

The Synagogue Journal

1856-2006

April 7, 2006

Contact us: historicaljournal@kanestreet.org

Shabbat Hagadol

View the Contents of Issue 14 at
www.kanestreet.org/historical_journal.html

Issue 14 Passover

“Passover in Jail. Warden Brymer’s Privilege for Hebrew Prisoners”

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, March 29, 1888, Page 4

Account relates Baith Israel’s role in providing “sufficient [matzos] for the eight days of fast required by the Hebrew law.”

“The Feast of Passover. How It Will be Observed by Hebrew Residents of Brooklyn”

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, April 1, 1890, Page 6

Describes the differences in the way the reformed and orthodox communities celebrate the holiday. Note the spellings of “Aroo Pasock”, “Hargodah” and “matsor”.

“Jews Rejoice. The Passover Season Celebrated in the Local Synagogues”

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, April 5, 1890, Page 3.

The text of Rabbi Friedlander’s sermon begins with a description of the seders in homes the prior night, including the question, “Wherefore is this night distinguished from all other nights?” On the significance of Elijah’s cup, the Rabbi said, “we will reach an era of human perfection when drops of bitterness will no longer be dissolved in our cup, but we will enjoy a full cup of unmingled joy... when all nations will unite by one common tie of unity and uniformity of worship.” He urged families to “educate our children with the consciousness that they are destined to be the servants of God and defenders of freedom.”

“The Passover. Beginning of the Great Jewish Feast”

Credit Brooklyn Eagle, April 12, 1892, Page 1

Rabbi Marcus Friedlander delivers an impassioned defense of the Jewish people as patriots of freedom. He references the deliverance of the Jewish Russian refugees and looks to a time when, “Prejudice will then vanish, violence and tyranny will no longer be practice, the Jew will no longer be accused of a lack of patriotism, laws restricting immigration will no longer be tolerated, “Welcome will be the watchword of every nation. Love will be the motto on every man and the whole world will celebrate with the Jew his Passover, the anniversary of the great achievement of liberty and justice, of enlightenment and truth. ”

“Hebrew Notes”

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, March 31, 1901, Page 33

Article notes the holiday customs and the schedule of Passover services in Brooklyn synagogues as well as news of fraternal organizations, The Sons of Benjamin and The Progress Lodge.

In Preparation for Passover 2006

The congregation notified the community about Passover events by emails, mailings, ads and articles in the local papers and *Kane Yirbu* newsletter. We include the following notices.

Synaplex Announcement

Sale of Chametz letter

Kane Yirbu newsletter

Hebrew School Candy Sale letter

In this issue ...

We celebrate Passover and learn how the Jews of nineteenth century Brooklyn observed the holiday. Articles from the Brooklyn Eagle discuss various communities, including Jewish prisoners who received enough matzos to last the week. Rabbi Friedlander's sermons from 1890 and 1892 related the Passover theme of freedom and redemption to the Russian Jews immigrating to America.

During the first half of the twentieth century Passover foods were sold at the synagogue. Our archives include a blank order form from the 1910's with the synagogue's 236 Harrison Street address and the name Max Brown as "an agent for Matzoth, wine and slivowitz, egg matzoth, meal and ferfel." Max Brown was the congregation's *shamus* or sexton who lived on premises and attended to ritual needs throughout the year.

The journal includes Passover notices from 2006 as a record of how the congregation prepared for the holiday this year.

Carol Levin, Editor
historicaljournal@kanestreet.org

About the Journal ...

The Synagogue Journal" is a one-year online publication at www.kanestreet.org/historical_journal.html, designed to highlight the three periods of the Kane Street Synagogue congregation: the first fifty years as Congregation Baith Israel at both the Atlantic Street and the Boerum Place sites; the middle years (1905-1956) with Rabbi Israel Goldfarb as spiritual leader of the consolidated Congregation Baith Israel Anshei Emes at the present location that was first known as Harrison Street, and the last fifty years, as the synagogue evolved to be the Congregation that we know today.

