

Curriculum Vitae
SHOLOMO B. LEVY

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EDUCATION:

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

M. Phil, American History

Thesis: "Black Zion: A History of the Black Jews of New York, 1920-1990"

Prof Alan Brinkley and Prof Eric Foner, Advisors

YALE UNIVERSITY

M.A., African American Studies, 1988.

Thesis: "W. E. B. Du Bois and Joel E. Spingarn: A Case Study in Black-Jewish Relations, 1910-1939."

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

B.A., Political Science, 1986

TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY

Tel Aviv, Israel, 1985. (Semester Abroad)

Studied: Hebrew, Archeology, Judaic History, and Middle East Politics.

ISRAELITE RABBINICAL ACADEMY

Doctor of Levitical Doctrines

Ordained, 6 July 1985

**FELLOWSHIPS
AND HONORS:**

Nominated for *Christensen Excellence in Teaching Award*, Northampton Community College, (2007, 2008, 2010)

Proclamation, Council of the City of New York, Hon. Leroy Comrie, 18 August 2002

Arthur Vining Davis Fellow, Middlebury College, 2001-2002

Documentary Heritage Grant from the New York State Archives and Records

Administration, 1994-1995. Schomburg Center for Black Culture, New York City.

Yale University Fellowship, 1986-1988

Ford Foundation Minority Doctoral Fellowship (Honorable Mention 1987)

CIGNA Corporation Tuition Scholarship, 1982-1986

Rabbi W. A. Matthew Award, 1986

Dean's List, Middlebury College

**PUBLICATIONS /
RESEARCH**

African American National Biography (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), Associate Editor.

African American Lives (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004). Twenty-three biographies including those of Father Divine, Reverend Ike, Maya Angelou, Louis Farrakhan, Tiger Woods, August Wilson, Amy E.J. Garvey, and John Hope Franklin.

“Safe! Jackie Robinson and the Image of the Non-Threatening Black Male.”
Conference Paper. Long Island University. April 3-5, 1997. This article was subsequently
cited in *Jet Magazine* 21 April 1997 and in the *New York Daily News* 4 April 1997.

“Judaism: Black Jews in America” in *Encyclopedia of African-American History and
Culture*, Vol. III, ed. Cornel West and Jack Salzman (New York: Macmillan Publication,
1996).

APPOINTMENTS:

Professor of History, Northampton Community College, 8/19- Present
Associate Professor of History, Northampton Community College. 6/13- 7/19
Assistant Professor of History, Northampton Community College. 8/05-5/13
Associate Editor, African American Biography, Harvard University. 8/02-5/05
Teaching Fellow, Middlebury College, Vermont. 1/01- 5/03
Instructor, Medgar Evers College, City University of New York. 1/96-6/99
Adjunct Assistant Professor, Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus. 9/96-5/97
History Teacher, Andrew Jackson High School, New York City. 9/88-5/92
Lecturer, LaGuardia Community College, City University of New York. 5/90-8/90
Teaching Assistant, Yale University. 9/87-5/88

LECTURES/ CONFERENCES

Panelist, “The Influence on Rev. James Lawson on Dr. Martin Luther King.” Moravian
University, sponsored by the office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. 3/30/2022.
Television Appearance, P.B.S., “Courageous Conversations,” 11/9/2021
Presentation, “Junteenth For Jews,” Congregation Brith Shalom, Bethlehem,
Pennsylvania, 6/19/21.
Lecture, “The Meaning of Juneteenth,” for the City of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 6/18/21
Lecture, “Racial Healing: Beyond Guilt and Pity.” Diocesan Task Force for Racial
Justice and Reconciliation, 2/6/21.
Lecture, “What the Early History of Bethlehem Teaches Us about Race.” Central
Moravian Church. 1/3/21.
Radio Appearance, N.P.R., Morning Edition, “Rabbis Share How Rosh Hashanah Will
Be Affected By COVID-19,” 9/18/20
Panelist, “Race and Space in the Lehigh Valley,” Lafayette College, 10/14/20.
Television Appearance, P.B.S. 39, “The History of Black Bethlehem,” 2/15/19.
Lecture, “Bleaching of the Jews: How Western Society Turned Judaism into a White
Religion... And Why It Matters.” DuSable Museum of African American History,
Chicago, Illinois. 10/27/18.
American Academy of Religion, Annual Conference. Afro-American Religious History
Group. “From Out of Zion: Arnold Josiah Ford and Black Jewish Nationalism.”
Atlanta, Georgia. 11/22/15.
“As One Jew One Heart,” Combating Anti-Semitism Throughout the World. Kupferberg
Holocaust Resource Center & Archives, Queensborough Community College.
Sponsored by the UJA Federation of New York. 6/29/15
Panelist, “Spirituality and Academia” East Stroudsburg University, 4/22/14.
Participant, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Interfaith Prayer Breakfast, New York Public
Library, 2006 to 2012.
Invocation, Thirty-Fifth Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Luncheon, sponsored
by Black Agency Executives, Hilton Hotel, New York. 1/19/12.
Lecture, “Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Jews: The Spiritual Influences of Judaism
on Dr. King’s Theology.” Temple Israel. Great Neck, Long Island, NY, 1/22/12
Lecture, “Rediscovering the Jewish Jesus,” Loyola University, Baltimore, MD, 2/24/12

