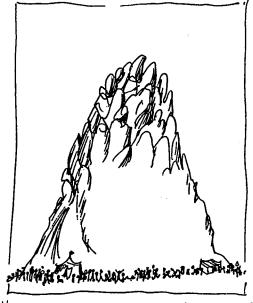
Vol. VIII No. 4

BERESHITH "IN THE BEGINNING"

5745 Sivan/June 1995



1/2 MILLION "BEGINNERS" ARE ENCAMPED AROUND MT. SINAI, WAITING FOR THE TORAH TO BE DELIVERED.

SONG OF THE SEAS

by Miryam Wohlgemuth

My father drowned. Twice. Once when the kelp net off the California coast pulled him under, twice when the Coast Guard floundered and dumped what was left of him back in the sea.

I was eleven. G-d had gone. And left me with the guilt of being the one left alive.

So I drowned myself in sickness. The doctors said it was all in my head: a virus, "encephalitis," colloquially called "water on the brain." I almost died, but didn't. I owed my life to G-d. And hated Him for it.

I hid from Him for years behind piles of hours of highpowered work. Decade after decade, I built myself a fortress strong enough to withstand any attack. Except an internal one. G-d stopped my world long enough to show me all the busyness couldn't

(cont. p. 2)

THE FIRST BEGINNERS CRASH COURSE IN TORAH

by Rabbi Herschel Billet

Approximately 3,300 years ago, on Shavuot, the first crash course in Basic Judaism was offered. The setting was very different from current NJOP programs. The event took place in the Sinai Desert, at Mount Sinai. There were several million people of all ages physically present, and Moses himself was the teacher who conveyed the Torah to all the students in attendance. The skies were dark and heavy clouds covered the mountain. Thunder and lightening shattered the stark surroundings. G-d's presence was almost palpable and added an electrifying ambiance to the outdoor desert classroom where the Torah was revealed to the Jewish people.

Although we live in an age of technology within the galaxy of (cont. p. 3)

GESHER TSAR ME'OD (A VERY NARROW BRIDGE)

by Melanie Notkin

My mother died. At the exact stroke of destiny, when my chariot turned into a pumpkin, my mother transcended from life to death. And I became a woman. Not that I wasn't headed in that direction, a month shy of my twentieth birthday. Still, I felt like a young, spry hare, when somehow, while I was looking in the mirror, or struggling with calculus, real life came up from behind me and beat me at a race I hadn't realized I had actually entered.

My mother, Margaret Ruth Notkin, of blessed memory, died on Erev Shabbos of heart failure. The doctors mentioned words like quadruple---- and cardio---- My mother simply likened herself to the Tin Man; she needed a new heart. And so, on that Friday night, when Jews around the world were singing

(cont. p. 3)

SONG OF THE SEAS, *(cont. from p. 1)* silence the gasp of my soul.

In less than a year, three young friends died in sudden succession. Heart failure, brain tumor, gunto-head suicide. I couldn't sleep. My self-made world might vanish the moment I let it out of my sight.

Not surprisingly, the yoke of life's make-shiftness soon began to choke me. I left my lawyering job in L.A. and came to New York looking for transcendence. I tried my hand at fiction, hoping to find something lasting. I must have given G-d an opening. He, at long last, came looking for me.

This time His knock was soft and steady: an NJOP flier in a health food store, a Shabbos dinner at the teacher's house, a kiddush at the shul, a book by Heschel, a book by Frankl, a book by Steinsaltz, two by Soloveitchik. His music was what really snaked its

way into my soul: the minor-key melodies with magic foreign words Dad used to belt out Friday nights. I felt as if I'd finally come home.

One small problem: it wasn't my home.

My father was Jewish. My mother wasn't. She converted with a Reform rabbi. I grew up believing we were Reform Jews. I found out later I was neither Reform nor Jewish.

In the wake of my father's death, I rejected any Reform relationship with G-d. Capitalizing on life's happiness

(weddings, births, and bar mitzvahs), Reform Judaism seemed concerned only with making Jews "feel good" about being Jewish on the surface, while offering no substantive means for grappling with life's suppressed sorrow.

