



Newsletter of The Synagogue at Malden Bridge

The Synagogue at Malden Bridge is located at the Wesley United Methodist Church in Malden Bridge, New York at the intersection of Albany Turnpike and Shaker Museum Road

Shevat-Adar-Nisan 5761 Volume II, Number 3 Feb/ March 2001

Committee, Anyone? by Alan Gelb

For some years now, my family has celebrated Passover with a haggadah that radiates a vintage 1960s sensibility, complete with cameo appearances from Ho Chi Minh and the Rosenbergs. In this haggadah, Moses comes off a little like Tom Hayden, particularly when he forms an underground to fight the Pharaoh. That particular section goes like this:

So, a new committee was formed—the “how-to-get-out-of-here” committee. They met every Tuesday and Thursday night for two months; and at the end of two months, people weren’t sure that much had been accomplished. Some preferred to remain in slavery rather than face the perils of committee life.

Most of us who are immersed in modern life know all about the perils of committees. We have committees at work; committees at our children’s schools; committees serving the community. If we opt for an active role in the way we lead our lives, then we’re bound to find ourselves on such com-

mittees and often these experiences can be frustrating, with too much time spent and too little to show for it.

Those of us who have been with The Synagogue at Malden Bridge from the beginning know all about committee life. The good news, however, is that, for the most part, our experience has been neither perilous nor onerous. Yes, being an active member of a Synagogue committee requires some commitment of time, but not all that much. And when you have the pleasure of working with smart, caring people, which our Synagogue happens to be filled with, it feels like time well spent. Some important friendships have been formed in the context of these committees; some strained relationships have been mended. And a lot of good work has been accomplished.

I currently serve on three committees: Publicity, Programs, and Cemetery. The amount of time I punch the clock for any and all of these certainly does not exceed an hour a month. For that hour, I get an ongoing sense of involvement with an institution that is serving a very vital role in our community. I also get that warm, fuzzy feeling that comes with having done my part. I have helped this fledgling organization to grow,

knowing that without this kind of minimal investment of time, the Synagogue would never have gotten off the ground.

There are currently 13 committees within SAMB:

- Publicity
- Membership
- Programs
- Finance
- Fundraising
- Board of Education (in other words, Hebrew School)
- Liaison with Wesley United Methodist Church
- Grounds (this one, as you can imagine, doesn’t meet a lot as we have no grounds yet)
- Cemetery
- Ritual
- Kiddush
- Sunshine (this is the committee that attends to life passages, etc.)
- Social Action.

There may be more committees in the future; there may be less. The Synagogue is a work in progress, so time will tell.

If you have an interest, we urge you to join one of these committees. Our current manpower is spread thin, and we very much need the infusion of new energy and new ideas (have you ever heard of a Synagogue that

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Committee, Anyone?

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doesn't even have an accountant on the Finance Committee?). Just think about where your talents would be best used and then send an email to Larry Machiz at machizmail@taconic.net. He'll tell you what to do next. And rest assured: there are openings on every one of the above committees, so you won't be disappointed.



Board News

We recently expanded the Synagogue's Board of Trustees to 13 members. The three new spaces were filled by Steve Ostrow, whose term will expire in 2003, Virginia (Ginger) Feldman, whose term will expire in 2002 and by George Carey, whose term will expire in 2001. Steve Ostrow has been managing the shul's books since the fall and he has also been given the office of Assistant Treasurer. Ginger is taking over the chairmanship of the membership committee, so if you know someone that you think might be interested in joining our shul, please let Ginger (672-0041; Ginger6908@aol.com) know. Presently, the roster of trustees and officers is as follows:

<u>Trustees:</u>	<u>Officers:</u>
Sy Balsen	Vice President
George Carey	
Mark Dickerman	
Ginger Feldman	
Alan Gelb	Vice President
Yehuda Hanani	
Lydia Kukoff	Exec. Vice President
Diane Leibovitz	Treasurer
Jody Leopold	
Charles D. Lieber	Vice President
Larry Machiz	President
Steven Ostrow	Ass't Treasurer
Alice Swersey	Secretary



Know a Good Plumber?