Panelist, “Anti-Semitism and Humanism in Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*,
Chesapeake Shakespeare Company, Baltimore, MD, 2/25/12

Panelist, “The Commandment Keepers Documentary by Marlaine Glicksman,” 92 Street
Y in New York City, 4/17/12

Jesus” Cathedral Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Four Part Series,
March 1 – 20, 2009.

Radio Appearance: WXXI, Am 1370 Rochester, “Judaism and Racial Identity” with host
Bob Smith, aired 2/10/09.

Guest Speaker, *Jewish Community Federation of Greater Rochester*, “The
Commandment Keepers,” 1/29/09.

Memorial Lecture, “Martin and Coretta: Partners in Leadership,” Warren County Human
Relations Commission, 1/15/07.

Guest of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, 40th Anniversary of the Reunification of
Jerusalem Reception, Gracie Mansion, June 26, 2007.

Keynote Speaker, “Dr. King’s Life in Pennsylvania: Formative Years,” Northampton
Community College, 1/21/06.

Panelist, *Let Justice Roll*, “Toward An African American Inter-Religious Symposium,”
Harvard Divinity School, 4/08/05.

Faculty Address, *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast*, “The Mind of Martin Luther
King, Jr.,” Middlebury College 1/21/02.

Keynote Speaker, *Black History Month*, “Origins of the Zionist Impulse Among African
Americans,” Western Carolina University, 2/25/02.

“Discovering the Jewish Guest Speaker, *Hillel Jewish Alliance*, “Racial Diversity in
American Judaism,” Chapel Hill University, 4/24/00.

Radio Appearances: KYW Philadelphia 1/16/06, WLIB New York City 4/2/00.

RABBINICAL BACKGROUND

President, International Israelite Board of Rabbis, Inc. The IBR is an organization of
black rabbis representing congregations throughout the United States, Caribbean, and
Africa. It is a deliberative body that also operates the Israelite Rabbinical Academy, an
institution devoted to the training of black rabbis, and a Bet Din, a Jewish court that rules
on religious matters for the community. 7/2000-Present

Rabbi and Spiritual Leader, Beth Elohim Hebrew Congregation, Saint Albans, New
York. This congregation is one of the historic black Jewish congregations of New York.
It has about one hundred members, operates a Talmud Torah Hebrew Schools, and
sponsors many social activities throughout the year. 8/88-Present

Dean, Israelite Rabbinical Academy. Since 1996, I have worked with our reconstituted
yeshiva to recruit and train qualified black rabbis. As well as being one of the instructors
teaching Biblical Hebrew, Kabbalah, and Israelite History, I have been involved with
curriculum development and outreach initiatives. 8/96-7/2000

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Historical Association
American Jewish Historical Society
Bnai Brith
NAACP

Proclamation

Whereas, A great state is only as great as its most committed and faithful individuals, whether through acting courageously and with strong conviction, blazing pathways and knocking down barriers for those to follow, contributing to the growth and success of our neighbors, siphoning the power of engagement to strengthen the community at large, or simply through a lifetime of good citizenry; and,

Whereas, Rabbi Sholomo Ben Levy was born in Queens, New York, in 1964 and is the eldest son of Deborah Levy and the late Chief Rabbi Levi Ben Levy, Rabbi Sholomo Levy entered the Israelite Rabbinical Academy in 1981 and continued his rabbinic studies while pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree at Middlebury College in Vermont, part of which were completed at Tel Aviv University in Israel, in 1985, he graduated from the Academy and was ordained a rabbi, the following year, he received his B.A. followed by receiving his masters degree in African-American Studies from Yale in 1988, and a Masters degree from Columbia University in American History in 2005; and,