Later on I learned about the law: halakha. The law said Jewish genes come from the mother and mine had none to give. Because my mother's conversion wasn't according to halakha, the law orphaned me all over again, taking away what was left of my father's spirituality.

So there I found myself, deserted in the world of Orthodox Judaism, learning all about a family I'd never belonged to, coming "back" to a house with no room with my name on it. Unlike my baalei teshuva friends who banded together, I had to make my way home myself. The effort broke my back. I was humbled, humiliated, and liberated.

At first I thought the right rabbi would be the road and went looking for a man who'd build a bridge to G-d through all my pain and anger. But months and months of looking for a go-between got me nowhere. All the men I met with had neither time nor tolerance for my grievance. I was turned away time and time again until I felt I had no one to turn to.

But G-d.

So, after all the years of silent rage, I started yelling and screaming and crying and pleading. And guess what? He listened. Once I went to G-d, rabbis came to me. But by then I'd finally learned G-d alone could father.

In almost no time, G-d delivered: I was on the verge of mikvah before I knew it, frightened like I'd never been. I'd come so far but, still, after all that had happened, could I trust enough to go under?

Only by bringing Torah in with me. Every

Shabbos we sing in shul, "the Torah is a tree of life to those who grasp it." The tune that goes with the Hebrew words always makes me shiver. I started singing it every day, begging G-d for the strength to surrender to the water and still come up alive.

The day of my conversion I brought my siddur with me to hold the words and sing them before going under. The rabbis questioned me intensively, retesting the strength of my resolve. When they were satisfied, we got in the car to go

to the shul where the mikvah was. The car was littered with all sorts of kids stuff: shoes, balls, papers the teachers send home before Shabbos. I reached down and picked up the first thing laying at my feet. It was a picture of a tree drawn in fine lines for coloring. On the top it said in Hebrew, "the Torah is a tree of life to those who grasp it... I smiled. G-d had been singing beside me all along."

The water itself was disarmingly warm. I said the blessing, held my breath, went under Audrey, and came up Miryam. The name Miryam, which was my father's mother's, means bitter sea. But this time, like Moshe at Marah, I'd found the G-d-given tree that turns bitter water sweet.

Miryam Wohlgemuth is an Assistant Attorney General for the State of New York and is a graduate of the Beginners Service at Lincoln Square Synagogue.

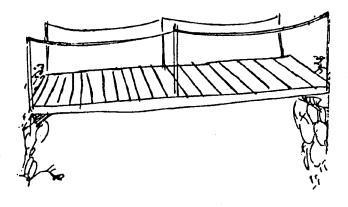


GESHER TSAR ME'OD (cont. from p. 1)

Boachem L'Shalom, Malachei HaShalom.... Tzaitchem L'Shalom, Malachei HaShalom..... (Welcome Angels of Peace,...... and Leave in Peace, Angels of Peace,) my mother left in peace. And my own journey began.

The *shiva* was a difficult experience. By every right and privilege, as my mother's only daughter, I was now *Ba'alat Habayit*, Mistress of the Home. And yet, my mother's generous friends and relatives were taking over *my* kitchen, *my* home, displacing me, my brother, and the salt and pepper shakers. Mourners are not supposed to get up or greet visitors during *shiva*. But these were my guests; would they like a sugar coated cheese bagel? A slice of chocolate cake? But I wasn't allowed into my kitchen for seven days, so by the time shiva ended, I didn't know where anything was anymore. And all the king's horses and all the king's men, couldn't put all the pieces back together again.

The fairy tale was over. That moment of transcendence came in the same type of moment that made Lyndon B. Johnson the President of the United States of America. It was unexpected and shocking, the kind of shock when you are on the subway and



you realize you must have fallen asleep and you end up in Brooklyn, and you've never been to Brooklyn before, and the whole world takes on a new perspective. It was at the shiva that I started to find my way back home.

Reiner, whom I had always thought of fondly as one of my mother's funnier friends, sort of like the Seinfeld or Letterman of middle-aged, mother-type women, mentioned that since my mother was gone,

and my mother's mother was gone, "there was nothing now between me and G-d." Shocking. She wasn't trying to be funny. In fact, those were some of the most inspirational words, the truest words, I had ever heard.