We welcome submissions of reminiscences, letters and photographs to help shape the BIAE story. For a list of upcoming Journal themes or to read past issues, see "Archives," located under the Journal banner.

Special thanks to: Rabbi Samuel Weintraub; webmaster Dugans Martinez; Brooklyn Daily Eagle Online™, Brooklyn Public Library; www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/eagle

PASSOVER IN JAIL.
Warden Brymer's Privilege for Hebrew
Prisoners.

Michael Furst, of the Garfield Building, was on Monday surprised by the receipt of the following note, addressed to him by Warden Brymer, of the Jail:

DEAR SIR—I have two men confined in the Jail who profess the Jewish faith. They desire to comply with the forms and ceremonies of their fathers, and it is my strong desire to aid all under my charge so far as in my power lies. The feast of Passover will commence this evening, and if you will kindly interest your friends in their behalf I shall be glad to receive for them such articles as may be required by them to conform with the rules of their faith.

As soon as Mr. Furst learned of this he sent around to Mrs. Harris, of Adams street, and she secured from the Hebrew Orphan Asylum a supply of matzos, or unleavened bread, sufficient for the eight days of fast required by the Hebrew law. Rabbi Pulvermacher called on the prisoners, and with full permission of Warden Brymer saw that they had every means of observing the ceremonial. Warden Brymer's action has surprised and pleased the Hebrews of the city.

THE FEAST OF PASSOVER.

How It Will be Observed by Hebrew Residents of Brooklyn.

On the evening of Friday, Nissau 14, according to the Jewish calendar, commences the festival of Pasock or Passover, commemorating the emancipation from Egyptian slavery and oppression of the Hebrew race. The festival is continued for eight days, the first two and the last two being held sacred, while the intervening ones may be devoted to ordinary avocations. The reform sects, comprising the majority of the Jews in America, regard as holy only the first and last days of the week. The restrictions on these holy days are simply from business and labor; those of the Sabbath apply exclusively to that day. Outside the special religious observances the sacred days are regarded as seasons of pleasure and joy. The evening on which the festival commences is called Aroo Pasock, and some hours before sunset the houses must be cleared of all leavened bread. The eldest son of each family is expected to fast in remembrance of the saving from destruction of the first born of Israel while the first born of Egypt succumbed to terrors of the Angel of Death.

During the entire festival no leavened food or fermented liquor is permitted to be used. A thin cake of flour and water baked quickly in a hot oven, so that it has no time to rise, supplies the place of bread. These cakes are called matsor. Other food may be eaten as on ordinary occasions. The religious ceremonies of the festival are as follows: On the first two evenings the family circle join together and recite the Hargodah, a history of the dwelling of the Israelites in Egypt and their miraculous deliverance. If there are any Jewish servants they are invited to join the family as commemorative that at the Passover all became free and equal. On the second day of Passover commences the counting of the fifty days to Pentecost. The ceremony of counting is simple, including merely the addition to the ordinary service of the words chanted in Hebrew, this is the — day of Omer. On the Sabbath in Passover is read a special portion of the Scriptures in addition to the proper service and in very orthodox communities three services are held in the synagogues on all the sacred days of the festival.

JEW'S REJOICE.

The Passover Season Celebrated in the Local Synagogues.

The Hebrew feast of Passover, kept in commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt, commenced at sunset last evening. Orthodox Jews for the coming eight days will eat no leaven bread. The festival is observed as a season of rejoicing. Services will be held at all the synagogues this morning. In the Boerum place synagogue Rabbi Friedlander delivered the sermon. He took his text from Exodus xiii:8: "This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt," and said among other things:

