



AN INTER-GENERATIONAL CONVERSATION Rabbinic discussion through the ages

Shalom Belsize Square Synagogue,

What is Judaism? My teacher in Talmud and co-signatory of my rabbinical ordination diploma, Rabbi Dr Saul Lieberman z"l, perhaps the foremost talmudist of the 20th century, was interviewed by Time Magazine in the 1970s in his office, crowded with books. Asked if he really knew all these books, he replied: "Test me."

The reporter pulled out two books at random and held up the text. The Rabbi's immediate response to the first was: "12th-century Rabbi Eliezer of Lublin's commentary on the talmudic tractate of Ketubot, a pearl of wisdom." His enthusiastic response to the next was: "A 6th-century compilation of talmudic commentary, rare and hard to comprehend, but one of our earliest sources of post-talmudic wisdom."

Impressed, the reporter said: "I can see you treat these authors and books as classroom mates. It is as if you see Judaism as a conversation between generations." Saul Lieberman responded: "Young man, that is the best definition of Judaism I have heard. A conversation between generations is exactly what Judaism does."

That story has influenced my own understanding of Judaism. When I open a page of any sacred Jewish text, I feel I am communicating with tens of generations before me. So I would like to share with you a brief rundown of our most sacred books. After all, we are *Am Hasefer*, the People of the Book.

1) Torah means Instruction, not Law. The Five Books of Moses – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy – are our foundation stone, read every Shabbat and Festival.

2) *Tanach*, Hebrew Scripture, the three-fold division of our Bible, written in Hebrew. The word Tanach is made up of TA – Torah, the Five Books; NA – Nevi'im, the Prophets, from Joshua to the last prophet, Malachi; CH – Ketuvim, the Writings, including Psalms, Proverbs, Esther, Jonah, Lamentations, Song of Songs. We do not call it the Old Testament. That is a Christian term for Hebrew Scripture. For us, there is no "old" Scripture leading to a "new" one.

3) Apocryphal Literature: all those books written in antiquity that did not make the canon of Hebrew Scripture, such as the books of Maccabees, Judith, Tobit, Jubilees and other treasures of the Jewish past such as, for some, the Dead Sea Scrolls.

4) Philo of Alexandria, first-century BCE philosopher and Josephus, the first century CE historian. Both are important historical resources from the turn of the millennium 2,000 years ago.

5) Mishnah, meaning "teaching", refers to the Oral Law, finally written down in Hebrew by Rabbi Yehudah, known as HaNasi (the Prince), around 200CE. The Mishnah is the first code of Jewish law and contains some of the earliest texts of our rabbis who shaped the Judaism still practised today. For example, the Mishnah says it is the woman's obligation to light Shabbat candles in the home. There is no reference to this in the Torah.

6) Talmud/Gemara: once the Mishnah was put into writing, the Jews who had stayed

behind in Babylonia pored over its words. Gemara, Aramaic for "learning", covers rabbinic discussion on virtually every facet of Jewish law and practice from 200 to about 550CE, when all 22 tractates were edited by the Saboraim. The earlier "lesser" Jerusalem Talmud, still an important text, also combines Mishnah and rabbinic views.

7) Rashi, Tosefta/Tosafot: later commentaries (literally, additions) with Rashi (11th century France) the supreme master. He created his own commentators, the Tosafot (Hebrew term) and Tosefta (Babylonian).

8) Codes of Jewish Law: the Mishneh Torah (Maimonides' late 12th-century "Torah Repetition") and Shulchan Aruch (Joseph Caro's mid-16th-century "Set-out Table") helping people apply Jewish law in a different environment. Maimonides' codified Jewish law was a master work. Rabbi Caro of Safed's comprehensive code is still referred to.

With ever-changing circumstances, the conversation between generations never stops. May we hand it on to the next generation! Wishing you all a joyous and healthy winter and a wonderful beginning to the third decade of the 21st century.

Rabbi Altshuler

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL SHABBAT
Friday 24 January at 6.45pm
Including Mazkir for all those who died *Al Kiddush HaShem* for the sanctification of God's name

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Jewish Practical Open Day



Clockwise from top left

Tefillin demonstration by Cantor Paul Heller

Lulav demonstration by Adam Rynhold

Annette Nathan explains the Chanukah candle order

Chanukiya preparation

Rehearsing for Chanukah

John Alexander shows Cheder boys the scrolls in our Ark



Harry Kornhauser receives a Mitzvah Day biscuit package delivered by a volunteer



The Music Committee's third and final concert of the year, Jazz In The Square, featured the superb Ralph Freeman Jazz Quartet playing classical jazz numbers as well as Ralph's own compositions. It followed this year's Mini Market and super supper choices.

Cheder Mitzvah Day



Cheder years 7 & 8 (age 11 & 12) on Mitzvah Day project outside Tesco Express in England's Lane collecting food for the Camden Food Bank



Cheder years 3 & 4 (age 7 & 8): Creating "Get Well" cards for children undergoing surgery in Israel



Cheder year 5 girls (age 9) add edible decorations to biscuits which were packed by the boys for delivery to older members of the congregation

MITZVAH DAY 2019

Adam Hurst describes a breathless sequence of events

Mitzvah Day 2019 took place on Sunday 17 November and once again Belsize Square contributed energetically to this inspiring national event, organising multiple activities and involving members and volunteers from throughout the community.

In the morning the synagogue was buzzing with the sound of the Cheder children, who threw themselves into a variety of tasks across every age group.

* Years 1 & 2 (ages 5-6) decorated tissue box covers for Jewish Women's Aid.

* Years 3 & 4 created "Get Well Soon" cards which were sent to the Israeli charity "Save a Child's Heart" for children due to undergo or recovering from surgery.

* Years 5 & 6 made "dog rags" for our local Animal Welfare Rescue Centre to give their rescue dogs.

* Years 7 & 8 stood outside Tesco on England's Lane and collected food for the Cheder Food Collection for the Camden Food Bank.

The whole Cheder then came together

to decorate and pack almost 500 biscuits which were delivered to senior members of our congregation by our volunteer drivers. They also sorted out and boxed up the mountains of food donated for the Camden Food Bank.

