



בראשית

783

Vol. IV, No. 3

Bereshith: "In The Beginning"

5742 Adar/March 1982

DOORS AND WINDOWS

by Allan Leicht

I'm not sure what I expected to find on the other side of the door leading to the Beginners' Minyan. The first time through any new door is fraught with mixed feelings, expectations, some fear, perhaps. But whatever I expected to find, I knew the experience on the other side was not going to be all that new for me, only another version of an old experience. Or so I thought. It seems I was wrong.

While much of the content of the Beginners' Minyan is made up of words and ideas, prayers and melodies I have known and forgotten many times since I graduated from yeshivah, the feeling is brand new. I have not had this experience before. In 1955 I left yeshivah behind, along with much of what I learned there. I stopped leading what I considered to be a double life as a yeshivah bocher on the one hand and an American boy on the other. I had enough of what it took to be Jewish in America, and I was bound for public school.

Public school. One of the most dreaded injunctions to be heard at yeshivah would go something like: "Leicht, come here, Leicht. Dear Leicht, sweet Leicht. Please, look in the Chumash, look in the Chumash, Leicht, and not in the window. Because if you look in the window, Leicht, I'll call your mother, I'll call your father, I'll call your grandfather, and I'll send you to public school."

DON'T SPEND FRIDAY NIGHT ALONE DINE WITH US

Want to spend the beginning of Shabbat with friends? Through a new program you can eat Friday night dinner with others at Lincoln Square Synagogue.

Reservations have to be handled by mail. Send \$14 by check to LSS by Wednesday morning of any week. Include your name, address and home and business phone numbers.

For more information call 724-2516.

That threat became my dream. My dream came true and I set off on a simple life as a public high school student.

Twenty-six years later I was standing with my two-and-a-half year old daughter at Lincoln Square Synagogue on Simchat Torah and a man turned around and gave Rebecca a piece of candy. Nothing new. This had happened before. We recently moved into the neighborhood and I had been shopping for a shul, for practical as well as spiritual purposes. For some reason I kept coming back to Lincoln Square. Maybe the candy was the reason. But this particular piece of candy was different. I knew this man, but couldn't quite place the face.

(Continued on page 2)

**CONGRATULATIONS
AND MAZEL TOV**

ENGAGEMENTS

Ann Belstein &
David Peck

Laura Landau &
Joel Marcus

Marna Schwarz &
Fred Carrol

WEDDINGS

Beverly Dyer &
Dr. Leonard Davidman

Faige Fishman
Yisrael Meir Cohen

BIRTHS

Nina & Tim Boxer on
the birth of a son
DAVID

Penelope & Michael
Edelhart on the birth
of a daughter
MARNINA ABIGAIL

Teineke & Steve
Kelson on the birth
of a son
DAVID BENJAMIN

Ellen & Howard Natter
on the birth of a
daughter
SARAH JESSICA

Fraya & Richard
Wigler on the birth
of a son
MORDECHAI

DOORS AND WINDOWS....continued from page 1

It took me several blocks in the procession up West End Avenue before I could picture this face turning around to me in the right setting. Turning around. And back. Hardly a glance. L-E-I-B. L-E-I-C. Leiber. In the seat in front of me in yeshivah. Freddie Leiber. Twenty-six years. After twenty-six years, Freddie is downstairs with the continuers, and I am upstairs with the beginners. And we are both under the same roof. That is what is so new about this experience: the astonishing diversity within the cosmos of a synagogue.

So what did I find on the other side of the door leading to the Beginners' Minyan? Well, for one thing, I'm not looking out the window. There is no window. And it wouldn't matter even if there were. I'm too busy looking in the Chumash!

IS THERE LIFE AFTER THE BEGINNERS' MINYAN?

by Marty Kaufman

In a recent issue of the Beginners' Minyan newsletter, Bereshith, our esteemed Rabbi Buchwald enumerated the guidelines for "graduation" from the beginners' minyan. This not-so-recent graduate would like to add these extra tips for those members who are pondering whether they should move on to another minyan...