Looking at the world from this new perspective meant understanding it in an entirely different way. A year later, I understood that losing my mother z"l (zichrona l'vracha-of blessed memory) didn't just mean graduating to automatic womanhood, taking on the responsibility of the household. It meant finding myself responsible for all my actions, good, bad, as well as the mundane. "Nothing between me and G-d" meant that G-d would judge me for me. And so, a year after I became a woman, I found myself becoming much more observant.

It would have been wonderful to ride in the back seat of my mother's magic carpet for many more years. It would have been quite satisfying to just be the daughter of an *Aishet Chayil* (Woman of Valor). However, instead of living off my mother's reputation, I have begun to strive toward it.

My world is not exactly as I had envisioned it as a child. Yet, I have discovered new opportunities on my journey. I am now beginning to bridge the gap between me and G-d. And along the way, I am finding my mother.

Melanie Notkin is Community Coordinator for the National Jewish Outreach Program.

THE FIRST BEGINNERS, (cont. from. p.1) cyberspace, we can not create a replica of the Sinai experience even on a small scale. But we must realize that, for each individual Jew, a Sinai experience is attainable. Despite the differences between our modern setting and that of Mount Sinai, things really have not changed that much. Time and space become irrelevant factors when we realize how close we really are to our ancestors who were there.

The product that is being taught in our modern crash courses is essentially the same Torah and Hebrew language from the time of Moses. Not one letter or law has changed. Of course, the relevance of the ancient Torah to changing times has been adjusted to meet the needs and realities of each generation. But the rules and principles remain the same.

The language, the laws, and the customs are very durable. They have emerged unscathed even after

(cont. p. 4)

THE FIRST BEGINNERS, (cont. from p. 3)

3,300 years. An H.G. Wells Time Machine has never really been created. However, the Hebrew language and Jewish tradition is the closest thing to it.

Through Torah study and Hebrew conversation we are all transported through time and space to meet our fellow Jews, past, present and future. The language and the message is always current...and relevant!!!

If surviving as a Jew is important to an individual or their children or grandchildren, then the Sinai experience and its legacy is the closest we can come to owning an insurance policy. NJOP is dedicated to helping any Jew who wishes to experience Hebrew, Torah, and Sinai realize their dream.

Of course, Moses does not make personal appearances for us. Our classrooms are well lit and do not have thunder, lightening, and dark clouds. Our sessions do not feature several million students per class. G-d's presence is not visibly felt. But our teachers are students of Moshe Rabbienu, Moses our teacher. And our message is as electrifying and uplifting. And we have already reached tens of thousands of Jews all over the world. G-d's presence can be felt inside many of our students. And if we maintain our level of dedication, who knows what might happen on Shavuot 5755.

Rabbi Herschel Billet is Rabbi of the Young Israel of Woodmere and the founder of its Beginners Programs.

Does your Beginners Service offer the free HEBREW READING CRASH COURSE?

Cali 1-800-44-HEBRE(W)

Illustrations by Stu Hample

Bereshith: "In the Beginning" is edited under the direction of Beryl Levenson of the National Jewish Outreach Program, Inc. Special Beginners Services are conducted at synagogues throughout the United States to introduce those with limited backgrounds to the beauty of the traditional Hebrew service. For more information regarding the Beginners Service closest to your home, to establish a local Beginners Service, or to learn more about the programs of NJOP, please write or call: 485 Fifth Avenue, Suite 701, New York, NY 10017, (212) 986-7450.

Readers: This is your newsletter, and we'd like to hear from you. Article contributions are always welcome.



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OF BEGINNERS AND MINYANS: A JOURNEY TO JUDAISM

TRANSFORMATIONS

by Steven Winnett

In the beginning, for me, there was the Beginners' Minyan at Lincoln Square Synagogue in Manhattan, led then as now by Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald. I was the true beginner, the non-Jew who knew virtually nothing about Judaism. Everyone else in the room "belonged"; they weren't really beginning, they were starting over. Not that I was made to feel unwelcome, mind you; my questions, no matter how elementary, were always patiently answered. I was even permitted to give a Dvar Torah, as paradoxical as that might seem to some.