Elsewhere the synagogue library was vibrant as some of the sorters and packers went on to create around 500 bags containing generously donated toiletries, which were split between the homeless and refugees in Barnet and Camden. There was a great atmosphere and the group were delighted to share a home-made cake to celebrate Helen Grunberg's birthday!

The Adult Discussion Group rolled up their sleeves and, together with Rabbi Igor Zinkov and congregants from the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, St Johns Wood, cleaned the library bookshelves in Keats House in Hampstead.

We also continued our outreach to the Wellesley Road Care Home in Camden. Kikar Kids visited in the morning, singing nursery rhymes and meeting the residents. In the afternoon, Stephen Wiener led a group of Belsize

singers in a music-hall style sing-along and joke-telling extravaganza. This was our third Mitzvah Day visit to the care home, who are always extremely grateful for our support.

There are too many people to thank individually for their contributions but it would be remiss not to mention the heroics of the Cheder and, not least, our head teacher, Caroline Loison, who made over 80 phone calls to our senior members to arrange logistics for distributing biscuits! So a huge thank you to all our organisers and volunteers as none of this could happen without you.

It's truly heartwarming that so many members of our community are prepared to get involved in this annual event, which continues to go from strength to strength.

And if anyone would like to get more involved next year in organising additional events or helping to co-ordinate the overall day's activities, then please don't hesitate to contact Adam Hurst or Lee in the Synagogue Office.

JEWISH PRACTICAL OPEN DAY

Explaining J-POD

Sunday 10 November saw Belsize Cheder's first J-POD (Jewish Practical Open Day) of this academic year, a termly project initiated by Cheder Head, Caroline Loison, last April. The idea is to have six activities set up around the shul for anyone and everyone, whether they attend Cheder or not, to "have a go" at practising, or perfecting, their practical Judaism skills.

Children, parents, staff and members of the congregation with no connection to Cheder came together for a wonderful morning of learning and, more importantly, of "doing". We were lucky to have three Board Members to lead three of the activities. John Alexander led the **Gelilah** activity, showing everyone our amazing collection of Torah scrolls and explaining how to "dress" the Torah correctly before it is put back inside the Ark at the end of the Torah Service. Annette Nathan led the **Chanukiyah**

activity, explaining how to set up the candles whilst also teaching the brachot that we recite as we light them and finishing each group session with a rousing version of *Maoz Tsur*! Rob Nothman led the **Chumash/Tanach** activity, teaching everyone the meaning behind these words (Torah or Pentateuch, and Bible respectively), showing participants how to navigate their way through to find specific chapters and verses rather than listen out for page numbers.

Alongside our Board Members were three Cheder Staff members who also led activities. Our Cantor led the **Tefillin** activity and demonstrated how to lay Tefillin, with everyone having a go, using one of his many sets. Marion Godfrey led the **Mezuzah** activity, explaining its purpose and how to fix a mezuzah to the doorpost, as well as the bracha we recite for the purpose. Last, but by no means least, Adam Rynhold led the Lulav & Etrog activity,

explaining the plants' significance and symbolism, and showing how to shake them correctly, with the right bracha.

Walking around the shul, the buzz was palpable and the learning evident. This term's J-POD @ BSS Cheder was highly successful and will be repeated on 1 March. Please put this date in your diary and join us for what we hope will be an equally successful morning of Practical Judaism, where we can learn, practise and perfect together.

ANNUAL HENRY KUTTNER Z"l CHOIR SHABBAT

Friday 13 March at 6.45pm

Each year we honour the Belsize Square Synagogue professional choir in memory of Henry Kuttner z"l. Join us in thanking the choristers who make our choir so special and unique.





MOSSAD MISSION

Peter Leon describes a fascinating tour of Israel's security service's work

Have you seen the film *The Red Sea Diving Resort* (available via Netflix)? It tells the story of the rescue of Ethiopian Jews from starvation in Sudanese refugee camps. In 1977 Menachem Begin ordered the Mossad, Israel's intelligence agency, to start a rescue mission. Rubi Viterbo – a Mossad Special Agent – was part of that mission and came to talk to us with many stories that were not in the film.

My wife Sue and I joined 45 others on a Mossad Mission in Israel in November for a week's tour run by Shurat Hadin, the Israel Law Center. Rubi Viterbo was just one highlight.

Fauda, another Netflix film, is a fictional story, based on real events, of undercover operations to capture terrorists in Judea and Samaria. The authors included a woman in the team without realising there was indeed a woman in the team. Shir Peled was the first woman in such a combat unit. Now retired and a designer, she told us the reality of being part of the squad.

What do you need to be a Mossad member? Uzi S explained and demonstrated that the most important feature is self-confidence. Four of our group were taken to our hotel lobby and told to approach a stranger there and engage in conversation – find out as much as possible about the stranger without having to tell the truth about yourself (i.e. work out a cover story).

Reporting back to the group, we discovered that an approach from a man to a woman is much harder than any other combination. Some of us were asked to approach Uzi, who pretended to be crossing a street. We each had to make up a reason to get Uzi to return to the pavement from which he started. A fascinating talk!

We were taken to Lebanon and the Golan Heights on the Syrian border to see and hear first hand what it is like to live on a kibbutz right on the border. We saw Hezbollah's rocket emplacements, which are disguised as houses without glass in their windows! The roofs slide back hydraulically and the rockets launched.

People near the border have at most 15 seconds to reach a shelter. We were taken to two IDF (Israel Defence Forces) border command centres, first a Border Patrol Office, where we were shown various weapons which fire rubber bullets of different kinds. One of us volunteered to put on the protective "armour" worn when on patrol.

The other visit was to a military intelligence base, where girl soldiers monitor the tech screens and communications of every inch of the borders. Apparently, girls are better than boys at monitoring and instantly recognise anomalies to alert their (female) commander. We were escorted that day by Brigadier General (Res.) Gal Hirsch, who was full of anecdotes about Israel's many wars she has had to fight.

In the 1973 Yom Kippur War, for instance, the tank divisions on the Golan Heights had to wait for the reservists to arrive, while their tanks and equipment were assembled and ready. Does one withdraw against the onslaught of the Syrian army and live to fight another day, or go in guns blazing and hope that the Syrians think that the reservists have already arrived, but risk the ultimate sacrifice?

