

NOT "YET" RELIGIOUS

By Alan Magill

I was at a Bar Mitzvah recently when someone asked me if I was "religious" from birth.

"No," I said, and with a twinkle in my eye, added, "I became religious at 6 months."

He laughed, but in my joke was the ambivalence towards what it means to me to be "religious," and who and when someone deserves that title.

Today, I wear a yarmulke, I am Sabbath observant, and I aspire to eat only kosher food and follow the laws of family purity.

Growing up in my house, I learned by the examples set by my parents, may they rest in peace, about the importance of keeping your word, respecting others, providing hospitality to the needy, and caring for the sick.

Therefore, today, I find it difficult to answer when someone asks, "Did you come from a religious home?"

To be sure, growing up we didn't observe the Sabbath or eat only Kosher food, but the things that we did do, must have had something to do with religion.

When I became "religious," - a gradual process that began around eight years ago - my parents respected my choice, and pleasantly took part in the religious rituals that I suggested for them (i.e., having a Sabbath meal when I visited from New York, lighting Chanukah candles).

At my father's funeral, a co-worker of his told me that the religious rituals I had brought into the home had meant so much to my father. I fondly recall my father sitting at the dining room table with a yarmulke perched on his head, singing Hebrew Sabbath songs, together with my mother and me, from a transliterated prayer book. Although cancer had claimed my mother's voice box, I still heard her loud and clear as she put her thumb on and off an opening in her neck to make the sounds she wanted.

I see my parents as good people, who were always willing to do more, even though it meant trying to do something a little different from their regular routine.

What I have encountered in the "religious" world in which I now travel, has at times given me pause to wonder about this new "religious" path I have chosen.

People ask me, "What prompted you to take the 'right' path?" What, after all, is that right path?

Is it the path travelled by a "religious man," well respected in the community, who owed me money for work performed for him for 2 months, making promises for payment, not kept, until finally coming through last night, when I saw the check in the mailbox?

Doesn't he read the Jewish law that says you must pay your workers before the sun goes down?

Around 75 suns rose and set before he finally paid me!

More important, he told me he was going to do something, and, on at least two occasions, did not do it. In the so-called non-religious home in which I grew up, if someone gave their word, they kept it.

Or is the right path the one that takes me to a minyan where "religious" men have casual and distracting conversations very close to me while I am trying to concentrate on saying the Mourner's Kaddish.

At one minyan, I had politely asked two men, who had been talking during the Kaddish, if they could please not talk while I said the mourner's prayer. They respected my request that day. The very next week, however, when I said the Kaddish, they were talking again and continued to talk throughout the prayer. And Jewish law says they're not supposed to.

And these are well-respected men in the "religious" community.

Does the right path lead you to Avenue J or Avenue M in Brooklyn (and probably elsewhere) on a Thursday night or a Friday afternoon, where scores of "religious" people double-park and snarl up traffic just for their own convenience? It's the law of the land not to double-park, and Jewish law says that Jews are

required to obey civil law.

This is not intended as put-down of religious people who do not entirely live up to the laws and ethics by which they profess to live. I know that NOBODY is completely perfect. That is the human condition.

G-d knows, and people who know me know, that there is much that I have to work on to live up to even half of what I believe in.

But this examination has given me a new perspective: the "right path" is simply about being ready to grow, about being good people, willing to do more, willing to try something a little different.

That "something" would vary from individual to individual: For one person it could mean lighting candles on Friday night, for another it could mean giving up eating ham, or visiting an elderly lonely aunt in a nursing home, or paying bills a little sooner, or talking a little less in synagogue, or parking in a legal spot, even if it is a block farther away from the convenience store.

So let's drop the monikers. I now see that there are no "religious" and "non-religious" people. We are all in process - not "yet" purely "religious." And may we all be given the strength to try and do a little bit more for ourselves, for others, and for G-d.

Alan Magill is a writer-recreation therapist who is happily married to Miriam Magill. They live in Brooklyn.



