

# TEMPLE EMANU-EL Bulletin

Volume 78, Number 15

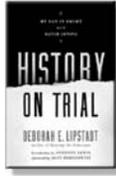
December 16, 2005

## UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW DATE!

Tuesday, December 20 8:30 a.m.  
**Men's Club Reading Group**

We will discuss *History on Trial: My Day in Court With David Irving* by Deborah E. Lipstadt, a gripping account of the court proceedings involving Irving—an English author of books about World War II and the Third Reich—who sued Emory University historian Lipstadt for libel after calling him a denier of the Holocaust.



For January, we will discuss *A Thread of Grace* by Mary Doria Russell, a novel based on the true-life efforts of a group of Italian citizens who sheltered more than 40,000 Jews from the work camps of World War II.

## SABBATH SERVICES

**Friday evening, December 23  
Lowenstein Sanctuary**

Organ Recital—5 p.m.

Sabbath Eve Service—5:15 p.m.

WQXR Radio (96.3 FM) and Internet  
(www.wqxr.com) broadcasts—5:30 p.m.

**Saturday morning, December 24  
Women's Auxiliary Lounge**

Torah Study—9:15 a.m.

**Lowenstein Sanctuary**

Service—10:30 a.m.

Torah Portion—Vayeshev

Readings—Genesis 37:1-40:23

Amos 2:6-3:8

**Sermon: Rabbi David M. Posner**

## Candle Lighting With a Senior

CHANUKAH  
MITZVAH

Fulfill the mitzvot of lighting the Chanukah candles and of giving *tzedakah* by setting aside one of your Chanukah nights to help light the *chanukiah* (Chanukah menorah) in the home of a DOROT senior.

DOROT provides visiting families with a *chanukiah*, candles, chocolate gelt, a dreidel and helpful guidelines for Chanukah blessings, songs and dreidel playing. All you need to bring is your family, and together with a DOROT senior, you can create a memorable and meaningful Chanukah tradition. Visits should last between 20 and 30 minutes and will be arranged at a time that is convenient for your family.

As part of the program, each family is asked to contribute \$50 per visit. If you are unable to make an actual visit, DOROT will send a teen volunteer in your place for every \$50 collected. To register for a Chanukah night visit, call the DOROT office at (917) 441-5051. Make checks payable to DOROT and mail them to: DOROT, 171 West 85<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10024.

*This program is underwritten  
in part by our Temple  
members Joanna and  
David Silver.*



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, December 22 6:30 p.m.  
**Emanu-El League Chanukah Party**

Join us for a festive evening of food, games and fun people! Cost is \$5 for Temple members, \$10 for nonmembers if you RSVP by Wednesday, December 21. Cost without a reservation is \$7 for Temple members, \$12 for nonmembers. Reservations should be sent to [tesevents@aol.com](mailto:tesevents@aol.com). *The Emanu-El League is a group for Jewish singles in their late 20s through early 40s.*

Wednesday, February 1, 2006 8 p.m.  
**'The Odd Couple' on Broadway**

The Men's Club has a few remaining tickets for their outing to see "The Odd Couple," starring Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick, at the Brooks Atkinson Theater (256 West 47<sup>th</sup> Street). Cost is \$175 per ticket for Men's Club members, \$190 for nonmembers. Checks made payable to *Men's Club of Congregation Emanu-El* must be received ASAP. For more information, call the Men's Club at (212) 744-1400, ext. 250.



## PULPIT FLOWERS

**Pulpit flowers at Sabbath services this weekend are the generous donation of our congregants:**

Hal, Mary, Craig and Nicole Randelman  
in loving memory of  
*Milton Randelman*

The Cemeteries of Congregation Emanu-El  
Salem Fields and Beth-El

A limited number of above-ground crypts are available in our community mausoleum. For information, please call Dr. Mark W. Weisstuch at the Temple Office, (212) 744-1400.

Charles S. Salomon

**The Universal Funeral Chapel**

1076 Madison Avenue (212) 753-5300  
Our service is available in the Temple, home, or our Chapel.

## CHANUKAH — MYTH AND

By Rabbi David M. Posner

CHANUKAH, a holiday not mentioned in the Bible but rather in the last two books of Apocrypha (I and II Maccabees), is for all outer appearances a festival of joy—one that gladdens the hearts of parents and children. The sad truth is that, after the rededication of the ancient Temple in 165 B.C.E. and the rekindling of the perpetual lamp (the *Ner Tamid*), 34 years of bloody civil war ensued in ancient Judea, with Judah the Maccabee himself being one of the victims. When all was said and done, he himself did not survive the entire "Chanukah process."

Popular belief holds that the struggle of the time was between the Jews of Judea and the Greco-Syrians. In actuality, the conflict was between two groups of Jews: one that wanted to remain Jewish and the other that did not. Also, this was a conflict that was brought about by the first invasion of Europeans into Asia.