Of the two "7-tank groups" trying to hold the Golan [the newly arrived 7th Brigade and the dug-in 188th "Barak" Brigade], each commander took a separate view. Although the 7th Brigade who went in "guns blazing" did indeed pay the ultimate price, the Syrians thought the reservists had arrived and fled.

On another day we went to the Erez Crossing Terminal at the Gaza border and were briefed by its Commander. Gazans who have consent to cross into Israel – often for hospitalisation or to visit relatives – are told by Hamas to carry objects such as bombs etc.

Therefore all have to be searched and permission denied if anything untoward is found. A special unit has been set up to shoot down the kites and helium balloons trailing fire onto the growing wheat and other crops. Burning has been reduced from many thousands of dunams to 500 dunams.

Shurat Hadin (Israel Law Center – literally the line of the law) – is at the forefront of fighting terrorism and safeguarding Jewish rights worldwide. It is dedicated to taking action to protect the State of Israel and its citizens through putting terrorists and their supporters on trial to compensate victims and blocking funding of terror, as well as fighting to end the use of social media for inciting violence and promoting terror. It was founded and is run by Nitsana Darshan-Leitner.

Among its recent successes was taking Airbnb to court last spring to stop them adopting BDS (Boycott, Disinvestment & Sanctions) policy over listing West Bank properties. Do see their website for their many and varied activities.

Shurat Hadin has close relations with Mossad and the IDF in general and is therefore privileged to be able to set up such missions or tours which, as well as the above, included talks by other prominent Israelis.



English translation of "The Spirit of the IDF", distributed to all IDF soldiers, laying out the underlying values and ethics governing military activity

The whole programme was guided by Rami Shemesh, a fount of knowledge from biblical times to the modern day. We were accompanied by Or Hikry (Project Manager), Rachel May Weiser (lawyer for Shurat Hadin) and Ellie Geller (starting law studies) for day-to-day organisation and further information.

Other speakers were Ram Ben Barak (former deputy Head of Mossad); Yossi Melman (investigative journalist); Uzi Arad (ex-Mossad, National Security Advisor and Israeli strategist). All extremely interesting, giving us the "inside story".

The week was based in three hotels in Tel Aviv, Tiberius and Jerusalem, and included some more touristy events, such as a trip on Lake Kinneret, a visit to the Kotel on Friday evening and a lovely Friday evening Shabbat dinner. We recommend that you look at their website for future missions. Anyone can go and, while the group was predominantly American, some came from Canada, New Zealand, Germany and of course the UK. There were about 10 Christians with us, some visiting Israel for the first time.

The last highlight took place during our closing dinner when Nitsana Darshan-Leitner interviewed and translated for Nadia Cohen, widow of the famous spy Eli Cohen (see the Eli Cohen series, also on Netflix). Nadia talked about her life with Eli, who necessarily was away for many months at a time. He was in Syria and, before being caught, was about to become a minister in the Syrian government. Nadia of course knew nothing of this until his execution by the Syrians in 1965. She was depressed and lonely with Eli being away for long periods and only with her for short times. I asked if it would have been better if she had been aware of Eli's secret work for Mossad. Her response was an emphatic "no" as she would have begged Eli not to go back to Syria.

Sue and I were quite overwhelmed with a week of seeing the inner workings of Mossad and the IDF border units. They have a tough job, protecting Israel and Jews everywhere. We recommend you join the next mission of Shurat Hadin. Not cheap but eminently worthwhile.

www.israelawcenter.org

GERALD HELLMAN ON SYNAGOGUE CHANGES

As I sat in synagogue during the High Holydays I reflected on the changes in the synagogue. My first "Continental" service was in 1942 in Buckland Crescent. At Belsize Square the building has been altered several times and now caters for all, whereas in days gone by services were held variously at Swiss Cottage, Kilburn, Willesden, Bounds Green. Progress indeed!

I have listened to five Cantors and now Rev Paul Heller gives wonderful renditions to prayers. Each has added something to the service and I am truly appreciative of every one. One must also remember the choirs, both youth and adult, who expressed music in a meaningful way, and young singers who visited old-age homes bringing pleasure to the elderly.

My friend Antony Godfrey wrote a book, *Three Rabbis in a Vicarage*. There has of course been an addition since, in the form of Rabbi Dr Stuart Altshuler, whose Adult Discussion classes have inspired

all who attend. His well researched sermons and trips abroad have contributed to making our Synagogue more than just a house of prayer. Rev Paul Heller has helped both male and female youngsters to conduct a part of the High Holy Day services, which are well executed and a pleasure to follow. Female participation in services was something that was not even considered, say, 20 years ago. Yet today it is a regular feature.

The dress code by the Rabbi and Cantor has also changed but, for me, the most important change is that I am now able to follow services from home on my computer. Yes, I too have changed from a regular attendant. There have been many changes in society, most positive, some not so. What has not changed for me is my strong attachment to religion. As I sat during the High Holy Days, I prayed and thanked the Almighty for giving me such a good life, blessed with a happy marriage, children and grandchildren. Changes indeed!

RUTH ROTHENBERG ENJOYS A NICE CUP OF TEA

LEGACY: One Family, a Cup of Tea and a Company that took on the World by Thomas Harding, published by Heinemann, £25.

Thomas Harding, son of our members Frank and Belinda Harding, is a well-known non-fiction writer who has mined his father's side in German-Jewish history. Now he turns to his mother, Belinda nee Salmon, descended from a man sent to London in 1843 to see if his parents could escape the persecution, poverty and insecurity of Prussia, Holland and Belgium.

Taking a room in Whitechapel, Samuel Gluckstein (the next generation dropped the umlaut) married the manager's daughter, and started to hand-roll cigars, perfecting an art he had seen in Holland. His parents arrived in 1847 with his eight siblings and their families. All worked on cigars, ending up with 60 tobacco shops around the country.

Samuel married his older daughter, Lena, to his business associate, locally born Barnett Salmon. Belinda is their great-granddaughter. The family moved into catering when Samuel's gifted fifth child, Monte, spotted a gap in the market after the 1851 Great Exhibition spawned shows around the country, where the food was bad and expensive

and all drinks were alcoholic.

