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JEWISH MUSIC MONTH

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WORDS

from Rabbi Saul J. Berman

Deep in the forest there lived a wonderful beast named Ephram, Ephram the elephant. Ephram the elephant loved all the other animals of the forest and, since he was big and strong, always wanted to do things to help others. And he did. One time Ephram the elephant was walking in the forest. He saw a whole family of monkeys chattering excitedly, upset, in a tree. Ephram walked over to them and said, "Is there a problem?" They said, "Yes, there is a very serious problem. The tree in which we usually reside—we can't stay there anymore because a nest of vipers has settled right near the tree. That has driven us away." "Well, Ephram said, don't worry. I'll go there and I'll take care of it because, after all, I have very thick skin and I'm not afraid of the vipers. I'll drive them away so that you'll be able to go live in your tree again."

The monkeys were very relieved, and they began chattering happily amongst themselves as Ephram walked away to take care of the problem. As Ephram was leaving, he noticed a group of young monkeys playing baseball with some coconuts. Ephram thought that was very funny and decided that he would watch just for a few minutes. After all, he knew that he had a responsibility to take care of and he would do it, but just a little bit later. So Ephram sat down, thinking that he would watch just one inning. But it was really exciting and it was fun to watch. He watched the second inning, and the third, and pretty soon, Ephram found himself staying to watch the entire game. Indeed, by the time the game was over, Ephram had completely forgotten that he was going to take care of a problem.

The next morning as Ephram was walking through the forest he came upon a lioness living in a cave. Ephram began talking to the lioness, and the lioness said that she really had a serious problem. One of her lion cubs was ill and she had to stay nearby to take care of him. But that meant that she was not able to go out and hunt to provide food for her cubs. "Well," Ephram said. "That's no problem. I'll take care of that for you. I'll go out and hunt for you, and I'll come back and provide you the food for your family." The lioness was very relieved as she turned and went back into her cave to take care of her sick cub, knowing that food would soon arrive.

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Jewish Music Month



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The passing of Sam Feld leaves a void that can not be filled.

The emptiness is sorely felt by his loving wife, children and extended family around the world. But for me and other long-standing members of the Shul, the loss is also institutional.

Mr. Feld, few of us "youngsters" dared to call him Sam, was a sublime teacher in the true Lincoln Square spirit. As *gabbai rishon* he epitomized commitment to those *mitzvot* and *minhagim* that are at the core of a shul's spirit - the prayer service and *k'riyat haTorah* - the reading of the Torah. As *gabbai*, he dominated the *Bimah*, and dignified the service for more years than anyone else. He was steadfast in preserving a tradition of "*derech eretz*" - good manners - and that dedication extended to a zealous loyalty on behalf of our Rabbis and Chazzan. I remember the passion with which he once spoke out publicly when he felt that congregational leaders had wronged one of our Rabbis.

But with all of the serious devotion to serving *HaShem*, Mr. Feld gloried in a spirited debate over a verse of *Chumash* or an issue in the Talmud. There too he typified what LSS stands for, a commitment to inclusive and tolerant questioning - the active (not passive) learning of Torah.

Mr. Feld was always the star at Simchat Torah and Purim. With a joke and twinkle in his eye he obeyed the commandment to "rejoice in your festivals and be altogether joyful".

Most of us were present at his last Aliyah and remember the moment vividly. Mr. Feld, in severely failing health, was helped to the *Shulchan*. The congregation had just sung a *Mazel Tov* for the gentleman who had the previous *Aliyah* - he had become a father. Mr. Feld stood straight and completed his *brachot*. "What?" he asked, "no song for me?"

The song for Mr. Feld is one we all know:

"Light is sown for the righteous, and rejoicing for the upright in heart".

May his family know of no more sorrow. May his memory and legacy remain part of Lincoln Square always, impelling us to greater and greater devotion to *HaShem* and his Torah.

Perry Davis

WHAT IS JEWISH MUSIC?

Strangely enough, at the turn of the 20th Century, most of the musical world refused to believe, or even consider, that there was such a thing as "Jewish Music." Most musical "authorities" claimed that the Jews never had a music of their own, but borrowed from every nation on the globe as they traveled. After the bitter and sarcastic writings of Richard Wagner—the darling of Western Music—the credibility of Jewish musical origins was literally destroyed. It is only in the past half-century that the musical world is beginning to admit the existence of an authentic, original music of the Jewish people. The world is slowly recognizing that the Jewish people—who have wandered across the face of this earth for two thousand years of scorn and ridicule—have a musical tradition which is the *origin* and forerunner of "Western World" music from its very beginning!

Jewish music begins with the tune of the Torah, which according to tradition, dates back to Sinai. We know as a definite historical fact, that there was a system of music used in the reading of the Torah after 444 B.C.E. when Ezra the Scribe began to read the Torah publicly. In the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, a great choir and orchestra of Levites sang and played a musical arrangement to the Psalms and prayers of the Temple Service, in part adapted from an older tradition of Torah melodies and chants. After the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E., musical instruments were completely abandoned, and only vocal music was retained.

Curiously enough, the key to proving the ancienticity of Jewish Music lies in discovering the origin of our Western symphonic musical tradition. We know that Mozart and Beethoven—who established the "rules" of Western music—based their music on a style and system traceable to Palestrina (d. 1594), the great composer of the Catholic Church. The music of the church evolved from Pope Gregory (d. 604) who standardized the "Gregorian" melodies and modes that the church was to use as a musical foundation for the next 1,000 years of church music. Where did Gregory get his models from which he chose his official tunes and musical modes? These he took from the existent music of the early church in use at that time. He sifted through these melodies, discarding some while maintaining others, and established a set pattern. The crucial question is—where did the music already being used come from? We must remember that a majority of the early Christians were proselytized Jews who converted after fleeing the destruction of Israel in 70 C.E. The only music they knew was that of the Temple and the small synagogues that had grown in Israel during the time of the Second Temple. The hypothesis is that early church music *was* Jewish in origin, and in fact, taken from the Temple itself! In fact, the early church fathers such as Augustine, Eusebius, et al, in their writings constantly refer to the "Traditional chant of the Temple in Jerusalem" which they were utilizing in their own services. Proof to this is offered by Professor A. Z. Idelsohn who, at the turn of the century, made Jewish music his life's work, and wrote a monumental encyclopedia of Jewish music that established it as authentic, historical and worthy of scientific study. He transcribed thousands of Oriental Jewish melodies in his world travels. Most interesting are the sacred melodies of the Yemenites, whose community was cut off from contact with Western Civilization for more than 15 centuries. Their tunes are directly traceable to the songs of Israel in the time of the Second Temple. The amazing discovery was that these Yemenite tunes were in many tens of cases, almost identical to the early Ambrosian and Gregorian chants of the church! We know that the Yemenites never came into contact with these two churches and cultures. Therefore, we must conclude that both are two branches that come from one source: the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and the melodies and chants used there and throughout the land of Israel during the Second Temple period!

Despite the shock into which this revelation would put Richard Wagner if he were to examine this proof, very few musicologists today can deny the inevitable conclusion: That Jewish music is the origin of "Western World" music.

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CHAZZANUT—HOW TO LEARN TO ENJOY IT

Of all the forms that Jewish music takes, chazzanut may be the most difficult to appreciate. In a sense, it is the Jewish form of serious or classical music. And just as classical music is an acquired taste, so chazzanut needs to be worked at to be understood.

At one time, before the advent of recordings and mass entertainment, a performance by a chazzan and his choir was the major form of entertainment for Jewish people. But somehow the line between entertainment and davening became blurred. Chazzanim started to sing many pieces in shul which were composed for the concert stage and which were never intended to be used in the davening.

In our day, many people tend to avoid shuls where the chazzan gives lengthy, flowery performances. Yet almost everyone can sing or hum a melody made famous by one of the great chazzanim, even if they don't know its origin.

You might like, therefore, to learn to appreciate chazzanut outside of a shul setting, through recordings and concerts. There is a vast range of recordings available by virtually all the great chazzanim of this century which you may sample to discover your own preferences.

Listen to the music a few times before you decide if you really like it or not. See how it reflects your own understanding of the words of the prayer. Or just enjoy it for the vocal artistry of the performer. Remember that—as in any art form—not every piece is of the same high quality, and you have to learn how to choose what is worth listening to.

