our own humanity.

So come, here, to Temple Ner Ami, where you can set aside the artificial constraints of our modern world. Feel the security of being among your own tribe, as we sing, pray, celebrate and mourn. It is only when we have a connection to our own human nature that we can connect with others and with G_d. Here is where we can experience the deep, primal satisfaction of being human.



Torah Study:
The
Women's
Perspective

Join us from Noon-1:00 pm
Wednesdays – bring your
lunch, and join Student
Rabbi Lisa Bock as we shine
light on the Torah from the
women's perspective!



TODAH RABBAH Means Thank You!

*Message from
Naomi Brill, Oneg Chair*



Yes, Todah Rabbah means Thank You but this month I can say that to only two women who helped the Temple by sponsoring Onegs. They were FRAN YASNEY who did it in honor of her own birthday and SONIA LOTKER who celebrated the move into the Village that she and Rabbi Lotker undertook this month. A big “thank you” to these two women for giving so graciously of themselves. Our helpers for the month were **Elvira Cabelli** and **Arla Crane** and to them we send our thanks and appreciation.

I am sure all of you must have an event to celebrate at least once a year. Why not do it here at the Temple by becoming a Sponsor of an Oneg (the social hour after Friday night services)? The procedure is simple: Just call me and tell me what event you want to observe and we'll find an appropriate date for you. You can either bake the goodies, buy them or do neither but give the Temple a donation and I'll do the shopping for you! It's that easy.

Remember to call me at (805) 388-8511 to help with the Onegs. We really do need YOU! *Naomi Brill, Oneg Chair*

Get your Ner Ami logo necklace, earrings or tie tac!



The logo jewelry sale is a fundraiser for the Temple. Stop by the gift shop to purchase one!

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Sarene Wallace via eMail at
residents@templenerami.org.*

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Spotlight on a Volunteer!

by Shari Brody

I have the opportunity to get to know some people through their work at the Temple. This has led to my discovery that we have some amazing people, who in some

cases, volunteer a huge amount of time!

A person who fits this description is Phyllis Mandel. Phyllis replaced Ruth Nathan, (who moved) as our Temple Librarian. Phyllis is from Cleveland, and became a widow in 1951 when her husband, Abe, a Marine, was killed in Korea. She raised their three young children, who were 8, 5, and 3, by herself. When the Rabbi at her family Temple recommended her for a position, she began working at the College of Jewish Studies in Cleveland. Phyllis knew how to read and write in Hebrew and taught herself to use the Hebrew typewriter during her 13 years of service to the college library.

She moved to the milder climate of California in 1968, and was hired at Occidental Petroleum in Westwood. Phyllis improved their library system, started a business library and became the Supervisor of Corporate Records during her seventeen years of employment. She moved to Camarillo just before

retiring. When Phyllis retired at the age of 65, she taught water aerobics, volunteered at Pleasant Valley Hospital and was a Hospice volunteer for the next 20 years!

When the Temple moved to our new location, Phyllis devoted 20 hours a week for the next five months to organize and categorize our new, larger, library. On Mondays and Wednesdays, Phyllis can be found checking in the books that have been borrowed and keeping the library organized.

Phyllis has a large personal library, loves to read and belongs to two book review groups. She hopes that people of all ages will develop the good habit of reading and enjoy books as much as she does. Her son William, who also served in the Marine Corps, lives the closest of her three children. Her daughters Marcia and Louise live in Florida and Arizona.

Many thanks to Phyllis for her experience, expertise and dedication to our Temple and library. Her generosity of time and talent is a tremendous gift to all who enter the library. We wish Phyllis the blessings of continued good health and offer our gratitude to an amazing woman. Did I mention that Phyllis is 90 years young?



MOVIE NIGHT

APRIL 23rd - 6:30pm

A documentary on television pioneer Gertrude Berg. She was the creator, principal writer, and star of "The Goldbergs," a popular radio show for 17 years, which became television's very first character-driven domestic sitcom in 1949. Berg received the first Best Actress Emmy in history, and paved the way for women in the entertainment industry.





Tikkun Olam - "Feeding Hungry Families in Our Community"

By Harriet Lit

On a daily basis, Beth Yale works non-stop getting donations of food and money and negotiating discounts on necessary items that she cannot get for free. Julia Newman, among her many jobs, organizes the volunteers and keeps records of the families in need.

On a monthly basis about a dozen volunteers meet at the Somis Pantry and fill bags and boxes with canned, fresh, frozen, and refrigerated foods as well as packaged cereals, cookies and treats. There is much bending and lifting and stretching - some really great exercise! Regular Temple volunteers include: Amy Goltz, Alison Grossmann, and Seth and Char Brandes. Clarice Shapiro is our newest volunteer. Children volunteer during the summer, and one of our Torah School students just got a large donation of food from his Boy Scout Troop.


What can you do? When you have your weekly Mah Jong, canasta, or poker game, make it a habit to bring the food of the month to the game. My own Mah Jong group was thrilled to be asked to help, and I am the only Temple member in that game. When people understand a need, they are excited to be of help.

When you shop at a warehouse grocery store and there are eight cans packaged together, drop some off at the Temple. If you live in Leisure Village, call me and I'll pick up the food and bring it to the Temple for you. Remember the food of the month:


- March: Peanut Butter**
- April: Jelly, preserves, or jams**

Ongoing need: canned fruits and vegetables. Special thanks to everyone who contributed this month. Let's keep the momentum going!

Harriet Lit 484-9119




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NEW MEGILLAH ADVERTISER!