Whereas, He became President of the International Israelite Board of Rabbis and served as the editor and a frequent contributor to the Hakol newsletter and www.blackjews.org. Rabbi Levy taught college courses on various aspects of American and African-American History at LaGuardia Community College, Medgar Evers College, and Middlebury College, in 1999 he married his wife Rayah, Rabbi Levy worked at Harvard University as an Associate Editor of African American Lives (2004) and the African American National Biography, a ten-volume reference work, Rabbi Levy is currently a tenured Associate Professor of History at Northampton Community College and lives with his wife and son in Pennsylvania; and,

Whereas, Such significant contribution to the community embodies the character that inspires us all and is truly the lifeblood of our community; now, therefore, be it

Proclaimed, That as a duly elected member of the State Senate of New York, I, Brian A. Benjamin recognize that in

Rabbi Sholomo Ben Levy

We recognize an outstanding individual, one worthy of the esteem of both the Village of Harlem and the great State of New York,

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my Hand and Signature

Date: August 15, 2019

DATE



Brian A. Benjamin
SENATOR BRIAN A. BENJAMIN
30TH SENATE DISTRICT

THE COUNCIL



CITY OF NEW YORK



Proclamation



Whereas:

The Council of the City of New York is pleased and proud to honor Rabbi Sholomo Ben Levy for 20 years of outstanding spiritual leadership at the Beth Elohim Hebrew Congregation of St. Albans, Queens; and

WHEREAS:

Our religious leaders offer us wisdom, strength and guidance. They lead by example and provide important lessons in how to live more meaningful, more productive and more spiritual lives; and

WHEREAS:

Today, we are immensely proud to honor Rabbi Sholomo Ben Levy, an inspirational religious leader who for 20 years has dedicated his time, energies and love to the Beth Elohim Hebrew Congregation of St. Albans Queens, and the Israelite community-at-large; and

WHEREAS:

The Beth Elohim Hebrew Congregation is open to all people of the Hebrew faith, and under Rabbi Sholomo Ben Levy's leadership and dynamic vision it has become an important "Beit Knesset" in our City; and

WHEREAS:

Congregation Beth Elohim is truly dedicated to our children, "ha talmidim sheylaanu," and operates two schools: the Sabbath School and the Cushi Talmud Torah Hebrew School, both setting forth the important philosophy that life is a learning process, and that the more individuals learn the better equipped they will be in life; and

WHEREAS:

Rabbi Sholomo Ben Levy's insightful guidance, his extraordinary patience and his compassionate understanding have made him a much beloved and admired spiritual leader, and Congregation Beth Elohim's dedication to bettering the community and strengthening the family is a direct result of the Rabbi's influence and moral instruction; now, therefore

BE IT KNOWN:

That the Council of the City of New York salutes

RABBI SHOLOMO BEN LEVY

for 20 years of service to the Beth Elohim Hebrew Congregation and the Queens community.

Signed this 17th day of September in the year Two Thousand and Five.

LEROY CANARIE, Majority Whip
Council Member, 27th District
Queens



B4

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THE NEW YORK TIMES METRO MONDAY, JUNE 26, 2000

CITY

They're Jewish, With a Gospel Accent

By TARA BAHRAMPOUR

Fifty years ago, a Saturday visitor to the small synagogue on Willoughby Avenue near Throop Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, would have come upon a congregation reading prayers and singing, the men and women separated, as Orthodox Jewish law demands.

On Saturday, as muted sunlight shone through the synagogue's high arched windows, some things had not changed. A rabbi intoned a prayer in Hebrew. The men and women sat on separate sides of the aisle. Prompted by the rabbi, the congregation solemnly began a song called "This Is the Torah."

Then the voices grew louder. The singers began to sway, and some broke into two-part harmony.

"Glory!" yelled a woman, an aqua-blue chiffon scarf draped over her head.

"Ooh, that sounds so good!" murmured another singer, whose dreadlocks poured out from under a small lace cap.

By the next song the solemnity had disappeared. Dressed variously in dark suits, multicolored African prints and Middle Eastern caps and snocks, the worshipers danced, clapped, stomped and shook tambourines in a gospel spiritual style more commonly associated with black Baptist churches than with Jewish ceremonies.

Which was fine with them.

For they were black, and some grew up with gospel church traditions but others' families have been Jewish for generations.

They are Hebrew Israelites, an 80-

year-old association of black Americans with Judaic beliefs, though many "don't identify ourselves as Jews," said Eliezer Levi, one of six rabbinical students to be ordained at Saturday's services. Wearing a gold Star of David pendant and a small woven skullcap, Mr. Levi acknowledged that the Hebrew Israelites' attention to the Torah, their celebration of bar mitzvahs, and their sense of Israel as homeland in many ways matches that of Jews from Europe and the Middle East. But personally, he said, he preferred to be called a Hebrew Israelite.

