

HABAYIT



הבית

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ISRAEL'S FORTIETH BIRTHDAY

On the road which leads us every year from Pesach to Shouvos lies Yom Atzmaut, the day on which we celebrate Israel's founding. This year it will be its fortieth anniversary.

The number 40 rings familiar bells because our people's repertoire contains several "forties." The Torah records 40 days of rain leading to The Great Flood, 40 days which Moses spent on Mount Sinai, 40 days of scouting Canaan by the spies, 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. The Talmud, in a popular Mishna, sees age 40 as the stage when man reaches mature understanding [Fathers 5:23].

A fascinating album of snapshots — some evoking sad memories (flood, spies, desert travel), some reminiscent of happy occasions (Mount Sinai, maturity). Be it in days or years, the number 40 counsels patience.

Life is short. We like to rush things, eager to see happy endings and successful conclusions quickly, speedily. A slow progress can be maddeningly annoying.

History teaches man to accept and to tolerate gradual growth and steady if slow ripening. Examples? There are many.

It took 40 years to reach the Holy Land. Subsequently it took some 300 years until the 1st Jewish Commonwealth could enjoy the security and prosperity under King David and King Solomon.

It took 70 years of captivity in Babylonia before a return to our land was possible, and then it took some 60 years until the 2nd Jewish Commonwealth became a genuinely Jewish state.

We waited almost 2,000 years for the 3rd State to be established. Formidable and knotty are the obstacles and problems on its way to security and maturity. But we are patient, and, above all, confident. As Israel celebrates its 40th birthday, we want to thank G'd for the privilege to live in historic times and we pray for peace.

— Rabbi Shlomo Kahn



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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

		Preceding		Mincho	End	Day Break	Shema Before
		Evening	Morning				
1988							
March 5	Ki Siso	5:40	8:45	5:55	6:28	5:00	8:45
March 12	Vayakhel-Pekudeh-Poroh (Blessing Month of Nisan) — Sermon	5:40	8:45	6:00	6:35	5:00	8:45
March 19	Vayikro-Hachodesh (Rosh Chodesh)	5:45	8:30	6:10	6:42	4:55	8:40
March 26	Tzav—Shabbos Hagadol—Sermon	5:55	8:45	6:15	6:50	4:50	8:35
April 2	1st Day Pesach — Sermon	6:05	8:30	6:25	6:58	4:30	8:20
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME							
April 3	2nd Day Pesach	6:25	8:30	7:30	7:59	5:30	9:20
April 8	7th Day Pesach	7:00	8:30	7:00			
April 9	8th Day Peach—Yizkor—Sermon	7:00	8:30	7:35	8:06	5:10	9:10
April 16	Shemini — (Blessing Month of Iyar)	7:00	8:45	7:40	8:14	4:55	9:10
April 23	Tazria—Metzoro — Sermon	7:00	8:45	7:50	8:23	4:50	9:10
April 30	Achare — Kedoshim	7:00	8:45	7:55	8:30	4:40	9:05
May 7	Emor — Sermon	7:00	8:45	8:05	8:38	4:25	9:00
May 14	Behar — Bechukosai (Blessing Month of Sivan)	7:00	8:45	8:10	8:45	4:25	9:00
May 21	Bamidbor	7:00	8:45	8:20	8:53	4:20	8:55
May 22	1st day Shovuos	8:20	8:30	7:00	8:54		
May 23	2nd day Shovuos—Yizkor—Sermon	7:00	8:30	8:35	8:55		

WEEKDAYS (unless listed otherwise—see below)

Mornings:	Sundays and Legal Holidays	8:00 A.M.
	Mondays and Thursdays	6:40 A.M.
	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays	6:50 A.M.
Evenings:	February 28 to March 17	5:30 P.M.
	March 20 to March 31	6:00 P.M.
	April 4 throughout Summer	7:30 P.M.

SPECIAL DAYS

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.
Friday	March 4	Shushan Purim
Shabbos	March 19	Rosh Chodesh Nisan: Shacharis 8:30 A.M.
Thursday	March 31	Bedikas Chometz after nightfall
Friday	April 1	Erev Pesach: Shacharis followed by Siyum for Firstborn 6:30 A.M.; Chometz may be eaten until 9:25 A.M.; must be out of possession by 10:36 A.M.
Mon.-Thurs.	April 4-7	Chol HaMoed: Shacharis 6:30 A.M.
Thursday	April 14	Yom HaShoah
Sunday	April 17	Rosh Chodesh Iyar, 1st day: Shacharis 8:00 A.M.
Monday	April 18	Rosh Chodesh Iyar, 2nd day: Shacharis 6:30 A.M.
Thursday	April 21	Yom Atzmaut (Israel Independence Day); special services Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Monday	April 25	Sheni: Shacharis 6:30 A.M.
Thursday	April 28	Chamishi: Shacharis 6:30 A.M.
Sunday	May 1	Pesach Sheni
Monday	May 2	Sheni: Shacharis 6:30 A.M.
Thursday	May 5	Lag beOmer
Sunday	May 15	Yom Yerusholayim
Tuesday	May 17	Rosh Chodesh Sivan: Shacharis 6:30 A.M.
Shabbos	May 21	Erev Shovuos — Shovuos — Lernen 10:15 P.M.
Sunday	May 22	Shovuos — Lernen 7:00 P.M.

SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Daily Lernen after Shacharis

Daily Lernen after Maariv

Chumash Shiur Shabbos 45 minutes before Mincho

Sidro explanation Shabbos after Mincho

Ladies' Shiur Mondays 8:00 P.M.

Lernen of Gemoro Shabbos after Musaf followed each week by a Kiddush. (Siyum for Firstborn on Erev Pesach.)

IMPORTANT NOTICE

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CHANUKKAH 5748

This year's Chanukkah festivities on Sunday, December 20, 1987, were dedicated to honoring Cantor Jack Schartenberg, founder of Congregation Beth Israel and cantor of Congregation Beth Israel and later of Congregation Beth Hillel and Beth Israel for 40 years, and now retiring from his cantorial position; Mr. Oscar Wortsman, officer, trustee and then President from 1978-1987; and those men whose regular attendance assures a minyan at the synagogue services. President William Blank opened the proceedings by welcoming the membership and guests, and giving an overview of the agenda for the afternoon, which began with a tribute to Cantor Schartenberg by Rabbi Shlomo Kahn.

Rabbi Kahn characterized Cantor Schartenberg as a rare individual, who almost singlehandedly established a Kehilla in 1948 which functioned superbly until its merger in 1980 with Congregation Beth Hillel. From its early beginnings with 69 families and 7 students in its Hebrew School, Congregation Beth Israel had more than 600 families and 150 enrolled students at its peak in the mid-1960's. Cantor Schartenberg filled a variety of roles in the Congregation with great success and distinction: as *chazan* — *Sheliach Tzibbur* — dedicated to Torah, Avodah and Gemiluth Chasadim; as founder of and teacher in the Hebrew School; as assistant to the rabbi in Torah education; as Barmitzvah lesson instructor; and as innovator and organizer of congregational activities. He brought a thorough Torah education, a fluency in Torah and Haftorah reading, and a sound liturgical knowledge to his activities. Rabbi Kahn applied a talmudic rule to Cantor Schartenberg: "Whatever is influenced, is never greater than the one who did the influencing." Hence the expertise and knowledge gained by hundreds of students are all to his credit. He enrolled new members, advised the Board of Trustees, and enriched congregational life for youngsters and adults alike by founding men's and boys' choirs, a breakfast club, youth shabbatot, play nights and much more. Rabbi Kahn alluded to the 35 years of harmonious and friendly joint service between the two men, an association which blossomed into brotherly friendship between them and their families. To highlight Cantor Schartenberg's personality and talents, Rabbi Kahn quoted extensively from the Certificate of Honor, bestowed on Cantor Schartenberg 30 years ago, awarding to him the distinguished title of *Chover*.

Mr. Eric Hanau, prominent officer in Congregation Beth Israel and officer and trustee before and after its merger for many years, stressed Mr. Schartenberg's shaping of the congregational liturgical music, his establishment of choirs, and his excellence as a Hebrew School teacher. He preserved the old melodies and introduced new ones. He wished Cantor and Mrs. Schartenberg well and the opportunity to now more deeply enjoy their daughters, grand- and great-grandchildren. President Blank endorsed heartily the sentiments expressed by Rabbi Kahn and Mr. Hanau, and on behalf of the Congregation presented Mr. Schartenberg with a silver decanter bearing an appropriate inscription.

Mr. Schartenberg responded by voicing his happiness at seeing so many friends from both Congregations: "It is a very nostalgic afternoon for me." He saw people in the audience who were not born yet when he started Congregation Beth Israel, whom he later prepared for Barmitzvah and then officiated at their weddings as *chazan*. "It is actually a span of two generations, having officiated as cantor at some weddings of parents and then, 20 or 25 years later, at their children's weddings." Cantor Schartenberg named the new congregation after the then new state of Israel, Congregation Beth Israel of Washington Heights. He looked back with great satisfaction at his own family which increased from his daughter Carol (with Harriet on the way) in 1948 to 10 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren today. Cantor Schartenberg thanked President Blank and Mr. Hanau for their kind sentiments, and to Rabbi Kahn "... for his heartwarming tribute. Our 35 years of working together in Achdus, in unity, in harmony and in friendship — for the good of the Congregation — will remain unforgettable for the rest of my life." He appreciated the well-meant suggestions from many for him to stay on, but felt that at "the age of 80 the time has come to retire." He reserved his highest gratitude to Mrs. Schartenberg: "I want to thank my dear wife, a true Eishes Chayil and a real Ezer K'negdo. I was so very fortunate to have her at my side in all my functions and undertakings. She deserves so much credit for all her support and devotion!" He ended with best wishes and Kol Tov to all.

President Blank announced that at a recent meeting of the Board of Officers and Trustees, the title Cantor Emeritus was unanimously approved and bestowed on our honoree, Cantor Schartenberg.

Following the presentation of an interlude of liturgical music by the synagogue choir, Presi-

dent Blank lauded former President Wortsman for his services, first to Congregation Beth Hillel and then to the combined congregations for a total of 9 years as President, "... always with devotion and always with a smile" Mr. Blank noted that Mr. Wortsman came from a religious home and was well familiar with the religious practices and music of our "common background." We were the beneficiaries of this training, not only regularly on Shabbatot and Yomim Tovim, but also, when some years ago, he gave a command rendition of Mincha on Yom Kippur. Early in his presidency, Mr. Wortsman became a driving force in the fusion of Congregations Beth Hillel and Beth Israel. The large majority of members of both congregations, despite differences in degrees of religious observance, were retained in the combined Congregation. "The unqualified success of our merger and the harmonious communal life of our Congregation is in large measure due to the good will and tact of our past President and surely constitutes one of the highlights of his tenure in office." Mr. Blank mentioned Mr. Wortsman's inflagging interest in the welfare of the Congregation, not dimmed even during a period of very severe illness. Mr. Wortsman is an outstanding human being: "... generous to our community, concerned for the physical welfare of our members, love for the land of Israel, and, most of all, devotion to Mrs. Wortsman, Elaine and Steve, Susan and, last but not least, Matthew." President Blank added a personal word about their long association. "It was an honor to serve as Vice-President under him and it is a source of great satisfaction to know that he continues his active interest in our community as First Vice-President and that he is always available to help or to lead when called upon! All of us wish him many more decades of good life and health and peace that he so richly deserves!" He then presented Mr. Wortsman a silver, inscribed Chanukkah Menorah.