A big “thumbs up” from Stephen Pickett, antique appraiser, is on the cover of this issue along with Ann Burke, Sisterhood Program Chairwoman/Vice President. He provided expert appraisals for many Temple members at our “Antique Road Show” in the Irv Dubin Library during the Purim Carnival. He appraises antique and collectable items. Give him a call and you can find out what that heirloom hiding in your closet is worth. And don’t forget to tell Stephen you heard about him in the **MEGILLAH!**



Cheder Chappenings

by Julia Newman

Everything is a *first* for us this year at the *Temple on Temple*.

We had our first **Student of the Month** awards for children demonstrating our Middah/ Value of the month which was

Chesed/Kindness. Students were chosen by their teachers and were given a certificate of appreciation along with a

We invite all of the Congregation to attend the monthly Family service. April's service will be led by the 1st Grade class and May's service by the PreK & Kinder kids.

Our **Junior Youth Group** had its first sleepover in our new Temple. Students attended the Family service led



by our 2nd & 3rd graders and when that was over—the FUN began! The evening started with a hide and seek game. Did we ever find Daniel??? There were snacks, movies on the big screen, video games, more snacks, schmoozing, no sleeping (for sure) and breakfast in the morning. Heartfelt thanks to advisors: *Jeffrey Lee Steinberg & Gil Ramot* for staying awake all night. Sleepless JYG members include: *Griffin D'Inca, Rena Dvoretzky, Sophie Elliott, Nolan Grossmann, Hannah Harris, Fallon Highfill, Eric Saleh, Daniel Siela, Samantha Shapiro, and Shoshi Steinberg.*

February was **Jewish Disabilities Month** and the



Torah School held an Abilities Awareness Fair which provided a variety of simulations and hands-on experiences for different disabilities (deaf & hard-of-hearing, visual & sensory impairments, fine motor, mobility and learning disabilities).

Camp Kadimah Purim featured our annual Hamentaschen making and baking, A Dr. Seuss Purim Spiel, and puppet-making with a guest teacher, our very own Arla Crane of Alphabet Soup Puppeteers.



small gift certificate to Baskin-Robbins Ice Cream (how sweet is that!). Honorees for March were: *A.J. Williams, Kaitlyn Sadowsky* (Kindergarten), *Jacob Greenberg* (1st), *Talia Lieb* (2nd), *Abbie Harris* (4th), *Justin Lieb* (5th), *Samantha Shapiro* (6th), *Rena Dvoretzky* (7th). Mazal Tov! April's Middah is Ahava/Love.

Second and Third Graders conducted our **March Family Shabbat** service. Along with teacher, *Karen Dworsky*, these young children led the service and entertained us



with an hysterical play called "The Meaning of Religious School." The class includes: *Bella Budin, Noah Harris, Simon Harris, Chloe Kamola, Maya Lapidot-Boaz, Talia Lieb, and Shea Sadowsky.*

TEEN CONNECTION

On Purim Shabbat our senior high teens prepared and served a delicious dinner to over 50 Ner Ami congregants. Our heartfelt thanks to the parents who purchased and cooked the food: *Gina Burstein, Robin Elliott, Sandi Fischler, Sue Littaua, Jack Perr,*



Tamar Sheffi, Pam Veselak and Pam Weinstock. Along with advisors, *Jeffrey Lee Steinberg and Daniel Veselak,* the teens planned the dinner and helped serve, set-up and clean-up.

NAUTY (Ner Ami United Temple Youth) includes: *Lucas Burstein, Zeke Elliott, Michael Fischler, Tari Kurman, Shani Levi, Alex Littaua, Daniel Perr, and Carly Shaul.* A fun highlight of the evening was a brief thank you from the teens given in a variety of languages: English, Hebrew, Japanese, Spanish and American Sign Language. Proceeds from the dinner go to support the Dubin Youth Scholarship Fund—which will help pay tuition for our teens to attend the Spring NFTY retreat at Camp JCA Shalom.



Hurricane Purim—our Carnival couldn't have been done without the many teens who pitched in to help. They set up



for the day, ran the games, played the music, and worked in the food booths. Todah Rabah!

Along with Advisor, *Daniel Veselak,* several NAUTY teams joined VCTRY (Temple Beth Torah) for Broom Ball at the local rink.

Skaters included: *Zeke Elliott, Michael Fischler, Shani Levi, Alex Littaua, Jason Veselak, and Mitchell Weinstock.*

We Want to Know Your Stories

What were your traditions when you were young? Is there any special tradition that you observe presently that started in your parents' or grandparents' home? Do you have any Jewish memorabilia more than 30, 50, 70, 100 years old? Do you have anything Jewish given to you by your parents or grandparents? Sharing your special experiences enhances everyone who hears your story, and telling stories of those who have passed is a blessing and keeps our loved ones' memories alive. Please share your special stories with your community through this column.

Send your article to Kaila Kaden, at accounting@templenerami.org or call her in the temple office to tell your story, and she will write it up for you. Claim your 15 minutes of fame and tell your story in next month's Megillah. It's a *mitzvah!*

Gift Shop News

Have you seen the **Matzo Covers** displayed in the Gift Shop? They are just beautiful and would enhance your Sedar Table. So come in and see these, the Sedar Plates and all our other wonderful merchandise.

Passover is almost here and our beautiful case at the Temple Gift Shop is filled with beautiful new items. There are some new **Sedar Plates** and **Elijah Cups** to grace your beautiful **Passover Table**.

There are nice novelty items that make great gifts. I have also refilled our card rack with beautiful cards for all occasions.