It was a term heard often this weekend at a four-day, multicongregation conference of Hebrew Israelites that included Saturday's ordination as well as slide shows, dance and music performances, a black-tie banquet and a colorful parade yesterday around Marcus Garvey Memorial Park in Harlem. Members came from as far as Mississippi, Barbados, Guyana and Israel to watch the white-robed rabbinical students be anointed with oil and physically lifted, one by one, from a kneeling position to stand among their fellow rabbis.

Estimates of how many Hebrew Israelites live in the United States range from 40,000 to 500,000, an accurate counting made impossible by the diversity of styles and beliefs. Many followed the teachings of a rabbi named Wentworth Arthur Matthew, who founded a congregation in Harlem in 1919. Noting that some African-Americans retained dietary laws and observed holidays that were similar to Judaic ones, and seeing parallels with biblical prophe-

cies in which Israelites were enslaved and scattered across the world, Rabbi Matthew decided that Judaism had been the original belief system of many Africans. Blacks who followed him would not be converting, he said, but simply coming back to the fold.

Over the years, the groups branched out, and now there are about 10 congregations active in New York City and many more throughout the country, all embodying varying aspects of Jewishness. (The congregations, however, have only the most tenuous links to the street preachers known as Hebrew Israelites, or Black Israelites, a separatist group whose anti-white inective has been a fixture for years in Times Square and Harlem.)

The two-story brick building on Willoughby Avenue was once a model if not for assimilation, then for peaceful coexistence. Originally home to Young Israel of Williamsburg, a white Orthodox temple, in the 1960's its congregation invited the Hebrew Israelites, new to Bedford-Stuyvesant, to share their space, said Rabbi Sholomo Ben Levy, who serves a black synagogue in Queens. The groups held separate services at first, but over time, some of the older members of the first congregation started attending the black services.

"This one was a good experiment," he said, noting that as the neighborhood's white population dwindled and its black population increased, many synagogues were being transformed into churches. "The people who owned this building were happy to see it become a synagogue, even if a black synagogue,



Ruth Fremson/The New York Times

One of the highlights of a four-day gathering of Hebrew Israelites was the ordination Saturday of six rabbis at Beth Shalom Hebrew Congregation in Brooklyn. Members came from as far away as Israel.

rather than becoming a black church," he said. Eventually, the black group bought the building, renaming it the Beth Shalom Hebrew Congregation.

But often, the mixing has not worked so well. Rabbi Raphael Tate, assistant rabbi at Beth Shalom, said his grandchildren, who attended a mostly white yeshiva in Chicago, "have been through hell" because of racial prejudice. "The color of your

skin shouldn't determine whether you're Jewish or not," he said. "We're not totally accepted — let's be honest."

There has been conflict, too, among Hebrew Israelites, said Rabbi Levy. Some groups say others are not Jewish enough, others are accused of pandering to the rules of white Jewish culture, some include New Testament elements in their worship, and some promulgate more

militant, black separatist beliefs.

That is why, for Rabbi Levy, the highlight of this weekend's events was not the ordination or the parade, but the fact that so many different groups had come together. "It's been very fractious," he said, surveying the synagogue's large basement, where worshipers from various congregations feasted on turkey, fried fish and pasta salad. "This is a milestone."

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

Late Edition

New York. Today, partly sunny with spotty showers, high 86. Tonight, low 74. Tomorrow, partly sunny with late rain, high 88. Yesterday, high 86, low 72. Weather map is on Page B8.

VOL. CXLIX . . . No. 51,431

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NEW YORK, MONDAY, JUNE 26, 2000 *

\$1 beyond the greater New York metropolitan area.

75 CENTS

Part 2

THE REAL KRAMER: Unlike his TV alter ego, this one has a first name.

44

FOOD: Tortillas, Mexico's venerable flatbread, are going mainstream.

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RADIO: Z-100's 10th birthday bash — well, it's no day at the zoo.

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They are black people who do not consider themselves African-Americans. They follow Jewish law, but do not wish to be called Jewish. They call themselves. . .

THE ISRAELITES

Newsday Art Photo



Photo by Brian M. Ballweg

Rabbi Sholomo Levy — with his father, Rabbi Levi Levy standing nearby — blows ceremonial shofar marking the Jewish New Year.

A New Rabbi Welcomes 5746

By Adrienne Goodman

Even more than usual this year, Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year that begins at sundown tonight, is a time of new beginnings for young Rabbi Sholomo Levy.