Oscar Wortsman replied that it is difficult for him to find quite the right words in response. He thanked all: Mr. Blank, the Board of Trustees, and the membership. Leading the Congregation for 9 years was both an enlightening and a hectic experience. He and Mrs. Wortsman were active in many facets of congregational life, the PTA, the School Board, and the choir, and they made many friends in the process. Mr. Wortsman recited the poem "Friends" in recognition of his rich and warm experiences. He concluded by again thanking the Congregation and voicing his appreciation of and best wishes to Mr. Schartenberg.

The last honor on the agenda was for those members of the Congregation who regularly come to services on weekdays, thereby ensuring a minyan. Without these dedicated individuals, minyan would often not exist. Certificates of Honor were presented by Mr. Arthur Hanauer, to whom the Congregation is in deep debt for always organizing the daily minyan. Certificates, reading "CERTIFICATE OF HONOR PRESENTED FOR EXCELLENCE IN ATTENDANCE" were awarded to: Messrs. Ernst Aufseer, Hugo Bacharach, Harry Bengel, Albert Blank, Ferdinand Erman, Fred Fuld, Alan Furst, Roger Greilsamer, Julius Grunspecht, Michael Haas, Max Hamburer, Eric Hanau, Arthur Hanauer, our late Honorary President Adolph Heimer, Emanuel Hirsch, Siegfried Hirsch, Lewis Knurr, Albert Kramer, Milton Lamm, John Loeb, Siegfried Lowenfels, Walter Michel, Kurt Neu, Alfred Oppenheimer, Eric Reiss, Manfred Schoen, Harry Speier, Alfred Stern, Heinz Stern, Arthur Struass, Max Strauss, Walter Strauss, Charles Wolff, John Wolff, Oscar Wortsman, and Nathan Zimmermann. To each of these gentlemen a small gift was presented as token of the Congregation's gratitude.

The festivities, which took place in the Social Hall, packed with members and guests, ended with Mincha and Maariv services in the Synagogue. A rousing *Maos Tsur* was heard!

Till Chanukkah 5749!

— Dr. Eric Bloch

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CONGREGATION NEWS IN BRIEF



... the multi-faceted Chanukkah event which took place on December 20th, is fully reported on elsewhere in this issue . . .

... the annual Sisterhood Luncheon took place on January 17th; see a report of it in this issue . . .

... Chevra Day combined with the Congregation's Purim Dinner, scheduled for March 6th, will have its write-up in the next issue . . .

... please reserve Sunday, March 13th, for the Congregation's annual General Membership Meeting, for which invitations have been mailed to all members . . .

... in preparation for Pesach, the holiday instructions prepared by Rabbi Kahn, and the Pesach Food Directory published by the Kashruth Division of the Union of Orthodox Congregations will be made available . . .

... in answer to questions asked by several members, please be advised that when visiting our cemetery, a detailed map which gives direction and location can be obtained in the cemetery office . . .

SISTERHOOD

Rabbi Kahn said in his address, that the Sisterhood Luncheon is to him like an enjoyable Yomtov that occurs once a year. That is how it was on Sunday, January 17th.

Chairladies were Miriam Hirsch, who welcomed the guests, and Ria Roos. President Fay Blank thanked them and also the efficient helpers for an excellent job done. She mentioned the importance of belonging to the Sisterhood and invited those of the Congregation who are not yet members, to join our ranks, because "the Sisterhood is always here for you." She also thanked all present for coming in such great numbers.

Rabbi Kahn paid tribute to the Sisterhood and praised the ladies for the good work they do for the Congregation. Contrary to the habit of wanting to stay young and not admitting the passing of years, Judaism commands that we respect and give *kovod* to the elderly, for years of life mean years of experience. Our Sisterhood shows how true this is. Its activities, including the annual luncheon, maintain a high standard.

The tables were set festively, graced by bouquets of fresh flowers, and the food was excellent and plentiful.

Pianist Ori Steinberg, a graduate of The Julliard School of Music and widely recognized for his talent, entertained with background music during the meal, but then he featured his skills by presenting a classical concert: a Sonata by Mozart, a Nocturne by Chopin, and a Prelude by Rachmaninoff. The applause showed the audience's warm appreciation for his fine performance.

President Fay Blank then made a short, eloquent speech about the person chosen for the "Woman of the Year" Award. Everybody was pleased to hear her announcement of Sisterhood Treasurer Gertrude Strauss. Mrs. Strauss' willingness to serve for the good of our Sisterhood over many years in various capacities made her a perfect choice.

After coffee, tea and fancy fruit tarts, Miriam Hirsch and Ria Roos raffled off the prizes. It was a pleasure to watch happy winners open their "surprise packages." Rabbi Kahn then led in the Benshen.

It was once again the atmosphere of congeniality and belonging, which makes the Sisterhood Luncheons so special.

— Eugenie Weinberg
RECORDING SECRETARY

ALL IN THE FAMILY

"Am stillen Herd zur Winterszeit,
wenn Haus und Hof mir eingeschneit,"
and when the driveway's caked with ice,
you really know it isn't nice . . .
one thing, at least, we feel is great:
it's not the year one-eight-eight-eight!

Well, it may betoken the youthfulness of our "Geburtstagskinder" that none of them, not even their most venerable one, could have been an eyewitness to the great blizzard that befell New York one hundred years ago. Newspaper accounts tell us that after a balmy Saturday and a rainy Sunday, the blizzard struck early on Monday, March 10th. Within three days it piled up 21 inches of snow that — blown about by gusts of wind reaching 85 miles per hour — reached drifts towering 20 feet. A small exhibition, showing photographs, newspapers and other mementos of this fierce natural event, will be open until April 5th and the new York Historical Society at Central Park West and 77th Street.

We are not competing with mountainous snowbanks or the frozen East River of 1888, when we say that our special birthdays of 1988 are quite an impressive array of She-hecheyanus. Mr. Kurt Neu celebrated his 70th birthday in December. The seventy-five year celebration is shared by Mrs. Thea Schlesinger in January with Mr. Rudy Hertz's like birthday in February. Eightieth birthdays are observed by Mrs. Meta Newhouse, Mrs. Lina Lilie and Cantor Jack Scharenberg in January and Mr. Walter Hersch as well as Mrs. Erna Hirsch in March. To the Schartenbergs also came the simchah of the arrival of two great-granddaughters. We record a trio of eighty-fifth birthdays celebrated in January by Mrs. Stephanie Levi, Mrs. Ann Stein and Mrs. Edith Vogel, while Mr. Fred Rothholz observes the same mark in February. Our retired choir member, Mr. Emil Valk, whose beautiful renditions of Haftarat are still a pleasant liturgical memory, is observing his 90th birthday in February, preceded by Mrs. Selma Eppstein's same milestone in January. Our other nonagenarians — all in January — are Mrs. Flora Fleischmann having attained her 92nd birthday, Mrs. Ella Gostynski her 93rd and for top honors Mrs. Rose Schlesinger her 98th birthday.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bernheimer had the pleasure of seeing a grandson become Bar Mitzvah. The same joy came to Mr. and Mrs. Leo Wartelsky when they celebrated the simchah of a grandson's Bar Mitzvah.

Mr. and Mrs. Kurt Neu report the arrival of a granddaughter, and Mr. and Mrs. Leo Oppenheimer the marriage of their daughter Rose, a simchah shared by the grandmother, Mrs. Hertha Spiegel.

As we go to press, Mazel Tov to Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Gerstley on their Golden Wedding Anniversary, and to Mrs. Selma Jacobson on the birth of a grandson.

May all of us, younger and older, continue to enjoy the blessings of Heaven.

Chag Purim ve-chag Pessach Sameach
Shalom ve-hatzlachah,

— Theodore H. Spaeth

THANK YOU

(Belated Thank You)

My sincere thanks to Rabbi and Mrs. Kahn, Mr. and Mrs. Wortsman and all the friends in the Congregation for the beautiful flowers and good wishes I received on my special birthday in October 1987.

* * * * *

— Magda Kahn

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Sisterhood and the Congregation for the beautiful flowers and good wishes on my recent special birthday.

* * * * *

— Lina Lilie

My heartfelt thanks to the Rabbi, the President and the Congregation for the lovely flowers sent to me for my 85th birthday.

* * * * *

— Ann Stein

Sincere thanks to all members of the Congregation, friends, and the Sisterhood, for the kind sympathy expressed at the passing of my beloved sister.

* * * * *

— Frieda Einstein

I would like to thank President William Blank for his nice words on my behalf at our Chanukkah Celebration, and also the Officers and Members of the Board, for the nice memento presented to me.

* * * * *

— Oscar Wortman

My sincere thanks to all my friends and members of the Congregation for their thoughtfulness during my recovery from my accident.

* * * * *

— Lewis Knurr

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.

Hilda Saul

SOVIET JEWRY CONCERT

The hall was packed to the last seat and beyond. Last minute ticket purchasers waited impatiently until they could be accommodated in cramped quarters. Official sale of tickets had stopped days earlier. All this testified to the popularity of the Miami Boys Choir who performed on Saturday night, February 6th at the Mt. Sinai Jewish Center for the 15th annual Soviet Jewry Concert Sponsored by the Washington Heights-Inwood Council.

Equal to and perhaps more than the musical program, the cause attracted the large participation. Glasnost notwithstanding (a window-dressing concert), help for Jews in Russia is still very

ABOVE THE HIGHEST JOY

By Rabbi Shlomo Kahn



"By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept," begins Psalm 137 which describes in heart-wrenching words the longing for Jerusalem, felt by the unfortunates whom Nebuchadnezzar dragged into Babylonian captivity in 586 BCE. The Psalm's climax is the solemn vow: "If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand wither. May my tongue cleave to my palate if ever I think not of you, if ever I set not Jerusalem above my highest joy."

Mournfully melancholy and piteously pathetic is the grief for what was lost. The vehement outrage directed against the killers and spoilers has forged this Psalm into a timeless vehicle for our people's feelings over the centuries and millenia. (Indeed, there is a custom to recite it on every weekday prior to *birchas ha-mozon*, the *benshen*). Jerusalem is the pinnacle of our yearning, its splendor unforgotten, its rebuilt glory our constant dream. It is to be set "above the highest joy."

What is "the highest joy?" Of personal family events celebrated in happiness, surely it is the wedding day. Eminently private yet irresistibly shared by many, Halacha embraces its joy so warmly that there is an effusion of *berochos* (usually confined to a minimum but here in abundance), a heightened call to rejoice in the *benshen* introduction (after the wedding meal), and a ruling that the joy of the wedding is incompatible with mourning and pushes mourning aside.

All of this notwithstanding, the memory of a destroyed Temple and Jerusalem curtails the joy. Sharp reminders of our national treasures in ruins find articulation in several wedding day customs: to break a glass, to place ashes on the forehead of the groom, to omit at least some of the bridal ornaments. Jerusalem is "above my highest joy."

National joy, felt by the Jewish people collectively, comes on a Yomtov. "Rejoice on your festival" [Deuteronomy 16:14] is a biblical commandment. Our holidays demand of us unstinting gladness and delight. Yet, not one of them passes without including Jerusalem, the cherished heirloom in the festival's jewelry box, as if to say: don't forget to set Jerusalem "above the highest joy."