I still reflect on how incredibly ignorant I was about Judaism when I started down this road. I was well-educated in Western culture, a graduate of Canadian and English universities, a student of literature and history, but I had no substantial personal contact with Jews or Judaism. I had encountered them briefly in literature, in the character of Shylock the moneylender in Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice", or in the somewhat crass characters of the novels of Mordecai Richler, with whom I shared the same birthplace (Montreal). The Jews and Judaism seemed but a cultural footnote on the larger scene. Viewed from the perspective of the dominant culture, they were at best some sort of living fossil. I was aware that they had suffered terribly in the Second World War, for no good reason other than other people's hatred. I was also aware that the Jews had succeeded, against great odds, in founding their own state, Israel, after that war, and I applauded the courage of that plucky nation when in 1967, and again in 1973, they fended off massive attacks from their Arab neighbors. Nevertheless, the lives of Jews, and the content of Judaism, remained things totally on the periphery of my standard, secular, Western mind.

This immense ignorance about Judaism remains profoundly disturbing for me. It is one of the primary reasons I choose today to send my child to a Jewish day school rather than to that instrument of assimilation, the public school, where I know - because I have been there - that she would learn absolutely nothing about Judaism. But I digress

So, I was in essence totally ignorant of Judaism and of Jews until - I married one.

Now, my wife did not press her views on me, but I was curious, and so she directed me to the Beginners Service at Lincoln Square, which was three minutes walk from our apartment. So that is how I ended up there.

I found this service one of the strangest things I had ever seen. I came to think of it - and I mean nothing derogatory here - as a 3-hour solo virtuoso performance. I watched in amazement as Rabbi Buchwald conducted this service using a language of which I knew almost nothing and cheerfully - yes, cheerfully - fielded questions from the audience, who would interrupt him at almost any point - which he invited - with questions which were often hostile. I don't mean that these questions were personally hostile, but rather they were hostile to the traditional (a.k.a. Orthodox) Judaism which the rabbi would discourse upon between parts of the service. It astounded me to see his total confidence in what he was saying, his complete aplomb in the face of this barrage of questions.

My amazement at this tremendously confident - and knowledgeable - display led me to begin studying what it was that was being said. And here again my eyes were opened; I found a rich tradition, a tradition not just of belief but also of study and of deeds. This total world-view of Torah Judaism was completely alien to the dominant Western culture that I was a part of, which essentially consigned "religion" to a set of once-a-week beliefs with little concrete linkage to the actions one performs in the world and in the home. I remember being amazed at the notion being expressed by Rabbi Buchwald that the home was just as important - nay, more important - to the life of the observant Jew than the synagogue.

So, I did a little more learning. I took a Hebrew course at Lincoln Square, even ventured into a Rashi course. I also went to a Shabbaton at LSS from which I obtained a booklet and tapes on observing Shabbat in the home, which I still use. I studied some of the prayers in the Siddur (in my

opinion, the world's greatest unread, unknown, and unappreciated literary masterpiece), along with the weekly portion of Torah.

And yet - I didn't make the jump. Something within me made me cautious, somehow still content with the status of a friendly and somewhat knowledgeable outsider.

Time passed, we became parents, and we left New York to live in New Hampshire. We looked into the local synagogues, Reform and Conservative, joining first the one and then the other. We sent our daughter to public school for kindergarten, and to the Sunday school at the Conservative synagogue. We dug out the Shabbat materials from Lincoln Square and began to enjoy the beauty of Shabbat in the home (to me, the "state secret" of Judaism). Those 25 or so hours became a special moment in the week, something far greater than a mere vacation.

We also made the decision to send our daughter to the nearest day school, Merrimack Valley Hebrew Academy in Lowell, Massachusetts. We wanted her to learn about and to experience Judaism every day at school, in an environment where all the other children would be Jewish and where she would not be submerged into the dominant culture, with its Hallowe'en costumes, Xmas trees, Valentine cards, and Easter eggs right there in the public school.

