

MINYAN MONTHLY

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HAPPY NEW YEAR? --Evan Greenspan

Ask most Jewish families what holidays they are most likely to observe personally throughout the year and the answer will be Rosh Hashana and Pesach. It is interesting to note that on the 12-month Jewish calendar, Nisan is exactly 6 months removed from Tishre and in many ways, the springtime complement to the Yomim Noraim (Days of Awe) and Sukkot festivals of the Fall.

In the festival Amidah, you can find a thumbnail comparison of the commandments that set the cycle. Bamidbar 28:9-10 describes Pesach: "In the first month, on the 14th day of the month, is the Pesach unto the Lord...". Bamidbar 29:12-16 describes Sukkot: "on the 15th day of the seventh month, you shall have a holy convocation...". But if Sukkot is in Tishre (the month of Rosh Hashana), why does the Torah say it is in the seventh month? And Pesach in the first month? Why isn't Rosh Hashana in the first month?

The answer is that we observe no less than four cycles in the Jewish calendar. Rosh Hashana is indeed the "head of the year" (see explanation below), but Nisan is the first month of the calendar. Our other new years are Tu B'Shvat (the New Year of the trees) and the first of Elul (the annual cycle for tithes on cattle).

Rosh Hashana (which, incidentally, falls in the calendar according to events in Nisan) was never originally defined as "new year," but rather Yom T'ruah (a day of blowing the shofar) or Yom Hazicharon (a day of remembrance). It came to be observed as the New Year because of the belief that creation was completed on the first of Tishre.

The *mahazor gadol*, the 28-year larger cycle of leap years in the Jewish Calendar is calculated from the month of Nisan. Feldman, in Rabbinical Mathematics and Astronomy, explains that every 28 years the *t'kufat Nisan* (the Vernal Equinox) occurs at the beginning of the fourth day (i.e. Tuesday at 6:00

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MY FIRST PESACH
--Leon Rogson

A long time ago, when I had just decided to study at the Hebrew Union College, Pesach loomed high on the horizon. I was still working at the Aerospace Corporation, and decided to have my usual large Pesach (over 20 friends and family members). Since this was to be my first "lay" Pesach, I decided to do it properly. I studied Mishna Pesachim and read Goldin's book about Passover.

In my studies, I learned that in Israel, during Temple times, every family slaughtered a lamb or got together with their neighbors to purchase a lamb for the Passover Meal. This lamb was roasted, and the family ate it during the Seder.

My grandfather, and my father, had never done something like this in all the Seders I remember attending, but it never occurred to me to ask why. I decided we would have roast lamb for dinner. I bought a standing rib roast of lamb, dressed it properly with the little napkin pompons at the end of each rib, and served it, even telling my guests about the meaning of the paschal lamb. I felt very proud of having done a Seder as it should be done.

During the Passover, I took time off from work, and attended a Kallah at Hebrew Union College. While we were discussing Passover customs it occurred to me that I had not ever seen anyone serving roasted lamb for dinner, so I brought the matter up. To my consternation, I was told that it is not customary to serve lamb on Pesach since the paschal lamb was part of the sacrificial Temple service, and that service cannot be done in the absence of the Temple!

(Reader's comment: In many Sephardic Jewish families, the paschal lamb is still served at the Pesach Seder)

UPDATE ON THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN
--Manny Forster

The Beth Am Capital Campaign has been active and successful in recent weeks. As most of you know, George and Anna Ganzberg made a significant contribution, which was recognized at the school groundbreaking on March 1, 1992. The campaign has now raised over \$4,000,000 and we are on our way to meeting the goal of \$7,000,000 to fund construction of a new school building, chapel and improvements to the existing synagogue building.

The Library Minyan has been active in the campaign. We want to express our thanks to the following people who have generously made commitments to the campaign:

Linda and Amos Amit
Felice and Ronald Andiman
Roslyn and Gerald Bazar
Sandra and Robert Braun
Alan Broidy
Jackie and David Ellenson
Fran and Joel Grossman
Hannah and Marshall Kramer
Michelle Kramer
Lee and Luis Lainer
Judith and Louis Miller
Karen Fox and Michael Rosen
Faith and Mayer Schames
Fredelle and Steve Spiegel
Lillian and David Zerner

The Minyan's object is to be an integral part of the Capital Campaign, and that translates into two goals. One of these is to exceed our portion of the entire project, which we have set at \$500,000. In order to meet that goal we must also accomplish our other goal, which is to involve every member of the Minyan in this project. As a Minyan, our success will be measured by the involvement of each member of the Minyan, to whatever extent of their abilities in the Capital Campaign.

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--New Year - Continued

PM exactly). This cycle synchronizes the solar and lunar cycles and is calculated to keep the months of the Jewish calendar (based on the phases of the moon) from falling behind the solar cycle (based on both the rotation of the Earth and its motion around the Sun). Without this cycle, our festivals would gradually come earlier and earlier in the year, eventually falling out of their appointed seasons.