By selling decent food and tea far more cheaply, he created a social revolution. Women could now eat out safely. But because his family was uncertain of this venture, Monte could not use their name or money. He paid an amiable stallholder, one Joseph Lyons, to give his name and act as front man.

J. Lyons & Co opened tea shops and produced its own goods for them at Cadby Hall, a former piano factory. It went public on the London Stock Exchange in 1895, with the family retaining voting rights, and went on to renovate restaurants, build hotels and create venues. This provided jobs for the men in the family and took them all out of the East End and into Bayswater.

In the next generation, between two world wars, the word "Nippy" was officially recognised in 1924 as a Lyons waitress, and Lena's son, Sir Isidore Salmon (knighted in 1933), had the education and confidence to serve in Jewish and public life.

(Continued at foot of Page 10)





TO PLAY OR NOT TO PLAY, THAT IS THE QUESTION

Cantor Paul Heller looks back at Jewish music-making from Bible times to the modern era

My interest in the organ as an essential musical feature in Jewish liturgy started when I served as Cantor in Stockholm's Great Synagogue from 2000-2011, in the footsteps of the late great Leo Rosenbluth, who served from 1931-76. This was my introduction to it. I have been a fan ever since, demonstrating how our liturgy benefits from it.

The organ was known, and even normal, in Hungary and Italy as early as the 17th century. Its wider use was the result of the late 18th-century Enlightenment (Haskalah) movement, bringing Jews into general society. In 1810 a synagogue featuring organ and choir, the Seesen Temple, opened near Hannover. The 1818 Hamburg new prayer book stamped Reform's path, marking its differences with traditional Orthodoxy. This included abandoning the rabbinic prohibition on instrumental music on Shabbat as a sign of mourning for the destruction of the Second Temple – still a major division between the two streams of Judaism.

Looking at the Bible, musical instruments to accompany song have a long history and there is a range of them: the Tof (tambourine), Nevel (lyre) and Kinnor (a sort of reed instrument). Miriam's song at the Red Sea (Exodus 15:20) brings in the Tof, which is associated with women's dance songs and not part of divine worship. The only one mentioned in connection with sacrifices (the regular expression of man's communication with God in that culture and period), is the Shofar (ram's horn trumpet, as in Psalm 150:3). In fact, music is not a feature of worship till we come to David, the poet and musician.

For me, the most striking biblical reference is David's Psalm 29: *Mizmor, Shir l'Yom HaShabbat* (A Psalm, a Song, for the Sabbath Day): It is good to praise the Lord/ And to make music to Your name, O Most High/ Proclaiming Your love in the morning/ And your faithfulness at night/ To the music of the ten-stringed lyre/ And the melody of the harp.

There is also the mystery of the recurrent word *Selah*, often translated as "forever". Sometimes this seems



Cantor Salomon Sulzer

right, at other times it appears to indicate a pause. We do know that the orchestra of the Temple in Jerusalem consisted of string instruments: the Nevel (big harp) and Kinnor (small harp). The Shofar (ram's horn) was used only to provide rhythm in the form of Tekiah (a single long blast) and Teruah (a series of short staccato notes), not for Nagen (melody). There were also Chatzotzrei (trumpets), mentioned in the Bible and distinct from the Shofar.

The talmudic tractates *Arachin* (Dedications) and *Chullin* (Non-holy matters) note that both these "signalling" instruments were blown by Priests, not Levites, the "professional Temple musicians". They also mention wind instruments: Ugav (small pipe); Chalil (big pipe, today a flute); Alamot (double pipe – as listed in 1 Chronicles 15:20); Metziltayim (cymbals); and Pa'amoni (bells). No drums.

As to the singers, the minimum choir number was 12, with no upper limit. There are several mentions of a 4,000-strong choir. Members had five years of training and generally served from 30 to 50. Boy choristers were added for sweetness and a fuller range.

The French cantor Samuel Naumburg (1817-1880), a post-Enlightenment scholar of Jewish music, lists the instruments mentioned in ancient sources: the Mashukita, a transverse flute cited in Daniel 1; the Sumphonia,

connected pipes that sound remarkably like bagpipes; Nekev, flute (Ezekiel 3); and the Magrepha from the Hebrew root g-r-ph, meaning grasp. This is assumed to refer to an organ which, according to the Talmud, produced a sound audible from Jerusalem to Jericho, four leagues (nearly 16 miles) away.

While judging this an exaggeration, Naumburg noted that the hydraulic organ was invented by Ktebesios in 3rd-century BCE Alexandria. With regular contact between Jerusalem and Alexandria in the Hellenistic era, it was likely that this feat of musical engineering reached Jerusalem but took time to be accepted in Temple services. His list of percussion instruments covers the Tof – drum or tambourine; Tziltzilim or Metzilot – cymbals divided into "noisy" and "jubilant" types; Metzaltayim – a pair of copper castanets; Mena'anin – "sistrum" or rattle of sorts; and Shalishim (literally a threesome) – triangle.

Most scholars of this obscure subject agree that 20 musical instruments were used in Temple service. Six are named in Torah: Kinnor, Ugav, Tof, Machol (an unknown instrument always accompanying dance), Chatzotzorah and Shofar. Seven are in Judges, Kings and Psalms: Neve Gittith (possibly a stringed instrument from Gath), Tziltzilim, Kinnor, Chalil, Keren and Shalishim. Samuel (6:5) has a single mention of Mena'anin.

The Book of Daniel lists five instruments, familiar to the Persian court – Mashrokitha (3:5), a flute or pipe; Kitarath/Kataros, similar to a lyre; Sabecha/Sabekka, another stringed instrument; Psanterin, probably also strung; and the Sumphonia.

Going back to the Magrepha, this was a mechanical version of the syrinx or set of banded panpipes. The invention was to stand them on a box, the hydraulis or water cistern, containing an air reservoir. The air was driven by hand pumps into the pipes to produce a sound. Basically, this is the first organ. Later, bellows took over from water-and-pump but the name hydraulis stayed.

