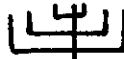


לִישׁוּב
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LEARN
TO KNOW
PRAYER



הַתְּחִלָּה



NEWSLETTER
BEGINNER'S MINYAN
LINCOLN SQUARE SYNAGOGUE
200 AMSTERDAM AVENUE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10023

MAY 1979/5739 740 (IYAR)

9"02



The period between Pesach and Shavuot is called "Sefirah" (counting). The name is derived from the practice of counting the Omer which is observed from the conclusion of the second Seder of Pesach until the eve of Shavuot in accordance with the Pharisee interpretation of the words, "on the morrow after the Shabbath." (Leviticus 23:11)

The announcement of each day in the Omer is incorporated into the "Maariv" (evening) service because the Omer was reaped by night. The announcement of the day is followed by a prayer for the restoration of the Temple service.

The period between the first grain harvest and the first fruit harvest, which is the period of the counting of the Omer, must have originally been a time of joy. During the Talmudic period the days of the Omer began to take on a character of national semi-mourning. The prevalent explanation is that a devastating plague ravaged the lives of Rabbi Akiba's students who were in hiding with him during the Bar Kochba revolution against the Roman Emperor Hadrian. Rabbi Akiba was the greatest scholar of his day and his students were the sole reliable interpreters of the Torah. Therefore, the plague threatened the survival of Judaism as well. The first day on which the epidemic was checked was set aside as a permanent national holiday, now known as Lag B'Omer ("Lag" numerically meaning thirty-three in Hebrew). The Talmud reference for the student epidemic is, "12,000 pairs of the disciples of Rabbi Akiba died in one period" and that period was "between Passover and Weeks".

If the origins of the national observance of semi-mourning during the Sefirah period seem obscure, more identifiable events add justification for its observance today. The twenty-seventh day of Nisan is "Yom Hashoah", the commemoration of the memory of the millions of souls brutally lost to Hitler's Nazi Regime. The fifth day of Iyar is "Yom Haatzmaut" (Israeli Independence Day). This day has the status of a half-holiday and has been included among the days on which mourning restrictions are suspended. The twenty-eighth of Iyar is "Yom Yerushalayim", a semi-formal commemoration of the Israeli liberation of Jerusalem.

The "Sefirah" is evolving towards a bitter-sweet experience which has been profoundly expressed by Golda Meir, "Now we are a nation like other nations: Masters of our destiny for the first time in twenty centuries... The dream came true, too late to save those who perished in the Holocaust, but not too late for the generation to come".

A.F.

Dear Readers,

Please keep those articles and stories coming. We need to begin collecting material for our next edition. Remember -- this is your newsletter. Please send all material to Rabbi Buchwald, The Beginner's Minyan Newsletter, c/o Lincoln Square Synagogue.

The Editors



Dear Editors:

This is the equivalent of the old yarn about a 97-pound-weakling's development into a robust man of steel. In the end, our hero wins the hand of the lovely (and traditional) Jewish lady. The part of Charles Atlas is played by Rabbi Buchwald, and the story constitutes what I suppose is a testimonial to the Beginner's Minyan.

First, a before-and-after shot. In Spring 1976, my understanding and observance of Jewish law was anemic and underdeveloped. Since being bar-mitzvahed in a Reform synagogue, I had not set foot inside a Jewish institution. The religion was anathema to me, associated with the rote learning of Hebrew school that deprived me of valuable time on the baseball diamond.

Now, Spring 1979, though my level of religiosity hardly makes me the Mr. Olympia of Boro Park or qualifies me to kick sand in the face of Hare Krishna, I receive gratification from observance of Shabbat, Kashrut, and the Yamim Tovim, and regular study of Halacha.

The Beginner's Minyan played a critical role in this transformation. I had been randomly exploring synagogues in New York for over a year when a congregant at Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach's shul suggested Lincoln Square Synagogue to me. I was seeking several things in a shul: a sense of community, a service with both spirit and informative discussion, and a young membership.

My first few visits to the service proved disappointing. The parschiot Terumah and Tetzaveh detailed the specifications for the Tabernacle in the desert; the inspiration I gained from the number of cubits in the altar paralleled that derived from lifting barbells thirty times. My distressingly negative memories of religion were confirmed; I did not return to shul.

That summer I visited Israel and encountered a group of young Orthodox students whose Shabbat meals proved spirited, informative and fun. I began to reassess the value of traditional religion: The lady I initially found tedious and uninspiring seemed to have a beguiling side to her.

This time around at the Beginner's Minyan, the Torah readings were Genesis, and the stories and commentaries intrigued me. The discussions in minyan proved not only lively, but touched on deeper questions that had concerned me -- particularly issues of theodicy, personal ethics, and faith. Moreover, the spirit and song of the niggunim to which Rabbi Buchwald davened the Amidah provided the vitality I was looking for in prayer. I began to attend more regularly.