But this was not enough. We decided to strictly keep kosher. When you make this decision, it has a profound impact on your life. It makes the simple act of preparing and eating meals a complex one involving questions of halacha. It turns the routine task of shopping for food in the supermarket into

a complex decision-making process. And it throws up a wall between you and other people, because you can no longer eat at their homes or eat out at their favorite restaurants.

At this point we were members of a Conservative synagogue. I found myself seriously thinking of converting with them. So why didn't I? Why didn't we just stay with the Conservative movement?

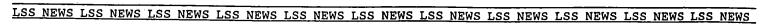
The breaking point came for me when we told other people at the synagogue that we had decided to strictly keep kosher and Shabbat and people laughed at us. It was a shock to the system. I had assumed - naively, that we would be praised. It was then that I began to see a fatal flaw in the Conservative and Reform movements. True, they would use

Hebrew to varied extents, but most people did not want to observe. Strictly keeping kosher and Shabbat, they said, was just "too difficult" or "too expensive" or "too hard on the kids." The same arguments were used against sending one's children to a Jewish day school, in addition to the argument that this would cut the child off from "normal" society. Halacha was for them something to be ignored, bent, or "adjusted", not something given once - for all time - at Sinai. I could not accept this rationalization for non-observance.

I found myself terribly disillusioned with these movements and, through a friend at Lincoln Square, Mr. Cyrus Abbe, made contact with the National Jewish Outreach Program headed by my old teacher, Rabbi Buchwald. They put me in touch with Rabbi Chaim Goldberger at Montefiore Orthodox Synagogue in Lowell, Massachusetts. He invited me and my family to spend a Shabbat at his home. He also took me on as his student to prepare me for my conversion.

Thus began my career as the invisible man at the Montefiore Synagogue. I was given this name - in friendship - by one of the regulars at the minyan because, of course, I did not count for the minyan. Here is where I left the "beginners" stage of my journey and began what I call the "minyan" stage. I found myself welcomed into this synagogue and warmly received by its members. I found myself enjoying the experience of Shabbat in this small and friendly shul. Since we lived a mere 17 miles from the shul, we made arrangements to secure a small "Shabbat apartment" within walking distance of the shul. As the weeks went by, I felt that I was part of a moving experience.

(cont. on reverse side)



<u>LSS NEWS LSS NEWS L</u>



CONGRATULATIONS AND MAZAL TOV

ENGAGEMENTS

Gayle Dennheisser end Stewart Ashkenezy Wendy Klein and Brandon Dunn Mary Jo Montalvo and Moshe Eliovson

MARRIAGES

MARRIAGES
Joelle Levine and Eliezer Friedman
Mazal Tov to parents Renee and trwin Levine
Ellen Levine and Dr. Michael King
Jody Spiegel and Stephen Lerner
Lori Epstein and Simon Zarour
Zena Schechter and Jack Chudnoff

Shabbat, July 1st (KORACH) Shalibat Moming Services . . Dai Yomi & Chumash Classes

Shabbat July 8th (CHUKKAT) Shabbat Moining Services . . Dal Yomi & Chumash Classes

Sunday, July 16th East of 17th Day of Tammuz

Shabbat, July 22nd (PINCHAS) Shabbat Moming Services Dal Yoni & Chumash Classes . . . Mincha Daily Mincha and Maariv

Shahbat Morning Services
Dal Yomi & Chumash Classes
Mincha
Delly Mincha and Maariv

Mincha Daily Mincha and Maariv

Tuesday, July 4th Moming Services 7:10 & 8:30 a.m. Friday, July 7th
Kindle Shabbat Cend 8:12 p.m.
Mincha end Kabbalet Shabbat 6:45 & 6:15 p.m.

Ast beg 4:26 a.m.
Moming services 7 & 8:30 a.m.
Mincha 8:00 p.m.
Fast concludes 8:56 p.m. Friday, July 21st Kindle Shabbat Cendles 8:04 p.m. Minche end Kabbalat Shabbat 6:45 & 8:10 p.m.