(Continued on next page)

ABOVE THE HIGHEST JOY (Continued)**I. SHABBOS**

A hymn of haunting beauty welcomes the "Sabbath bride" in stanzas sparkling with metaphors and biblical quotations, skillfully composed by a poet par excellence: Shabbos and Israel, devotion and redemption, divine mercy and abiding love, and — Jerusalem:

*Zion, G'd's city and shrine below.
Rise from your ruins and your despair.
Long have you dwelt in the vale of woe;
G'd's loving pity shall crown your prayer.*

II. PESACH

Festival of freedom, birth of our nation, launching pad for Israel's meteoric journey. The majestically impressive Seder culminates in the passionate cry: "Next year in Jerusalem!" — quickly followed by the prayer, sung in a universally familiar melody: "O G'd, build Your Temple speedily."

III. SHOVOUS

From Sinai's height, G'd spoke to the assembled people. To its fire-tipped summit Moses ascended to receive Tablets of Law. Forty days and forty nights he remained there and learned the Torah in its entirety.

What caused this isolated mountain in a barren wilderness to be selected for such awesome honor? An intriguing comment by the Midrash sheds light. "From Mount Moriah was Sinai plucked, like *challo* from a kneaded dough, from the spot where Isaac lay readied for sacrifice. Said the Holy One, blessed be He: Because their Patriarch Isaac was bound there, it is most fitting to receive on it the Torah; eventually it will be restored to its place" [Shochar Tov 68:9].

The sanctity of Jerusalem and its Temple is the proper site for Torah.

IV. ROSH HA-SHONO

Day of Judgment when Books of Life and Books of Death lie open for divine scrutiny. Day of Remembrance on which the fate and destiny of all human life are examined, weighed and decided by the Creator. Day of Sounding the Shofar, sharp reminder of the ram which Abraham offered in substitution for his son. On Mount Moriah a drama was enacted whose consequences last from generation to generation. Abraham envisioned it as the future Jerusalem. Sanctified by an unparalleled act of commitment to G'd, it became the site of the Temple.

V. YOM KIPPUR

Next to Shabbos, this is the Prince of Sanctity on our calendar, an entire day exclusively devoted to prayer. In our synagogue service we follow at times verbatim the ancient ritual prescribed by G'd, which was conducted by the High Priest in Jerusalem's Temple. Words of recitation and prayer are mere substitutes, attempting to replace the grandeur of the Temple service that once effected wondrous atonement.

We follow, deep in thought, passages poignantly descriptive, how "the Kohanim and the people, standing in the great Temple Hall, heard the glorious, awesome Name of G'd pronounced clearly by the Kohen Godol in holiness and purity, kneeled and prostrated themselves, gave thanks and fell upon their faces, and said: blessed is the Name of His glorious kingdom forever." It's as if we were there! And we too fall on our knees and touch the ground with our faces, almost feeling the sanctity of the Temple itself.

And, similar to the Seder, many congregations have the custom to conclude the Neila service with a resounding "Next year in Jerusalem!"

VI. SUKKOS

It is the festival most prominently called "time of our rejoicing." For Israel of Temple times, an agricultural people, Sukkos bring serenity, satisfaction and happiness. The harvest is in, thanksgiving is offered in the singing of Hallel. Hence, too, Sukkos in the Temple saw the incomparably joyous festivity of the water libations offered on the Altar, orchestrated by the stirring "Draw water with joy from springs of salvation" [Isaiah 12:3].

ABOVE THE HIGHEST JOY (*Continued*)

Focus is on Jerusalem's Temple service: circling with lulov and ethrog the Sefer Torah to recall the circuits of the Kohanim around the Altar; *arvos* on Hashano Rabbo commemorating the tall willows adorning the Altar; Haftorah readings of Solomon's Temple dedication; Torah reading of the special seventy offerings that benefitted all the world's nations; universal peace symbolized by the Sukkah.

VII. CHANUKKAH

Judea trampled by a cruel tyrant — liberated by courageous freedom fighters. The Temple defiled by idolators — cleansed and rededicated by victorious Hasmoneans. The dark oppression pushed aside by the blazing lights of the Temple Menorah. Chanukkah is Jerusalem and Temple, freed and purified.

VIII. PURIM

A time when the fate of all the Jews hung perilously in the balance. Threatened by a vicious anti-Semite who had ingratiated himself with the empire's king and engineered a plot of annihilation, Mordechai and Esther initiated a daring rescue. Risking her life and happiness, Esther approached the king. He graciously offered her anything she wanted "up to the half of the kingdom." What was this condition — "half the kingdom" — which the love-struck king attached to his offer?

The Purim story occurred during the Babylonian exile, towards its end. Already some of the captives had returned. Already permission had been granted to erect the Second Temple. But Ahasuerus, influenced by hostile tribes in the Land of Israel, had revoked the permission. Temple construction came to a halt. Under no circumstances would he give in to a request to reconsider. Any favor asked, even by his wife (whom he did not suspect of being Jewish) routinely excluded what would divide, cleave, "halve" his kingdom, namely the Temple in Jerusalem. [Talmud Megillah 15b.] On Purim too, Jerusalem's glory is of acclaimed importance.

When the danger was gone and, in gratitude, a holiday was declared, rejoicing had to be delayed by one day in Persia's capital, Shushan. Purim is on the 14th of Adar — in Shushan on the 15th. But the Rabbis refused to grant special status to a city not shared by *our* capital. Jerusalem too (as all cities which had a wall in Joshua's time) has a unique Purim.

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THE PEOPLE OF THE JOKE



When Alan King contended in a battle of wits with students at Oxford University last summer that humor began when the first Jewish immigrants to America headed from steerage for the Catskills, he was joking — but not by much.

Jewish humor, at any rate, started in America in the Yiddish theater — which some consider the forerunner of vaudeville — on the Lower East Side, before traveling to the Borscht Belt. And according to Samuel Shep Janus, a psychologist at New York Medical College, in America, where Jews are only two-and-a-half percent of the population, "Comedy and Jewish are as synonymous as pizza and Italian." Janus has interviewed over 85 percent of the top comedians in the country and, he says, they are all Jewish and neurotic.

Jews in America — from the Marx Brothers to Joan Rivers — have become the dispensers of a distinct brand of mostly self-derogating and anti-authoritarian humor. In fact, in America you don't have to be Jewish to tell Jewish jokes. Steve Allen, for instance, is thought by many to be Jewish, even though he isn't; that his jokes are so Jewish is probably due to his being brought up in a Yiddish-speaking neighborhood. Robin Williams and Danny Thomas, as well as Johnny Carson, include Jewish material in their acts. It is probable also in tribute to Jewish humor that Whoopi Goldberg chose Goldberg as her last name.

Jewish humor mirrors Jewish acculturation and assimilation in America. The early Jewish comedians in the 40's and 50's did not exploit the Jewish Joke; Jack Benny, Joey Bishop and George Burns avoided the ethnic association, seeking acceptance in the non-Jewish cultural landscape. As Lenny Bruce observed, "Eddie Cantor's *goyish*."

After the period of name-changing and de-Judaization earlier in this century, American humor became "Yiddishized" in the 60's, under the sharp prodding of Lenny Bruce, followed by Mel Brooks and Woody Allen. Today much of humor on radio and Broadway, in film, television, nightclubs, recordings, books and other publications is richly and unabashedly Jewish. Woody Allen's Jewishness, for instance, is an essential element in his filmmaking. In *Zelig*, his chameleon character explores Jewish identity; in *Hannah and her Sisters* he tries on other religions for size, but they don't fit. Neil Simon's plays and movies, especially the three autobiographical B's — *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *Biloxi Blues* and *Broadway Bound* — are entertaining thousands. Two late-night television talk shows are hosted by Jewish comics — Joan Rivers and David Brenner. Also ubiquitous is the large — and largely unknown — stable of Jewish comedy writers. Indeed, it would be hard to imagine American humor without its overwhelmingly Jewish component.

Not only is Jewish humor amusing Americans but, according to one practitioner, it may also be providing the religious and ethnic identity for many American Jews. Most Jews may not study Talmud, but they do love the Jewish joke and identify with it — no matter what their religious observance.

On the other hand, today when many third-generation American Jews are rediscovering their heritage, there is also a group of young stand-up comics who are carrying on the tradition of Jewish humor, some with more affection and less hostility than their predecessors.

(continued on next page)

THE PEOPLE OF THE JOKE (Continued)

For Moshe Waldoks, co-author with William Novak on *The Big Book of Jewish Humor* (Harper and Row), and himself a very funny man, that Jews became the "*The People of the Joke*" is itself incredible, considering the humorlessness of the Bible. (Letting loose frogs in Egypt, he says, is slapstick, not a form of Jewish humor, although some Jews practice it, as did the Marx Brothers.)

One talmudic admonition aimed at teachers has been taken to heart by Jewish comedians as well: Begin a lesson with humor, so that it will be better learned. Jews, Nathan Ausubel wrote, "are indestructible moralists and teachers . . . they have turned the joke . . . into pedagogic aids with which to illustrate, to illuminate and to improve."

That Jewish humor is talmudic is not surprising; the humor of Jackie Mason, the Yiddish-accented rabbi-turned-comic, is the most talmudic of all. His show, *The World According to Me*, which consists of well-honed, rapid-fire jokes, has met with tremendous acclaim. (An example: This apartment is soundproof and fireproof. If it's soundproof, it had better be fireproof, because if I yell "Fire!" — nobody's going to hear me.)

The Purim *shpiel* (a dramatic play that pokes fun) is one of the few breaches of etiquette that "kept humor alive in an anti-theatrical people," Waldok asserts. The rabbis tried but did not succeed in suppressing the Purim festival, with its carnival-like atmosphere.

Another repository of Jewish humor was the *badhan*, the jestor, a character who did his *shtick* at weddings — in essence the forerunner of the stand-up comic. The satire and irony of the *badhan* twits the listener who, laughing at tales of the *shlemiel*, doesn't realize the joke is on him.

Lenny Bruce was a master practitioner of this form, using the jazz-like *shpritz* (spontaneous monologue). His fierce sense of "moral outrage" was expressed with caustic wit, says Joseph Dorinson, a professor of history at Long Island University in New York, who writes and lectures on Jewish humor. "Animated by a democratic mode of thought," Dorinson explains, "he deflated the pompous and powerful, while he identified with the downcast and the losers. Lenny . . . used Yiddish phrases, hip argot and obscene language . . . to shock white Christians into an awareness of their deeply buried feelings about foreigners, Blacks and Jews." In one routine, Bruce defines a Jew as "one who killed our Lord." He says: "A lot of people say to me, 'Why did you kill Christ?' We killed him because he didn't want to become a doctor, that's why we killed him."

Generally, the themes of Jewish humor in twentieth-century America have remained the same as in nineteenth century Eastern Europe, even though the forms, media and language — English having replaced Yiddish — have changed, as have the economic, social, political and religious environments. While there has not been as much emphasis on anti-Semitism, *shnorrers*, mothers-in-law and pretentious rabbis as in Europe, there was a greater focus on assimilation, conversion and name-changing earlier in this century. Jokes about Catholics, Protestants and Jews reflected the movement toward ecumenism and Judaism's acceptance as one of America's three main religions. Jokes poke fun at the extremes of Jewish observance — Reform and Orthodoxy — particularly at hasidim. Food, family (especially mothers), business, wealth (or lack of it), Arabs and Jews, Nazis, health, injustice, survival, fund-raisers, psychiatrists and even G-d Himself are the targets of Jewish satire.

