

Kodimoh Bulletin

Iyar 5715

Vol. 19, No. 14

May 1, 1955

Youth Torah Pilgrimage

Here is the latest on this year's Youth Torah Pilgrimage:

Time: June 24-27

Place: Yeshiva University, New York City, and weekend at nearby Summer Camp.

Cost: \$35.00 besides carfare. **START SAVING NOW.** ("Scholarship" arrangements, etc., not yet set).

Age: Men and women from 13 through 17.

Sponsors: Yeshiva University, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations and Rabbinical Council of America.

Program: Terrific!

Mr. and Mrs. Club

A meeting of the Mr. and Mrs. Club will be held on Sunday, May 15th, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Steinberg, of Firglade Ave.

The topic of discussion will be "The Atomic Age: The Effect of Atomic Development on Present Day Living." Mrs. Steinberg will speak on the deleterious effect, and Mrs. Irving Gold will speak on the beneficial effect. Mr. Harry Rosen will speak on the general aspects.

Final Bnei Mitzvah

Breakfast Minyan

On Sunday, May 8, the Bnei Mitzvah will have their final Breakfast Minyan. It will be a gala breakfast, and will be given by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bloom in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son Elliot. Mrs. Charlotte Bloom and members of the family will act as hostesses. Everyone is invited to attend.

Sisterhood Annual Bazaar

To Be Held On

Wednesday, May 4

Everyone is invited to spend an exciting day on Wednesday, May 4th. This is Sisterhood Bazaar Day!

There will be bargains galore. A delicious supper will be served and the Hi-Fi victrola will be given away. There will be wheels of chance, delicious cakes baked especially for the Bazaar, and other delights too many to list.

Make it a point to come early and stay all day. Mrs. Herbert Levi is Chairman.

Kodimoh Sunday School PTO

To Hold Meeting On May 1

On Sunday evening, May 1, at 8:00, a meeting of the Kodimoh Sunday School P. T. O. will be held in the vestry of the synagogue. Reports of the progress of the various committees will be given, and will be followed by a discussion on future plans.

Mr. Ben Kalman, well known local pianist, will render selections and refreshments will be served.

Brotherhood Meeting

To Be Held On May 10

Election and Installation of officers will be the program for the May meeting of the Brotherhood. All Brotherhood members are urged to attend this meeting, and lend their support to the newly elected officers.

The meeting will start with dinner, which will be served at 6:30.

KODIMOH CONGREGATION
29 Oakland Street
Springfield, Mass.

Norman Lamm, Rabbi
Herman B. Abramson, Cantor
Abraham Pollak, Sexton

Junior Congregation

The following members of the Junior Congregation will be participants in the services:

May 7

Joyce Widland, Leader
Rozzie Neigher, Sermonette
Barry Izenstein and Stephen Shapiro,
Cantors

May 14

Joyce Widland, Leader
Stephen Shapiro, Sermonette
Paul Kurn and Stephen Bernstein,
Cantors

Myra Katten, Paulette Fein and Arlene Sherman will prepare the Kiddush following services.

Calendar of Events

- May 1 Sunday School P. T. O. Meeting
4 Sisterhood Bazaar
10 Brotherhood Dinner and election of officers
15 Mr. and Mrs. Club
15 Marriage of Jean Ginsberg, daughter of Mrs. Louis Ginsberg

Prayer Books

We wish to thank the following people who have donated books to the synagogue:

Mrs. Mark Rice in memory of her husband, Mark Rice.

Mr. and Mrs. Irving Cohen in memory of Joseph Abrams.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Tillman in memory of Joseph Abrams.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Saffer in memory of Mrs. Nathan Goldstein.

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Greenberg in memory of Barnett Raine.

Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Ziff in memory of Barnett Raine.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Gordon in memory of Barnett Raine.

The Odentz Family in memory of Barnett Raine.

Personals

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bloom on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Elliot.

Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Freedman on the birth of a grandchild.

Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Buder on the birth of a new baby.

Mr. and Mrs. Morris Fein on the engagement of their son.

Mrs. Louis Ginsberg on the coming marriage of her daughter.

We wish a Refuah Sheleimoh to the following who have been ill:

Mrs. Lena Berson

Mrs. Rose Rabinovitz

We extend our sincere sympathy to:

Mr. Louis Abrams on the loss of his father.

