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"Toward a Course of Study for the Third Grade in Relating
Judaism to the American Holiday Cycle"

written by Barry Hewitt Greene
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TOWARD A COURSE OF STUDY FOR THE THIRD GRADE
IN RELATING JUDAISM TO THE AMERICAN HOLIDAY CYCLE

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fulfillment of requirements
for the Master of Arts in
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DIGEST OF THESIS

Realizing the existence of a void in the curricula of our Reform Jewish Religious Schools in relating our Jewish heritage to the experience of living as an American Jew, the author has sought to take the first step toward filling this gap. He has consulted secular and religious school curricula, and many textbooks before writing his "Course of Study for the Third Grade in Relating Judaism to the American Holiday Cycle."

In this initial project he has attempted to re-enforce those essential Jewish values which are an intricate part of our American environment by relating them to the lives and experiences of third-grade children. Toward this goal he has taken various concepts e.g., peace, freedom, brotherhood, dignity of labor, thanksgiving, respect for parents, etc., and incorporated them into eleven separate stories; each one devoted to a different American holiday. In each story he has endeavored to take cognizance of the needs and capacities of the third-grade child while presenting to him an interesting story designed to convey the historical background of the holiday and to make each child aware of the existing and very vital relationship between his own Jewish heritage and those American holidays which he celebrates each year: Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, New Year's Day, Brotherhood Week -- including the birthdays of Lincoln and Washington, I. M. Wise Sabbath, Arbor Day, Parents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day.

It is his hope that this effort will lead to the publication of a course of study and a textbook to relate Judaism to the American holiday cycle.

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INTRODUCTION

During the three-hundred years that Jews have lived in America they have adjusted to modern America and have sought full-fledged participation in American life. To a great extent this integration of the American way with the Jewish religion has been accomplished. Indeed, many prominent Jewish leaders, e.g., Louis Wolfson, Frank Weil, Lewis Strauss, have also reached the apex as distinguished Americans.

Yet in the field of Jewish religious education there seems to have been a cultural lag. Our children "through their every day elementary schooling and the events and people around them are suddenly becoming aware of their Americanism. Now, for the first time in their lives, they seriously lack a correlation of their Jewishness" with their American environment. (1)

Each year these children observe almost a dozen American holidays: Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, New Year's Day, Brotherhood Week, I. M. Wise Sabbath, Arbor Day, Parents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day. Our religious schools have not seen fit to include in their curriculum the study of these holidays particularly emphasizing the Jewish aspect. Eleven years ago a teacher in Central Synagogue, New York City, tried a course on the American holidays with a fifth-grade class. She said: "They are old enough to grasp and understand the meanings of such a course, particularly in terms of the importance of holidays in American Jewish life today." (2)

During the past decade little was done to implement this course or to create a suitable textbook. Her aim at that time was "to show how the Jewish people not only fit into contemporary American life,

but form an integral part of it and have contributed much toward making it what it is." (3) As this aim can be reflected through a course of study for the third grade, in relating Judaism to the American holiday cycle, so too it is the aim of this thesis.

The Commission on Jewish Education of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Central Conference of American Rabbis year after year advocates the presentation of the Jewish holidays as part of its course of study for children in the Religious School. Beginning in Kindergarten and continuing through the fourth grade these holidays are again and again taught to the children. If an adult, whose span of attention isn't too short is bothered by endless repetition, how much more so the nine year old child? Furthermore the children remain unaware and unmindful of an existing and very vital relationship between the American holidays and their own Jewish heritage, especially since these American holidays are not presented to them in Religious School.

The current (1956) Curriculum issued by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and prepared by Dr. Emanuel Gamoran, the UAHC Director of Religious Education, does include a course entitled "American Jewish Holidays." But this course must be considered inadequate since it encompasses only a few of the American holidays. In addition, the prescribed textbook, "Fun Ways to Holidays," by Mamie G. Gamoran leaves much to be desired as a textbook. As a supplementary "activity book" of puzzles it is quite good. But on its own it does not convey enough information and lacks primary motivation. Yet this book is presently the only book somewhat related to a presentation of the American holidays for use in the Reform Jewish Religious School.

Dr. Solomon B. Freehof, in stating the Guiding Principles of the Commission on Jewish Education, says:

"It is our duty in the education of adults and children to establish a firm conviction of God's presence, His beneficent governance of the universe, His infinity yet His nearness to every searching heart. This is the ultimate aim of all our education and the test of its effectiveness." (4)

It is unfortunate that Dr. Freehof and the Commission on Jewish Education, which plays a significant role in establishing the curriculum for many of the five hundred and forty Reform religious schools, do not carry out the problem to a logical conclusion. Though they speak of inculcating the knowledge of God and His omnipotence in children and of "building in the child a love for those Jewish observances which are vital in present-day living and such new observances as may become helpful," (5) Dr. Freehof and the Commission neglect to consider the milieu in which the children are being reared.

For years the curriculum of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations has consistently failed to relate the material suggested "to the child's immediate way of life." (6) The result is an ever-growing belief among our children that the American environment --- which has so many of its values and ideals deeply rooted in our Jewish heritage --- belongs only to non-Jews. Instead of re-enforcing these essential Jewish values and perpetuating our heritage by relating them to the lives of the children and thus making Judaism meaningful to them, the UAHC seems to be neglecting them because of their universality. Rabbi Richard Hertz has written; "Merely to teach Jewish history, Jewish customs and beliefs, even the Hebrew language itself, will not motivate the Jewish child to want to identify himself with Jewish

life --- unless it is related to the social experience of living as an American Jew." (7)

Certainly the time has arrived to accept the view of enlightened and progressive Jewish educators, one of whom "seeks to expose the child from his earliest years in the religious school to the realities of living as an American Jew." (8) It is these realities including concepts of freedom, peace, brotherhood, dignity of labor, thanksgiving, honoring of parents, etc. which can be taught to our children in a meaningful course devoted to a study of our American holidays those holidays which are very much a part of their lives.

It is the purpose of this thesis to present a course of study, suitable for use as a textbook, for the third grade of our Reform Jewish Religious Schools, to show the universal Jewish values inherent in eleven American holidays beginning with Columbus Day and continuing through the academic year to the following Labor Day. Each holiday will be developed in story form to interest the third-grade child while conveying the historical background of each holiday and further indicating those basic Jewish values which are to be found in each holiday. The stories begin with real-life situations (for third-graders) and are intended to keep the interest of the children.

Many of the chapters were tried out experimentally with the children of the second, third, and fourth grades of Temple Shalom, Sterling, Illinois; and less systematically in other religious schools. With the reaction of these children as a guide, various concepts were simplified, words were changed, and the chapters were made more meaningful to the third graders. The reception was most favorable and very gratifying.

It is the profound hope of the author that this thesis will serve as an inspiration and basis for a textbook relating Judaism to the

American holiday cycle for our third grade children; thus ameliorating the existing condition which after careful study of texts and curricula (9) definitely reveals a paucity of material. Then will we be following in the tradition of Reform Judaism by not only perpetuating our great heritage but also making it relevant to the needs of this day and age; redefining it, reshaping it, and adopting from the environment, as we have in every generation, those values which are in harmony with Judaism.