The family is a preeminent butt of jokes, with the conflicting overtones of hostility, criticism and affection. As Philip Roth wrote in *Portnoy's Complaint* (Random, Fawcett), "A Jewish man with parents alive is a 15-year-old boy, and will remain a 15-year-old boy until they die."

But even Jewish American Princess jokes have an undercurrent of pride in achievement. "When I die," the husband says, "my ashes will be spread over Bloomingdale's, so my wife will visit me sometimes."

Jewish humorists run the gamut from vulgar, like Buddy Hackett, to political, like Mort Sahl, to sophisticated, like David Steinberg. Steinberg, whose father was a rabbi, lambastes Jewish prejudice, Orthodox narrowness and Reform ignorance. He notes his father's observation, on December 25, "They got their snow again for Christmas." Even liberal Jews are blasted because "they won't admit that some Jews have money."

Robert Klein, too is a cerebral comic, whose humor is social commentary. His topics range from religion and its rituals to smothering parents to anti-Semitism and the election of Kurt Waldheim as President of Austria.

(continued on next page)

PEOPLE OF THE JOKE (Continued)

Alan King makes people laugh at a humor whose base is anger at the stupidity of the Establishment. Somebody is always out to get you, and comedy is the only weapon. On Bob Hope's seventy-fifth birthday, King made him an honorary member of the Jewish community, which entitled him to "2,500 years of persecution and guilt."

Jewish jokes also reflect popular trends. When light bulb jokes were making the rounds about five years ago, Don Cashman wrote some Jewish versions:

How many Zionists does it take to screw in a light bulb?

Four — one to stay home and convince someone else to do it, a second to donate the bulb, a third to screw it in and a fourth to proclaim that the entire Jewish People stands behind their actions.

How many Jewish mothers does it take?

None. "It's all right — I'll sit in the dark."

Self-mocking humor — which some critics feel is self-hating and others regard as a healthy defense mechanism — is the most prominent characteristic of American Jewish comedy. It is also the secret of its success. Sigmund Freud had marveled at this trait: "I do not know whether there are many other instances of a people making fun to such a degree of its own character." Indeed, many Jews feel uncomfortable with the uninhibited criticism of middle-class Jews, such as in Woody Allen's contention that his "parents worshipped Old World values: G-d and carpeting."

For a person to talk of his weakness is "unusual and admirable," says Avner Ziv, a psychologist and professor of education at Tel Aviv University, who has written and lectured extensively on the psychology of humor. Self-disparaging humor evolved from the Jew's existential and philosophical dilemma in Eastern Europe. "On the one hand," explains Ziv, who has organized two international conferences of Jewish humor and wants to set up an institute of Jewish humor at Tel Aviv University, "they were people chosen by G-d; therefore, they must be extraordinary, the best. On the other hand, they were at the bottom of the economic and social barrel, without rights. Could it be that G'd made a mistake? Of course not — G-d is perfect. It must be that they Jews are doing something wrong. How ironic: To be both the best and the worst."

Woody Allen, having donned the *shlemiel* persona, gives us permission to laugh at and recognize our weaknesses and gain acceptance, as did Sholem Aleichem. "I don't burn," Allen explains. "I stroke."

While humor was used to combat hostility and distort tragic reality in Eastern Europe, it also contained an element of optimism for the future. As the Messiah said, "I'm sorry it took me so long to get here. Everybody is so spread out, some over here, some over there, it was hard to find them." This "laughter through tears" humor is echoed in Woody Allen's message to the graduates: "Today, more than at any other time in history, humanity stands at the crossroads. One leads to total despair: the other to complete annihilation. Let us pray that we will have the wisdom to choose the right way."

Jewish humor in the Old World was also important in preserving the internal cohesiveness of the Jewish people. It emphasized Jewish uniqueness and superiority, in contrast to the surrounding society, which was hostile and less educated. This thread of humor has its counterpart in the New World, too. (Why did G-d make *goyim*? Somebody had to buy retail.) In *Blazing Saddles*, Mel Brooks is a Yiddish-speaking Indian chief, an outsider, the universal victim. According to Brooks, his comedy has to do with the "realization that even though you're better and smarter, you'll never belong."

Some Jews are uncomfortable with revealing a condescending yet admiring attitude toward the non-Jew before a largely *goyish* audience. After all, it could feed the flames of anti-Semitism; in the past, such humor had been for Jewish ears only.

Young Jewish comedians are also overpresented in the booming number of live comedy clubs all around the country; by one estimate, they make up 80 percent. Bill Grundfest and Scott Blakeman on the East Coast, and Lotus Weinstock and Emily Levine on the West Coast, are part of this new generation. They perform in clubs like The Comedy Cellar in New York and The Comedy Store in Los Angeles. They are proud to be Jewish, and their humor reflects this. In New York, there is a growing number of kosher restaurants, such as Cheers and The Dairy Planet, which

(continued on next page)

THE PEOPLE OF THE JOKE (Continued)

offer live comedy shows.

Weinstock and Levine in particular, feel that they are intensely political and feminist because of their strong Jewish identity. Weinstock has said that she and Levine have a "tremendous consciousness not to be self-loathing or in any way perpetuate stereotypes," but rather to do "intelligent and honest" comedy. When a man in the audience in a Los Angeles club said that Levine reminded him of his mother, she retorted, "Why? Did your mother go to Harvard, too?"

Yet despite the revitalization of Jewish culture and identity among a segment of the American Jewish population, which is reflected in Jewish comedy, there is also an increased neutralization of Jewish humor.

Hiram Davis, an Australian actor, wondered, at the second international conference of Jewish humor in New York, in June 1986, whether Jewish humor in America will lose its Jewish character, as it has in Australia. Australia, like America, has similar trends in assimilation and intermarriage, the decline of the influence of Yiddish on Jewish humor and the lack of tensions.

If the Jewish joke reflects the Jewish condition, he asked, and if aggression and hostility are absent from Jewish life, will Jewish humor become doomed to "parevisation?" If there's no longer a need for the defensive, "You don't need to attack us; we can do that ourselves and even do a better job," will Jewish humor lose its sting?

This question is no laughing matter, but it may be too soon for American Jews to indulge in worry and guilt over the demise of Jewish humor. Jewish comedy, like the Jewish people, has survived a great deal. It has been analyzed by Sigmund Freud, Theodor Reik, Henri Bergson and others; transplanted across the ocean; and dissected at international conferences, in lectures at museums, Y's and colleges. But happily for America — and the Jews — it is currently in the peak of health. As Scott Blakeman has said, "As long as there is going to be Jewish family and friends, there'll be Jewish humor." And that's no joke.

— Zelda Shluker

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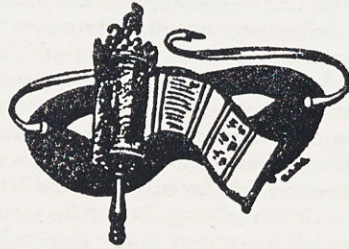
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PURIM — DAS EINZIGARTIGE FEST



Der Vergleich zwischen den Feiertagen Chanukka und Purim draengt sich auf. Die Feste gleichen sich dadurch, dass sie beide an die Befreiung aus toedlicher Gefahr erinnern, und dass beide vom Gesetz her als Halbfeiertage gelten, an denen gearbeitet werden darf. Das eine Mal war eine grosse Diaspora-Gemeinschaft von physischer Vernichtung bedroht, das andere Mal wollte ein fremder Herrscher den Glauben an den einen G'tt ausmerzen und durch den griechischen Goetzendienst ersetzen.

Die Unterschiede, die sich in der Halacha und in der Tradition entwickelt haben, sind frappant: Waehrend Chanukka im Talmud nur kurz erwaeht wird, handelt ein ganzer Talmud-Traktat, "Megilla," von Purim und der Megillat-Esther, die in den Zyklus der "Kitwe Hakodesch," der heiligen Schriften, aufgenommen worden ist, waehrend sowohl die Makkabaeer-Buecher als auch die "Megilla Jewanit" dieses Privileg nicht geniessen. An Chanukka wird dagegen an allen acht Tagen das festliche Hallel-Gebet gesagt, das bei Gelegenheit von Purim nicht erwaeht wird. Auser mehreren Mizwot, die Purim auszeichnen (an Chanukka gibt es nur das Licherzuenden), ist ueber Purim auch eine ueberaus reiche Literatur in Midrash und Aggada vorhanden.

Im Midrasch Mischlei steht der beruehmte und viel zitierte Satz: "Alle Feiertage werden einst abgeschafft werden — ausser Purim." Wenn wir nach der ersten Ueberraschung den Grund suchen, warum Purim diese Sonderstellung geniess, die wir doch viel eher Pessach oder Schawuot (oder auf einer anderen Ebene Jom Kippur) zugedacht haetten, dann werden wir die verbluefende Feststellung machen, dass dem Feind das "Verdienst" dafuer zukommt.

Der Feind, das ist Amalek, dieser sagenumwobene, geheimnisvolle Volksstamm, dessen Name erstmals als einer der Nachkommen Esaws in der Bibel erscheint. Nach dem Auszug aus Aegypten, als die Isaeliten dank eines g'tlichen Wunder eben das Schilfmeer durchquert haben, in dem die aegyptische Verfolger ertrunken sind, freift das Heer von Amalek das von den Strapazen der Flucht mitgenommene Volk an.

Dieser Kampf findet unter besonderen Merkmalen statt. Wie in Schemot 17, 8 ff. anschaulich geschildert, entscheidet nicht die bessere Ausruestung oder die numerische Ueberlegenheit diesen Krieg, sondern es ist die Kampfmoral, die den Ausschlag gibt. "Wenn Mosche seine Hand erhob (17, 11)," dann gewann Israel die Oberhand, "wenn er seine Hand sinken liess, siegte Amalek." Die Haende von Haende von Mosche, so wird uns in der Mischna, Rosch Haschana 3, 8 gesagt, wirken keine Wunder, aber sie sind Ausdruck des Vertrauens auf G'tt. Sie richten unsern Blick nach oben, woher die Hilfe kommt.

Fuer Israel wird dieser Krieg gegen Amalek zum Fanal. "Ich werde ausloeschen die Erinnerung an Amalek," heisst es an dieser Stelle (17, 14). Und als im Buch Dewarim (25, 19) dieser Angriff Amaleks ins Gedaechnis gerufen wird, da ergeht die Aufforderung an Israel: "Vernichte das Andenken an Amalek . . ." G'tt und Sein Volk sollen zusammen wirken, um Amalek aus der Erinnerung zu tilgen.

Amalek wird zum Stolperstein fuer Israel. An der Schonung Amaleks — gegen den Befehl des Propheten Samuel — geht Koenig Saul zugrunde. Und im persischen Exil ersteht Jahrhunderte spaeter der Todfeind der juedischen Gemeinschaft: Haman, der als ein Nachkomme von Amalek gilt. Was urspruenglich der Kampf einer Diaspora-Gemeinschaft gegen einen maechtigen Feind war, das wird zum Symbol.