How to know when you are ready to graduate from the beginners' minyan:

- 1) When you tell people you daven at LSS and they say "Oh, Rabbi Riskin's shul" and you don't know whom they are speaking about. (Check out the main shul services at 8:30 a.m.)
- 2) While you are eating your nuts and raisins at the beginners' minyan kiddush and you notice a delicious aroma coming from next door. (It's time to visit the kugel-cholent minyan at 9:45 a.m.)
- 3) You've heard LSS is a "singles" shul and would like to start meeting some singles, but can't take the once-a-year Simchat Torah stampede. (Try the crack of dawn hashkamah minyan at 7:50 a.m.)
- 4) You can recite the instructions for taking three steps backward and three forward and don't need the asterisks to tell where you should bow during the Amidah. (You're ready for the big time.)

CALL ME ARIELLA

by Ariella Sofia

Ever since I took Literature 101 in college and read Shakespeare's plays I've wondered if he was right: Would a rose smell just as sweet by any other name? I mean, what if the English word for that fragrant flower were, say, cabbage? Somehow the combination of the sound of that word and the picture of that flower is so incongruent that it makes me chuckle.

Some months ago, this musing took a serious turn. Here I was, a Jew who had decided to raise her religious identity up to the level of Orthodox observance, yet carrying a very "un-Jewish" first name. My parents had simply been too assimilated to think it would make any difference to me. But it did. Even though I liked the name they had given me, now I wished that the sound and even the meaning of my name could be more in tune with the lifestyle I was leading. And hadn't one of our sages said that to do teshuvah really properly, a person would have to change his/her name? So I decided that just because my parents hadn't thought to give me a Hebrew name didn't mean that I had to continue on without one. The simple solution was to pick one myself.

Did I say simple? Thinking back over the time I spent choosing a new name, I doubt any set of expectant parents ever labored so painstakingly over the name to give their soon-to-be-born child. How many countless hours were spent wedged between obviously pregnant women in bookstore aisles while we all peered at books on names. They would smile indulgently at me, apparently thinking that I had just joined their group. Little did they know the object of my attention was already several decades old!

Finally one name seemed to fit. It was the Israeli version of one of my great-grandparents names, had a meaning that suited what kind of character I would like to bring to my life as a Jew, and had a special attachment to the city of Jerusalem. That's it, I thought.

But the decision didn't end there. One question remained. Would I be like many Jews who had two names-- the common English one they used most of the time and the "official" Jewish one they reserved for special occasions, usually religious ones? Or would I completely obliterate my "old" name?

Even in the midst of wanting to do the second, I did the first. Partly the reason rested on the fact that I have an established writing career and switching by-lines is confusing for readers. Partly too it was the belief that having a non-Jewish sounding name can come in handy sometimes, especially when you want to say something pro-Jewish or pro-Israeli and people

(Continued on page 4)

TSETCHEM L'SHALOM

Deborah Bonelli
Abigail Wachsman

Who have recently made
Aliyah to Israel --
We hope to join you
there soon!

*FREE HEBREW LESSONS

*KOSHERING YOUR HOME

*GIVING A D'VAR TORAH
ON SHABBAT

*HELPING WITH THE
NEWSLETTER

*AN APPOINTMENT WITH
RABBI BUCHWALD

*TAKING COURSES AT THE
JOSEPH SHAPIRO
INSTITUTE

*ANYTHING ELSE!

CALL: Arlene Porath

LSS, after 2:15 p.m.
(Mon.-Thurs.)
874-6105

really listen because they don't realize I'm not a disinterested party.

So for professional use, I have kept using my original name. But everywhere else I've switched to my Hebrew name. It's not an ideal solution, but there are plenty of less than ideal situations in the Diaspora.

And at least I got an answer to my original question. Using a Hebrew name certainly doesn't make one a "better" Jew. But it does provide another intangible bond with the Jewish people, a sense of belonging that doesn't come with the names of other nations. And when one of my friends calls me by this name, its sound becomes a song and reaches all the way to the center of me and elicits the same response given by our forefathers in the book of Bereshith when Hashem called out to them: "Hineini." Here am I. A Jew.