CONGRATULATIONS AND MAZAL TOV

ENGAGEMENTS

Anat Buimsohn and Dr. Gabriel Levi
Jennifer Kuchma and Joseph Hoening
Maureen Kushner and Carlos Mora
Joella Lavine and Eliezer Dovid Friedman
Donna Ritter and Dr. Barry Levinson
Zena Schechter and Jack Chudnoff



MARRIAGES

Leah Ehrlich and Dan Faber
Mazal Tov to parents Nan and Bob Ehrlich
Simcha Liba Jacobs and Moshe Zvi Berger Helevi
Susan Katz and Dr. David Kessler
Dr. Elizabeth Konecky and Yaakov Kronfeld
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Jessica Panduro and Jordan Chanofsky
Jolienne Pivawer and Lawrence Waldman
Jennifer Schuster and Michael Gross

BIRTHS

Deborah and Elliot Caplan, on the birth of a boy,
Anyeh Leib (8/31/93)
Drs. Dawna and Matthew Eichen, on the birth of a girl,
Chana Meira
Leslie and Peter Farkas, on the birth of a boy,
Max Taro (Moshe Tzvi)
Lisa and Shelly Freedman, on the birth of a girl, Ariella Tal
Elinor and Aharon Hoffman, on the birth of a boy,
Avraham Mordechai
Drs. Chava and Steven Kaplan, on the birth of a boy,
Naim Gabriel
Miriam and Yochanan Kreizel, on the birth of a girl, Gittel
Mazal Tov to the Grandmother Ann Kreizel
Bobbie Sue Daitch and David Landau, on the birth of
a boy, Aharon Ephraim Simcha
Sandra and Jerry Leshaw, on the birth of a girl,
Aviva
Edna and Robert Lewicki, on the birth of a boy,
Dror Yosef
Annie and Richard Linhart, on the birth of a girl,
Tobey Natalie
Nancy Jo Friedman and James Margolin, on the birth of
a girl, Emily Rose
Susan and Joshua Paul, on the birth of twin girls,
Jordan Asher and Rachel Lauren

Jeannette and Dr. Ross Pinsky, on the birth of a girl,
Meira Davora
Wendy (Coan) and Richard Platt, on the birth of a boy,
Maxwell Barnett (Emanuel Leib)
Tracy and Asher Repp, on the birth of a boy,
Noah Mordechai
Carolyn and Marc Rowan, on the birth of a boy,
Joshua Emanuel
Gail and Doug Schiller, on the birth of a girl,
Rina Bracha
Marsha Croland and Barry Schwartz, on the birth of a girl,
Abigail Chaya
Ellen and Robert Shasha, on the birth of a boy,
Jordan Ashendorf
Gail and Yuri Usherenko, on the birth of a boy,
David Yakov
Rochel and Reuven Weinberg, on the birth of a girl,
Chana Basya
Sandy and Marc Weiner, on the birth of a girl,
Sara Melanie (Sara Meira)
Marsha and Jonathan Weisman, on the birth of a boy,
Yehuda
Leslie Lichter and Ronald Winters, on the birth of a boy,
Daniel Sidney
Debi Linhart and Steven Wisch, on the birth of a girl,
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TZEITCHEM I'SHALOM (To live and/or study in Israel)
Elissa Eisner

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Neil Baim
Esther Judith Manischewitz
Margot Zitter

CONDOLENCES

Adina Goldfarb, on the loss of her mother,
Rose Goldfarb-Krawiec
Michael Gorinsky, on the loss of his mother,
Minnie Gorinsky
Joan Hillel, on the loss of her father, George
Schlissel
Galit Schloss, on the loss of her father, Elyahu Shelev

Aidel and Ephraim Buchwald wish to thank all the
Beginners who contributed to the wonderful surprise
"Erev NJOP Dinner" presentation of a Kiddush Cup.
Special thanks to coordinator, Lisa Castleman.

Beginners Shabbat Luncheons - Cost \$15

May 6, June 3
Beginners Schmooze - Free
Monday, April 3, May 1, 8:15 PM
Beginners Shabbaton - Cost \$25
Fri-Sat, April 7-8
All Night Shavuot Learn-in
Sat, June 3, 11:30 PM - 6:45 AM

Shelly and Scott Turkel, on the loss of their daughter,
Samara
Risi Zweig, on the loss of her mother, Matilda Tully

BAR/BAT MITZVAH

Nan and Robert Ehrlich, on the Bar Mitzvah of
their son, Yaakov Yisrael
Susan and Andrew Fleisch, on the Bat Mitzvah of
their daughter, Karen
Miriam and Mordechai Savir (Swire), on the
Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Shira Batya
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of their daughter, Shoshana Batya

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Beverly Davidman for being selected "Outstanding
Mathematics Teachers in America," Disney-
Americas Teacher Award
Stuart Hample for his op-ed piece in the New York
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Akiva Lane upon completing the study of the entire
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over the past ten years
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Graduate Program
Vivian and David Reikin for being honored as Parents
of the Year by the Kadima Learning Center,
Monsey, N.Y.