NOTES

to the introduction

1. Suzanne Fischbach, "American Holidays & Jewish Festivals,"
The Jewish Teacher, Vol. XV, No. 1 (November 1946).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Solomon B. Freehof, "Guiding Principles of the Commission
on Jewish Education of the Union of American Hebrew
Congregations and the Central Conference of American
Rabbis," UAHC Curriculum for the Jewish Religious School,
1956-1957, pp. 1-2.
5. Ibid.
6. Sylvan D. Schwartzman, "Toward a New Curriculum for the One-Day-
A-Week Reform Jewish Religious School," Monographs of
The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion,
No. 1 (1955), p. 7.
7. Richard C. Hertz, The Education of the Jewish Child, pp. 22-23.
8. Schwartzman, op. cit., p. 11.
9. This study included the following Religious School Curricula:-
1956-57 The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, New York
June '55 Congregation Rodeph Shalom, Philadelphia, Pa.
1955-56 Congregation Rodef Shalom, Pittsburgh, Pa.
1956-57 Jewish Community Centre, White Plains, N. Y.
1955 Temple B'nai Jeshurun, Des Moines, Iowa
1956-57 Rockdale Avenue Temple, Cincinnati, Ohio

The New Primary Manual of the Cincinnati Public Schools, 1955,
was also consulted as were all of the books in the
bibliography to this thesis.

COLUMBUS DAY

"Let's hurry to town," said Judy, "or we'll be late for the big parade. There are going to be many bands marching and Susie's brother David is going to be in the parade too, in his Boy Scout uniform."

"I'm coming," her brother Joel called from upstairs where he was looking for his camera. "I want to take some pictures of the Columbus Day parade this year to put in my scrap book." Soon Joel found his camera, put his jacket over his shoulder, and came hurrying downstairs. Together both children ran downtown and arrived just as the parade was beginning.

"Oh look," cried Joel, "there's our school band in their blue and gold uniforms."

"Yes, and there's David with his Boy Scout troop right behind the band," exclaimed Judy. "Look at all the flags the Boy Scouts are carrying," she said while pulling Joel's arm trying to get his attention. "Don't they look pretty, with the red, white, and blue shining in the bright sunlight?" she asked, as she put her hand across her heart to salute the flags.

The parade continued for almost two hours and soon Joel turned to Judy and said, "I'm sure glad we didn't have school today so we could see the parade. I wish Columbus Day came more often."

"Oh don't be silly," his sister cautioned. "You know Columbus Day is celebrated to honor Christopher Columbus. And after all he only discovered America once, on October 12th."

Joel thought for a few moments and then replied, "I guess you're right Judy. It sure must have been exciting for Columbus and his men,

sailing from Spain for the rich countries of China and India; and instead of finding them, discovering a new country. I wonder what it was like?"

Joel thought about it and so did Judy. Then all of a sudden they found themselves back in Spain of 500 years ago.

"There certainly are a lot of people and boats here," Judy said as she looked around the wharf. Her big blue eyes were open as wide as possible and not a person passed whom she didn't see. The sailors wore uniforms -- which were very different from the blue ones worn by sailors whom Judy and Joel had often seen downtown. And soon, Joel began to chat with one of them.

"Hi there, sailor," he said timidly.

"Hello, son," the tall, husky sailor responded. "What's your name?" His deep voice frightened Joel at first but Joel soon got used to it.

"My name is Joel, and that's my sister Judy over there looking at those women with their baskets. What are they carrying in them?"

"Those women are the wives of some of the sailors and they're bringing some food for the men to take with them on their voyage. Very often these boats are out on the waters for days and days, and the food supply in the galley runs low. I'd like to stay here and talk to you, young fella, but I've got to be gettin' into town to meet the boss. Why don't you and your sister come along? We'll be coming back here in a little while."

"Golly, can we really come along with you?"

"Sure you can, and I'll even introduce you to Captain Columbus and to some of the other members of his company. Call your sister, and let's go."

"Judy, Judy," Joel called excitedly, "Judy, c'mon over here; we're going into town to meet Christopher Columbus and some of his friends." When Judy heard what her brother said she quickly ran from the group of women and hurried to join Joel and the tall, husky sailor.

The two children had to walk very quickly to stay with the tall sailor whose long legs carried him across the cobblestone streets. Soon the three approached two men standing near a small building. The sailor turned to the children and said, "The gentleman standing over there with the wide white collar is Columbus; and he's talking to Luis de Santangel, a Jew who is one of the king's trusted advisers."

At this moment Columbus noticed them and indicated that he'd be with them in a few moments. While they were waiting they heard Luis de Santangel say to Columbus, "At first King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella wouldn't listen to me. They kept saying, 'What an expensive trip it would be. Besides, he'll probably never find anything worthwhile there.' Finally the King sent for some of his other advisers, Abraham Senior, Isaac Abrabanel, and Gabriel Sanchez."

Columbus interrupted de Santangel, as Judy and Joel listened attentively. "Luis, aren't they all Jews too?"

"Yes," replied de Santangel; and he continued telling Columbus about the meeting with the King and Queen. "After a few hours we finally convinced Queen Isabella that the wealth, and the land that you will find will be hers. And the fame that will be cast upon you will also be shared with her."

"And that," asked Columbus, "was enough to convince her to finance my trip and supply ships and men?"

"Well, not quite. But when we offered the Queen our own money... then she decided that your trip must really be a good idea. One which she should help."

Columbus was so thrilled and excited by this news that he forgot all about his friend, the sailor, who was standing nearby with Judy and Joel. The sailor, however, called him just as he began to walk away and he came over. Not only did he meet Judy and Joel but he invited them to join him on his voyage.

A few days later Judy and Joel, accompanied by their friend, Stuart the sailor, came down to their pier. Stuart was going to be the First Mate on board the Pinta, Columbus' ship and had to supervise the loading. Judy and Joel were fascinated by all the excitement and by the boats. They had often seen pictures of the Pinta, the Nina, and the Santa Maria. Now they saw the wooden ships with their tall masts reaching towards the sky. When all the supplies were on board, Columbus and his company of men came on board, followed by Judy and Joel.

"Goodbye!" "Have a nice trip!" "Keep well!" "Good luck!" came the shouts from the women who stood on the pier as the sailors got ready to lift the gangplank. Near the front of the ship Columbus was bidding farewell to a few people.

"I want to thank you so much," he said to Luis de Santangel and a small group of men with him. "If it hadn't been for you Jews, I don't think we'd be able to make this trip." Tears came to the eyes of Columbus as he continued. "Not only did you persuade the King and Queen to help us, but you offered your own money. And you, Zacuto, your charts and maps are on board to guide our ships. To all of you, I say thank you, thank you."

"God bless you, Columbus," answered one of the men.

"Yes, may God guide you and watch over you," de Santangel added.

"Gee whiz," said Joel to his sister, "I never knew that so many Jews helped Columbus start his famous trip."

