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Number 293

OF LIFE TO THEM

June, July, Aug., Sept. 1982



REE

# SUMMER PLANS

When Shovuos appears on the calendar, summer is just around the corner, an annual experience with a fragrance all its own. The months ahead have their own, distinct lifestyle.

When this particular issue of HABAYIT reaches us, many make, or have made, their plans for vacation, near or far, short or long. A glance at the Prayer Schedule in this issue directs our thoughts to a period of time which reaches from late spring through summer all the way to Elul, the days of Selichos in the fall.

Relaxation, from work, school and daily routine, is one of the necessities of life. "All work and no play" would make for a dull, lackluster existence, not at all conducive to the spirit of vitality and vigor needed for a healthy mind and a healthy body. A change of pace, of scenery, broadens the horizon and brightens the outlook.

And yet, not from *every* aspect of life do we take a vacation. Some activities are never interrupted but remain conscientiously constant: daily meals, nightly sleep, concern for family and friends, interest in current events. With these we keep in touch unflaggingly, on a year-round basis. We never neglect physical requirements — can we do less for our spiritual values?

There is a striking significance that of all the Jewish holidays, Shovuos, *zeman mattan Torasenu* (Season of the Giving of our Torah) is the overture to the symphony of summer! The festival which commemorates our spiritual birth must set the tone and the mood for vacation as well as vocation, leisure as well as labor.

May the coming weeks and months be blessed with health and happiness, and enrichment of the soul.

Rabbi Abraham L. Hartstein Rabbi Shlomo Kahn ADMINISTRATION: 571 West 182nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10033. LO 8-3933/59.

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# PRAYER SCHEDULE SHABBOS AND YOM TOV

		Preceding				Day	Shema
1982		Evening	Morning	Mincho	End	Break	Before
May 28	1st day Shovuos	8:00	8:30	7:00			
May 29	2nd day Shovuos (Yizkor) Sermon	7:00	8:30	8:30	9:01	4:05	8:50
June 5	Noso	7:00	8:45	8:35	9:06	4:00	8:50
June 12	Beha'alosecho — Sermon	7:00	8:45	8:40	9:11	4:00	8:50
June 19	Shelach (Blessing Month of Tammuz)	7:00	8:45	8:45	9:14	4:10	8:55
	— Sermon		1				
June 26	Korach	7:00	8:45	8:45	9:15	4:10	9:00
July 3	Chukas-Bolok	7:00	8:45	8:45	9:14	4:20	9:05
July 10	Pinchas	7:00	8:45	8:40	9:13	4:30	9:05
July 17	Matos-Masse (Blessing Month of Av)	7:00	8:45	8:35	9:08	4:45	9:10
July 24	Devorim (Chazon) - Sermon	7:00	8:45	8:30	9:01	4:55	9:10
July 31	Voes-chanan (Nachmu) - Sermon	7:00	8:45	8:25	8:54	5:05	9:15
Aug. 7	Ekev	7:00	8:45	8:15	8:44	5:15	9:20
Aug. 14	Re'eh (Blessing Month of Elul)	7:00	8:45	8:00	8:33	5:25	9:25
Aug. 21	Shoftim	7:00	8:45	7:50	8:23	5:35	9:25
Aug. 28	Ki Setze	7:00	8:45	7:40	8:12	5:40	9:25
Sept. 4	Ki Sovo - Sermon	7:00	8:45	7:30	8:00	5:45	9:30
Sept. 11	Nitzovim-Vayelech	6:55	8:45	7:15	7:49	5:45	9:30

# WEEKDAYS (unless listed otherwise - see below)

Mornings:	Sundays and Legal Holidays (Monday, Sept. 6, Labor Day)	.8:00 A.M.
	Mondays and Thursdays	.6:55 A.M.
	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays	.7:00 A.M.
Evenings:	Until September 2	.7:30 P.M.
	September 5 to Sept. 16	.7:00 P.M.

# SPECIAL DAYS

Thur.,	May 27	Erev Shovuos: ERUV TAVSHILIN - Shovuos-Lernen 9:45 P.M.
Fri.,	May 28	Shovuos-Lernen 5:30 P.M.
Mon.,	June 21	Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, 1st day: Shacharis 6:45 A.M.
Tue.,	June 22	Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, 2nd day: Shacharis 6:45 A.M.
Thur.,	July 8	Shivo osor beTammuz: Fast begins 4:10 A.M.; Shacharis 6:45 A.M.; Mincho-Maariv 7:30 P.M.; Fast ends 9:10 P.M.
Wed.,	July 21	Rosh Chodesh Av: Shacharis 6:45 A.M.
Thur.,	July 29	Tisho beAv: Fast begins Wed., 8:10 P.M.; Mincho, Wed., 8:25
; another	and the	P.M.; Shacharis Thur., 6:30 A.M.; Mincho-Maariv 7:30 P.M.;
		Fast ends 8:55 P.M.
Thur.,	Aug. 19	Rosh Chodesh Elul, 1st day: Shacharis 6:45 A.M.
Fri.,	Aug. 20	Rosh Chodesh Elul, 2nd day: Shacharis 6:45 A.M.
Sun.,	Sept. 12	Selichos 7:00 A.M
MonThur.,	Sept. 13-16	Selichos 6:15 A.M.
Fri.,	Sept. 17	Erev Rosh HaShono 6:00 A.M.
SHIURIM SC	HEDULE:	Daily Lernen after Shacharis
511101111100		Daily Lernen after Maariv
		Chumash Shiur Shabbos 45 minutes before Mincho
		Sidro explanations Shabbos after Mincho
		Ladies' Shiur Monday 8:00 P.M.
		Ludios Sinui Intenuus eree anna

# IMPORTANT NOTICE

We would like to make our members aware of a City-wide JEWISH MEDICAL EMERGENCY SERVICE called **HATZALAH** which will render *free emergency first aid* on a 24-hour a day basis. (Incl. Shabbat and Holidays.)

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# SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

The OFFICE will be closed on SUNDAYS starting June 13th to AUGUST 29th inclusive.

# A SCHEDULE OF THE VISITATION SERVICE TO CEDAR PARK AND BETH EL CEMETERIES PROVIDED BY THE RED and TAN LINES, Inc. IS AVAILABLE AT OUR OFFICE.

(Bus Service every 1st Sunday of month and on special holidays)

CHEVRA KADISHA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Sunday, June 6, 11:00 A.M.

#### FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK ...

In accordance with our tradition, we once again this year concluded the morning services on Sabbaths, between Chanukah and Pesach, with "Lernen" — Talmud study. This year's subject, the Tractate Makkos, was explored. The difficult themes contained in the Tractate were well presented by Rabbi Hartstein. The months of studying concluded with the Siyum for the First-Born on Erev Pesach.

Recognition is due to all members of the Congregation who participated in sponsoring the refreshments served at the weekly Kiddush following the Lernen (see list below). Thank you also, Mrs. Herta Hirsch and Mrs. Edith Weissfeld, for preparing the breakfast at the Siyum.

Congratulations to Mr. Kurt Hirsch on his election to the Board of Trustees of our Congregation.

Despite the adverse weather at the beginning of the Pesach Holiday, attendance at our services was very good. The much improved climate toward the close of the Yomtov caused a full shul at the conclusion of the holidays. The spirit of Kehillah worship added to the joy of the festival.

Best wishes for a pleasant summer,

Shalom, Oscar Wortsman

The President and the Synagogue Committee acknowledge with appreciation the generosity of the following members who sponsored a Kiddush following the Shiur (listed in alphabetical order): Mr. & Mrs. Hugo Bacharach, Mr. & Mrs. William Blank, Mr. & Mrs. Harry Benger, Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Gerstley, Mr. & Mrs. Eric Hanau, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Hanauer, Rabbi & Mrs. Abraham L. Hartstein, Mr. & Mrs. Emanuel Hirsch, Mrs. Sally Hirschenberger, Rabbi & Mrs. Shlomo Kahn, Mr. & Mrs. Edward Knopf, Mrs. Ottie May, Mr. & Mrs. Ludwig Merklinger, Mr. & Mrs. Walter Michel, Mrs. Rose Rabow, Mrs. Fanny Rau, Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Roos, Mrs. Sophie Roston, Mrs. Ruth Ruhm, Mrs. Hilda Saul, Mrs. Rose Schoenberger, Mr. & Mrs. Otto Weinberg, Mrs. Edith Weissfeld, Mr. & Mrs. Oscar Wortsman.

# **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING 1982**

On March 28th, 1982, Congregation Beth Hillel and Beth Israel held its annual membership meeting, beginning promptly at 11:00 A.M. There was good participation with more than 80 members in attendance.