Our cards are first quality and are priced lower than Hallmark cards. Come in and see all our wonderful gifts. No matter what you are looking for, I am sure we can accommodate you. Looking forward to seeing you soon.

Happy Passover! - *Claire Goldstein*

"SISTERS IN DA' HOOD" News

Dear Sisters & Supporters,

There is an exciting evening planned for you at the end of April. We will be marking the conclusion of Passover on Tuesday, April 26, with a traditional Moroccan celebration called Mimona. We will feast on sweet treats which is the custom. In addition, there will be entertainment provided by a professional Belly dancer. You are invited to bring guests and your spouse is welcome. The cost is \$10.00 per person and it will be well worth it! Please RSVP to the Temple, 805-388-3824.



The Sisterhood version of an Antique Road Show was held during the Purim Carnival. There were a variety of items brought in and appraised by Steve Pickett. It was interesting to learn about the history and value of the different possessions that people have in their homes.

In February, Rabbi Lotker presented a talk entitled, "Illicit Sex in the Bible." It was followed by chocolate tasting and the evening was a huge success! Rabbi

Lotker included one of his famous songs which everyone enjoyed. Thanks to the efforts of our publicity chairwoman, Arla Crane, we had more than forty people in attendance. Our Temple Administrator, Mark, was able to arrange for us to use the Fellowship Hall (kitchen) which made our preparations and serving much easier. Sliced strawberries, angel food cake, apple slices, pineapples, pretzels, bananas, coffee & tea were served. There were four pots of chocolate fondue set up so that everyone had the opportunity to dip their choices in the chocolate. The Sisterhood hostesses for the evening were Sonia Lotker, Elvira Cabelli, Naomi Brill, Arla Crane and Shari Brody.

See you at the Mimona!

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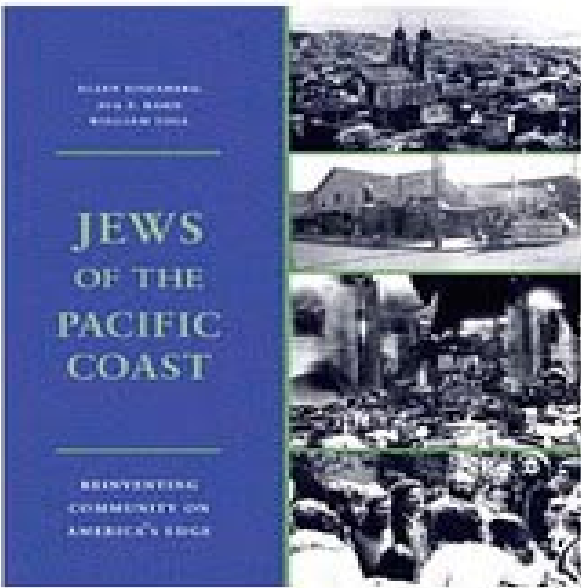
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CLASS SCHEDULE

- April 4** What the Bible Has to Say.
- April 11** Rabbinic/Talmudic.
- April 25** Kabbalah/Mystical.
- May 2** Modern Thinkers & Jewish
Funeral & Mourning Practices.



The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County & Western States Jewish History Journal

Meeting Co-Sponsored by Temple Adat Elohim

Sunday, April 3, 2011

1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

at Temple Adat Elohim

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Reminder:

TEMPLE NER AMI - HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE

Saturday, November 13, 2011

To be held at the "Boys & Girls Club" in Camarillo.
We need vendors! If you know of anyone that might
be interested please contact: Bobbe Jacobs at:
bobbejacobs@gmail.com or call 805-389-4320



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Judy Sitko	Friday	April 1	Sandra Goodwin	Tuesday	April 12
William H. Slapin	Friday	April 1	Michael Clark	Wednesday	April 13
Lisa Alberstone	Saturday	April 2	Irving Bergman	Saturday	April 16
Paul Taubman	Sunday	April 3	Stacy Shaul	Sunday	April 17
Madelyn Miller	Monday	April 4	Jean Shev	Sunday	April 17
Robert Abbott Defazio	Saturday	April 9	Sharon Hartman	Wednesday	April 20
John Kerwien	Monday	April 11	Robert Kadin	Saturday	April 23
Hannah (Anne) Kushner	Monday	April 11	Muriel Rosenkranz	Sunday	April 24
Deborah Blum	Tuesday	April 12			

** This table is based on Temple records. If your information is missing or in error, please contact the Temple office.*



PESACH: TWO FREEDOMS

by Student Rabbi Lisa Bock

As I write this article for our **MEGILLAH**, we are just about to read the *Megillah* – the scroll containing the words of the Book of Esther, and celebrate Purim. I can feel Passover coming as well.

In my home, we know it is

time to stop buying cereal and pasta, in anticipation of turning our household upside down in celebration of Passover. Spring cleaning comes to mind. I think about fresh tablecloths, inviting friends and family to our *Seder*, and of course, getting out the *haggadot*, the booklets we use for our dinner table service. I start looking for horseradish root in the store – yes, I do make fresh horseradish that really does bring tears to the eyes. It is these tears that bring us a physical reminder of the pain of slavery. And of course, it is from our slavery and bondage in Egypt that we celebrate our freedom.

But if we look a little deeper, it is not just physical freedom that we celebrate; we also celebrate spiritual freedom. We go from bondage to physical freedom, and we go from being unable to worship to being free to worship God.

The distinction between physical freedom and spiritual freedom is an important one. It can be a reminder that our circumstances can give us very real boundaries, and yet our spirit is nevertheless free.