"That's not all," Judy replied angrily. "Where have you been? I was just introduced to some members of the crew and a few of them are also Jews. C'mon, I'll introduce you."

As the ships slowly floated away from the wharf the children went below the deck where a man was speaking a language they thought sounded familiar. He saw them and said, "Shalom."

Judy remembered his name and said, "Mr. de Torres, this is my brother Joel. Joel, this gentleman speaks four or five languages and is going to be the interpreter for Mr. Columbus."

"How-do-you-do," Joel said to Luis de Torres. "Do you really speak five languages? Where did you learn Hebrew?"

"Hi, Joel....now wait just a minute. Let's take one question at a time," the interpreter answered. "Yes, I do speak Hebrew and four other languages. Most of them I learned in school, but my parents taught me Hebrew so I could read some of the prayers at Sabbath services. Unfortunately we haven't been able to have too many services recently."

"Why not?" queried Joel, somewhat surprised.

Luis de Torres looked around before replying. When he saw that nobody but Judy was listening he explained in a whisper, "The Jews were expelled from Spain this year. In order to remain in the country we had to pretend that we had become Christians and so we could not continue our services."

Judy suddenly asked, "Are you and these other Jewish men Marranos?"

"Yes," answered de Torres, rather surprised by Judy's question.

"Then you became Christians only to remain alive and in Spain. If I remember correctly, didn't you secretly continue to be Jewish?"

"We tried, Judy. But often they watched us too carefully and we weren't able to have a Sabbath service, or to light candles, or to send our children to religious school. I'm hoping that we'll find a land where we can worship as we desire without fear of death....a land where we can be Jews in public too."

Judy and Joel remained silent, as they thought of the problems the Marranos had faced. Jewish people who because of government restrictions were unable to be Jews except in secret. These Marranos had to pretend to be Christians to save their lives. How exciting, thought the children, that they risked their lives by continuing some of their Jewish practises in secret.

The voyage continued for about two months. On sunny days Joel would sit up on deck and dangle a line over the side, hoping to catch some fish for dinner. Occasionally a few of the sailors would sit near him and also do some fishing. Many times he'd hear one of them say, "I'm getting frightened. I don't think the world is round. Let's get Columbus to turn back to Spain."

Judy heard other people say the same things as she helped out in the kitchen; but neither she nor Joel were frightened. Not even on those dark, rainy nights when the boat almost seemed like it would tip over did the children become frightened....well, not too frightened. They were certainly happy though, when one day they heard the cry, "Land Ho!"

Luis de Torres pointed the land out to Joel and Judy and said: "Excuse me, I must get ready to go ashore. Columbus is depending on me to serve as an interpreter."

"Where are we, where are we?" asked Judy, just as Columbus was walking by on the deck.

"Well," said he, "I think we have reached India." Looking carefully through his spy-glass he exclaimed, "de Torres, I see people on the shore waiting to greet us. Their skin is very dark. They must be Indians. Will you be able to talk to them?"

"I'll try, sir," de Torres answered. And the three boats soon anchored at this island southeast of Florida. Columbus did not realize that he was about to discover a New World. He believed this land to be a part of India and claimed it for the King and Queen of Spain. And as Columbus and his men left the boat to set foot on this island (known to us as San Salvador) the natives on the shore welcomed him with shouts, and with music....music that sounded just like marching bands.

The sounds of another band marching past them suddenly awakened Judy and Joel from their day-dream. And it was a good thing it did. Judy looked at her watch and said, "Gosh, Joel, if we don't hurry we're going to be late for dinner."

Joel, who was still thinking about Columbus, at first muttered, "Huh," and then said, "I'm sure glad Columbus discovered this country."

"Me too," added Judy, as the two children hurried home to dinner.

VETERANS' DAY

The sound of guns shooting sometimes sounds like a car back-firing. But when Judy and Joel heard the noise they knew it wasn't a car. It was coming from guns being fired.

"I wonder who got shot," said Joel as the two children began running towards the sound of the shots. "Hurry up, slow poke," he advised his sister.

In a few minutes they found two men who had been shooting rifles. "Why, it's Sy Crew and his uncle, Mr. Hirsch," shouted Judy.

"Shooting at some robbers, Sy?" asked Joel, hoping to find some excitement.

"No, we're not shooting at anybody," laughed Sy Crew. "We're shooting blank bullets and we're only practising for tomorrow."

"Well, who are you going to shoot tomorrow?"

"Nobody at all," was the answer. "Tomorrow's Veterans' Day," said Mr. Hirsch, "and our Jewish War Veterans group is going to march in the parade with other veterans groups; and at 11 AM we're going to play taps on the bugle and fire a rifle salute."

"Did your group of Veterans fight in a Jewish war?" asked Joel.

"No, Joel. Our Jewish War Veterans fought in all the wars with the American armed forces. Mr. Hirsch was in the 1st World War, I was in the 2nd World War, and some of our members fought in the Korean War just a few years ago. We call our group the Jewish War Veterans because our members are all Jews."

"Why are you going to fire your rifles at 11:00 A.M.?"

"That's when the fighting stopped in World War I. At that hour every year on November 11th we honor all the veterans. Yes, we honor the men who fought for America in all wars," said Sy Crew.

"I remember when the fighting stopped in World War I," Mr. Hirsch commented.

"Were you really fighting, Mr. Hirsch?"

"Sure was! We were over in France, in trenches of mud. The cannons were booming all around us. The bullets whizzing over our heads. The shells shattering near us caused the dirt to fly in every direction. We thought we'd be buried under dirt. My buddy in the trench was reading a letter from his wife when he began to get excited."

"Keep your head down," I shouted to him. When he read that his little daughter had just gotten her first teeth he forgot all about the war. He started to climb out of the trench to tell some of the fellows. Then he let out a cry.

"Hirsch, Hirsch, I've been hit. Get the doctor... help..."

"The bullets kept zipping by as I crawled over to him. I bandaged his arm, gave him some water to awaken him, and then got back to my gun."

"Was he badly hurt?" asked Judy.

"He was pretty lucky, just scraped by a bullet," continued Mr. Hirsch. "It wasn't easy fighting from those trenches. And it wasn't easy for our families back home, working in factories and worrying about us getting hit by those shells and bullets. There were so many shells exploding, and bullets whining thru the air that we had to shout to each other to be heard. And then all of a sudden...everything was absolutely quiet. We didn't know what to expect next. It was frightening. For some crazy reason I happened to look at my watch. It was

11:00. Soon a messenger came up and told us, the war was over."

"Wow," said Joel.

"We thought that World War I would be the last war. When it was over we sat in our trenches and prayed. We thanked God for peace, so that no more men would be killed in war. We hoped we would live peacefully for many, many years."

"World War I wasn't the last war. And if you think it was rough then, you should have been fighting with us in World War II," said Sy Crew, Mr. Hirsch's nephew. "While you were sitting in the trench, we were flying bombing missions day after day. Imagine what it was like being eight-thousand feet above the ground in a plane loaded with bombs. Suddenly enemy fighter planes would come shooting out from behind the clouds firing machine guns at you."

