



בראשית

783

Vol. V, No. 1

Bereshith: "In The Beginning"

5742 Elul/September 1982

JOIN US!

The Joseph Shapiro Institute of Jewish Studies is pleased to invite you to a special High Holiday workshop conducted by Rabbi Moshe Morduchowitz. The workshop will be held on Sunday, September 12th from 9:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. at Lincoln Square Synagogue.

It will be an intensive learning experience relating to some central laws of the High Holidays. Individual and pair study (chavruta) will be coordinated with lecture time to provide a Bet Midrash format and experience.

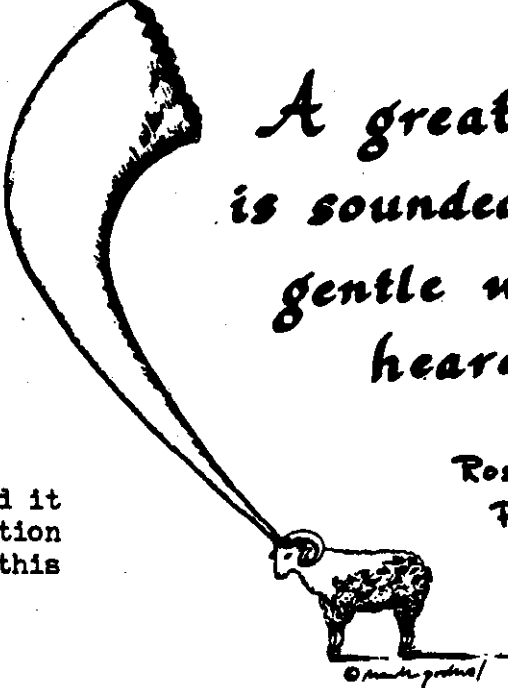
There is no charge for this workshop and it could make a big difference in your appreciation of the Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur services this year, so please come!

SELICHOT AT LSS

On Sunday, September 12th at 11:30 p.m., Rabbi Shlomo Riskin will lecture on "Israel and Lebanon: Preventative Warfare and Repentance--Halachic and Theological Reflections." Immediately following his discussion, Selichot services will begin at 12:30 a.m. Members of the congregation will receive individual admission cards, but everyone who wishes to attend will be able to hear Rabbi Riskin.

CARE TO SCHMOOZE?

The Beginners' Schmooz has met four times already. From a starting group of 7, the Schmooz has already had over 30 adults in attendance one time. Schmoozes are informal, free-form group discussions of almost any topic of interest to the beginner. Judith Broun informs us that recently the topic turned to intermarriage--with a twist. This time the "intermarriages" referred to members of the Beginners' Minyan and various "old-timers" who attend services in the main shul! Refreshments are served at each Schmooze. The next one is scheduled for Monday, Sept. 13th at 8:30 p.m. at LSS. For more information, call Pnina Edelhart at 265-2339.



*A great shofar
is sounded, a
gentle whisper
heard.*

Rosh Hashana
Prayer Book

LEARNING TO STAY HIGH ON LEARNING

by Ariella Sofia

MAZEL TOV!!!

ENGAGEMENTS

Leslie Jacoby to
Ron Goodman
Janet Lipschik to
Ross Pinsky
Jill Miller to
Marty Davis
Ruth Weinfeld to
Jack Raisner
Miriam Weiss to
Ron Lane

* * * *

MARRIAGES

Hope Harris to
Steven Block
Sharon Kalimian to
David Ginsberg
Laura Landau to
Joel Marcus
Marna Schwarz to
Fred Carroll

* * * *

BIRTHS

Nesta Feldman on the
birth of a grand-
daughter, ISABEL.

Marty & Howard
Kaufman on the
birth of a
daughter, MERYL
ROSE

Joan & Steven Reich
on the birth of a
son, DANIEL.

Pam & Allan Shanker
on the birth of a
daughter, ELISHA
ANNE

* * * *

The weeks of Elul/Tishrei sparkle like no other time of the year. The first snap of cold air arrives, such a refreshing change from the hot, humid days of summer. Less intense sunlight brightens all the outdoor colors--the roses seem more riotously red, the sky more brilliantly blue. Soon after the trees begin their yearly transformation as though G-d had tossed a Joseph's coat-of-many-colors on their boughs. How easy inspiration comes at a time like this! All the natural rhythms of the world seem bent on helping us prepare for what is aptly called Yamim Noraim, the Days of Awe.

