

HABAYIT



הבית

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BUT ONLY G'D CAN MAKE A TREE

Poets are gifted. Their talent prompts them to express in rhyme and meter (of late, in peculiar-spaced prose, too) thoughts, which appeal to the reader and stimulate the mind. Sometimes they attain timeless durability, enjoyed for generations, spanning centuries.

Joyce Kilmer was an American poet, killed as a soldier in World War I. His most celebrated piece sings an ode to the trees. Delightfully fetching, he contrasts a poet's meager achievement with the magnificent and masterful handiwork of the Creator. He therefore concludes:

*Poems are made by fools like me,
But only G'd can make a tree!*

Tu b'Shevat on our Jewish calendar adds to Kilmer's tribute meaningfully. Shevat sees the trees bare of leaves, swayed and tossed by blizzards, shivering in freezing temperatures, seemingly lifeless. Yet tradition teaches that on the fifteenth of the month of Shevat the tree's lifeblood, its sap, begins to rise to stir it into new life. Unseen at the time, this will cause the tree to burst into bloom in the spring.

A breathtaking "holiday" is chamisho osor b'Shevat, not merely confined in theme to the trees. Here lies the miracle of renewal, against all odds.

It is a Jewish holiday in particular, with a precious message. History has doomed us countless times, written us off the map, decimated us almost to extinction, to the point of no return. But history proved itself wrong, again and again. In the midst of barren winter, in the dreariest of landscapes, the sap stirs and rises. When all hope seems gone, the smoldering spark was not extinguished after all. Spring is bound to come, followed by summer!

Rabbi Shlomo Kahn

חנוכה



THEN AND NOW



CHANUKAH

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

		<i>Preceding</i>				<i>Day</i>	<i>Shema</i>
		<i>Evening</i>	<i>Morning</i>	<i>Mincho</i>	<i>End</i>	<i>Break</i>	<i>Before</i>
1987							
Dec. 19	Miketz—Chanukah (Blessing Month of Teves) Sermon	4:10	8:30	4:35	5:11	6:15	9:25
Dec. 26	Vayigash	4:15	8:45	4:40	5:14	6:15	9:25
1988							
Jan. 2	Vayechi—Sermon	4:20	8:45	4:50	5:20	6:10	9:25
Jan. 9	Shemos	4:30	8:45	4:55	5:26	6:10	9:25
Jan. 16	Voero (Blessing Month of Shevat) Sermon	4:40	8:45	5:00	5:33	5:55	9:20
Jan. 23	Bo	4:45	8:45	5:10	5:41	5:55	9:15
Jan. 30	Beshalach—Sermon	4:55	8:45	5:15	5:49	5:50	9:10
Feb. 6	Yisro	5:00	8:45	5:25	5:56	5:40	9:10
Feb. 13	Mishpotim—Shekolim (Blessing Month of Adar)—Sermon	5:10	8:45	5:30	6:05	5:30	9:05
Feb. 20	Terumo	5:20	8:45	5:40	6:13	5:20	9:00
Feb. 27	Tetzave—Zochor—Sermon	5:25	8:45	5:45	6:20	5:10	8:50
Mar. 5	Ki Siso	5:40	8:45	5:55	6:28	5:00	8:45

WEEKDAYS (unless listed otherwise—see below)

Mornings:	Sundays and Legal Holidays (Friday, December 25; Friday, January 1; Monday, January 18; Monday, February 15)	8:00 A.M.
	Mondays and Thursdays	6:40 A.M.
	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays	6:50 A.M.
Evenings:	December 27 to January 7	4:30 P.M.
	January 10 to February 4	5:00 P.M.
	February 7 to March 1	5:30 P.M.

SPECIAL DAYS

Wed.-Wed.	Dec. 16-23	Chanukkah: 1st Chanukkah light Tuesday evening; weekdays Shacharis 6:45 A.M. except:
Sunday	Dec. 20	Shacharis: 8:00 A.M.
Monday	Dec. 21	Rosh Chodesh Teves, 1st day: Shacharis 6:30 A.M.
Tuesday	Dec. 22	Rosh Chodesh Teves, 2nd day: Shacharis 6:30 A.M.
Thursday	Dec. 31	Fast Asor b'Teves: Fast begins 6:00 A.M.; Shacharis 6:30 A.M.; Mincho-Maariv 4:30 P.M.; fast ends 5:16 P.M.

1988

Wednesday	Jan. 20	Rosh Chodesh Shevat: Shacharis 6:30 A.M.
Wednesday	Feb. 3	Chamisho osor b'Shevat
Thursday	Feb. 18	Rosh Chodesh Adar, 1st day: Shacharis 6:30 A.M.
Friday	Feb. 19	Rosh Chodesh Adar, 2nd day: Shacharis 6:30 A.M.
Wednesday	March 2	Ta'anis Esther: Fast begins 5:00 A.M.; Shacharis 6:30 A.M.; Mincho-Maariv 5:45 P.M. followed by Megillo; fast ends 6:22 P.M.
Thursday	March 3	Purim: Shacharis and Megillo 6:15 A.M.

SHIURIM SCHEDULE:

Daily Lerne after Shacharis
 Daily Lerne after Maariv
 Chumash Shiur Shabbos 45 minutes before Mincho
 Sidro explanation Shabbos after Mincho
 Ladies' Shiur Mondays 7:30 P.M.
 Lerne of Gemoro Shabbos after Musaf (beginning December 26th)
 followed each week by a Kiddush. Siyum for Firstborn on Erev
 Pesach. This year Tractate Moed Koton will be studied.

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WELCOME CANTOR LUTNICK

On Shabbos Parshas Ki Sovo, last September 12th, Mr. Seth Lutnick, graduate of the cantorial school of Yeshiva University, was invited by the search committee to conduct Shabbos services in our synagogue, as a candidate for assuming the position which will be vacated by our Cantor Jack Schartenberg upon his retirement in January.

Mr. Lutnick's rendition of the Friday evening and Shabbos morning services easily won the approval of all who were in attendance. At a subsequent meeting of the Board of Officers and Trustees in October, arrangements were finalized to engage Mr. Lutnick as cantor. He will begin to serve in his position in January.

Born in New York in 1966, Mr. Lutnick presently resides in Merrick, Long Island. In his youth he attended the Hebrew Academy of Nassau County. He continued his education in Israel where he studied at yeshivat Radin Derech Chayim in Netanya.

After his return to America, Mr. Lutnick studied at the Washington Heights campus of Yeshiva University. He obtained his college education at Yeshiva College earning a B.A. degree in music. Eager to develop further his musical talents, Mr. Lutnick enrolled in the Belz School of Jewish Music of Yeshiva University. Under the guidance of the school's director, Cantor Bernard Beer, Mr. Lutnick's cantorial skills blossomed. He comes to us well prepared in the field of liturgical music and has had practical experience as auxiliary cantor at a prominent synagogue in Lawrence, N.Y.

In addition to his career of cantor, Mr. Lutnick is pursuing studies for the rabbinate. At present he is enrolled at Yeshiva University's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, in the first year of a program leading to semichah.

We look forward to many years of pleasant relationship and welcome Mr. Lutnick in our midst.

CONGREGATION NEWS IN BRIEF

... once again the series of yomim tovim was proof of the strength of our Kehillah; the preparation for the *yomim noraim* evoked the solemn mood of the annual Days of Awe as the sounding of the shofar in Elul and subsequently the *selichos* services set the proper tone; Rosh HaShono, immediately followed by Shabbos Shuvo and then Yom Kippur found our Synagogue services well attended and fittingly conducted; the Sukkos holidays were observed joyously, our Sukkah, decorated by the ladies of our Sisterhood featured Kiddush receptions after the Yomtov services, prepared and served by the Sisterhood; on Hoshano Rabbo the traditional Lernen was arranged and sponsored by the Chevra Kadisha and enjoyed the participation of a group of men who gathered for Torah study and were addressed by Rabbi Kahn and Mr. Emanuel Hirsch; at the concluding holidays, Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, Yomtov services were again well attended, Rabbi Kahn and Cantor Schartenberg were honored as Choson Torah and Choson Bereshis and both gentlemen tendered a Kiddush reception for the Congregation on Shabbos Bereshis ...

... as reported elsewhere in this issue, the Congregation's Board engaged Mr. Seth Lutnick to officiate as our Cantor after the retirement of Cantor Schartenberg will go into effect in January; many of our Shabbos worshippers have had the opportunity to hear Mr. Lutnick's expert and pleasant rendition of prayers ...

... a "first" in the prestigious Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center was the erection of a Sukkah, thanks to the efforts of the hospital's Jewish chaplain, Rabbi Gross; our Congregation gladly and generously contributed to the cost of this welcome innovation ...

... a report on the Sisterhood's General Meeting appears in this issue ...

... once again a bus trip to Atlantic City, sponsored by Congregation and Sisterhood, was successfully undertaken on October 28th ...

... at this year's Chanukkah event, on Sunday, December 20th, Cantor Schartenberg will be honored, also tribute will be paid to Mr. Oscar Wortsman who had served as President of the Congregation for many years, as well as to the gentlemen who faithfully constitute our daily services, mornings and evenings; the event will be reported in detail in the next issue ...

... please reserve Sunday, January 17th for the Sisterhood Luncheon, Saturday night, February 6th for the Soviet Jewry Benefit Concert, Sunday, March 6th for Chevra Day ...

... additions to our YAD VASHEM Memorial have been made in memory of the following communities: Lorsch (Hessen) and Dortmund ...

SISTERHOOD GENERAL MEETING 1987

On June 14th 1987, the annual Sisterhood General Meeting of Congregation Beth Hillel and Beth Israel took place. Mrs. Fay Blank, Sisterhood President, opened the meeting by welcoming everybody and extending greetings to Rabbi Kahn and to the newly elected President of the Congregation, Mr. William Blank. In the absence of Recording Secretary, Mrs. Eugenie Weinberg, Mrs. Hannelore Marx was asked to read the minutes and to report on this year's meeting.

The passing of the dear and lamented Board Member, Meta Weil, was mentioned, and the fact that she is sorely missed. In honor of all members lost during the past year, a minute of silence was observed.

Sisterhood Treasurer, Mrs. Gertrude Strauss, delivered the financial report which was approved by Mr. Spaeth. Mrs. Blank gave an itemized account of the various activities of the Sisterhood: the annual Sisterhood Luncheon which enjoyed good attendance and a huge success; the awarding of the "Woman of the Year" Award to Mr. Irma Leopold, a well-deserving recipient; Mrs. Miriam Frankel as a delightful guest speaker who delivered a highly interesting slide show; two bus trips to Atlantic City.

Also the Sisterhood decorated the Sukkah, served Kiddush receptions after services on Sukkos, provided sweets to the children on Simchas Torah, refreshments on Yom Atzmaut, and decorated the Synagogue on Shvuos.

The ladies' Chevra performed 16 Taharos during the past year, a sacred task which was especially singled out for recognition to all who participated.