Here then, as a starting point, is my own personal list of the five greatest chazzanim of this century who have left us extensive recordings:

*Gershon Sirota (1874-1943) was one of the most powerful and highly trained tenors anywhere in this century, with climactic top notes and outstanding voice control. Sirota, the only one of the great chazzanim not to accept a position in America, perished in the Warsaw ghetto. You can hear the emotional intensity of his dramatic voice in the famous *Retzei*, and in his *Unesaneh Tokef*. You might also appreciate his fine recording of the Puccini aria *E Lucevan le Stelle*.

*The most popular chazzan of his day was Yossele Rosenblatt (1882-1933) who, incidentally, was an Upper West Sider for most of his American career. Rosenblatt possessed a glorious tenor voice with the exceptional range of two and a half octaves. His hundreds of compositions, including the very popular *Shir Hamaalos*, reflect his Chassidic background in their tunefulness. Listen to his *Hineni*, *Geshem*, or *Ato Yotsarto* to hear his range—both vocal and emotional.

*Mordechai Herschman (1888-1940), one of the line of great chazzanim to have served at Temple Beth-El in Boro Park, was a master of the Yiddish folksong, as well as of chazzanut. The warmth of his singing, and the power and sweetness of his tenor voice are evident in such pieces as *Eilu Devarim*, *Umipnei Chata'enu*, and *Tal*.

*One of the most dramatic and moving pieces of chazzanut is *Tiher Rabbi Yishma'el*, as sung by Zavel Kwartin (1874-1953). In his early recordings, you can hear his ringing tenor voice, which later in life darkened to a rich, dramatic baritone. The intensity of Kwartin's phrasing and delivery make him very worthwhile listening to.

*Moshe Koussevitzky (1899-1966) is still remembered by many as the greatest chazzan of his time. He had a graceful and powerful lyric tenor with a phenomenal upper register with which he could do wonders. For sheer artistry, it's hard to beat his renditions of *Hashem Moloch*, *Ad Heino Azorunu Rachamecha*, or *Ledor Vodor*. Koussevitzky's version of Israel Schorr's *Sheyiboneh Bais Hamikdosh* may be the best known of all liturgical recordings.

There are, of course, many more to try, some of whom may be easier to appreciate, such as Shmuel Malavsky, Moishe Oysher, Leibele Waldman, Sholom Katz, or Richard Tucker. And if you would like to hear a live performance by some of the leading chazzanim of our own day, look out for concerts by Moshe Stern, Ben Zion Miller or David Bagly among others.

Since chazzanut is a genuinely Jewish art form, there's a special satisfaction involved in enjoying it. You may also discover that—through your enjoyment of the music—you will greatly enhance your familiarity with the words of the davening. The rewards are many and varied, so buy or borrow your first recordings and learn to appreciate the unique manner in which generations of our people have chosen to address the Almighty, through words and through song.

David Olivestone

A METHOD TO HIS MUSIC

It was a typically, cold, blustery Friday afternoon as I entered Lincoln Square Synagogue. The congregation sounded tired and subdued (reflecting a hard work-week, I mused) as they davened the Mincha service. With the completion of Alenu, the congregation sat down with such weariness that I wondered how we would all get through Kabbalat Shabbat.

But as Cantor Sherwood Goffin quickly walked to the bimah with an energetic "bounce" in his step, I knew we would all be "saved." As he chanted the preparatory Shabbat psalm, "Yedid Nefesh," the congregation almost all at once picked up their ears and joined with the chazzan in singing a lively rendition of the psalm.

The warmth, intensity, sincerity and enthusiasm that Chazzan Sherwood Goffin (affectionately known to everyone as "the Chaz") displays in his role as Chazzan of Lincoln Square Synagogue, are a result of a deep understanding of the function that the chazzan has played in Jewish tradition.

He says, "The chazzan must view himself as the one who puts out his fist and knocks on God's door saying, 'We are here. We have something to say to you.'"

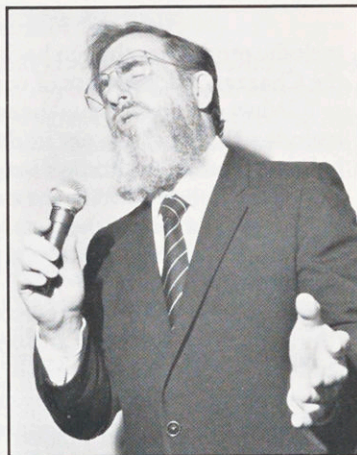
That "something to say" changes with the seasons of the year, and the onset of different festivals and days of mourning. But even throughout the year, there is an underlying theme that connects Chazzan Goffin to the congregation. He explains, "I see my role as giving Tefillah (the communal prayer) cohesiveness and unity, and to enhance the religious intensity of the congregation's prayers. The chazzan should view the people who make up the Kahal as individuals who would, for example, know if he was not sincere, or if he was not feeling well that day . . . " He should see them as the true partners in prayer that they are.

Chazzan Goffin also comments that it is his task to try to keep Tefillah alive and vibrant. On Shabbat, this has been reflected in the introduction of new melodies; some original and some others from Chassidic sources. Particularly, the Chazzan has been influenced by the approach to davening of the Chassidim of the Bostoner Rebbe of Boro Park. Their way of Tefillah he adds, has its "own electricity, with a lot of congregational singing. It's more of an emotional style that sets out to affect the neshama. It does not have a formal structure, note by note, but is more improvisational, which I feel really reflects the inner thoughts of the Chazzan."

The Chazzan calls this type of davening "fluid," flowing naturally between himself and the congregation. He tries to integrate this style of davening throughout the year during the different Yom Tovim. While conscious of his own particular "style" of chazzanut, he is also at once keenly aware of the needs of the nusach (musical mode) of each particular festival setting.

To translate a festive mood melodically requires a lot of thought, Chazzan Goffin adds. Primarily, he chooses a niggun that fits the prayer musical mode or nusach. He comments, "It can't be something that is alien in terms of the original music. Secondly, if there are original words to the niggun that are chosen for a particular prayer, the words cannot be adverse to it. There has to be some relationship between the prayer, words and the niggun. The words themselves have to reflect the intent and at the same time be something that is singable. The final decision lies with the congregation. For instance, can I harmonize with the melody over the congregation so that there is the feeling of a choir? This, I feel, can add to kavana, to the intent, in a beautiful, meaningful way."

Speaking of the nusach style of Yomim Noraim, the High Holidays, Chazzan Goffin reflects that it is appropriate for this time of year to go back to the "roots" of the holiday nusach, to



Photograph by Kenneth S. Siegel

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A METHOD TO HIS MUSIC *(continued)*

melodic modalities that go back to another generation. Familiarity with these melodies, says the Chazzan, adds a sense of continuity and warmth that permeates the entire congregation.

When one approaches the advent of the Shalosh Regalim, here too, says the Chazzan, most melodies that are sung are traditional ones that have changed very little. However, with the holidays that are eight days long, he says that he tries to introduce new melodies toward the end of the holiday. "With the continuance of the holiday I feel it all the more intensely, and that gives me a certain perspective on the nusach which allows the flexibility to introduce new niggunim. I begin to feel at one with that particular holiday and try to convey that feeling to the tzibbur," he adds.

Summing up his own personal feelings of being a chazzan, Chazzan Goffin says simply, "the fervor, the simplicity and beauty of the baalei tefilah that I heard when I was a high school student living in the environs of the Bostoner Rebbe in Brooklyn is one of the most enriching experiences of my life. The davening of the Rebbe and his sons is something that I try to emulate in my davening at Lincoln Square Synagogue. What they lacked in what chazanim might term "technical perfection" was more than made up in the beautiful, flowing harmonious melodies they sang at every Friday night and Shabbat morning davening and festive zemirot at meals. As I grew older, I felt it was more important for me as a chazzan to choose a free-flowing traditional melodic style over a highly technical, so-called "artistic" one. After all, what you feel in your heart is more important than getting each and every note exactly correct as written in a Cantorial Anthology."

"I also feel thankful that Lincoln Square Synagogue has allowed me to be creative and to introduce new melodies as well as a wide range of Jewish music courses and programs just as they've allowed the Rabbis to be continually creative and innovative. I feel that for this, I and all of my family will be eternally grateful to Lincoln Square Synagogue even when we are in the twilight of our lives."