Mr. Morris Newman on the loss of his father.

To the Raine family on the demise of Barnett Raine.

Simon Rosenberg on the loss of his mother.

Religious Calendar

From May 1 to May 15

May 1-6 Minchah 7:00

May 6 Friday
Minchah 7:00
Light Candles 7:36

May 7 Saturday EMOR
Morning 8:30
Senior Congregation 9:30
Junior Congregation 9:45
Minchah 7:15
Sabbath ends 8:25

May 8-13 Minchah 7:00

May 13 Friday, Minchah 7:00
Light Candles 7:44

May 14 Saturday
B'HAR-B'CHUKOSAY
Morning 8:30
Senior Congregation 9:30
Junior Congregation 9:45
Minchah 7:30
Sabbath ends 8:33

May 15 Minchah 7:00

"THOSE WHO LIVE AND THOSE WHO LIVE ON"

(A Sermon on Immortality delivered by Rabbi Norman Lamm on the last day of Passover, 5715—April 14, 1955—and here printed by special request)

The very fact that we are gathered here this morning to worship a Living and Eternal God, and also to ask Him to remember the souls of dear departed relatives, is in itself an expression of an age-old Jewish belief — the Immortality of the human soul. We pray to God Who is Eternal, and since He created Man in His image, then Man is immortal. We ask God to remember the soul, and therefore the soul must still exist before God; for if not what is the use of remembering it?

So that our presence here presumes our profound though unarticulated belief that Man can achieve immortality. Though the body is perishable, the soul can live on.

However, I feel sure that there is one question that must disturb many of us. Granted that immortality can be a fact. Obviously some people achieve it. No one will deny the immortality of a Moses or a Rabbi Akiva or a Maimonides. Rembrandt, Shakespeare and Einstein, in their respective fields, have achieved this deathlessness. Dr. Jonas Salk is probably the latest star in this galaxy of Immortals. But that is true of people of world-wide fame, people of extraordinary ability and achievement, people of genius or power. What, however, of us common folk? What of those we memorialize this morning, and what of ourselves? — talented, perhaps, but not geniuses. Well-liked, yes, but world-famous, no. People who are good, kind, but largely undistinguished in the course of usual, uneventful lives. Can they be said to be able to achieve immortality? Are they not swallowed up at once into this vast, anonymous army of the dead, ultimately receding into eternal obscurity with the relentless passage of time? Can anyone achieve immortality?

And the answer is yes, anyone can achieve immortality. We can assure it for those we loved and are departed. We can assure it for ourselves. And the formula for the attainment of immortal-

ity by us unpretentious and unassuming common folk, was given in symbolic form by a man who himself was certain of eternal reverence and fame. That man was the great Sage, Rabbi Judah the Prince, the man who redacted the Mishna, the great and sacred body of Jewish Oral Law, who lived about 1800 years ago as both the spiritual and political leader of Judea of his day, beloved by all his people and revered as well by the Roman Emperor Antoninus. Certainly, he himself knew that his fame would last forever. Yet he was anxious to teach that immortality is not only for the few but for the many. He wanted to show those who live how to live on. And so he gave us a four-fold formula for Immortality.

The Talmud relates (Ketubot 103a) that the beloved Sage was on his deathbed, while in the next room was gathered his entire family. And suddenly, as the end was approaching, the great Rabbi said, *le'vanai ani tzarich*, call in my children. I want to tell them something of how to overcome the utter hopelessness and despair of death. I want to tell them how to take out its sting, how to remove the fear, how to recapture Life even as it wanes. And as they gathered about him, he gave them four commands or last wishes as his final legacy. He said: *Hizabaru bi'chvod imchem, neir yehei daluk bi'mkomo, shulchan yehei aruch bi'mkomo, mitab tehei mutza'as bi'mkomab*. Be careful to honor your mother; let the candle be kindled in its place; let the table be set in its place; let the bed be made in its place. Let all these things be as when I lived. Take these four steps, my children, and you will assure immortality for me as well as for you. You will learn how those who live should live in order to live on.