Several years ago, it was precisely at this season that I decided to become a baalat tschuvah. Fired up with enthusiasm and bursting with a desire to learn, I eagerly attacked the course bulletin from Lincoln Square's Joseph Shapiro Institute. Ignoring the reality of a very demanding secular job and various responsibilities, I signed up for every course I could squeeze into my schedule. Our great sage, Rabbi Akiba, who learned the alef-bet alongside little children when he was 40, was my idol. After all, wasn't I lucky to be getting more than a decade's headstart on him?

So I went week after week, class after class, determined to make up for lost time. Sounds great, doesn't it? Actually, it was nearly a disaster. It was so frustrating to come from a job where my intellectual prowess was taken for granted, only to find myself unable to translate the simplest phrase in Torah because I couldn't read Hebrew. Too, my course selection had been a la "kid let loose in candy store" and there was no particular rhyme or reason as to the choice of classes. My only criteria was that they must "sound interesting."

When the next Yamim Noraim came, I was rather depressed. Looking back over the year, I couldn't decide what, if anything, I had accomplished--a little of this, a little of that, but nothing to make me sure that I'd progressed to a higher level. This was a saddening realization. The Days of Awe restored a temporary feeling of inspiration, but I decided it was time to change tactics. Something was wrong with my grab-bag approach and I had to find out what it was or face the possibility of going through another hectic year and then finding myself upset once again the next time the Days of Awe arrived. That simply wouldn't do. If one's frustration level gets high enough, there's always a chance that it won't even matter when the next Yamim Noraim comes!

Enter Rabbi Buchwald. Part of his work as educational director at Lincoln Square is to oversee the JSI program. After just a few chats with him, I realized that my learning lacked an important ingredient: discipline. Sure, inspiration is helpful, but without discipline even the most enthusiastic student will run into difficulties.

(Continued on page 3)

So, armed with this new understanding, I sat down, chose a few goals and planned strategies to meet them. The next semester found me concentrating on Hebrew. Particularly helpful was the I course in classical Hebrew taught by Rabbi Orlian. His course requires plenty of discipline and commitment--unlike other classes at JSI, there are weekly homework assignments and the course plan runs a full two years. But it's amazing how soon after beginning the course one can, with diligent effort, actually begin translating sections from the Torah and the prayer services. And though it's fine to use translations if you need them, nothing beats learning Torah or being able to pray in the same language that our forefathers spoke thousands of years ago.

Since then, I've used the same approach in other topics with similar success. And though it's difficult for me to do, I've even forced myself to be more patient and take fewer courses than I'd like each semester. This leaves time for private review between scheduled classes, a very necessary ingredient in Jewish education.

Now, several years after those first fumbling steps, my eagerness for learning and building on the observance of Orthodox customs is still growing stronger. Discipline was the key you see. Charismatic religions depend on moments of emotional ecstasy to fire up their congregants. Jews know that inspiration by itself is a shaky foundation on which to build a religious life.

And it's a funny thing, but when you apply yourself with discipline to a course of Jewish studies, the moments of extreme pleasure come pretty often anyway: like the first time you sound out a few words in the Torah, or the time when you finally understand why Rashi's commentary points out a peculiarity in the Hebrew grammar, or the time you first stumble your way through a passage in gemara. And the more you learn, the more you become a full participant in and recipient of the rich heritage we all share as Jews.

So if you're satisfied with your learning program, yaasher koach! But if you're puzzled about what to study, do set up an appointment with Rabbi Buchwald. He'll be happy to help. And one last hint--follow another long-standing Jewish custom and get a study partner. Problems are often solved faster when two heads work on them and two people provide twice the measure of inspiration that one does alone!



No one is poor except he who lacks knowledge...Once a person acquires knowledge, what does he lack? If a person does not acquire knowledge, what does he possess?

Babylonian Talmud, tractate Nedarim, 41A



Mazel tov to Vernon (Ze'ev) Dorfman M.D. on the relocation of his office to Jefferson Valley Medical Center, Yorktown, New York.