Yossi Shien

WHAT IS JEWISH MUSIC *(continued)*

The music of the synagogue today, of course, has undergone many changes since 70 C.E. In contrast to the Oriental Jew, the European Jew added to and infused his music with the elements he found in each country of the exile. However, most of the original musical modes, and many chants, resisted the change of time. We can say with certainty and pride, that the authentic Nusach (Prayer Chants), which infuses all of our Shabbat and Festival services with such tradition and beauty, can be directly traced in an unbroken chain back to the days of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. Our thousand-year-old East European tradition did color, restructure, re-mold and add to the temple tradition, however its direct ancestor is, without a doubt, the Bet Hamikdash and its priestly musicians. At some later date I will discuss the evolving of our present-day synagogue musical tradition, which is a book in itself. Suffice it to say that we can be very proud of our musical tradition, from the songs of the Bible to our present-day Synagogue music.

The Midrash says: "The world was created for the sake of music." For most of our "Western World," this original music was Jewish.

Cantor Sherwood Goffin

JEWISH MUSIC ON THE MODERN SCENE

During the last thirty years Jewish music has burst forth and grown at an increasingly rapid pace. Not a month goes by that we do not hear about a new album by a new - or not so new Jewish singer. New groups are formed, new singers perform, a new children's choir comes into being. We have cantorial music, Chassidic music, Israeli music, Yiddish music, music for children. We listen to Russian music, Sephardic music, music for dancing, instrumental music, and klezmer music. All of these forms of music are very much a part of the modern scene in Jewish music.

What is Jewish music? The Encyclopedia Judaica defines it as that music which is made "by Jews, for Jews, as Jews". To learn more about the Jewish music of today, I recently talked with Yisroel Lamm, who describes himself as an "arranger and conductor of Chassidic music". This form of music, Chassidic music, is extremely popular today throughout the world. Mordechai Ben David, Avraham Fried, our own Cantor Sherwood Goffin, The Miami Boys' Choir, Shimon Kugel, The Pimentas and many, many others are performing this music. So Yisroel Lamm and I began with a discussion of Chassidic music: What is it? What are its origins? Who popularized it?

Since just about the beginning of the Chassidic movement in Europe, the Rebbe of each Chassidic sect—whether Bobover, Gerer, or Satmar, for example—would compose his own songs, with some Chassidic sects having their own Court Composers. The Rebbe or Court Composer would compose songs for different purposes and different holidays—for example for Rosh Hashanah—and the Court Composer would then present these songs to a committee (it was not necessary for the Rebbe to go through this process). The committee members would then decide whether a particular niggun, or tune, was to be accepted and introduced into their community. Today in many of the Chassidic sects, this process remains almost unchanged, as contemporary Rebbes and their Court Musicians continue to compose. We know of the Bostoner Rebbe, for example, and of the composers among the Belzer and Lubavitcher Chassidim. Ben Zion Shenker, who incidentally wrote the niggun to "Aishes Chayil" as we sing it today, is Court Composer of the Modzitzer Chassidim, Chassidim who have a great history of composers. As their forefathers did, the Chassidic Rebbeim and musicians of today use as source material for their niggunim, pesukim (passages), Tehillim (Psalms), and different parts of the daily, Shabbos, and Yom Tov davening. They draw from the liturgy and from Biblical text.

But the 1960's brought the infusion of a new element to Chassidic music—the folk music of such performers as Peter, Paul, and Mary, and The Kingston Trio. Chassidic music was brought into the modern age as this neo-Chassidic music synthesized the traditional niggunim and the music that was being composed and sung in the United States. It was a folksy Chassidic music.

And who pioneered in blending these two musical genres? — none other than Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, the Rebbe of Modern Jewish Music. Rabbi Carlebach, or "Reb Shlomo", or just plain "Shlomo" to many who know him, created a neo-Chassidic music in which he blended the traditional Chassidic niggunim with the American folk songs of the 1960's. And as the folk singers did, he accompanied himself on guitar.

Shlomo Carlebach's songs have etched themselves into Jewish life. We sing his versions of Am Yisroel Chai, Od Yishama, Borchi Nafshi, Esa Einei, and many, many others. Traditional melodies with modern rhythms, time-honored tunes with stylistic updates—Reb Shlomo began a "new" tradition which continues with each new performer who comes onto the scene. Reb Shlomo was (and is) able to reach people, especially young people, through the medium of his music and his words. He brought Chassidic music into the modern age. And other people followed soon after. As Shlomo did, individual performers and groups learned to speak through their music to this new generation, in a time of ferment and confusion, a period of searching and upheaval, and so, for example, The Rabbis' Sons, Ruach Revival, and The Mark III Orchestra became popular groups in the 1960's.

We later learned to sing the songs of The New York School of Jewish Song, Or Chadosh, The Toronto Boys' Choir, The Diaspora Yeshiva Band, and The Megama Duo. And we now hum and sing to the niggunim of Shmuel (Shmelkie) Brazil and Regesh, Moshe Laufer, and Yossi Green. And at simchas we dance to the music performed by Shelley Lang and The Neginah Orchestra, The Neshoma Orchestra, and Ruach, among others.

In addition to Chassidic music, many other forms of Jewish music are both popular and ever evolving. Among the musicians performing Sephardi music are Yehoram Gaon, who occasionally sings in Ladino, or Judeo-Spanish, and Jo Amar.

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JEWISH MUSIC ON THE MODERN SCENE *(continued)*

Many different groups exist, playing various kinds of Jewish music. The group, Safam, was formed in 1974 when four young Jewish men from Boston came together to forge yet another type of music. A short time ago I had an opportunity to speak with the lead vocalist of Safam, Dan Funk, who described the group's music. Safam, he feels, expresses concerns and experiences of the American Jewish family through such songs as "World Of Our Fathers". The group members sing of the plight of Jews throughout the world in such songs as "A Brighter Day" and "Falasha Nevermore". Their song, "Leaving Mother Russia", written in 1978 and focusing on the imprisonment of Anatoly - Natan - Scharansky and other Russian Refuseniks, became somewhat of an anthem for the Soviet Jewry movement. At a recent concert of Safam, I found this song to still move people to tears. This group uses music as a vehicle for words, as Yisroel Lamm describes, "The material is in their words. They have important messages to convey".

Jewish music teaches and educates, as well as entertains, and we have such groups as Moishey and his Mitzvah Men and The Marvelous Midos Machine to instruct our children.

The music of the great cantors of the past such as Yossele Roenblatt, Mordechai Herschman, and Moishe Oysher remain ever popular, as does the cantorial music of such present day cantors as Naftali Herstik in Israel, Joseph Malovany, Benzion Miller, Yaakov Motzen, our own Sherwood Goffin, and Alberto Mizrahi.

The klezmer tradition continues unabated with such performers as Giora Feidman, The Klezmerim, The Klezmer Conservatory Band, and Andy Statman and The Klezmer Band.

A fairly recent development is the performing by frum (religiously observant) women singing for a female only audience and accompanied by an all female orchestra. In the past five years, performers including Kineret, Pnina Klaver, and Rachel (Grund) Miller have become increasingly well known.

Israeli music continues to flourish. Chava Alberstein, Ofra Haza, Sandy Shmueli, Zvika Pik, Avi Toledano, and Yoel Sharabi are all very well known. Many remember the early songs of such singers as Yaffa Yarkoni and the pioneering Naomi Shemer, who are still very active in the world of Jewish music.

And we even have albums of Broadway musicals performed in Israel which have been translated into Hebrew—everything from "Hair" to "Les Miserables".

We have chorales such as The Zamir Chorale and The Hebrew Arts Chorale. We listen to Yiddish folk songs and to selections from the old and new—Yiddish Theatre.

Yisroel Lamm and I talked about the process by which the Jewish songs of today become well known and popular. Many song festivals bring new pieces to our attention. The three song festivals held in Israel—The Chassidic Song Festival, The Sephardic Song Festival, and The Israel Song Festival—all introduce us to new works. There are The Eurovision and other festivals and competitions. We attend concerts and we listen to the radio to hear what such "D.J.'s" as Art Raymond and Nachum Segal are playing. It is these "lay experts on radio", Mr. Lamm explains, "who help get the music around. They help make the music widely known".

What is the future direction of Jewish music? What are some of the trends we can look forward to? Yisroel Lamm feels that Chassidic music will continue to grow in popularity. "I think we'll see more and more authentically Chassidic music. We'll continue to see Chassidic music use the traditional sources for its inspiration—the davening, for example. "But all types of Jewish music will flourish.