During the month or so before Passover, we have four *Shabbatot* that are called *Shabbat Shekalim*, *Shabbat Zachor*, *Shabbat Parah*, and *Shabbat HaChodesh*.

Shabbat Shekalim is named for the portion of Torah we read on that *Shabbat* which discusses the half shekel (a form of currency) that each person contributes to support the portable tent in the desert, and later, to the Temple in Jerusalem. *Shabbat Zachor*, for Shabbat

of Remembrance, is an admonition to remember Amalek – Haman, the villain in the Story of Esther, is a descendant of Amalek, and *Shabbat Zachor* is the Sabbath right before Purim. *Shabbat Parah* is right after Purim, and is a reading about the Red Heifer, whose ashes were mixed with water to ritually purify anyone who was ritually impure, as only those who were ritually pure could eat from the Passover sacrifice. The fourth Shabbat is *Shabbat HaChodesh*, which this year is on Friday, April 1st, the 27th of Adar II. The passage read on this Shabbat deals with Passover laws, and details on the observance of Passover. A final special Shabbat is *Shabbat HaGadol*, the Great Sabbath, just before Passover.

On *Shabbat Zachor*, the Sabbath of Remembrance, we are reminded to remember Amalek. This is an opportunity for us to prepare for Passover, and assess in our own lives our physical freedom, and spiritual freedom. Amalek can be thought of as a villain against whom we must prevail, a sort of evil character that might be at the core of a good-guy, bad-guy movie. This we can think of as struggling for our physical freedom. Or, we can use the image of Amalek as a metaphor for that which stops us internally. This is the fight for our spiritual freedom. Our internal Amalek might be that voice which says, “I can’t”, “I’m not good enough,” ...all the things we say to ourselves which stop us from accomplishing things and being our truest selves in our own lives and in the world. The internal Amalek is that voice of doubt, negativity and failure, and this is what we have the opportunity to remember. We are also instructed to forget the name of Amalek. By remembering, we are reminded to forget Amalek. Perhaps this is really a reminder to turn the volume down on that voice of doubt, negativity, and failure.

I wish for you and our whole Ner Ami family a fulfilling, meaningful, and joyous Passover.

Chag Sameach Pesach!



Support Sisterhood—Wear Your Colors!

The most visible way to show your support for the Sisterhood is to purchase and wear an Official Sisterhood T-Shirt. The logo and artwork is on the back of the shirt.

We have long-sleeve versions for \$9 and short sleeve styles for just \$7. Both are available in several sizes.

Contact Shari Brody or Sonia Lotker today to get yours!

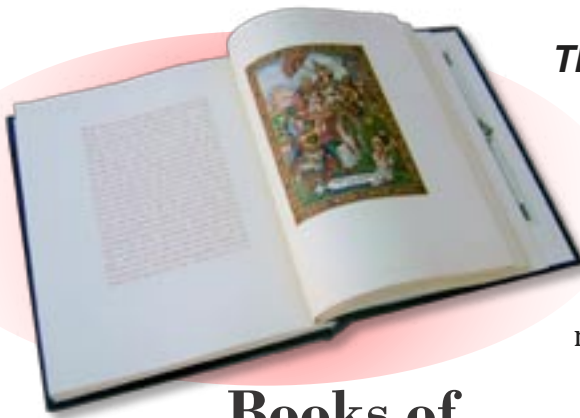
THE HAGADDAH

By Arthur Szyk Edited by
Cecil Roth

The illustrations in this beautiful Haggadah are reproductions of the originals of the Arthur Szyk illuminations. He worked on the Haggadah between 1932-1938, when the greatest, perhaps, of all the tragedies in the millennial history overwhelmed the Jewish people.

Szyk thinks of the conflict between Israel and his prosecutors, the motif of the entire Hagaddah, largely in terms of the struggle between Israel and the eternal Amalek. To this he reverts time after time in miniature after miniature in illumination after illumination of the struggle.

Cecil Roth narrates in detail the beginnings of the printing of the Haggadah in medieval times through the centuries, to the invention of the printing press making the Haggadah available to everyone. Thank you Rabbi Lotker for donating this beautiful Haggadah to the library.



Books of Interest

by Phyllis Mandel

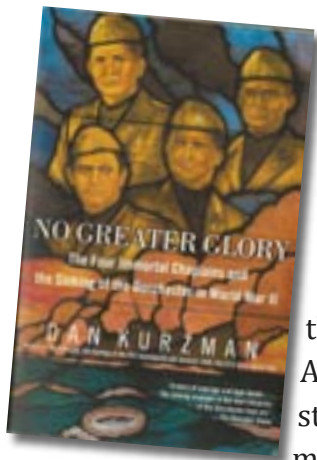
THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

By Geraldine Brooks

In 1996 a rare book expert is offered the analysis and conservation of a mysterious, beautifully illuminated Hebrew manuscript created in 15th Century Spain. The manuscript was recently saved from destruction of the Sarajevo library in Bosnia.

Trace the global journey of the Sarajevo Haggadah back from Sarajevo to Vienna in 1894; Venice in 1609; Taragona in 1492; Seville in 1480 where the manuscript's extraordinary illuminations is finally disclosed.

This book will be discussed at the Temple Eager Reader Book Review Group at their May meeting.



Eager Readers Book of the Month Club Meets Tuesday, April 12th, 10:30am

NO GREATER GLORY, the book to be discussed in April, is the inspiring true story of four extraordinary men of faith who forever

changed the lives of those they saved on a harrowing night during World War II. The tragic sinking of the Dorchester in the icy waters off Greenland shortly after midnight on February 3, 1942, was also the occasion of an astounding feat of heroism. As water gushed through a hole made by a German torpedo, four chaplains moved quietly among the men onboard. Preaching bravery, they distributed life jackets, including their own. In the end, these four souls went down with the ship, their arms linked in solidarity, their voices raised in prayer.