It is described and discussed in the Talmud (*Arachin* page 10b), which says there was one in the Temple. All descriptions give it 10 holes but vary as to how many sounds each hole produced. One version gives the "organ" a total of 100 notes, another says 1,000. This leads to many accusations of exaggeration, including from the 10th/11th-century Rabbi Gershom and his successor, Rashi. But at least, this organ existed.

There is a slight mystery about its other use, as a rake to clear up the mess of the sacrificial fires every morning. Was it played to drown out the noise? Or did the word have two meanings and those involved knew which was which? We shall never know.

The destruction of the Temple by the Romans in 70CE changed the whole procedure of religious services, replacing the Temple service with a Synagogue service led by a prayer leader or cantor. As a sign of mourning for loss of the Temple, instruments were forbidden and prayers chanted without musical accompaniment.

The tradition of using some sort of vocal ensemble or choir can be traced back to the third century when the cantor had an assistant or two, called Meshorerim. The practice became standardised over time. By the mid-16th century, Ashkenazi practice frequently saw the cantor accompanied by both a boy soprano (occasionally, a trained falsetto) and bass.

They usually alternated with the cantor, providing both contrasting sonority and dramatic support, and moments of vocal rest for the cantor. Choristers (Meshorerim) also served as prompters for the cantor and were often "keepers of the melodies." The alternation between soloist and ensemble that developed through the use of Meshorerim became a standard element of liturgical practice. They were all paid for by the community, a practice some scholars believe goes back to Temple times.

The development of choral music with organ in West European synagogues spread to Central Europe, especially larger cities, as khorshuls (choral synagogues). Reaction to the organ plus choir was mixed.

Prosnitz in Moravia, for instance, embraced it enthusiastically. In the 1590s Prague, capital of Bohemia, not only had several synagogues using tiny organs on Friday evening services to accompany Kabbalat Shabbat psalms but even a Jewish organ builder, Meir Mahler.

Other places condemned the practice, especially as the organ became increasingly used in church music from the 15th century. Interestingly, Christianity's founding fathers thought this style of music, with its instruments, too Jewish. But once it was accepted in church services, there was a Jewish reaction against it. Italian rabbis strongly opposed the organ in synagogue. This attitude spread, although Prague kept its organ until 1745, while the famous organ at Budapest's Dohany Street Synagogue, built in 1859, was played by Franz Liszt and Camille Saint-Saens.

Another major development of the 17th-century Baroque period was the adoption of polyphonic singing, especially through the work of Salomone Rossi (1570-1630), who had rabbinic approval for his resetting of liturgical texts. Throughout all this ferment, the cantor kept his role as prayer leader and keeper of the Nusach, the style and modes, or melody, of liturgy for each occasion, as he has done to this day.

The next radical change came with the Enlightenment and the sharp difference of reactions to an organ installed in the Jacobstempel of Israel Jacobson (1768-1828) in Seesen in 1810, as mentioned earlier. Fear was now rising over the future direction of the Jewish community. It seems the organ became

a touchstone of acceptability in Jewish practice. From now on, the debate over "instrumental music" in services marks a dividing line between Orthodox and Reform – though not the only one.

Similar arguments came up in 1859 when building started on the Neue Synagoge in Berlin's Oranienburgerstrasse. Two years later a 30-member committee was formed, including four rabbis, Music Director Julius Stern and composer/Cantor Louis Lewandowski (1821-1894). Lewandowski's argument centred on the undeniable ability of the organ to lead a large body of singers "in the immeasurably vast space of the new synagogue" and still retain the "distinctive features of the ancient Jewish style of singing". The organ was approved in 1863 and inaugurated at the official consecration in 1866.

The organ is absent in Lewandowski's contemporary, composer/Cantor Salomon Sulzer (1804-1890). Based at the Seitenstettengasse Synagoge in Vienna for 55 years and known as the father of modern synagogue music, Sulzer focused on reforming synagogue music by refining melodies and setting them for choirs. Initially opposed to instrumental synagogue music, he later favoured the organ as involving the congregation and refused to see it in conflict with religious values. Lewandowski, on the other hand, later doubted if he had done the right thing. Evidently, a tricky subject for both.

The organ can embody visual elements that distinguish it from a church organ and reflect Temple sounds. Stockholm Synagogue's organ, for example, resembles a Torah scroll and has sounds replicating plucked strings (Kinnor), woodwind (Chalil, Ugav) and brass horns (Chatzotzrei).

But at heart, it is the keeping of the Nusach, the basic modes so finely preserved by tradition and composers and singers like Lewandowski, Sulzer, Naumbourg and Leo Rosenbluth, all of blessed memory, that has kept Jewish liturgy alive and brought the echo of the Temple Organ inside today's Synagogue.

This article is based on a lecture that was given by Cantor Heller at Limmud held in Birmingham, in December 2018.



The organ of Prague's Jerusalem Jubilee Synagogue



Obituary

BEN LACHMANN

Soldier in pre-state Israel, the Jewish Brigade and IDF

A stalwart member of our congregation and a true *yekke*, Ben Lachmann did not actually join us till his marriage in 1961 (he was 37) to Steffi Blum, who grew up in the then New Liberal Jewish Congregation. He grew up in Germany, where he was born in Gleiwitz, Upper Silesia (now Gliwice in Poland), on 12 July 1924, went to school in Italy and became a carpenter and soldier in British-mandate Palestine and Israel.

His mother, Rose Lachmann, ran the family store with her husband Josef, selling household furnishings. After his tragic death in a car accident in late 1928, when Ben was four, she ran it on her own and sold it, fortuitously, in 1932, with completion in early 1933.

The family moved to Berlin in 1934, where Ben attended the Theodor Herzl School. Coming home one day, he was shot in the arm with an air rifle by two Hitler youths. He rushed up to his second-floor flat and hurled a flower pot from the balcony at them. He was pretty sure he hit one of them. In 1936 he was sent to a Jewish boarding school in Florence set up for German speakers, while his older sister was sent to a similar school in Maderno.

His mother showed great foresight in her timing. Because she sold just before Hitler came to power, she could claim her widow's pension and all her rights from her husband's estate. In 1933 she visited Palestine, where her brother had settled, and decided this was their future. She paid £1,000 for the legal immigration certificate. On 23 June 1937 her children sailed on the *Galileo* from Trieste to Haifa.