Levy, 21, who was ordained a rabbi in July after his graduation from the Israelite Rabbinical Academy in St. Albans, Queens, is the new spiritual leader of the Beth Elohim Ethiopian Congregation in St. Albans. And he is also starting his senior year at Middlebury College in Vermont.

"Being a rabbi is a big responsibility," Levy said of his new duties. "Going back to school as a rabbi this semester, I feel like a different person. Even in the few months since I was ordained, I feel I have a greater understanding of what being a rabbi is."

The dual responsibilities mean commuting between college and his Orthodox congregation at Beth Elohim, the only all-black Jewish congregation in Queens, where he led ceremonies yesterday in preparation for the beginning of the Jewish year 5746.

Levy delivered a message of spiritual renewal for Rosh Hashanah, which begins a 10-day period of introspection leading to Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. His own spiritual rebirth began in July, he said, when he left the tutelage of his father, Rabbi Levi B. Levy, who heads the academy, and became a rabbi in his own right.

The Beth Elohim temple and the Israelite Rabbinical Academy share the building at 189-31 Linden Blvd. The academy was founded in 1971 as an extension of a rabbinical school that was started in Harlem in 1929.

Tomorrow, Levy said, the congregation will gather in prayer on the East River banks in Long Island City's Rainey Park and will perform the traditional blowing of the shofar, a ram's horn whose sound signifies a summoning to penitence.


"The actual blowing of the shofar is very meaningful to us," said Zipporah Profeet, 28, a member of the congregation. "It's important because we ask God to bless us for our sins and give us a good new year. We also have a feast, but the main thing is to ask God for forgiveness."

Already, Levy, who spent six months at Tel Aviv University in Israel earlier this month, is beginning to think about his ambitions beyond college. He hopes to get a doctorate from Yale in Afro-American studies, specializing in black and Jewish relations.

"Being born black and growing up Jewish, and then going to Israel last year, I think I really understand the situation," Levy said. "I feel I'm in a privileged position to speak to both black issues and Jewish issues. Plus, I want to do something that won't interfere with being a rabbi."