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CSUCI Hillel Joins Us for Dinner - *by Julia Newman*



In March, Ner Ami hosted a dinner for CSUCI Hillel students. They were joined by Rabbi Mike, Cantor Karen, Dale and Bobbe Jacobs, Saul Lessler, Sarene Wallace, and Julia Newman.

Hillel at CSUCI is funded by the Jewish Federation of Ventura through the generosity of the Jewish community's donations to the annual campaign. Cheri Dekofsky, Executive Director of the Federation writes: "We are proud of their (Hillel) accomplishments on behalf of the Jewish student body and Israel advocacy. We also wish to thank the graduating leadership and

welcome the incoming officers. Yasher Koach. May they go from strength to strength on their journey.

Hillel will return to Ner Ami on **Friday, April 15th** for their monthly dinner and Shabbat service. The Federation will be sponsoring the dinner. If you would like to attend, please let Julia know. On **Friday, May 6**, they will hold their installation of new officers. Please plan on attending that night. It would send a strong message to these young college students that they are indeed a part of our congregation.



Photos Courtesy of Dale Jacobs

Dedicated Beth Shalom Lawn Section



PERSONAL CHOICES

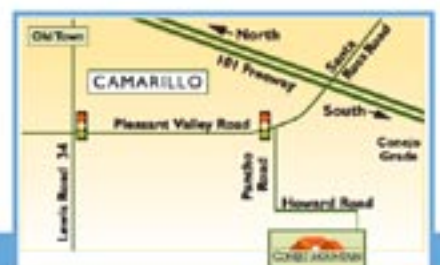
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Get the latest news, pictures, and other info about everything going at Temple on **facebook**. To see what's happening today go to:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Temple-Ner-Ami-The-Ventura-Jewish-Connection/195877267344>

TORAH SCHOOL SUPPORT FUND



Thank you to all those wonderful supporters. Your support got me through a difficult, but triumphant day - the Los Angeles Marathon. I was able to complete the run two hours sooner than the 2008 run and still have some energy after the race was over to enjoy the day's festivities. I'll have a complete listing of all my wonderful supporters in the next Megillah. Not everyone has actually sent in their donations and I don't want to leave anybody out.

This has been an exciting year. You have all helped through out the year to make our Torah School Fund a grand success...\$25,000! A small price to pay to have the best school this side of the I-5. We have had garage sales, fashion shows, boutiques, luncheons, breakfasts, speakers, carnivals, countless raffle prizes, a 1/2 marathon run, and one very long marathon run (From Dodger Stadium to the Santa Monica Pier.) Together we have achieved our goal.

I will be stepping off the Board on June 30th. It's time for new leadership. I know you will give the next TSSF Leader all the help and support you have given to me.

Jay and I have been active in the affairs of Temple Ner Ami from day one. We can truly say that it has been a wonderful experience to be associated with TNA. We wish you all continued success.

Arla Crane, Torah School Support Fund

In Focus Photography and Video



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-PORTRAITURE

-WEDDINGS

Kenneth Bahr
(805)555-4045
www.infocusphotographyandvideo.com
info@infocusphotographyandvideo.com



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www.infocusphotographyandvideo.com

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Ari & Jodi Spitzer - Sunday, April 10, 17th
Jack & Teri Milner - Tuesday, April 12, 30th
Bonnie Shubb & Moises Mercado- Fri., April 22, 4th

** Listings based on Temple records. If your info is missing or in error, please call the office.*



▲ TEMPLE NER AMI

*Celebrate the Second Night of Passover
Conducted by Rabbi Michael Lofker*

Tuesday, April 19, 2010

6:30 P.M.

515 Temple Ave., Camarillo, CA 93012

Temple Ner Ami is pleased to hold their 2nd Night of Seder Polluck. The 1st 100 people will be seated in the sanctuary. Overflow will be seated in the Fellowship Hall. It will be our first Seder at our new location and promises to be a joyous occasion!

Please call Karin Greenberg at 310-245-4426 after 4pm to RSVP. (Please call by Monday, April 18th). You will be asked to bring a Kosher main dish, salad or veggies to eat and share with 10 people.

Non-temple members are welcome!

\$5 donation is requested for members, \$10 for non-members.

Suggested Dishes

Brisket of Beef, Salmon, Roast Chicken, fish, etc. Salads, Hot Vegetables

Matzah, Coffee, Tea and Dessert will be provided by Temple.

If you wish, you may bring your own gefilte fish, hard-boiled eggs and Seder plate.

NOTE: Kosher for Passover. Meat or Parve only, no dairy, no pasta, no bread, croutons, noodles, etc.



Help Me Give the Gift of Sight - by Steve Moore



Shalom,

My name is Steve Moore and my family and I have been members of this wonderful little temple for about a dozen years. A couple of years ago I decided to get a little more involved and joined the board. I am glad to be doing my part in helping us grow our temple into "THE" temple of Camarillo.

I love our new home. The warmth, the functionality, and it just feels more like a house of God to me than the old location. I hope that you feel the same way about our "Temple on Temple" as I do. I would love to hear any of your thoughts, whether good or bad so we can work on our weaknesses and expand on our greatness. We have a great little Jewish community here. Please email me at Steve4FightingBlindness@gmail.com with any feed back that you would like to share with me. Although it's important to me, it's not the reason for me reaching out to you today.