Yesterday was a busy day at every Jewish fire-side. A visitor could observe that preparations were made for the celebration of a joyful event. The youngsters were anxious to greet the Passover stars, and the chieftains of the family were longing to occupy the majestic chair made for that occasion. The hopes were indeed realized as the sun retired from his magnificent work of the day, and the eve of Passover, the festival of freedom, was ushered into every Jewish home. The commencement of the domestic ceremony was then announced, and, with electric swiftness, a solemn impression traversed through the whole family circle, and a profound gladness and admiration prevailed with both adult and child. At the festal supper the hostess sat on her husband's right, graciously watching every motion of her flock; the prettily dressed children enjoyed over the richly decorated table, and the host, in whose direction every eye was turning, felt like a prince when ascending the throne. At an authoritative look from the head of the family, one of the little ones, appointed for the office, asked in an inquiring tone, "Wherefore is this night distinguished from all other nights?" In answer to this query, the assembly was told by the leader that the lives of our ancestors were made bitter with hard bondage by the cruel Pharaoh, in remembrance of which we eat bitter herbs on Passover eve. The end came when God relieved Israel from Pharaoh's tools. And on that night when the Lord led our ancestors out of Egypt, they were compelled to take their dough before it was leavened,

in remembrance of which we eat unleavened bread on Passover. The whole company then spent the rest of the evening in thanking, glorifying and exalting the Lord God of Righteousness that He brought our fathers forth from bondage to freedom, from servitude to redemption and from darkness to light. Those, however, who, in this age of refinement, boast of being classed among the free thinkers, would turn away with derision from this happy convention. This display of unusual cheerfulness and plenty, exhibited with patriarchal reverence pointing with pride to the line of their ancestors, is to them a fit subject for sneers and sarcasm. "What an absurdity," I heard a pretender to reason declare in a tone of rebuke, and with the gravity of a philosopher. What an absurdity to make a religion of what people did 3,000 years ago. What concern us the blind customs of those who have centuries since turned to dust? There is no more fear for revolution now Pharaoh is drowned." Such was the ridiculous attack of the wicked man at the Hagadah made upon those who shelter themselves under the divine law, and regard the usages of their ancestors as sacred. This sophist is not admitted to reason on Passover eve. We simply retort on him that by slighting the observance of Passover, he betrays his ignorance, and commits a breach of loyalty and patriotism. On Passover our fathers were the recipients of the priceless blessing of freedom, the true and sole breath of life, the choicest gift God ever bestowed upon man. The departure of the Israelites from Egypt, which Passover eve commemorates, marks the line where our history as a tribe ended, and where our history as a powerful nation commenced. It marks the era when our race first was formed into an independent political organization and was designated to be a learned and a teaching nation. Last night 3,203 years ago the cry, "Freedom," was heard along the parched banks of the Nile, the echo of which had torn asunder the iron chains fastened on our fathers. Pharaoh's decree that Abraham's descendants be swallowed up by the Nile was then annulled, and that Israel should exercise a supreme influence

THE PASSOVER.

Beginning of the Great Jewish

Feast.

Services in the Synagogues to Commemorate the Deliverance of Israel From Egyptian Bondage—Sermon by Rabbi Friedlander at Congregation Baith Israel This Morning.

The feast of Pasach, or the Passover, was begun at sundown last evening, with services at all the Jewish synagogues except one, the Congregation of Temple Israel worshipping in Avon hall, the dedication of the new edifice at Bedford and Lafayette avenues not occurring until Sunday next. The ceremonies were of a joyful and thankful nature and were continued at home, where Sadir—consisting of prayers, reading the book of Exodus, relating to the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage, and singing of Psalms CXIII to CXVIII, inclusive—was observed, the heads of families leading. An elaborate repast, in which matzoths comprised the most important article of food, was also partaken of. This was a feature of every home, both rich and poor, many of the latter having been provided with the necessary matzoths by various charitable societies.