They settled in Ramat Hadar, then a small village north east of Tel Aviv, specialising in chicken farming. Ben turned 13 at sea and celebrated his barmitzvah in Tel Aviv. He learned Hebrew at school, worked on the farm and learned how to handle a rifle. The village was twice attacked by Arabs.

At 15, he was sent to a kibbutz south of Haifa, where a technical school taught German-Jewish boys metal and and woodwork. He did woodwork. He also joined the Haganah, Israel's pre- state army. The Second World War began a

month before he started there.

In 1942, aged 18, he joined the Palestinian Buffs Company, then being upgraded from security duties to the Palestine Regiment (where he guarded prisoners) and absorbed into the Jewish Brigade in 1944. In the Brigade he was sent first to the Western Desert, then from Alexandria to south Italy, following the Allied invasion from Sicily. His platoon's job was mine clearance and marking.

With war over in 1945, Ben and his fellow-soldiers, stationed in northern Italy near the borders with Austria and (former) Yugoslavia, brought displaced Jews from the Soviet-occupied zone into Italy and sent them to Palestine in boats waiting at the port of Bari. This was carried out by Jewish Brigade officers from the Haganah without the knowledge of the British Army. The Brigade was then sent north to guard tanks and heavy weapons.

Returning home in June 1946, Ben worked in furniture factories in Tel Aviv, while rejoining the Haganah and completing two years' army service. Between the November 1947 UN vote on partition and Ben-Gurion's declaration of independence of 14 May 1948, the Haganah defended Jewish areas from Arab attacks, especially near Jerusalem. Ben joined convoys bringing supplies. But at Hartuv (now within Beit Shemesh) they had to evacuate at night, with the children injected to make them sleep. Ben carried out a child in a rucksack.

When the Arabs declared war, Ben unloaded weapons, ammunition and unassembled aircraft flown in from Czechoslovakia. He fought in the Negev against Egyptian Forces, then the Jordanians. He was put in charge of the Shekem canteen (like NAAFI) and promoted to sergeant but was glad to be discharged in 1950. Called up for the 1956 Suez Campaign, he did his last reserve duty in 1957.

Living conditions in 1950s Israel were harsh. His mother left in 1957 to rejoin old friends in Frankfurt. His sister got married in London in 1958. The family sold their farm in Ramat Hadar. Ben

visited his mother and sister and decided to look for work in England.

A Czech-owned furniture company applied for a work permit for him to inspect goods in Eastern Europe prior to import. He ended up as technical and import director. But until he got his work permit, he had to stay with his mother in Frankfurt. With her failing health, he then brought her to London. In December 1960, aged 62, she died of a heart attack and is buried at the Liberal Jewish Cemetery, Pound Lane.

Ben became British in 1963, two years after marrying Steffi, to whom he was introduced by a mutual friend. His son Jonathan, known as Yonni, was born in 1968 and led him to join the Religion School's parents association. After retiring in 1989, he became treasurer of the Leo Baeck Lodge and served on the Synagogue board and executive, chairing the Israel Committee. On his frequent visits to Israel, he followed up the projects supported by the annual Israel Dinner appeal.

Despite suffering a massive stroke in January 2014 which significantly impacted his left side, his brain function was untouched. Sadly, in June Steffi died. He was enormously helped by his devoted carers and Lynn Marcus, who helped him produce his memoir in 2016. Although no longer able to serve as warden, he valued his call to open the Ark during Ne'ilah on Yom Kippur, which involved the rarely-used wheelchair lift, and enjoyed the livestreaming of services.

The highlight of his later life was Yonni's marriage to Beth in 1999 and the B'nei Mitzvah of their children, Sam and Maya, who all survive him. He died peacefully in London on 13 November 2019, aged 95.

From Yonni Lachmann to the Belsize Square Community:

Thank you for the messages of support following the passing of Dad. They provided great comfort and warmth during a difficult time.



Dear Fellow Members

It is with a heavy hand that I write this column. It is the day of the general election and it is my belief that we again will end up with a well-hung parliament. So nothing will be achieved. But this is not the real reason for my downheartedness, I have decided that it is time for me to hang up my pen. Therefore this is the last of my column. I am hoping that someone else can fill up this half page gap as the voice from the people on the downside from the bima.

I was not alone in coming to this conclusion, Mrs Klopstick told me what to do. She said I am now a relic from the past and long over my sell by date. As I have to agree with what she said I have managed to persuade her to shug away her krampons. She will give up her mountaineering adventures and concentrate on fighting against global warming.

I wish to express my thanks to Rabbi Altschuler and Cantor Paul Heller for never taking a fence to my comments. I am particularly grateful to the encouragement of the two editors under which I have toiled, first E.N. Lee and then Ruse



Rothenberger. They have always guided me in the write direction and tolerated my individual style of yawnalism.

Now I would like to extend my thanks to my reader whoever he or she is. Not in the last fourteen years have I received a compliant. This must mean that I have often hit the nail on the hat. If I can hold myself together I would like to continue riding in sum form or other. So maybe you have not heard the last from me. I have an idea to ride a series of Jewish detective novel featuring a Rabbi sleuth. I don't think this has been done before.

Now it is time to say good buy. It has been a great stimulation for me to be a loud occasionally coarse amusement if I have.

From Mrs Klopstick and I (she is now stuffing a chicken for Shabbat. Her new hobby is taxidermy), we wish all of you a very happy and preposterous new year.

With the best of intentions

Fritz Klopstick

RALLY AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

Claire Walford writes: Dressed to brave the cold, several BSS members joined 3,500 Jews and non-Jews in Parliament Square for the *Together Against Antisemitism* rally on Sunday 8 December, organised by the Campaign Against Antisemitism. Unlike the Dayenu protests of 2018 this rally, four days before the general election, was non-political with speakers from the world of entertainment and law: Tracey-Ann Oberman and Judge Robert Rinder, author and historian Tom Holland, representatives of the Hindu and Muslim communities, including Muslim activist Fiyaz Mughal, founder of Faith



Sarah Percival, Robert Sachs, Claire Walford with placard.

Matters, and Gideon Falter, founder and chief executive of CAA. The aim was to raise awareness of "Jew hatred in politics and mounting Jew hate crimes".