"Were you frightened?" asked the children.

"We sure were. Especially at times when our gas supply would be running low. I remember one time when we flew back with only two of our four motors working, and very little gas left in the tank. But my last mission was the worst."

"The voice of the pilot came over the radio asking the navigator where we were. He told him we were over the Sea of Japan....flying toward Hiroshima. Then I knew why our mission was so important. We were carrying the first atom bomb to be dropped. We thought of the thousands of innocent women and children who would be killed. We didn't want to drop it but we had our orders. We had been told that this atom bomb was our best hope for getting the war finished quickly. This would stop the war and bring peace. This would save the lives of millions of people and the property of millions."

"Pilot to bombardier."

"Bombardier to pilot, go ahead."

"We're approaching the target, are you ready?"

"As I listened to this conversation on the plane's radio," said Sy Crew, "I thought of the damage this bomb would do. But I thought of the results; of peace, of being able to be home again with my family."

"I'm ready," answered the bombardier.

"Let it go," shouted the pilot and the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

"Did it hit the target?" Joel asked.

"We let it go and it hit the target," said Sy. "It was horrible to think of all the people it killed, but it brought peace to the world."

"But peace didn't last for long," said Judy. "The Korean War came after World War II."

"Yes it did, Judy," Mr. Hirsch said. "But the nations of the world were able to prevent another World War through the work of the United Nations."

"We went to the United Nations last summer during vacation," added Joel. "We went on a tour of all the meeting rooms and we sat in on one of the meetings where they were talking about peace."

The young veteran of World War II, Sy Crew, said, "I've been to the United Nations too. If the United Nations can keep the world in peace then there won't be many more war veterans and Veterans' Day can be a happier day."

"Why do you shoot your rifles on Veterans' Day?" Joel asked.

"Remember how you came running when you heard the rifle shots? Well, when people hear them we hope they will remember all the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who fought for our country so that we may live in peace. A peaceful world is very important. Even thousands of years ago the leaders of the Jews, the prophets, spoke about peace. Isaiah said, 'nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more'."

"Let's hope we never have to put real bullets into these rifles," said Mr. Hirsch as they fired another round of blanks.

When the children heard the shots they quickly thought about Mr. Hirsch and the soldiers in World War I and about Sy Crew and the servicemen in World War II and the Korean War.

"Gosh," said Judy, "I'm glad that we're not at war."

THANKSGIVING

Judy let out a scream that could be heard all over the house. Then she breathed a sigh of relief. Meanwhile, Joel, Mother, and Father had come running into the dining room to see what had happened. "Judy, Judy, are you all right?" Mother shouted, as she ran in from the kitchen.

"For heavens sake, what happened? Why did you scream like that?" asked Dad, as Judy suddenly began to laugh. "Stop laughing and tell us!"

"I was helping Mother set the table for Thanksgiving dinner and I dropped one of our expensive plates. But don't worry, it landed on the carpet and didn't break."

Everybody soon began to laugh and Mother returned to the kitchen to see if the turkey was roasted. Dad again picked up his newspaper and Joel went to his room to continue getting dressed for dinner. Judy, who at first was quite frightened, returned to her task of setting the table.

The table looked lovely. The pink table cloth was used only for special occasions. The gray dishes with the gold border and the sparkling silver candle sticks and silverware each added to the colorful picture.

"Judy, will you come in and take the cranberry sauce to the table? I don't have room for it in the refrigerator. And be careful, don't drop it!"

"I'll be right there, just as soon as I finish folding the napkins."

Before long the company arrived. Aunt Ethel and Uncle Sid came from Thanksgiving Services at Temple. Cousin Marion and her son Richard came from the big Thanksgiving Day parade. Some of the dinner guests even came from out-of-town. Ever since the first Thanksgiving when Massasoit and ninety of his Indian braves were invited to the feast it has become a custom to have a large gathering for the turkey dinner.

"Dinner is ready, shall we all sit down," said Mother.

When everyone was seated Dad said the blessing in Hebrew and asked Joel to recite it in English. Then everybody was asked to name one thing that he was particularly thankful for. Uncle Sid began, "I am thankful for being able to sit here at this table with all of you in this warm and comfortable house."

"I am thankful that we were all healthy so that we could be here today."

"And I am thankful for having all this food without having to worry like the Pilgrims did at the first Thanksgiving," said Mother.

Aunt Ethel added, "I am thankful that we can sit here and talk about anything at all without being afraid. In some countries you don't have this freedom of speech. Here in America we can also pray whenever and wherever we desire. I am thankful that we can live in America and go to Temple."

Somebody asked young Richard what he was thankful for. He thought for a minute and then answered: "I am thankful that we didn't have kindergarten today so I could see the big parade."

"We sure have it easy compared to the Pilgrims," said Joel. "I wonder what it was like at their first Thanksgiving dinner. It must have been real exciting with all the Indians around."

Joel wondered, and wondered and soon he imagined that he was at that first Thanksgiving dinner more than three hundred years ago. At first he watched the smoke coming from six or seven fires in a clearing in the forest. Each fire was being watched by two boys about Joel's age who were wearing knee breeches. They took turns keeping the fires lit by moving the logs and chips and turning the branch on which the turkeys hung. On the other side of the clearing smaller fires burned beneath outdoor ovens. In these ovens the women and girls were baking pumpkin pies.

Suddenly everyone was quiet. Joel turned and asked one of the boys who was poking the fire, "What's the matter?"

"Shhh," he said. "Look over there!"

At the edge of the clearing Joel saw a number of Indians coming closer and closer. In a few minutes shouts of welcome rang out. The Pilgrims could see that these were friendly Indians carrying wild turkeys for the big feast. They were very happy to welcome the Indians and to receive their gifts.

Before the actual Thanksgiving feast began Governor William Bradford was standing near one of the outdoor ovens.

One of Joel's new Pilgrim friends asked him, "Say, how would you like to meet Governor Bradford? That's him standing over there."

"Do you think he'd talk to me, and answer some questions?" Joel said, somewhat frightened.

"Sure he will. Let's walk over to him."

Joel was introduced to the Governor and he began to talk with him. Governor Bradford told him about the cold and dark day when the Pilgrims landed on the coast of New England, and of that first winter. "There was so much sickness during the first year that half of the

settlers died. But in the spring we were very lucky. We planted and scattered the seeds and hoped it would grow."

"It did, didn't it?" asked Joel.

"Yes, it did. We had a good harvest and we're very thankful for it. That's why we're having this Thanksgiving feast."

"Do you mean that this Thanksgiving feast is to give thanks for a plentiful harvest?"

"It certainly is. We got the idea from the Bible (Deut. 16:13) where it tells about a feast every year to celebrate the gathering of the harvest. We'll talk about that later, it's time to eat now."

Joel, Governor Bradford of the Plymouth colony, the Pilgrims, and Massasoit and his Indians sat down to this Thanksgiving dinner and they too recited prayers before eating. They ate the turkey, corn, cranberries, and much more. Joel was sitting and thinking about what Governor Bradford had said, when he heard a familiar voice.