Bereits mit Haman ist der Gegner nicht mehr ein Volk, sondern eine Geisteshaltung. Skrupellos,
(continued on next page)

PURIM — DAS EINZIGARTE FEST (Continued)

unerbittlich und machtbesessen, ueberzeugt Haman den willensschwachen Koenig Ahaschwerosch davon, dass dieses Volk, "zerstreut und versprengt unter den Voelkern," [Esther 3, 8] die Existenz von Parasiten fuehrt, die keine Schonung verdienen. Denn "ihre Gesetze sind anders als die der anderen Voelker, und die Gesetze des Koenigs befolgen sie nicht, und es lohnt sich nicht fuer den Koenig, sie zu dulden." Hier erleben wir ein erstes Beispiel boeswilliger Verleumdung gegen eine Minderheit, wie sie seither zum traurigen Alltag der Geschichte gehoert. Durch den Befehl des Koenigs wird die Diffamierung zum Todesurteil gegen eine ganze Volksgruppe.

Ungeheuer gross ist die Zahl von Midraschim und Aggadot, von Erklaerungen und Deutungen, die die Purimgeschichte zu einem weiten Feld der Forschung und Einsicht macht. Amalek — sowohl der physische Feind als auch die Geisteshaltung, die sich bis in unsere Tage nicht gewandelt hat — hat unsere Weisen ganz offensichtlich gaszyniert. Immer wider haben sie sich mit diesem Gegensatz beschaeftigt, der irrationale Zuege angenommen hat und zu einer unueberbrueckbaren Feindschaft geworden ist. Hinweise, die Deutungen geradezu herausfordern, finden wir schon in den beiden bereits genannten Tora-Stellen.

Als eine der Befruendungen, warum G'tt vom Volk verlangt, es muesse Amalek ausloeschen, heisst es in Dewarim 25, 18: "Er hat G'tt nicht gefuerchtet." Waehrend die uebrigen Voelker von den Wundern in Aegypten und am Schilfmeer tief beeindruckt waren, und in den Vorgaengen G'ttes Walten ahnten, blieb Amalek von solchen Gefuehlen unberuehrt. Trotzdem es von den Israeliten nicht bedroht wurde, griff es frech und unbekuemmert die Nachzuegler des Volkes an.

Dieses erste Aufeinandertreffen hat einen unversoehnlichen Gegensatz geschaffen. In Schmot 17, 16 heisst es: "Denn die Hand ist erhoben ueber G'ttes Thron: Krieg fuer G'tt gegen Amalek von Generation zu Generation." Die erhobene Hand wird von den meisten Kommentatoren als eine Art Geste des Schwures verstanden: G'ttes selber schwuert sozusagen, Er werde Krieg gegen Amalek fuehren, bis dessen Andenken vergessen ist. Doch einzelne Erklaerer — unter ihnen auch der Malbim — verstehen die erhobene Hand als die Hand Amaleks, die als Zeichen der Auflehnung gegen G'tt erhoben ist. G'tt aber wird Amalek — die Negierung der g'ttlichen Allmacht — bekaempfen, bis Sein Walten von allen Menschen erkannt sein wird.

Von ganz besonderem Interesse ist, dass die bereits zitierten Worte "G'ttes Thron" in der Tora unvollstaendig wiedergegeben sind. Statt "Kissee" (Thron) steht nur "Kess," (der letzte Buchstabe fehlt), und vom G'ttesnamen stehen nur zwei (anstatt vier) Buchstaben. Der Midrasch sieht darin die Andeutung, dass weder der Name G'ttes noch die g'ttliche Herrschaft ihre vollkommene Entfaltung finden koennen, solange Amalek in der Welt wirkt. Wenn einmal der Geist von Amalek aus dem Bewusstsein der Menschen getilgt ist, dann wird G'tt als Herrscher der Welt anerkannt sein.

Eine weitere Besonderheit finden wir im Vergleich der beiden Torastellen in Schemot und Dewarim: "Schreibe dies zur Erinnerung in das Buch, . . . dass *Ich* ausloeschen werde das Andenken an Amalek . . ." heisst es in Schemot. In Dewarim aber steht: "Wenn G'tt dir Ruhe gegeben hat von all deinen Feinden ringsum . . . sollst *du* das Andenken von Amalek ausloeschen . . ." — G'tt sagt zu ihnen: Erfuellst eure Aufgabe und kaempft gegen den Geist von Amalek, dann werde auch *Ich* tun, was *Ich* versprochen habe. (Pesikta Rabati)

Die Faszination, die dem Konflikt Judentum-Amalek innewohnt, ruehrt daher, dass immer wieder versucht wird, die beiden unversoehnlichen Feinde gegeneinander abzugrenzen. Wenn es uns keine Muehe macht zu definieren, was Judentum ist, so duerfte es viel schwerer sein, in eindeutiger Form zu umreissen, was mit dem Begriff Amalek gemeint ist. Es besteht auch kaum ein Zweifel, dass die Meinung darueber, was Amalek wirklich ist, staendigem Wandel unterworfen ist. Amalek tritt uns in vielen Gestalten entgegen und versucht, die Verwirklichung unserer juedischen Lebensaufgabe zu verunmoeglichen. Damit wird es zu einer Verneinung der juedischen Ethik, zu einer Verneinung der innern juedischen Dsiziplin — eine Ablehnung, deren Form staendig wechselt, deren Geist mit Amalek ist gleichzeitig ausserhalb von uns: die Feindschaft gegen unser Andersein — und in uns: die Schlacken, die wir nicht wegraeumen auf dem Weg zu unserm juedischen Ich. Wir fuehren staendig diesen doppelten Kampf: Wir kaempfen gegen den aeusseren Amalek, der uns in irrationaler Feindschaft ablehnt, weil wir sind, wie wir sind. Dennoch ist der aeusserer Amalek der weniger gefaehrliche Feind, weil er offen auftritt. Den inneren Amalek vermoegen wird oft gar nicht zu erkennen, weil wir im Alltag so viel Unjuedisches in uns aufnehmen,

(continued on next page)

PURIM — DAS EINZIGARTE FEST *(Continued)*

dass wir meinen, es gehoere zu unserer Lebensform. Nur unbestechliche Kritik gegen uns selber kann uns dazu bringen, Amalek in uns auszumerzen.

Die bereits zitierte Stelle in Dewarim (17,19) schliesst mit dem beschwoerenden Ruf: "Vergiss es nicht!" Da kommt wohl noch ein Element hinzu: Wir versuchen, die Existenz Amaleks zu uebersehen. Doch die Feindschaft des aeussern Amalek manifestiert sich immer wieder. Jeder von uns ist Zeuge, dass er immer wieder erscheint und unsere Existenz bedroht. Schwieriger ist es mit dem innern Amalek. Da mag es sein, dass wir uns Illusionen hingeben, dass wir meinen, der innere Amalek sei ueberwunden, er koenne es doch gar nicht mehr geben in einem Zeitalter hoch moralischer Grundsaeetze. Die suesse Illusion will das "Lo tischkach!" in Frage stellen. Vergiss es nicht, dass Amalek noch immer in dir, in uns allen wirkt.

— Heinrich Lang

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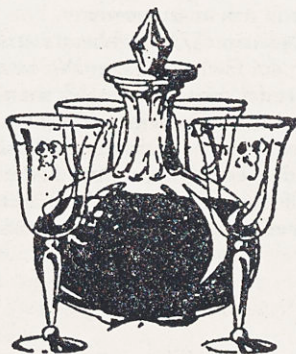
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One measure of how far kosher wines have come is the changing way in which they are advertised. "The wines you can almost cut with a knife" reads an aging sign over an old established wine company. "Kosher wine needn't be sweet — just special" proclaims a more recent winery, aimed at appealing to a wider audience. The new emphasis reflects the growing sophistication and demand for diversity in the kosher wine market.

Wine is ubiquitous in Jewish life — required for Kiddush on Sabbath, holidays and joyous occasions like weddings and *brith milahs*, as well as for toasts and conviviality. "Wine makes glad the heart of man," says the Psalmist [Psalms 104:15]. And the Talmud adds: "When the Temple was in existence there could be no rejoicing save with meat. But now the Temple is no longer in existence, there is no rejoicing save with wine" [Pesachim 109a].

Our ancestors drank different sorts of wine from the varieties we know today. Their wine may have been made from grapes smoked or dried in the sun, mixed with spices, honey and pepper or with balsam and water. Pomegranates, raisins, figs and dates were also made into wine, but only grape wine could be used for sacramental purposes. Then as now, the character of the grape, soil conditions, weather and the vintner's skill determined the quality of the wine.

While Jewish law may mandate when we should drink and how much — four cups on Passover, until one "doesn't know the difference between Haman and Mordecai" on Purim — the choice of red or white, sweet or dry is up to the individual. While red wine is commonly used for Kiddush because of its association with the wine used on the altar in ancient times, white wine is also permissible; and sweet wine is no more "kosher" than dry. Rather, one should drink the best affordable and available.

Many American Jews grew up with a wine they came to think of as the traditional *sine qua non* — a sticky-sweet, jelly-red liquid guaranteed to produce a headache after four cups at the Seder. In truth, this wine's history extends back only a few generations, when Jewish immigrants to America began applying their wine-making skills to a tart Concord grape, native to the Eastern United States, better suited for jams or grape juice. To turn this wine into something potable, they added copious amounts of sugar.

In the 1970's, as imports from France and new vintages from California fueled American sophistication about wine, younger Jews began to demand high-quality kosher wine in greater variety. The kosher wine industry in Israel, New York and California quickly responded, cultivating new varieties of grapes and adapting the methodology of oak-barrel aging to impart a special taste to the wine. "There's a major revolution among religious people about the style they're buying," notes a spokesman of a large liquor corporation in New York. "My shelves of California wine are part of the evolution of Jewish-American history."

What is kosher about wine — and why all the fuss about certification? In ancient times, wine used by idolators for libations was strictly forbidden to Jews. By entension, wine processed or bottled by gentiles, even though not for religious use, is also forbidden, perhaps to discourage socializing between Jews and non-Jews. Thus kosher wine is that which has been touched only by observant Jews from the time the grapes are pressed until the wine is poured. Strict guidelines

(continued on next page)

KOSHER AND DRY (*Continued*)

about yeast, additives and preservatives necessitate supervision by a rabbi. There are many different certifying agencies, including individual rabbis whose integrity is accepted by people who know them, but there is a national certification with universal acceptance.

But what if a non-Jewish waiter pours the kosher wine? An Orthodox Jew will not drink it — unless the wine is *yayin mevushal* or cooked wine, which has gone through the additional step of flash pasteurization. Once the wine is *mevushal*, it cannot be rendered unfit for Jewish consumption. But some connoisseurs feel that this "cooking" changes the taste of the wine, an opinion which is not universally accepted. There are experts who maintain that pasteurization does not affect the taste of the wine and indeed, several *mevushal* wines have won awards in wine-tasting competitions with other, non-kosher wines. The largest producer of Israeli wine, whose products are shipped all over the world, makes all of its wines *mevushal*, and this designation appears on the label of every bottle.

The historic industry of wine producing in Israel was revived about a century ago when Baron Edmund de Rothschild sent grape vines from his estate in France to several agricultural settlements in Palestine. After underwriting the first vineyards and wineries, Rothschild turned over the ownership to the cooperative, which still produces most of Israel's wine. Today, it turns out over two million cases of wine a year, in about 30 different varieties.

Another Israeli winery, younger and smaller, has also developed an international reputation. Established in 1983 its production has risen to 60,000 cases a year, from grapes grown on eight kibbutzim and moshavim in the Golan Heights. Their fields in the Vale of Tears were the site of a major tank battle. Before they could start planting, they removed 250-300 tanks, an example of how to turn swords into plowshares.