How do we account for this flourishing? "Jewish music is an expression of a people's—our people's—beliefs, feelings, thoughts and emotions. We can identify with the singers, with their songs. There is also a tremendous utility to this music as we hear it and sing it in shuls, Bentsch (sing Grace After Meals) and sing Zmiros (Shabbos and Yom Tov songs) in our homes. We hear this music and dance to it at weddings and Bar-Mitzvah celebrations. The music moves us to tears of both sadness and happiness". It reflects and expresses and contributes to our most melancholy moments and our most joyous ones.

And so Jewish music continues as a part of our heritage, taking the old, bringing in the new, adding a different style or beat, using a simple or complex rhythm, a minor or major scale. It moves us and speaks to us. With us for more than 2,000 years, it is ever present in our lives as Jews today in this modern age, combining the richness of past traditions with the best of the present.

Zelda Stern

TU B'SHVAT: THE FIRST "EARTH DAY"

It may be the dead of winter in Manhattan, but in Israel the first signs of Spring are beginning to appear. Shabbat, February 9-10, is Tu B'Shvat, the fifteenth of the Hebrew month of Sh'vat, which is identified in the Mishna as one of the four New Years in the Jewish calendar.

Tu B'Shvat is the New Year of Trees, originally a legal date for beginning the counting of the years of fruits for tithes, *orlah* (prohibition of the first three years' fruit), and, according to some authorities, the *shmita* (sabbatical) year. Hillel and Shammai differed on whether that date should be the first or fifteenth of Sh'vat; as usual, Hillel won (Mishnah Rosh Hashana 1:1). The reason a tree's year begins now is that at this season in the Land of Israel the heavy rains end, the earth begins to warm up, the water starts to flow in the ground (and the sap to run in the trees), and the trees (including the early-blooming almond) burst into blossom. "Any tree which puts forth its fruit before Tu B'Shvat has its fruit counted in the past year; if afterward, then in the incoming year" (Tosefta Shvi'it 4:20).

After the Temple was destroyed, when the tithe offerings ended and the Jews were dispersed, Tu B'Shvat evolved into a celebration of fruits, trees, God's bounty, and the beauty of the Land of Israel. Various customs of feasts of fruit, special liturgies, blessings and songs developed (such as the "Hamishusar" in certain Sephardic communities). In the last century the pioneers in Palestine adopted Tu B'Shvat as an occasion for planting trees as part of the Jewish return to the Land and its rebuilding and renewal.

The rich and beautiful medieval practice of the Tu B'Shvat seder has recently been revived and expanded. It was created in the 1500's by the Kabbalists of S'fat, the followers of R. Isaac Luria (the "Ari") who also invented the *kabalat shabbat* service and the all-night *tikun* on Shavuot and Hoshana Rabba. The Tu B'Shvat seder is modeled in part on the Passover seder, and includes four cups of wine (evolving in color from all white wine to all red with a drop of white). A total of 21 fruits are eaten in order, beginning with the seven species for which Israel is known (Deuteronomy 8:8)—wheat, barley, olives, dates, grapes, figs and pomegranates—followed by those mentioned in the Bible (etrog, apple, walnut, almond), the carob (long associated with this holiday) and others. The book *Pri Etz Hadar*, first published in the 1700's and attributed to R. Haim Vital, details the orders of wines, fruits, readings from Bible, Midrash, Talmud and Zohar, and the blessings. The Kabbalists' seder also includes eating from three kinds of fruits corresponding to three of the four kabbalistic "worlds": *olam hab'riya* (the world of creation), represented by fruits which are wholly edible (e.g. fresh figs); the world of *yetzira* (formation), represented by fruits edible on the outside but with pits inside (e.g. cherries); and the world of *asi'ah* (action), represented by fruits with outside shells but edible insides (e.g. pistachios).

Tu B'Shvat also raises larger issues. It reminds us of our unbreakable ties with the Land (It's always snowing and ugly here at the time trees are supposed to be bursting forth: Maybe we're in the wrong place?) and also helps us remember that our foods and blessings come from somewhere. The seder is organized around myriad *brakhot*: the Talmud says that anyone who eats without reciting a blessing, that is, without recognizing and appreciating, is a thief. This gratitude for our gifts is always connected in our tradition with responsibilities; on Tu B'Shvat we are alerted to our obligations to share with needy fellow human beings (the Zohar calls *tzedaka* "*ilana d'hayey*"—Tree of Life—the fruits of our joy and comfort can bring life to others), and we recall our task to preserve and protect the world of trees and nature, and the ecology of G-d's world—*lovdah ul'shomrah*—which are being exploited and endangered in Israel, America, and elsewhere.

Tu B'Shvat will be celebrated at L.S.S. this year beginning with a festive Oneg Shabbat focusing on environmental issues (and featuring holiday fruits) on Friday night, January 26 (Rosh Chodesh Shvat). On Sunday Feb. 4, the L.S.S. Ecology Committee has helped organize an afternoon of study on Judaism and the Environment, ending with an evening Model Tu B'Shvat Seder led by Jonathan Wolf, at Cong. Ansche Chesed, 100th St. at West End Ave. And on Tu B'Shvat itself, Friday night, Feb. 9, the L.S.S. Oneg Shabbat travels to the S.A.J. on 86th St. near Central Park West, for a talk on Jewish ecology by Prof. Richard Schwartz of the Young Israel of Staten Island. Wherever you celebrate Tu B'Shvat, remember the Land and its fruits, the people who are in need of food, the environment which shelters and satisfies us, and the Source of all of our blessings and wonders, Who asks of us that we use and protect and appreciate them. And enjoy!

Jonathan Wolf

ETZ CHAYIM HI No.2

ETZ CHAYIM HI



A JEWISH CONCERT IN LENINGRAD

On April 3, 1989, Rabbi Kenneth Brander with Chaim Hagler and Lisa Carroll led a two week mission to the Soviet Union. With them were Yael Balsam, Atara Gorsetman, Benji Katz, and Dena Landowne. While in the Soviet Union, among other activities, they met with Refuseniks, led synagogue services, gave shiurim, supplied to those they met kosher food, religious articles, books, Hebrew tapes and other items hard, if not impossible to obtain in the Soviet Union. Capping the trip was their conducting a Model Seder attended by over 550 people.

One afternoon Shimon Axelrod, one of the Refuseniks (who also manages the singing group, Chaverim, in the Soviet Union) invited Rabbi Brander and the group to give a concert in Leningrad. The following account of the concert is excerpted from Rabbi Brander's report on the mission.

After Shabbat, we split into two groups. Lisa, Benji and I went with Shimon Axelrod to join a group of people that had assembled to meet us. It was a mixed group, including the people from the Chaverim singing group, (the only Jewish music group in all of the Soviet Union). Shimon had invited us to perform with them at a concert they were giving in Leningrad. The last concert the Chaverim gave was interrupted by a Pamyat protest. (As they explained to us the government had allowed this protest and they hoped that our presence would deter Pamyat from protesting this concert).

The Chaverim invited us to give a concert. However we wanted to teach the audience some songs rather than simply perform. We compromised, they would give the concert and we would teach song and dance.

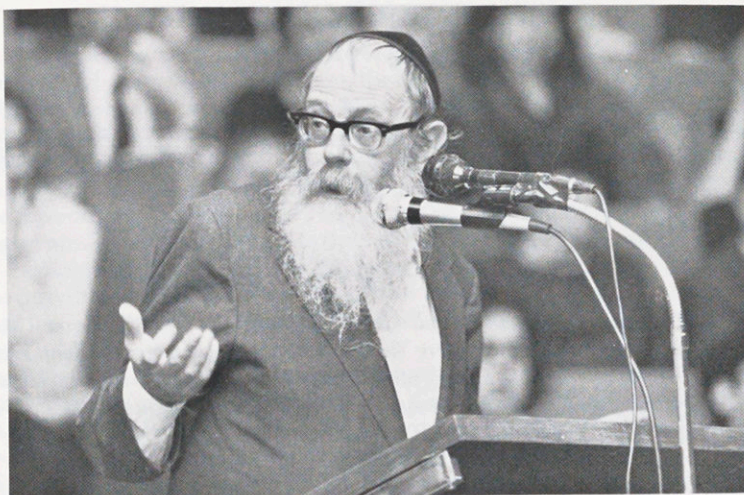
(The following day)

That afternoon we ran a concert. The concert room was small, seating approximately 60 people, but it was filled to capacity with another 20 people standing. First the Chaverim singing group performed a few melodies of Shabbat songs and then it was our turn. We divided ourselves into the two parts of the hall and began to teach them songs of Shabbat and Pesach. We handed out song sheets in Hebrew and in Russian (which we had prepared prior to the concert) and at first the response was poor. But slowly the audience really got involved. However, the most moving part of the concert was not getting everyone involved, but the final request at the end of the concert: The request for us to sing Hatikvah. The Chaverim singing group was a little intimidated about singing this song; they felt that was going too far. However, they asked us if we would sing the song for the audience. At first the people were afraid to sing with us but eventually hummed along and hugged us when we were finished. —A first in Leningrad they told us.