Other traditional functions of the Sisterhood included discreet help to the needy, donations to several worthy causes, including the Hebrew Institute for the Deaf, the Palisades Home of Gemiluth Chessed, Save A Life Foundation (sponsored by Councilman Noah Dear), Neve Hanna-Children Home in Israel, B'ne Akiva Arad Emergency Fund, Women's Social Service for Israel, Hebrew Free Burial Society, Daniel Heumann Fund, Jewish Guild for the Blind. Within our own Congregation, the Sisterhood purchased 3 new coat racks for the Social Hall.

The practice of sending a full meal to mourners after the funeral, a traditional Jewish observance, was performed by the Sisterhood.

In their words to the assembled, Rabbi Kahn and President Blank dwelled on a new project concerning visits to the sick and homebound. Mrs. Ruth Ruhm, who ably supervised this task in the past, has received a much needed and welcome assistance in the form of an enlarged committee, headed by Mr. Oscar Wortsman. This committee will continue efforts on behalf of Congregation, Sisterhood and Chevra Kadisha. For those not easily reached on account of distance, occasional cards will be sent.

All Board members indicated their willingness to serve again in the coming year and Mrs. Ilse Zechemann's nomination to the Board as a new member was unanimously approved.

In her closing remarks, Mrs. Blank asked once more to be notified about members who are sick so that they can be visited. She then thanked all for their presence and, wishing everyone a pleasant summer, adjourned the meeting.

Hannelore Marx

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WASHINGTON HEIGHTS-INWOOD COUNCIL FOR SOVIET JEWRY

The Council, our area's organization to assist Jews in the Soviet Union and alleviate their plight, established some fifteen years ago, is one of the most active local community councils in the city, with a record of dispatching life-sustaining parcels to Jewish families in Russia whose livelihood has been cut off. Its annual Benefit Concert, chief source of funds, will take place on Saturday night, February 6th (*see notice elsewhere in this issue*).

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THANK YOU

Sincere thanks to all members of the Congregation and friends for the kind sympathy on the passing of our beloved husband, father and brother Sigmund Hirsch.

Rosi Hirsch and children, Brothers and Sisters

My sincere thanks to Rabbi Kahn, the Congregation and the Chevra Kadisha for the good wishes on my 75th birthday.

Eric Oster

My sincere appreciation and thank you to Rabbi Kahn, the Chevra Kadisha and Sisterhood and all congregational members and friends for their thoughtfulness extended to me during my stay in the hospital and while recovering at home.

Richard Hanau

A sincere thank you to all in the Congregation for the lovely flowers and the many good wishes I received on my recent special birthday.

Bianca Berger

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Rabbi Kahn, Cantor and Mrs. Scharenberg, the Sisterhood and all friends in the congregation for their thoughtfulness and concern during my recent illness.

Marga Pauson

A sincere thank you to Rabbi and Mrs. Kahn, Cantor and Mrs. Scharenberg, the Chevra Kadisha and all friends in the congregation for the kind sympathy expressed at the loss of our dear mother, sister, sister-in-law and aunt, Selma Kann, nee Spier.

*Ruth Soika, nee Kann
Idel and Else Barth, nee Spier*

We express our sincere appreciation to all who participated so generously in our honor in the Dinner Journal of the Shaare Zedek Hospital.

Rabbi and Mrs. Shlomo Kahn

SUCCESS

Success is speaking words of praise;
In cheering other people's ways
In doing just the best you can
With every task and every plan:
It's *silence* when your speech would hurt,
Politeness when your neighbor's curt,
It's *deafness* when the scandal flows,
And *sympathy* with others' woes,
It's *loyalty* when duty calls,

It's *courage* when disaster falls
It's *patience* when the hours are long —
It's found in laughter and in song,
It's in the silent time of grief
In happiness and in relief,
In all your life and nothing less
You find the thing we call
Success!

—Bianca Berger

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ALL TO MYSELF

All to myself I find the way
Back to each golden yesterday,
Playing in fancy until I stand
Clasping your ready, friendly hand;
The picture seems half true, half dream,
And I keep its color and it gleam
All to myself.

All to myself I hum again
Fragments of some old-time refrain,
Something that comes at fancy's choice
And I hear the cadence of your voice:
Sometimes 'tis dim, sometime 'tis clear,
But I keep the music that I hear
All to myself.

All to myself I hold and know
All of the days of long ago—
Wonderful days when you and I
Owned all the sunshine in the sky;
The days come back as the old days will,
And I keep their tingle and their thrill
All to myself.

All to myself. My friends do *you*
Count all the memories softly, too?
Summer and Autumn, Winter, Spring,
The hopes we cherish, and everything?
They course my veins as a drink divine,
And I keep them wholly, solely mine—
All to myself.

All to myself I think of you
Think of the things we used to do,
Think of the things we used to say
Think of each happy, bygone day;
Sometimes I sigh and sometimes I smile,
But I keep each past and golden while
All to myself.

—Bianca Berger

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ALL IN THE FAMILY

In the *Habayit* issue of Spring 1982 (No. 292) your reporter drew on old lore to invoke "Reminiscences of a Kehilla." At this time of season another little oddity about the Ottensoos Kehilla comes to my mind. As a child, of course, I did play the "drendel" as enthusiastically as I am sure it was my forbears' pleasure in their youth. But as elders they allowed themselves a little joke about their neighboring kehilla by reversing the sequence of the traditional dreydel letters: Shin, He, Gimel, Nun was interpreted to mean: "Schnaittach hat gar nichts." Whether this somewhat condescending opinion was confined to Ottensoos or also shared by the Huettenbach Balebatim is not known to me, nor with what justification this opinion was voiced.

History, however, does have the last word. With the trio of kehillas gone, their shuls converted to secular buildings, there are hardly any Jewish memorabilia left in two of them. (Ottensoos salvaged a house door lintel with four Hebrew names carved in). But in Schnaittach, two of its three Jewish cemeteries are in tact and stand as silent witnesses to the once lively kehillas that were in the area. The middle one in time sequence of the three "Batey Olam" was leveled during the Nazi years and a simple postwar monument lists the name of those whose resting place was desecrated. The latest cemetery, apparently having had its inception in the 19th century, was left undisturbed from destructive hands and appears to be in good shape. On the oldest cemetery—which may possibly date back to the 14th century—nature has done such a thorough job of erosion that in 1964 I could not identify any letters that could yield a date. But twenty years later, when my wife joined me in a (re)visit to Schnaittach (to see my grandparents' graves), a comforting and gratifying occurrence happened. Within a short time two local policemen came to the scene after somebody had phoned in that "strangers" were at the cemetery and they wanted to be sure that no potential trouble would occur. They do patrol the cemetery areas at random times and all the remaining graves and monuments are under the "Denkmal-Schutz" by the State of Bavaria. S. Schnaittach has lots of remembrances to give yet. Perhaps then I am justified in saying: "Schnaittach has given Nechomoh." (consolation).

How good it is, by contrast, to write about the joyous events of a *living* kehilla. Let us then begin with our special birthdays. Our procession opens with Mrs. Ilse Wulkan who celebrated her 70th birthday in Florida in November. The 75 year mark was attained by Mr. Lothar Tannenwald, Mr. Eric Oster and Mrs. Eugenie Weinberg in October while Mrs. Elsie Haas, Mrs. Hilda Saul and Mr. Harry Speier are looking forward to the same milestones in December. 80th birthdays were shared by Mrs. Betty Ibsen and Mrs. Magda Kahn in October. October and November saw the 85th birthdays of Mr. Henry Wolf and Mrs. Frieda Struass (Fairview Ave.), while a belated Mazal Tov is due to Mrs. Else Scheuer who reached the same mark in September. We do have nonagenarians in November; Mr. Victor Schwab celebrating his 90th and Mrs. Hilde Bloch her 91st birthday. To Mr. and Mrs. Leo Nordlinger who celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary in October we wish many more years in good health and happiness, a wish that, of course, goes to all of our Jubilare.

And now to the simchot coming from our younger generation. Our last issue's *Redaktionsschluss* had precluded the timely listing of Mr. and Mrs. Aufseeser's becoming grandparents of a little girl. — Rabbi and Mrs. Kahn became grandparents again, this time being presented with a girl by their daughter Mrs. Rachel Furst and her husband Alan. — The simchot of their grandson Joshua's Bar Mitzvah was afforded to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Fuld and to Joshua's parents Ilan and Linda Kaufthal, nee Fuld. Cantor and Mrs. Jack Schartenberg's grandson Shmuel, son of Rabbi and Mrs. Yosef Zitter, was Bar Mitzvah; Arielle, granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Bengel, was Bat Mitzvah. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Leopold's granddaughter, Dr. Hillory Berlin, was married to Dr. Kenny Abrahams. Mrs. Irene Heimer's granddaughter, Stacey Frank, became engaged to Mr. Glenn Gelband, son of Dr. and Mrs. J. Gelband.

Like the Menorah's lights in the Chanukkah week, may our joyous news items continue to increase!

Chag Sameach,
Shalom ve-hatzlachah,
Theodore H. Spath

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HABEN DIE ROEMER DAS TRENDDEL ERFUNDEN?



Trendel oder Dreidel (= etwas, das sich dreht) heisst jener Kreisel mit vier Buchstaben auf seinen vier Seiten, der zum "Inventar" der Chanukkaspiele gehoert. Seine Herkunft ist nicht gesichert. Sie ist, wie Rabbi Me'ir Grunewald (Sefer hamoadim, Chanukka, 225f) vermutet, bei den Roemern zu suchen.

Die Roemer waren bekanntlich grosse Spielfreunde und huldigten insbesondere Gluecksspielen. Bei Ausgrabungen sind beispielsweise Wuerfelspiele gefunden worden. In England ist ein Spiel namens Te-totum ("fuer dich alles") bekannt: Auf einem Kreisel stehen vier Buchstaben, die Abkuerzungen lateinischer Vokabeln sind: A = aufer ("nimm," d.h. nimm Nuesse aus der Kasse), d = depone ("gib"), n = nihil ("nichts"), t = totum ("alles"). Entsprechend dem christlichen Gebet Te Deum ("Dich, o Gott") nennen die Englaender das Spiel Te-totum.

Nach Grunewald haben roemische Soldaten oder Siedler das ehemals roemische Spiel nach England gebracht. Ob diese These richtig ist, bleibt vorerst noch zu beweisen. Tatsache ist, dass das Trendelspiel nicht juedischen Ursprungs ist. Christen haben zur Weihnachtszeit mit dem sich drehenden Kreisel gespielt, im Fruehmittlelter hat es dann in juedischen Kreisen Deutschlands Eingang gefunden (Jewish Encyclopaedia, VII, 306) Die einst auf lateinische Woerter hinweisenden Buchstaben wurden ersetzt. Auf dem "juedischen" Trendel stehen N (nichts), G (ganz), H (halb), und S (setz ein). Hebraeisiert ergeben sie den Merksatz: Nes Gadol Haja Scham ("ein grosses Wunder geschah dort," das Chanukawunder "dort" in Jerusalem). Weil fuer die Israelis das "Dort" ein "Hier" ist, tragen in Israel fabrizierte Exemplare den Aufdruck N-G-H-P (Nes Gadol Haja Po, "ein grosses Wunder geschah hier"). Findige Leute haben herausgefunden, dass der Zahlenwert von n-g-h-sch dem Zahlenwert von Maschiach (Messias) entspricht: 358.