Friday, July 28th Rosh Chodesh Av
Moming Services 7 & 7:40 a.m.
Kindle Stabbat Candles 7:58 p.m.
Mincha and Kabbolat Shabbat 6:45 & 8:00 p.m.

 Shabbat, July 29th (MAATOT/MASE))
 6:45 a.m.

 Shabbat Moning Servi
 6:55 p.m.

 Dal Yori & Chumash Classes
 6:55 p.m.

 Minche
 7:56 p.m.

 Dally Mincla and Maaify
 7:56 p.m.

Shabbat, August 5th (DEVORIM) Shabbat Hazon Dai Yomi Dai Youn Shabbat Moming Services

Lee and Dr. Eyal Barzel, on the birth Hannah Lee and Dr. Eyal Barzel, on the birth of a girl, llana Kaila and Barry Friedman, on the birth of a boy, Moshe Simcha Cindy and Ed Harris, on the birth of a boy, Aryeh Moshe Caryn Halbrecht and Tommy Haendler, on the birth of a boy, Alex (Asher) Yaffa and Jeff Hodes, on the birth of a boy, Oran lease. Oren Isaac Rivka Rochel and Beruch Kramer, on the birth of a girl, Zehava Malka and Michael Levinson, on the birth of a girl, Rochel

giri, Nochel Hildy Feinberg and Louis Parks, on the birth of a boy, Andrew (Asher Yitzchak) Adina and Rabbi Mark Penner, on the birth of a boy, Gedeliah Moshe

Debbie and Mark Roslimsky, on the birth of a boy, Joshua David

CONDOLENCES
Sandy Braitman, on the loss of her mother,
Pauline Braitman
Helene Feldman, on the loss of her mother,
Wilma Feldman
Meijorie Munsterberg Gregor, on the loss of her
father, Prof. Hugo Musterberg
Yocheved Radovsky, on the loss of her father,
Prof. Stanley Broskie
Michael Rose, on the loss of his mother, Claire
Rose

BAR MITZVAH Barbara and Shlomo Dov Gewirtz, on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Zvi

TZEITCHEM L'SHALOM (To live and/or study in Israel) Jill Brandfon

Dr. Jack Shershow REFUAH SH'LEIMAH

Margot Zitter

CONGRATULATIONS
To Dr. Leonard Davidman for receiving the Special Service Award from Lincoln Square Synagogue

To Miryam Wohlgemuth, for receiving the Community Service Award from the Jewish Renaissance Cent To Rachel and Richard Weinberg, for being honored at the 25th Anniversary Dinner of Neve Yerushalayim College

THANK YOU
To Stewart Ashkenazy, Miriam Cyrulnik, Gayle
Dannheisser and Peter Ferkas for the wonderful
Purim Schpiel 1995

To Adam Schlesinger for reading the Megillah at the Purim Beginners service



Friday Evening Beginners Services June 2, 9, 16, 23 Friday Evening Beginners Dinner June 16, cost \$18 Beginners Shabbat Luncheon Sept 9, cost \$15 All Night Shavuot Learn-in Sat. June 3 11:30 pm - 6:45 am Rosh Hashana Services Sun-Tues, Sept. 24-26

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

CONEDULE OF CENTICES
Fast concludes
Filday, August 11th Kindle Shabbat Candles
Shabbat, August 12th (VAETCHANAN) Shabbat Nachanni Shabbat, August 12th (VAETCHANAN) Shabbat Nachanni Shabbat Monling Services. 8:45 a.m. Dal Your 6:10 p.m. Chumash Class 6:55 p.m. Talmud Class 6:55 p.m. Mincha 7:40 p.m. Daly Mincha and Maailv. 7:40 p.m.
Friday, August 18th Kindle Shabbat Cendles
Shabbat, August 19th (EKEV) Shabbat Morning Services 8:45 a.m. Dal Yoni 6:00 p.m. Chumash Class 6:30 p.m. Talmud Class 6:45 p.m. Mincha 7:30 p.m. Delly Mincha and Maaity 7:30 p.m.
Friday, August 25th Kindle Shabbat Candles
Shabbar, August 26th (REEH) Rosh Chodesh Elul 8:45 a.m. Shabbar Moming Services 8:45 a.m. Dail Yoriv 5:50 p.m. Chumash Class 6:20 p.m. Talmud Class 6:35 p.m. Mincha 7:20 p.m. Daily Mincha and Maaify 7:20 p.m.
Sunday August 27th Rosh Chodesh Elul Moming Services
Friday, September 1st Kindle Shahbat Candles
Shabhat, Septembel 2nd (SHOFTIM)
Monday, September 4th Labor Day Monling Services 7:05 & 8:30 a.m. Fidday, September 8th Kindle Shabbar Candl 8:58 p.m. Minche and Kabbelat Shabbat 7:00 p.m.
Shabbat, September 9th (KI TETZE) Shabbat Moming Services Stabbat Moming Services Stabba