This morning services in the several synagogues consisted of prayers and sermons relating especially to the feast which is being observed. At Congregation Baith Israel, Boerum place and State street, the oldest synagogue in Brooklyn, Rabbi Marcus Friedlander addressed a large congregation, taking for his subject, "Patriotism." His text was Deuteronomy x:19: "And ye shall love the stranger, for strangers were ye in the land of Egypt." He spoke as follows:

Whoever reads and understands the Bible will acknowledge that he is indebted to the Jew for his religion and morality, as all the moral precepts contained in the Koran or in the New Testament have been incorporated from Israel's Bible. Whoever reads and understands the history of literature will give the Jew a distinguished seat among the intellectual toilers in the rich mines of art, science and philosophy, as there is not a civilized nation whose literature has not been enriched by the Jewish pen and whose thoughts have not been embellished by Jewish thought. Whoever is familiar with the Jewish history will look upon the Jew as an amazing model of patience and forbearance. Whoever appealed to the Jew for charity will award to him the prize for generosity. The only virtue which is questioned, nay, which is denied the Jew, even by those who are otherwise free from prejudice, is patriotism. We will endeavor this morning to defend ourselves against such accusations. We would prefer a defense, not of argument, not of reasoning, not of calling for evidence from the past, but a defense drawn from living facts. We would take our accusers by the hand and ramble from shore to shore, from continent to continent, from country to country, from one Jewish house to the other, and let them be eye witnesses of the ceremonies the Jews perform on Passover night at the festal supper and they will never again cast at the Jews such accusations. We will take them to the humblest dwelling of the poorest Jewish family and let them observe on that night the gracious appearance of the wife, the vigilant watchfulness of the mother, the rich decorations of the table, the great rejoicing of the children, the unusual privileges of the house servant and the princely air of the hosts. And what does all that mean? It commemorates the night in which, over three thousand years ago, the yoke of tyranny was removed and the chain of slavery was broken, and our accusers will at once exclaim that the Jew excels other nations in patriotism as he surpasses them in religion and morality. After 3,000 years of Egyptian deliverance, the Jew feels with his forefathers the bitterness of slavery and rejoices like them in the blessing of liberty. After eighteen centuries of the expulsion from his land the Jew manifests his profoundest longing after his country by concluding his festal supper with the prayer "Leshonoh habo berushohayim"—"Next year may we be in Jerusalem." Yes, there can be no more fervent patriotism manifested than the Jew exhibits on Passover night. We do not, however, shrink from reasoning with our accusers in proof that

the Jew is a true patriot. We have history on our side. History will array in our favor not individual names, but a whole nation of heroes, patriots and martyrs. We will ask Spain, Portugal, Germany and England to give us an account of Jewish patriotism, and our accusers will turn away with shame and remorse. She will not find another people like the Jewish people that dared to struggle for existence against a whole world in arms and, though a thousand times defeated, though a thousand times crushed to earth and though made to languish in a thousand dungeons, still refused to surrender still struggling for national existence, for justice and for independence. But our most earnest desire is to correct the gross mistake of those who accuse the Jew of directing his only patriotism toward Palestine—of being uninterested in the prosperity of the country in which he lives and of considering his country not his home, but his place of sojourn. To clear ourselves of this charge we will ask modern nations to tell of Jewish patriotism. Let Spain tell of her Atarbancl, let Italy tell of her Signor Malvano, let France tell of her Jules Simon, let England tell of her Disraeli, let Germany tell of her Lasker and Bamberger, let the United States tell of her Peixotto, Bush, Wolff, Strauss and Hirsch; let the war department of this country tell of the 6,000 fighting Jews, among whom were generals, captains and majors, who distinguished themselves for their bravery in the great struggle for the preservation of the Union, and the charge that the Jew is not patriotic will soon be effaced. Yes, the patriotic address of Jeremiah to the Jewish captives in Babylon, "seek the peace of every city whither you are carried as captives and pray unto the Lord for it," has been deeply impressed upon and always obeyed by the Jew wherever he lived, no matter how cruelly he was treated, how shamefully he was abused and how dreadfully he was persecuted. To be patriotic and to strive to promote the intellectual and material standard of the country in which he lives is the virtue of which the Jew has ever been pre-eminently possessed. But Israel's patriotism is not bounded by the narrow confines of a single country. His love for his neighbor, his delight in the prosperity of others and his interest in the promotion of independence goes far beyond the boundary of one nation. The mission of Israel is universal peace and universal happiness. Israel was the first to establish a republican form of government, to secure equal rights and to make its national motto "And ye shall love the stranger, for strangers were ye in the land of Egypt." Let our accusers read and understand the Old Testament and they will at once yield to Israel the claim of first having given to the world social, religious and political equality. They will acknowledge that all achievements in the cause of freedom have their roots in Judaism; that the conception that man has inalienable human rights goes far back of the American revolution, back of the French revolution, back of the German