I was born with an eye disease called **CHOROIDEREMIA**. It is an X linked recessive retinal degenerative disease that leads to the degeneration of the *choriocapillaries*, the retinal pigment *epithelium* and the photoreceptor of the eye. In layman's terms, I'm going blind.

Choroideremia impacts my life every day. I have about a quarter of the vision of a normally sighted

person and it will keep deteriorating until it is all gone. It really slows me down, especially in my business. I have to employ extra help to do the jobs that I used to easily (and more cost effectively) do myself. It gets me a little frustrated sometimes. But, a cure for Choroideremia and many other eye diseases are just in sight (maybe a little pun intended). Shoshanah Steinberg's Bat Mitzvah project was collecting eye glasses, large print books and various other vision aids. She has a macular degenerative eye disease that runs



Matthew and Sarah walk blindfolded during our Disability Day event.

in her family as well. Her great grandpa was blind and her Bubbe and Zeydies vision is greatly impaired.

It wouldn't be the end of the world but I'm sure you can imagine that I'm not keen on going blind. Thank God for the FFB! The Foundation Fighting Blindness (FFB) is the worlds largest non-governmental funding resource

for researching cures for all retinal degenerative diseases. Since it's inception in 1971, FFB has raised over \$425 million dollars towards its mission. Nearly 80 cents of every dollar donated goes to the worlds most elite and cutting edge in research science. VISION WALK is one of FFB's signature fund raising events. My sister is the President of the Jacksonville Fl. Chapter. She is helping organize the 3rd Annual VISION WALK 2011 on May 21st. in Jacksonville. I will be joining her and my mom as well as my other sister and brother and my nephews on the walk to help raise funds.

YOU CAN HELP US!

Please go to my FFB web page at, www.fightblindness.org/goto/stevemoore and click on the SUPPORT STEVEN button.

Just follow the quick and easy instructions and you'll be done in a few minutes. My brother donated and his employer matched his donation, so please check with your employer if you donate.

Regardless of whether or not you donate, I appreciate you taking the time to read this. If I do not know you but you now know who I am by my picture, I hope that you will introduce yourself to me if you see me at the temple or around town.

I hope to see you around for a good long time.

Best regards,
Steve Moore

For more info about The FFB, just go to fightblindness.org



Katie & Gary Glenn visited their "home" in Camarillo for a few days, and they joined us at the Temple for a BYO lunch on Tuesday, March 8th. Upon moving to Arkansas, the Hot Springs area had the hottest summer on record—followed by the winter with the most snow ever (*somebody is telling them they belong in Camarillo-ed.*). Here's a dozen or so Temple members listen intently as Gary describes how much they enjoy retirement life in Arkansas.

After almost a year on hiatus, our **Tree of Life** is returning to the Temple foyer!

At right Jay Crane and Aaron Dvoretzky mount the branches of the tree on the mounting boards while Sharon Spielman holds them in position. The new tree is mounted on three boards so it can be removed without destroying the wall in the process. The picture below taken after the Purim Carnival, shows the tree with many of it's leaves now in place.

Want to purchase a leaf to commemorate a memorable event in your family? The cost is just \$150, and they can be ordered by completing an application form available in the Temple office. See Mark or send him an eMail request and he will get you a copy of the form.



April Outside Organization Meetings



CITY OF HOPE - GENERAL MEETING

Monday, April 11, 2011 12:30 pm

Performance by Camarillo High Choir

Donald Seidler - 805-987-0917 - President

CITY OF HOPE - BOARD MEETING

Monday April 25, 2011 - 9:30 AM

Donald Seidler - 805-987-0917 - President

HADASSAH GENERAL MEETING

Now meeting at "The Center for Spiritual Living"

Natalie Rosen - Co-President 805-484-3523

Judy Meisels - Co-President 805-482-9222



ORT BOARD MEETING

Thursday, April 7th, 2011 - 10am

Annelies Regen - 805-445-9722

ORT General Meeting

Thursday, April 28, 2011 - 11:30 am

Annelies Regen - 805-445-9722

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

Tues-Wed 7-8:15 pm,

Sat. 6:30-7:30 pm,

Sunday (Men only) 7-8 am

The Temple Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Contributions

Honorarums/Memorials

Max & Josephine Freifield in loving memory of Max's late wife, Louise Freifield
Bernard & Helene Scherer in loving memory of Samuel Scherer, Bernard's father
William & Claire Goldstein in loving memory of Uncle Frank Bram
Richard & Ellen Brand in loving memory of Richard's mother, Anna Brand
Irving & Arlene Bergman in honor of all who made donations in loving memory of their son Gary
Gerald & Natalie Rosen in loving memory of Natalie's mother, Mignon Schneiderman
Doris Weinberg in loving memory of her brother, Daniel Bloom
Lee Edwards in honor of the Temple staff helping her with her "Pear Necklace" story
in the March issue of the *MEGILLAH*
Albert Schwartz in loving memory of his dear departed wife, Terri Schwartz
Muriel Rosenkranz in loving memory of Abraham Tenebaum and Sarag Rosen
Frank & Marilyn Seiden in loving memory of Rebecca Seiden and Dr. Herman Cohen
Gloria Brodie in loving memory of her dearly departed husband, Steve Brodie

General Donations

Jack Kaplan Robert Moskowitz & Esther Torres

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Naomi Brill for a "Get Well Soon" wish for Max Heller
Muriel Rosenkranz

