

NEW BEGINNINGS

Meredith Lerner

As I looked around, I realized that the space we were praying in wasn't a sanctuary -- it was less formal than I had anticipated. In fact, the room looked more like a large dining hall or a high school gym. The men, wearing kippahs and cloaked in white prayer shawls, were in the middle, the women flanking them on either side. Some men stood for the entire service, *davening* and swaying from side to side as they murmured their prayers. Others were more diminutive in their praying. And when the entire congregation sang together, even though I didn't recognize the songs, something about the melodies was achingly familiar to me.

As I observed this very traditional service, I knew I wasn't supposed to be watching everyone else. I was supposed to be focusing on my own prayers. But how was I supposed to do that when I didn't even know half the prayers we were reciting? Even though this was my faith, and we were celebrating a holiday I had participated in for the past 32 years, part of me felt like an outsider.

With the help of my friend's mother-in-law, I struggled through the service. Afterwards, while we walked home in a light rain, I started asking questions: Why did we say the *Amidah* twice? Why did we take three steps backward and three steps forward? Why did it seem like everyone was praying at a different pace? The questions spilled out of me like a torrent. I felt like a nomad wandering the desert, but instead of searching for water, it was answers I wanted. I was craving knowledge. And on that walk home in the rain, I took my first steps in a quest to learn more about my faith.

Growing up in suburban Long Island, the High Holidays were often the only time that my family and many of our neighbors would go to synagogue. Though there was something comforting in the annual ritual of seeing everyone dressed up and praying together in the sanctuary where I had become a Bat Mitzvah, I always felt like something was missing. Perhaps it was the discordant sound of the organ, an instrument that seemed to me to be so out of place in a synagogue. Or maybe it was the fact that most of the congregants spent more time socializing and, more recently, checking their Blackberries for baseball scores, than paying attention to the service. I knew I wanted more, so I began searching for something different.

That search brought me to a traditional synagogue in suburban New Jersey for the High Holidays last year. I was trying to find a deeper connection with G-d, so I asked my more observant friends if I could spend the holiday with them and their extended family. While I knew that I wasn't going to have a spiritual epiphany by attending such a traditional service, I also knew that ushering in another new year at the synagogue where I had

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grown up was certainly not the answer. After two days at the traditional shul, mostly spent in confusion, I didn't necessarily feel much closer to G-d, but I was determined not to give up.

After the second morning of Rosh Hashanah services, we sat around my friend's dining room table and enjoyed a long and plentiful lunch full of laughter and singing. After we *benched* (said Grace After Meals), I saw my opportunity. I started to ask my friend's father-in-law some questions. Patiently, he answered all of them. Then he asked me a question. He wanted to know if I had heard of Rabbi Buchwald, and the Beginners Services he leads at the Lincoln Square Synagogue. I told him I hadn't heard

of the Rabbi or the services, but I was intrigued. I practically begged him to tell me more. According to his assessment, Rabbi Buchwald's service was exactly what I needed, an environment where everyone wanted to learn and a place where I could ask as many questions as I wanted. At the time, it seemed hard to believe that such a place really existed. What Rabbi would tolerate a million interruptions during a Shabbat Service? Of course, that was before I experienced a Beginners Service firsthand.

I left my friend's house feeling unusually centered. Though the two days of praying in a world unfamiliar to me had been quite unsettling, something about this man's confidence in the Beginners Services had convinced me that I needed to experience it myself. I knew I was moving in the right direction.

Now, almost a year later, I am grateful for the advice I was given on Rosh Hashanah. Because of the Beginners program run by Rabbi Buchwald, I have found a community of people who are as excited and passionate to learn more about Judaism as I am. And, just as important, I feel like I have found a spiritual home as well.