California, of late has been exporting not only wine-makers but also premium kosher wine. One company, founded in 1976, was among the pioneers of the California kosher wine industry. "We didn't enter the kosher wine business because of the market," says one of its owners, "we want to make wines as a superior cultural item available to Jews. There are many products, like pickles and salami, that have positive connotations for being kosher, and we hope that we can get people to understand that our wines are terrific and happen also to be kosher." The company is now producing four premium wines, three whites — Johannisberg Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir Blanc — and a Cabernet Sauvignon.

In neighboring Sonoma Valley, another winery is making award-winning kosher wines, including a fruity and spicy Gewurtztraminer and two sweet and dry Chenin Blancs. It is expanding production with a dry, oak-barrel-aged Chardonnay and two new red wines.

Then there is a company making kosher wines from grapes grown in California's prime Alexander Valley. It is producing wine to satisfy the tastes of younger Jews who want to be in touch with Judaism. In 1985 the company won 13 medals in competition with non-kosher wines.

A large company with its headquarters in New York produces, imports and exports one million cases of kosher wine annually from all over the world. It is particularly proud of the line of wines bearing the label Baron Jaquab de Herzog, named for the owner's grandfather, who was awarded the title by Emperor Franz Josef of Austria in appreciation of the family's wines. This company has played a major role in changing the tastes of American Jews by offering a staggering array of kosher wines from Israel, Italy, France, California and New York. "We prefer to give our customers the same choices non-Jews have," says its owner. Most of its wines are *mevushal* and under national rabbinic supervision, with additional supervision by local rabbis in the case of wines of exotic origin.

Crown Heights in Brooklyn doesn't have much cachet among winemakers, but that didn't stop the proprietor of a local wine cellar. Believing that he could make a better wine than the sweet stuff that made him sick, he started operations in his family's basement. His experiments blossomed into good wines and he has expanded production to upstate New York. A follower of the Lubavitch Rebbe, he named one of his wines *Seven-Seventy*, after the address of the Lubavitch headquarters in Crown Heights.

The many kosher wines on the market today are setting sophisticated standards of taste at moderate prices. Many have beautifully designed labels that add an esthetic dimension to the wine-drinking experience. One has a striking label of a wine glass set against a pattern of stylized

(continued on next page)

KOSHER AND DRY (*Continued*)

grape leaves. Another shows a brightly colored Rousseau — like a painting of a garden. Two premium wines released this year are adorned with reproductions of a sixth-century mosaic floor bearing wine motifs now in the Israel Museum. An ancient mosaic oil lamp decorates another label.

Kosher wine consumers are becoming more familiar with the subtleties of grape varieties, aromas and tastes and are approaching wine with a sense of adventure. And wine producers are proving that one can drink *l'haim* over a wine that is neither sweet nor bad — but certainly, certifiably kosher.

— Natalie Berkowitz

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yellow stars,
weak
and
defenseless
in the hands of
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standing proud,
swastikas
sewn to their
shirts.
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mightiest
nation —
or so
they
thought.
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may be
gone,
but
the star
is
still
shining.



— Marc Penner

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BASLE



In 1929, on the occasion of the 25th Yahrzeit of Dr. Theodore Herzl, a memorial book of tributes by his contemporaries was published by *The New Palestine*, the official organ of the Zionist Organization of America. The book, edited by Meyer Weisgal and dedicated to Louis Lipsky, was published in a limited edition of only 350 copies. Because of his leadership position in the Mizrahi movement in America, my father was among those who received a copy of this coveted book, and immediately upon its arrival in our home it became my very own precious possession. What is so memorable about these articles is that they were mainly written by those who knew Herzl and worked at his side when the Zionist movement was in its infancy.

For me, the people who actually knew Herzl, were enveloped in a special kind of aura. I will never forget the euphoric sensation that seized me when I once overheard a conversation which took place in the living room of my parental home. I was a young teenager then and I knew Herschel Farbstein, a famous leader of the Mizrahi in Waraw, was to be our guest that day. The door between the living room and the library, where I was busy with my books, was slightly ajar, and I could not help overhearing Farbstein tell about a caucus meeting of all the religious delegates at the First Zionist Congress that he had attended. He related that, as these delegates were discussing certain issues that were of consequences to them, Herzl suddenly appeared at the door and, looking at the yarmulkes that covered their heads and the patriarchal beards that adorned their faces, turned to an aide who stood at his side and said, "Das ist das gepanzerte Judentum." (Here are the advance troops of the Jewish people.) Hearing the story, I immediately ran to my book on Herzl, remembering that somewhere in the Diaries of Herzl, parts of which were reprinted in this volume, there was a centerfold across which an array of quaint, old fashioned oval pictures depicted all the delegates to the First Zionist Congress. When I finally discovered Farbstein's picture in the vast gallery of faces, and thus verified that he had indeed been a delegate to the First Congress, I boldly walked into the living room and asked to be introduced to our guest. As our hands met, I felt for the first time in my life that I was touching history.

The Herzl Memorial book was, for me, truly memorable not only for its articles but also for its pictures. In it were to be found the famous etching of Herzl by Hermann Struck, the bas-reliefs by Boris Schatz, the stained-glass window design for the Bnai Brith of Hamburg by E.M. Lilien, the portrait by Leo Mielziner which was painted for the Jewish Colonial Trust Company and many other pictures of the Herzl figure in various popular artistic mediums. There were also the rare photographs: Herzl sitting on the deck of a ship with his successor David Wolffsohn as they returned from a trip to Egypt, family pictures, meetings in a Vienna cafe, Herzl and the Actions Committee, Herzl's funeral in Vienna — photographs not reproduced elsewhere. One picture that occupied a special place in my heart was the Herzl stamp of the Jewish National Fund. This stamp pictures Herzl, during a recess in the sessions of the First Zionist Congress, standing on the Wettstein Bridge over the Rhine River, resting his arms on its protective railing and looking as if in a reverie, into the vastness about him. As a child, I promised myself that if ever I went to Basle, I too would stand on this very same bridge and see that which Herzl saw. Both of these childhood dreams — to visit the site of the First Zionist Congress and to stand on "Herzl's Bridge"

(continued on next page)

BASLE (Continued)

— were realized in the summer of 1986, 89 years after the First Zionist Congress changed the course of Jewish history.

Buildings in small European towns are not razed with the frequency that they are elsewhere, so that Stadkasino on Steinenberg Gasse has remained unaltered for the last nine decades. But there is nothing whatsoever to indicate the uniqueness of this building. There is no sign anywhere — not on the street or on the building itself. Not a single tourist bus stops to unload its passengers for a quick look-see. There is simply nothing to make a passerby pause and look. Only inside the Congress Hall itself is there a modest plaque indicating that it was here that the foundation was laid for the modern Jewish State.

Today, as one enters the building and ascends the gracious, old-world staircase to the spacious foyer adjoining in Congress Hall, one seems to be transported to another era. One can almost hear the babble of the various languages spoken by the delegates from Tolna, Paris, Jassy, Warsaw, Mayence, Baltimore, Bobruisk, Vienna, Lemberg, Stockholm, New York, Berlin — delegates who created, for the first time in 2,000 years of Jewish history, a Jewish organization on a world-size scale — the World Zionist Organization.

As one enters the Hall itself and gazes at the platform on which Herzl stood, one senses, in the fullest measure, the sentiments expressed by Chaim Weizmann. Speaking at the 50th Jubilee Celebration of Zionism at Basle on August 31, 1947, Weizmann said that although he was not present at the First Zionist Congress, "Herzl became a monumental, mythical figure — something out of legend, not only in the eyes of those who came in direct contact with him, but also in those of people who never saw him. To see him . . . was an unforgettable experience. He glowed at a time radium was not yet known with a kind of Zionist radioactivity, electrifying his entire environment." Eighty-nine years have passed, but his glow somehow still dominates the Hall and I could still feel it.

Herzl himself, on September 3, 1897, wrote that "if I were to sum up the Basle Congress in a single phrase — which I would not dare to make public — I would say: In Basle I created the Jewish State. Were I to say this aloud I would be greeted by universal laughter. But perhaps five years hence, certainly fifty years hence, everybody will perceive it."

Unable to resist the temptation, I walked up to the dais on which Herzl had stood, and I suddenly remembered the moment I had shaken hands with Herschel Farbstein and felt enveloped by the majesty of Jewish history. I could actually hear the words of Herzl echo and re-echo in the innermost recesses of my being — "In Basle I created the Jewish State."

Six bridges span the Rhine as it winds its way through the center of Basle, but the most magnificent view of the city is from the Wettstein Bridge. Silhouetting the skyline at Gross Basle's highest point, on a steep hillside above the banks of the river, is the dark red sandstone Cathedral with its graceful twin towers and colorful roof. Pressed one against the other all around this old Cathedral, which was consecrated at the beginning of the 11th century, are the splendid old buildings of Basle and a maze of quaint old lanes and busy streets. Here also nothing seems changed: judged from the bas-relief at the Bezalel Museum and the Jewish National Fund stamp, even the protective railing of the bridge appears to be unaltered. However, the view pictured on the Jewish National Fund stamp is not the view I just described, for the tourist looks into space and only sees the physical scenery and landscapes while Herzl looked out into time. He looked backwards into the past, far beyond the Basle Cathedral and its 11th century beginnings, and saw instead the Tower of David which, according to legend, was built by King David and immortalized by King Solomon in the Song of Songs. And he also looked forward in time and saw in his vision the future — the *halutzim* (pioneers) of the 20th century, ascending the difficult ridge of Aliyah, ready "to build the land and be rebuilt by it": one of the figures raising his hand and beckoning his fellow Jews to follow suit and join in the great heroic effort "to secure for the Jewish people a publicly recognized, legally secured homeland in Palestine," the basis of the Basle Program adopted at the First Zionist Congress.

— Rabbi Ezra Gellman

From the diary of
ALEX SINGER



[A terrorist squad on its way to an attack inside Israel last September, was met by a unit of the Israel Defense Force patrolling the security strip in southern Lebanon. Alex Singer, commanding officer of the unit, was killed. He died on his 25th birthday.]

Once in a while,
As I progress towards the course's end,
I feel a pang of fear.

Today I felt such fear.

If the war comes
When the war comes
I will have to lead men to die.

But those men were not men a short time ago
Some don't even shave yet.
And I will have to have the calm power
to yell to them
or to whisper,

Kadima.

And,

I will have to have the calm power
to step forward myself.

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GAMLA: A JEWISH POMPEII?



High up in Israel's Golan is a hill which, they say, looks like a camel's back. The ancients who first settled the spot called it Gamla — Aramaic for camel. From the foot of the hill, the grassy, symmetric humps of earth rise in the distance. Nourished by melting snows from nearby Mount Hermon, the hill and valley below are eternally green. In springtime, the entire valley bursts with flowers — poppies, sweetpeas, cyclamen and fennel. Falcons, cranes and eagles fly overhead. Beyond the hilltop the Sea of Galilee shines like a plate of pure silver in the late afternoon sun.

But Gamla is not a spot known primarily for its beauty. It is one of those awful places, like Betar or Kishinev, where Jewish blood ran so thick that it stained the earth for years. It was here in 67 C.E., three years before the destruction of the Second Temple and six years before the fall of Masada, that several thousand Jewish men, women and children challenged the forces of Imperial Rome. Armed with homemade bows, arrows and slingshots, they held back their attackers for a month. After a brutal siege, the Roman legions, led by Vespasian and his son Titus, broke through the town's thick outer wall with battering rams. With the enemy at their backs, the 4,000 remaining Jews flung themselves from the rocky cliffs on the outskirts to their deaths.