Auf dem israelischen Markt werden heutzutage vielgestaltige Trendel in verschiedenen Groessen angeboten. Neuerdings gibt es auch das "leuchtende" Trendel, bei dem waehrend des rasanten Drehens ein Licht aufleuchtet. Die traditionellen Buchstaben sind freilich verschwunden. Damit Kinder nicht nur spielen, sondern ihre Feiertage waehrend Chanukka sinnvoll verbringen, sorgen die Stadtverwaltung und Kulturzentren Israels fuer ein reiches Angebot. In Jerusalem sieht es so aus: Im Theater wird das Musical "Alisa im Wunderland" aufgefuehrt. Das englische Marionettentheater von Parkley zeigt den "Zirkus von Stanley." "Vogel der Seele" heisst ein neues Stueck der israelischen Autorin Michal Snunit. Die beliebte Zippi Schawit zeigt ihre Kunststuecke in ihrer Darbietung "Zipp kfiz." Serge Sergejewitsch Prokofiews "Peter und der Wolf" tanzt die Kibbuz-Tanzgruppe.

Im Israel-Museum koennen acht bis zweelfjaehrige Kinder sich eine grosse Videoschau mit vielen Erklaerungen ueber Vincent Van Gogh ansehen, der vor 133 Jahren geboren wurde. Das Puppentheater "Der Eisenbahnwagen" zeigt das Stueck "Im Schatten der Dattelpalme" und die Komoeidie "Wegen der Loecher im Kaese." Motti Barchan erzaehlt fuer die Juengsten Geschichten von Zwergen und Riesen. Und damit die Eltern mit ihren Kindern zusammen sind, sorgt das Museum fuer einen Nachmittag mit vielen Ueberraschungen. Neben dem Eintrittspreis sind nur drei Schekel pro Veranstaltung zu bezahlen. Der Zspruch is gewiss.

Israelisches Wochenblatt R.G.

THE CHANUKKAH MA NISHTANAH



by Rabbi Shlomo Kahn

Mention the word 'Chanukkah' and on the screen of your mind, you see the Chanukkah Menorah bathed in its soft glow. To the dismay of many! To the dismay of children who see Chanukkah chiefly as a magical source of delightful gifts. To the dismay of the commercial world which looks to Chanukkah as a seasonal, blessed opportunity to reap profits from the sale of all those gifts. And — to the dismay of the halachist too, who resents it when a particular observance is singled out and lifted from the entire basket which contains not only the kindling of the lights, but also the reciting of the full Hallel, daily Torah reading, and a thanksgiving paragraph which is added to the daily liturgy: *al hanissim* in Shemoneh Esreh and benshen. Yet despite dismay, the kindling of the Chanukkah Menorah's lights kindles a responsive chord in the heart of everyone.

Be they in the form of candles popular and frequent, or as wicks floating in rich golden oil, soft little lights emit a warm, irresistible charm. They play on heart strings, tease the emotion, not only because it is quaint to turn to illumination of yesteryear at a time when the flip of a switch, touch of a button, preset timer or ultra-sensitive light sensor bring blazing light which audaciously competes with the sun, but also out of sheer admiration. Those fragile, flickering flames, they push bravely and successfully! against surrounding shadows, they modestly but persistently carve little spheres of influence, each one a cozy oasis in the blankets of darkness. Temporary, of course. Short of duration. Strongly depending on the fuel supply which is rather limited. But before they sputter into oblivion, they have made their statements, proved their points, done their duty, lived their life and come to a well deserved rest.

Don't we almost instinctively endow them with sanctity, the Chanukkah lights? Blessings precede the kindling and they come easily to our lips. A religious ceremony is the act of kindling them. And afterwards, just prior to the singing of the hymn which has an almost universal melody, immediately after kindling the first of the Menorah's lights, we recite these words:

We kindle these lights to mark the miracles and wonders, the salvations and battles, which You performed for our forefathers, in those days at this season, through your holy priests. During all eight days of Chanukkah these lights are sacred and we are not permitted to make ordinary use of them but only to look at them, in order to give thanks and praise to Your great name for Your miracles, Your wonders and Your salvations.

The explicit prohibition to make use of the Chanukkah lights in any manner, is unique; we find it nowhere else. The Shabbos and holiday lights, likewise a religious requirement for which a similarly worded blessing is pronounced, may — should! — be used for room illumination. By the light of the Havdolah candle, kindled at the conclusion of the Shabbos, we gaze at our fingers, folding them over the palm to create light-and-shadow effect immediately after its particular blessing, in a conspicuous attempt to use its light. Even memorial lights, kindled for commemoration only, are not forbidden to be used for any other purpose. The ban against enjoying light other than merely gazing at it exclusively reserved for the Chanukkah lights.

(continued on next page)

CHANUKKAH (Continued)

Another aspect separates the Chanukkah lights from all the others. Religious law does not prescribe the type of light used for honoring the Shabbos and Yomtov, for Havdolah, or for honoring the memory of departed at Yahrzeit (anniversary of the day of death). Oil lamps and candles were used when those were the usual means of illumination. It may appeal to our sentiments to continue the practice of candles. Most housewives do use candles when they usher in Shabbos and Yomtov (and for a long time, before it was discarded, the beautiful star-shaped brass oil Shabbos lamp was the pride in many Jewish homes in Germany); at Havdolah ceremonies in home and synagogue, the braided and often colorful candle is held aloft; and to this day, many prefer the glass tumbler with its 24-hour supply of wax and its flickering wick, so eminently resembling a living soul with its ups and downs, its shivering and turning to and fro, for Yahrzeit and Yom Kippur. But electric lights are perfectly acceptable as well for all of the above.

(As a matter of fact, unless romantic candle light is the intention for a cozy Friday evening meal, it is highly recommended that, in addition to kindling the Shabbos candles, the room's electric light be switched on prior to reciting the blessing. After all, it is this much stronger light, which most probably is the main source of illumination, while the candles are merely a sentimental gesture, which we are loath to abandon.)

Indeed, the first to give way to modern innovation were the memorial lights. Hardly a synagogue nowadays which does not have on its walls the small electric light bulbs which economically, conveniently and with dignity honor the memory of the dead. Not infrequently, electric Shabbos lights become a necessity. Hospital staffs frown with justified concern on the use of open flames in a hospital room. On ocean liners and cruise ships, the lighting of candles is similarly perilous and is not tolerated. Hence practical, decorative, electrified Shabbos Menorahs take ably and legitimately the place of candles. For Havdolah too, the ordinary electric room lights are sometimes used. When Shabbos is followed by Yomtov, and the Havdolah blessings for the departing Shabbos are incorporated into the Kiddush for the incoming Yomtov, the blessing over light, if no candles are nearby (such as in the synagogue) is recited over the electric lights. Electricity is fine for everything — except for Chanukkah! (The electric Chanukkah Menorahs in windows are quite proper for display and proud affirmation: this is a Jewish home! But the blessings cannot be recited at kindling their lights nor is the mitzvah of Chanukkah thereby observed.)

And now — our Chanukkah *ma nishtannah*: "Why are Chanukkah lights different from all other lights? For all other lights we may use electricity, for Chanukkah only oil or candles! All other lights may be utilized for other use, in addition to the religious requirement, of Chanukkah light we are not permitted to make ordinary use but only to look at them."

A search for the answers to these two questions takes us to the Chanukkah miracle as and where it occurred. "In those days at this time" leads us straight into the rededicated Temple, to the magnificent seven-arm golden Menorah standing in front of the heavy drape which separated the sacred chamber from the Holy of Holies. The kindling of this Menorah was part of the daily Temple service. High on its seven artistically ornamented arms were the "lamps" — large containers which were filled with pure olive oil and into them large wicks were placed. Every evening a Kohen lit the lamps. (During his lifetime, Aron, our people's first High Priest, never delegated this task but personally performed it evening after evening.)

Taking a cue from the Torah's verse [Number 8:2], "... when you light up the lights, the seven lights shall shine toward the center of the Menorah," the Talmud (Megillah 21b) explains that the wicks, flanking the middle lamp, were deliberately turned to face the center, the three on the right faced left, the three on the left faced right. But this is contrary to the very purpose of a lamp! Every multi-lamped chandelier is designed to cast the lights outward so as to illuminate as far an area as possible. Why does the Torah so curiously curtail the Temple Menorah's illumination? Because not "its light does G'd require" in His Temple. G'd is light! Rather the Menorah is living "testimony to the world that G'd's Presence dwells among His people Israel" (Talmud Shabbos 22b).

Not for its use was the Menorah kindled in the Temple but only to gaze at it and to know of G'd's Presence. And so when we commemorate the rekindling of the Holy Temple's Menorah on Chanukkah, we carefully adhere to its original: (1) We kindle wicks in our Chanukkah Menorah, either immersed in oil or embedded in wax; electric lights will not do. (2) We refrain from using the Chanukkah lights for illumination but only "look at them, in order to give thanks and praise to Your great name."

REFLECTIONS FROM JERUSALEM



The night is crisp, but the breeze that blows across Mount Zion cannot account for the shiver that courses through me. No—the wind has nothing to do with it; it is the words. Sweetly sung into the evening's stillness, they penetrate mind and body. I look about me at the other guests gathered round this bridal canopy. And they listening as I am—do they hear the words? "... May there yet be heard in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem—the sound of gladness and of joy, the voice of bridegroom and of bride . . ."

Why me? I wonder. How was I chosen to be among this select group? Generation after generation, my ancestors have repeated these very words at innumerable wedding ceremonies, in countless cities and villages all over the world. The idea that someday we would indeed stand on the soil of our own land—in the streets of Jerusalem—to celebrate the creation of another Jewish home has been for some, a hope, a prayer. But for most, it was only a distant dream, as removed from reality as a fairy tale or an ancient legend. And here before me, before a sizable assemblage of present-day Jews—ordinary folks, like me—a hope is realized, a prayer answered, a dream scene miraculously transformed into tangible reality.

The blessing completed, the new couple is surrounded, embraced. Soon they extricate themselves, and the group dissolves to reassemble in the banquet hall. The moment is past, and I return, with the others, to the business of eating and drinking, and of entertaining the bride and groom as has been done at so many weddings, in so many places for so many generations.

Next morning, I awaken determined to reiterate for my children, the specialness of our circumstances. I draw the living room drapes open on a view yearned for in vain by so many, that I am loath to turn my back on it. "Come, children," I call, "Come to the window—I want to talk to you about something!"

No one comes. I find them in their rooms, too busy to hear me. Binyamin is angry because his shoelaces are knotted again; he kicks the floor in frustration. Yochanan and Rachel are fighting over the erasers they traded yesterday; their voices are rising . . . Rivky can't find her history notebook, and tears are forming in her beautiful blue eyes. Seeing me, each has a request, a demand, a complaint. What is beyond the window will just have to wait.

Later, when the house is quiet and empty, I take my cup of coffee back to the window. If I gaze long and hard enough at Mount Scopus, will I gain the perspective necessary to balance the history of our land and people with the commonplace pursuits of the present?