"Joel, you haven't eaten a thing! We're almost ready for dessert and you haven't even tasted your turkey, sweet potatoes, or cranberry sauce."

It was the voice of Joel's mother which brought him back to the family dinner-table from his exciting day-dream which took him to the first Thanksgiving of the Pilgrims in America. He was so startled by his mother's voice that he jumped up in his seat and everybody smiled and began to laugh. Joel also smiled and began to eat. But something was bothering him. He had thought that the idea of celebrating Thanksgiving began with the Pilgrims. Governor Bradford had mentioned that the holiday was much older. He said that the Bible tells us about Thanksgiving.

"Dad, is it true, " asked Joel, "that Thanksgiving was celebrated before the Pilgrims celebrated it more than three hundred years ago?"

"The first Thanksgiving was probably celebrated many thousands of years ago by the Jews. We read in the Bible that the holiday of Succoth was a thanksgiving festival which lasted for a week. The people were giving thanks to God for providing them with many crops and fruits to gather in at the harvest."

"Then Thanksgiving was really a Jewish holiday before it became an American holiday," said Judy.

"Let's say that the Jewish holiday of Succoth, which is very similar to the American holiday of Thanksgiving, is much older."

Dad had just finished explaining the beginning of Thanksgiving when a loud noise was heard from the kitchen. Aunt Marion realized that young Richard had disappeared from the table and she ran to the kitchen to see what he was doing. There was Richard with a drum stick from the turkey in his hand, banging it on the kitchen door. The next noise heard from the kitchen was Richard crying.

"That certainly was a delicious dinner," said Uncle Sid, as he finished his second piece of pie.

"My daughter is a good cook," said Grandma.

"Could I have another piece of pie?" asked Judy. "The first piece was awfully small."

"I'm glad somebody is still able to eat," said Mother. "We have so much food left. Joel, if I pack some turkey and vegetables and pie in a basket will you take it over to those poor people who live near the station? Aunt Ethel will drive you over. Then they will have something else to be thankful for."

"I'll be ready as soon as I find my gloves. It's getting cold out."

NEW YEAR

"There are thousands of people gathered here awaiting the New Year. Only two minutes to go and this old year will be gone. The people are getting frightfully noisy. They are shouting and dancing in the streets and waiting for the signal that the New Year has begun. Ten seconds to go... eight... seven.. six.. five, four, three-two-one... Happy New Year," cried the radio announcer. "This is London, England, wishing a very Happy New Year to all our friends in America."

"And now this is the British Broadcasting Company switching you to Westminster Cathedral where New Years Eve's services are being held."

"Mother, what kind of services are they having in church tonight?"

"Why, the're having New Year services, Judy. At the beginning of the year people think back over the things they've done during the past year, and they think ahead to the coming year. They decide how they can improve themselves, how they can become better men and women. They make New Years' resolutions, or promises of what they will do during the coming year to make themselves better and to make the New Year, a good year."

Dad added, "These New Year services are like our Rosh Hashonah services. We ask God to forgive the things we did wrong during the old year, and we think and promise to improve during the New Year."

"Don't the Jewish people have any New Year services on January 1st?" asked Joel.

"Some do. The people go to Temple just like they do on Rosh Hashonah," his dad answered.

"Then we really have two New Years," Judy said. "We're twice as lucky."

By this time they had turned off the radio and were sitting at the dinner table. The New Year had already arrived in London and in many cities around the world. Here in America it would be about five hours before the New Year would be welcomed. Before eating Dad recited the blessing and he added, "As we say our prayer at dinner, I think it would be a good idea to think of the promises or resolutions we made last Rosh Hashonah. How many have we kept? How many have we forgotten? What new promises are we going to make tonight? Our Father, our King, bless us, and grant us a year of happiness. Amen."

Judy and Joel had known that their folks were having a New Year's Eve party for a few days. They wanted to go to the party too. Finally at dinner, Judy said, "May I wear my blue dress tonight to the party?"

"Your blue dress?" said Mother. "You're going to wear blue pajamas! Our party is only for grown-ups."

"That's not fair. You save all the good things like parties, for grown-ups," Joel whined.

"Well, can't we at least stay up late?" Judy wanted to know.

"Since it's New Year's Eve, we'll let you stay up for a while. But no longer!"

When dinner was over Judy helped Mother with the dishes while Joel did some last-minute shopping with his dad.

How can you have a party on New Year's Eve without noisemakers? All over the world, New Year comes in with plenty of noise, a ringing of bells, blowing of whistles, tooting of horns. Many, many years ago

people believed that these noises would scare away any evil spirits which might be present. But today, the noise of the horns, whistles, and bells is just a way of saying goodbye to the old year and hello to the new year.

Later in the evening when the guests arrived Judy and Joel took their coats and hats from them. "Hi, Judy, you certainly have grown up since I saw you last; and you too, Joel." That's what each of the visitors said as they came in. A few patted either Joel or Judy on the head or on the shoulder. The children got so tired of being told how tall they had grown that they finally decided to go to their room and write their New Year resolutions.

"Judy, is a resolution like a promise?" her brother asked.

"Uh-huh," murmured Judy, as she wrote her resolutions.

"What resolutions have you written?" he asked.

"If I read a few to you will you stop bothering me?"

Joel quickly answered that he would; and Judy read some of her New Year's resolutions to her brother. "I've resolved," said Judy, "to try to get my homework done in the afternoon when I get home from school. And I've resolved to be of more help to mother in the house. I'm even promising not to get angry with you when you bother me," Judy said to her younger brother.

"How long do you think it will be before you forget all about your promises?"

"I'm making another resolution. To remember and to carry out my resolutions all year. When are you going to write your list?"

Joel said, "Oh, I have time."

Suddenly there was a knock on the door. "It's time you children went to bed," said Dad.

"We can't go to bed yet," said Joel. "We haven't finished our list of resolutions."

"I'll let you stay up for ten more minutes," Dad answered, as he turned and went back to the party.

When Mother came in thirty minutes later to see if the children were asleep they were still wide awake. Judy quickly said, "Mother, may we help you serve?"

"You children will think of any excuse to try to stay up until midnight. No, you may not help me serve, but if you want to, you may come into the living room for a few minutes since it's almost midnight now.

Before she had finished her sentence Judy and Joel had run out of the room and had gone into the living room to join the party. The television set was turned on and everybody was watching. Judy and Joel were very excited. They had never been up to welcome the New Year. They sat on the floor right in front of the television set and listened to the shouting and screaming, the horns and whistles being telecast from Times Square in New York. In the living room everybody had become quiet. They remained quiet until midnight when they all shouted together. "Happy New Year," and began to blow the horns and ring the bells which Joel and Dad had bought early that evening.

"That was New Year's Eve in New York. But what was it like in other countries?" said the television announcer. "We now present a special program, 'New Year's Eve Around the Wide World.' Since

New Year's Eve is celebrated at different times in different countries this program will be filmed."

