

MINYAN MONTHLY

Volume 7, No. 7

December 1993

Kislev 5754

... Many an Ancient Volume of Forgotten Lore

--by Mitch Miller

As most Library Minyan members know, the minyan has no formal set of rules. This is not for want of trying. About seven years ago we spent a great deal of time and effort drafting, considering and adopting by-laws.

Then, in an unparalleled psychic phenomenon, everyone, even the drafter, destroyed his or her copy, and not one remains.

Certain of those rules, however, having been passed down from generation to generation became part of the Oral Law. We all know at least one rule - pay, come and serve. (Of course, like the rest of the Oral Law, or the Internal Revenue Code, that rule is subject to so many exemptions, exceptions and qualifications that no one is quite sure any longer of exactly what it does mean.)

Other rules, too, were part of the minhagim ha-makom which have been forgotten. Fortunately, those of us

skilled in the folk tradition (that means raised in the 60's) have kept the memory of those traditions alive, singing them around the campfire, or telling them to our children on dark and stormy nights.

Herewith a few:

* Anyone celebrating a simcha (aufruf, bar/bat mitzvah, baby naming) at the Minyan should provide a kiddish for the members. This need not be elaborate - a huge expense is not necessary and we have members available to assist you.

* We love children at the Minyan, but sometimes even the most wonderful (one's own) can become loud and unruly. They should be taken out of the chapel at such times. We have excellent child care and other programs for kids, so let's take advantage of them.

* Children are not allowed onto the bimah except during Adon Olam, when they should be welcomed up.

No doubt there are other of these customs which I have forgotten, so perhaps other members could add to this list.

(continued next page)

I would like to suggest a few additional policies for the Minyan's consideration:

* Shabbatot and Yomim Tovim are special occasions, for which we should shed our everyday garb and "dress up." While everybody has a different idea of what "dress up" means, jeans, work boots and shorts aren't it. This is particularly important for those who receive honors or participate in the service.

* Some members and visitors have suggested we should have a policy as to the appropriate religious attire for women davening, laying, and receiving aliyot. If we are egalitarian, should they not be required to cover their heads and wear tallitot, as are men?

* It would be helpful if simchas were announced at least a week early. That way, members could adjust their plans, e.g., to miss a speech in the main shul or to have people meet them at home for lunch.

Any comments?

CHAIR'S COLUMN

--by Norm Green

The Library Minyan Steering Committee met in October with Larry Schwimmer, Beth Am President, and Harold Waterman and Rodney Freeman of the Building Committee, in order to discuss temporary and permanent facilities for the Minyan.

Several decisions were made in regard to the permanent facilities. Most important, we will have a flat, not sloped, floor. Also, we may have a movable bima.

Although a temporary location (for the construction period) will have impact sooner, a final decision was postponed on this matter. While the new building will be completed and occupied in January, we will not need to vacate the current chapel until at least May. Therefore, we will have the opportunity to inspect, and perhaps even try out, the alternate locations before a decision is made for where to meet during the construction period (which will probably last at least six months).

We will probably use the Mirror Room for some time, until construction on it commences. Then we will need to move either to the temporary chapel on the third floor of the new building (an open combination of three classrooms) or to the blue room (part of the crystal room adjacent to the main sanctuary). All three of these locations have some advantages and disadvantages. Hopefully a decision made closer to the date of any required move will better reflect our needs and desires at that time. Suggestions are still welcome.

Ritual Committee Meeting Minutes July 11, 1993

--by Ronnie Cohen

The ritual committee meeting began at 8:00 PM at the home of Ronnie and Hilda Cohen. In attendance were:

Hilda Cohen	Stan Goldstein
Ronnie Cohen	Val Goldstein
Jonathan Friedman	Fran Grossman
	Joel Grossman

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The issue of appropriate religious attire (i.e. tallit and head-covering) for shlichot tzibbur and ba'alot kri'a was discussed. Currently, there is no standard established. While many women who lead services or read from Torah wear both a tallit and a head-covering, not all do. On the other hand, men who lead services or read from the Torah wear both a tallit and a head-covering.

The committee determined that this was a difficult issue because there are both egalitarian and halachic principles involved which operate on different planes. After deliberation, the committee decided it could not reach a decision that would be binding on the minyan. We recommended those people who have strong feelings on the subject see to it that an educational process be begun on these issues through drashot and articles in the Minyan Monthly. This would also encompass the issue of head-covering for women who are called up to the bima or aron kodesh for honors.