President Oscar Wortsman opened the meeting with thoughts reflecting general satisfaction with the welfare and status of the Congregation, and the activities of the various bodies serving the Congregation. The Treasurer's Report by Mr. Werner Heumann, Treasurer, attested to a currently healthy financial situation, but also emphasized the necessity for continued conservative fiscal management as a congregational policy. The reports by the Chairmen of the several Committees, by the Presidents of the Chevra and Sisterhood, Mr. Emanuel Hirsch and Mrs. Fay Blank, respectively, and the head of Family Club, Mrs. Meta Weil, documented the active programs and agendas of these several groups and organizations. Together with the Board of Trustees, they provide leadership and service to the Congregation and encourage participation by the membership.

The membership voted to accept the Board of Trustees' recommendation not to renew Rabbi Hartstein's contract with the Congregation.

Rabbi Kahn addressed the membership, and the meeting concluded with the election of Officers and Board of Trustees. The current Officers were confirmed in their respective offices for another year. The following Trustees were elected: For a three-year term: Alfred Bloch, Martin Marx, Sidney Neuburger, Ruth Ruhm; for a two-year term: Dr. Eric Bloch, Herman Gutman, Walter Michel, Manfred Schoen, Walter Strauss; for a one-year term: Kurt Hirsch, Ernest Roos, Harry Speier, Meta Weil, Charles Wolff.

Dr. Eric Bloch

# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF ....

... our *Purim Party* on March 14th featured the talented ventriloquist Stan Burns, who entertained the admiring and participating audience with clever antics and humorous stories, and together with everyone else, appreciated the generous refreshments provided ...

... an Oneg Shabbat on April 24th saw a larger-than-usual Mincho-and-Maariv congregation with the traditional Seudat Shelishit (third Shabbat Meal) enjoyed in community spirit in the Social Hall, with tasty food attractively prepared by Mrs. Rabow and her expert assistants, the singing of zemirot led by Cantor Schartenberg and enthusiastically accompanied by a spontaneous round-the-tables choir, and a devar Torah delivered by Rabbi Kahn

... the annual Yom Atzmaut Israeli Independence Day Service took place in our Synagogue Tuesday evening, April 27th in the now-traditional format: appropriate thoughts expressed by the Rabbi, Maariv in Yomtov chant conducted by the Cantor including Hallel (without the berochos), singing of Hatikvah, and a collation ...

Institute for the Deaf, a popular annual event co-sponsored by the area's Sisterhoods on May 2nd at the Mount Sinai Jewish Center saw a large participation by our members who contributed generously to a cause which has captured the hearts of thousands . . .

War, this year on Friday, May 21st, was observed in our Synagogue as a Day of Thanksgiving for the miracles of the Six Day War with the recitation of full Hallel as part of the morning service . . .

(A report on the Lag beOmer trip to Atlantic City will appear in the next issue of *HABAYIT*).

#### SISTERHOOD SLIDE PRESENTATION

"The Cycle of Life" was the title of a slide presentation, sponsored by the Sisterhood, on Sunday, February 21st. It provided the assembled audience with a rare blend of enjoyment and enlightenment which will long be fondly remembered.

Mrs. Arnold Frankel, a distinguished staff member at New York's Jewish Museum, and a friend of our Congregation, took us on a guided tour right in our own Social Hall, with the aid of carefully selected color slides accompanied by learned explanations and background information charmingly delivered.

Her chosen topic, "The Cycle of Life," was a panorama of Jewish tradition, laws and customs in the areas of human life: birth (Bris Miloh, Pidyan HaBen), childhood and adolescence (Barmitzvoh), maturity (engagement and wedding), and life's conclusion on earth.

Thanks to Mrs. Frankel's knowledge and talent, scenes and objects projected on the screen seemed to come to life. There they were, right before our eyes, both the familiarbeloved as well as the astonishingly-strange, Jewish customs from far-away lands and communities so different, whetting our appetites and arousing our interest.

Intellectually enriched by the program presented, and physically satisfied by the refreshments served, all participants gave a unanimous vote of approval to our gracious host, our Sisterhood, and our deservingly applauded entertainer, Mrs. Frankel.

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#### LONG DISTANCE BARMITZVAH

A poignant "Barmitzvah celebration" took place in our Synagogue on Shabbos Parshas Yisro (February 13th). The 13-year-old, and all his family, were nowhere to be seen and yet their presence was keenly felt by us all.

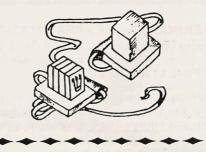
In far-away Odessa, Russia, Aleksandr Khromchenko reached religious maturity. Lacking the proper education, forbidden by law in the Soviet Union, no proper Barmitzvah celebration could be given to the young lad, an event which, in the free world, is filled with solemnity and joy, festivity and happiness.

A friend of the family, recently come to Washington Heights, came to us with the plea not to let the day pass unnoticed. We gladly complied.

In his sermon that Shabbos morning, Rabbi Kahn said that "in spirit Aleksandr Pinchas ben Pavel is with us here today, or all of us are with him in Odessa, to formally induct him into the ranks of Jewish men."

Rabbi Kahn then recited from the pulpit the *mi sheberach* prayer customarily said for a boy on the day of his Barmitzvah: "May G'd, Who blessed our Fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, bless Aleksandr Pinchas ben Pavel, may He protect him and grant him long life, incline his heart to be with G'd, study his Torah, walk in His ways, observe His commandments, bless him with success together with his family and all our brethren behind the Iron Curtain, may he find favor in the eyes of G'd and man and may his parents have the opportunity to raise their son and guide him to Torah, *chuppoh*, and *ma'asim tovim*."

Somehow the words of the prayer took on more solemnity and yearning than usual, the attention given to it by the worshipers was stronger, and all of us felt that the rousing response of *Amen* not only winged its way across oceans and continents, but also to our merciful Father in Heaven.



# HATZOLOH NEWS

Our local volunteer emergency chapter of Hatzoloh has earned high respect and admiration, and heartfelt gratitude for courteous, swift and efficient service whenever called on.

Last November, a dignified appeal for additional funds was made through the rabbis of the various congregations in the community, in which we participated. The purchase of more equipment and a much needed ambulance is contemplated.

In order to report to our members, many of whom responded generously, on the success of the appeal, we publish here excerpts from a warm letter of acknowledgement sent by our local Hatzoloh Director to the Rabbis of our Congregation:

"We are very grateful for your assistance in our appeal for funds. The response from your congregants was overwhelming. We would like to express our appreciation for your efforts on our behalf. Your noble response will enable us to carry on our vital work of providing assistance in medical emergencies." BETH HILLEL & BETH ISRAEL

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#### CHEVRA DAY -- FEBRUARY 28

Our annual Chevra Day gathering took place on February 28th. By tradition, the birthday and Yahrzeit of Moshe Rabbenu, on the 7th of Adar, is set aside as Chevra Day. It was Moses who brought the Children of Israel out of Egypt and under his leadership, all were united into one people, brothers and sisters. It is therefore fitting that Chevra Day is commemorated then.

The observance began in the Synagogue, where a large assemblage of members attended. Cantor Schartenberg officiated and conducted the service, Minchah followed by the Choir's singing of "Enosh KeChotzir." Rabbi Hartstein delivered the Sermon. He reminded us of the functions of Chevra Kadisha — as a "holy society" — to perform good deeds and charitable works, taking care not only of the deceased but also of the living. Thus the Chevra contributes to life and rejoicing. There is happiness — "simchah" — in the month of Adar but also reverence. Rabbi Hartstein's reference to the Talmud's story how Moses, before leaving the Land of Egypt, searched for and found the bones of Joseph and saw to it that they too would be taken on the journey through the wilderness, was an apt illustration to highlight the tasks of the Chevra. After the Sermon, Rabbi Hartstein mentioned by name all Chevra Brothers who had passed away during the preceding year. This was followed by Cantor Schartenberg's rendition of "E-I Moleh Rachamim" and Kaddish. The singing of "Adon Olom" concluded the solemn Chevra Day Service.

The second part of the afternoon's proceedings took place in our Social Hall where Mrs. Rabow and her staff of ladies had prepared the Chevra S'udo, in her well-appreciated, talented way. Chevra President Emanuel Hirsch welcomed all participants and, wishing them an enjoyable afternoon, set the mood for it. Tasty hors d'oeuvres and a delicious meal contributed expertly and lavishly. During the dinner, Rabbi Kahn delivered a D'var Torah spiced with humor. The entire afternoon became a pleasant "Plauderstunde" thoroughly enjoyed by all. With his usual experience and success, Mr. Nordlinger conducted the auctioning of the Benshen, and the Benshen, led by Rabbi Kahn, concluded this year's Chevra Day to the satisfaction of all who were present.