Torah School Principal's Chair

Dalya Dektor in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Dan & Mary Harris in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Shlomo & Charlotte Kreitzer in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon.
Gloria Brodie in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Frances Yasney in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Israel Feingold in loving memory of his beloved wife, Clarice
Steve & Judy Sitko in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Saul Lessler & Julia Newman in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Howard & Shari Brody in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Edith Kuznitz in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Ruth Weiss in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Bernard & Phyllis Pivo in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Gail Brockett in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Della Carmona in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
From the Sisterhood in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Wendy Lefkowitz in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Michael & Patricia Glick in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Harvey & Jessica Harris in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Gail Brockett in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Sal Goss in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Suzy Schlesler in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Lois Pollok in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Barbara Wallace in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Nancy Graeber in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Jeanie Seaburger in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Marianne O'Leary in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Joyce Wolfe in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Karen Dworsky in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Joan Frank in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Sonia Lotker in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Naomi Brill in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.
Dorothy Elchness in honor of Arla Crane running the LA Marathon on March 20th.

TEMPLE NER AMI

Yahrzeits - April 2011

Friday, April 1, 2011

Abraham Khazin.....step grandfather of Greg Krastein
Dora Mendelson.....step mother of Edith Schallheim
Gemma Sanfelice.....grandmother of Linda Schlagel
Roy Jacobson.....father of Stuart Jacobson
Isaac Diamond.....father-in-law of Israel Feingold

Friday, April 8, 2011

Simha Cohen.....mother of Ninette Beg
Kate Ross.....mother of Mae Mendelson
Celia Weintraub..... grandmother of Dalya Dektor
Michael Brandfather of Richard Brand
Dora Freifield.....mother of Max Freifeld
Micky Michaels.....husband of Barbara Michaels
Tillie Treitman.....mother of Dr. Paul Treitman
Abraham Goldin.....father of Leon Goldin
Bertha Wolinsky.....aunt of Raye Gabriel
Miriam Cooperman.....mother of Gilbert Cooperman
Minnie Goldstein.....mother of William Goldstein
Annette Shaw.....mother of Judy Slapin
David Shaffron.....father of Lorraine Weingardt

Friday, April 15, 2011

Benjamin Schwartz.....father of Lyn Mesirov
Henny Sills.....mother of Carole Atkinson, Candy
Weinroth & Susan Leifer
Evelyn Berkman**mother of Andrea Granat
Louis Smith..... grandfather of Dr. Robert Improta
Samuel Chriqui.....father of Sonia Chriqui Banon
Roberta Borovoy.....sister of Verna Merrin
Lillian Bein.....sister of Sandy Garfield

Friday, April 22, 2011

Arthur Goodman.....father of Marlene Votion
Benjamin M. Lessler**father of Saul Lessler
Melvin Lefkovits.....father of Richard Lefkovits
Ruth Rosenberg.....grandmother of Barbara
Michaels
Sara Feinselber.....mother-in-law of Jane Selber
Cecile Gardner.....mother of Bill Gardner
Allan Louis Kaplan.....father of David Kaplan
Ludwig Linz.....father of Annelies Regen
Rose Lotker.....grandmother of Rabbi Michael
Lotker
Samuel Weisz.....father of Stefania Spiegel
Aleksy Aller.....grandfather of Mariana Krastein
Barbara Louis**cousin of Joan Taubman
Anna Adelson.....mother of Joyce Brown
Oscar Heller.....husband of Shirley Heller
Benjamin Marshack.....father-in-law of Marvin
Krantz
Max Rosansky.....father of Lucille Goldin
Carlos Stone.....father of Lewis Stone

Friday, April 29, 2011

George Anne....brother-in-law of Helene & Bernard
Scherer
Victor Pergament.....father of Harriet Lit
William Pomerantz.....father of Steve Pomerantz
Jack Koenig.....father of Sharon Green
Joseph Ovadia.....father of David Ovadia
Samuel Titen.....father of Arthur Titen
Simon Mendelson.....father of Edith Schallheim
Max Stolman.....brother of Bettina Stallman
Eric Scott Wachovsky.....grandson of Muriel
Rosenkranz
Emanuel Levy.....father of Arlene Bergman
Toula Pessah**mother of Elvira Cabelli
Saul Ballonoff.....grandfather of Jay Collins
Ruth Wagner.....sister of Joan Frank
Martin Saul.....brother of Florence Fingold
Richard Minter.....brother of Lisa Alberstone

* Deceased Member

** Name on the Yolanda Cramer Memorial *Yahrzeit* Board

The Temple's *Yahrzeit* Board has spaces available for remembering loved ones who have passed away. The requested donation for memorial plaques on the *Yahrzeit* Board is \$350.00 per plaque.

ADULT EDUCATION – MONDAYS

On-Going Temple Adult Classes

4:15-5:00 Hebrew Language – Learn your alef-bet and how to read simple Hebrew.

5:15-6:15 Prayer – Learn the liturgy and melodies.

“What Happens After I Die?” Class Starts Monday April 4th

A 4 week discussion hosted by Rabbi Michael Lotker of Biblical, Rabbinic, mystical and modern thoughts. The suggested donation is \$20 for Temple members, and \$40 for non-members. Classes begin on April 4th, and continue on April 11, 25, and May 2nd.