"Look at the Indians," shouted Joel, as the television showed a large group of Cherokee Indians standing around a huge fire. The announcer explained that the Cherokees burn all their old clothes on New Year's Day so that they can begin the New Year with new clothes.

"I like that idea," said Judy. "Just think of how many new dresses I would get every year."

"In China they used to welcome the New Year between January 21 and February 19th. The parades which are part of the Chinese celebration are fascinating to see." Everybody watched closely to see the movies of the Chinese New Year parade. They saw the Chinese lanterns decorating the streets, and the people in costumes. When the Chinese Dragon Boats passed everybody leaned forward to see them.

"Do we have parades on New Years Day in America?" asked Joel.

"We sure do. In Philadelphia and in Pasadena, California. If you get up in time you'll be able to see them on television," Dr. Weiss said.

"Which reminds me," said Dad, "it's time you both went to bed. You've seen the New Year's television program, and you've made your resolutions. In case you forgot it, you'd better resolve to get to bed, right now."

"Good night and Happy New Year," said Judy and Joel, as they left the party and hurried off to bed.

BROTHERHOOD WEEK

The snow had been falling since early morning and everything was covered with the glistening white snow. This February was a particularly bad one and Judy and Joel had to walk to school since it was too slippery to be driven. "Guess what we're having today," said Joel to his sister as he threw a snowball at a nearby tree. "We're having a special assembly," he added without giving Judy a chance to reply.

"A special assembly," said Judy, "how come?"

"To observe Brotherhood Week. It's the middle of February and we usually have an assembly between Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays. Don't you remember?"

The children soon arrived at school and went to their classrooms to be marked present. Then each class quietly went to the large Auditorium with its teacher. The Principal, Mrs. Feldman, began to introduce the program. "Boys and girls, this week as you know is Brotherhood Week. For our Assembly this morning we have people of three different religions here with us; The Rev. Smith, Rabbi Herman, and Father Williams. The Reverend Smith is the minister of the church across the street. Mr. Smith, won't you tell us how and why Brotherhood Week began?"

"Thank you, Mrs. Feldman, and good morning boys and girls. I'd like very much to tell you about Brotherhood Week, and I've even brought along some movies to show you and some records for you to hear."

The Reverend Smith continued, "About twenty-five years ago things were not too pleasant for minority groups such as, Jews,

Catholics, Negroes, Chinese, Japanese. They were called minority groups because they had fewer people than some other groups. These groups were being picked-on continually. You've all heard of Haman, who many years ago attacked the Jews and tried to kill them. Well, in the 1930's there was a man in Germany named Hitler, who was just like Haman. Hitler wasn't satisfied to hurt the Jews in Germany. He also wanted to bother the Jews in America. So he paid a group of people to start trouble for the Jews here.

"This group, known as the Silver Shirts, held secret meetings in America and planned some very cruel things. I have a recording which the F.B.I. got from one of these meetings. Let's listen."

"Heil Hitler, good evening, gentlemen:"

"Good evening, Herr Wagner. What are we planning tonight?"

"You know, gentlemen, that we have received orders to drive those two Jewish businessmen in town out of business. We have tried but they are still here and still operating their stores. So, tomorrow night we shall set fire to their stores. We shall not permit these Jews to live in the same town with us."

"And so it was, boys and girls," Rev. Smith said while turning the record over. "This was one of many incidents. Why, out on the west coast Chinese and Japanese were not permitted to own land unless they were born in the United States. And in the south, the Ku Klux Klan made plenty of trouble."

"The Ku Klux Klan," shouted one of the boys. "Aren't they the group that wears white sheets?"

"Yes, Martin, they are," answered the minister. "Not only that, but they also.... but wait, instead of telling you I'll let you listen

to a recording of a portion of one of their sessions. During their meetings some speaker stood up and would say...

"We ain't goin' to have our children going to school with any of those Negro children. And they ain't going to be in classes with those Jews or Catholics either. They just ain't as good as we are. It's time we did something..."

"The rest of the group would then rise," Rev. Smith continued, "and shout in agreement. To show their agreement they would go out and set fire to three gasoline-soaked crosses."

Judy, Joel, and their classmates were frightened to hear this and Joel asked Rev. Smith, "Did things like that really happen?"

"I'm afraid they did," was the reply. "And it was because of these incidents and this unfair treatment which Negroes, Jews, Catholics, Orientals, etc. were receiving that Brotherhood Week began. The idea was suggested at a meeting of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. May we see the film of that meeting?"

The lights in the auditorium were turned off, the projector turned on and the film was shown. A Catholic priest from Denver, Colorado, Monsignor McMenamin rose from his chair at the filmed meeting and said, "Friends, we have all seen how so many citizens of this nation are being mistreated by groups such as Hitler's spies, the Silver Shirts and the Ku Klux Klan. It is true that the United States government and other organizations are trying to stop this prejudice. But I think we should do more. I believe we ought to set aside a special period during the year when we can all re-dedicate ourselves to understand and to love our neighbors and all mankind."

"But shouldn't we love our neighbors and practise Brotherhood all

during the year?" another person asked at this meeting.

"We certainly should," answered Monsignor McMenamin, "but during this week, which we can call Brotherhood Week, we should each make a special effort. We should ask ourselves whether we are doing all we can to respect all people, regardless of race, color, or religious beliefs. We should ask ourselves how we can help to stop the prejudice and intolerance which many people suffer."

"I think it's a terrific idea to have Brotherhood Week," commented somebody else at the meeting. "Even our Bible tells us to 'love thy neighbor as thyself' (Leviticus 19:17). The prophet Zechariah (chap. 8:16-17) said, 'These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour.... and let none of you think evil in your hearts against his neighbour.'"

When the film ended Rev. Smith said, "Of course there are many, many more verses in the Bible which tell about Brotherhood. I think that you can see from that film just how Brotherhood Week was first planned. Do you have any questions?" -

Throughout the auditorium a few of the pupils raised their hands. One of the boys asked, "How did they decide which week would be Brotherhood Week?"

At this time, Rev. Smith called on Rabbi Herman to answer the question. After greeting the students the Rabbi said, "Somebody suggested at the meeting that the ideals of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln both reflected the spirit of the Bible and the spirit and intention of Brotherhood Week. Therefore, why not observe Brotherhood Week in February between Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays?"

"Rabbi," asked Judy, "did President Washington actually favor Brotherhood Week?"

"No, Judy, not Brotherhood Week. Washington was President about 150 years before Brotherhood Week was observed. But Washington agreed with the principles of Brotherhood Week. He wrote a letter to the Jewish congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, when he visited there in 1790, saying that the Government of the United States was opposed to bigotry and persecution."

"What does bigotry mean, Rabbi?" a little girl asked.

"I'm glad you asked. A person who is against some person, or some belief for no reason whatsoever is a bigot. We would call Hitler and his men bigots, and also the Ku Klux Klan."

"Then people who don't want Negroes or Chinese working with them would be bigots, wouldn't they, Rabbi?"

"Yes, they would."

"Well then, I guess President Lincoln was also opposed to bigotry because he freed the Negroes who had been slaves," said Joel.