Friday, April 7th Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	7:09 p.m.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	7:15 p.m.
Shabbat, April 8th (METZORA - SHABBAT HAGADOL)	
Daf Yomi.....	8:00 a.m.
Shabbat Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.
Mincha followed by Shabbat Begehal Derasha.....	6:15 p.m.
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	7:20 p.m.
Thursday, April 13th	
Search for Chametz.....	8:04 p.m.
Friday, April 14th	
Morning Services.....	6:45 & 7:45 a.m.
The first born are invited to complete a Talmudic Tractate after each service so that they may be able to eat on what would normally be a fast day for them.	
The latest time to eat Chametz.....	10:20 a.m.
The latest time to destroy Chametz.....	11:38 a.m.
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	7:18 p.m.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	7:20 p.m.
Shabbat, April 15th First Day Pesach	
Shabbat and Yom Tov Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.
Daf Yomi.....	6:30 p.m.
Mincha.....	7:18 p.m.
Kindle Yom Tov Candles not before.....	8:16 p.m.
Sunday, April 16th (Second Day Pesach)	
Yom Tov Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.
Daf Yomi.....	6:30 p.m.
Mincha.....	7:15 p.m.
Monday - Thursday April 17th - April 20th	
Chol Hamoed Morning Services.....	7:00 & 7:30 a.m.
Mincha.....	7:25 p.m.
Thursday, April 20th	
Kindle Yom Tov Candles.....	7:22 p.m.
Mincha and Kabbalat Yom Tov.....	7:25 p.m.
Please remember to make an Eruv Tavshilin	
Friday, April 21st	
Yom Tov Morning Services.....	8:00 & 8:45 p.m.
Bible Classes.....	6:25 p.m.
Talmud Classes.....	6:40 p.m.
Mincha.....	7:25 p.m.
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	7:23 p.m.
Shabbat, April 22nd	
Shabbat and Yom Tov Morning Services incl. Yizkor.....	8:00 & 8:45 a.m.
Daf Yomi.....	6:30 p.m.
Mincha followed by Seudah Shlisheet Neilat Hachag.....	7:15 p.m.
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	7:30 p.m.
Thursday, April 27th Yom Hashoah	
Friday, April 28th	
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	7:30 p.m.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	7:35 p.m.
Shabbat, April 29th (ACHAREI MOT) Shabbat Mevorchim	
Shabbat Morning Services.....	8:45 p.m.
Daf Yomi.....	6:00 p.m.
Bible Class.....	6:30 p.m.
Talmud Class.....	6:45 p.m.
Mincha.....	7:30 p.m.
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	7:40 p.m.
Sunday, April 30th	
Rosh Chodesh Iyar Morning Services.....	7:00 & 8:30 a.m.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Monday, May 1st	Rosh Chodesh Iyar Morning Services.....	7:00 & 7:40 a.m.	
Wednesday, May 3rd Yom Hazikaron			
Thursday, May 4th Yom Ha'atzmaut Morning Services.....			7:00 & 7:40 a.m.
Friday, May 5th	Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	7:38 p.m.	
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	6:45 & 7:40 p.m.		
Shabbat, May 6th (KIDUSHIM)			
Shabbat Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.		
Daf Yomi.....	6:05 p.m.		
Bible Class.....	6:35 p.m.		
Talmud Class.....	6:50 p.m.		
Mincha.....	7:35 p.m.		
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	7:45 p.m.		
Friday, May 12th			
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	7:45 p.m.		
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	6:45 & 7:50 p.m.		
Shabbat, May 13th (EMOR)			
Shabbat Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.		
Daf Yomi.....	6:10 p.m.		
Bible Class.....	6:40 p.m.		
Talmud Class.....	6:55 p.m.		
Mincha.....	7:40 p.m.		
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	7:55 p.m.		
Thursday, May 19th Lag B'Omer			
Friday, May 19th			
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	7:51 p.m.		
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	6:45 & 7:55 p.m.		
Shabbat, May 20th (BEHAR)			
Shabbat Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.		
Daf Yomi.....	6:20 p.m.		
Bible Class.....	6:50 p.m.		
Talmud Class.....	7:05 p.m.		
Mincha.....	7:50 p.m.		
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	8:00 p.m.		
Friday, May 26th			
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	7:58 p.m.		
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	6:45 & 8:00 p.m.		
Shabbat, May 27th (BECHUKOTAI) Shabbat Mevorchim			
Shabbat Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.		
Daf Yomi.....	6:25 p.m.		
Bible Class.....	6:55 p.m.		
Talmud Class.....	7:10 p.m.		
Mincha.....	7:55 p.m.		
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	8:10 p.m.		
Sunday, May 28th Yom Yerushalayim Morning Services.....			7:00 & 8:30 a.m.
Monday, May 29th Memorial Day Morning Services.....			7:05 & 8:30 a.m.
Tuesday, May 30th Rosh Chodesh Sivan Morning Services.....			7:00 & 7:40 a.m.