I know that the Days of Awe between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are supposed to be a time when we take stock of our lives, reflect and ask for forgiveness. It is a time to recognize our transgressions and make a pact with G-d to try to come closer to living a righteous life in the year ahead. But I also think that the Days of Awe are a time when G-d is listening more acutely to our thoughts and prayers. It is a holy time, and holy prayers are answered. Last year I opened my heart to G-d and asked for guidance, and I can't help but think that G-d knew what I was looking for and answered my humble prayers. Now, when I observe the High Holidays this year with the other beginners at Lincoln Square Synagogue, my prayers will be filled with gratitude for the opportunities I have been given to explore my faith and find a spiritual home.

Meredith Lerner is a television producer and writer currently working at the Rachael Ray show. Meredith lives in New York City.

CONGRATULATIONS AND MAZAL TOV

MARRIAGES

Beckie Epan and Nimrod Shlomo Chotzen
Mazal Tov to parents Lorraine and Rafi Epan

Elisheva Greenhut (Israel) and Oren Epstein
Mazal Tov to parents Judith Weil and Lloyd Epstein
Meryl Degan and Raphie (Albert) Louzoun
Rebecca Dreisinger and Jose (Yosef) Melendrez
Ann Fragen and Gary Narin
Adina Page and Bezalel Weinberg
Mazal Tov to parents Dodi Li Lamm and Debbie and Rabbi Simcha Weinberg

BIRTHS

Anja (Laakso) and Asher Barmoha, on the birth of a boy, David Joseph
Karen and Baruch Burnham, on the birth of a girl, Ilya Chana
Mazal Tov to grandfather Dr. Stuart Blaustein
Riki and Zvi Gewirtz, on the birth of a boy, Daniel Meir
Mazal Tov to grandparents Barbara and Shlomo Dov Gewirtz
Sacha and Elon Gold, on the birth of a boy, Mordechai Asher
Mazal Tov to grandparents Lynn and Sid Gold
Nika (Erastov) and David Klinghoffer, on the birth of twins,



Jacob David and Saul Naphtali
Mazal Tov to grandmother Nina Perlin
Dr. Leora & Richard Linhart, on the birth of a boy
Jennifer Paradise and Dr. Lawrence Maayan, on the birth of a boy, Yosef Hillel
Nancy and Doug Rose, on the birth of a girl, Sophie Lila Jordana (Levine) and Glen Ross, on the birth of twins, Beriah Aliza and Mordechai Yitzchak
Mazal Tov to grandparents Renee and Irwin Levine
Sheryl Kaskowitz and Benjamin Shaykin, on the birth of a boy, Ezra Marcus
Mazal Tov to grandparents Norah Shaykin and Maura and Leonard Shaykin
Nechama and Reuven Weiser on the birth of a girl, Orly Chana
Mazal Tov to grandparents Sema and Rabbi Dr. Mordechai Reich

BAR/BAT MITZVAH

Joel Eliyahu Aharon Ickovics
Mazal Tov to parents Karen and Alain Ickovics
Charles Aron McLagan
Mazal Tov to mother Michaela Harel
Benjamin Marc Shenwick
Mazal Tov to parents Lisa and James Shenwick

Noam Teleky

Mazal Tov to parents Dr. Elaine Friedlander & Bruce Teleky

SPEEDY RECOVERY/REFUAH SH'LAIMA

Shleema Freeda bat Basha Roza
Peter Howard (Chuna ben Chana Sarah)
Dana Hudes (Daniel Baruch ben Rivkah Bryndel)

CONDOLENCES

Daniel Bettinger, on the loss of his mother, Gloria Bettinger
Rafi Epan, on the loss of his father, Harold Epan
Dodi Li Lamm, on the loss of her sister, Judy Young
Abraham (Carlos) Mora, on the loss of his mother, Hilda Mora
Reb Yaakov S. Gabriel and Sara Schechtman, on the loss of their mother, Matilda Schechtman
Adam Sternglass, on the loss of his father Arno Sternglass

CONGRATULATIONS

To Judy Federbush and Rodney Greenwald, Guests of Honor at the Dinner of Chabad of the West Side