Hugo Bacharach

# CONSECRATION OF MEMORIAL WINDOW AND MEMORIAL PLATES

During the Yizkor Service on the last day of Passover, April 15, Rabbi Kahn consecrated the Memorial Window of JULIUS LASKER and MARTHA LASKER and of LEO FORCH-HEIMER and the following Memorial Plaques: JOSEPH BENDER, RICKA BENDER, KURT BLUMENSTIEL, HELENE GERN, STEPHANIE GREENBAUM, ERIC GROSS, MAR-THA GRUENBAUM, HELEN GUTKIND, MARTIN HEINEMAN. MANNY HOFFMAN, SELLI HELDMAN, WILLIAM HERZE, HUGO ISRAEL, EUGENIE KAHN, WALTER KOHLMANN, CURT LAUTER, HERTA LEVI, RECHA LEVITUS, BERNHARD LOEWENSTEIN, MARTIN LOWENBERG, ISAAK LOWENSTEIN, JULIA LOWEN-STEIN, SIEGFRIED MANSFELD, MEINHARD MARX, MARTIN SAUL, LEO STOCK, JULIA STOCK, ERNST WERTHEIM, SESSI WERTHEIM.

Their memories are cherished by our membership, and were especially so remembered by the presence of their closest relatives and friends who gave donations in their usual generous style.



## ALL IN THE FAMILY

An Erev Yomtov sah's nicht grad gut aus; das Wetter — statt Freude — brachte nur Graus. Wir hofften fuer Krokus, Narzissen und Daisies; doch die gabs zu sehn nur — im Eingang bei Macy's.

Vom Eise bedeckt waren Buergersteige; die schwere Schneelast brach knospende Zweige. Anscheinend konnt' Winter nicht werden gezaehmt. und wieder mal war die Metropole gelaehmt. You couldn't help having that uncertain feeling: Um Pessach ein blizzard — ist das ein Fruehling?

Well, bad weather has yet to deter our steady shul-goers and New York City *did* get its spring days in the latter part of the holiday week. But our congregants, young or old, do carry a cheerful outlook at whatever season.

Our family news begins with the nachas that parents, in the summer of their lives, derive from children and grandchildren: Mr. and Mrs. Aufseeser's daughter Joyce got engaged to Mr. Jonathan Harrer. A double Mazal-Tov is due to the family of Rabbi Abraham L. Hartstein for the engagement of their daughter Lisa to Mr. Richard Altabe as well as for their son Ivan's achievement of winning a New York Regents Scholarship.

Hearty congratulations go to Dr. and Mrs. Eric Bloch at the occasion of their daughter Alexandra's Bat Mitzvah on Shabbat Tazria-Metzorah, April 24, and to proud grandmother Mrs. Hilde Bloch and sister Talia.

Mr. and Mrs. Eric Hanau share the joy of having become grandparents of a baby boy with his great-grandmother, Mrs. Charlotte Gutterman. Mrs. Frieda Bing-Meier is grateful for the simcha of a grand-daughter's arrival in California.

Mr. and Mrs. Siegfried Lowenfels' grandson Steven Siegel was married to Miss Fern Silverman.

The list of special birthdays covers the months of March through May and encompasses a remarkable span of attained ages. Mrs. Elsie Hirsch celebrated her 70th birthday, whereas five names share the honor of having reached the 75 year mark: Mr. Siegfried Lowenfels and Mrs. Martha Strauss in March, Mr. Fanny Leidecker in April, Mr. Curt Behrens and Mr. Max Weil in May. Mrs. Claire Friedman and Mr. William Oppenheimer, respectively, observed the 80th and 85th year milestone.

Five of our celebrants — b'ezrat hashem — are sharing membership in an exclusive club — being nonagenarians: Mr. Isidore Wormser having attained 91 years, Mr. Fred Heumann and Mr. Hugo Meyer sharing the 93 year mark, Mrs. Adele Lebrecht being 95 years old and Mrs. Henriette Heymann showing the most venerable age of 99 years.

A "mere" fifty years of wedding bliss is shared by our popular Chevra President Mr. Emanuel Hirsch and his wife Cilly, who are celebrating their simcha with a kiddush on May 8, Shabbat Parshah Emor.

As we go to print we hear of the engagement of a granddaughter of our Executive Secretary, Mr. Manfred Walden, and wish him and his family a hearty Mazel Tov.

For all of our celebrants may the Almight fulfill the words of the Sabbath Psalm that even in the winters of their lives they may be fresh in body and spirit. May we be blessed at all thimes with carrying the hope of spring in our hearts!

> Shalom ve-hatzlachah, Theodore H. Spaeth

# THANK YOU

Many thanks for having remembered us on our recent special birthdays in such a nice way.

#### Elsie and Hugo Kahn

My sincere thanks to the Congregation and the Chevra Kadisha for all the good wishes I received during my recent illness.

#### Victor Marx

My sincere thanks to the President, Rabbis, Cantor, and many members and friends of the Congregation and Chevra Kadisha for the good wishes and presents I received on the occasion of my 75th birthday.

#### Siegfried Lowenfels

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Rabbi Kahn, Cantor Schartenberg, the Chevra Kadisha members, and friends for their thoughtfulness extended to me at the passing of my beloved husband.

## Millie Friedman

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Rabbis, Congregation, Chevra Kadisha and Sisterhood, and members and friends, for their thoughtfulness extended to us at the passing of our beloved wife and mother.

Julius and Danny Wertheimer

Our sincere appreciation to all in the Congregation, Chevra Kadisha and Sisterhood, for their expressions of sympathy extended at the passing of our beloved husband and father, Ludwig Baer.

#### Herta Baer and Family

I would like to express sincere appreciation to the Rabbis, Congregation, Chevra Kadisha, members and friends for their thoughtfulness extended on the passing of my beloved husband.

Selma Goldschmidt

My sincere thanks to the Congregation, the Sisterhood, my relatives and friends for remembering me on my special birthday. It was much appreciated.

Martha Strauss

# SOVIET JEWRY

The Washington Heights-Inwood Council for Soviet Jewry reports that although last December's traditional Benefit Concert could not take place, due to prohibitive entertainers' fees, a "Non-Concert" appeal was blessed with overwhelming success. Much-needed funds to send life-sustaining packages to Jews in Russia were replenished. Moreover the annual Passover appeal provided generously for food packages to Pesach-observing families in the Soviet Union.

In appreciation of the generosity and understanding of its devoted friends, the Council arranged for a free Pesach Concert on Monday, Chol HaMoed Pesach at the Mount Sinai Jewish Center. There the audience was treated to an evening of first class entertainment reminiscent of the great Concert Halls, offered by Russian immigrants who had only recently benefited from our community's work for Soviet Jews. On the program appeared a charming 10-year-old pianist, a talented 13-year-old violinist, two outstanding concert pianists and one gifted singer, artists formerly of recognized renown in Europe and now touring the free world.

As we go to print, preparations are under way for the great annual Solidarity March and Rally, on Sunday, May 2nd.

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BETH HILLEL & BETH ISRAEL

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# THEY CANONIZED THE BIBLE (A SHOVUOS TRIBUTE TO THE MEN OF THE GREAT ASSEMBLY) by Rabbi Shlomo Kahn

Resilience is the hallmark of the Jewish people. We have existed longer than any other nation on earth, have outlived the mightiest world powers and overcome the most murderous designs and conspiracies against us. To our delight, and that of our true friends, Judaism is indestructible. And to our foes, hidden or concealed, we are the proverbial *am keshey oreph*, a stubborn, stiff-necked people, who simply refuse to be wiped off the map.

Examples and evidence of this miraculous historical feat are plentiful. None more profound than the fact that we regained our sovereignty in the land of our fathers from which we were exiled, and calmly, without batting an eyelash, resumed a people-existence where we left off, close to 2,000 years ago. In the year 70 C.E., the Temple was destroyed, Jerusalem sacked, the Second Jewish Commonwealth came to an end, our people dispersed to the four corners of the earth — in the year 1948 the State of Israel was proclaimed, the ingathering of the exiles began and the road was paved for a reunification of Jerusalem as the national capital, and — (as we sang so fervently at the Seder) — we look forward to the rebuilding of the Holy Temple.

When the miracle of modern Israel took place, its founding fathers were imbued with a wisdom and an inspiration reminiscent of biblical dimension. Wisely, the new state was not named Zion (a quite likely candidate, for it was political Zionism which was directly responsible for its establishment) nor Judea (another eligible name, for its immediate predecessor, destroyed by the Romans 1,900 years earlier, bore that name), but rather Israel — the name which includes and encompasses us all, the entire world Jewish population, all descendants of the Twelve Tribes (even those whose premature exile caused them to be "lost").

More. Israel's representative body received an official, uniquely Jewish name; not Parliament nor Congress, but Knesset. And its members, the democratically elected representatives of the people, were fixed at 120. Why? Because in this way a continuity is to be demonstrated. Not a new nation came into being there in the Middle East owing its existence to a majority vote in the United Nations. Nor did a new state rise out of the dogged determination of a worldwide Jewish movement. Rather, the world was once again treated to a spectacle of unique grandeur, namely the Jewish ability to come out of exile after its national existence had suffered an interruption, and our insistence on looking upon it merely as an interlude. In that interlude nothing concerning statehood was forgotten. We had not become "rusty." Life as a sovereign state began to function as smoothly as if it had never ceased.