*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

ON BEHALF OF CONVERTS

by Raizel Aropsaid

Once, at a "Beginners'" event at the shul, a friend remarked that it disturbed her to see that some people present were not yet Jewish (that is, non-Jews studying for conversion) and yet were apparently involved in a personal relationship with someone born to the faith. When I asked her why she felt this way, all she could say was, "There are so many nice non-Jewish boys and girls. Why can't they go with them instead?" I tried to understand her point of view, but her anger seemed misplaced. Can anyone be expected to say, when someone nice asks him or her out, "I can't go out with you because it's against your religion?" People who go out together sometimes fall in love with each other and when that happens, they want to get married. If the issue of religion does not arise until that point, who is to be considered responsible?

The majority of converts I know are married. It is true in most cases that they were not yet Jewish or in the process of converting when they met their Jewish spouse. It is also true, however, that the fact that they are Jewish by choice and not by birth has in no way prevented them from establishing a Jewish home characterized by a high level of observance and devotion to Torah learning. The rigorous education required in an Orthodox conversion is such that I cannot imagine how anyone can persevere through its long and demanding course unless they have truly fallen in love with Judaism for its own sake, independent of whatever personal attachments might have prompted their initial interest. One should recall that for every non-Jew who undertakes conversion when he or she becomes engaged, thus entering what at first may be an alien world and often facing permanent estrangement from his or her non-Jewish parents, siblings and friends, there are many more who marry a Jew without doing such things or who offer to convert and are told by their Jewish fiance(e) not to bother.

One convert friend made a significant point when she was almost a full year into her studies. Her husband-to-be had only recently begun to attend services with her. "I cannot honestly say that I would have come here originally if it weren't for my fiance," she said. "But I am sure that he would not be here now if it weren't for me." She completed her conversion, they were married, and my friend sets the religious tone for a household dedicated to the mitzvot incumbent upon all Jews, in keeping with her thorough Orthodox education. And when, im irtzeh Hashem, she has children, she will, as a Jewish woman, help to multiply the House of Israel.

And how great is the duty which the Law imposes on us with regard to proselytes? Our parents we are commanded to honor and fear; to the prophets we are ordered to harken. A man may honor and fear and obey without loving. But in the case of "strangers," we are bidden to love with the whole force of our heart's affection.

--Maimonides, from a letter to Obadiah the Proselyte, last quarter of the twelfth century

ר' אורי 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!

Test Your Jewish Knowledge!

- 1) In ancient times, Jews lit bonfires on the mountains in order to
(a) cook dinner (b) keep warm (c) announce the advent of the New Moon.
- 2) Rosh Hashana celebrates the new year of (a) trees (b) kings and festivals
(c) years (d) the tithe of animals.
- 3) Salt is served with challah on Shabbat (a) to make the bread taste better
(b) to act as a reminder of the salt used during Temple sacrifices (c) to
whet the appetite for the scrumptious meal to follow.
- 4) The correct blessing to make over bananas is (a) Blessed...who creates
the fruit of trees (b) Blessed...who creates the fruit of the ground
(c) Blessed...who creates heavenly fruit.
- 5) We throw crumbs in rivers and other bodies of water during the ceremony
of Tashlikh on Rosh Hashana to (a) feed the fish (b) to use up old bread
before Pesach comes (c) to symbolically cast away our sins before Yom
Kippur.
- 6) The Jewish Marco Polo was (a) Clarence of Charleston (b) Benjamin of
Tudela (c) Marco Polo (d) Arik of Sharon.
- 7) Lulav and Etrog are (a) two major characters in a story by Isaac Bashevis
Singer (b) palm, myrtle and willow branches and citron used during the
festival of Sukkot (c) a comedy team

Answers: 1) c; 2) all of the above. The first of Nisan is the new year for
kings and festivals. The first of Elul is the new year for the tithe of
animals. The first of Tishrei is the new year for years. The first of Shevat
is the new year for trees according to the School of Shammai, but we rule
along with the School of Hillel that the new year for trees falls on the
fifteenth of Shevat--Tu B'Shevat; 3) b; 4) b; 5) c; 6) b; 7) b.