THANK YOU

To Dr. Leonard Davidman who conducted the Beginners Service with much devotion during the summer.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Fri September 7, 2007 - 24th of Elul
 Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM
 Candle Lighting 7:01 PM
 Mincha 7:05 PM

Sat September 8, 2007 - 25th of Elul
Nitzavim-Vayeilech
 Daf Yomi 7:00 AM
 Bible Class 8:30 AM
 Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
 Talmud & Bible Class 5:50 PM
 Mincha 6:50 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 8:01 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 7:00 PM
 Early Selichot 10:00 PM
 Late Selichot 12:53 AM

Sun September 9, 2007 - 26th of Elul
 Morning Services 7:10 & 8:30 AM

Mon September 10, 2007 - 27th of Elul
 Selichot & Morning Services
 6:40 & 7:30 AM

Tue September 11, 2007 - 28th of Elul
 Selichot & Morning Services
 6:40 & 7:30 AM
 Late Selichot 9:00 PM

Wed September 12, 2007 - 29th of Elul
EREV ROSH HASHANA
 Selichot & Services . . . 5:45 & 6:45 AM
 REMEMBER TO MAKE AN ERUV TAVSHILIN
 Candle Lighting 6:53 PM
 Mincha 7:00 PM

Thu September 13, 2007 - 1st of Tishrei
ROSH HASHANA
 Kollel Minyan 7:30 AM
 Main Sanctuary 7:45 AM
 Ballroom 7:45 AM
 Beginners 9:00 AM
 Tashlich 5:55 PM
 Mincha 6:55 PM
 Yom Tov candles after . . . 7:53 PM
 Maariv 7:53 PM
 Daf Yomi after Maariv

Fri September 14, 2007 - 2nd of Tishrei
ROSH HASHANA
 Kollel Minyan 7:30 AM
 Main Sanctuary 7:45 AM
 Ballroom 7:45 AM
 Beginners 9:00 AM
 Daf Yomi 6:10 PM
 Mincha 6:55 PM
 Shabbat candles before . . . 6:49 PM

Sat September 15, 2007 - 3rd of Tishrei
Ha'azinu SHABBAT SHUVA
 Daf Yomi 7:00 AM
 Bible Class 8:30 AM
 Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
 Mincha 6:20 PM
 Shabbat Shuva Drasha . . . 6:45 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 7:49 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 6:40 PM

Sun September 16, 2007 - 4th of Tishrei
TZOM GEDALIAH
 Fast Begins 5:25 AM
 Selichot & Services . . . 6:20 & 8:00 AM
 Mincha 6:30 PM
 Fast Ends 7:35 PM

Mon September 17, 2007 - 5th of Tishrei
 Selichot & Morning Services
 6:30 & 7:15 AM

Tue September 18, 2007 - 6th of Tishrei
 Selichot & Morning Services
 6:30 & 7:15 AM

Wed September 19, 2007 - 7th of Tishrei
 Selichot & Morning Services
 6:30 & 7:15 AM

Thu September 20, 2007 - 8th of Tishrei
 Selichot & Morning Services
 6:30 & 7:15 AM

Fri September 21, 2007 - 9th of Tishrei
EREV YOM KIPPUR
 Selichot & Services . . . 6:50 & 7:40 AM
 Mincha 1:30, 3:00 & 4:25 PM
 Candle Lighting 6:37 PM
 Kol Nidre 6:40 PM
 Daf Yomi after Maariv

Sat September 22, 2007 - 10th of Tishrei
YOM KIPPUR
 Kollel Minyan 7:30 AM
 Main Sanctuary 8:00 AM
 Ballroom 9:00 AM
 Beginners 9:00 AM
 Final Shofar Blast 7:37 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 6:35 PM

Wed September 26, 2007 - 14th of Tishrei
EREV SUKKOT
 Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM
 REMEMBER TO MAKE AN ERUV TAVSHILIN
 Candle Lighting 6:29 PM
 Mincha 6:35 PM
 Begin Meal in Sukkah after . . 7:18 PM