Could it be that the children have the right idea? Reality demands that we tie our shoes, settle ownership disputes, get our books in order and go to school. This is the stuff of life. Why look back?

Remembering that the man is coming to take my drapes down for cleaning this morning, I finish my coffee quickly and take out the ladder. Just in time. The bell rings, and I let in the cleaner's helper, who bids me a warm *Shalom*. I show him the ladder and the drapes, but he stops in his tracks and stares out the window. After a moment, he says: "Do you realize what a view you have?" On his face, I read a reflection of the emotions I have been struggling with since the wedding last night. I am strangely comforted.

He is shaking his head, slowly. "Dare we take this for granted?" he asks, surprising even me with the gravity of his tone. He is only the drape man, I start to think, but stop myself, remembering that here we are all Jews, nobody is "only," and each of us has a story. To prove it, he begins to tell his.

Growing up in Poland, he had spent every available moment with his grandfather—a frail, sensitive man whose heart was far away, in Jerusalem. On his grandfather's wall was a map which seemed in retrospect, bigger than the terrain it represented. It was an arty sketch of Mount Scopus and the Mount of Olives. The little boy had spent many a twilight hour tracing paths on the mountains with his finger and listening to his grandfather's stories of Jerusalem—what had been and what would someday be again.

(Continued on next page)

REFLECTIONS FROM JERUSALEM (Continued)

When the world turned upside-down and the boy—or young man by then—found himself miraculously intact, he had no doubt as to where he must head. It proved a long and arduous journey, and frequently he would close his eyes in order to reaffirm his goal—for the map of Jerusalem's twin mountains was engraved inside his eyelids.

"So much has happened since then," he says, "like so many other Jews of our times, I really could write a book. But here . . ." he shakes his head again and gestures toward the sun-drenched landscape, ". . . here it is. A flat map—it was only a springboard for the imagination of an old man. That those tales should turn out to be my life; that what hung on his wall should be spread out before me in full color—right here; who would have believed such a thing?" He turns to look at me, and his face shows pain now. "My grandfather loved this land with a passion greater than I could understand. He never saw it. And I, so much smaller in every way, for some reason, I have the privilege of being here, seeing such momentous things happening. But I cannot take this lightly. I must appreciate every moment, not just for me, but for my grandfather as well. And for so many others."

He begins to unhook the draperies. But this everyday job is no longer just that. He, and I, and the window, are part of a picture which is in no way commonplace. Oh, if I lived in some foreign city, all this might be merely my own home, mine and my family's. But here in this land, at this time, there are elements in something much larger. Hundreds of years of Jewish dreams and prayers, of nurturing the precious spark in each child's heart, of transmitting love of G-d, of Torah, and of Zion. All of these are finding concrete expression at last—in my life. When I eat a meal in my Jerusalem kitchen, and bless G'd for this land, what a responsibility I bear. To represent so many generations is both a privilege and an obligation—a rare and cherished burden.

Closing the door behind my draperies and my compatriot, I realize I do not even know his name. But he has helped me focus on an elusive truth. I resolve now that I will make my children find time to listen why our home and our opportunity to live here and now are so special. I will educate them to view every aspect of our existence through the prism of our history—even if only once in a while.

by Sarah Chaimson

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BERLIN



The play at the Theater des Westens dealt with a familiar metaphor. Ostensibly about a young German with a Jewish girlfriend who sells his mirror image to the devil, the underlying message is that the Germans will never again regain their identity until there is a reconciliation with the Jews.

The elderly woman working the hat-check counter in the theater lobby looked Prussian from head to toe, except for the silver Star of David dangling from her neck. No, she told a curious foreigner, she was not Jewish, but she had been to Israel five times and loved it. Asked if she knew any Hebrew, she replied, "A few words." By way of example she then uttered, "Sliha," which in the context seemed to mean "Forgive me."

While it may be understandable, it is surprising to witness this modern West German phenomenon. Nowhere is there a country with so few Jews (30,000-50,000 out of 60 million Germans) where Jewish issues are so inescapable in the national discourse. Books on Jewish subjects are bestsellers in Germany, much as they are in America, except that in Germany they are bought mainly by non-Jews. Courses and lectures at Berlin's Jewish Community Center are attended by large numbers of gentiles and non-Jewish observers, particularly youngsters, are ever present at Berlin synagogue services. More young Germans than Americans, it seems, have worked on *kibbutzim*.

This is not to say that Germany has the ideal climate for Jews. It is no more devoid of anti-Semitism than other Western countries (although it is more carefully observed). Among some students, newspapers and those on the political left, there is a noteworthy dislike for Israel. Perhaps most disturbing is the debate among historians and politicians on the nature of the Holocaust—between those who argue that it was a uniquely horrible event in human history and those who seek to "normalize" it as an inevitable, albeit terrible, outgrowth of war.

The debate, however, is nothing if not part of the constant presence of "the Jews" on the German scene, and it is a presence that the West German government and the German people cope with it, if not always comfortably. The way they coped was recognized by Israel's President Chaim Herzog on his state visit in April. "West Germany," he said, "is Israel's best friend in the world after the United States."

And what is perhaps most fascinating is how the Jewish-German drama is played out in divided Berlin, where the Iron Curtain still seems so aptly named. Surrounded by a wall and adrift more than a hundred miles east of the world's political border, one might expect West Berlin to be more preoccupied with the Russians than with the Jews, and in many ways they are. But Berlin, like New York, can juggle a lot at once, and the nation's interest in things Jewish is, if anything, more pronounced in Berlin; when the American TV miniseries *Holocaust* aired on West German television a few years ago, for example, Berliners watched in greater proportion than other Germans.

Berlin—East and West—is celebrating its seven-hundred fiftieth anniversary this year, which makes it sound old to Americans, but it is young by German standards, as is its Jewish community. Berlin was far removed from the main Jewish settlement areas in the Rhineland and the villages of Franconia and Bavaria. Only with the development of Berlin in the nineteenth century as the center of unified Germany did the Jewish community experience the explosive growth that made it the center of German Jewry.

The first mention of Jews in Berlin is in 1295, although there was an older, and larger, community in Spandau, which is today at the western edge of West Berlin. Jews were expelled from Berlin in 1349, when the plague swept the city; in 1446; in 1510, after the Host-desecration charge; and in 1571.

In 1671, at a time when Germany's territorial princes had taken on court Jews, or *Hofjuden*, to run their financial affairs, Berlin admitted 50 Jewish families expelled from Vienna. This marked the beginning of the modern Jewish community, and a continuous Jewish presence, including the entire 12 years of the Third Reich.

(Continued on next page)

BERLIN (Continued)

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the Jewish community began to modernize and also to contribute in a more visible way to German culture. The philosopher Moses Mendelssohn—friend of G.E. Lessing, defender of Judaism, articulator of the enlightenment—was at the forefront of both of these movements. In 1778 he was instrumental in founding the *Juedische Freischule*, designed to foster Jewish and general education. Mendelssohn's was the first of several Jewish homes to become a gathering place for the social and intellectual elite of Berlin—Jewish and non-Jewish.

A series of acts and edicts between 1809 and 1812 conferred Prussian citizenship on Berlin's Jews. Though citizens, the Jews did not achieve formal civic equality until 1860, after which they entered German public life, especially in Berlin, with increasing visibility. Jews were particularly prominent in journalism, the arts and commerce.

The nineteenth century also saw the rise of Reform Judaism in Berlin. Beginning in the 1840's, the new movement was characterized by liturgical reforms, the introduction of an organ, for a time, Sabbath services on Sunday. Opposition grew with each change, and in 1869 Azriel Hildesheimer and his adherents broke from the main body of Berlin Jewry to start an Orthodox congregation. The Liberals would continue to be predominant in Berlin, but Liberal-Orthodox relations in the central organizations of the Jewish community were generally harmonious.

Many of Jewish successes of the nineteenth century had their dark counterpoints in the twentieth. Many Germans, particularly in the lower classes, accepted the argument that Jews controlled the media and the country's finances. There was a wave of anti-Semitic propaganda after the murder of Rosa Luxemburg, the Jewish leftist leader, in Berlin in 1919. Walter Rathenau—whose father, Emil, was the founder of General Electric—became the foreign minister in the Weimar Republic, but was assassinated in 1922 by anti-Semitic nationalists.

The persecution of Jews under the Nazi regime is one of the best documented episodes of history, but what is usually not appreciated is how German Jewry—particularly in Berlin, where 170,000 Jews lived—was transformed as a community between 1933 and 1938. Increasingly cut off from the rest of the country by racial law, boycotts and persecution, the Jews, many of whom had minimal ties to their coreligionists, were forced into an independent community existence. Jewish schools were set up to accommodate children barred from Aryan schools. Jewish cultural and sports organizations flourished to serve the most educated part of the German population, suddenly cut off from the rest of society. Jewish books and newspapers were published on a scale never before seen. And Jewish politics intensified, fed both by those who still hoped to find a niche in Germany and those who believed Zionism was the answer. In some ways it was the most vibrant period in the history of Berlin Jewry.

About half of Berlin's Jews emigrated between 1933 and 1938, when the community life began to unravel. In the summer, the anti-Jewish violence and arrests took on massive scales. The turning point was on *Kristallnacht*, the night of November 9-10, 1938, when synagogues were burned and Jewish shops looted all over Germany. Emigration—for those who could find a place to go—was permitted until 1941, the year in which the remaining Jews were forced to wear yellow stars.

Mass deportation to the ghettos and death camps in the east were carried out between the Fall of 1941 and the Spring of 1943, when Berlin was declared *judenrein*—free of Jews. But the Nazi regime never operated quite as efficiently, or free of opposition, as its reputation—even in Berlin. During one roundup in 1942, a group of non-Jewish women staged a violent street demonstration, prompting the Gestapo to release their husbands. Far from being *judenrein*, approximately 6,000 Jews (many of mixed parentage) survived the war in Berlin.

Today, Berlin Jewry is, in one sense, what it was before the war—the largest Jewish community in Germany. There are about 7,500 Jews in West Berlin—6,000 registered members and roughly 1,500 unaffiliated. The community is supported by taxes from its registered members, direct government support and income from real estate.

In another sense, the Berlin community is quite different. Before the war, for all its importance, it was the least "German" Jewish community, attracting large numbers of immigrants from Eastern Europe. Today, while as much as 90 percent of German Jewry has roots in Eastern Europe, the proportion is smaller in Berlin. This has been changing, however. In West Germany, where immigration is a municipal affair, the Berlin Jewish community has used its influence to gain admission for Soviet Jews, who now make up about half their number.

(Continued on page 18)

OUR THOUGHTS DWELL ON . . .

[A series describing memorials displayed in our Synagogue]



Photo: Courtesy Gary Weil

II

THE YELLOW STAR

The history of distinctive signs which Jews were forced to wear so as to easily identify them as a minority in host countries, is a long one. Interestingly, it began under Moslem rule, early in the eighth century, but became much more wide-spread in Christian countries. England, France, Spain, Italy and Germany each had its periods when in one form or another, Jewish subjects were compelled to wear badges or clothing styles in order to publicly set them off, frequently resulting in humiliation and hooliganism. At times the distinction was a peculiarly shaped hat, a brightly colored badge, often assuming a typically Jewish form or an easily recognizable shape. The edicts came either from anti-Semitic governments or, more often, from the Church.