I'm not sure how much of this objective was achieved with the election so much in the news. The only reports I have seen were in the Jewish Press. But the tourists on open-topped buses got loud cheers when they took photos of us with our placards. Will there be a need for more such rallies? Sadly, I fear there will.



From left: Philippa Strauss, Naomi Levy, Albert Levy and Jimmy Strauss at the rally. Philippa said the atmosphere was calm, police presence low-key, and Tracy-Ann Oberman outstanding.

Remember Belsize Square Synagogue in your Will
and help secure the future of your community



Although the community continues to grow and attract new members, we cannot flourish if membership fees alone...

we depend on the generosity of you, our members, to provide the inspiring religious services, a wide variety of education for adults and children, social events, burials and pastoral care for all members of our community and also to preserve our unique musical heritage.

Any legacy, large or small, will make a difference!

Any questions? For a confidential discussion please call Lee Taylor on 020 7794 3949

SHABBAT CANDLE LIGHTING

Friday 3 January:	Jackie Alexander
Friday 10 January:	Emma Alter
Friday 17 January:	Lucy Bergman
Friday 24 January:	Deborah Cohen
Friday 31 January:	Phoebe Jerome
Friday 7 February:	Natalie Godfrey
Friday 14 February:	Hollie Gold
Friday 21 February:	Vivienne Linton
Friday 28 February:	Ruth Kersley





Community News

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a cordial welcome to:
Mostyn Barnard

BIRTHS

Mazal Tov to:
Orly & Robert Cohen on the birth of their son Harry

BIRTHDAYS

Congratulations and best wishes to:
Mrs A Goodwin (94) on 2 December
Mr E Kaczynski (81) on 5 December
Mr P Sussmann (85) on 23 December
Mrs C Haar (98) on 29 December
Miss M Kinstead (93) on 3 January
Mr R Mattes (96) on 6 January
Mrs R Eisenfeld (88) on 8 January
Mrs D Lichfield (84) on 13 January
Mrs V Kendall (86) on 14 January
Mr H Carlton (83) on 14 January
Mrs L Simmonds (96) 18 January
Mrs I Wolffberg (100) 20 January
Mrs G Oblath (95) 27 January

DEATHS

We regret to announce the passing of:
Estelle Maier, who died on 1 November
Ben Lachmann, who died on 13 November
Michael Glyn, who died on 13 November
Freda Fleischer, who died on 29 November
Paul Lindsay, who died on 4 December
Denise Israel, who died on 12 December

STONESETTING

Peter Batkin on Sunday 13 January at 1.45pm at
Edgwarebury Lane Cemetery

NW3 WEDNESDAY LUNCHEON GROUP

Giacomo, 428 Finchley Road, London, NW2 2HY
1.00pm on 15 January & 20 February
Please call Judy Field (020 8455 0614) if you wish to attend

SECOND NIGHT SEDER

Thursday 9 April

Rabbi Altshuler and Cantor Heller together with their families invite you to join them for Second Night Seder at the Synagogue after the Service which starts at 6.45pm.

Members: £30 Non Members: £35 Under 13s: £15
Please contact the Synagogue Office if you wish to attend.

The copy deadline for the next issue of
Our Congregation is Friday 7 February

REGULAR SERVICES

Friday evenings at 6.45pm & Saturday mornings at 10.00am
Kikar Kids

Saturday 4 January, 1 February, 7 March

Under-5s Service in the Crèche (Crèche opens 10am)
Junior Service for 5-9 year-olds in the Library
11.30am – Kids' Kiddush

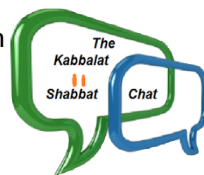
Often combined with a Shabbat Breakfast for Families
Contact Synagogue Office for details

Religion School

Sunday mornings: 9.30am-12.30pm
Term begins: Sunday 12 January
Half Term: Sundays 16 & 23 February

CANTOR HELLER'S KABBALAT SHABBAT CHAT

An invitation and opportunity for Bar Mitzvah class pupils to make Kiddush, sing Lecha Dodi and learn the lessons of the Parsha. On the second Friday of the month 5.30pm in the Library



Next sessions: 10 January, 14 February, 13 March

TEFILLIN CLUB



Sunday 19 January

9.30am - 10.00am
(within Cheder morning)

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT DISCUSSION

12 January 10.00-12.30 Film morning (title TBC)

19 January 10.00-11.15 Rabbi Altshuler: Prayer Part 5 - The Amidah and Kedushah (rescheduled due to illness)
11.15-12.30 Rabbi Chaim Wiener, Director of Masorti Europe: Portuguese Jewry and our forthcoming trip

26 January 10.00-11.15 Rabbi Altshuler: The Shoah Part 6 - WW1 and its Aftermath
11.15-12.30 Charlotte Littlewood: Honour Killings of Palestinian Women

2 February 10.00-11.15 Rabbi Altshuler: Prayer Part 6 - The Kaddish
11.15-12.30 Jonathan Charles: Why Putin's Russia believes the Middle East is key

9 February 10.00-12.30 John Barton FBA Anglican priest, biblical scholar and author of *The History of the Bible: The book and its faiths* (rescheduled)

17 & 24 February No session (Half Term)

(Continued from page 5)

He dissuaded the Daily Mail's owner, Viscount Rothermere, from backing Oswald Mosley and his British Union of Fascists, threatening to withdraw advertising. Like Monte, he was quiet and anti-Zionist, fearing accusations of dual loyalties. For him, Judaism was solely a religion, not a peoplehood.

With the Second World War looming, he set up the Army Catering Corps. But Lyons' real war work lay in making

bombs in a secret factory near Bedford

Things were hard for the post-war generation. But the company still innovated, notably with LEO, Lyons Electronic Office, an early computer. The 1950s benefitted from Wimbledon style events and the coronation. Troops were billeted at Olympia, bought from bankruptcy by Monte in 1893.

Neil Salmon, Isidore's nephew, looked abroad for acquisitions. When Britain

entered the Common Market in 1969, he used eurodollar loans to buy Continental meat producers. Inflation from the 1974 oil shock made the loans unrepayable. Assets, then voting rights were sold. Lyons merged with Allied Breweries in 1978. A non-family chairman was appointed in 1979.