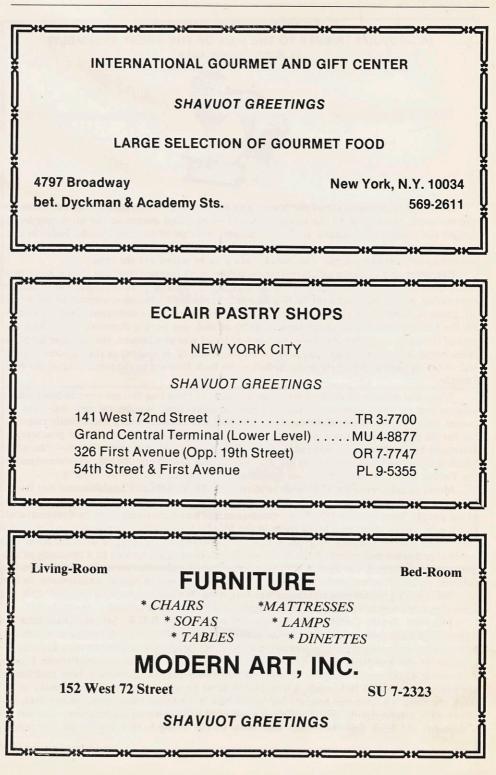
The First Jewish Commonwealth was destroyed in 586 B.C.E. Seventy years later the Babylonian Exile came to an end, exactly as foretold by the Prophets. A benign monarch permitted, even encouraged the captives to return to Eretz Israel. Not unlike our own days, only a fraction of the hundreds of thousands who had settled in the Babylonian-Persian Empire responded; 42,000 made "aliyah." Under the leadership of Ezra, the Scribe, later fortified by the practical genius of Nehemiah, a new Jewish State became a reality. Again, similar to our days, the fledgling state was severely hampered by economic hardship, surrounding foes, and above all, a disappointing lack of religious awareness on the part of the returnees. But not for a moment did Ezra and Nehemiah lose faith in the strength and destiny of the people.

(continued on page 13)

Page Twelve

BETH HILLEL & BETH ISRAEL

Number 293



# THEY CANONIZED THE BIBLE (continued)

Nehemiah supervised the fortification of Jerusalem and saw to the security of the settlers. Boldly Ezra structured a true Jewish administration. After an initial period of laying the groundwork, he convened a body of scholars and visionaries and called it Knesset HaGedolah ("Great Assembly"), which over a period of years comprised 120 men of outstanding stature. These were then known as *Anshe Knesset HaGedolah* — the Men of the Great Assembly.

Patterned after this illustrious precedent of Jewish history, when a Second Jewish Commonwealth followed smoothly a 70-year interval of total collapse, men of vision in our days established a Third Jewish State after 1,900 years of national collapse, called its modern Parliament by the ancient name Knesset and designated a membership of 120.

What the modern Knesset in Jerusalem does, is contemporary history and current events. What, however, was the chief function of the Knesset HaGedolah which sat in the same Holy City some 2,500 years ago? Numerous references, gleaned from Mishnah, Gemorah and Midrash as well as historic texts, supply colorful details which, when properly fitted together, provide us with one overruling supreme function: the systematic structuring of national-religious values. Thanks to the Anshe Knesset HaGedolah (as we shall see in the next few paragraphs) our Jewish life received a disciplined structure, stamped with authority, blessed with lasting survival.

Among the men of the Great Assembly were giants of Jewish history, names forever engraved in the annals of our people as shining luminaries: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi (biblical prophets), Joshua, the High Priest, Mordochai (of the Purim story), and as reported in a well-known Mishnah (Ethics of the Fathers), the period was concluded by the eminent Shimon HaTzaddik, a High Priest of immense-piety (who well deserves a tribute and biographical sketch all his own). The others on this august assembly? Historians make a valiant attempt to identify them, if not all by name then at least by designation. One authority lists them as the heads of the 24 Priestly Divisions, the heads of the 24 Divisions of Levites, 70 community leaders, all under Ezra and Nehemiah, totaling 120. Another list names the 98 delegates of the people called "signers" (Nehemiah 10:11) plus 22 delegates who were absent at the signing ceremony.

More impressive than their names, and astoundingly lasting, is the work achieved by the Men of the Great Assembly. They set for themselves formidable tasks, tackled them with courage, vigor and admirable energy. And they accomplished masterfully. Recognized as the supreme judicial and administrative authority of the people, they turned to a staggering array of points, some of temporary and local importance, (regulating and organizing courts of justice, appointing judges, establishing court procedures, imposing fines, etc.), some influenced by an amazing awareness of sociological and economic factors (for example the ensuring of ample supply of religious items, such as Sifre Torah, Tefilin, Mezuzahs). Most impressive, however, was their work in the area of *Torah* and *Avodah*, Scripture and Prayer.

Recognizing the urgency to formalize prayer in concise phraseology and language, so as to ensure its sanctity, unity, and, above all, the proper way for man to address the Almighty, the Men of the Great Assembly gave us the precise wording to be used in our *Shemone Eshreh*, *Kiddush*, *Havdalah*, and the many benedictions. Ever since then these are the time-honored vehicles of our communication with G'd.

The first post-Pentateuch holiday was instituted by the Men of the Great Assembly. Prodded by Esther, heroine-queen of the Purim event, this body of scholars searched for religious authority, found prophetic allusions and established Purim as a binding and lasting biblical festival. (Chanukah is post-biblical).

With reverence and a high awareness of responsibility, the Men of the Great Assembly turned to their most awesome task: the Canonization of the Bible. Undaunted by such a daring venture, they met and sat, studied and discussed, scrutinized and agonized, immersed themselves in solemn and highly intellectual scholarly research, inspired each other with religious fervor. Most of the sacred books posed no problems and little discussion, for their authenticity was beyond question or doubt. The Five Books of Moses were G'd's Own Words;

(continued on page 14)

# THEY CANONIZED THE BIBLE (continued)

books of the Prophets whose credentials were unimpeachable quickly joined the growing list, but here and there gnawing doubts troubled some of the scholars. Some of Ezekiel's verses needed the defense and clarification of eloquent sages who finally were able to convince their colleagues of the Prophet's true meaning and stature. Some of Solomon's books, especially the deeply philosophical Koheles (Ecclesiastes) (and in the opinion of some Talmudic references, the Book of Shir HaShirim as well) aroused stormy debates, for seeming contradictions in various passages (and stylistic objections) clouded the sanctity of the work. However, here, too, clarification was forthcoming to the satisfaction of all. Inevitably, not all books that were examined "made" it. Those later grouped in the Apocrypha (original Hebrew designation: *Seforim Chitzonim*, lit. "Rejected Books") were not accepted, for serious doubts remained concerning their authenticity or the reliability of the authors. The overruling barometer was compatibility with Torah-true content, and a divinely inspired authorship.

Confidence in the wisdom of these illustrious Men of the Great Assembly, by the Rabbis of the Talmud, and indeed, by *Kelal Yisroel* (i.e., ratification by spontaneous, unanimous approval of the entire Jewish people) is breathtaking. So certain are we of the accuracy of the decisions made by the Men of the Great Assembly, that all the 24 Books of the Bible (listed below) are deemed as holy as if G'd Himself had revealed them at Mount Sinai, together with His Torah!

#### I TORAH (PENTATEUCH)

1) Genesis 2) Exodus 3) Leviticus 4) Numbers 5) Deuteronomy

#### II NEVIIM (PROPHETS)

6) Joshua 7) Judges 8) Samuel 9) Kings 10) Isaiah 11) Jeremiah 12) Ezekiel 13) The Twelve Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)

# II KHESUVIM (WRITINGS)

14) Psalms 15) Proverbs 16) Job 17) Song of Songs 18) Ruth 19) Lamentations 20) Ecclesiastes 21) Esther 22) Daniel 23) Ezra-Nehemiah 24) Chronicles = Hence Shovuos is the "birthday" of our entire *TaNaKH*!

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# DAS VENEZIANISCHE GHETTO

von Ingeborg Merker



Die Venezianer erfanden nicht nur die Einkommensteuer, die Statistik und das Spielkasino, in Venedig entstand auch das erste juedische Ghetto. Das venezianische Ghetto hat in der Geschichte der Juden eine bedeutende Rolle gespielt und als historischer Ort von Shakespeares "Shylock" im "Kaufmann von Venedig" grosse Aufmerksamkeit erregt. Es wurde geschaffen, um die Frage der juedischen Fluechtlinge zu loesen, die waehrend der Kriege des Cambrai-Bundes in das sichere Lagunengebiet fluechteten.