Score: 7 correct--mazel tov! Just for you we'll include some tougher
questions on the next quiz. 6-4 correct--Hillel says: "Say not, 'When
I have leisure I will study.' Perhaps you will have no leisure." Less
than 4 correct: run, don't walk to your nearest bookstore and buy a copy
of Kitov's Book Of Our Heritage.

HOLIDAY GREETINGS TO ALL OUR READERS!

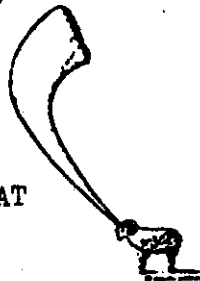
from

Rabbi Ephraim and Aidel Buchwald
and family

Ariella Sofia

Arlene Porath

MAY IT BE THE L-RD'S WILL
TO RENEW FOR US A YEAR THAT
WILL BE GOOD AND SWEET.



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Daily Selichot and Morning Services.....6:45 and 7:30 am

Friday, Sept. 17--Eve of Rosh Hashana

Selichot and Morning Services.....6:00 and 6:45 am
Kindle Shabbat Rosh Hashana Candles.....6:42 pm
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat Rosh Hashana.6:55 pm

Saturday, September 18

Shabbat Rosh Hashana Services.....7:45 am
Mincha.....7:00 pm
Kindle Rosh Hashana Candles...not before.7:42 pm

Sunday, September 19

Rosh Hashana Services.....7:45 am
Tashlich Walk.....6:00 pm
Mincha.....6:55 pm

Monday, September 20--Fast of Gedalia

Selichot and Morning Services.....6:45 and 7:30 am
Mincha.....6:45 pm
Daily Selichot and Morning Services.....6:45 and 7:30 am
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....6:45 pm

Friday, September 24

Kindle Shabbat Candles.....6:30 pm
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....6:40 pm

Saturday, September 25 (Haaveenu)

Shabbat Shuva
Shabbat Morning Service.....8:30 am
Mincha followed by Shabbat Shuva Discourse.....5:30 pm

Sunday, Sept. 26--Eve of Yom Kippur

Selichot and Morning Services.....7:00 and 8:30 am
Mincha.....3:00 pm
Kindle Memorial and Yom Kippur Candles...6:27 pm
Kol Nidre Services.....6:30 pm

Monday, September 27--Yom Kippur Services

Main Sanctuary.....8:00 am
Auditorium.....9:00 am
Final Shofar Blast.....7:27 pm
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....6:35 pm
Daily Morning Services.....7:15 and 7:50 am

Friday, October 1

Kindle Shabbat Succot Candles.....6:19 pm
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat Yom Tov.....6:30 pm

Saturday, October 2

Shabbat Succot Service.....8:30 am
Daf Yomi.....5:35 pm
Mincha.....6:20 pm
Kindle Festival Candles.....not before..7:19 pm

Monday, October 3

Sukkot Mornings Service.....8:30 am
Daf Yomi.....5:45 pm
Mincha.....6:30 pm
Daily Services Chol Hamoed Sukkot.....7:00 and 7:40 am

Friday, October 8

Hoshana Rabba
Morning Services....6:30 and 8:00 am
Kindle Shabbat Festival
Candles.....6:07 pm

Saturday, Oct. 9--Shemini Atzeret

Festival Morning Services.....
.....7:30, 8:30, 9:30 am
Yizkor Memorial Service at each
morning service
Mincha.....6:20 pm
Kindle Festival Candles...
...not before..7:07 pm

Sunday, Oct 10--Simchat Torah

Simchat Torah Service..7:30 am
Women's Service (Esplanade
Hotel)....8:30 am
Mincha.....6:00 pm
Followed by Seuda Scheesheet
Neilat Hachag



With the Blessing of G-d, 5742

My fellow worshippers,
I thank you for the privilege
of participating with you in the
Beginners' Minyan this summer.

My involvement in the service
proved to be a cherished, en-
obling experience, owing largely
to your demonstrated kindness,
generosity of spirit, and in-
spired commitment to further
your learnings about our reli-
gious heritage.

As the new year approaches,
please accept my prayer that
G-d will grant you good health
and prosperity in unbounded
measure and bless you with
renewed vitality for life's
challenges in 5743.

Faithfully yours,
Ely J. Rosenzweig