Plumbers, lawyers, psychotherapists, piano teachers, antiques dealers, graphic designers...if you've got a skill or ply a trade and are a member of our Synagogue, send in your business card to the SAMB post box and we'll plug you in our next newsletter. It's free advertising...what could be bad

SMB MicroCinema Coming Attractions



Yidl Mitn Fidl
(Yiddish Musical from the 30s)
Saturday, March 17
7 PM
Cup Final
Saturday, May 12
7 PM

Commentary by Fred Rheingold

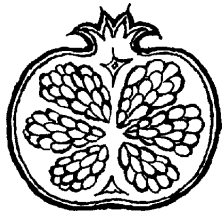
In the Talmud, spring and fall are recognized as the times of redemption. While the predominant tradition believed that the world was created in Tishrei at the beginning of the autumn, some thought that the world was created in Nisan, at the beginning of spring. Those who thought that the world was created in the fall usually thought that the Final Redemption would come in the fall. And conversely, those who thought that the world was created in the spring believe that the Final Redemption will come in the spring. Since the final answer is up to God, we can enjoy the feelings of renewal that naturally come to us at both of these seasons.

As we get closer to spring, our tradition provides us with steppingstones to Redemption. Though very different in character and origin, these winter holidays teach us about the importance of faith in the face of the apparent concealment of God's presence. Tu BiShvat is the New Year of the trees when the sap starts to flow in the trees even before any evidence of new growth appears on the outside of the tree. At a time when the ground is frozen and we see only barren branches, it helps us to have faith that there is growth and change even before we can perceive it.

Purim usually comes one month after Tu BiShvat and one month before Passover. Here the Redemption in the

end is more dramatic historically than Tu BiShvat but concealment is a vital element of the story. In fact, the Rabbis cite the name Esther as being related to the Hebrew root *str*. There is a doubly hidden quality to the story of Purim. First, Esther hides her Jewishness until almost the end. (This made Esther a very inspiring role model for the Marrano Jews of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.) An even more “dramatic” concealment is the absence of any mention of God in the whole book. While some may prefer to see the Book of Esther as a secular work because of this, it is more likely that the message is that God works through the seemingly “normal” events of human action.

So the holidays of winter teach us that beneath what we can see with our normal eyes, there is a Hand both in Nature and in history that brings us to Redemption. This lesson acts as a valuable counterpoint to the very manifest Redemption of Passover with the accounts of plagues in the realm of nature and God’s very obvious role in history.



**Believe it or not
Spring is coming!**

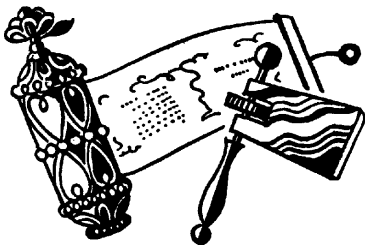
Tu BiShvat Seder

**Celebrating the New Year of the Trees
Sunday, February 4, 12 PM
At the Vedder Hall**



**Purim Megillah Reading
Thursday, March 8
7 PM**

Followed by a traditional Purim Spiel



Welcome New Members! Pamela Katz and Richard Steinbach, Bernard and Leah Tolpin, Steve and Carol Villeneuve, Shirley Schips, Richard and Carol Altwerger, and Samuel Mieschonz.

News about a good friend

As most of our membership knows by now, Martin Kace, who observed the High Holydays at SMB, had a life-threatening accident some weeks ago: a tree fell on him during some light clearing near his recently acquired home on Stonewall Road in Spencertown. He was rushed by helicopter to Albany Medical, and the care he received there and, later, at New York City’s Mount Sinai Hospital, has now made it possible for him, his family, and his many friends to look forward to his returning home to the city and, soon thereafter, to Spencertown.

With one voice we all wish him a steadily accelerating recovery and send our warmest regards to him as well as to the charming and beautiful Bella, Ruth, his lovely daughter, and to Hella, his regally solicitous mother, who upon receiving the frightening news immediately flew in from Tel Aviv to be by his bedside. We look forward eagerly to having them rejoin us in shul at the earliest possible time. Anyone wishing to be in touch with Martin may write to him at 8 East 12th Street, NYC 10003.