Obwohl die Kirche massiven Druck auf die Republik ausuebte — die Dominikanischen Moenche forderten die Massenaustreibung der Juden —, war Venedig nicht bereit, den Beispiel der iberischen Koenigreiche zu folgen. Spanien und Portugal wiesen 1492 und 1497 saemtliche Juden aus. Die venezianische Republik, die fuer ihre Diplomatie bekannt war, waehlte eine Kompromissloesung, die spaeter von vielen anderen Staedten in der Welt uebernommen wurde. 1516 verfuegte der Senat, dass die Juden von nun an in einem abgeschlossenen Gebiet in der Naehe von S. Girolamo zu leben haetten, isoliert von der uebrigen Bevoelkerung. Es war der Welt erstes Ghetto. Der Name soll von den Metallgiessereien, die sich vordem hier befanden, abgeleitet worden sein. (Giesserei = gheto in venezianischen Dialekt).

Die Anwesenheit der ersten Juden in und um Venedig reicht bis zu den ersten Jahrhunderten der christlichen Zeitrechnung zurueck. Sie kamen aus Deutschland, Frankreich, dem Byzantinischen Reich und von der Levante, um zunaechst kleinere Geschaefte waehrend ihrer kurzen Aufenthalte in Venedig abzuwickeln. Zu dieser Zeit war Venedig der wichtigste Handelsplatz zwischen Europa und der Levante. Dies war der Anfang einer juedischen Gemeinde, die gegen Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts auf 1300 anstieg.

Die Juden siedelten sich zunaechst auf der Insel Giudecca an, dann auf dem Festland in Mestre, und spaeter breiteten sie sich ueber ganz Venedig aus. Trotz der hohen Tribute und harten Beschraenkungen (besoders gekennzeichnete Kleidung — einen gelben Ring oder roten Filzhut —, kein Erwerb von Grundbesitz, kein Verkehr mit christlichen Frauen), genossen die venezianischen Juden gegenueber anderen europaeischen Juden eine gewisse Vorrangstellung. Sie durften Handel mit dem Orient treiben, den Arztberuf ausueben, Darlehensbanken eroeffnen und Altkleider — sowie Pfandleihgeschaefte betreiben — Konzessionen, die heute nicht besonders grossartig erscheinen, aber zu jener Zeit ein hohes Mass an Toleranz seitens der Republik bewiesen. Fuer diese spezifischen Rechte musste jedoch ein hoher Preis bezahlt werden. Die juedische Gemeinde wurde unbarmherzig besteuert. Sie wurde fuer alles herangezogen: fuer Tribute, Steuern, fuer die Marine, die Erhaltung der Kanaele, ihre Wohn — und Arbeitsgenehmigungen, die alle fuenf, sieben oder zehn Jahre gegen eine zusaetzliche Gebuehr erneuert werden mussten. Sie mussten sogar fuer ihren kleinen Friedhof zahlen, der noch heute bei S. Niccolo auf dem Lido existiert.

Das Ghettoviertel befand sich damals auf einer relativ kleinen Insel, die von breiten Kanaelen und hohen Waellen umgeben war. Es war auf der Aussenseite fensterlos, um es vollkommen von der Stadt abzuteilen. Es gab drei Tore, die von christlichen Waechtern — sie wurden ebenfalls von den Juden bezahlt — zu bestimmten Zeiten geoeffnet und geschlossen wurden, Hier lebten die Juden, die aus verschiedenen Laendern der Welt kamen, nach

(continued on page 16)

## DAS VENEZIANISCHE GHETTO (continued)

juedischem Recht, Brauchtum und Ritus. Mit seinen Synagogen, Lehrern, Rabbinern, und Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen war das Ghetto ein kleiner Staat fuer sich, wo Traditionen fortlebten. Da es uebervoelkert war, baute man eng geschachtelte, wolkenkrazerartige Haeuser, die noch heute zu sehen sind — ein eigenartiger, malerischer Anblick.

Das venezianische Ghetto hat seine Urspruenglichkeit bis heute bewahrt. Es gibt heute noch fuenf Synagogen (Schole), die Schola Grande Tedesca und Schola Canton — beide nach sogenanntem deutschen Ritus —, die Schola Levantina, Spagnola und Italiana. Sie gehoeren zu den schoensten noch existierenden mittelalterlichen Synagogen der italienischen Renaissance. Was fuer sie besonder charakteristisch ist — und das unterscheidet sie von anderen Synagogen der Welt —: es sind keine freistehenden Gebaeude, sondern sie sind in die Wohnhaeuser eingebaut worden, so dass sie von aussen kaum zu erkennen sind. Man konnte sie ueber steile Treppen von jeder Wohnung aus erreichen. Die Innenausstattung ist sehr prunkvoll, mit Verzierung aus geschnitztem Holz und Marmor. G'ttesdienst wird heute regelmaessig in der Schola Levantina abgehalten. Die anderen Synagogen werden mit Hilfe von italienischen und auslaendischen Spenden retauriert.

Im Ghetto gibt es heute noch das Buero der Juedischen Gemeinde und des Rabbiners, ein Altersheim mit einem kleinen Restaurant, wo man heute noch koscher essen kann, einen Kindergarten und ein kleines Museum fuer Juedische Kunst, in dem Gobelins, huebsche Silberarbeiten, Wandteppiche, Manuskripte und wertvolle Buecher ausgestellt sind. Heute gehoert das Ghetto zu den aermsten Vierteln Venedigs. Die juedische Gemeinde umfasst nur noch 750 Menschen, von denen 150 im Ghetto leben.

(Aus der "Allgemeine")

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# NO SHOVUOS WITHOUT KAESEKUCHEN (CHEESE CAKE)



Regarding our Torah's numerous biblical precepts, we say that "they are our life and the length of our days" (daily Maariv service). Undoubtedly so, but often it is the colorful custom, the beloved *minhag*, which supplies spice to life. Customs are tasty tidbits — we wouldn't miss them for anything.

Needless to say, the main courses constitute the essentials of the meal and provide sustenance and stamina. But it's the sweet dessert which so deliciously tops it off. Into this metaphor, the custom of eating cheese cake on Shovuos enters quite fittingly.

We eat it with relish and satisfaction. But between bites, let us ask: Where does this custom come from? Why is the time-honored "Kaesekuchen" offered as a "reward" for having a perfect record in counting the Omer diligently from Pesach to Shovuos?

The knowledgeable will at once pounce on me with the correct comment: not necessarily cheese cake, but rather dairy food. "In many localities there is the custom to eat dairy foods on the first day of Shovuos," writes Rabbi Moses Isserles, co-author of the Shulchan Oruch (Orach Chaim 494:2). In other words, our traditional cheese cake is just a culinary expression of a practice, merely an example of a much wider range of dishes customarily gracing the festival table. But the reason must be explored for this custom, especially since it would seem to run counter to a law. "You shall rejoice on your festival," demands the Torah (Deuteronomy 16:14). "There is no rejoicing without meat," comments the Talmud (Pesochim 109a). How can a mere custom (to eat dairy) uproot a law (to eat meat)?

(Some solve the problem diplomatically by first partaking of a dairy meal, concluding it with the prescribed benedictions, and subsequently sitting down to a festive meat dinner.)

To the "hungry and thirsty" we present here a "menu" of reasons, in explanation of the custom, each of which is not only tasty but also quite satisfying, deserving of individual attention and appetite.

I.

Shovuos marks the end of the 49-day Counting of the Omer. In Temple times it was celebrated with a special offering of two loaves baked from flour that came from the first cut of the new wheat harvest, ". . . you shall bring two loaves of bread . . ." (Leviticus 23:18) which were offered in a special wave-ceremony at the Temple Altar. In fond commemoration of not one but two loaves, specially prepared, we serve not one but two meals, distinctly set apart by the fact that their ingredients (dairy and meat) cannot possibly be combined but must of necessity be kept separate. (RaMO, Machatzis HaShekel)

(To the alert and discerning student of the Bible text, an almost undetectable clue reveals the "dairy" nature. Numbers 28:26, commenting on this Shovuos Temple offering, states: "On the day of the firstfruits, when you bring a new flour offering to G'd, after your [counting of the] weeks . . ." The three Hebrew words *CHadosho LaShem BeShovuosechem* spell with their initials *CHoLoV*, i.e. "milk"!)

#### II.

What is more nourishing to man as he makes his entry into life than milk? And, what is more nourishing to the Jew as he embarks on his Jewish way of life than Torah?

Proverbially, Torah is compared to milk for nourishment and to honey for sweetness. "Honey and milk are under your tongue," sings Solomon in his Song of Songs (4:11). (KolBo)

III.

From the poetic-philosophical we turn to the tangible-historical. Before G'd gave them the Torah, the Jewish people had not yet attained halachically the status of Jewishness. Torah (continued on page 19)

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# **NO SHOVUOS WITHOUT KAESEKUCHEN** (continued)

laws, though prophetically known to them and voluntarily observed by many, were not binding. Hence they did not necessarily observe the dietary laws. Their kitchens, as it were, were not "kosher." Neither was their meat.