The next day Shimon and others who organized both the Shiur as well as the concert received 40 phone calls telling them how excited they were with everything that they did. Unfortunately, one of the phone calls was from the Russian government telling Shimon that due to technical difficulties his phone service would be shut off for the next two days.

After the concert, a group of us congregated outside with a group of Jewish teenagers from Leningrad who had been following us around. While Lisa and I made phone calls, our teenagers and their friends basically had a song festival on the sidewalk. About 15 minutes later a police van drove by and I insisted that all Hebrew songs stop. We and the Leningrad teenagers began singing English songs and having a good time as well as exchanging addresses and it ended with our giving our new friends Hebrew music tapes.

RABBI BRANDER; ADAPTED BY ZELDA STERN



Photograph by Kenneth Siegel

RABBI STEINSALTZ AT L.S.S.: "BEING A JEW HAS NO BOUNDARIES"

The first in a series of commemorative programs in celebration of the 25th year of Lincoln Square Synagogue was a lecture on December 12 by Talmudist and philosopher Adin Steinsaltz.

Rabbi Steinsaltz, in America to publicize the first volumes of his new translation of the Talmud into English, addressed a packed crowd in the Sanctuary along with 300 closed-circuit-television viewers in the Ballroom. The founder of the recently-opened Yeshiva in Moscow and noted writer on Jewish law and mysticism spoke on the topic, "The Boundaries of the Halacha."

"There is no realm which one can say is out of bounds from the reach of halacha. There is no discussion which is not bound within the halacha," he declared. "One of the most un-Jewish ideas" is the notion of 'rendering unto Caesar': "In our world, everything belongs to Him. Being a Jew in the deepest sense has no boundaries."

Rabbi Steinsaltz cautioned that these days no one should announce categorically what Judaism believes. "To say that 'The Torah says so-and-so' is not only presumptuous, but in today's world it is silly. There are those who think they have the power—or arrogance—to speak like the Prophets, as if to say 'Thus Saith the Lord . . . ' People today have no permission, halachically or otherwise, to say these things in such a clear-cut way."

Stating therefore that he was simply offering "my own opinion," Rabbi Steinsaltz suggested that, "There is no distinction between the realms of halacha and aggada." Ideas and feelings, "basic concepts of knowledge and belief", the "emotional make-up" of one's life, are all bound up within the values of Torah.

"There is in today's world a great danger of 'Orthopraxis': of saying, 'I adhere to all the practices of Judaism but I don't have to accept any of the points of belief,'" Rabbi Steinsaltz suggested. "It's not so hard to cover one's head, to put on even three different pairs of tefillin. These are the easiest things to do. There is a great temptation to dichotomize between one's behavior and one's values. Many people would like to make an agreement with the Kadosh Baruch Hu like the one between the King of Sodom and Abram [Gen. 14:21]: 'Give me the spirit and take the worldly goods for yourself'."

"But even the Shulchan Aruch isn't confined only to legal practice, especially for Ashkenazim. For example, the ReMaH's commentary prescribes that in praying, one is obligated to escape all bodily limitations (which is obviously not a technical legal ruling). People like to say that certain things are aggadic and not obligatory because they don't like them, not because it isn't demanded of them. It's so much easier to change outside behavior than to change inwardly in any form.

(continued on page thirteen)

BEING A JEW HAS NO BOUNDARIES (continued)

"Take the example of Parshat Mishpatim or Parshat Kedoshim. One finds there a mixture of mitzvot between persons and God and mitzvot between persons and each other. There is no distinction between interpersonal, social undertakings and the purely 'ritual'.

"Or the Ten Commandments, the only place we have a sample of what the Torah is about. The Law doesn't only deal with belief ('I am the Lord your God') or with practice ('Observe/Remember the Sabbath day') or with basic notions of behavior ('You shall not kill'; 'You shall not commit adultery'), but also with the purely emotional: 'You shall not covet . . .'

"We are bound to a religious framework not only in our conceptual notions, but even in our emotional behavior. We are told not only 'Don't do certain things', but even 'Don't think them!' The Torah speaks about intellectual issues as well as about points of practice. There is a constant 'interference' of Judaism in every part of our lives."

Rabbi Steinsaltz acknowledged that there are some 'neutral areas' from the point of view of halacha, such as mathematical truths or preference for a particular kind of food. But he insisted that "there are very few such areas" and that "no realm of existence is exempt."

Why then does it seem that discussions of Jewish law are sometimes confined to certain narrow areas? "People—even rabbis—prefer not to interfere in painful subjects which might cause all kinds of friction. It's easier to tell people what to do in their kitchens. When you go to interfere with the bedroom rather than the kitchen, there are problems. The rabbi doesn't want to have a fight.

"I am asked many halachic questions. Often the *she'elah* is, 'Is this food kosher?' Very seldom is it, 'Is this money kosher?' From the point of view of halacha there are far more questions to be asked about money than about food. But people prefer to ask about the kitchen rather than about their pocketbooks.

"It is far easier halachically to be a judge than to run a grocery store! Running a store, there is a halachic problem every two minutes. You may transgress Biblical commandments such as *lo tignov* (you shall not steal); *lo tizol* (you shall not rob); *lo tonu* (you shall not oppress). These are very common things. Nice religious people violate them every day."

Rabbi Steinsaltz conceded that while these are clearly issues within the realm of halacha, that the precise application may be 'hazy'. He said he doesn't have all the answers: "In Jerusalem, people all around me seem to acquire Ruach HaKodesh (direct Divine inspiration)! I'm the last one who doesn't have it." He added that while Emunah (belief) and Hashkafa (Torah outlook) are vital concepts, they may also be misused. There is "abuse of power. The question is not only 'What are the boundaries of halacha' but, 'What are the boundaries of the halachists?'

"The fact that for a long time people have considered belief and emotional behavior to be outside the bounds of halachic treatment is one reason these realms have been dealt with inadequately and incorrectly. We don't have too *much* halacha in those fields; we have not enough!" Much of the thinking and writing being done "suffers from a lack of real halachic understanding of the issues. These realms have been left to emotionalism and therefore to abuse."

As an example of a pressing issue which is not being treated adequately in current halachic analysis, Rabbi Steinsaltz described questions which have been addressed to him about the right to refuse orders one feels to be immoral while serving in the Israeli army. "Good answers, satisfactory from every point of view, are very hard to get. In Israel you encounter problems which you have to solve, and yet you feel that any solution is wrong. There are lots of opinions but very little real research. There is a lack of rigor in dealing with the subject properly. Resistance to orders in the Army is an important issue, but the field has been left to non-halachic thinkers.

"Because I do believe that halacha has no boundaries, there should be Torah opinions about many things, including political problems. Politics and real life should be examined halachically, Jewishly.

"People who are teachers should address these issues. People who are students should ask these questions. Because they *are* within the boundaries of Judaism, and therefore should be dealt with properly.

"People think we have too many mitzvot, too many obligations," Rabbi Steinsaltz concluded. "I feel we have too few. We must deal with more issues, and put more things which seem to be in the neutral world into the boundaries of mitzvot and Avoda (serving God)."

Jonathan Wolf

A REPORT ON CHANUKAH AT L.S.S.: THE FLAME JUST KEEPS BURNING!

The classic Rabbinic question about the holiday of Chanukah is why we celebrate it for eight days, since the miracle of the oil really lasted only for seven as the oil burned in a natural manner for the first day. At Lincoln Square, the question would have to be reformulated, because our observance and celebration of Chanukah lasted for much longer than eight days.