"Abraham Lincoln," said Rabbi Herman, "was a man who was born in a log cabin and had to work very hard when he was a young man. He had to struggle in order to learn. In fact, he often walked several miles just to borrow a book to read. Yet he became the President of the United States. Even though he became such a great leader, Lincoln never played favorites between men because of their race or religion. Did you know that one of the men who helped choose Lincoln as President was Lewis N. Dembitz, an important Jew and a lawyer from Kentucky?"

"Was he related to Louis Dembitz Brandeis, the Supreme Court Judge?" asked Joel's friend David, before the Rabbi could continue telling about Lincoln.

"The man who nominated Lincoln was Brandeis' uncle. Young Brandeis was born four years after the political convention when his uncle became famous."

"Rabbi Herman, may I tell the boys and girls a story about President Lincoln and General Ulysses Grant?" asked the Catholic priest, Father Williams.

"Please do," Rabbi Herman responded and turned the microphone over to the priest.

"Almost one-hundred years ago General Grant became angry with some of the cotton traders who were breaking the trading rules. General Grant decided that since a few of these cotton traders were Jewish he would blame all the Jews in that part of the country. On December 17, 1862, General Grant issued his General Order No. 11 which ordered all Jews to leave that part of the country within one day. This meant all the Jews in most of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi were told to move elsewhere."

"Does that mean that General Grant was a bigot?" asked one of the children. "He wanted to make the Jews move because a few of them had done something wrong. That doesn't sound very fair to me."

"No, it wasn't very fair. And when President Lincoln heard about it he was very unhappy. He immediately wrote to General Halleck, the General-in-Chief of the Army. He told the General to cancel Grant's order because it was not right to punish all the Jews because a few were violating the law."

"Was the Order cancelled?"

"General Halleck cancelled it less than a month after it had been issued by General Grant."

"Gosh, that sure is interesting," said Judy to the girl sitting next to her. "President Lincoln really believed that all men were created equal, and that we should have Brotherhood Week every week."

Just then the bell rang to signal the end of the assembly. Mrs. Feldman, the Principal, thanked Rev. Smith, Rabbi Herman, and Father Williams for explaining Brotherhood and Brotherhood Week to the children and then asked everybody to stand and sing America The Beautiful. When they reached the last lines it seemed that everybody sang them much louder than usual. The words,

"And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea"

could be heard throughout the school building.

I. M. WISE SABBATH

"This morning," said Mrs. Allen to her class in Religious School, "we are going to study about some of our great institutions of Reform Judaism."

"Like the Hebrew Union College?" asked Natalie.

"And that other union, the Union of Hebrew Congregations?" said Jack quizzically.

"You mean the Union of American Hebrew Congregations," Judy added to correct Jack's statement.

"I didn't realize you boys and girls knew the names of those two institutions. Does anybody know the name of the third?"

"I don't know the name," replied Michael, "but it's sort of a Rabbis' Club, isn't it?"

"Not quite a club, Michael, but it is an organization of Reform Rabbis known as the Central Conference of American Rabbis," said the teacher. "Now that we know the names of these three important institutions of Reform Judaism I think we should know something about each of them."

"The Hebrew Union College," said Jack, "is a school where people study to be Reform Rabbis. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations is an organization of the Reform congregations in America which provides them with many services. Don't they publish books too?" inquired Jack.

"Yes they do. They publish many books and records and film strips which we use in our own class. And the Central Conference of American Rabbis publishes a few books too, Jack. They publish our prayer book and hymnal in addition to some other books and magazines

for Rabbis."

The teacher then asked her class if they knew who started the Hebrew Union College, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis. Some of the children stared at the ceiling as if they expected to find the answer there. Others looked at the teacher waiting for her to tell them the answer.

"Don't any of you know?" she asked, rather impatiently.

"Was it, was it.....oh never mind," said one of the children.

"The man who began these three institutions of American Reform Judaism was Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, who came to America more than a hundred years ago when he was about twenty-seven years old," explained the teacher. "Every year one Sabbath during the month of March is celebrated as Isaac Mayer Wise Sabbath in more than five-hundred temples in the United States. Children study about Wise and about the things he did; and the Rabbis tell the adults about him in the Sabbath sermon. Since next week is Isaac Mayer Wise Sabbath, this morning I'm going to show you a film strip about him. Then during the week I want you to read about Wise. When you think you know enough about him, then make believe you are newspaper reporters interviewing him at his 75th birthday party. You may write the stories at home and bring them to class next week. But first, let's pay attention to this film strip."

As they watched the film strip Judy listened carefully and began to think how she would write a newspaper story about Isaac Mayer Wise. She thought it was interesting that when Wise first came to America in 1846 with his wife and child, he had only two dollars with him. He must have left Europe very suddenly when he decided that he had enough of the cruel treatment which the Jews were experiencing.

"I wonder what he did when he arrived in New York," she thought. And that's where she began her story which she wrote for Religious School.

"Well, Judy," said Wise, "I was pretty tired after an ocean trip that lasted two months. You see, there was no doctor aboard the ship so I soon found myself trying to help some of the passengers who became ill."

"Where did you live?"

"I knew a few people who had come over to America before I did, and I stayed with them until we got our own home."

"Were you able to find a congregation which needed a Rabbi?"

"No, at first I earned a living by tutoring private pupils and by speaking at different congregations. My friend Rabbi Max Lilienthal, one of the first Reform Rabbis who came to America from Europe, arranged for some speaking invitations for me in New Haven, in Syracuse, and in Albany."

Isaac Mayer Wise did speak at congregations in these cities. He usually travelled to them by steamboat. He was thrilled with his first ride on an American railroad train. He finally accepted a job with a congregation in Albany and that's where he began Reform Judaism in America....and that's where he got into trouble.

"Rabbi Wise," asked Judy, continuing her interview, "did you make many changes in Albany?"

"I made a few, Judy. Before my arrival only men had sung in the choir. I trained a choir of men and women to sing at the services."

"I'm sure glad you did. My mother sings in the choir at our temple and so do many of her friends."

"I shortened a few prayers, omitted some of the Hebrew prayers, and introduced a weekly sermon as part of the service."

"Is that when the trouble began?"

"Some people objected to those changes but the real trouble began because of what I said during a debate (speech) in Charleston, South Carolina."

"What did you say to them?"

Rabbi Wise explained that while he was speaking in South Carolina, he told them "when a person dies, he's dead; and that's that." (Gesell, Arnold, YOUTH - From Ten to Sixteen -, page 64).

"Some of the people in Albany did not agree with me and wanted to take my job from me," Wise added.

"Did they believe in freedom of speech, Rabbi?" Judy asked.

"That's a good question, Judy. They had a meeting of the congregation and they decided to get another Rabbi instead of me. My friends persuaded me to stay and to have services during Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur which were coming very soon."

Judy was getting very excited. She interrupted him and asked, "Did you?"