I was still not observing Shabbat or Kashrut, however; it was for the minyan alone that I ventured into Judaism. People I met through the shul began to broaden my scope. The shul provided hospitality for meals at the homes of people my age, and the Shabbat day came to be filled by the spiritual and social pleasures of meals and prayer. The transition to "shomer Shabbat," which at first seemed so onerous, grew easier after four or five months of this growth.

As I began befriending people at the shul, Kashrut became an issue, and they proved helpful in impressing me with its value. What once seemed an archaic and cultic custom became, in the context of Halacha, a vehicle of identification with Jews, past and present, as well as a means of showing gratitude to the G-d who has been so kind to me. At Rabbi Buchwald's urging I decided to take several courses, and later enrolled at the summer Kollel.

Memories of the Beginner's Minyan still linger -- three years later and 250 miles away. I still daven the Shabbat Amidah to the tunes Rabbi Buchwald sang, and am still wrestling with many of the issues raised during the course of minyan discussion. My views collided with Rabbi Buchwald's on a number of occasions, and I barely suppressed a smile recently when I discovered a point made by Torah commentator Nehama Leibowitz that seemed to bolster my argument.

On a larger scale, the minyan was instrumental in initiating a process that fundamentally altered my lifestyle and world view. The pursuit of a more Halachic way of life continues. The lovely lady becomes more entrancing every day; Skinny boy, she can be yours.

Sincerely,
Neil Roland
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Get ready for our next special issue -- Shavuot. We need: recipes, stories, essays, etc.

Have any good ideas for special features or columns in the newsletter? If so, write to The Beginner's Minyan, c/o Rabbi Buchwald, LSS.



On Thursday nights I, a Jew of little religious background, make my way to Rabbi Cohen's Basic Judaism class. One night when the discussion was on Shabbat, I witnessed the Rabbi kvell, while explaining his way of sanctifying time. As I pondered if I, too, could "create a oneness with G-d and get a glimpse of the world to come," the inspiring Rabbi announced that Joseph Shapiro Institute was sponsoring a Shabbaton dedicated to the theme of Passover. I grasped hold of this opportunity and enrolled.

On April 6th, Friday evening, some thirty people gathered to share a Shabbaton experience. During orientation, the joyful Rabbi Buchwald told us of Shabbat Hagadol. "This is the Shabbat before Passover, and it is called 'The Great Sabbath' because the Rabbis wanted to make sure that it wasn't overlooked by the people who were so busy anticipating and preparing for the Passover holiday." I thought to myself, how ironic that this, my first observant Sabbath, was called "The Great Sabbath." Was it going to be great? Would I be able to discard my worries, refrain from doing, and allow myself spiritual rejuvenation?

My Sabbath was about to begin. I lit two candles and silently prayed. I opened my eyes and looked around at the friendly faces that surrounded me. How quickly I felt the Sabbath light kindle warmth in my heart. Now feeling aglow, I entered the main Synagogue. I listened to Kabbalat Shabbat and the evening service. I participated in prayer every now and then. I became enraptured with the participation, prayer, and people. All were so new to me, yet I was aware of how old a tradition welcoming the Sabbath is. How grateful I felt toward the congregation for being such a beautiful representation of my Jewish heritage.

The festivities continued over a delicious Shabbat meal. Songs were sung and conversation was pleasant. Later that evening Rabbi Riskin joined us and spoke briefly about Passover and the Seder. He stressed that the drama experienced through the Seder be not only our celebration of freedom from Pharaoh and Egypt, but our freedom to worship G-d. The discussion touched on the responsibilities of being Jewish and how difficult it can be to uphold the covenant. Rabbi Riskin was then eager to meet us all individually and hear how we came to Lincoln Square Synagogue.

The next morning, dressed in special holiday clothes, I arrived in time for Rabbi Buchwald's Beginner's Minyan. My brief encounter with Hebrew was paying off as I was able to follow along. However, I would read the English now and then to understand what the prayers meant. The melodies and spirit involved were wonderful. Later on at the second Shabbat meal we toasted Mr. and Mrs. Kevelson, a newly married couple. Everyone danced around them and Rabbi Buchwald did all sorts of antics to amuse them. Following Grace After Meals we gathered in a small classroom to discuss Passover with Rabbi Cohen.

Now I find myself, during the week, looking forward to the Sabbath when once again I will have the time to journey into myself and be closer to G-d. My Shabbat was Gadol back on April 6th, and will continue to be great from now on. I would be remiss if I did not take this time to thank all three Rabbis for making the Shabbaton such a memorable experience. I recommend a Shabbaton to anyone interested in really learning about Judaism.