Thu September 27, 2007 - 15th of Tishrei
SUKKOT
 Morning Services 8:00 & 9:00 AM
 Daf Yomi 5:50 PM
 Mincha 6:35 PM
 Yom Tov candles after . . . 7:29 PM
 Maariv 7:29 PM
 Begin Meal in Sukkah after . . 7:29 PM

Fri September 28, 2007 - 16th of Tishrei
SUKKOT
 Morning Services 8:00 & 9:00 AM
 Daf Yomi 5:50 PM
 Mincha 6:35 PM
 Shabbat candles before . . . 6:25 PM

Sat September 29, 2007 - 17th of Tishrei
SUKKOT CHOL HAMOED
 Daf Yomi 7:15 AM
 Morning Services 8:00 & 9:00 AM
 Daf Yomi 5:30 PM
 Mincha 6:15 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 7:25 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 6:20 PM

Sun September 30, 2007 - 18th of Tishrei
SUKKOT CHOL HAMOED
 Morning Services 6:45 & 8:30 AM

Mon October 1, 2007 - 19th of Tishrei
SUKKOT CHOL HAMOED
 Morning Services 6:45 & 7:30 AM

Tue October 2, 2007 - 20th of Tishrei
SUKKOT CHOL HAMOED
 Morning Services 6:45 & 7:30 AM

Wed October 3, 2007 - 21st of Tishrei
SUKKOT HOSHANA RABA
 Morning Services 6:15, 7:00 & 8:00 AM
 REMEMBER TO MAKE AN ERUV TAVSHILIN
 Candle Lighting 6:17 PM
 Mincha 6:25 PM

Thu October 4, 2007 - 22nd of Tishrei
SHMINI ATZERET
 Daf Yomi 7:15 AM
 Morning Services 8:00 & 9:00 AM
 Mincha 6:20 PM
 Yom Tov candles after . . . 7:17 PM
 Maariv & Hakafot 7:17 PM

Fri October 5, 2007 - 23rd of Tishrei
SIMCHAT TORAH
 Morning Services 7:00 & 8:30 AM
 Womens Tefillah Group 9:00 AM
 Daf Yomi 5:35 PM
 Mincha 6:20 PM
 Shabbat candles before . . . 6:14 PM

Sat October 6, 2007 - 24th of Tishrei
Bereshit
 Daf Yomi 7:00 AM
 Bible Class 8:30 AM
 Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
 Talmud & Bible Class 5:05 PM
 Mincha 6:05 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 7:14 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 6:05 PM

Fri October 12, 2007 - 30th of Tishrei
ROSH CHODESH
 Morning Services 7:00 & 7:40 AM
 Candle Lighting 6:03 PM
 Mincha 6:10 PM

Sat October 13, 2007 - 1st of Cheshvan
Noach ROSH CHODESH
 Daf Yomi 6:55 AM
 Bible Class 8:30 AM
 Morning Services 7:40, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
 Talmud & Bible Class 4:55 PM
 Mincha 5:55 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 7:03 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 6:00 PM

Fri October 19, 2007 - 7th of Cheshvan
 Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM
 Candle Lighting 5:52 PM
 Mincha 5:55 PM

Sat October 20, 2007 - 8th of Cheshvan
Lech-Lecha
 Daf Yomi 7:00 AM
 Bible Class 8:30 AM
 Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
 Talmud & Bible Class 4:40 PM
 Mincha 5:40 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 6:52 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 5:50 PM

Fri October 26, 2007 - 14th of Cheshvan
 Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM
 Candle Lighting 5:42 PM
 Mincha 5:45 PM

Sat October 27, 2007 - 15th of Cheshvan
Vayera
 Daf Yomi 7:00 AM
 Bible Class 8:30 AM
 Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
 Talmud & Bible Class 4:30 PM
 Mincha 5:30 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 6:42 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 5:40 PM

Fri November 2, 2007 - 21st of Cheshvan
 Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM
 Candle Lighting 5:33 PM
 Mincha 5:40 PM