The notion of a small town of Jews taking on the mightiest army in the world sounds preposterous and, sadly, familiar. But from within the ruined town walls it is evident why the men of Gamla believed that their town could withstand even Roman attack.

Geographically, Gamla is virtually impregnable. The town stands on a hill which falls away sharply at both sides. Surrounding the hill are impassable ravines, except on one side, where the wall stood. Built of thick black basalt boulderstone, the ancient wall is 20 feet wide at some points and was erected with the clear intention to keep intruders out.

In his account of the battle, Josephus Flavius describes the town as appearing to "hang in the air." The houses were built into the side of the hill, huddled together so closely that one man's roof was another man's street.

As the Romans marched up the sides of the hill and into the town, the Jews rained rocks and arrowheads on their attackers from positions in the upper part of the town. Josephus reports that the Jewish rebels inflicted heavy casualties. Unable to advance, the Romans fled to the lower town. Under their immense weight, wooden rooftops gave way, crushing hundreds of soldiers to death.

Vespasian was humiliated by the setback. The Jewish victory only increased his determination to take the town. He rallied his remaining troops, exhorting them that the honor of Rome was at stake, and he ordered fresh recruits and supplies. Reinforced with an additional legion commanded by his son Titus, Vespasian once again charged up the hill into the town.

Nearly 2,000 years later, Gamla is still littered with the remains of the battle. Strewn about are the arrowheads, catapults and slingshot stones. Most of the buildings are either partially or completely destroyed, a testament to the severity of the battle. Five thousand Jews were killed in the fighting. The 4,000 who remained jumped from the cliffs, rather than be butchered by the Romans.

Josephus's account of the battle in *The Jewish Wars* ensured that the story of Gamla was not forgotten. But for years no one could locate the camel-backed hill where the fighting took place. Some historians began to wonder whether the story had been fabricated.

After the 1967 war, with the Golan under Israeli rule, archeologist Shmaryahu Guttman set out to find the remains of the ancient town. "I felt that the others had failed to find the spot because they didn't understand Josephus properly," he explains. The largely self-taught maverick had been part of the team that excavated Masada.

(continued on next page)

GAMLA (continued)

At Masada, Guttman began to read Josephus with new eyes. For many years, his writing on the Great Revolt were discredited, particularly in Israel, because their author (who changed his name from Yosef Ben Matityahu to Josephus Flavius in honor of the ruling Roman house) was a Roman sympathizer and apostate Jew. Scion of a priestly family, Ben Matityahu began his military career as commander of the Jewish forces in the Galilee. Ironically, one of his tasks was to erect the fortification wall surrounding Gamla. After his troops were bitterly defeated at Jotapa, and convinced that the Jewish revolt was doomed, Josephus offered his services to the Roman Empire and guided the Roman legions on their sweep through the Galilee, witnessing most of the battles he later recorded in his histories.

Based on his experience at Masada, Guttman became convinced that Josephus's account is the most accurate record of the period. "I took Josephus with me as a guide (at Gamla) and I found the place exactly as he described it, both in topographical form and in the dates of the archeological materials I found there," he says.

In 1976 Guttman started to unearth Gamla's remains. Assisted by volunteers from all over the world, he excavated an entire urban settlement, uncovering homes, factories and places of worship dating from the second and third centuries before the Common Era.

Guttman believes that with the proper financial backing the town could become a "Jewish Pompeii." Until now, he has not been able to attract a wealthy patron to allow him to complete the project. Each spring and summer, the digging continues piecemeal, with a 76-year-old Guttman personally supervising the volunteers.

After more than a decade of work, much of the town has been uncovered. Following the path of the Romans, one enters through the town wall, at one of the three points where the battering ram struck. The first major site is the synagogue. According to most archeologists, the Gamla synagogue — which dates from the first century before the Common Era — is the oldest such remnant found in Israel. Though the Talmud states that during the Second Temple period Israel abounded with places of worship, no others have been located.

To the untrained eye, the large Greco-Roman ruin offers no hint of its sacred function. Built into the walls are broad stone benches arranged in steps, indicating that the hall was used for public assembly. But there is no Hebrew writing on the walls, no Jewish symbols on the broken-shaped columns. Yet the rectangular structure faces westward, toward Jerusalem, and built into the northwest wall is a niche to hold the Torah scrolls. Next door to the synagogue is a ritual bath, one of several found at Gamla. Experts have determined that it is a kosher *mikve*, constructed in accordance with the specifications of Jewish law.

Further up the hill of the stepped town was the industrial district. In its heyday, Gamla was a regional center. Farmers came in from the valley bringing their wheat to be ground into flour and their olives to be pressed into oil. The remains of several grinding stations and presses were found in this part of town.

In the ancient world, olive oil was highly valued, not only as a delicacy, but for its medicinal properties and as a fuel. The finest quality olive oil was set aside for use in rituals at the Temple in Jerusalem. Since this oil had to be in a state of ritual purity, the place where it was pressed contains a *mikve*, so that employees could immerse on the job.

Other relics from the town, including glassware, pottery shards and jewelry, are displayed at the archeological museum in Katzrin, about six miles to the north. The museum, which is open every day except Shabbat until 1:00 P.M. also contains a scale model of the town with diagrams of the battle. There are English-speaking guides and it's worth a side trip.

According to Guttman, Gamla was founded around 240 B.C.E. by Jews returning from the Babylonian exile. He suspects that the deeply religious settlers chose to settle the isolated spot to remove themselves from the Hellenistic influences then dominant in Israel. But even though the hillside town appears to stand alone, it was near the intersection of major trade routes to Syria and other nations of the ancient Near East. The melting snows from Mount Hermon and several wells within the town assured a constant and abundant water supply.

The town's location would later prove to be of strategic value. During the revolt, Galma was the supply center for Jewish fighters in the northern Galilee. The Jewish communities of Mesopotamia supported the uprising against the Romans and supplied the rebels with food and

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GAMLA (*Continued*)

munitions, which were sent through Gamla. Because of this, the Romans knew that if they could take Gamla, Jewish supply lines in the Galilee would be cut off and they could march to Jerusalem uninterrupted.

Knowing that their town was an important obstacle in the way of the Roman advance, the Jews of Gamla fought valiantly. Coins minted in Gamla during the revolt bear the inscriptions "Jerusalem, the Holy City" on one side and "Redemption" on the other. These coins, which are displayed at the Israel Museum are evidence of how seriously the Jews of Gamla regarded their position. This explains their readiness to fight against impossible odds, and their sense that their defeat was a prelude to the fall of Jerusalem.

Alongside the rocky cliffs are markers engraved with sections from *The Jewish Wars*, describing the mass suicide.

Today, after 2,000 years, Gamla is once again in Jewish hands. Tourists and vacationers come to breathe fresh mountain air and enjoy the year-round greenery. They meander through the quiet ruins, vaguely aware of what happened here. The camel-backed hill is the same as it has been since the beginning of time. The trees and shrubs bloom, leaving no hint that armies once scorched the earth that nourishes them. Occasionally an eagle flies by, the only living reminder of the once mighty empire that tried to destroy Jewish nationhood.

— Carol Ungar

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A series describing memorials displayed in our Synagogue

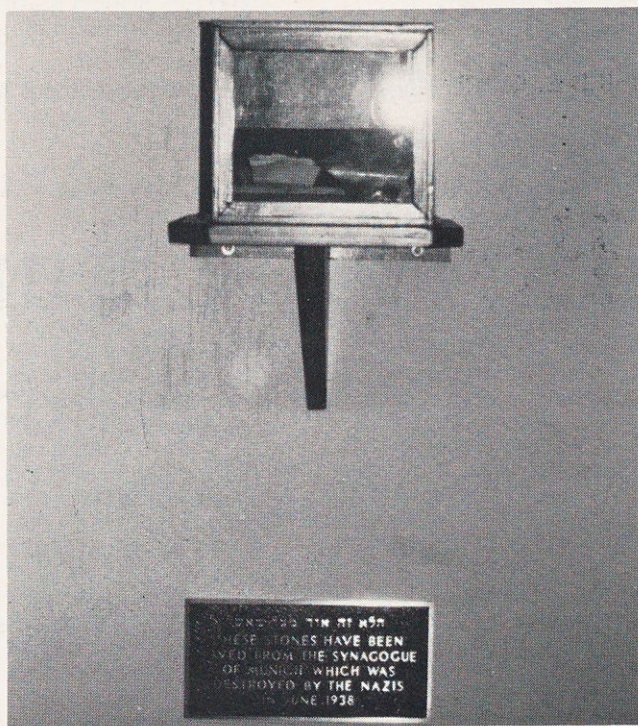


PHOTO: COURTESY OF GARY WEIL

III REMNANTS OF A SYNAGOGUE

Jewish life centers around the synagogue. When our nation was young, shortly after it gained freedom from Egyptian bondage, traveling through the wilderness to the Promised Land, it was grouped around the Tabernacle housing the Holy Ark. King Solomon later replaced it with the magnificent Holy Temple in Jerusalem. After the Temple's destruction, the Prophet Ezekiel brought G'd's soothing message to the exiles: "... although I have cast them far away among the nations, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a small sanctuary in the countries where they shall come" [11:16].

And so it was. Wherever we settled, our first concern was always to establish a "small sanctuary," a synagogue. Modest or luxurious, small or spacious, built or rented, on their synagogues Jews lavished love and care, for in them they perceived the memory of Jerusalem's glorious, majestic Temple. G'd's house and *their* house, solemnly dedicated, sanctified and maintained, it serves as the center of the Jewish community.

What is holy to the Jew, is hated by his enemy. Throughout our tear-and-blood-drenched history, the synagogues aroused the blind fury of anti-Semites. And each attack, whether "mild" vandalism or brutal demolition, is an excruciating blow felt as if it were inflicted on our bodies.

Whereas Kristallnacht, that fateful November night 1938 saw Nazi savagery perpetuated on 267 synagogues in the infamous Third Reich, Munich's largest synagogue fell victim earlier. On the express orders of Hitler, it was torn down some five months prior to the pogrom in which all Jewish places of worship were destroyed. A few stones, snatched from the rubble of the Munich synagogue, are lovingly preserved in a place of honor in our house of worship. A plaque, bearing a verse from Zechariah [3:3] "Is this not a brand plucked out of the fire?" has the following inscription: "THESE STONES HAVE BEEN SAVED FROM THE SYNAGOGUE OF MUNICH WHICH WAS DESTROYED BY THE NAZIS IN JUNE 1938."