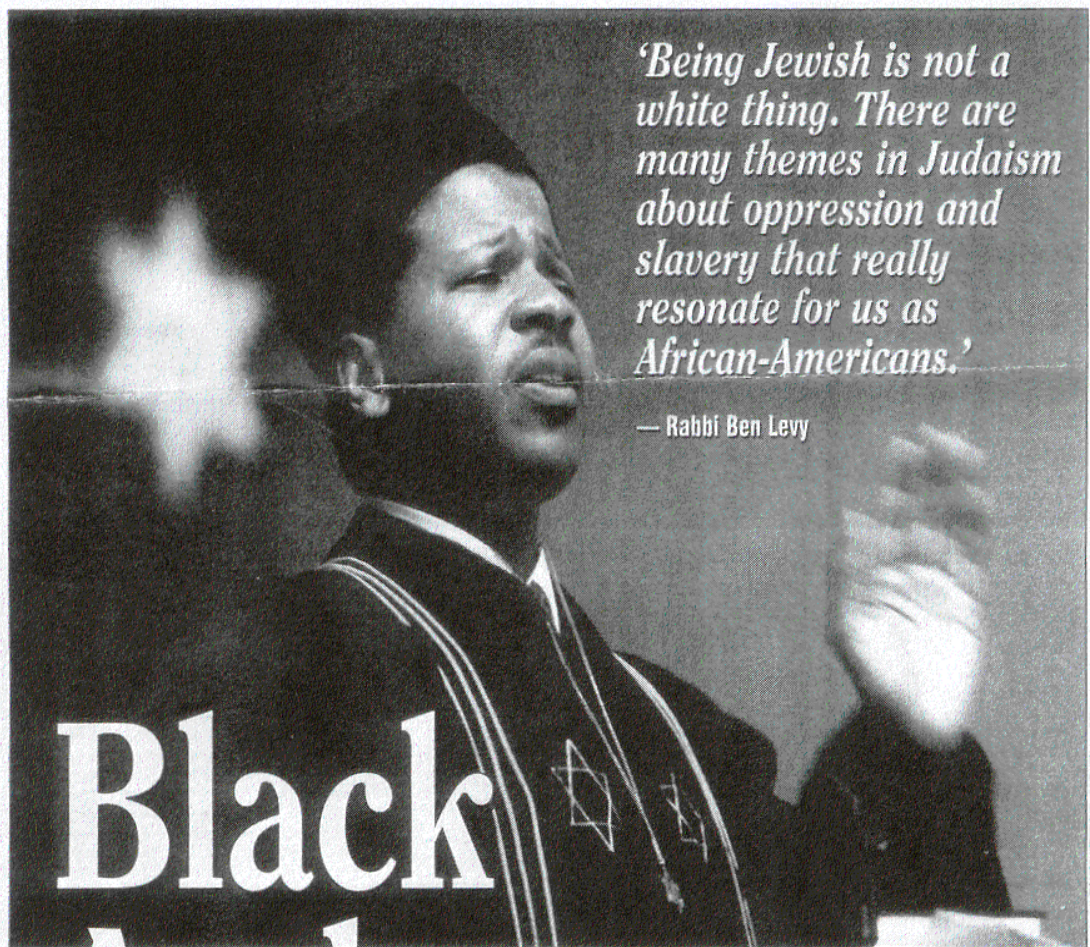
QUEENS

Section G

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Newsday

Sunday, December 13, 1998



'Being Jewish is not a white thing. There are many themes in Judaism about oppression and slavery that really resonate for us as African-Americans.'

— Rabbi Ben Levy

Newsday Photo / Patrice Andrade

Black And Jewish

Levy speaks to his congregation at Beth Elohim in St. Albans.

By Emily Wax

BEN LEVY was in the third grade the first time he saw that puzzled look. As a Jewish student in a Queens public school, he refused to make a paper Christmas tree. Because he was black, his teacher thought he was joking.

"I remember vividly the look on my teacher's face," said Levy, 34, who is now the rabbi at Beth Elohim, a black Jewish congregation in St. Albans.

Please see BLACK JEWS on Page G6

The New York Times

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

Late Edition

New York: Today, sunny, breezy and cool, high 56. Tonight, clear with diminishing winds, low 40. Tomorrow, sunny and milder, high 62. Yesterday, high 56, low 37. Details, page D5.

60 CENTS

41 beyond the greater New York metropolitan area.

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 1999

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VOL. CXLVIII . . . No. 51,491

Rabbi Levi Ben Levy, 64, Head of Black Jewish Group

By ERIC PACE

Rabbi Levi Ben Levy, the chief rabbi of the Israelite Board of Rabbis for the New York metropolitan area and the Western Hemisphere, died on Friday at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Manhattan. He was 64 and lived in the Queens Village section of Queens.

The cause was leukemia, said his son Sholomo Ben Levy, also a rabbi.

The Israelite Board of Rabbis serves black Hebrew Israelites, as they prefer to be known by their fellow Jews and others.

David Pollock, the associate executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, said that members of "Rabbi Levy's group consider themselves part of the Jewish community, and everybody whom I know who has examined this group has concluded that they are part of the Jewish community."

Rabbi Levy was born in Linden, N.C. In 1950, he moved to New York, where he met Rabbi Wentworth A. Matthew. Rabbi Matthew was born in Africa and, when he died in 1973, was described by his family as the first ordained black rabbi in the United States.

Rabbi Matthew established a black synagogue in Harlem. In 1925, he founded the Ethiopian Hebrew Rabbinical College, also in Harlem.

Rabbi Levy entered City College in 1957, but two years later, having de-



Chester Higgins Jr./The New York Times

Rabbi Levi Ben Levy, chief rabbi of the Israelite Board of Rabbis.

chief rabbi of the Israelite Board of Rabbis. At that time, the board's responsibilities were limited to the New York metropolitan area, but later they were expanded to include new congregations in other countries in the Western Hemisphere. He held the title of chief rabbi at his death.

In 1988, Rabbi Sholomo Ben Levy, Rabbi Levi Ben Levy's older son, became the spiritual leader of another synagogue, Beth Elohim Hebrew Congregation, which Rabbi Levi Ben Levy had founded in 1983 in Queens. Another son, Benyamin, became Sholomo's assistant.

In later years, Rabbi Levi Ben Levy spent much of his retirement back in North Carolina, but he often traveled to New York to visit relatives and to advise Jewish organizations to which he had ties.

In addition to his sons, both Queens residents, Rabbi Levy is survived by his wife, the former Deborah Byrd; four daughters: Deborah, Yehudith, Tamar and Zipporah; two brothers: Issac and Frank McKethan; four sisters: Enola McNeil, Irene Elliot, Lillian Issac and Laura Brown, and nine grandchildren.

A spiritual leader's first synagogue was in his Queens home.

ecided to become a rabbi, he enrolled at the Ethiopian Hebrew Rabbinical College. He was ordained in 1967, a year after graduating. The college is now called the Israelite Rabbinical Academy.