On that memorable first Shovuos, when they returned from the Sinai Revelation to their tents, they found that they could not eat the meat which they had prepared earlier that day. By necessity, non-meat meals were eaten at this first Shovuos. We commemorate to this day this practice fondly, "joining" our ancestors' dilemma by eating dairy food. (Ge'ulas Yisroel)

IV.

To explore the immortal text of G'd's Written Law is a never-ending thrill. An imaginative reading unearthes an undeniable link between the holiday Shovuos and a biblical reference to milk.

Our dietary restriction of mixing milk and meat is mentioned three times in the Torah and G'd phrased it in famous words: "You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk." Two out of the three times (Exodus 23:19 and ibid 34:26) this well-known phrase is preceded by the words: "The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring to house of G'd, your G'd." That is Shovuos — Festival of the Firstfruits! And with telling emphasis this clear reference carries in its wake the work "milk"! (Sheloh)

V.

Shall we attempt once more a historical effort of gymnastics in order to align milk with Shoyuos?

Moses was born on the 7th of Adar, a calendar date duly noted and annually observed. His birth occurred at a terrible time in Jewish history. By the cruel decree of Pharaoh, newborn boys were cast into the river of Egypt. For three months, Moses' mother managed to conceal the birth of her precious baby. When she feared subsequent discovery, she conceived of her plan of rescue, to entrust the fate of her child into the hand of G'd. She placed him in a basket and set it afloat in the reeds of the river. We know the Torah's account how Moses was found by the Princess of Egypt who quickly summoned the baby's own mother in order to provide the nourishing mother's milk for this crying child.

Now take a look at the calendar. Moses' rescue took place three months after his birth. Count three months from the 7th of Adar and you will arrive at the 6th of Sivan — Shovuos! (Sefer Matamim)

Whatever the reason — and all are fascinating! — our custom is justified and firmly established: eat dairy on Shovuos.

Rabbi Shlomo Kahn

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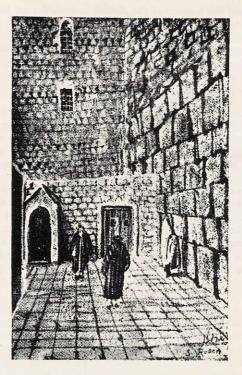
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THE MOSQUE OF OMAR ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT

Where once the Holy Temple stood, there is now a Moslem house of prayer. It is called the Mosque of Omar (after Omar Ibn Al-Khattab, a caliph of the 7th century), or the Dome of the Rock. The mosque was built by another caliph, Abd al-Malik, who lived some 50 - 60 years later, but it was Omar, a benevolent conqueror of Eretz Israel, Syria, Iraq, Persia and Egypt, whose benevolence included non-Moslems too, who ordered the clearing of the site, when he learned of its significance, and who set it aside as a place of prayer. What made it sacred?

The traditional *Even Shetiyah* (world's cornerstone) from which, in accordance with Jewish tradition G'd began the creation of the world. (Moslems identify it as the spot from which their Prophet Mohammed was supposed to have ascended to heaven.)

Much of the story connected with Omar's finding of the spot is shrouded in mystery, legend and folklore. A popular version tells the following.

It was a hot Jerusalem summer day. On the calendar of the Jews, it was the 9th of Av, the anniversary of the destruction by fire of the Holy Temple. Caliph Omar, looking out from his palace window, near the Temple mount, was shocked to see an old Moslem woman, staggering under a heavy basket filled with rubbish and dung. She slowly ascended the mount and deliberately emptied the odorous contents not far from the royal palace. "Bring that woman to me!" he ordered his palace guards. Trembling, she stood before her ruler.

"Where do you come from?" came his thundering question. "From Bethlehem, my lord," she said. "Is there no garbage dump to be found anywhere between Bethlehem and Jerusalem?" "May my lord forgive me," whispered the hapless object of royal fury, "but in my family there is a tradition. On this day the temple of the non-believing Jews was destroyed on this spot. To show our disdain for it, it is our custom to heap refuse on their sacred place on this day." Omar's anger increased. He forbade her on pain of death to desecrate the site henceforth.

(continued on page 22)

Page Twenty Two

# THE MOSQUE OF OMAR (continued)

He then summoned the leaders of the Jewish community of Jerusalem to him. "It has come to my attention that on yonder mount the Holy Temple of Solomon once stood in which Almighty G'd was worshiped. I give you my blessing to rebuild it." Moved to tears by the caliph's benevolence, the Jewish leaders explained that it was their view that the rebuilding of the Temple of G'd must await a more propitious time. "If so," said Omar, "let me, in the meantime, dedicate it as a place of worship, until the time when the Temple will once again stand in all its ancient glory."

The sanctity of the site of the Beth HaMikdosh is in full force, even after its destruction. Jews must carefully refrain from entering the holy precincts, lest they defile it in their impure status. (Even in modern Israel, the soldiers of the Israeli army enter only for security reasons, after first purifying themselves by ritual immersion. Visiting tourists are cautioned by signs affixed by the Ministry of Religion, not to enter the Temple site proper.)

A sequel to this popular tale has it, that the old woman's act of desecration was deliberate in adding to the pile of earth and rubbish which, over the centuries, obscured the remnants of the outer Temple walls. The caliph was determined to uncover those. Cleverly he buried some gold coins on the site and later encouraged his subjects to explore the ground. The bait of gold aroused feverish digging. As a result, soon the great stones of the Western Wall were unearthed. Ever since then, the Kotel remained a site, sacred and beloved to Jews for centuries. In our days, it is the heart of Jerusalem and all Jewry.

> (Ze'ev Vilnay: Aggadot Eretz Israel; E.J.: Omar Ibn al-Khattab)



# THE LAST SYNAGOGUE IN HARLEM



"It's a strange phenomenon. Somehow, there's always a minyan."

Jacob Mazo, rabbi of the last congregation of white Jews in Harlem, sighed as he looked across at his tiny flock.

"It's a miracle, almost," he said. "If someone cardinal to the minyan were, God forbid, to die, the whole place would fall apart."

None of the worshipers at Congregation Tikvath Israel of Harlem, on East 112th Street between Lexington and Third Avenues, remembers when the congregation was founded. Professor Jeffrey Gurock of Yeshiva University, who has written extensively about Harlem Jewry, believes that the sanctuary in the twenty-five-foot-wide, five-story, tenementlike building was built around 1910, when Harlem's Jewish population of 100,000 made it the second largest Jewish community in the United States, after Manhattan's Lower East Side.

At that time, large synagogues lined Lenox Avenue and 116th Street. Businessmen, office workers, storekeepers, garment workers, and manual laborers who had escaped the crowded Lower East Side filled Harlem's synagogues. They came to the Institutional Synagogue to hear the inspiring oratory of Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein, who was among the first Englishspeaking rabbis in new York, and to hear the sweet voice of Cantor Joseph Rosenblatt, who was paid the astonishing sum of \$2,400 per year by Congregation Ohab Zedek of Harlem. Many of Harlem's Jews were prosperous. Their thriving synagogues sponsored speakers, dances, social clubs, and youth groups.

Harry Rosenthal, eighty-six, a resident of the Hebrew home for the Aged in Riverdale, remembers his Harlem neighborhood as "100 percent Jewish."

Harlem's Jewish population grew to 178,000 during World War I, and families doubled up to share apartments. But housing construction was curtailed during the war, and Harlem was bursting at its seams.

At the war's end, construction began along the new subway lines. Jewish Harlemites moved to newer apartment buildings in Washington Heights, along the Grand Concourse and White Plains Road, and across the East River to Bay Ridge, Bensonhurst, Flatbush, Astoria, Jackson Heights, and Long Island City. Blacks replaced the Jews, and by 1930, fewer than twenty-five thousand Jews lived in Harlem. Synagogues sold their buildings to church groups (who still occupy them today) and followed what one rabbi called the "drift of our congregants" to the new neighborhoods.

A few Jews, and Congregation Tikvath Israel, remained.

Services are held at Tikvath Israel on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. The synagogue pews can seat about two hundred persons on the main floor and perhaps one hundred more in the now closed women's gallery. Though the harsh fluorescent lighting hides the beautiful carvings in the wood of the Holy Ark, it cannot hide the paint peeling from the cracked walls and ceiling. Water leaks through the walls onto the pitted, bare wood floor. The benches are covered with boxes of unused prayer books and Bibles; a congregation with about twenty-five members does not need many prayer books or Bibles. The scene is reminiscent of photographs of rundown *shtetl* synagogues in Eastern Europe.