This practice, which had become archaic history, was eagerly revived by the Nazis. Whereas in Germany at first (beginning in 1938) only Jewish shopkeepers had to display the words "Juedisches Geschaef" (Jewish Business), the infamous yellow badge in the form of a Jewish star and the word "Jude" soon made its appearance. It began in occupied Poland in 1939, was later extended to other occupied Eastern regions in 1941 and finally in all of Germany by September of that year.

Denmark was the only occupied country which resisted successfully Hitler's order. The venerable and unforgettable King Christian X threatened to personally wear it and order the entire royal household to join in, should his Jews be put to shame.

Jews everywhere reacted with dignity and unhesitatingly and even proudly wore what was to be a badge of shame as if it were a treasured decoration. "Wear it with pride!" became the slogan. And indeed, it became our badge of glory.

The enemies of our people disappeared, one after the other. The "Thousand-Year-Reich" lasted a dozen years. But our Jewish Star survives the ages. Out of the ashes of Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dachau and Treblinka rose the State of Israel on whose flag the Jewish Star proclaims to all of mankind that *Am Yisroel Chai*, the nation of Israel lives!

Many museums, libraries as well as synagogues display a Yellow Star once worn under Nazi rule, as a reminder of our identity and survival. The above-pictured framed Yellow Star adorns one of the walls of the room in the very front of our Synagogue, and bears the inscription:

*This is one of the six-pointed stars
the Jews in Germany were
forced to wear by the Nazis.
1941-45*

BERLIN (Continued)

There are only 200 people, mostly elderly, registered as members of the Jewish community of East Berlin, but community officials estimate there are 2,000-3,000 unaffiliated Jews, many of whom attend community functions. A rabbi from West Berlin visits the east once a week to lead services and teach. Officials of the East Berlin community—whose budget comes from the East German government—are permitted to visit West Berlin to maintain official contact with the Jewish community there.

Before the war, Berlin's Jewish geography was fairly well drawn. Poorer Jews lived around *Alexanderplatz*; a slightly better off class occupied pensions around *Wittenbergplatz*; upper-middle-class Jews lived along the *Kurfuerstendamm* and through *Charlottenburg*; and the richest Jews lived in the *Grunewald*. With the exception of *Alexanderplatz*, now in East Berlin, Jews, albeit in smaller numbers, live in the same neighborhoods today. Most of West Berlin's synagogues, as well as the Jewish Community Center, are within walking distance of *Kurfuerstendamm*.

Despite *Kristallnacht*, several historic Berlin synagogues survived the war. Courtyard synagogues, of which Berlin had several, were so close to other buildings that fire brigades tried to contain the damage. Visiting Berlin's synagogues, however, is not always easy. Since most community activity takes place at the community center, synagogues tend to be open only at prayer times. Also bear in mind that synagogue security in West Berlin is extremely tight; in East Berlin, ironically, it is virtually nonexistent and, apparently, not necessary.

The gem of West Berlin's synagogues is the Liberal congregatoin in the courtyard at 14 *Pestalozzistrasse*. The red-brick neo-Romanesque building was opened in 1912, damaged on *Kristallnacht* and restored after the war. The sanctuary is surrounded by four large alcoves and three Magen David stained-glass windows. The synagogue's custom and ritual are eclectic. Designated as Liberal, the sexes sit separately but almost equally—men in the central portion of the main floor and women in side sections of the main floor as well as in the traditional upstairs gallery. The cantor sings in Sefardic Hebrew, but his choir uses Ashkenazic.

Also worth seeing is the Orthodox synagogue in the courtyard of *Joachimstrasse* 13, which survived *Kristallnacht* because it was not yet a synagogue. Built in 1902 as a Masonic lodge, the light grey stone building with narrow, arching windows has the look of a turn-of-the-century mansion.

The big event of the year is the city's seven hundred fiftieth anniversary celebration, a year long program of cultural events, including many of Jewish interest. Among the cultural visitors to the city in September were the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and Tel Aviv's Habima Theater.

Berlin is a theater town, and more often than not, at least one of the city's playhouses features something of Jewish content or interest. Specifically Jewish culture in all its forms can be found at the Jewish Community Center. Two publications—the weekly *Berliner Allgemeine Juedische Wochenzeitung* and the community's monthly *Kulturspiegel* list lectures, plays and exhibits at the community center and elsewhere. Both publications also give prayer times for all West Berlin's synagogues.

Alan M. Tigay

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THE JEWS OF CHRISTIAN SPAIN



The "Golden Age" of Jewry in Muslim Spain came to a close in 1147-8 when persecutions by the Almohade (a fanatical Muslim sect) caused many Jews to flee the southern Muslim provinces for the northern Christian territories. At the same time, the *reconquista*, the Christian campaign to reconquer Spain, steadily gained ground. These circumstances combined to create a situation in which ever increasing numbers of Spanish Jews found themselves under Christian dominion, one which was very different from Muslim rule in a variety of aspects, including culture, language and, of course, religion. During the *reconquista*, the Jews, an educated and cultured urban class with knowledge of Arabic, were an asset to the conquering Christians: Jews could be counted upon to administer the provinces, attract business, and pay taxes. A "royal alliance" was mutually beneficial to both sides, the Jewish communities (*aljamas*) were accountable only to the unified central government and therefore not subject to the whims of the local authorities, while the rulers enjoyed the loyalty of the Jews, as well as their skills and services. Each *aljama* was accorded the privilege of communal autonomy which allowed it to perform a wide range of functions including regulation of markets, fiscal administration, taxation, and supervision of morals. Within the Jewish communities, coercive instruments such as excommunication were utilized to enforce the laws. The judicial powers of the *batei din* (Jewish courts) were recognized by the Christian authorities and often extended as far as the adjudication of capital crimes.

The 13th century ushered in the completion of the *reconquista* and the zenith of Jewish life in Christian Spain. The elite group of Jews who had achieved positions of great influence coalesced into a courtier class. Culturally and intellectually, the Jewish intellectuals could draw upon the traditions which they had brought from Muslim Spain. Nevertheless, the situation was precarious—events were transpiring which, in retrospect, foreshadowed the tragic end of the Jewish communities in Christian Spain. In central Europe, the papacy was pressing for reform and the Dominicans and Franciscans, newly established Christian mendicant orders, were steadily gaining influence; in 1233, a Papal Inquisition was established to root out heresy.

Although these developments had not yet reached Spain, with improving communications the groundwork was being laid for religious intolerance. Christianity, differed essentially from Islam; and the history of centuries of fundamentally Christian attitudes to Jews and Judaism created underlying tensions (both socio-economic and cultural-religious) between the Jews and the Christians which eventually strained the relationship between the two groups to the breaking point. While some Jews were still eminently successful—personalities such as Todros ben Joseph haLevi Abulafia, were well-liked and virtually indispensable to the court of Alfonso X (also known as 'Alfonso the Wise' (1252-1284), ruler of the independent Christian province of Castile)—the undercurrent of insecurity, the traditional companion of the Jews in the Diaspora, was growing stronger. The Jews were walking a tightrope and the abyss beneath their feet was widening.

The central Jewish figure in Christian Spain was the Ramban (Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman, also known as 'Nachmanides' 1194-1270), a major scholar, leader and teacher. He is perhaps best known for his monumental commentary on the Torah, one of the most popular and studied commentaries of the Medieval period. In this work, Ramban reveals great sensitivity to both narrative and character as well as presenting first-rate halakhic analyses in the legal sections of the text. Rather than just commenting on words and verses, Ramban offers an integrated and cohesive exegesis which looks at larger pieces of text and develops recurrent motifs. He prefaced each book of the Pentateuch with a discussion of its essential nature, message and purpose, as well as its place in the larger scheme of the entire Torah. Perhaps the most famous motif which Ramban develops in his commentary, an idea mentioned in the midrash, is that of "ma'aseh avot siman li'banim," (the acts of the fathers foreshadow or are indicational of the future acts of the children). For example, in his commentary of Genesis 12:6, Ramban says that just as Abraham first came to Shechem, before the land was actually given to him by G-d, so too Jacob's children conquered Shechem separately before the conquest of the rest of the land. Subsequently, Abraham sojourned and pitched his tent between Beit El and Ai, the very first place to be conquered by Joshua through natural means.

(Continued on next page)

THE JEWS OF CHRISTIAN SPAIN (Continued)

Kabbalistic interpretations, often introduced by the phrase "ve'al pi derech ha'emet" (according to the true way), also plays a major role in Ramban's commentary the Torah. The fact that Ramban used his commentary to the Torah (an established genre) as the vehicle for discussion of the Kabbalistic ideas, rather than writing an independent work, is perhaps indicative of his ambivalence to the study of philosophy and rationalism not firmly based in revelation and religion. The Jewish intellectual community of 12th century Provence (the region in Southern France separated from Spain by the Pyrenees mountain range) became increasingly attracted by Kabbalah when confronted with the philosophically oriented culture of the Spanish Jewish immigrants fleeing the Almohad persecutions. Many Provençal Jews were opposed to philosophical study because of the dangers it presented to faith, but were nevertheless interested in a deeper understanding of G-d. Kabbalah was the ideal solution, being the mode of Jewish thought that provided the secrets of G-d in a specifically Jewish way that goes back to Sinai itself. Kabbalah spread rapidly to Spain and, in the 13th century, a Kabbalistic center which sought to diffuse the major ideas of Kabbalah to a wider public flourished in Gerona (northeastern Spain). Ramban numbered among these Kabbalists and because of his prominence, increased their fame and popularity. It was in this era of the rise in popularity of Kabbalah the *Zohar*, attributed to Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai (Tanna, 2nd century CE), made its first public appearance. Ramban's involvement with Kabbalah greatly influenced his Torah commentary (as well as his other works), further contributing to its complexity. The wide range of modes of exegesis in the commentary make it a unique and skillful weaving of peshat, derash, halakhic analysis, character analysis, psychological insight, and Kabbalah.

The Ramban while familiar with Jewish philosophic tradition had profound reservations concerning its study and, as a result, took an intermediate position during the Maimonidean Controversy of the 1230's. He argued that Maimonides' (the Rambam's) controversial philosophic work, *Guide to the Perplexed*, was not intended for public use, but only for those who had been led astray by philosophy. He also pointed out that, while the *Guide* might be unnecessary and even injurious to the Jews of France and Germany, it filled a vital need for the philosophically oriented Sephardic community of Spain. He apparently urged the revocation of the ban against the *Guide*, although he did discourage its public study.

The Ramban was a major commentator on the Gemara, and utilized many different literary genres in his discussions of it. One such genre was works of "defense" — writings in which he defended the opinions of earlier commentators against critiques by later ones. For example, in his *Milchamot HaShem*, Ramban usually sides with the Rif (Rabbi Yitzhak Alfasi, Spain, 11th century) against the refutations of Rabbi Zerachia haLevi (the Baal Hamaor, Provence, 12th century). In addition to these "defenses," Ramban wrote *Hiddushim* (original analyses of problems in the Gemara) on most of the Talmud into which he incorporated the Tosafist methodology which he ardently admired.