The first thing he told them — and us — was *hizabaru bi'chvod imchem*, always be careful to honor your mother. My sons, if you would have me live on with you, give all the respect in the world to your mother, for it was she who was the recipient of my love and will forever remain the

repository of my fondest, profoundest and most imperishable affections. Give honor to your mother, because she will be the symbol to you of the first great ingredient in this prescription: Love.

How did Solomon put it many years before?—*Ki azah ka'mavess abavah*, Love is as strong as Death. A true, deep and genuine love is not subject to the terrors of death. It can outlast it and vanquish it.

A sincere love, without ulterior motive, as our Sages of Pirke Aboth taught, is everlasting.

I am sure that there are a number of people with us here this morning who can testify to the truth of that statement. Those who have loved deeply and have lost a partner in life, know that after the first bitter pangs of grief have worn away, there comes a warm feeling to fill the void, a warm feeling of the presence of whomever it is we loved. The presence of the beloved person is then no longer subject to illness and disease, to long or short periods of absence. As I look about me I can see some of you whom I have in mind. I know that every time I meet one of you I immediately think of the one whom you loved. It is not only that love itself is immortal; more than that, it confers immortality upon them who practice it.

Hizabaru bi'chvod imchem, R. Judah the Prince told his children. Honor Mother and you will be honoring me, for I live on through her.

A second step in the formula he taught his children was *mitah tehei mutza'as bi'mkomah*, the bed should be made as always, in its place. The *mitah*, or bed, is in the language of the Rabbis a symbol for the word "family". A person's children are his second guarantee of Immortality. A child is, in a way, a recapitulation of the parent. Heredity is more than another science; it is a vehicle for the extension of life even after death. A parent lives on in the person of a child who lives.

We must, however, distinguish between just having children and what *kind* of children one has. Merely having children does not assure one of deathlessness, any more than not having children automatically rules it out. Certainly, biological continuity is not the same as immortality. If it were, then an elephant or Japanese beetle that lived a thousand years ago would

be as immortal as the greatest human. Family and children as a vehicle of Immortality derives not from the biological gift of father to son, but from the fact that the parent molds the personality of the child, and the child's behavior and life are then a reflection on the parent and a mirror of the kind of immortality he achieves. It is ridiculous to speak of immortality for a parent whose child becomes a wicked destroyer of all that is good. One cannot speak of immortality for a father whose child is godless and himself conceives of life as only a cruel accident of biology, as nothing more than a change configuration of molecules, as a desperate, meaningless, hopeless struggle between competing brutes, in which the fittest, most brutal brute wins, but which ultimately results in both winners and losers vanishing in obscurity.

Mitah tehei mutza'as bi'mkomah, let the bed be in its place, let the family be the right kind of family, my sons, and then I know that I will be blessed with Immortality — the right kind of Immortality. When a father and mother pass on and leave children who come to pour out their hearts to God only three or four times a year, and thereby remember them, that is a measure of immortality, certainly more than nothing. But it is not enough. Immortality is not magically achieved by a superstitious visit to a certain building. It means developing the kind of religious, godly character that reflects upon a parent and upon the self. That is the second of R. Judah's suggestions: you live the right kind of life to grant your parents immortality and train your children to live full, Jewish lives if you desire this blessed gift of Immortality for yourselves.

The third thing he told his children gathered around his bed was: *shulchan yehei aruch bi'mkomo*, let the table be set and prepared as always. The Table in Jewish life was never only a place at which to stuff one's stomach in privacy and greed. The Table was always a *Mizbeiach*, an altar. About it were seated not only the family, but also the poor and the weary, the stranger and the needy. The Table was the altar, the spiritual piece of furniture at which one put into practice all the beautiful precepts of charity and hospitality and neighborliness. The *Shulchan* has become the work-table of Jewish charitableness. It is the symbol of benevolence, generosity and kindliness.

No wonder the great code-book of Jewish Law, that Divine book of humaneness, is called *Shulchan Aruch*, the "Prepared Table."

So that when R. Judah told his sons not to disturb the position of his Table, he meant that the prominence he had given charity and hospitality and help to others in his life-time should be continued after his death, and that would be one way of immortalizing him.