Another issue concerns the leading of the Kaddish Yatom (Mourner's Kaddish), particularly at the end of Mussaf. Some Shlichei Tzibbur feel uncomfortable reciting that Kaddish, and therefore do not. However, there may be people in the congregation who are not familiar enough with the service to know when Kaddish is recited, yet are there for this very purpose. The committee recommends the Gabbai appoint a member of the congregation to approach the bima at the end of Mussaf for the specific purpose of leading Kaddish.

The final issue on the agenda was a request, brought by Rachel Adler, that the traditional Yom Kippur Mincha Torah Reading (Leviticus 18. dealing with

forbidden unions) be replaced by the reading suggested by Rabbi Jules Harlow as an alternate reading (in his Mahzor for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur), namely Leviticus 19:1-18. The committee discussed this issue from various sides. We realize that the reading of this section--which contains the verse (Lev. 18:22) prohibiting homosexual relations--on the holiest day of the year could be viewed by some as a rejection (or at least, reservations concerning the acceptance) of gay and lesbian members of the community. Here, again, the committee felt that it could not come to a decision, and that this matter ought to be discussed by the entire congregation. Furthermore, we determined that there was insufficient time to effect a change in the coming Yom Kippur service. Accordingly, those who feel strongly about this subject are encouraged to give drashot and/or write articles in the Minyan Monthly.

A HEARTFELT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

-- The Jacoby-Stern Family

Our family was greatly moved by the caring and support you've shown to us during this most difficult time. Your expressions of kindness during shiva, your thoughtful cards and contributions in memory of Jacob, and your generosity of spirit, have been and continue to be a source of comfort to us. We are blessed beyond words to be part of such a wonderful community.

Please accept our deepest thanks.

With love,

Joel, Susan, Rena, and Ethan Stern
Norman and Lela Jacoby
Henry and Ann Stern

*An Answer to Eric
Lesin's "New
Revelation"*

-- by Miriam Elkins

How silly of me to have wasted so much of my time with the foolish insights of patriarchs and prophets, when it was really the "begetters" who are the heroes of our tradition. When I think of all the years I spent trying to get a handle on justice and righteousness, identifying with the powerless and oppressed because we were once slaves in the land of Egypt...when what the Lord really required of me was to make babies!

How misguided I've been, when I believed the sages who warned against using the Torah as a spade to dig with, as a convenient cover for narrow, mean-spirited judgmentalism! And when I beat up on myself each Yom Kippur for saying things that cause injury to my fellow human beings, how guilty I am of making Judaism into "an insipid religion." You have given us a whole new Revelation, Eric! But I think I'll stick with the old, knowing full well that, if I do it right, I run the very real risk of a loss of complacency, and any claim of superiority over other human beings.

Enough Already!

--by John Antignas

When I read the title of Eric Lesin's article in the Minyan Newsletter, I said to myself, "Enough already on this gay business." However, as I read further I realized that his arguments served to divert our attention from the real issue: How should we treat gays, who, after all, are the sons, daughters, aunts,

uncles, children or grandchildren of members of our community, our minyan, or maybe our own children or grandchildren, born or unborn?

Should we expect the gays among us to hide their sexual orientation in the closet, commit themselves to sham marriages, repress their sexuality? Or do we expect them to step out of the closet and face ostracism, or be denied the full Jewish communal life we wish for ourselves? Are we only capable of "don't ask, don't tell?"

We should face up to our "attitude" problem, which stops us from acting justly toward gays. We must learn to accept that two men, or two women, can behave as straight couples properly behave in public--to hold hands, dance, embrace, show affection, and even kiss. If we change our "attitude" it will bring long overdue justice for the gays amongst us. It will also go a long way toward humanizing relations between fathers and sons, when those fathers suddenly, at a certain age, stop embracing their sons, who are denied their fathers' arms in the name of manhood.

Loving and caring couples seeking the blessing of their God and the celebration of their commitment to one another by their families and community should be a source of joy, not raised eyebrows and shaking heads. How long should the gays among us wait? If not now, when?

The sooner we face up to our responsibility to act justly, and not hide behind the words rather than embracing the spirit of our Torah, the sooner we can get on with repairing the world. As Mr. Rabin recently proclaimed about a problem not as old as the gay problem, "Enough already!"

A LETTER FROM BERKELEY

-- by Judy Massarano

Dear Friends and Relatives,

Believe it or not, and contrary to any rumours you might have heard, we have not fallen off the side of the world. We are all alive and well and living in... Berkeley, California. Where in LA we might possibly have been considered on the leading edge of hip, here we are behind the times, learning the correct lingo and current issues. We might be seen as having some potential, but it may take some time to retrain us, rehabilitate us, and detox us from the smog.