Ramban's other works (both halakhic and philosophic) include *Iggeret HaKodesh*, on the sanctity and significance of marriage; *Sefer HaGeulah* on the coming of the Messiah; *Torat HaAdam*, a compendium of laws of mourning; *Iggeret HaMussar*, an ethical epistle, and numerous other significant treatises.

In 1263, Ramban was called upon by King James I of Aragon to participate in a public disputation to be held in Barcelona. His opponent was a Jewish apostate, Pablo Christiani. In the past, Jewish-Christian disputants had used the Scriptures, the accepted common ground between the two religions, as the basis for their polemics. However, in the 1240's, during a disputation in Paris, Nicholas Donin, the Christian defender, brought the Talmud into the debate. Traditionally, Christians tolerated Jews on theological grounds, considering Jewish existence and survival an authentication of the Hebrew Bible which, in Christian dogma, is perceived as filled with prophecies of Christianity. The discovery that the Jews lived by "another law" (i.e. the Oral Law—the Talmud), undermined this Christian tenet. In addition, the Talmud was accused of containing blasphemies against Christianity.

In the 1263 disputation, Pablo Christiani employed yet another tactic still in its infancy; use of the Talmud to prove the truth of Christianity, by showing that *Hazal* believed that the Messiah had already come. Ramban, though caught off-guard by this unforeseen development, acquitted himself well, arguing that had *Hazal* believed in Christianity they would have converted. In any event, added Ramban, *aggadot* and statements found in the Talmud (such as the ones which Christians adduced as proof) are not theologically binding. Ramban won his debate and received the prize money from the king; nevertheless, two years later he was pressured to leave the country, and at the age of 72, he decided to go to Israel. Upon his arrival there in 1267, Ramban helped revive the deteriorating Jewish community in Jerusalem. He later moved to Acco where he gathered a circle of pupils and completed his Torah commentary.

(Conclusion page 22)

CHABAD — EINE WELTFORMEL



In Weissrussland kommt er 1745 zur Welt, im kleinen Flecken Liosna. Seine Lehrer sind die chassidischen Meister Dow Baer, der Maggid ("Erzaehler") von Mesritsch, und R. Menachem Mendel von Witebsk. Er lernt viel von ihnen, doch er ueberragt sie an geistiger Tiefe. Die Rede ist von *Raw Schne'ur Salman*, dem wohl tiefsten Denker der im 18. Jahrhundert durch R. Israel Baal Schemtov begruendeten chassidischen Froemmigkeitsbewegung.

Rabbi Schne'ur Salman geht es nicht nur, wie den anderen, um eine emotionale Beziehung zu Gott, um die Herzensfroemmigkeit, die an sich grossartig ist, wenn sie wirklich ehrlich und ernst auf Gott hinaus gerichtet bleibt. Er will diese Beziehung geistig durchdringen und Gott auch mit seinem Verstand dienen. 1814 erscheint posthum aus seiner Feder ein neuer Schulchan Aruch (Gesetzeskodex "Gedeckter Tisch"), der seinem Verfasser den Ehrentitel *Raw* (Rabbiner) einbringt. Er ist nicht nur mehr ein Rebbe, er ist ein *Raw*.

Selbststredend will er den Schulchan Aruch des R. Joseph Karo (ediert 1564-65 in Safed) nicht annullieren; es geht ihm lediglich um eine Ergaenzung, um die Beruecksichtigung der neuen Probleme einer anderen Zeit. Sein wichtigstes Werk ist die "Sammlung von Reden" (*liqute amarim*), die anonym 1797 erscheinen und unter der Bezeichnung *tanja* ("es wurde gelehrt"), dem ersten Wort seines auf fuehn Teile ausgedehnten Werkes, bekannt werden. (Eine franzoesische Uebersetzung wurde 1975 in Paris gedruckt).

R. Schne'ur Salman wird 1801 zum *Raw* von Liadi ernannt, und nach dieser Stadt, nicht nach seinem Geburtsort, wird er betitelt: "Der *Raw* von Liadi." Sein Nachfolger ist der Sohn von Dow Baer (1773-1827), die Sukzession der Nachkommen von R. Schne'ur Salman, der Schneersohn-Familie, reisst bis heute nicht ab: Dow Baer uebersiedelt nach Lubawitsch, das zum Zentrum des neuen Zweigs innerhalb des Chassidismus wird. Man spricht daher vom Lubawitscher Chassidismus oder—was auf dasselbe herauskommt—vom Chabad-Chassidismus.

Das Werk *tanja* des R. Schne'ur Salman basiert unter anderem auf dem kabbalistisch-mystischen Prinzip der gottlichen Emanation bei der Weltschoepfung, das im Baum der Sphaeren (*s'firot*) festgehalten wird. Die ersten drei "Sphaeren" heissen *chochma* ("Weisheit"), *bina* ("Einsicht") und *daat* ("Erkenntnis," als Synthese von *chochma* und *bina*). Die Anfangsbuchstaben der drei hebraeischen Woerter *ch-b-d* bilden die Abkuerzung Chabad.

Zum Unterschied von anderen Stroemungen des Chassidismus ist die Lubawitscher Chabad Bewegung ausgesprochen extravertiert. Sie beschraenkt sich nicht nur auf ihre Anhaenger, die heute auf rund 25,000 Menschen geschaetzt werden und unter der Fuehrung des in New York residierenden R. Menachem Mendel Schneersohn (geb. 1902), des siebten Nachfolgers des R. Schne'ur Salman von Liadi, stehen. Die Chabadniks suchen alle Juden einzubeziehen und zu einer Umkehr und Rueckkehr zu Gott zu bewegen. Der Lubawitscher Rebbe gibt seine Direktiven heraus, und diese Directiven gelten als absolute Verpflichtung. Weltweit entstehen Gemeinschaften, die ihre geistige Impulse vom Rebbe erhalten. Die Beziehung zu ihm ist wie die Beziehung zu einem Vater, und sie vertrauen seinem Rat—auch in persoennlichen Fragen—blind. R. Menachem Mendel nutzt dabei alle Moeglichkeiten der modernen Medien, um mit seinen Anhaengern den Kontakt zu pflegen. Seine Sendschreiben werden in Hunderttausenden von Exemplaren gedruckt. Als moderner Mensch, der an der Sorbonne von Paris Mathematik studierte, weiss er um den Wert der Wissenschaft. Erst dieser Tage war zu lesen, dass in Jerusalem auf sein Betreiben hin eine neue Ansiedlung der Lubawitscher Chassidim gebaut werden soll. Ihr Name ist Kiriat Schamir, was mit dem israelischen Ministerpraesidenten Schamir nichts zu tun hat, sondern

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CHABAD (Continued)

eine Abkuerzung der hebraeischen Vokabeln *schomre mizwot joze Russia* (Gesetzestreue Einwohner aus der Sowietunion) darstellt. Im Jersusalemmer Vorort Ramot wurden 52 Wohnungen gekauft, auf dem Gelaende der Technologie eine Forschungsstaette eingerichtet. Der Staatspraesident Herzog — einer seiner Vorgaenger, Salman Schasar (Schlomo Salman Rubaschow), war ein Chabad Chassid, Ministerpraesident Schamir und Buergermeister Teddy Kollek haben die Unterstuetzung des Projekts zugesagt. In Kfar Chabad (Chabad-Dorf) unweit des Ben Gurion Flughafens lebt die dichteste Gemeinschaft der Lubawitscher in Israel. Doch es gibt sie auch sonst, etwa in Entwicklungsstaedten wie Kiriat Malachi, wo sie ein praktiziertes, nicht fanatisches Judentum vorleben. An der Kotel (Westmauer des Jerusalemer Tempelbergs) kuemmern sie sich seit vielen Jahren um das Anlegen der T'fillin (Gebetsriemen), mit einem "Mitzwa-Mobil" fahren sie durchs Land, um jedem Juden den Segen ueber den Lulaw (Palmzweig) am Laubhuettenfest Sukkot oder das "Wohnen" in der Sukka (Laubhuetze) zu ermoeeglichen. Ein riesiger Chanukkaleuchter wird am Lichterfest im Zentrum Jerusalems allabendlich von ihnen entzuendet. Und was in Jerusalem und anderen israelischen Staedten geschieht, wird auch in New York, London, Paris, Zuerich und anderswo nicht vernachlaessigt. Wir haben 1982 kurz nach dem Ende des Libanonkriegs ein "Mizwa-Mobil" in der libanesischen Stadt Sidon gesehen. Mit aller Selbstverstaendlichkeit haben die Chassidim (die keinen Kaftan tragen!) ihre religioese Pflicht getan. Und sie leisten auch Dienst in der israelischen Armee. Unter den Chabadniks gibt es beispielsweise Offiziere der Panzertruppen.

Manches mag etwas befremden. Etwa, wenn man an der Einweihung eines Prachthauses in Kfar Chabad teilnimmt und dabei erfahrt, dass es sich um die haargenaue Kopie des Hauses handelt, in dem R. Menachem Mendel Schneersohn in New York lebt. Der Rebbe befahl, das Haus in dreissig Tagen in Kfar Chabad zu bauen, und es wurde gebaut. Bei der Einweihung wusste keiner der Gefolgsleute anzugeben, weshalb das Projekt auszufuehren war. "Der Rebbe weiss es, und das genuegt," hiess es. Der Rebbe weiss auch, weshalb der *tanja* in aller Welt gedruckt werden muss, auch in asiatischen Laendern, in denen ueberhaupt keine Juden leben. Der Rebbe weiss es auch, warum bei der Einfahrt nach Kfar Chabad grosse Schilder anzubringen sind mit der Aufschrift: "maschiach achschaw" (DerMessias jetzt!), was an ein ganz anderes Losungswort einer ganz anderen Bewegung Israels erinnert: "schalom achschaw" (Frieden jetzt!) Der Rebbe weiss alles dank seiner tiefen Intuition und seinem Weitblick, die dem gewoehnlichen Sterblichen (dem mittelmaessigen Menschen, dem *benoni*, wie der *tanja* lehrt) vorenthalten sind und nur vom Zadik (dem "Gerechten") erkannt werden. Wenn der Glaube selig macht, so sind die Lubawitscher selig. In jedem Fall sind sie ehrliche Juden, denen die mitmenschliche Beziehung nicht minder wesentlich ist wie das Mensch-Gott Verhaeltnis. Und da fuer allein gebuehren ihnen schon Anerkennung und Respekt.

Roland Gradwohl, Jerusalem

THE JEWS OF CHRISTIAN SPAIN (Continued)

Ramban's contribution to succeeding generations is immeasurable. Rivah (Rabbi Isaac ben Sheshet Perfet, halakhist and Talmudist in Spain and North Africa 1326-1407) wrote about him: "All his words are like sparks of fire and the entire communities of Castile rely upon his halakhic ruling as if given directly from the Almighty to Moses."

by Maida Katz

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JEWISH GENETIC DISEASES



Jayne and Esther could scarcely be more different. Jayne, a public relations executive in Manhattan who comes from a secular, liberal Jewish family, is tall, blonde and blue-eyed, with a model's slender figure. Esther, by contrast, is a brunette with soulful brown eyes and a dark complexion. A Brooklyn homemaker with a large family, Esther is a member of the strictly Orthodox "yeshiva world," and wears a modestly styled long-sleeved dress and a dark *sheitel* (wig). She is of medium height and admits having to wage a continual battle against the bulge.