(continued on page 25)

Page Twenty Four

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# THE LAST SYNAGOGUE IN HARLEM (continued)

On a recent Sunday morning, while nine men prayed at the front of the synagogue, Becky Shapiro, elderly daughter of the former sexton of Tikvath Israel, set up breakfast for the worshipers in the rear. She has been caring for the synagogue since 1936. "God pays my wages," she says. She does most of the cleaning herself and hires neighborhood women to help her with the heavy work. She manages to keep the main floor relatively clean, but the upper four stories are, she claims, inaccessible and "a mess."

After the services ended, the nine men drifted to the back of the synagogue for a breakfast of Italian bread, cream cheese, and sardines. The half-filled quart bottle of whiskey is about two years old, according to Jacob Grodnick, the unofficial president of Tikvath Israel. The members do not drink much.

Much of the conversation revolves around real estate and the produce business. Some of the members have stayed in Harlem because they own the apartment houses in which they live.

Sixty-nine-year-old Meyer Grossman is a bachelor who used to own a hardware store in Harlem. He lives alone in one apartment of the house he owns near the synagogue. He says he has few problems with his tenants: "Some pay the rent; some don't pay." He takes some meals at a senior citizens center and spends much of his time caring for his four dogs and analyzing the racing charts.

Rubin Kugler, an elderly man with bright blue eyes, has lived with his wife for over fifty years in the rooming house they own in East Harlem. He has few problems in this rough, predominantly Hispanic neighborhood because, he feels, "the people here respect us."

Larry, a fifty-year-old Hispanic with an earring in his left ear, quickly agreed. Born in Spain of Gypsy heritage, he occasionally accompanies Meyer Grossman to the synagogue. He had sat quietly during the services, wearing a skullcap and a prayer shawl. "I sympathize with the Jewish people; they're the people of Jesus," he added.

Other people have stayed in the neighborhood to be near their business in and around the Park Avenue Market, the *Marketa*.

Jacob Grodnick explained that contributions from Jewish merchants who worked in the market had kept the congregation financially secure until the market fire of July 1977, when many of the merchants gave up their businesses. The synagogue's financial position is precarious now. Tikvath Israel charges dues, but not all the members can pay.

"Our biggest contributor is also our oldest member, a ninety-two-year-old man," Grodnick said.

One of those who works around the market is seventy-five-year-old Sam Spiegel, who owns a wholesale produce business on East 105th Street and lives with his daughter on East 107th Street. he drives his truck to the Hunt's Point Market each morning at 2:30 A.M. to buy merchandise. "All I'm still good for is driving the truck," Spiegel says. An assistant helps him load and unload the produce.

Another man, known to the members as Peewee, is younger that the others. he appears to be no more than fifty years old. Peewee owns a dairy and delicatessen in the market and is active in its merchants' association. For these reasons, he says, "I have to live in this area."

The members are reluctant to talk about the future of their community. Sam Davis, the unofficial cantor and philosopher of the congregation, has two important reasons for staying in his five-room apartment on East Ninety-eighth Street, on the fringes of Harlem. Davis walks to Tikvath Israel, rather than to a closer congregation in the East Nineties, so that the minyan at Tikvath Israel can continue. In addition, he and his wife are often hosts to Orthodox Jews, who, forbidden to travel on the Sabbath, want to be able to visit relatives at nearby Mount Sinai Hospital over the weekend.

Grodnick moved out of the neighborhood seven years ago, but he continues to attend services at Tikvath Israel. "We don't know how long the synagogue is going to live," he says. "Nobody knows what will be," Spiegel says.

When the others had all left, Miss Shapiro agreed. "If we knew what was gonna be in the end, we would have started out in the beginning. This place is our cemetery. This is the last

synagogue in Harlem. It has to be remembered."

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BETH HILLEL & BETH ISRAEL

Number 293

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# PEACE AND EVERLASTING MEMORY TO

Kurt Goldschmidt	formerly	Bad Orb
Eric Friedman	"	Herborn
Hilde Herman, nee Benedickt	**	Fuerth
Ludwig Baer	"	Wenings
Lisa Wertheimer, nee Fraenkel	"	Obbach/Schweinfurt
Margarete Freund, nee Biedner	,,	Germany

We extend our warmest sympathy to the bereaved.

# WE REMEMBER

the departed Brothers and Sisters inscribed on the Memorial Windows and Bronze Tablets in our Synagogue

May	Sivan		June	Sivan	
23	1	Julius Lehmann	4	13	Isak, Bertha, Else, Heinz
23	1	Sidi Lorsch			Erwin & Irma Bratt
23	1	Herta Losman	4	13	Lina Buchheim
23	1	Josef Losman	4	13	Louis Jonas
24	2	Benjamin Vosen	4	13	Siegfried Mendle
25	3	Sofie Goldschmidt	4	13	Adolph Sandler
25	3	Joseph Gottlieb	5	14	Paul Adler
26	- 4	Fritz Schiff	5	14	Frieda May
26	4	Clementine Wollenreich	5	14	Jacob, Frieda & Liselotte
27	5	Rosel Rachel Bruchfeld			Schiff
27	5	Jonas Frank	6	15	Henriette Buxbaum
27	5	Fanny Levite	6	15	Felix Jonas
27	5	Doris Schuelein	6	15	Johanna Kaufman
28	6	Dr. Isak Heilbronn	6	15	Clementine Krueger
28	6	Jenny Katzenstein	6	15	Louise Levy
28	6	Auguste Wolf	6	15	Leopold Markus
29	7	Thekla Alexander	6	15	Pauline Schloss
29	7	Lina Gitterman	8	17	Benno Baumann
29	7	Emil Liffgens	8	17	Emil Gundel
29	, 7	Irma Liffgens	8	17	Robert & Elise Hirsch
29	7	Helene Mayer	8	17	Rosa Klar
29	7	Berta Oppenheimer	8	17	Betty Traub
30	8	Anna Pollack	9	18	Alice Dressler
30	8	Renate & Sally Pollack	9	18	Fred Kahn
31		Balbine Heldmann	9	18	Martha Kahn
31	9	Samuel Hess	9	18	Curt Lauter
31	9	Leonie Schlossberger	9	18	Amalie Levis
31	9	Philip Wolfermann	9	18	Michael Lichtenthal
June		Thinp to chorneally	10	19	Jenny B. Baerwald
1	10	Alfred Katzenstein	10	19	Julius Dreifuss
î	10	Louis Weil	10	19	Rosa Fussmann
1	10	Jacob Winter	10	19	Malchen Gottlieb
2	11	Nanny Frank	10	19	Richard Jung
2	11	Caroline Kronenberger	10	19	Hugo Mannheimer
2		Kurt Nathan	10	19	Leopold Meyer
2	11	Friedrich Schwarz	11	20	Amalie Baum
3		Martin Israel	11	20	Harry Lessheim
3		Reinhard Loewengart			(continued on next page)
5	12	iteminara Doenengart			(continued on next page)

# We Remember (continued)

June	Sivar	7	June	Tamuz	
11	20	Walter Rosenbaum	23	2	Julia Noy
11	20	Arthur Schloss	24		Amalie Eberhardt
11	20	Johanna Sommer	24		Maurice Gudoff
12	21	Sophie Daniel	24		Jettchen Stern
12	21	David Gunzenhaeuser	24		Joseph Voss
12	21	Rosa Katzenstein	25		Doris Baer
12	21	Jakob Levis	26		Bertha Kahn-Bruchfeld
12	21	Jakob Plawner	26		Leopold Henlein
12	21	Max Schloss	26		Hermann Hirsch
12	21	Herman Speier	26		Amalie Rosenberg
12	21	Helene Spaeth	27		Emma Baer
12	21	Gustav Wahle	27		David & Rosa Frankel
13	22	Arnold Berney	27		Lisl Schuelein
13	22	Fred Schindler	29		Judith Berman
13	22	Max Strassburger	29		Harry Loewenstein
14	23	Herman Rosenthal	29		Gabriel Schloss
15	24	Wilhelm Feuer	30		Max Bruchfeld
15	24	Martin Heineman	30		Alma Gutmann-Sucher
15	24	Siegfried Loew	30		Moses Hess
15	24	Dora Meyer	30		Marianne Sondheimer
15	24	Hans Neubauer	Jul		in an
15	24	Julius Reinstein	1	10	Efroim Birman
15	24	Else Schloss	i	10	Lisa Lauber
16	25	Ernest Rosenberg	1	10	Thekla Lewy
17	26	Max Naumann	1	10	Rebecca Schoemann
17	26	Dr. Leo Richmond	2	11	Leo Basch
17	26	Ernst Simon	2	11	Max Strauss
17	26	Harry Siegel	3	12	Isidor Brunn
17	26	Selma Stern	3	12	Lina Frei
17	26	Bertha Wolfsheimer	4	12	Bernhard Hirsch
18	27	William Basch	4	13	Isaias Weiskopf
18			5	13	
18	27	Ludwig Bauernfreund Frieda Lehmann	5	14	Julius Abraham
18	27		5		Flora Marx
19	28	Otto Morgenthau Hilde Kahn	5	14	Rudolf Sinsheimer
19			6	14	Leopold Sonneberg
20		Sigmund Marx	7	15	Edgar M. Loew
20	29	Erna Katzenstein	7	16	Arthur Einstein
20	29	Moritz Mayer		16	Abraham Rosenthal
	29	Samuel Silbermann	8	17	Jonas & Amalie Roer
20 20	29	Betty Silbermann	9	18	Emma Behrens
	29	Rosa Stern	9		Lucie Furstenberg
20	29	Gisela Sundheimer	10	19	Leopold Lemke
21	30	Max Alexander	10	19	Selma Schlesinger
21	30	Frida Hirsch	10	19	Julius Schoenberg
21	30	Richard Katz	11	20	Herta Levi
21	30	Martha Leitner	11	20	Herman Schartenberg
21	30	Albert Spaeth	12	21	Lina, Siegfried & Wolfgang
	Tamu				Frankenstein
22	1	Carl Bergman	12	21	Gustav Gruenberg
22	1	Max Erman-Bach	13	22	Rosel Kahn
22	1	Dr. Gustav Gutwillig	13	22	William Kugelman
23	2	Herta Levy			(continued on next nage