Community preparations began on Sunday, December 10, with the third annual L.S.S. Chanukah-season **Toy Drive**. Dozens of members and area residents brought in wonderful new or good-conditioned-used toys of all descriptions, which were conveyed to kids in hospitals, children of homeless families, newly arrived Russian Jewish families, a Jewish children's home, Jewish children in Ethiopia (toys will be brought there by NACOEJ), and L.S.S.' own Nursery. The L.S.S. Homelessness Committee thereby brought Chanukah joy (and seasonal joy to Non-Jewish kids) to hundreds of children: the Drive netted over 2,300 toys, our most successful collection ever.

On Thursday night, December 14, the **North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry** (NACOEJ), the nationwide project to rescue and assist Ethiopian Jews which was formed at L.S.S., held its annual Chanukah Crafts Sale in the L.S.S. Annex. Besides the selling of authentic crafts from Jews in Ethiopia (sculpture, scarves, sashes, breadbaskets, and Jewish stars), the evening featured a slide presentation by two women who spent the summer volunteering in the "Achi" program to help Ethiopian Jews' resettlement in Israel (which is supported by NACOEJ), and a policy update on the current state of the Ethiopian civil war and the implications of new ties between the Ethiopian and Israeli governments by NACOEJ Executive Director Barbara Ribakove Gordon. Over fifty attendees heard this insider briefing and helped raise over \$2,600 for emergency relief.

The following Sunday, December 17 (the Sunday before Chanukah), L.S.S. was abuzz with pre-holiday Chesed activities. The first annual (B'H) Pre-Chanukah **Hats, Gloves, and Scarves Drive** collected warm winter accessories for homeless people and recently arrived Soviet Jews. The Drive is intended as a modern continuation of the North African custom of "Shabbat Halbasha", on which warm clothing was collected for the needy on the Sabbath preceding Chanukah. The L.S.S. Soviet Immigrants Committee and Homelessness Committee combined forces to run the drive, and community members brought in over 1,000 scarves, hats, and pairs of gloves.

Meanwhile, L.S.S. singles were holding their **Pre-Chanukah Chesed Doubleheader**. Over 100 singles converged on the Annex for Sunday brunch, the price of admission to which was a hat, scarf, or pair of gloves for Soviet Jews or the homeless. After bagels and socializing, they proceeded to Project Dorot to deliver Chanukah holiday packages to homebound elderly Jews.

The night before Chanukah, Thursday, December 21, the Joseph Shapiro Institute's annual **Chanukah Workshop** to prepare people for the themes, observances, and philosophy of the holiday was led by Suri Kasirer for over 20 participants. J.S.I. had also been offering, all through the months of November and December, an advanced course in Rabbinic Literature taught by Rabbi Nathan David Rabinovich called "Mai Chanukah?", treating the history and theology of Chanukah in Talmudic and subsequent texts.

Also on the night before Chanukah, the L.S.S. Tzedaka Committee participated in the American **Jewish World Service's** Pre-Chanukah party. L.S.S. representatives helped to provide attendance, musicians, a large symbolic Chanukah Menorah, and kashrut approval for the food served (through the diligent researches of Rabbi Brander). This continued the working relationship which has been developing between L.S.S. and A.J.W.S. to help infuse traditional Jewish values, sources, and participation into their important work of assisting poor people in developing countries to become self-sufficient.

After all this preparation, Chanukah finally began! The first night was also Shabbat, and L.S.S. held its annual **Chanukah Dinner** in the Ballroom, chaired by Michelle and Eli Salig. Over 250 people enjoyed the delicious meal, festive holiday balloons and special decorations, treats for children and adults, and latkes and sufganiyot, while listening to Cantor Goffin and the L.S.S. Chorale spiritedly perform Chanukah's greatest hits.

The first morning of Chanukah, all the usual L.S.S. Shabbat **minyanim** celebrated the Sabbath and the holiday with their accustomed dedication and *ruach*. The Chaz' mellifluous Hallel (and similar inspiring melodiousness at each of the other minyanim) helped members and visitors soar with Chanukah spirit.

(continued on page fifteen)

THE FLAME JUST KEEPS BURNING *(continued)*

On Motzei Shabbat, December 23, the second night of Chanukah, the **L.S.S. Chanukah Menorah** was lit at Broadway and 72nd St. for the 12th consecutive year. The aluminum art Menorah, designed and built by Lynn and Ian Bader, was lit every evening from Saturday through Thursday by a different group. The lighters (and accompanying singers and speakers) included Rabbi Berman, Cantor Goffin and the L.S.S. Chorale, Youth Director Chaim Hagler and L.S.S. youth, Suri Kasirer, and the Manhattan Day School Choir. Junior-high and high school youth also distributed dozens of Chanukah outreach packets at each night's candle-lighting (containing menorah, candles, dreidel, and explanation of the meaning of the holiday). Chaim Hagler and the Youth Department also sent Chanukah outreach packets to students attending college away from home in the weeks prior to Chanukah.

The **Melanie Ross Youth Center** Chanukah party on Sunday, December 24, brought over 30 kids of between kindergarten and fourth grade age to the Annex for games, lunch, prizes, the making of Chanukah cards, gifts, and puppets, and a raffle (Grand Prize Winner Yoseph Teleky took home a teddy bear).

On December 25, several volunteers from the L.S.S. Homelessness Committee helped serve a full, tasty hot meal at the **Soup Kitchen** of the Goddard-Riverside Community Center on Columbus Avenue to hungry non-Jewish individuals and families. Over 1,000 people came for the holiday dinner at the Center, served all afternoon, and each also received a full meal to take home with them. It is unfortunate that so many people in our neighborhood should be in need of this program; L.S.S.' cooperative participation is a good-will gesture we wish were unnecessary.

After leading the 72nd St. Menorah lighting on Tuesday evening, December 26, the Youth Department kids went to the Jewish Home and Hospital For The Aged on 106th St. to bring Chanukah cheer. The L.S.S. youth entertained, performed magic acts, and danced with the residents.

Also on Tuesday evening the 26th, members of the L.S.S. Homelessness Committee went to the Educational Alliance's Project ORE outreach center for homeless Jews, to celebrate Chanukah with Project ORE regulars. In addition to the singing and dancing, talent show, dinner with latkes, and candle lighting and explanation, the L.S.S. participants brought gift-wrapped scarves from the previous week's Drive, menorahs and candles for those who wanted to (and were permitted to) light at their homes (the ones who *had* steady places to sleep), Chanukah-gelt chocolate coins, and, for formerly homeless family who have just moved into an apartment of their own, kosher mezuzah parchments and cases.

Wednesday night, December 27, found the L.S.S. Beit Midrash humming with the annual **Beginners' - Intermediates' Chanukah Chagigah** and celebration, at which over 75 people heard Rabbi Buchwald sing "Chanukah carols", joined the "Crazy Buchwald-Brander Dancers" in holiday hoofing, dined, sang, and blessed, and then went together to the Shvut Ami concert taking place in the Sanctuary.

That performance was the "**Hassidic Festival of Song II**" to benefit Friends of Shvut Ami, the Israeli organization which produces Russian-language Torah materials for Jews in the Soviet Union (as well as Israel and America). Featured musicians were our own Cantor Sherwood Goffin, Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, Shimon Kugel, and the rock parody band 'Yeadle Bit of Shlock'.

Also on Wednesday night the sixth night of Chanukah, L.S.S. played host for the first **Beyond Shelter Coalition** Chanukah party. The Coalition is an alliance of Upper West Side synagogues and Jewish religious institutions which have been working together since 1987 to press for permanent housing for the homeless. The L.S.S. representatives to Beyond Shelter decided it was time for these dedicated Jewish activists of all denominations to have some good old-fashioned fun and religious celebration together, to complement all the previous meetings, rallies, education programs, and organizing. The evening included candle-lighting and singing, latkes and desserts, and (inevitably) some serious discussion of city housing policy and governmental direction in the 1990's.