Despite their differences, Jayne and Esther share at least one important characteristic. Both are of Ashkenazic (Eastern and Central European) descent, as are most American Jews, and as such, both are at a significant risk of being carriers for certain genetic diseases.

But less than 20 years ago, when Jayne and Esther were in their 20's and each was expecting her second child, neither was aware of this risk. Both were young and perfectly healthy, and each had given birth to a normal firstborn son. Their second pregnancies were uneventful; if anything, they were even smoother than their previous ones. Labor and delivery proceeded normally and the babies arrived safely. But then the unthinkable happened.

After developing normally for six months, Esther's son was diagnosed as having Tay-Sach's disease, a rare genetic condition that is progressive, irreversible and fatal. The doctor told Esther that because her son lacked an essential enzyme, fatty substances would accumulate in his nerve cells, initiating a destructive process that would ravage his nervous system. He would have seizures, become blind, mentally retarded, paralyzed and totally out of touch with the world — before dying by the age of five.

And when Jayne's daughter turned two and complained of a pain in her neck, she was found to have Gaucher's disease, a genetic condition whose symptoms may range from mildly inconvenient to crippling and life-threatening. The doctor told Jayne that because her daughter lacked a crucial enzyme, fatty substances would build up in the cells of her body, particularly those of the liver, spleen, lymph nodes and bone marrow. There was no way to predict the course of her disease, he said, but symptoms often included an enlarged spleen and liver, low blood counts, bleeding episodes, bone deterioration, fractures, and in some severe cases, complications that could result in death.

The disorders that afflicted Esther's and Jayne's children — Tay-Sachs and Gaucher's (Type I) — as well as a third disease, Niemann-Pick, are the three most common genetic disease among Ashkenazic Jews. (Another seven, also classified as Jewish genetic diseases affecting the Ashkenazic community, occur even less frequently.) Each stems from a deficiency in a particular enzyme required for the metabolic breakdown of complex fatty substances called lipids.

Gaucher's, Niemann-Pick and Tay-Sachs are all lysosomal storage disorders that follow a recessive pattern of inheritance. The word "lysosome" comes from the Greek word meaning "to dissolve," and refers to a particle found in cells that contains digestive enzymes whose job it is to break down most of the constituents of living matter.

Victims of Tay-Sachs disease lack hexosaminidase (Hex)A, which results in the accumulation of GM ganglioside, a fatty substance, in the nerve cells. Children with Niemann-Pick disease (Type A, the most common form), another incurable and rapidly fatal disease, lack an enzyme called sphingomyelinase. As a result of this deficiency, fatty deposits of sphingomyelin (the lipid incriminated in this disease) collect in their bone marrow, liver, spleen, lymph nodes, lung and brain, and those who suffer from Gaucher's disease are deficient in the enzyme acid B-glucosidase. Because this enzyme is not present in sufficient quantities, a compound known as glucosyl ceramide builds up in the cells of the body, with the most pernicious effects being felt in the liver, spleen, lymph nodes and bone marrow. However, unlike Tay-Sachs and Niemann-Pick disease, this form of Gaucher's does not affect the nervous system; hence, many Gaucher's patients may live a normal life span.

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JEWISH GENETIC DISEASES (Continued)

These three diseases follow a "recessive" form of inheritance in which both parents must be carriers of the defective gene for a child to be affected by the disorder. Carriers are perfectly healthy themselves, but when two carriers marry, each pregnancy holds a 25 percent risk of producing a child with the disease, a 50 percent risk of producing a child who will have no symptoms of the disease but who will be a carrier like the parents, and a 25 percent chance of producing a child who is not a carrier.

"There are two important points that have to be made about these genetic diseases," says Esther, whose son died just after his second birthday. "The first is that carriers are at risk (of having a Tay-Sachs child) during each and every pregnancy. Just because you've had five healthy children does *not* mean that you're safe. The only way to know for sure is to be tested to determine one's carrier status. And second, most people who have a child with Tay-Sachs cannot recall any family history of the disease. So just because you do not have any relatives with a Tay-Sachs child is no reason to believe that you're immune. Tay-Sachs can strike in any family at any time. And the only way to avoid the agony of having such a child is to be tested for carrier status in advance."

Tay-Sachs and the other storage disorders can affect people of *any* ethnic background, but they strike Jews of Ashkenazic descent much more often than they do those of other ancestry, says Jane Birnbaum, former executive director of the National Tay-Sachs and Allied Diseases Association, Inc. (NTSAD). Thus, one in 25 Ashkenazim is a carrier of the Tay-Sachs gene. This means that in one of approximately 625 marriages between two Jews of Ashkenazic origin, there is a 25 percent risk that each pregnancy will result in the birth of a child with Tay-Sachs disease; 1 in 85 Ashkenazic Jews is a carrier of Neimann-Pick, and it has been variously estimated that from 1-in-12 to 1-in-25 Ashkenazim is a carrier of the Gaucher's gene.

Since no cure has yet been discovered for any of these conditions, the thrust of medical efforts has been toward prevention. The NTSAD therefore advocates that members of the Ashkenazic population, being at high risk, should undergo genetic testing to determine their carrier status, and those identified as carriers are urged to monitor their pregnancies through prenatal screening so that defective fetuses can be detected early enough to be aborted (see *What is the Halakha?* for the halakhic view on abortion). Since the first mass screening program to identify Tay-Sachs carriers in the Jewish community was launched in 1971, more than 500,000 people have undergone testing, more than 1,000 pregnancies at risk have been monitored, and more than 480 "carrier-couples" have been identified, says Jayne Mackta, a former president of the NTSAD, who now serves as the association's vice president of publications.

This vigilance has paid off. Today, fewer than 10 Jewish children are born with Tay-Sachs each year in the United States, down from about 60 a year before the availability of carrier detection and prenatal-screening programs. In fact, in the past 15 years, the incidence of this disease in the Jewish community has fallen 65 to 85 percent, so that now, Tay-Sachs births among non-Jews in the United States actually outnumber those among Jews, notes Dr. Michael Kaback, a medical geneticist at the University of California-San Diego who pioneered the nation's first mass screening program while at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore.

If the effectiveness of screening programs is the good news in the Tay-Sachs story, the bad news is that "Tay-Sachs is becoming an Orthodox disease," according to Mackta. A brochure published by Chevra Dor Yeshorim, the first organization designed to meet the special genetic screening needs of the Orthodox community reports that at New York's Mount Sinai Medical Center alone, at least two Tay-Sachs babies are born each year to *Orthodox* mothers.

Explains Dr. Mark Ludman, a pediatrician and medical geneticist who serves as assistant director of Mount Sinai's Center for Jewish Genetic Diseases:

"There's an awareness in the Jewish community of carrying the Tay-Sachs gene and the availability of carrier testing. Most Jews in the general Jewish population have taken advantage of Tay-Sachs screening programs; the Orthodox and Hasidic communities are the exception. Only recently through Dor Yeshorim has genetic testing become accepted by the Orthodox community."

In large measure, the seeming indifference shown by the Orthodox community reflects a rejection of the options currently available to carrier-couples who desire a healthy child; artificial insemination by donor or prenatal screening and selective abortion. Although these methods of circumventing the risk of Tay-Sachs disease are widely practiced in the Jewish population at large, they are options generally unavailable to Torah-observant Jews. What many Orthodox Jews have failed to realize, however, is that because their choices in this sphere are so limited, there must be a serious community-wide effort to prevent Tay-Sachs disease by identifying carriers *prior to marriage*.

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JEWISH GENETIC DISEASES (Continued)

While prevention remains paramount, scientists continue to search for a cure that will reverse the destructive processes set in motion by these storage disorders. Research into these diseases has focused on three major areas: prevention, enzyme replacement therapy and bone marrow transplantation. Preventive research is focusing on improving the accuracy and reliability of carrier identification and prenatal testing for Gaucher's disease and Niemann-Pick (testing for these two disorders is not as simple, rapid or reliable as that available for the detection of Tay-Sachs).

In enzyme replacement therapy, enzymes are isolated from human placentas (afterbirth) purified, and then injected into the bloodstream of patients with these disorders, who lack these enzymes. This method is similar to the one used by diabetics to overcome their insulin deficiency. In the case of Tay-Sachs disease, this technique has not proved effective. One of the major factors impeding progress in the treatment of Tay-Sachs has been the inability of scientists to overcome the "blood-brain barrier," a cell barrier that protects the brain from infiltration by foreign matter.

"Another major problem is that the Neurons (nerve cells) do not seem to pick up the enzyme in the purified form," says Dr. Mario C. Rattazzi, professor of pediatrics at Cornell University Medical College and directors of the human biochemical genetics laboratory at North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset, N.Y.

A second area of research into the treatment of the storage disorders is bone transplantation. In this method, bone marrow is extracted from the living compatible relative of a patient. These normal cells are then infused into the patient's bloodstream in the hope that they will engraft and produce sufficient quantities of the missing enzyme to correct the storage disorder. Since a perfect match is possible only from the bone marrow of an identical twin, bone marrow transplantation is a complicated and risky procedure when the marrow is donated by a sibling who is not a twin. To begin with, patients are at risk of developing *graft-versus-host disease*, a potentially fatal reaction in which the donated bone marrow attacks and destroys the tissue of the patient. In addition, during the 2 to 3 week period required for the grafted marrow to take root and begin to function, the patient has a weakened immune system that makes him highly susceptible to infection.

"In storage diseases that affect the visceral organs (rather than the brain) such as Gaucher's . . . there is data that you can get enough enzyme into the liver, spleen and bone marrow to overcome the . . . disorder," says Rattazzi of the bone marrow transplant technique. "But so far, we've been unable to get this to work with brain disorders as Tay-Sachs."

At times, the quest for an effective treatment for the storage disorders, particularly for Tay-Sachs, strikes one as being as futile as the mythical task of Sisyphus, with each step forward being accompanied by new setbacks. Despite the frustration of many dead ends Rattazzi remains optimistic.

by Ora Baer

WHAT IS HALAKHA?

Since the development of amniocentesis in 1970 and the subsequent innovation of chorion villus sampling in 1983—a technique that allows for prenatal diagnosis of Tay-Sachs as early as the seventh week of pregnancy—couples at risk have had effective and relatively safe means for detecting genetic abnormalities early enough to opt for abortion.

But what does the halakha have to say about such an approach?

According to Rabbi J. David Bleich, a Rosh Yeshiva at Yeshiva University, professor of Jewish Law and Ethics at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, and one of the foremost authorities on Jewish bioethics, abortion is generally sanctioned only in cases in which the mother's life is in danger. A minority opinion, voiced by Rabbi Eliezer Judah Waldenberg, a *posek* (a person qualified to render a halakhic judgement) for the Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem, holds that the mental anguish of the mother may justify the abortion of a fetus found to be affected by Tay-Sachs—even up to the seventh month of pregnancy. In the United States, the stricter position of Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, z"l, which does not permit abortion of such fetuses, is the one most often followed.

