

Ha Shavuah B' Sha'arey Israel

December 31, 2009 - January 7, 2010

14 Tevet - 21 Tevet 5770



Candle lighting time 5:21 pm
Friday, January 1

Friday Evening Kabbalat Shabbat Services begin at 6:15 pm
Saturday morning Shabbat Services begin at 9:30 am

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## Parashat Vayechi (Commentary on Page 3)

Annual (Gen. 47:28-50:26): Etz Hayim, p. 293

Triennial (Gen. 49:27-50:26): Etz Hayim, p. 305

Haftarah: Etz Hayim, p. 313

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Mazel Tov!

To Rachael Koplín who graduated from college a few weeks ago.

Best Wishes for a Speedy Recovery to:

Art Besser, Elaine Dreizin, Nathalie Goodrich, Mel Haskins, Fran Kirsh, Ethel, Koplín, Henry Koplín, Paul Kruger, Ida Miller and Viola Schwartz

We wish a Happy Birthday this week to:

Mauro Faibicher, Marla Kaplan, Elsie Benn, Jenna Ziesenhene, Jonathan Cohen, Daniel Ardet, and Pam Hill

We wish a Happy Anniversary this week to:

Jami & Jimmy Gaudet

This week we remember the Yahrzeit of:

Sam J. Arnovitz, John Joseph Del Gallo, Sadie Lesser Gerson, Joanie Fox Manganiello, Pauline Singer, Sadie Jacobowitz, Joseph W. Levine, Ida R. Davidson

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**No Religious School on Sunday, January 3**

**Hebrew School resumes on Wednesday, January 6 - 4:15 pm**

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Next Jr. Congregation is on Saturday, January 9

Adult in Charge: Joe Finkelstein - Davening Leader: Aaron Brown

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**CONGREGATION MEETING**  
**SUNDAY – JANUARY 10, 2010 – 4:00 PM**  
More details are in the January Bulletin

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**EXPERIENCE JEWISH HISTORY AND PRAYER**

Adult Education classes taught by Rabbi Rachel Bat-Or

**Tuesday nights, 7:15 - 8:15pm**  
at the synagogue

**Jan. 12, 19, 26, Feb 2, and 9 - Jewish History, Part I**

**Feb. 23, March 2, 9, 16 and 23 - Jewish Prayer**

**April 13, 20, 27, May 4 and 11 - Jewish History, Part II**

The format of the class will be discussion based on material read and questions from class participants. It will not be a lecture class.

If you would like to join the classes and/or need additional information, please contact the Rabbi, 478.745.0182 or Stephanie Kross, 478.405.0643.

For the history classes we will use, A Short History of the Jewish People by Raymond Scheindlin.

The next Tefilat Lev Shaleyem whole heart one hour service is scheduled for Saturday, January 30th beginning at 10:30am



## *Family Shabbat Dinner*

*Friday - January 15th*

Services begin at 6:15 pm  
featuring our 4th Grade Class  
**and Cantorial Intern, Richard Bessman**  
with dinner to follow

Adults - \$10, Children - \$7, Kids under 3 free  
All Religious School students are free

Please call 745-4571 or email: [secretary@csimacon.org](mailto:secretary@csimacon.org)  
to make a reservation

## **Parashat Vayechi**

Genesis 47:28-50:26

*This week's commentary is by Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson*

**Don't Be Quarrelsome On The Way** - Joseph's warning to his brothers not to quarrel on their way instructs us as well in our relationships with our families and the larger Jewish community.

In Parashat Vayigash, Joseph finally reveals his true identity to his brothers. He loads them with all sorts of riches from Egypt and tells them to return with their families so they can settle in Egypt and survive the famine under Joseph's supervision.

In the midst of their newfound wealth and security, Joseph gives them a strange piece of instruction. "Do not be quarrelsome along the way." Why would Joseph say that? And why, especially, in the midst of a joyous reunion, amidst unexpected wealth and success?

### **Blaming Each Other**

Rashi suggests that each brother would blame the others for having sold Joseph into slavery. Joseph, understanding how guilt and denial operate, anticipated his brothers' need to blame each other, and he therefore instructs them not to engage in recriminations about the past. In effect, Joseph tells his brothers that they will never agree about the past, but they can still live in harmony despite that disagreement. That advice is no less precious today.

Conflicts within families are often magnified by our human propensity to remember the past in a way that makes us look best. As a result, two loving relatives end up not only disagreeing about the meaning of what happened, but even about the facts themselves. By focusing on those areas of disagreement, we lose sight of a shared desire to be part of each other's life.

Joseph's advice still rings true--in such times, it may be best simply to agree to overlook the past, to start afresh in the present. A second possibility, also raised by Rashi, is that Joseph instructs his brothers "not to engage in arguments of Jewish law (divrei halakhah), lest the road become unsteady for you."

We Jews have always argued about our beliefs, and we have always mined out sacred traditions to articulate our visions of how the world is structured, and how we should live our lives.

According to Rashi's second understanding, Joseph's brothers, like Jews throughout time, would spend their time on the road arguing about questions of Halakhah (Jewish law). Caught up in the passions of their discussions, they would lose their way religiously as well as geographically.

### **Obsession With Ideas**

Our Jewish obsession with ideas contains a potential danger--that we will become so excited by the ideas themselves that we will lose any sense of a connection to reality. The ideas will justify themselves, regardless of how they work in the world, regardless of whether or not they conform to what we know of reality.

Judaism has always reflected this tension--adherence to timeless standards, but always renewing those standards in the light of developing communal understandings and ongoing social need. We must take care never to stop our passion for ideas, but we must also be on our guard, lest our ideas cease referring back to reality, to questions of how to live a more moral, more holy, more fully human life.

A third possible reading of Joseph's warning is that Joseph sees that his brothers are now wealthy because of his gifts. And wealth brings tensions that are often unexpected. Worried that his brothers might feel the pressures of their wealth and therefore begin to quarrel about how they live together, Joseph urges his brothers not to allow money to divide them.

We, too, face that challenge. American Jewry is a comfortable community. As one consequence of our wealth, we have raised up a large number of different organizations, movements and institutions, all vying for our attention, our energy and our resources.

Can we see those different movements and institutions as complementing one another, contributing to a communal life that is multi-layered and profound? Or will those movements and institutions perceive each other as competitors, in which case a great deal of energy will be wasted on trying to impede the growth and health of each other's ways of being Jewish?

As we travel on the road, we do well to remember Joseph's advice: "Do not be quarrelsome on the way!"

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**Quick links:**

- [CSI Macon Online](#)
- [United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism \(USCJ\)](#)
- [JTS Podcast - this week's Parsha](#)
- [Audio Siddur](#)
- [Jewish Telegraphic Agency \(JTA\)](#)
- [Israeli News Broadcast – in English](#)
- [The Jewish Ethicist](#)
- [Synagogue 3000](#)
- [Learn through USCJ online](#)
- [The William Breman Jewish Heritage Museum](#)
- [United Jewish Communities \(UJC\)](#)
- [American Jewish University](#)