Friday, September 15th Kindle Shabbat Cendles . 6:40 p.m. Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat . 6:50 p.m.
Shabbat, Soptember 18th (KLTAVO)
Monday-Friday September 16th-22nd Selichot & Momling Services 6:40 & 7:30 a.m.
Friday, September 22nd Kindle Shabbat Candles
Shabbat, Septembel 23rd (NITZAVIM) Shabbat Morning Services B:45 a.m.
Sunday, September 24th Erev Rosh Hashana Selichot and Morning Services 6:00 & 8:00 a.m.
Kindle Rosh Hashana Candles
Monday, September 25th Rosh Hashara Services 7:45 a.m. Reginners Service 9:00 a.m. Tashilach Walk 5:30 p.m. Mincha 6:30 p.m. followed by Maarity and Dal Yom! Collowed Dal Yom Coll
Tuesday, September 20th 7:45 a.m. Rosh Hashana Services 9:00 a.m. Beginners Service 9:00 a.m. Dal Yornl 5:30 p.m. Mincha 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday, September 27th Fast of Gedalia Fast Ibegins 5:36 a.m. Selicitor & Morning Services 6:35 & 7:30 a.m. Mincha 6:15 p.m. Fast concludes 7:16 p.m. 7:16 p.m.
Thursday September 28th Selichot and Monning Services 6:35 & 7:30 a.m. Daily Mincha and Maariv 6:30 p.m.
Friday, September 29th Selichot and Moming Services 6:35 & 7:30 a.m. Kindle Shabbat Cavides 6:24 p.m. Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, September 30th Shabbat Shuva Dal Yorn Shabbat Moming services 8.45 s.m. Mincha Glilowed by Rabbi Weinberg's Shabbat Shuva Discourse

BEGINNERS, (cont. from front) of awe that the words we were using were thousands of years old. I felt in touch with something not just ancient but also

Eventually, I went before the Boston Beit Din, was examined by them, and was converted by them. It gave me a tremendous feeling to be counted toward the minyan. I wonder how often people think about the profundity of this concept. It makes a statement that being a Jew and striving to live the life of Torah Judaism is not just a personal action, nor is it just a family action; it is also a communal action. If you gathered together the nine most learned rabbis in the world, they still could not say Kaddish, lacking that tenth man. I had never given this much thought until one Shabbat evening at Montefiore when we were one short for the minyan (as the invisible man I of course did not count). There was a sense of regret in the air, so great that one could almost touch it. It showed me that you can learn not only from the presence of something but also from its absence,

What wealth the Jewish people have in all these treasures which are hidden from the eyes of the dominant culture - Shabbat, kashrut, mitzvot, studying Torah, the minyan. How lucky I am to have gone from total ignorance of these treasures to an active participation in them. How sad it is that many of those who are born into this immensely wealthy inheritance - who own it simply by birthright - should choose to ignore it or reject it. They are prisoners of that dominant world view which sees the Jews and Judaism as nothing more than a living fossil. In truth, Torah Judaism is a garden which flourishes out of sight of that dominant world view and which brings sustenance, meaning and enjoyment to those who choose to enter it and to tend it.

Steve Winnett is a software engineer in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He lives with his wife Ilana and daughter Sarah in Nashua, New Hampshire.