In 332 B.C.E., the Greeks conquered the Persian Empire, thus bringing to the ancient world of the Middle East the civilization of the *Polis*—the Greek city state. With a huge effort at colonization, an enormous Greek economic and cultural influence spread throughout Egypt and Asia Minor. This was the culture of the gymnasium, the stadium, the theater, the *odeum* (concert hall), the *lyceum* (lecture hall) and the *agora* (the market). It has been pointed out that the Hellenism that reached Judea in common with other oriental countries was not the Hellenism of pure Plato and Aristotle but a debased kind of Hellenism, as was exported by the soldier and the slave dealer. All of this meant a cultural invasion of simultaneous opportunity, temptation and threat.

The Jews of Judea reacted to this in three basic ways—two of them extreme and one of them the classic middle. At one extreme, many fundamentalists left Jerusalem and headed straight for the desert. This resulted in the first appearance of the *Qumran* community (which left us the Dead Sea Scrolls—one of the greatest archeological finds of the century) in approximately 250 B.C.E. At the other extreme, a majority of the Jews outside the land of Israel favored an accommodation with the new influences—a response to modernity even among the observant. As a result, the Bible was translated into Greek at this time, and Greek names became

## REALITY

common among Jews (such as Philo of Alexandria and Antigonus of Socho). Between these two was a broad group of pious Jews adhering to traditional observances that, in comparison with the Greek cultural revolution, were both ascetic and rigoristic, with enormous restrictions of diet, physical purity and human sexuality.

What pushed the region into conflict was the rise of a Jewish reform party that wanted to force the pace of Hellenization to an extreme, throwing off the yoke of traditional

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rigorism and abolishing all Mosaic law. In 175 B.C.E. this group of Jews found a dangerous and supportive ally—Antiochus IV—who was busy fighting wars with the Ptolemys in Egypt and trying desperately to raise revenue.

By 171 B.C.E., Antiochus had installed a puppet high priest—Meneleus—who in 167 B.C.E. abolished all Mosaic Law on pain of death and brought Zeus into the Jerusalem temple. Thus began the conflict between Meneleus and his many Jewish supporters with the Hasmoneans and their Jewish supporters—a conflict between one group of Jews that had no more use for Judaism and one

group that did.

In two years, the Hasmoneans drove the reformers and the Syrian-Greek garrison out of the area around Jerusalem. But only in 141 B.C.E. were the last of the reformists driven into submission or killed.

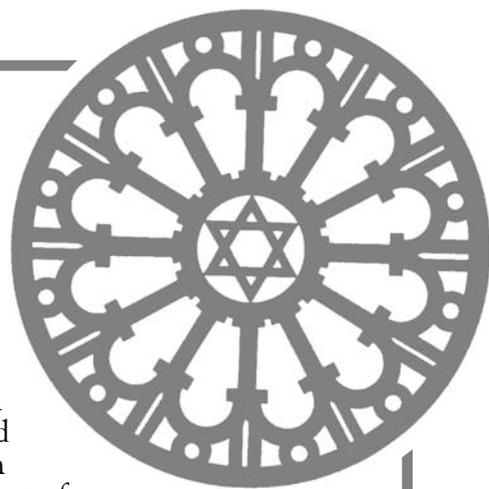
The Hasmoneans now were in control of Jerusalem and remained so for the next 115 years. However, they, too, eventually suffered from the corruptions of power, with some becoming despots. They were crushed by Rome in 63 B.C.E.

One of the major religious consequences brought about by this conflict between traditionalists and ultra-reformers was the development of a reactionary spirit in Judaism. From the time of the Maccabees, liberal tendencies in Judaism always have been on the defensive, regardless of whether these tendencies are worthy or not. And, in Jewish history, it is the extremists who seem to save the day, with extremism in defense of Judaism becoming a virtue.

With emotions such as these, Jewish life forever has remained charged with urgency and vitality, a result of both forces without and issues within. And, despite all the mixed messages of the season, we wish a Happy Chanukah to all.

**FIRST NIGHT  
OF CHANUKAH:  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25  
(FIRST CANDLE IS LIT)**

**LAST NIGHT  
OF CHANUKAH:  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 1  
(EIGHTH CANDLE IS LIT)**



# A CURE FOR THE WINTER BLUES

## Gilbert & Sullivan's 'Mikado' at New York City Center

The Women's Auxiliary invites Temple members to escape the January doldrums with a "visit" to the town of Titipu for a Sunday matinee performance of "The Mikado" on January 8, 2006, by the New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players. Cost is \$85 per person; proceeds will benefit the senior citizens program sponsored by the Women's Auxiliary. Checks made payable to *Women's Auxiliary of Congregation Emanu-El* must be received by Friday, December 30. Tickets will be mailed to you prior to the performance. On the day of the event, we will meet at the theater, located on West 55<sup>th</sup> Street between Sixth and Seventh avenues. Showtime is 3 p.m.



**Did you know...?** The Women's Auxiliary is both a social and civic organization open to **all** women of the congregation. We sponsor a variety of activities that benefit the greater New York City community. For more information about our programs or to obtain a list of upcoming activities, call (212) 744-1400, ext. 235. **Don't delay...join the Women's Auxiliary today!**

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Web site: [www.emanuelnyc.org](http://www.emanuelnyc.org)

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*Associate Rabbi*

**Nadia E. Gold**

*Assistant Rabbi*

**Lori Corrsin**

*Cantor*

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**Henry Fruhauf**

*Administrator Emeritus*

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