The second-to-last night of Chanukah, Thursday December 28, found over 40 very recent **Soviet Jewish immigrants** converging first at the 72nd St. Menorah and then in the L.S.S. Sanctuary (for an abbreviated, explanatory Maariv service) and Ballroom, for a Chanukah party organized by the West Side Synagogue Action Committee for Soviet Jewish Immigrants whose chairman is Rabbi Kenneth Brander, the L.S.S. Soviet Immigrants Committee, and the New York Association for New Americans (NYANA). The program featured a delicious catered dinner; take-home packets of menorah, candles, dreidels, translations and explanations, and an evening of music, learning, and communal


(continued on page seventeen)

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Vouvray, Loire Valley, 1988	7.99	90.00	Herzog Sweet Gewurztraminer, Calif., 1988	5.99	66.00
Chateau Piada, Sauternes, 1987	29.99	330.00	Herzog Late Harvest Johannisberg Riesling, 1988	5.99	132.00
La Vielle De Rashi Semi Dry White Bordeaux, 1988	6.99	75.00	Sound View Reserve Sauvignon Blanc, L.I., 1988	5.99	66.00
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ABOUT TU B'SHVAT . . . DID YOU KNOW . . .

In Ladino, Judeo-Spanish, Tu B'Shvat is called *Las Frutas*, or *Fruticas*, as Tu B'Shvat marks the traditional starting point for determining when fruit from recently planted trees may be eaten.

Each of the four cups of wine at the seder has a different meaning. The first cup of wine, a pale white wine, symbolizes winter and the dormant earth awaiting the planting season. The second cup of wine is more golden in color and represents the time when the earth comes alive and sap starts to flow in the trees. The third cup of wine is rose, symbolizing the blossoming of the trees. The fourth and final cup of wine is a deep red to remind us of the land's ripening fruit and its overall fertility.

Among the dishes served on Tu B'Shvat in the various Sephardi communities throughout the world are Syrian meatballs and cherries, Persian sweet carrot omelet, Iraqi date-filled pastries, Turkish wheat pudding, and Greek fig preserves.

Adapted from *Sephardic Holiday Cookery*
by Gilda Angel
Decalogue Books, Mt. Vernon, New York

THE FLAME JUST KEEPS BURNING (continued from page fifteen)

welcome. Rabbi Brander led candle-lighting and explained the holiday's ceremonies with wit and learning (as translated by NYANA's bilingualists); Cantor Goffin led holiday singing, including "Maoz Tzur" in perfect Russian (which he had learned and scribbled down in transliteration from Soviet guests during dinner); and every family was given a large bag of leftover foods and beverages to take home and enjoy during the remaining days of Chanukah. Several elderly guests were seen weeping with joy as they left the glowing holiday party, for many their first public Chanukah ever.

The calendar blessed us with a double Shabbat Chanukah this year, and once again each of the L.S.S. minyans came alive with prayer, Torah reading, song, and communal comradeship in celebration of the holiday Sabbath. With the chanting of Havdalah, the eight days of Chanukah (and prior weeks of preparation) finally came to an end.

There is no definitive answer to the Rabbis' question of why we celebrate eight days of Chanukah if the miracle was only the final seven, and the first day's oil simply a natural phenomenon. Many solutions have been suggested: that finding even one day's intact oil in the desecrated Temple was itself miraculous; that only one-eighth of the oil burned even on the first day; that we recognize the Jews' daring in lighting oil when they could well have expected that it wouldn't burn long enough; that even when the Menorah was filled up, the cruse of oil remained full; and numerous other proposals. But even presuming that the oil *was* found and burned naturally, leaving only a tiny drop which miraculously lasted seven more days, there remains a reason to commemorate eight. Precisely when did the "natural" oil finish burning and the "miraculous" process start in? What is the exact dividing line between the predictable consequences of our actions and the unforeseeable results which God produces from them? When does human, limited activity end and Divine, immeasurable extension take over?

It is because we believe that dividing line is invisible and unfathomable that we at L.S.S. dedicate our Chanukah, and our entire year, to engaging in prayer, study, outreach, working with Soviet Jews and homeless people, coalition with fellow Jews, youth programming, helping the elderly and Ethiopian Jewry, chesed and tzedaka, public Menorah lighting, and all the other projects to which we are committed. Who knows what ultimate outcome God will choose to create out of our efforts . . .

ECHOD SINGLES' COLUMN

Over the last few months, the Singles' committee has been not only active, but successfully involved in furthering participants' social and Jewish consciousness. On November 17, the second annual pre-Thanksgiving Friday night dinner was held in the shul's catering hall. Organized by Helene Lefkowitz and Joel Wachs, the event attracted a record number of attendees. Along with the traditional holiday menu, the 90 participants were taught "niggunim" by Cantor Goffin, and aspects of the "parshah" by Rabbi Michael Berger.

Cozy meals weren't the only things that attracted singles, however. Indeed, although it was a bone-chilling 5 degrees on Sunday morning December 24, well over 100 people brought new scarves, hats or gloves in lieu of admission to the "Chesed Double Header." Ray Edelman, Doba Treitel, and Linda Honigwachs coordinated the program, which donated the winter outerwear to the shul's Homelessness Committee. The double header featured brunch, and a short talk by Sara Fertig, followed by a trip to the Lindenbaum center on 89th Street, where Chanukah packages were packed, then delivered to Dorot's elderly constituency.

Israel was on the minds of the 40 individuals who attended the Chavurah luncheon on Saturday December 16. Held at the home of hosts Marcel and Belda Lindenbaum, the program included speaker Debbie Mark, who talked about religious politics in Israel; that in turn generated spirited conversation and ultimately a sense of camaraderie. Miriam Zussman and Debbie Goodman organized the event which was, said one participant, "absolutely perfect."

Upcoming events include the "Mix and Match Friday Night Dinner," on February 23. Through this program, married couples are given the opportunity to host L.S.S. singles, and hopefully establish lasting associations. For all those wishing to participate, there's a nominal \$10 contribution to L.S.S., and the deadline for the event is February 2. Post cards with the name, address, and phone number of their hosts, will be sent to all singles who register. Joe Blank and Morton and Shellee Goldberg are coordinating.

Finally, Mark Freilich, Alan Schwartz, Chanie Newman and Debbie Pine will be running this year's pre-Purim Gala scheduled for March 3. It will be a formal evening featuring a hot buffet dinner at the shul. For more information about any of these events, or others that are yet to be scheduled, watch for publicity in upcoming L.S.S. mailings or call the L.S.S. Singles Hotline (873-3330).

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WORDS *(continued)*

Ephram, meanwhile, girded himself to get ready to hunt so that he would be able to bring food back for the lioness and her cubs. As Ephram completed all of his preparations to go out and hunt, he suddenly realized that he was very tired. If he was going to go out to hunt he needed to be refreshed, and now was the time to take a nap. Of course, Ephram knew that he would have to get up soon in order to go hunting, and he really meant to do what he had said he would do. But, he would do it a little bit later.

So Ephram lay down to take a short nap. But, lo and behold, Ephram's short nap lasted all through the night. The next morning when Ephram awoke, he awoke to the sounds of the forest—alive with the chattering of all different kinds of animals. He realized that all of the animals of the forest were gathering excitedly, upset. Ephram marched over and said, "What's the problem?" The animals said that news had just arrived that hunters were on their way to that segment of the forest, and all of the animals were afraid that the hunters would come in and kill them all. Ephram thought for a moment and then he said, "Don't worry. I'll take care of the problem. Why, I'll go out to the beginning of the path that leads into our section of the forest, and there I will uproot some trees with my trunk. I'll lay them across the path so that the hunters will not be able to get by. In that way, I will protect the forest."

Everyone was very excited with Ephram's plan. They thought it was a marvelous idea and, relieved that they would now be protected, they all went their ways. Ephram started going toward the head of the path that leads into the forest. Just before he got there, Ephram noticed that there was a beautiful stream—one that he had never seen before. Oh, how beautiful it was! The water was so clear, and the flowers growing on the banks were so beautiful! Ephram, as he stood there, realized that he ought to stop and praise Hashem for having created such beautiful flowers and such a beautiful stream. So, Ephram walked closer and sat himself down at the side of the stream to offer praise and thanks to Hashem for the beautiful world which he had created. Ephram became so engrossed in his appreciation of the beauty of the place and so engrossed in his praise of Hashem for having created such beauty that he didn't realize that the hunters had already come up the path. Lo and behold, the hunters saw Ephram the elephant, and that was, indeed, exactly what they were hunting for. And so, they shot and killed Ephram the elephant. When Ephram fell, he fell right on the spot where the nest of vipers was located. Sure enough, Ephram destroyed the nest of vipers so that the monkeys would now be able to come back to their original home in the tree which they loved. And, indeed the place where Ephram fell was very close to the cave where the lioness lived. The lioness was able to come out of her cave and tear pieces of flesh out of the body of Ephram the elephant to feed her cubs. The hunters had taken his tusks, and since that was really what they were coming to hunt for, Ephram had really also protected all the animals of the forest.