Sa'adia has started his new gan, Gan Shalom. From all reports, he has acclimated extremely well, with many new and helpful friends. Judy has spent some time there and is very impressed with what they have to offer. The literature and parents' guide all have the right words -- stuff like requests for no super hero clothes or lunch boxes (the kids do their own playing and imagining), and no candy or overly sweet desserts. Whether or not one agrees with these policies, the nice thing for us is that it is much more in tune with what Sa'adia sees at home (I stopped wearing my cape and mask last year!).

Betzalel has been checking out the local tot-oriented parks which have been tres baby-friendly. Lots of interesting people and their parents frequent these parks, many willing to help out a homeless (if not hotel-less child and his ima.

Both Sa'adia and Betzalel have been checking out local regional

parks, too. Tilden is a recent favorite with the merry-go-round and live steam train rides (long rides on both, too!), in addition to more mundane things like beautiful hiking trails, a couple of lakes, and a petting farm.

Besides Sa'adia, Glenn has had the closest to what could be called a "routine". Work has been great and the drive, or lack thereof, has been wonderful. Now, Glenn gets antsy if he sits in traffic any longer than twenty minutes (compared to the 45-minute drive, minimum, from Los Angeles to Fullerton)!

Glenn's office has a nice group of people with whom Glenn works. It also has some marvelous views to the west of the San Francisco Bay, the Bay Bridge, and the Golden Gate Bridge (on all but the foggiest of mornings). While Glenn's office is facing east, which gives him a view of the hills in which Berkeley and the vicinity are nestled, it is but a short jaunt up one aisle and across the way to the conference room which sports the JHK view supreme. Needless to say, Glenn calls as many meetings as possible.

For those of you who might be interested, Glenn works for JHK & Associates. He is helping them put together the software to manage the traffic on the Bay Area freeways (LA friends, you're on you own!).

Our abodal story goes like this: We were all holed up in an ever-so-slightly larger than average hotel room in Emeryville for three weeks, as we desperately but unsuccessfully endeavored to acquire more permanent, family-appropriate living quarters. Finally, in desperation, we took a flat in Richmond, about 10 miles north of Berkeley. (cont. next page)

Some parts of Richmond are nice and the flat we rented had all the amenities: furniture, microwave, washer/dryer, nearby lake, bathrooms, etc. Although it was not quite walking distance to the synagogues we wanted attend, it was a place we could call "home" and, though it lacked the maid service we had at the hotel, it did afford us space where Sa'adia and Betzalel could stretch their legs and their parents could save their sanity.

We continued our search through Home Finders, the local equivalent of a dating service for home-seekers, checking out houses every couple of days or so. Also, local friends did some intelligence gathering on the "home front", but, again, to no avail. Until...

We found out that the local shlichah--the Israeli version of an army recruiter (l'havdil!)--had reached the end of her sojourn and tenure. It was just what we were looking for: three bedrooms (one for the kids, one for the parents, and one for you when you come to visit!), two bathrooms, a nice-sized kitchen, and a large backyard! It is across the street from the North Berkeley BART station (BART is San Franciscoese for subway), and about a twenty-minute stroll to both local congregations. What could be better? Well, the rent could have been cheaper, but it will do!

Now, we imagine that there are just a few myths in your mind about Berkeley and the Massaranos in Berkeley. And we want to deal with those myths directly.

Myth 1: The Massaranos are living on the streets, with no forwarding address, no phone number and no concept of reality.

Fact 1: The Massaranos have been

living in hotels, and are now living in a (rented) house at:

1709 Sacramento Street
Berkeley, CA 94702
(510) 644-0654

For those of you with access to the "information superhighway" or even a "data cul-de-sac" that somehow connects with internet, you can reach Glenn at:

glenn_massarano@bmug.org
gmass@holonet.net

Myth 2: The Massaranos had brought new meaning to the concept of no-iron clothing "wrinkle mania"; and now that they are in Berkeley, what do they look like?

Fact 2: The Massaranos, always on the cutting edge, have found new places to put wrinkles. But Glenn shows up every day in a tie!

Myth 3: The Massaranos fit right into the Berkeley scene.

Fact 3: But where? Have you tried to fit anywhere in Berkeley lately?

Myth 4: The Massaranos are your dependable Jewish liberal family.

Fact 4: In Berkeley, the Massaranos are your dependable right-wing conservative imports.

Myth 5: The Massaranos really miss every one of our friends and relatives in Southern California.

Fact 5: The Massaranos really, really, really miss every one of our friends and relatives in Southern California and in states and countries beyond!