Talmud Group Meets

On Thursday, January 4, the first meeting of the Talmud Study Group met at the Careys’ home. For most of the ten people who attended, this was truly their introduction to Talmud study. Under the leadership of Lydia Kukoff and the text, *Learn Talmud*, by Jacob Neusner, we were led from a state of almost complete ignorance to the beginning of an understanding of the history, and structure of the Talmud — Mishnah and Gemara — and to the logic and process linking them. It was a lively and rewarding evening, which we all look forward to continuing. New members are welcome. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 1 at the Kukoffs’ home. Anyone wishing to join the group should call Lydia at 766-7389.



Condolences

Ginger Feldman on the loss of her mother Elise Weil.
Alice Swersey on the loss of her mother, Celia Shapiro.
Refuah Shlamah
Sydell Roth on her recovery from bi-lateral knee replacement.

Recent Contributions- Thank You! Beth S. Greenberg, Jennette E. & William Herrick, Claire & David Krantz, Jack & Ilana Levitt, Dr. Bernard & Florence Mehl, Carl & Joan Rabb.

Torah and Haftarah Readings

February 3

Bo- Exodus 10:1-13:16

Preparations for leaving Egypt and instructions for the first Passover

Haftarah- Jeremiah 46:13-28

The Egypt of Jeremiah's day will also suffer defeat.

February 10

Beshallah- Exodus 13:17-17:16

Israelites crossing of the Red Sea

Haftarah- Judges 4:4-5:31

The victory of Deborah over the Canaanites.

February 17

Yitro- Exodus 18:1-20:26

Giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai

Haftarah- Isaiah 6:1-7:6, 9:5,6

Isaiah has his own revelation in the Temple.

February 24

Mishpatim- Exodus 21:1-24:18

Additional legislation to maintain justice

Shekalim- Exodus 30:11-16

The commandment to give half a shekel to the Sanctuary.

Haftarah- II Kings 12:1-17

Religious reform to restore the dignity of the Temple.

March 3

Terumah- Exodus 35:1-27:19

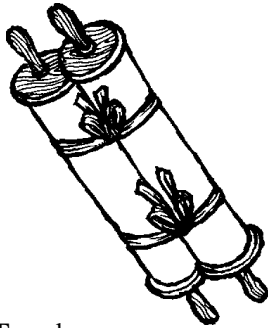
Donation of gifts to the Sanctuary and a description of some of the central objects in the Sanctuary.

Zachor- Deuteronomy 25:17-19

Remembrance of what the arch-enemy of the Jews did to our people in the desert on the Shabbat before Purim.

Haftarah- I Samuel 15:2-34

The origins of the personal feud between Mordecai, a descendant of King Saul and Haman, a descendant of Agag, the Amalekite king who was defeated by Saul.



March 10

Tetzaveh- Exodus 27:20-30:10

Aaron and his sons are chosen to be the priests. There is also a description of their garments.

Haftarah- Ezekiel 43:10-27

God will remain with the Israelites through the Exile. Also included is a vision of the Second Temple.

March 17

Ki Tissa- Exodus 30:11-34:35

The sin of the Golden Calf and God's agreement not to destroy the people.

Parah- Numbers 19:1-22

As we get closer to Passover, the Torah describes the purification ceremony for those who had contact with the dead in order for these people to be able to enter the sanctuary for the holiday.

Haftarah- Ezekiel 36:16-38

Ezekiel talks about the future purification when the Jewish people will be restored to their land.

March 24

Vayakhel and Pekudei- Exodus 35:1-40:38

Detailed description of the Sanctuary and its furnishings.

Hachodesh- Exodus 12:1-20

Preparations for Passover and for the month of Nisan as the beginning of the Jewish calendar.

Haftarah- Ezekiel 45:16-46:18

Restoration of the sacrifices when the Temple is restored.

March 31

Vayikra- Leviticus 1:1-5:26

A description of the various kinds of sacrifices carried out in the Sanctuary.

Haftarah- Isaiah 43:21-44:23

A call for the people to dedicate themselves to God in spirit as well as in ritual.

The Synagogue at Malden Bridge

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