As the first month, Nisan also begins two other important cycles - the Tal/Geshem cycle (for the next six months we will omit *mashiv haruach umorid hagashem* from the Amidah, only to add it again on Shemini Atzeret in the Fall), and the S'firah - the counting of the omer to Shavuot.

Here is the most interesting parallel. Nisan is a month of springtime and gladness, in which fasting is prohibited. It is followed by S'firah, a season of sadness (underscored in modern times by the addition of Yom HaShoah), ultimately concluding in Shavuot, a festival of the giving of Torah.

Isaac Klein notes that the sages regarded Shavuot as the true conclusion of the festival of Pesach, calling it 'Atzeret.

Sukkot concludes with Shemini Atzeret, culminated by Simchat Torah.

From the second day of Pesach (14th day of Nisan) to Shavuot is a 49 day period, and there is also 49 days from the first day of Elul (a month of return in anticipation of the Yomim Noraim) to Shemini Atzeret.

Both seasons culminate in a celebration of Torah

The appearance of Nisan in the calendar provides a fascinating insight into how our tradition incorporates the majesty of the cycles of the universe - astronomical, agricultural, seasonal - into a year long cycle for our spiritual enrichment.

Capital Campaign - Continued

Please join us in this effort. You can contact any of the members of the Committee listed below, or Manny Forster at the Temple office, for more information:

- Alan Broidy
- Robert Braun
- Sandra Braun
- Fran Grossman
- Joel Grossman
- Elka Tenner
- Jonathan Swerdlow

Library Minyan Birthdays for the Month of April

Name	Birthday
Susannah F. Andiman	04/03/1978
Yehuda Alexander	04/24/1985
Judith A. Andiman	04/12/1981
Tal Ruchama Link	04/06/1991
Laura Freeman	04/17/1990
Benjamin Ackerman	04/24/1986
Adam Max Sanchez	04/23/1985
Daniel Haim Rabin	04/14/1989
Sarah Ilana Leiter	04/02/1990
Celia Rose Chazanov	04/03/1989
Sephora Matzner	04/29/1985
Yuval Rogson	04/24/1977
Nomi Rembaum	04/29/1975
Solomon Mirell	04/28/1988
Hannah Ellenson	04/04/1986
Hannah Matzner	04/08/1989
Joseph Speyer	04/24/1978
Benjamin Nathan Fox	04/22/1979

MINYAN COMMITTEES/RESPONSIBILITIES

Chair, Steering Committee	
Robert Braun	838-4272
Minyan Treasurer	
Norm Green	938-8110
Reading Torah or Haftorah	
Lida Baker	934-3663
Gabai'im-Shabbat/Holiday Services	
Torah Honors	
Alan Broidy	933-8894
Sharon Kushner	271-5845
Dan Wolpe	
Paul Young	
Drashot:	
Julia Arango	276-5083
Torah Gabai'im	
Norman Saiger	837-5927
Evan Greenspan	818-760-0774
Child Care	
Mark Bodenstein	937-7443
Matt Chazanov	936-3901
Child Care Volunteer Coordinator	
Diane Landau	657-7903
Kiddush	
Elka Tenner	932-0688
Sharon Kushner	
Robin Moss	
Laurie Wallock	
Membership	
Michael Rogson	939-5124
Mailing List	
Leon Rogson	202-1329
Minyan Guide	
Carl Sunshine	934-7889
Minyan Monthly	
Susan Grinel	395-2572
Ritual Committee	
Stan Goldstein	813-8100
Scheduling Events-Master Calendar	
Lida Baker	934-3663

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

TREASURER'S COLUMN
--Norman H. Green

Thank you to Ellen and Eddie Rabin for a contgtribution in honor of Professor Larry Harris.

Thanks also to Annette Spronz for her donation in appreciation of an Ark opening honor.

Traditionally, Nisan 1 is the beginning of the Jewish fiscal year. Accordingly, this is my last column as Treasurer of the Library Minyan. Mazel Tov to the new Treasurer, Sandra Braun. You can reach her at (310) 838-4272, or send money to 1743 Holt Avenue, Los Angeles, CA. 90035

Ellen and Eddie Rabin want to wish Larry Harris a Mazel Tov. Larry has been promoted to Professor of Finance and Business Economics at University of Southern California Business School.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO
 ROBIN AND STEPHEN BORODA
 ON THE BIRTH OF THEIR SON
 ANTON DAMON
 March 18, 1992**

**CONTRATULATIONS TO
 LARRY AND ABBY HARRIS
 ON THE BIRTH OF THEIR SON
 NAFTALI DANIEL
 March 10, 1992**

**PLEASE SEND YOUR ARTICLES
 TO THE MINYAN MONTHLY
 Mail to: Susan Grinel
 1127 11th St. #204
 Santa Monica, Calif. 90403
 Or Call: 395-2572 (H)**