"I DIDN'T HAVE TIME"

I got up early one morning
and rushed right into the day;
I had so much to accomplish
that I didn't have to pray.
Problems just tumbled about me
and heavier came each task;
"Why doesn't Gd help me?" I wondered.
He answered, "You didn't ask."
I wanted to see joy and beauty
but the day toiled on, gray and bleak.
I wondered why Gd didn't show me.
He said, "But you didn't seek."
I tried to come into Gd's presence;
I used all my keys at the lock.
Gd gently and lovingly chided,
"My child, you didn't knock."
I woke up early this morning
and paused before entering the day.
I had so much to accomplish
that I had to take time to pray.

--Anonymous

(sent in by Beverly Dyer Davidson)

I INTERVIEW RABBI EPHRAIM BUCHWALD

Q. Rabbi Buchwald, isn't it true that you are a clever missionary trying to convert every Jew into becoming a fanatic Orthodox Jew like you are?

A. Contrary to these malicious accusations, I'm not out to destroy Judaism by creating Buchwald clones.

Q. What then, Rabbi, is the objective of the Beginners' Minyan? After all, it's such a fun environment, I often find myself so caught up in it that I don't even realize that I'm acting and thinking so religiously. It's like Yechiel Pincus says--almost self-hypnotic.

A. The real objective of the Beginners' Minyan is to share information about Judaism with adult Jews, so they may make an intelligent decision, based on correct facts, as to the meaningfulness of Judaism to their lives.

Q. But what if a beginner doesn't want to make a full commitment? What have you accomplished?

A. If a person has a little better feeling about being Jewish, or a more sensitive appreciation of Jewish tradition, then I think we've really scored.

Q. Is it true that you're only friendly with those Beginners whose homes you've made kosher?

A. It's true that I only eat in those homes, but some of my best friends don't keep kosher...yet.

Q. Rabbi, I don't think I've gotten a single answer from you yet that I didn't anticipate.

A. That's what happens when you interview yourself!

A good name is rather to be chosen
than great riches
And loving favour rather than
silver and gold.

Proverbs 22:1



Bereshith: "In The Beginning" is put together under the direction of Rabbi Ephraim Buchwald, Educational Director of Lincoln Square Synagogue, 200 Amsterdam Avenue, New York. Editor...Ariella Sofia Staff Assistant...Arlene Porath. A special Beginners' Minyan is held each Shabbat morning at 9:15 a.m. at the synagogue. Through its Joseph Shapiro Institute, Lincoln Square offers a number of adult education courses in Judaica.

Readers: This is your newsletter and we would like to hear from you. Article contributions are most welcome!

THE WALL

by Marilyn Rosen

I approached timidly
the wall so crowded with women
in different postures.
Some held prayer books to their faces
and cried into the pages.
Others pushed babies to the wall
encouraging them to kiss it
and I---I was embarrassed,
Ashamed of my ambivalence,
of my self-consciousness.
Could they see? Did they
know?--no
I was a ghost among them.
Each one was alone with
Gd. And I---I was just alone--
Envious. Wanting to cry
to participate
to believe.
I pushed through the fear
and touched the wall.
My hand fell alongside a crack.
Not a large crack
and by itself a seemingly unimportant one.
Until I saw the papers.
Hundreds of scraps pushed deep into
the crack
I started to feel something different.
These weren't just papers anymore--
They were dreams and hopes.
I wondered again if they would think I
was silly just touching the wall--
but--somehow, looking around at the people
just inches from me
I knew again that no one saw me
Good, I thought--Don't let go--
Allow yourself the pleasure of feeling
whatever you can.
The stone made smooth
by the hands that touched it lovingly
over the years
was good to touch
It felt as if it was trembling
and I thought with great surprise--
It's crying!--It feels!
Tears welled up in my eyes
and my deepest feelings surfaced.
They're free now--I heard my mind say
I want--my heart cried with no guilt
Here, finally, was a place
to express my fears and desires
Knowing I wouldn't be judged for them
and more--that they would be lovingly
heard.
I turned away, satisfied.