Love and Shalom,

Judy, Glenn, Sa'adia and Betzalel

At the request of Minyan friends,
I'm enclosing the lyrics to a song
sung by Fran Grossman and myself at
Alan and Heather Broidy's wedding.
Mazal Tov! We miss you all! - Judy

(tune: "Take Me Out to the
Ballgame")

Take me out to wedding,
Take me to Adat Ari El,
Wear your finest Hawaiian
shirt,
You can be sure that Lyla will
yell,
For it's root, root, root for
the Broidy's,
They're a great-looking team,
And it's 5, 6, 7 circles around
the man of your dreams!

Take me out to a Shacharit,
Give out some Aliyot,
Offer me up a L'chayim,
From your handy liquor tote,
For it's root, root, root for
the gabbai,
At least he woke up for that,
It's a good thing that it's
only once a month at bat!

Take me out to Burbank,
Take me into the school,
Give me some LDs and SLDs,
I'll teach them to be totally
cool,
For it's root, root, root for
Heather,
Alan, you did real good,
For if you didn't propose to
her then Josh Grob would!

Take me out to the ballgame,
Let's have lots of fun,
Give 3 cheers for Heather,
'Cause she puts up with Alan's
puns.
For it's root, root, root for
the Broidy's,
They're a great-looking team,
And it's 5, 6, 7 circles around
the man of your dreams!

Please MAIL or FAX all changes and
updates to the Minyan List to:

MITCHELL R. MILLER
315 S. BEVERLY DRIVE
SUITE 501
BEVERLY HILLS, CA 90212

FAX NO. (310) 551-1929

PLEASE DO NOT CALL!

Please make note of the following
changes in the Torah Gabbai
position, effective immediately:

Arnie Wuhrman (310) 657-8057 (H)
(310) 286-6601 (W)

Batyah Cohen (310) 657-4406 (H)

They will be replacing Norm Saiger
and Evan Greenspan for the coming
year. Yasher Koach to each of you
for your service to the Minyan!

PLEASE SEND YOUR ARTICLES
TO THE MINYAN MONTHLY

Mail to: Sharon Williams
9114 Olin Street
Los Angeles, CA 90034

Or Call: (310) 838-1316 (H)



**HAPPY HANUKKAH AND
HAG SAMEACH!**

MINYAN COMMITTEES/CONTACTS

- Chair, Steering Committee
 - Norman Green (213)938-8110
- Minyan Treasurer
 - Dale Bodenstein(213)937-7443
- Reading Torah or Haftorah
 - Lida Baker (213)934-3663
- Gabai'im-Shabbat/Holiday Services
 - Torah Honors
 - Alan Broidy (213)933-8894
 - Stan Goldstein (310)837-5503
 - Art Metz (310)276-6905
 - Itzhak Yaron (310)657-3760
- Drashot
 - Mark Rothman (310)659-0269
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 - Arnie Wuhrman (310)657-5533
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- Child Care
 - Teri Cohan Link(213)272-7401
 - Fran Grossman (213)933-5040
 - Michelle Wolf (213)954-8681
- Child Care Volunteer Coordinator
(Vacant - at time of press)
- Hospitality
 - Abby Harris (310)556-7778
- Kiddush
 - Judy Weinstock (213)933-1772
 - Carl Sunshine (213)934-7889
- Membership
 - Michael Rogson (213)939-5124
- Minyan Guide
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- Minyan Monthly
 - Sharon Williams(310)838-1316
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 - Michelle Wolf (213)954-8681
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 - Ronnie Cohen (213)658-8057
- Scheduling Events-Master Calendar
 - Lida Baker (213)934-3663
- Shiva Minyans
 - Norm Saiger (310)837-5927
 - Rachel Green (213)938-8110

EDITOR'S COLUMN

--by Sharon L. Williams

Well, it's been another busy month in the editor's chair. I didn't have to write one word to fill up space in this month's edition, except this column, of course. Many thanks to all who contributed--it makes for much more interesting reading!

We received not one but two responses to Eric Lesin's article in the last issue. See articles by Miriam Elkins and John Antignas, beginning on page four, for the other side of the story. The issue of homosexuality is also touched upon in the minutes of the ritual committee (see page 3). While some of us may be tired of this particular topic, I am remembering a question put to me by an orthodox rabbi at lunch this past Rosh HaShanah. He was interested in hearing about the Library Minyan's position on gays. I could only say that the jury was still out. There doubtless is no easy answer, so the only thing to do is continue to struggle with the issue to the best of our ability.

There are other hot issues broached in this issue, such as appropriate egalitarian ritual dress, where the Minyan will meet during the coming months of construction, and topics relating to our long-lost by-laws (see pages one and two for more details). See pages six and seven for promised contributions from Judy Masserano. As always, feel free to contact me with your opinions and articles!

 DON'T FORGET WE'RE STILL COLLECTING
 CANNED AND PACKAGED FOODS FOR
 SOVA