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WE REMEMBER

*the departed brothers and sisters inscribed on the Memorial Windows
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5	16	Samuel Eberhardt	14	25	Therese Stern	
5	16	Ann Lewy	15	26	Fritz Brandeis	
5	16	Mina Strassburger	15	26	Elfriede Breslauer	
6	17	Anna Feuer	15	26	Julie Horn	
6	17	Arthur Gottlieb	15	26	Ludwig Landenberger	
6	17	Martha Gruenbaum	15	26	Margarete Meyer	
6	17	Leo Lesser	15	26	Meta Rosenthal	
6	17	Recha Mathes	15	26	Paul Scherlinski	
6	17	Sigmund Neubauer	15	26	Hugo Schloss	
6	17	Isak Plaut	16	27	Bertha Herzberg	
6	17	Bertha Seelig	16	27	Isidor Kraus	
7	18	Lotte Adler	16	27	Herman Levi	
7	18	Bernard Appel	16	27	Jenny Pinkesfeld	
7	18	Bertha Dreifuss	16	27	Regina Rosenthal	
7	18	Max Friedman	16	27	Julius Schoenberger	
7	18	Johanna Kirschner	16	27	David Schuelein	
7	18	Albert Leiter	16	27	Hugo Ullman	
7	18	Rita Lowenberg	17	28	Bertha Froehlich	
7	18	Ernesto Stadecker	17	28	Max Louis Gutman	
7	18	Arthur Trautmann	17	28	Isidor Lewy	
7	18	Kenneth Zimmermann	17	28	Bernard Lowenstein	
7	18	Isidor Weil	17	28	Irma Marx	
8	19	Albert Falk	17	28	Leo Stern	
8	19	Moses Gruen	17	28	Babette Wild	
8	19	Siegfried Kahn	17	28	Henriette Wolf	
8	19	Abraham Kosinetz	18	29	Martha Herz	
8	19	Fritz David Lehman	18	29	Julius Schaler	
9	20	Bernhard Behrens	18	29	Ethel Sinnreich	
9	20	Julie Gruenberg				
9	20	Anna Hermann	19	Nisan	1	Gustav Bendheim
9	20	Hellmuth Hirschheimer	19	1	Hugo Hirsch	
9	20	David Liebmman	19	1	Arthur Kahn	
9	20	Johanna Liebmman	19	1	Hannah Kavern	
9	20	Meta Weil	20	2	Rabbi Dr. Leo Baerwald	
10	21	Dr. Ferdinand Hermann	20	2	Henriette Bensinger	
10	21	Jolan Schlee	20	2	Julius Hellman	
12	23	Joseph Adler	20	2	Paula Kalter	
12	23	Seli Heldmann	20	2	Willi Oppenheim	
12	23	Lawrence Hirsch	20	2	Adolf Sass	
12	23	Margot Hirsch-Reese	21	3	Elsie Blumenthal	
12	23	Hugo Horwitz	21	3	Selma Hamburger	
12	23	Hugo Voss	21	3	Max Hubert	
13	24	Betty Kraus	21	3	Steven S. Kahn	
13	24	Bertha Wiesenber	21	3	Bertha Rosenberg	
14	25	Joseph Feuer	21	3	Meta Stern	
14	25	Max Gitterman				

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WE REMEMBER (Continued)

March	Nisan		March	Nisan	
22	4	Ludwig Bruckheimer	31	13	Jettchen Griesheim
22	4	Gustav Stock	31	13	Irma Waelder
22	5	Julius Katzenstein	<i>April</i>		
23	5	Dr. Otto L. Kupfer	1	14	Flora F. Freyer
23	5	Isaak Selig	1	14	Rudolf Strauss
23	5	Dr. Paul Simon	2	15	Paula Alexander
24	6	Martha Lasker	2	15	Alexander Bauer
24	6	David Neumann	2	15	Helene Gowa
24	6	Leopold Weil	2	15	Jacob Gutwillig
25	7	Sally Hammerschlag	2	15	Samuel Hirschheimer
25	7	Herta Salomon	2	15	Julius Jacob
26	8	Julius Benjamin	2	15	Albert Katzenstein
26	8	Max Fein	2	15	Fred Loewengart
26	8	Recha Fein	2	15	Ferdinand Mayer
26	8	Hilde Kahn	2	15	Rudolf Strauss
26	8	Auguste Levi	2	15	Betty Strauss
26	8	Henry Miller	3	16	Fred Marx
26	8	Babette Noerdlinger	3	16	Berta Mueller
26	8	Gustav Sacki	3	16	Clara Neu
26	8	Ida Sacki	3	16	Herman Schlee
26	8	Bella Schloss	4	17	Eva Badt
26	8	Margit Schloss	4	17	Nette Loeb
26	8	Leonore Soika	4	17	Sanna Ottenheimer
26	8	Adele Strauss	4	17	Rabbi, Dr. Hugo Stransky
27	9	Siegmund Ehrlich	5	18	Elsa Angres
27	9	Jack Goldfarb	5	18	Irma Henlein
27	9	Rebecca Neu	5	18	Lisa Wertheimer
27	9	Herman Schulhoff	5	18	Hedwig Wolff
28	10	Isidor Bensinger	6	19	Samuel Stein
28	10	Ella Israel	7	20	Irma Levite
28	10	Liebmann Kaufman	7	20	Imanuel Rosenfeld
28	10	Sally Nauman	7	20	Emil Silbermann
29	11	Berta Friedberg	7	20	Sessi Wertheim
29	11	Gretchen Gutmann	8	21	Herman Gundelfinger
29	11	Johanna Koestrich	8	21	Johanna Kahn
29	11	Philipp Lehr	8	21	Max Katzenstein
30	12	Henry Lichtenstein			

(continued on next page)

MONUMENTS**JERRY TRAUBER**

142 LANGHAM STREET
Brooklyn, New York 11235

Phone 1-718-743-9218**(By Appointment)***Successor to:*

EMANUEL NEUBRUNN
MEMORIAL STUDIO

WE REMEMBER (Continued)

<i>April</i>	<i>Nisan</i>		<i>April</i>	<i>Iyar</i>	
8	21	Siegfried Wertheim	20	3	Elsa Wortsman
9	22	Dora Abeles	21	4	Irma Erlebacher
9	22	Max Abeles	21	4	Max Hamburger
9	22	Dr. Leopold Landenberger	21	4	Elsie Hirsch
9	22	Emil Oppenheimer	21	4	Emma Leitner
9	22	Irene Winter	22	5	Frieda Brotman
10	23	Aron Gottlieb	22	5	Peter J. Dienstag
10	23	Sarah Berney	22	5	Emil Dreyfuss
10	23	Victor Marx	22	5	Gabriel Klein
11	24	Jack Kayem	22	5	Salomon Loeb
11	24	Simon Stern	22	5	Fred Neubauer
12	25	Josef Holzer	23	6	Hedwig Fischel
12	25	Laura Schorsch	23	6	Alice Seligmann
13	26	Anna Perry	23	6	Walter Stein
13	26	Herbert Wolf	24	7	Bertha Kahn
14	27	Naftali Feingold	25	8	Goetz Hellmann
14	27	Lazarus Heinsfurter	26	9	Alexander Bloch
14	27	Benno Levy	26	9	Max Ransenberg
14	27	Amson Schloss	27	10	Bertha Freitag
14	27	Bertha Veis	27	10	Paula Gutwillig
14	27	Jacob Veis	27	10	Raphael Felix Hayum
15	28	Fanny Auerhann	27	10	Hermann Wertheimer
16	29	Flora Neubauer	28	11	Rosette Kaufmann
16	29	Irving Isidor Simon	28	11	Fred Royce
16	29	Jenny Strauss	28	11	Leo Traub
17	30	Meinhard Marx	29	12	Morris Hirsch
17	30	Matylda Morawetz	29	12	Otto Lowenstein
	<i>Iyar</i>		29	12	Arthur Nathan
18	1	Dr. Joseph Cahn	30	13	Henriette Brunn
18	1	Else Grossman	30	13	Eric Gross
18	1	Max Herz	30	13	Gustav Daniel
18	1	Adelheid Mannheimer	30	13	Martha Lafarque
19	2	Leopold Kronnenberger	30	13	Flora Strauss
19	2	Lothar Strauss	<i>May</i>		
20	3	Ignaz Benedikt	1	14	Stephanie Greenbaum
20	3	Norbert Hess	1	14	Jack W. Levi
20	3	Salli Levi			

(continued on next page)

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WE REMEMBER (Continued)

May	Iyar		May	Iyar	
1	14	Willi Schiff	15	28	Max Neumann
2	15	Mordko Katz	16	29	Ernest Gutmann
2	15	Lisel Leiter	16	29	Igo F. Gutman
2	15	Bernard Philippson	16	29	Eugenie Kahn
3	16	Erna Heilbronn	16	29	Siegfried Rothschild
3	16	Karl Lichtenstein			<i>Sivan</i>
3	16	Erna Stern	17	1	Julius Lehmann
3	16	Sol Stern	17	1	Sidi Lorsch
3	16	Recha Strauss	17	1	Herta Losman
4	17	Heymann Grossman	17	1	Josef Losman
4	17	Arthur Jacoby	18	2	Benjamin Vosen
4	17	Ludwig Kahn	19	3	Sofie Goldschmidt
5	18	Siegfried Heyman	19	3	Joseph Gottlieb
5	18	Manny Hoffman	20	4	Ella Strauss
5	18	Michael Singer	20	4	Clementine Wollenreich
6	19	Selma Adler	21	5	Rosel Rachel Bruchfeld
6	19	Henry Falkenstein	21	5	Jonas Frank
8	21	Joseph Freitag	21	5	Fanny Levite
8	21	Minna Hanau	21	5	Doris Schuelein
8	21	Stephen Schoemann	22	6	Dr. Isak Heilbronn
9	22	Bertha Friedberger	22	6	Jenny Katzenstein
9	22	Louis Heilbrunn	22	6	Auguste Wolf
9	22	Sylvia Mintz	23	7	Thekla Alexander
9	22	Anna Voss	23	7	Lina Gitterman
10	23	Klara Breslauer	23	7	Emil Liffgens
10	23	Morris Moser	23	7	Irma Liffgens
11	24	Doris A. Jacoby	23	7	Helene Mayer
11	24	Isaak Schoen	23	7	Berta Oppenheimer
12	25	Max Hammerschlag	24	8	Sally Hirsch
12	25	Michael Holzer	24	8	Anna Pollack
12	25	Henny Katz	24	8	Renate & Sally Pollack
12	25	Fanny Moser	24	8	Walter Ronner
12	25	Fred Reich	25	9	Balbine Heldman
13	26	Babette Himmelreich	25	9	Samuel Hess
13	26	Emanuel Himmelreich	25	9	Leonie Schlossberger
13	26	Malchen Oppenheimer	25	9	Philip Wolfermann
13	26	Ida Strauss	26	10	Alfred Katzenstein
14	27	Helen Gutkind	26	10	Louis Weil
14	27	Babette Levi	26	10	Jacob Winter
14	27	Max Plaut	27	11	Nanny Frank
14	27	Meyer Rosenberg	27	11	Caroline Kronenberger
14	27	David Meyer	27	11	Kurt Nathan
15	28	Lina Goetz	27	11	Friedrich Schwarz
15	28	Bertha Lemberger			

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



A SUGGESTION TO OUR MEMBERS

Our Congregation has received during the last years substantial amounts under the Wills of members and friends of our Congregation for the purpose of keeping the memory of their loved ones alive.

The form of such provisions usually reads as follows:

"I hereby give and bequeath the sum of . . . Dollars to Congregation Beth Hillel & Beth Israel, Inc. with present offices at 571 West 182nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10033, with the proviso that the Congregation causes Kaddish, the traditional prayer in commemoration of the departed persons, to be recited during the year of mourning and on the Yahrzeit days (the annual anniversary dates of my death)."

We suggest that our members and friends who want to act in a similar manner contact their lawyers and discuss with them the insertion of such a provision in their own Last Wills.

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President

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