Michele April



Excerpt from the D'var Torah of Karen Hills April 7, 1979

Relative to prayer, I would like to say a few words to some of my sisters who may be pained by the apparent male exclusivity of public Orthodox religious worship. The disparity is disturbing to the liberated. No one will brook an argument with me on that point. But, ultimately, if one ponders long enough on the nature of the relationship of person to God, one realizes prayer is a private experience. The public role is unimportant. What matters is the prayer itself and the דְּבָרֵי הַפְּרָשָׁה, the intent of the prayer. And that spirit of prayer is important not only for oneself, but for the entire community. The responsibility for prayer, our offering to פְּרָשָׁה should be everyone's commitment. We must all try to live by the Covenant. We are all joined together as עַמּוּת. We must all add to the sacrificial fires through prayer to פְּרָשָׁה and work for redemption.



A person returning to Jewish life after a long absence, or who is entering for the first time, may be confused by some of the words and expressions heard in the Synagogue. In this column we try to explain some of these terms.

MELAKHA

Literally, "work". In its Judaic sense, the 39 categories of tasks which were used to build the Temple. These types of labor form the basis for the activities which are forbidden on Shabbat.

These particular 39 tasks were employed in the construction of the Temple to achieve the perfect dwelling place for the Divine Presence. On Shabbat, which is meant to be a taste of the world to come, a world of perfection, we cease reaching for perfection in a symbolic building, and revel in the perfection of G-d, who gave us the ability to build in the first place, and who is all around us.

HALAKHA

Literally, "the way on which one goes". This term encompasses all the daily, practical deeds, actions and mitzvot required to carry out the laws of the Torah. Observance of halakha puts a pragmatic stamp on philosophy and faith; it is a means of carrying belief from the realm of thought into that of action.

P.G.

**Schedule of Services
SHAYUOT**

Thursday Evening, May 31

- Eruv Tavshilin
- Kindle Festival Candles 8:00 P.M.
- Mincha and Kabbalat Yom Tov 8:10 P.M.
- Midnight Bible Class 11:30 P.M.
- "The Prohibition Against Idolatry—Its Relevance To The Modern Society"

Friday, June 1

- Hashkama Minyan 4:50 A.M.
- Shavuot Morning Service 8:45 A.M.
- Talmud Class 5:45 P.M.
- Mincha 6:45 P.M.
- * Kindle Shabbat Candles 8:03 P.M.

Saturday, June 2

- Shabbat Shavuot Morning Services 7:45, 8:45 and 9:45 A.M.
- Yizkor Memorial Services
- Talmud Class 7:00 P.M.
- Mincha 8:00 P.M.
- Daily Mincha and Maariv 8:15 P.M.

Friday, June 8

- * Kindle Shabbat Candles 8:05 P.M.
- Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat 6:45 P.M.

Saturday, June 9 (Naso)

- Shabbat Morning Service 8:45 A.M.
- Talmud and Bible Classes 6:55 P.M.
- Mincha 7:55 P.M.
- Daily Mincha and Maariv 8:20 P.M.

Friday, June 15

- * Kindle Shabbat Candles 8:09 P.M.
- Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat 6:45 P.M.

Saturday, June 16 (Behaalotecha)

- Shabbat Morning Service 8:45 A.M.
- Talmud and Bible Classes 7:00 P.M.
- Mincha 8:00 P.M.
- Daily Mincha and Maariv 8:25 P.M.

Friday, June 22

- * Kindle Shabbat Candles 8:11 P.M.
- Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat 6:45 P.M.

Saturday, June 23 (Shelach)

- Shabbat Morning Service 8:45 A.M.
- Talmud and Bible Classes 7:10 P.M.
- Mincha 8:10 P.M.
- Daily Mincha and Maariv 8:25 P.M.

Monday, June 25 and Tuesday, June 26

Rosh Chodesh Tammuz

- Morning Services 7:00 and 7:40 A.M.

Friday, June 29

- * Kindle Shabbat Candles 8:11 P.M.
- Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat 6:45 P.M.

Saturday, June 30 (Korach)

- Shabbat Morning Service 8:45 A.M.
- Talmud and Bible Classes 7:10 P.M.
- Mincha 8:10 P.M.
- Daily Mincha and Maariv 8:25 P.M.

Friday, July 6

- * Kindle Shabbat Candles 8:10 P.M.
- Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat 6:45 P.M.

Saturday, July 7 (Chukat-Balaki)

- Shabbat Morning Service 8:45 A.M.
- Talmud and Bible Classes 7:10 P.M.
- Mincha 8:10 P.M.
- Daily Mincha and Maariv 8:20 P.M.

