

The Synagogue Journal

1856-2006

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Va'eira

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An online publication available at
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Issue 4 19th Century Leaders

- 1 **Rabbi Marcus Friedlander's Legacy: A New Chapter in Baith Israel's History**
By Carol Levin
- 2 **"Judaism in Brooklyn. The Ancient Faith of Israel in the Local Adherents"**
Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, September 27, 1891, Page 19
(For the entire article, go to www.brooklynpubliclibray.eagle, and enter the date and page)
This profile of the four leading Congregations includes biographies and sketches of the rabbis.
- 3 **"Hebrew Notes"**
Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, December 17, 1899, Page 25
Congregation Mount Sinai's Rev. Dr. Louis Pulvermacher served as Baith Israel's rabbi in 1881.
- 4 **"Personal – Meyers"**
Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, August 4, 1879, Page 3 (Scroll to paragraph 7)
Baith Israel's Rev. Dr. E. M. Meyers presented the tenets of Judaism to the Brooklyn community through his book and lectures .
- 5 **"The Story of the Talmud"**
Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, March 19, 1891, Page 6
Rabbi Aaron Wise served as Baith Israel's rabbi in 1874, prior to his tenure at Rodef Scholom in New York. Wise was a founder of United Synagogue. In this article, he affectionately addresses former students.
- 6 **"Put in the Ark"**
Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, April 08, 1889, Page 1
This article about the rededication services excerpts the addresses of Baith Israel president Moss Phillips and others. It is one of many Eagle articles to appear during the Friedlander years.
- 7 **"Obituary – Michael Lamm"**
Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, December 16, 1902, Page 6
This obituary of Baith Israel founder describes many of the Congregation's early leaders: German immigrant; merchant; active in ward politics and benevolent associations.
- 8 **"Obituary – Moses Hess"**
Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, September 11, 1889, Page 5
Moses Hess, Baith Israel president from 1861-1862, was one of the men who left to organize Beth Elohim.

In this issue ...

The congregation pays special tribute to the BrooklynEagleOnline™, Brooklyn Public Library, for introducing us to the details of Jewish social history and Baith Israel leadership in nineteenth century Brooklyn. Computer searches with iterations of the name "Baith Israel", "Temple Beth Israel" and "Beth Yisroel" led to articles about the Congregation. Most every article yielded other "key words" for additional searches, bringing the Congregation to life. The lives of the leaders and their families emerge through the coverage of weddings, summer holiday announcements, robberies, school events and obituaries. Rev. John D. Lindner officiated at a marriage ceremony in 1865. Baith Israel president Joseph Harris, a pawnbroker, was profiled as one of the "Wealthy Brooklyn Jews" in February, 1880.

The Journal's first six items highlight Baith Israel Rabbis: Joel Alexander, Louis Pulvermacher, E. M. Meyers, Aaron Wise and Marcus Friedlander. Items 7, 8 and 9 illustrate mid-nineteenth century leaders: Moses Hess, Michael Lamm and Moss Phillips.

In the case of Rev. Dr. Friedlander, we meet a spiritual leader who was excised from the Congregation's archives. This unusual circumstance piqued my interest and led me to write "Rabbi Marcus Friedlander's Legacy: A New Chapter in Baith Israel's History". The story relates the struggles of Rabbi Friedlander and synagogue leaders as they try to balance tradition and change. This week we read Parsha, Va'iera, which describes G-d's charge to Moses and Aaron to advocate for Israel's redemption before Pharaoh. Both leaders show signs of vulnerability, weakness and impatience; the people are frustrated. Eventually, by their faith in G-d's promise, and openness to the possibility of change, the people are freed, and freed together, irrespective of ideological bent.

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About the Journal ...

The "Synagogue Journal" is a one-year online publication at www.kanestreet.org/historical_journal.html, designed to highlight the Kane Street Synagogue congregation's rich historical record. It will draw primarily on original source material: oral histories, minute books and financial ledgers, souvenir journals, newsletters, and stories of the nineteenth century from the Brooklyn Daily Eagle Online™, Brooklyn Public Library.

Each week in 2006, the Journal will explore a specific theme, related to the Congregation's experience. Articles will illustrate the three historic periods: the first fifty years as Congregation Baith Israel at both the Atlantic Street and Boerum Place sites; the middle years with Rabbi Israel Goldfarb as spiritual leader of the consolidated Congregation Baith Israel Anshei Emes at the present location, and the last fifty years, as the synagogue evolved to be the Congregation that we know today.

Journal readers who take in the entire series will view the panorama of our special synagogue's experience in Brooklyn, the City of Churches: the constants, the changes and the cycles. Our intention is to foster greater understanding about synagogue customs and rituals and explore the development of the oldest Conservative congregation during its proud history.

Those of you who have watched the Congregation grow over the last decades and guided its course have a treasured perspective. We welcome your reminiscences, letters and photographs to help shape the BIAE story. Special thanks to Kane Street Synagogue webmaster Dugans for putting the Journal online.