reformation, back of Greek antiquity, back of the New Testament, back to the Bible of Moses, the dearest possession of the Jew. Every other revolution in the cause of liberty was but an echo of the sound that was first heard in Israel. Every other achievement in the cause of equality and fraternity is but a part of the great achievement of Moses. And this is the achievement which Passover celebrates, an achievement not in the cause of a single people, but in the cause of common humanity—the first step toward the abode over which the flag of liberty now waves. The songs of Moses on the Red sea are the notes of jubilee which now rise from the hearts of a free people. The burning bush beheld by Moses in the desert of the East is the bright luminary which now sheds light upon the blessed soil of the West. The motto, "And ye shall love the stranger," which Moses wrote upon Israel's flag, is the only passport which the Jewish Russian refugee is showing when landing on American shores. Let mankind continue following the example set by Moses in securing equal rights to all. Let all nations write on their banners in large letters the motto "And ye shall love the stranger." Let all men worship one God, from one common brotherhood, and obey one common law. The human family will then look back from the loftiest summit of civilization with a pride of triumph through the large vista of the dark past. Prejudice will then vanish, violence and tyranny will no longer be practiced, the Jew will no longer be accused of a lack of patriotism, laws restricting immigration will no longer be tolerated. "Welcome" will be the watchword of every nation, "Love" will be the motto of every man, and the whole world will celebrate with the Jew his Passover, the anniversary of the great achievement of liberty and justice, of enlightenment and truth.

At the Synagogue Beth Elohim, State street, near Hoyt, this morning services were conducted by the Rev. S. Taubenhans, assisted by a cantor and choir. He took for his text, "Next year we shall be in Jerusalem," in the discussion of which he brought out the fact that everyone has wishes which he hopes will be realized, giving this as the prime meaning for the term.

Rabbi Geisner likewise preached to his congregation at Avon hall, Dr. Wintner at the Temple Beth Elohim, in the eastern district, while the Chevras or religious societies held services in other portions of the city.

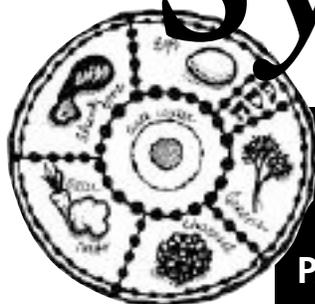
on mankind was pronounced by Him who administers human affairs. We should, therefore, on the anniversary of this event, manifest a spirit of merriment as an attest to our appreciation and thankfulness of the invaluable gift of freedom. The true and grateful man feels himself happy on Passover eve, as if he himself had actually miraculously escaped Pharaoh's ill treatment. His heart beats with renewed patriotism, his breast is animated with new attachment to his God and ardent zeal for the cause of freedom, and, while scrupulously exacting the festival performance, he repeats aloud, with an expression of joy: "This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt." But, in truth, the whole civilized world is indebted to the event which Israel's Passover commemorates. Our Passover is to the world what the Fourth of July is to this Republic. The exodus from Egypt was the birth of freedom for every member of the human family. The road on which Israel traveled from Egypt led mankind withal to civilization and refinement, for the power of Egyptian tyranny was broken and the rays of light, which have ever since become more and more invigorating, began to beam upon the human soul. Freedom of mind and of body spread through the world ever since constantly, though slowly. The fetters of Egypt were severed and the spark of enlightenment was kindled, which has continually grown brighter and which, we have reason to believe, will again flash up into a flame that will penetrate the heart of the most uncivilized part on the globe. God promised that such a time will arrive and we have an unshaken confidence in Him. The feast of the eve was closed with the lifting up of a large cup of wine called "the cup of Elijah." Even this custom has its due significance. It demonstrates our acknowledgment and belief in the assurance of the prophet that we will reach an era of human perfection when drops of bitterness will no more be dissolved in our cup, but we will enjoy a full cup of unmingled joy. A time will come when the real knowledge of God will spread over the earth; when justice, charity and true brotherly love will reign supreme among men, and when all nations will unite by one common tie of unity and uniformity of worship. Let us continue the work which our ancestors began in the cause of freedom, enlightenment and civilization. Let us render proofs that we are worthy of the inestimable treasure which our Creator granted to us on Passover eve. Let us educate our children with the consciousness that they are destined to be the servants of God and defenders of freedom. Let us make them imitate the commendable customs and virtues of the ancients, and not the voluptuous habits of the modern. Let us instruct and inspire them to everything that is noble and beautiful, and the promise of God will be fulfilled, and liberty, freedom and mutual happiness will be perceptible everywhere.