Friday, June 2nd	Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	8:03 p.m.	
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	6:45 & 8:05 p.m.		
Shabbat Morning, June 3rd (MIDBAR)			
Shabbat Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.		
Daf Yomi.....	6:20 p.m.		
Bible Class.....	6:50 p.m.		
Talmud Class.....	7:00 p.m.		
Mincha and Kabbalat Yom Tov.....	7:15 p.m.		
Kindle Yom Tov Candles not before.....	8:00 p.m.		
Midnight Bible classes.....	9:03 p.m.		
Sunday, June 4th SHAUOT			
Hashkama Minyan.....	4:45 a.m.		
Main Minyan.....	8:45 a.m.		
Daf Yomi & Bible classes.....	7:15 p.m.		
Mincha and Kabbalat Yom Tov.....	8:00 p.m.		
Kindle Yom Tov candles not before.....	9:03 p.m.		
Monday, June 5th			
Yom Tov Morning Services including Yizkor.....	8:00 & 8:45 a.m.		
Daf Yomi & Bible classes.....	7:15 p.m.		
Mincha followed by Seudah Shlisheet Neilat Hachag.....	8:00 p.m.		
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	8:15 p.m.		
Friday, June 9th			
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	8:06 p.m.		
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	6:45 & 8:10 p.m.		
Shabbat, June 10th (NASO)			
Shabbat Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.		
Daf Yomi.....	6:35 p.m.		
Bible Class.....	7:05 p.m.		
Talmud Class.....	7:20 p.m.		
Mincha.....	8:05 p.m.		
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	8:15 p.m.		
Friday June 16th			
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	8:11 p.m.		
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	6:45 & 8:15 p.m.		
Saturday, June 17th (BEHALOTCHA)			
Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.		
Daf Yomi.....	6:40 p.m.		
Bible Class.....	7:10 p.m.		
Talmud Class.....	7:25 p.m.		
Mincha.....	8:10 p.m.		
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	8:20 p.m.		
Friday, June 23rd			
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	8:13 p.m.		
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	6:45 & 8:15 p.m.		
Shabbat, June 24th (SHELACH - SHABBAT MIKACHMIM)			
Shabbat Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.		
Daf Yomi.....	6:40 p.m.		
Bible Class.....	7:10 p.m.		
Talmud Class.....	7:25 p.m.		
Mincha.....	8:11 p.m.		
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	8:21 p.m.		
Wednesday - Thursday June 28th & 29th Rosh Chodesh Tamuz Morning Services.....			7:00 & 7:40 a.m.
Friday, June 30th			
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....	8:13 p.m.		
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....	6:45 & 8:15 p.m.		
Shabbat, July 1st (KORACH)			
Shabbat Morning Services.....	8:45 a.m.		
Daf Yomi.....	6:40 p.m.		
Bible Class.....	7:10 p.m.		
Talmud Class.....	7:25 p.m.		
Mincha.....	8:10 p.m.		
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....	8:20 p.m.		