Indeed, part of the Yizkor prayer we soon will recite includes the statement that we promise to make a contribution to charity in memory of the soul we memorialize. What does that signify? It signifies that by performing this act of goodness in the name of someone we loved, he lives on in that act of goodness, for goodness outlives death. When you leave the Synagogue, look at the plaques and at the stained windows, at the Torah-covers and the pulpits. The names on them are more than names — they are people who are immortalized in an act of goodness performed by themselves or by someone else on their behalf. What better way of living on than through goodness! I know that for a number of years, during my schooling at Yeshiva University, I benefitted from a fund set up by the children of one Mendel Gottesman. I never knew him. But I shall never forget him. There was one time that I received what is called the Riva Sarah Kadin Award. I never knew her too. But neither shall I ever forget her. I know that those wonderful souls who showed goodness and charitableness to the Day School where I received my early education and the University where I received my higher education will live on in my heart. If ever I studied a folio of the Talmud, if ever I delved into the heart of a verse of the Torah, if ever the Good Lord in His way gives me any reward for these, they — those whose goodness made it possible — have an even greater share in it than I do. I ate at their Table. Even after they left, the

Table at which they lived was set — and in its place. What a noble way to live on!

Finally, R. Judah told his sons *ner yehei daluk bi'mkomo*, let the light be kindled in its place. No man, no matter how humble and ordinary, ever leaves this world without kindling some kind of lamp, without achieving some bit of good in some way. That candle, that special individual achievement, is his memorial, his path to immortality. Some people, like R. Judah himself, leave powerhouses. Others leave chandeliers of tremendous illuminating power. Others leave bright lights. But every man, no matter how small, leaves at least a candle. Everyone of us can think back to those we loved and whom we memorialize, and out of the darkness that shrouds the years, we will notice the flickering rays of that candle, that special act of goodness which was the constant specialty of that person. Speaking again from my own personal experiences, there is one old lady who still works at her specialty, and may she continue to do so for the full measure of her days, who is in my eyes already an immortal. Her specialty was the lunch-room of the Yeshiva in which I studied as a youngster. She never missed a day. It was her concern that every boy eat his lunch, whether home-packed or school-served. *Men darf zein gesundt tzu dinen Gott*. She encouraged the *brachah*, she encouraged the eating, she encouraged the blessing afterwards. And she has, in this way, assured herself of blessings afterwards — for all eternity. It was her candle, and I hope that there will always be someone to keep it kindled in its place.

As you who are here to remember loved ones recite the Yizkor, think about his or her special candle, and remember to keep it lit — whether it is a special charity, or special act, or special Mitzvah. It is a candle which burns forever. And then choose and light a candle of your own — it burns bright, and very long.

And after he passed away, the Talmud

relates, R. Judah the Prince became an immortal. And he would visit his home every *Bei Shimsha*, every Friday night. At the table, his family would unastonishingly be aware of the fact that Father was there with them. For there, at the Sabbath table, he would see the four steps to Immortality which he had taught his children.

There was his beloved wife, reigning like a Queen with the Sabbath candles as her scepters and the radiance of love filling her face and her home.

And there was his *mitab mutza'as*, his family, his children, gathered about the table and making of eating a worship and of feasting a mitzvah; children of whom he could be eternally proud.

And then there was the *Shulcan Aruch*, the Table, undisturbed; for there, together with his wealthy and aristocratic and scholarly sons, were the poor and the indigent, travellers and strangers — common and ignorant as well as wise — all together enjoying and hallowing the sacred Sabbath.

And finally, after the meal was done, he saw the lamp he kindled burn ever brighter. For the legacy he left to eternity was not neglected. There were his sons assiduously studying the Mishna, the book their father edited, delving into the Torah, the realm where he, in his

life, had found meaning and joy and creativity. Yes, he was truly immortalized.

As we, therefore, begin to recite the Yizkor prayers, let us too remember that all those who live can live on. With the right kind of Love, the right kind of Family, the right kind of Charitableness, and the right kind of special, personalized, creative Goodness, we can even now endow those we loved with the blessing of ever-continuing life; and we can assure ourselves, no matter how humble and undistinguished, of true Immortality.

Ki v'yadcha nafshos ba'chayyim ve'ba'meism, for in Thy hand, O God, are the souls of the living and the dead, and only by commending ourselves to the Hand of God can we be certain of eternal life, so that both those who live and those who lived may live on.

Have You Paid Your Dues?

CONGREGATION KODIMOH

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Springfield, Mass.

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