The coming week will be a most important one in Hebrew circles, for it marks the beginning of the Jewish festival of Pesach, or the Passover, which is equal to the Christian Easter festival. The festival this year occurs on April 4 and will continue for an entire week, ending on Thursday evening of the week following. This does not mean, however, that there will be a continuous religious festival for the entire week. There are only four strict holidays during the week. These four holidays will be strictly observed by the orthodox Jews. No work of any kind or description is to be performed on these days, while during the remaining days of the festival no such restrictions need be maintained. During the entire festival there will be two religious services every day, a prayer meeting in the forenoon and also one in the evening, and the synagogues will be open during the entire day.

An essential feature in the observation of the Pesach festival is the use of poultry and unleavened bread. The poultry is carefully selected one week in advance and it is authoritatively killed by the rabbi of each synagogue, according to an ancient custom. This is still observed by many Jewish congregations. The use of unleavened bread is also a conspicuous feature in the celebration of the Jewish Easter festival. In the poorer families it is baked at home, and consists of bread and water only, which is left to dry, when it is commonly called matzoths. No other bread is eaten by the orthodox Jews during the festival.



Kane Street Synagogue *invites you to a*



SYNAPLEX™ SHABBAT EVERYTHING THAT YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT PASSOVER BUT NEVER MANAGED TO ASK

Saturday, April 1, 2006

*Find an experience that speaks to you. No registration required.
Just drop in!*

- 9: 15 A.M. - 10:30 A.M. • Open Breakfast Bar
- 9:30 A.M. - 12 Noon • Sanctuary Service
- Adult Programs**
- 9:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M. • Pre-Passover Jewish Meditation Service
- The Jewish Calendar: How we use time to make a point (feel free to bring your own calendar!)
- 11:00 A.M. - 12:15 A.M. • Livening up Your Seder
- Learning the Songs of the Holiday Service
- Children's Programs**
- 10:30 A.M. - 12:15 P.M. • KC (Kavanna and Competence) Service for 9-11 year olds, including special program with performer **Anna Sobel**, *"It Happened at Midnight: Stories of Passover Magic"*
- 11:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon • Mini Minyan for 2-4 year olds and their parents
- 11:00 A.M. - 12:15 P.M. • Junior Congregation for 5-8 year olds, including special Passover program with **Anna Sobel**, *"Moses and Miriam: A Tale of Two Siblings"*
- 12:15 P.M. - 1:00 P.M. • Community Luncheon
- 1:00 P.M. - 2:30 P.M. • Even two Jews can be a Mixed Marriage: Negotiating Differences in Religious Practice within a Family
- How to Prepare your Home for Passover

CHILDCARE AVAILABLE FROM 10:00 A.M. - 2:30 P.M.

For more information contact: 718-875-1550 or office@kanestreet.org

Sam Weintraub
Rabbi

Donald Olenick
President

Jennifer Newfeld
Educational Director

Joyce Heller
Preschool Director

KANE STREET SYNAGOGUE

236 Kane Street (between Court and Clinton Streets); Cobble Hill, Brooklyn
Hebrew School: jennifer@kanestreet.org and Preschool: kids@kanestreet.org



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