Summarizing the debate in his book *Modern Medicine and Jewish Ethics*, Fred Rosner, M.D. notes: "Since many important legal and moral considerations which cannot be spelled out in the presentation of general principles may weigh upon the verdict in any given case, it seems advisable to submit every individual case to rabbinic judgment in the light of prevailing medical and other circumstances."

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Flora Jacob, nee Stein	 " Stordorf
Irene Falk, nee Oppenheimer	 " Fuerth
Selma Kann, nee Spier	 " Merzhausen
Sybille Fleischmann, nee Gegel	 " Nuernberg

We extend our warmest sympathy to the bereaved

WE REMEMBER

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

Dec.	Kislev		Dec.	Kislev	
19	28	Arthur Hanau	31	10	Betty Schmidt
19	28	Amalie Lippmann	31	10	Rudolf Schmidt
19	28	Heinrich Neuburger	31	10	Kathy Schoenmann
20	29	Hedwig Hamelburger	31	10	Adolf Schoenmann
20	29	Berta Hubert	31	10	Benjamin Siegel
20	29	Isaac Lowenstein	31	10	Martin Ullmann
21	30	Heinrich Nadel	<i>January</i>		
<i>Teveth</i>			<i>1988</i>		
22	1	Herman Braun	1	11	Siegfried Alexander
23	2	Siegfried Gutmann	1	11	Regina Kahn
23	2	Emil Levy	1	11	Meta Kraemer
23	2	Herman Nassauer	1	11	Jacob Levi
23	2	Lily Reichenberger	1	11	Nathan Levy
23	2	Leo Siesel	1	11	Leo Mueller
24	3	Albert Loewenberg	1	11	Sofie Rotschild
24	3	Berthold Oppenheimer	2	12	Malie Ehrlich
24	3	Milian Strauss	2	12	Claire Friedman
25	4	Charlotte Hirsch	2	12	Franziska Haas
25	4	Joseph Kaufman	4	14	Roesel Groeschel
25	4	Sally Schloss	4	14	Alice Martens
26	5	Martin Marx	4	14	Hermine Mayer
26	5	Julius Vogelsang	4	14	Alex Roer
27	6	Karl Kraemer	5	15	Siegfried Auerhann
27	6	Julius Lewy	6	16	Seligman Bacharach
27	6	Fred Mayer	6	16	Leo Dreifuss
28	7	Siegfried Adler	6	16	Hedwig Einstein
28	7	Desiderius Frank	6	16	Melanie Leffman
28	7	Elias Levi	6	16	Sally Mahler
29	8	Thekla Fleischmann	6	16	Louis Rothstein
29	8	Rosalie Gundelfinger	6	16	Heinrich Schwartz
29	8	Ida Lehmann	6	16	Moritz Seligman
29	8	Eric Wolff	7	17	Ludwig Hirsch
30	9	Eric M. Heilbronn	7	17	Siegbert Huber
30	9	Walter Kohlmann	7	17	Max B. Klein
30	9	Regine Therese Plaut	7	17	Nanette Veis
30	9	Ellen Simon	8	18	Lothar Meyer
31	10	Bertha Einstein	8	18	Jack Nussbaum
31	10	Isak Einstein	8	18	Armin Schlesinger
31	10	William Herze	8	18	Isidore Thurm
31	10	Alter Krell	8	18	Selma Wolff
31	10	Leo Rohm	9	19	Morris Oppenheim
31	10	Kathi Rosenfeld	10	20	Rosa Adler

(Continued on next page)

WE REMEMBER (Continued)

Jan.	Teveth		Jan.	Teveth	
10	20	Frieda Nassauer	26	7	Resi Stern
11	21	Julius Gumberich	27	8	Simon Goldfield
11	21	Joseph Hirschheimer	27	8	Gabriel S. Harwitt
11	21	Max Lamm	27	8	Sophie Roston
11	21	Ernest S. Loeb	27	8	Max Stein
11	21	Baruch Neu	27	8	Josef Sundheimer
11	21	Frieda Schwarz	28	9	Leya Arnstein
12	22	Clara Kramer	28	9	Dr. Alfred Hirsch
13	23	Rosa Hubert	28	9	Ernest Lindheimer
13	23	Meta Kruske	28	9	Denny Strauss
13	23	Rudolf Rose	28	9	Alice Weil
13	23	Sophie Reutlinger	29	10	Philip Siegel
14	24	Martha Loeb	29	10	Gabriel Tannenwald
14	24	Ida Schloss	30	11	Jacob Ehrlich
15	25	Sara Friedman	30	11	Lazarus Haas
15	25	Helene Kaufmann	30	11	Julius Lauchheimer
16	26	Nathan Hirschheimer	30	11	Julius Leidecker
16	26	Jonas Loeb	30	11	Leo Pfifferling
16	26	Martha Lorenz	30	11	Morris Schnell
16	26	Isaak Oppenheim	30	11	Frieda Weiskopf
17	27	Gerhard Goldschmidt	31	12	Aron Griesheim
17	27	Gustav Lindenstien	Feb.		
17	27	Salomon Schoemann	1	13	Marjem Katz
17	27	Sabina Feuer	1	13	Albert Stern
17	27	Ida Siegel	1	13	Ernst Wertheim
17	27	Berthe Levy	2	14	Wilhelm Fischel
18	28	Ephraim Forchheimer	2	14	Josef Gutwillig
18	28	Mathilde Mayer	2	14	Max Haas
19	29	Walter J. Rindsberg	2	14	Paul H. Harris
19	29	Ernest Sternweiler	2	14	Selma Selig
19	29	Richard Wolf	2	14	Sali Simon
	Shevat		3	15	Rose Gottlieb
21	2	Nathan Appel	4	16	Isidor Berney
21	2	Hannchen Appel	4	16	Seligmann Jacob
21	2	Eduard Gunzenhauser	4	16	Emil I. Pelz
21	2	Emilie Gunzenhauser	4	16	Berta Rose
21	2	George Rabow	5	17	Ernest L. Mayer
22	3	Seigfried Herzberg	5	17	Johanna Simon
22	3	Carl Katz	5	17	Ludwig Hirsch
22	3	Therese Neuberger	6	18	Herta De Jonge
22	3	Werner M. Strauss	6	18	Fred May
23	4	Samuel Falk	6	18	Rebekka Oppenheim
23	4	Louis Schoenberg	6	18	Alfred Schaeler
23	4	Otto Strauss	6	18	Mina Strauss
24	5	John S. Weil	6	18	Sol Waelder
25	6	Clara Braun	7	19	Meta Adler
25	6	Siegmund Fuld	7	19	Karl Meyer
25	6	Ferdy Herzfeld	8	20	Johanna Herz
25	6	Emanuel Hirsch	8	20	Joseph Neuburger
25	6	Kathie Schwarz	9	21	Norbert Rau
25	6	Ricka Blank	10	22	Karoline Falk
26	7	Meier Buchheim	10	22	Regina Forchheimer
26	7	Julius Goldstein			

(Continued on next page)

WE REMEMBER (Continued)

<i>Feb.</i>	<i>Shevat</i>		<i>Feb.</i>	<i>Adar</i>	
10	22	Berta Holz	21	3	Lina Baer
10	22	Therese Markus	21	3	Gretchen Gutmann
10	22	Albert Moses	21	3	Max Hirsch
10	22	Minna Schaler	22	4	Audrey Shlesinger
10	22	Wilhelm Wolf	22	4	Frieda Aach
10	22	Louis Zeilberger	23	5	Julie Hirsch
11	23	Julius Griesheim	23	5	Simon Hirsch
11	23	Siegmund Gutmann	23	5	Adolf Kahn
11	23	Emma Jacob	23	5	Wolf J. Levi
11	23	Dora Sachs	23	5	Joseph Morawetz
11	23	Hannchen Simon	23	5	Marian Morawetz
11	23	Karolina Stuehler	23	5	Clara Plaut
11	23	Betty Wiesenberger	23	5	David Wild
12	24	Johanna Bauer	24	6	Margarete Goldfield
12	24	Joan Mannheimer	24	6	Emil Gutmann
12	24	Flora Schiff	24	6	Jeanette Haas
12	24	Sara Snopce	24	6	Johanna Hann
13	25	Bessie Chaskin	24	6	Armin Kahn
13	25	Rahel Kahn	24	6	Gustav Rosenbacher
13	25	Leo Michel	24	6	Emma Speier
13	25	Leo Weissfeld	24	6	Max Strauss
14	26	Justin Maier	24	6	Nathan Sucher
14	26	Bertha Stoll	25	7	Isi Rosenheimer
15	27	Paul Kaufman	25	7	Frieda Wolff
15	27	Adolf Speier	26	8	Adela Frank
15	27	Kurt J. Vogel	26	8	Else Lauchheimer
15	27	Frida Wachenheimer	26	8	Alfred Nordlinger
15	27	Sabine Wellisch	26	8	David Regenstein
16	28	Frieda Buff	26	8	Adolph Reich
16	28	Hugo Hecht	26	8	Werner Sondheim
17	29	Regina Aach	26	8	Jack Stern
17	29	Joseph Gottschalk	27	9	Albert Plaut
17	29	Selma Huber	28	10	Israel Aach
17	29	Chaye Gitel Krell	28	10	Frieda Kaufman
17	29	Dr. Masino Lorenz	28	10	Hetty Landenberger
17	29	Eugen Nordlinger	28	10	Heinrich Marx
17	29	Erich Schwager	28	10	Rebecca Simon
17	29	Gitta Yunker	28	10	Arthur Harold Singer
18	30	Wolf Berney	28	10	Lilly Welt
18	30	Hermann Hammel	29	11	Bertha Benedikt
18	30	Lilly Hirsch	29	11	Alfred Fleischmann
18	30	Karel Morawetz	29	11	Florence Forchheimer
18	30	Lina Stern	29	11	Gustav Fuld
<i>Adar</i>			29	11	Benjamin Less
19	1	Siegmund Goldschmidt	29	11	Alfred Lion
19	1	Hugo Hubert	29	11	Julia Lowenstein
19	1	Selma Kraft-Weber	29	11	Lina Mannheimer
19	1	Moritz Mayer	29	11	Fred Stoll
19	1	Resi Schwager	<i>March</i>		
19	1	Sigmund Schwarzschild	1	12	Jenny Bauer
19	1	Mina Schwarzschild	1	12	Judith Mayer
19	1	Herta Siesel	1	12	Lothar Nordschild
20	2	Hirsch Krell	1	12	Wally Schweriner
20	2	Harry Nevis	2	13	Julius Petzon

(Continued on next page)

WE REMEMBER (Conclusion)*March Adar*

3	14	Hannchen Plaut
4	15	Anselm Baer
4	15	Sol Hahn
4	15	Otto Gutman
4	15	Rosa Lenz
4	15	Jacob Oppenheimer
4	15	Emma Wolf

March Adar

2	13	Albert Weil
2	13	Recha Weil
2	13	Ludwig Weissfeld
3	14	Gustav Blum
3	14	Jakob Blum
3	14	Julius Blum
3	14	Leopold Kende
3	14	Theodor Lauter

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

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