UPCOMING TORAH READINGS

Adar 11 March 6 Tezaveh
Exodus 27:20-30:10

Adar 18 March 13 Ki Tisa
Exodus 30:11-34:35

Adar 25 March 20 Vayakhel
Exodus 35:1-40:38
12:1-20

Nisan 3 March 27 Vayikra
Leviticus 1:1-5:26

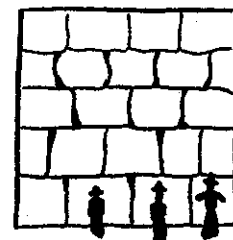
If you would like to give a

D'var Torah on any of

these portions,

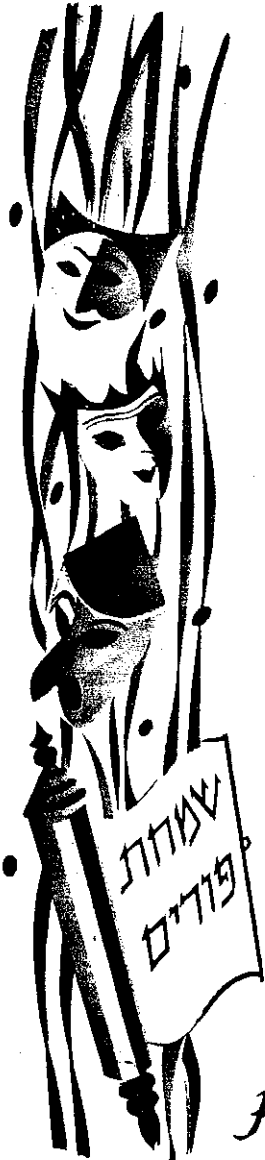
see or call Rabbi Buchwald

(874-6105)



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Saturday, March 6 (Tetzave) — Shabbat Zachor | |
| Shabbat Morning Service | 8:30 A.M. |
| Talmud and Bible Classes | 4:45 P.M. |
| Mincha | 5:30 P.M. |
| Daily Mincha and Maariv | 5:50 P.M. |
| Monday, March 8 — Fast of Esther | |
| Morning Services | 7:00 and 7:30 A.M. |
| Mincha | 5:40 P.M. |
| Purim — Maariv and the Reading of the Megillah | 6:25 P.M. |
| Additional Evening Megillah Reading | 9:15 P.M. |
| Tuesday, March 9 | |
| Morning Services and the Reading of the Megillah | 6:30 and 8:00 A.M. |
| Additional Megillah Readings during the day | 12:45 P.M. and 5:00 P.M. |
| Friday, March 12 | |
| Kindle Shabbat Candles | 5:35 P.M. |
| Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat | 5:45 P.M. |
| Saturday, March 13 (Kee Tissa) — Shabbat Parah | |
| Shabbat Morning Service | 8:30 A.M. |
| Talmud and Bible Classes | 4:50 P.M. |
| Mincha | 5:35 P.M. |
| Daily Mincha and Maariv | 5:55 P.M. |
| Friday, March 19 | |
| Kindle Shabbat Candles | 5:47 P.M. |
| Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat | 6:00 P.M. |
| Saturday, March 20 (Vayakhel - Pekude) — Shabbat Hachodesh | |
| Shabbat Morning Service | 8:30 A.M. |
| Talmud and Bible Classes | 5:00 P.M. |
| Mincha | 5:45 P.M. |
| Daily Mincha and Maariv | 6:05 P.M. |
| Thursday, March 25 — Rosh Chodesh Nisan | |
| Morning Services | 7:00 and 7:40 A.M. |
| Friday, March 26 | |
| Kindle Shabbat Candles | 5:54 P.M. |
| Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat | 6:05 P.M. |
| Saturday, March 27 (Vayikra) | |
| Shabbat Morning Service | 8:30 A.M. |
| Talmud and Bible Classes | 5:10 P.M. |
| Mincha | 5:55 P.M. |
| Daily Mincha and Maariv | 6:10 P.M. |



Happy Purim

"Wherefore they called these days Purim...
Therefore because of all the words of this
letter, and of that which they had seen
concerning this matter, and that which had

come unto them, the Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed,
and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail,
that they would keep these two days according to the writing thereof, and accord-
ing to the appointed time thereof, every year...that these days of Purim should
not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them perish from their seed."

(The Book of Esther, Chapter 9)