The end of a 130-year history, compellingly told. No wonder this book was recommended by the Financial Times.

OUR RECENT CENTENARIANS

RICHARD FISHER

Richard was born in Vienna on 10 September (not 9th, as in last issue) 1919. Forced to scrub pavements with a toothbrush after the 1938 Anschluss, he left for Riga where his friend's sister lived and worked in a Russian factory. When Hitler attacked Russia in 1941, he was sent as a foreigner to a Siberian camp for a year, then to Kazakhstan. Returning to Vienna in 1947, he found his widowed mother had been gassed in a death camp but learned from the Red Cross that his two older sisters were in England. He was sent to a farm in Aylesbury but preferred indoor work and started learning the fur trade from his brother-in-law.



The Home Office, displeased, expelled him. A friend had contacts with a shoe factory in Montevideo so he sailed with a visa to Uruguay in 1948. There he met his wife Marion who was visiting her aunt. She left Berlin at 18 for England and trained as a nurse. They married at a local registry office in 1950 and, with aid from MP Maurice Orbach, returned home. Their Jewish marriage was conducted by Rabbi Kokotek in 1951. Their son Lesley was born in 1957. Settling in Edgware, Richard established a business in leather belts, selling out at 85. At 70 he began 25 years of volunteering for Jewish Care and Leo Baeck Lodge, where he was president for seven years and chaired its Housing Association. He stopped when he could no longer read the accounts. Marion died in 2017 after being cared for in Clara Nehab House for six years. He has two grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.



HENRY BROOK

Henry Brook's son Stephen writes: My father was born Helmut Brod on 19 October 1919 to a German mother and Czech father. He spent his early years in Germany before the family moved to Prague in the early 1930s. His brother Alfred had some business interests in England and the two young Brods moved there in 1938. When the Nazi threat was clear, my father returned to Prague to try to bring his mother and grandmother to safety, but without success. They both perished in camps. He joined the Pioneer Corps and then the 5th Royal Tank Regiment, where his name was changed to Henry Brook. During the war he married my mother, Dita. He took part in the 1944 D-Day landings and was awarded the Légion d'Honneur by the French ambassador a few years ago. After the war he became a textile salesman, travelling extensively abroad. I was born in 1947.

Peter Godfrey (Henry's stepson), Stephen Brook (son), Alfie Evans (Maria's grandson), Maria (Stephen's wife), Lee Evans (Maria's son-in-law), George Evans (Maria's grandson), Nina Evans (Maria's daughter)

Sadly, my mother died in 1971. My father remarried a few years later and enjoyed another happy marriage with Madeleine Godfrey until her death in the late 1980s. My father continued to work until he turned 80. With Madeleine and his subsequent companion, Lisbeth Buchler, he travelled for pleasure and led a rich cultural life, attending concerts, operas and plays. He continued to do so well into his 90s. He was well enough to live at his own flat until he turned 99, when it was decided he should move to the Spring Grove care home, where he has lived contentedly to this day. He enjoys good health but failing memory.

WILLIAM (BILL) HOWARD

Bill was born Horst Adolf Herzberg in Berlin on 21 November 1919. In 1938 his father sent him to his supposedly rich uncle in New York. But the uncle was too poor to pay for his immigration process, so he returned to the UK. Kristallnacht, which occurred while his case was being considered, changed the British authorities' attitude and he was allowed to stay.

In 1941 he joined the Pioneer Corps. In 1944, following the British Government's decision to send vital arms and food supplies by sea to Russian troops marooned in the Arctic Circle, the Royal Navy broke its rule of enlisting only British-born citizens and advertised in the Pioneer Corps for German speakers and translators for their Arctic convoys in the summer seasons of 1944 and 1945. As the sea passage involved sailing parallel to the Norwegian coast, occupied by Germany, it was vital for the Navy to intercept and understand German communications. With his gift for languages, Bill was the ideal recruit and passed the stiff test with flying colours. On his first day, the Navy changed his name to William Ashley Howard. In his 90s he received the British Armed Forces' Arctic Star medal. He had already received one war medal from Russia and was later awarded another.

After the war, he married Marianne and they settled in their home "Castle Howard" in Kingsbury. They enjoyed life and culture, going to concerts and theatre, had a flat in Tenerife and went on annual skiing holidays. Bill worked for many years selling telephone systems and was a very successful salesman. They loved parties and Bill always had a few jokes up his sleeve. His command of English is superb and he wrote many beautiful and amusing poems for special friends. He still lives in "Castle Howard" with the aid of his devoted carer, Betty.

Bill Howard (centre) with old friend and lifelong neighbour Michael Shelton and Helen Grunberg from left and Judy Field and Sue Arnold at right.





SAVE THE DATE!

Tuesday 28 April

***Celebrating Yom Ha'atzma'ut
ISRAEL'S 72nd BIRTHDAY***

- A great evening of music and dancing with Shir, London's leading Jewish band
- Superb dining by our own chef, Adam Nathan
- Help support our deserving chosen Israeli charities



*Further details on
tickets and speaker
to come shortly.*

NEW YEAR'S HONOURS LIST

Congratulations to:

Lilian Levy, appointed MBE for Services to Holocaust Survivors

Marianne and Peter Summerfield, appointed BEM for Services to Holocaust Education and Awareness

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Fridays: 9.00am-2.00pm

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Lee Taylor - 020 7794 3949

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Joint Vice Chairs: Helen Grunberg - 020 8450 8533

Cantor Dr Paul Heller

COMMUNITY CARE CO-ORDINATOR & BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

Contact Eve Hersov on 020 7435 7129

or email eve@synagogue.org.uk

FUNERALS

During Synagogue Office hours phone 020 7794 3949.

Evenings/weekends phone Calo's (Undertakers)

020 8958 2112

KIDDUSH

Rota enquiries to Jennifer Saul in the Synagogue Office
(not Thursdays or Fridays)

LIBRARY

Open Wednesdays 10am - 12 noon

At other times please check first with the office

CHEDER

Enquiries to Caroline Loison, in the Synagogue Office

or email caroline@synagogue.org.uk

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