Sat November 3, 2007 - 22nd of Cheshvan
Chayei Sara
 Daf Yomi 7:00 AM
 Bible Class 8:30 AM
 Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
 Talmud & Bible Class 4:25 PM
 Mincha 5:25 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 6:33 PM
 REMEMBER to set your clocks backwards
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 4:35 PM EST

Tue November 6, 2007 - 25th of Cheshvan
ELECTION DAY
 Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM

Fri November 9, 2007 - 28th of Cheshvan
 Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM
 Candle Lighting 4:26 PM
 Mincha 4:30 PM

Sat November 10, 2007 - 29th of Cheshvan
Toldot
 Daf Yomi 7:00 AM
 Bible Class 8:30 AM
 Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
 Talmud & Bible Class 3:30 PM
 Mincha 4:15 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 5:26 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 4:25 PM

Sun November 11, 2007 - 1st of Kislev
ROSH CHODESH
 Morning Services 7:00 & 8:30 AM

Mon November 12, 2007 - 2nd of Kislev
VETERANS DAY
 Morning Services 7:00 & 7:50 AM

Fri November 16, 2007 - 6th of Kislev
 Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM
 Candle Lighting 4:19 PM
 Mincha 4:25 PM

Sat November 17, 2007 - 7th of Kislev
Vayetzei
 Daf Yomi 7:00 AM
 Bible Class 8:30 AM
 Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
 Talmud & Bible Class 3:25 PM
 Mincha 4:10 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 5:19 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 4:20 PM

Thu November 22, 2007 - 12th of Kislev
THANKSGIVING
 Morning Services 7:00 & 8:30 AM

Fri November 23, 2007 - 13th of Kislev
 Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM
 Candle Lighting 4:14 PM
 Mincha 4:20 PM

Sat November 24, 2007 - 14th of Kislev
Vayishlach
 Daf Yomi 7:00 AM
 Bible Class 8:30 AM
 Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
 Talmud & Bible Class 3:20 PM
 Mincha 4:05 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 5:14 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 4:20 PM

Fri November 30, 2007 - 20th of Kislev
 Morning Services 7:10 & 7:50 AM
 Candle Lighting 4:11 PM
 Mincha 4:15 PM

Sat December 1, 2007 - 21st of Kislev
Vayeshev
 Daf Yomi 7:00 AM
 Bible Class 8:30 AM
 Morning Services 7:45, 9:00 & 9:45 AM
 Talmud & Bible Class 3:15 PM
 Mincha 4:00 PM
 Maariv/Shabbat Ends 5:11 PM
 Daily Mincha & Maariv 4:15 PM

Tue December 4, 2007 - 24th of Kislev
 Chanukah Candles after . . . 5:00 PM

Wed December 5, 2007 - 25th of Kislev
CHANUKAH
 Morning Services 7:00 & 7:40 AM
 Chanukah Candles after . . . 4:59 PM

HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES
at the New York Historical Society
 West 77th Street and Central Park West

ROSH HASHANAH
 Wed., Sept. 12, 7:00 pm
 Thur. & Fri., Sept. 13 & 14, 9:00 am
 Thur., Sept. 13, 6:55 pm

YOM KIPPUR
 Fri., Sept. 21, 6:40 pm
 Sat., Sept. 22, 9:00 am

Tickets
 LSS Members \$75, Non-Members \$125

SAVE THE DATES
Beginners Shabbat Luncheons - \$20
 Saturdays 12:30 PM
 Sept 8, Oct 6, Nov 3

Beginners Shmooze - Free
 Mon., Dec 3, 8:15 PM

Beginners Shabbaton
 Nov 30 - Dec 1

Beginners Parties
 Sukkot, Simchat Bet Hashoeva:
 Tues, Oct 2, at Cong. Kehilath Jeshurun
 Chanukah: Mon, Dec 10

Special Events
 Sukkot Shopping: Wed, Sept 26