Indeed, everything that Ephram said he was going to do but put off for later was eventually done. But how sad that it had to happen through Ephram's death.

Rabbi Saul J. Berman

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December was a very full month at MRYC. We began with Youth Shabbat. Members of the various youth and teen minyanim took over the main shul, davening, laining and giving divrei Torah. Davening was followed by a family luncheon and entertaining skits from each of the Shabbat afternoon groups.

The 7th and 8th grade groups assembled the following Sunday for a trip to Putter's Paradise, a miniature golf parlor downtown.

On December 15th and 16th, the high school group hosted a Shabbaton with Yachad/NCSY, a group of developmentally disabled adults. LSS high schoolers and their friends spent Shabbat interacting with the Yachad members at meals, sessions, singing and dancing. The rest of the shul joined them on Friday night for an Oneg and again on Shabbat afternoon for Seudah Shlishit. Special thanks to the members who opened their homes to the Yachad members and their advisors.

MRYC celebrated Chanukah with a great party for all Kindergarten through 4th graders. The children made puppets and Chanukah cards, ate pizza and participated in a raffle.

On the fifth night of Chanukah, members of the high school group led the lighting of the Menorah at 72nd St. and Broadway, and then went uptown to visit senior citizens at the Jewish Home and Hospital for the Aged. In the warm and personal setting, they put on a magic show, sang Chanukah songs, and ate latkes with the residents.

February's main attraction will be our Third Annual Concert, featuring one of the biggest names in Jewish music, Mordechai Ben David, and Simmy Weber, a promising newcomer on the Jewish music scene. Nachum Segal, host of the daily Jewish Music in the Morning radio program, will once again be Master of Ceremonies.

The high school members of MRYC have done the majority of the planning for the concert on their own. In past years, the concert has been extremely successful, with youth of all ages participating and having a great time. In addition, we have raised money to help fund MRYC programs, including last year's mission to the Soviet Union.

The concert will take place on Saturday night, February 17th, at 8:00 at the Martin Luther King, Jr. High School, 122 Amsterdam Avenue at W. 66th Street. Ticket prices are \$17, \$23, and \$25 in advance, and \$20, \$25, and \$30 at the door. For tickets and more information, please call (212) 724-7200.

Dena Landowne

MAZEL TOV AND BEST WISHES

ENGAGEMENTS

Cliff Felig to Minna Ferziger
Sara Parzen to Martin Schandelson
Helene Teper to Elliot Shoenfeld

MARRIAGE

Bobbie Sue Daitch to David Landau

BIRTHS

Itta Brief on the birth of a grandson
Karen Lehman Eisner and David Eisner on the birth of a son
Annette Langer on the birth of a grandson
Susan and Avery Neumark on the birth of a son
Lisa and Rabbi Moshe Zucker on the birth of a son

Mazel tov to Rachel Balsam on being honored by the Manhattan Division of Bikur Cholim
Mazel tov to Jonathan Dachs on becoming an editor of the "New York Negligence Reporter"
Mazel tov to Mr. and Mrs. Gerson Wald on their 60th Wedding Anniversary
Tzetchem L'Shalom to Debra Pearl who is returning to Israel

CONDOLENCES

Jacob Birnbaum on the passing of his father Solomon Asher Birnbaum
Sherman Gould on the passing of his mother Gertrude Gould
Mrs. Goldie Kyle on the passing of her husband Sidney Kyle
Ilana Lloyd on the passing of her father Andre Bensimon
Chaim Rosen on the passing of his father Leib Rosen
Jeffrey Zuckerman on the passing of his father Sidney Zuckerman

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Herbed Potatoes	165	Herbed Potatoes	165
Greek Salad	77	Vegetable Delight	94
Baked Apple	40	Baked Apple	40
Total Calories	617	Total Calories	599
	Calories		Calories
Lemon Chicken	150	Veal Scallopini	240
Minestrone Soup	150	Chicken Soup	50
Acorn Squash With		Rice Pilaf	190
Apple Stuffing	160	Greek Salad	77
Sweet and Sour Cabage	35	Baked Apple	40
Baked Apple	40	Total Calories	597
Total Calories	535		

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Tues., Wed., Fri.	7:15 & 7:50 a.m.
Sabbath Morning Services	
Hashkamah Service	7:50 a.m.
Main Service	8:45 a.m.
Intermediate Service	9:00 a.m.
Beginners Service	9:15 a.m.
Shiur Cholent-Kugel Service	9:45 a.m.
Youth Service	10:00 a.m.
Child Care	From 8:30 a.m.
Friday, Feb. 2	
Kindle Shabbat candles	4:57 p.m.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat	5:10 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 3 (BO)	
Daf Yomi	8:00 a.m.
Shabbat Morning service	8:45 a.m.
Talmud and Bible Class	4:10 p.m.
Mincha	4:55 p.m.
Daily Mincha and Maariv	5:10 p.m.
Maariv only Mon-Thurs	6:20 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 9	
Kindle Shabbat candles	5:05 p.m.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat	5:15 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 10 (BESHALACH)	
TU B'Shvat (SHABBAT SHIRAH)	
Daf Yomi	8:00 a.m.
Morning services	8:45 a.m.
Talmud and Bible classes	4:20 p.m.
Mincha	5:05 p.m.
Daily Mincha and Maariv	5:20 p.m.
Maariv only Mon-Thurs	6:20 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 16	
Kindle Shabbat candles	5:14 p.m.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat	5:25 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 17 (YITRO)	
Daf Yomi	8:00 a.m.
Shabbat Morning services	8:45 a.m.
Talmud and Bible classes	4:30 p.m.
Mincha	5:15 p.m.
Daily Mincha and Maariv	5:25 p.m.
Maariv only Mon-Thurs	6:20 p.m.
(last week of Maariv only minyan)	
Monday, February 19th President's Day	
Morning Services	7:10 and 8:30 a.m.
No Maariv only	
Friday, Feb. 23rd	
Kindle Shabbat candles	5:22 p.m.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat	5:30 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 24 (MISHPATIM)	
Shabbat Shekalim	
Hashkamah Minyan	7:40 a.m.
Daf Yomi	8:00 a.m.
Shabbat Morning service	8:45 a.m.
Talmud and Bible classes	4:35 p.m.
Mincha	5:20 p.m.
Mincha	5:20 p.m.
Daily Mincha and Maariv	5:35 p.m.
Rosh Chodesh Adar	
Sunday, Feb. 25th	
Morning Services	7:00 & 8:30 a.m.
AND Monday, Feb. 26th	
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FEBRUARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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| THURSDAY | 1 — | Last night of JEWISH FREE UNIVERSITY |
| FRIDAY | 2 — | Pre-Tu B'Shvat SHABBAT DINNER FOR SINGLES
ONEG SHABBAT TALK: "What makes a successful Jewish life?"
Desserts at 8:30 P.M., speakers at 9:15 P.M. |
| SUNDAY | 4 — | Pre-Tu B'Shvat CONFERENCE ON JUDAISM & THE
ENVIRONMENT 12:30-5:00 P.M., followed by MODEL TU B'SHVAT
SEDER 5:30-7:00 P.M.
Includes children's programming. Organized by L.S.S. Ecology
Committee. At Cong. Ansche Chesed, 100th St. & West End Ave. |
| FRIDAY | 9 — | ONEG SHABBAT TALK for Tu B'Shvat. Speaker: Prof. Richard
Schwartz. This Oneg will take place at S.A.J., 15 West 86th St.
9:00 P.M. |
| SUNDAY | 11 — | SHADCHAN COMMITTEE BRUNCH, 10:00 A.M. |
| MONDAY | 12 — | Winter Term of JOSEPH SHAPIRO INSTITUTE begins. |
| SATURDAY | 17 — | Third annual MRYC CONCERT, featuring Mordechai Ben David. At
Martin Luther King High School, 8:00 P.M. (Call 724-7200 for tickets). |
| FRIDAY | 23 — | SINGLES' MIX AND MATCH SHABBAT DINNER. |
| SUNDAY
and
MONDAY | 25 —
26 | ROSH CHODESH ADAR. |

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