# We Remember (continued)

July Tamu	z
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July	Tamuz		July	Av	
13	22	Salomon Lehmann	29	9	Selma Lesser
13	22	Julius Lippmann	29	9	Else Starkhaus
13	22	Rika Seligmann	30	10	Gertrude Hirsch
14	23	Charlotte Hammel	31	11	Hilde Cahn
14	23	Erich Lauter	31	11	Albert, Anita & Hedwig
15	24	Dr. Leopold Frei			Pollack
15	24	Eva Lachman	31	11	Alfred, Siegfried, Rudolf
15	24	Amalie Neumann	51		& Emmy Schloesser
15	24	Pauline Reis	31	11	David Stern
15	24	Fanny & Julius Schaler	31	11	Rudolf & Erna Tannenbaum
15	24	Leo, Martin & Walter	31	11	Kurt Tannenbaum
15	24	Spicker	August		iture i unitere unit
15	24	Emma Willner	1	12	Oskar Gruenbaum
16	25	Josef Abramson	î	12	Max Kahn
16	25	Ernst Bauernfreund	î	12	Julius Kraft
16	25	Johanna Goldstein	1	12	Sigmund Neumark
16	25	Irma Haas	1	12	Martin Saul
16	25	William M. Kreisle	2	13	Recha Levitus
16	25	Norbert Neumann	2	13	Lazarus Strauss
16	25	Fanny Rosenthal	3	14	Mathilde Lendt
16	25	Anna Singer	3	14	Alfred Sherlin
17	26	Lola Friedman	3	14	Salli Stern
17	26	Karl Gutmann	3	14	Jenny Strauss
19	28	Rosa Breslauer	4	15	Paula Heumann
19	28	Louis Cohn-Victor	4	15	Fritz Levite
19	28	Albert Gutkind	4	15	Miriam Nussbaum
19	28	Hannchen Heilbrunn	4	15	Emilie Wimpfheimer
19	28	Max Jacob	5	16	Max Blumenthal
19	28	Fred & Lucille Roland	5	16	Julius Hamburger
19	28	Albert Schwager	5	16	Adolf Gottlieb
20	- 29	Blanca Marx	5	16	Martin Kreisle
20	29	Bettina Sonn	6	17	Martin Brunn
20	Av	Dettina Sonn	6	17	Leopold Eichtersheimer
21	1	Walter Kahn	6	17	Ricka Frank
22	2	Bernard Gooter	7	18	Ida Goldberg
22	2	Lothar Herz	7	18	Lina Hellmann
22	2	Adolf Stern	7	18	Sigmund Schloss
23	3	Anna Dicker	8	19	Joseph Hamburger
23	3	Klara Rotschild	8	19	Benjamin F. Herz
24	4	Martha Levi	. 8	19	Louis Wolfsheimer
25	5	Irma Loewenstein	9	20	Horace E. Bauer
25	5	Sophie Marx	9	20	Ernestine Hirsch
26	6	Jocheved Auer	9	20	Richard Hirsch
26	6	Sara Gruen	9	20	Rosalie Meyer
26	6	Leopold Stern	10	21	Karoline Bloch
27	7	Joseph Bender	10	21	Max Meir Karpf
27	7	Hugo Loewenstein	10	21	Bertha May
27	7	Franz Regensburger	10	21	Salomon Tannenbaum
27	7	Clara Schnell	11	22	Arthur Neu
28	8	Dr. Fred Dreifuss			
29	9	Willi Heinsfurter			(continued on next page)
	-				(continueu on next page)

# We Remember (continued)

Aug.	Av		Aug.	Elul	
12	23	Rosel Hersch	25	6	Ruth Zimmerman
12	23	Max Schwarz	26	7	Josef Wolf
12	23	Arthur Simonsohn	27	8	Martha Levor
12	23	Max Wolf	27	8	Siegfried Stein
13	24	Rudolf Bauer	28	9	Julius Hirsch
13	24	Jettchen Goldschmidt	28	9	Jacob Nartel
13	24	David Katzenstein	28	9	Siegfried S. Nordschild
13	24		29	10	Sussman Moses
13	24	Elfriede Pollack	29	10	Louis S. Obermeier
13	24	Rudolf Bauer	30	11	Georg Lendt
13	24	Max Schwarz	31	12	
14	25	Anna Bauernfreund	31	12	Rose Spaeth
14	25	Adolf Blumenthal			
14	25	Josef Goldschmidt	Sept.	12	Heindel Die 1
14	25	Hannah Goldsmith	1	13	Heinrich Bloch
14	25	Moritz Gottschalk	1	13	Hedwig Kaufman
14	25	Nathan Mathes	3	15	Leo Adler
15	26	Frederick S. Braun	3	15	Joseph Katz
15	26	Siegfried Frank	4	16	Cantor H. Silbermann
15	26	Lazarus Herz	4	16	Louis Straus
15	26	Sigmund Markus	4	16	Leopold Tannenbaum
15	26	Heinrich Wortsman	5	17	Leo Aach
16	27	Ernestine Lehmann	5	17	Fritz Gern
16	27	Fanny Loew	5	17	Erna Liebenstein
16	27	Camilla Michels	5	17	Julius Schaefer
16	27	Hilde Schwager	6	18	Bernhard Greenbaum
17	28	Babette Levi	6	18	Arnold Rosenstock
17	28	Jeanette Tannenbaum	6	18	Siegmund Schwarz
18	29	Julie Katz	7	19	Johanna Stern
18	29	Lina Rosenthal	7	19	Jacob Wachenheimer
18	29	Fred Tager	8	20	Joseph Silberman
19	. 30	Oskar Cahn	8	20	Adolf Traub
19	30	Frederick Jellinek	9	21	Gustav Kahn
19		Ludwig Stahl	10	22	Betty Blumenthal
19		Eugene Stern	10	22	Sophie Levy
19	30	Siegbert Weil	10	22	Arno Trautman
	Elul		11	23	Sally Friedberg
20	1	Daniel Gottlieb	11	23	Olga Jonas
20	1	Heinrich, Wilhelm, M. Julius,	11	23	Simon Levite
		Jettchen & Senta Levi	11	23	Stephan Mondschein
20	1	Flora Neuburger	11	23	Rosa Rothstein
21	2	Josef Pretsfelder	12	24	Bertha Hofmann
21	2	Dr. Emmerich Wellisch	12	24	Rose Lang
22	3	Blanche Rothstein	12		Emma Moses
22		Arthur Sonneberg	12	24	Susan Rosenthal
22	3	Benno Sternfels	12	24	Dr. Norbert Rothstein
22	3	Clara Strauss	12	24	Else Seligmann
24	5	Rika Bender	12	24	Hermann Seligmann
24	5	Heinz Lippmann	13	25	Ferdinand Baumann
24	. 5	Moritz Lippmann	13	25	Bernhard Groeschel
25	6	Eva Veisz			location of the second s
		- CAT VETTE CASE IN STRACT STRACT			(continued on next page)

BETH HILLEL & BETH ISRAEL

# We Remember (continued)

#### Sept. Elul

13	25	Dina Hirschmann	16	28	Albert Kronenberger
13	25	Salli Kahn	16		Erna Michelson
13	25	Dr. Leo Stahl	16	28	Salomon Ottenheimer
15	27	Traute Feith	16	28	Jacob Simon
15	27	Daniel Guggenheim	17	29	Jenny Holzer
15	27	Ida Meyer	17		Elizabeth Levy
15	27	Jacob Sommer	17		Julius Menges
16	28	Robert Arnstein	17		Adolf Pollack

The names of these departed will be read by the Rabbi during the Service on the Shabbat preceding the Yahrzeit.



# MONUMENTS

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