Rabbi Levy was encouraged in his religious studies and works by Rabbi Matthew, who was also chief rabbi of the Israelite Board of Rabbis.

Rabbi Levy's first synagogue, Beth Shalom Ethiopian Congregation, began on a modest scale, with eight families gathering in the living room of his Queens home. The congregation is now in Brooklyn.

Six years later, he was elected

POCONO *Life*

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POCONO RECORD
MONDAY
June 5, 2006

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POCONO PEOPLE

Sister is not likely to change

Dragonslippers

I need you to help me because I feel like I'm going insane. It has to do with my sister and her boyfriend. She's been with him for nine years and living a lie ever since. He's been unfaithful to her since the beginning of the relationship and continues to do her wrong. When times get hard, he runs out on her.

She has a daughter from a previous marriage and one with him. He plays in a rock band and never has time for them. He stays out every weekend and says he

has a show, when in actuality he is with another woman.

He has girls text messaging him and she's seen what they say to him, yet she covers for him and says it's nothing.

Her children are suffering because she doesn't pay attention to their needs. Just a few

weeks ago, he tells her he's leaving her again and moves in with another woman. Then he texts how miserable he is without her and how much he loves her.

I know she will take him back, and I think it will be the last straw for me. I love her with all my heart, but I worry more about what she is doing to the children. She acts as if she can't live without him and will put up with anything — lying, cheating, disrespect — just so he won't leave her. What can I do to help her see the light?

Bernadette



Sin is a reality and worth talking about

Q: In churches, priests say that Christ died for our sins. In the Old Testament, it mentions the word hundreds of times. Although we often hear the word mentioned, I rarely hear pastors or rabbis define sin, or go into detail to describe it. Also, some people say that since the New Testament was written, and because Christ died for our sins, that the Old Testament doesn't apply anymore and we don't have to pay attention to the moral laws of the Old Testament.

Today's reality on morality seems to say that as long as you don't hurt anyone, and just believe in Christ, that you can live as you please, and still find your way into heaven. How would you define sin?

— D., Monroe, La.

A: One of the great debates among the three Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam is about the nature of sin. Judaism and Islam on one side of this debate hold to the belief that sin is an act of straying from the path God has set for conducting our lives. This path is called halacha in Hebrew and sha'ariya in Arabic (and by the way, the path of righteousness is the meaning of Tao in the religion of Taoism).

This path is comprised of both ritual laws, which are those that only apply to the followers of that religion (lighting candles, fasting, holiday observances, pilgrimage, etc.), and laws that are universal moral laws intended to apply to all people regardless of their faith or lack thereof (don't murder, don't steal, etc.). Violating these ritual and ethical laws that define the pious reverence of God is a sin. The violation could be



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THE GOD SQUAD



Rabbi MARC GELLMAN



Rev. TOM HARTMAN

Tribune Media

The Washington Post

Acts of Faith

With new chief rabbi, black Hebrew-Israelites make bid to enter the Jewish mainstream

By Sam Kestenbaum October 30



The Israelites walked slowly, chanting in Hebrew and wrapped in loose white robes. A reverential silence spread across the crowd as one figure emerged above the rest. Hundreds had gathered to witness a sacred moment. "I came so that my children's children would remember this day," said one Israelite. "Hallelujah," called another.

It was a scene out of the Torah: after years of uncertainty a new leader was being installed.

THE MORNING CALL

\$4.00

JUNE 20, 2021

EARLY SUNDAY

RAIN, SOME SUNSHINE LATER 82° | 67°

Weather, NEWS 21

JUNETEENTH OBSERVATION



Sarai Kearsa, a dancer from Am Segulah, a dance troupe from New York City, performs at a Juneteenth celebration held by the Bethlehem branch of the NAACP on Friday night at the Bethlehem sculpture garden. **ASH BAILOT/THE MORNING CALL PHOTOS**

Festival for freedom

Bethlehem NAACP program features proclamations, celebration and urge 'not to bury Black history'

By Andrew Scott
The Morning Call

America celebrates its independence on July 4, but most Americans haven't realized until recently that June 19 is a date that should be equally celebrated by everyone.

"Black people weren't told they were free until June 19, 1865, two years after President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation," Northampton Community College history professor Sholomo Levy told more than 50 people gathered Friday evening for the Bethlehem NAACP's first Juneteenth celebration at the Sculpture on Church Street.