Thursday, July 12

Shiva Asar B'Tammuz (Fast Day)

Shiva Asar B'Tammuz (Fast Day)7:00 and 7:30 A.M.
Morning Services7:00 and 7:30 A.M.
Mincha8:10 P.M.

Friday, July 13

* Kindle Shabbat Candles8:07 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat6:45 P.M.

Saturday, July 14 (Pinchas)

Shabbat Morning Service8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes7:10 P.M.
Mincha8:10 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv8:15 P.M.

Friday, July 20

* Kindle Shabbat Candles8:03 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat6:45 P.M.

Saturday, July 21 (Mattot-Masail)

Shabbat Morning Service8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes7:05 P.M.
Mincha8:05 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv8:15 P.M.

Wednesday, July 25

Rosh Chodesh Av

Morning Services7:00 and 7:40 A.M.

Friday, July 27

* Kindle Shabbat Candles7:57 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat6:45 P.M.

Saturday, July 28 (Devarim)

Shabbat Chazon
Shabbat Morning Service8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes7:00 P.M.
Mincha8:00 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv8:05 P.M.

Wednesday Evening, August 1

Fast of Tisha B'Av

Begins8:12 P.M.

Friday, August 3

* Kindle Shabbat Candles7:49 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat6:45 P.M.

Saturday, August 4 (Vaetchanan) Shabbat Nachamu

Shabbat Morning Service8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes6:50 P.M.
Mincha7:50 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv8:00 P.M.

Friday, August 10

* Kindle Shabbat Candles7:41 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat6:45 P.M.

Saturday, August 11 (Ekev)

Shabbat Morning Service8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes6:40 P.M.
Mincha7:40 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv7:50 P.M.

Friday, August 17

* Kindle Shabbat Candles7:32 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat6:45 P.M.

Saturday, August 18 (Re'eh)

Shabbat Morning Service8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes6:30 P.M.
Mincha7:30 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv7:40 P.M.

Thursday, August 23 and Friday, August 24

Rosh Chodesh Elul

Morning Services7:00 and 7:40 A.M.
* Kindle Shabbat Candles7:21 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat6:45 P.M.

Saturday, August 25 (Shofetim)

Shabbat Morning Service8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes6:20 P.M.
Mincha7:20 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv7:30 P.M.

Friday, August 31

* Kindle Shabbat Candles7:10 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat6:45 P.M.

Saturday, September 1 (Kee Tetze)

Shabbat Morning Service8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes6:10 P.M.
Mincha7:10 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv7:20 P.M.

Friday, September 7

Kindle Shabbat Candles6:59 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat6:45 P.M.

Saturday, September 8 (Kee Tavo)

Shabbat Morning Service8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes6:00 P.M.
Mincha7:00 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv7:05 P.M.

Friday, September 14

Kindle Shabbat Candles6:47 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat6:45 P.M.

Saturday, September 15 (Nitzavim-Vayelech)

Shabbat Morning Service8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes5:45 P.M.
Mincha6:45 P.M.
Selichot
Daily Mincha and Maariv6:55 P.M.

* It is our custom to begin Mincha Friday afternoon at 6:45 P.M. throughout Daylight Savings Time. Those who usher in Shabbat earlier with the congregation must instruct those who are lighting Shabbat Candles that this must be done no later than 7:10 P.M. Once the congregation chants Mizmor Shir Leyom Hashabbat (The Psalm for Shabbat), Shabbat has officially begun for the worshippers and their families.

The Sabbath is terminated Saturday evenings one hour after the official candle-lighting time on the previous Friday afternoon.

SHABBAT SERVICES

Shabbat Early Services followed by classes in Bible and Talmud.....8:00 A.M.
Regular Services—Main Sanctuary8:45 A.M.
Service for beginners and those with little Synagogue background.....9:15 A.M.
Chumush Shiur—Cholent Kugel Minyan9:45 A.M.
Junior Congregations10:00-11:15 A.M.
Shabbat Nursery (3-5 years old)10:00 A.M.

DAILY MINYAN

Weekdays7:15 and 7:50 A.M.
If a member requires a shiva minyan at his home, the second minyan meets there.
Sunday7:15 and 8:30 A.M.
Legal Holidays8:30 A.M.
Rosh Chodesh7:00 and 7:40 A.M.
Chol Hamoed7:00 and 7:40 A.M.
Fast Days7:00 and 7:30 A.M.

If you are interested in any of the following, please call Reva Rapps at LSS, M-Th. after 5:15 at 874-6105: Making your home kosher, taking free Hebrew lessons, giving a D'var Torah on Shabbat, having an appointment with Rabbi Buchwald, helping with this newsletter, helping with the Beginner's Minyan kiddush, enrolling in a course at the Joseph Shapiro Institute, and much more!

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