TORAH SCHOOL SESSIONS & EVENTS

APRIL

- 3** Museum of Tolerance (7th Grade – Sunday)
- 4** Regular session
- 6** Regular session
- 8** *Family Shabbat Service led by the 1st Grade (Dinner)*
- 11** Regular session
- 13** Regular session
- 18** **SPRING VACATION**
- 20** **SPRING VACATION**
- 25** **SPRING VACATION**
- 27** Regular session
- 29** **Tot Shabbat Dinner & Family Program (5:45-7:15)**

MAY

- 2** Regular session + Yom Hashoah
- 4** Regular session
- 9** Regular session + Camp Kadimah – Yom Ha’atzmaut & Yom Ha-Zikaron
- 11** Regular session + Camp Kadimah – Yom Ha’atzmaut & Yom Ha-Zikaron
- 13** *Family Shabbat Service led by the PreK-Kindergarten (Dinner) + Tot Shabbat*
- 16** Regular session
- 18** Regular session
- 22** **JOLT – Lag B’Omer Picnic at Underwood Farms (Sunday)**
- 23** Regular session
Junior Youth Group 6:15 -7:30
- 25** **ALL SCHOOL PARTY (Wednesday)**
Teacher Appreciation
- 27** **Graduating Seniors Shabbat**

L’hitraot. See you next year!

Teen
Connection
Calendar

APRIL

- 6** NAUTY
- 13** **Place of Our Own**
- 20** **SPRING VACATION**
- 27** Place of Our Own

MAY

- 4** NAUTY
- 11** **Place of Our Own**
- 18** NAUTY
- 20-22** **SPRING KALLAH (Malibu)**
- 22** **JOLT – Lag B’Omer Picnic at Underwood Farms**
- 25** **ALL SCHOOL PARTY (Wednesday)**
Teacher/Youth Advisor Appreciation
- 27** **Graduating Seniors Shabbat (Tentative)**

TEMPLE NER AMI - April 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 7 pm - Board of Directors - 9:30am - City of Hope 12:30pm - Lunch N' Learn 4:15pm - Adult Hebrew 4:15pm - Torah School @ 4:30pm - ADULT CLASS -	28 12:30pm - Lunch N' Learn 4:15pm - Adult Hebrew 4:15pm - Torah School @ 7 pm - Adult Ed: What	29 12pm - Torah-Woman's 4:15pm - Torah School @	30 12pm - Torah-Woman's 4:15pm - Torah School @	31 10am - ORT Board Meeting	1 April Fool's Day APRIL FOOLS DAY 7:30pm - Shabbat Service	9:30am - Torah Study @
3 10:45am - Museum of	4 12:30pm - Lunch N' Learn 4:15pm - Adult Hebrew 4:15pm - Torah School @ 7 pm - Adult Ed: What	5 12pm - Torah-Woman's 4:15pm - Torah School @	6 10am - ORT Board Meeting	7 6pm - 1st Grade Dinner 7pm - Shabbat Service led	8 9:30am - Torah Study @	
10 12:30pm - City of Hope 12:30pm - Lunch N' Learn 4:15pm - Adult Hebrew 4:15pm - Torah School @ 7 pm - Adult Ed: What	11 10:30am - Eager Readers 12:30pm - City of Hope 12:30pm - Lunch N' Learn 4:15pm - Adult Hebrew 4:15pm - Torah School @ 7 pm - Adult Ed: What	12 12pm - Torah-Woman's 4:15pm - Torah School @ 7pm - Board of Directors	13 12pm - Torah-Woman's 4:15pm - Torah School @	14 Tax Day 6pm - Hillel Dinner @ 7:30pm - Shabbat Service	15 9:30am - Torah Study @	
17 Passover 1st Seder 12:30pm - Lunch N' Learn 4:15pm - Adult Hebrew 4:15pm - No Torah School	18 6:30pm - 2nd Night SEDER 12:30pm - Lunch N' Learn 4:15pm - Adult Hebrew 4:15pm - No Torah School	19 12pm - Torah-Woman's 4:15pm - No Torah School	20 12pm - Torah-Woman's 4:15pm - No Torah School	21 Earth Day GOOD FRIDAY 7:30pm - Shabbat Services	22 Movie Night - Yoo Hoo 9:30am - Torah Study @ 6:30pm - MOVIE NIGHT	
24 Easter EASTER 9:30am - City of Hope 12:30pm - Lunch N' Learn 4:15pm - Adult Hebrew 4:15pm - No Torah School 7 pm - Adult Ed: What	25 7 pm - Sisterhood Mimona 12:30pm - Lunch N' Learn 4:15pm - Adult Hebrew 4:15pm - No Torah School 7 pm - Adult Ed: What	26 12pm - Torah-Woman's 4:15pm - Torah School @	27 12pm - Torah-Woman's 4:15pm - Torah School @	28 12pm - OR general 6:30pm - Tot Shabbat 7:30pm - Shabbat Service	29 9:30am - Torah Study @	

Check www.TempleNerAmi.org for the latest Calendar Information!



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If you would like to make a contribution, the following funds are available. Donations are graciously accepted. The Temple's appreciation of your donation will be published in the following month's issue of the **MEGILLAH**:

- _____ Temple General Fund
- _____ Temple Building Fund
- _____ Newman Scholarship Fund
- _____ Torah School Principal's Chair
- _____ Irv Dubin Teen Scholarship Fund
- _____ Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- _____ Temple Music Fund
- _____ Art Fund
- _____ Sigmund Jaffe Memorial Library Fund
- _____ Temple Prayer Book Fund

The **MEGILLAH** is published monthly for members of TEMPLE NER AMI. Complimentary copies are available by contacting the Temple Office.

Suggested donation for non-members is \$36.00 per year. Make your check payable to Temple Ner Ami.

For information Call 805-388-3824, or eMail your request to:

admin@templenerami.org

Submission date for all material:

12th of each month

In Honor of: _____

In Loving Memory of: _____

From: _____