The celebration, put together by a committee of local leaders, activists and volunteers coordinated by Bethlehem NAACP President Esther Lee, remembers the date when Union troops marched into Galveston, Texas, the last place in America still holding slaves.

The troops announced the enforcement of Lincoln's executive order, Levy told the crowd, explaining Juneteenth's origin.

"But the general leading the troops and took it a step farther, announcing the



Northampton Community College professor Sholomo Levy speaks about the history of Juneteenth during a celebration held by the Bethlehem branch of the NAACP on Friday night.

Turn to Juneteenth, Page 4

Cameras cut speeding for work crews

Some want stricter measures for those who speed through construction zones, including 1st-timers

By Tom Shortell
The Morning Call

A year after PennDOT and the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission used cameras to spot more than a quarter-million drivers speeding through Pennsylvania construction zones, those organizations are praising the system in a report to legislators and promoting strengthening the program.

Road crews repair and maintain the highway system that's critical to the economy and everyday life, but they're vulnerable while working. While concrete barriers and truck-mounted attenuators often buffer them from traffic, they're sometimes protected by little more than the authority associated with a line of traffic cones. Since 1970, 89 PennDOT

employees have died on the job.

The General Assembly authorized PennDOT and the turnpike commission to use speed cameras, and state officials say they are encouraged by the program's early results. Drivers slowed down 5 to 8 mph on average in work zones with the cameras, according to the April 1 report. Crashes when the cameras were turned off during non-working hours outnumbered crashes when the cameras were on, suggesting the speed enforcement played an important role, the report found.

"Enforcement units are not only increasing safety for the workers active in the zone, but also for the motorists traveling through these work zones," according to the report.

Turn to Cameras, Page 2

Will staffing woes help boost minimum wage?

Some lawmakers see a chance to raise it to \$12 an hour

By Ford Turner
The Morning Call

HARRISBURG — Year after year, Sen. Christine Tartaglione has made little headway in Harrisburg with proposals to boost the Pennsylvania minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$12 — but, she says, the pandemic-scrambled job market of 2021 might make things different.

Tartaglione, a Philadelphia Democrat, is prime sponsor of a bill backed by Gov. Tom Wolf that would set the wage at \$12 an hour on July 1 and gradually boost it to \$15 in 2027.

Employers across the state who cannot find enough willing workers to fill jobs point to

the effects of federally padded unemployment compensation benefits, child care disruptions, and lingering concerns about COVID-19.

But Tartaglione, a Democrat, sees the situation through the window of hourly pay.

"We are in a unique place where employers have to take notice that workers are worth more than \$7.25 an hour," she said.

Her bill is stalled in the Republican-controlled Senate Labor and Industry Committee, and a similar bill in the House sponsored by Democratic Rep. Patty Kim of Harrisburg also has not moved.

Erica Wright, spokeswoman for Republican Senate Majority Leader Kim Ward of Westmoreland County, said Senate lead-

Turn to Wage, Page 4

New data show women close drinking gender gap

Research shows they are suffering health effects sooner than men

By Aneri Pattani
Kaiser Health News

Victoria Cooper thought her drinking habits in college were just like everyone else's. Shots at parties. Beers while bowling. Sure, she got more refills than some and missed classes while nursing hangovers, but she couldn't have a problem, she thought.

"Because of what my picture of alcoholism was, I'd never

Cooper, now sober and living in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

That common image of who is affected by alcohol disorders, echoed throughout pop culture, was misleading over a decade ago when Cooper was in college. And it's even less representative today.

For nearly a century, women have been closing the gender gap in alcohol consumption, binge-drinking and alcohol use disorder. What was previously a 3-1 ratio for risky drinking habits in men versus women is closer to 1-to-1 globally, a 2016 analysis of several studies suggested.

drinking and getting drunk at higher rates than their male peers — in some cases for the first time since researchers began measuring such behavior.

This trend parallels the rise in mental health concerns among young women, and researchers worry the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic could amplify both patterns.

"It's not only that we're seeing women drinking more, but that they're really being affected by this physically and mental health-wise," said Dawn Sugarman, a research psychologist at McLean Hospital in Massachusetts, about the findings.



CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC FRIDAY'S EVENTS

- The state reports 272 additional cases, for a total of 1,209,997.
- The Pennsylvania death toll is 27,560, up 14.
- Lehigh County has no new cases (39,806 total); Northampton County had six (35,832 total).
- The Lehigh Valley death toll is 1,577, with no new deaths in Lehigh County (861 total) or Northampton County (716 total).
- More than 73.5% of eligible Lehigh Valley residents are vaccinated, with 94,420 partially