"I tried but 'when I entered the synagogue to conduct the Rosh Ha-Shonah service, I found my seat occupied by an Orthodox opponent.' After the hymn I stepped before the Ark to take out the Torah scrolls and to pray. The president of the congregation got in my way and, without saying a word, struck me. The synagogue broke into an uproar. The police came to stop the fighting and closed the synagogue to prevent further trouble."

"Were you hurt, Rabbi Wise? What did you do then?"

"I was bruised but not too much. My friends organized a new congregation in Albany, the fourth Reform congregation in the United States and on Yom Kippur we had services in rooms we rented in a building. When we built a Temple we had an organ, and permitted men and women to sit together."

Isaac Mayer Wise did not find it easy to introduce Reform Judaism to America. When he left Albany he moved to Cincinnati where he began late Friday evening services, which are now very popular. He even helped write a new prayer book, in both English and German. It was called the Minhag America. Though Wise was a busy Rabbi he found time to write, edit, and publish a weekly newspaper in English, "The Israelite." He continued this newspaper for fifty years and in 1875 it was renamed THE AMERICAN ISRAELITE. But Isaac Mayer Wise did more....

"Why did you organize and found the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Dr. Wise?"

"I proposed that such a college be established in Cincinnati so that we could educate our Rabbis for our American Reform congregations in our own college. In 1875 the Hebrew Union College opened its doors. It is a school to train Rabbis."

"Do boys go there instead of going to college?"

"No, Judy, they don't. At least most of them don't. Only after they have finished college do they begin studying at the Hebrew Union College."

The Hebrew Union College, which Isaac Mayer Wise founded in Cincinnati now also has schools in New York City and Los Angeles. More than six hundred Reform Rabbis have been graduated from the College.

In addition many Christian ministers have studied the Bible, religion, and Hebrew and other languages there.

The Rabbi who arrived in America with only two dollars in his pocket desired peace, friendship, and cooperation. To strengthen Reform Judaism in America he founded the Union of American Hebrew Congregations to help the many, many congregations; and the Central Conference of American Rabbis to unite the Reform Rabbis of America.

"Rabbi Wise, Rabbi Wise, our congregation is a member of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations," said Judy. "And our rabbi told me that he was a member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. I asked him when I saw him one day at the airport and he told me he was coming from a Conference of Rabbis. He said that he learned a lot from the other Rabbis at these meetings."

"Glad to hear it, Judy. It's good to know that the College, the Union and the Conference are doing a good job. Thanks very much for interviewing me. I hope your teacher likes it."

"Thank you, Rabbi, and happy birthday."

Isaac Mayer Wise, the Master-builder of American Reform Judaism, died on March 26, 1900. It is the result of his work that today when we go to Temple we read a prayer-book with English as well as Hebrew. It was also Isaac Mayer Wise who introduced music; and choirs composed of men and women. It was this Rabbi who began the practice of permitting men and women, boys and girls to sit together in Temple. Yes, it was Isaac Mayer Wise who suggested the beautiful Confirmation ceremony which we attend in Temple each year at Shevuoth. So we pay tribute on this Sabbath during March each year to Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise,

the founder of the Hebrew Union College, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis. And we call this Sabbath, Isaac Mayer Wise Sabbath.

So ended Judy's story about Rabbi Wise which she wrote for her class in Religious School. The following Sunday Judy, Natalie, Michael, Jack and all their classmates read their assignment in class and honored Isaac Mayer Wise. In Religious Schools and Temples all over America boys and girls, and adults also, remembered Isaac Mayer Wise at special services which are held each year to celebrate Isaac Mayer Wise Sabbath.

ARBOR DAY

Joel was frightened and ran into Judy's room where she was working on her social studies homework. "Judy, may I stay in here for awhile?"

Judy knew why Joel had come in when he was supposed to be doing his own homework and she decided to tease her brother. "Don't tell me that you're afraid of thunder and lightning?"

As she finished her sentence the sound of thunder was heard so suddenly that even Judy jumped from her chair. Mother had come into the room to make sure that the windows were closed and she heard the conversation. "There's nothing to be afraid of. Just stay indoors and away from the windows," she told the children.

"But Mother, I'm sure I heard something fall in the front of the house," said Joel.

"You probably only heard the rain dripping on the front porch. We'll take a look in the morning to see if any damage has been done by the storm. Meanwhile, I think you should both return to your homework."

In the morning, the entire family was speechless when they looked out of the window. The big apple tree on the front lawn had been struck by lightning during the heavy rain storm and was badly damaged. Dad went outside and picked up a few of its large limbs and branches which were lying on the ground. Others were on the porch and some were just hanging from the trunk.

It was pretty quiet during breakfast that morning. Everybody was afraid that this great big apple tree which had stood there for so many years would probably have to be removed but nobody said a

word about it. Dad went off to work saying, "I'll call the tree nursery this morning and ask them to send somebody over to take a look at it."

"Tell them to come this afternoon after three o'clock, so we can be here," Joel shouted as he and Judy left for school.

Judy and Joel had been home from school for less than an hour in the afternoon and were sitting in the kitchen having some milk and cookies when the doorbell rang. "Just a minute," said Judy as she finished her milk and then went to the door.

"Judy, open the door. It's the men from the nursery," Mother called from upstairs. "I'll be down in a minute or two."

The two men had already looked at the tree and neither was smiling. Judy invited them in to the living room where they waited for Mother to come down. When she did, Mr. Shelley and his assistant stood up to greet her with the sad news. "I'm afraid that the lightning really got that tree. It's pretty much split and isn't safe to leave standing."

At that moment Dad came in from the office. "I heard what they said. I guess you'll have to come back tomorrow and remove it. Is it all right to leave it there tonight?"

"I think it will be all right unless the winds get very strong. If they do I'll send somebody out to tie it down. Otherwise we'll take it away in the morning."

Mr. Shelley and his helper left. Judy, Joel and their parents sat quietly for several minutes. Mother finally broke the silence. "We're sure going to miss the shade of that tree during the summer. It not only kept the sun from the house and the porch, but it kept the hot sun from drying the ground and burning the grass."

"Let's not forget the apples we got from it every year. Those apple pies that Mother made were really delicious," Dad sadly said. "Where am I going to hang the hammock from this summer?"

"I guess we didn't realize how important that tree was while we were using it," continued Mother.

"I'll have to find another tree on which I can climb," Joel said.

"Remember how Mother scolded you last time you climbed the tree?" Judy asked. "You'd better not do any more tree climbing."

"Not unless you want to be punished," said Dad.

That evening Mother, Dad, and the children attended Sabbath "Family Night" services at the Temple. Since there was no school the following morning Judy and Joel stayed up when they came home after the Oneg Shabbat and began talking about the tree with their parents. All of a sudden Joel leaped up and ran out of the room. In a few seconds he came back with a flashlight in one hand and his jacket in the other.

"Where do you think you're going at this hour?" Dad demanded in an angry voice.

"I'll be right back," Joel said mysteriously. "I want to look for something outside." Before he finished the sentence he had put on his jacket and was out of the house.

Mother and Dad ran to the front porch to watch him and Judy looked out of the living room window. "I know why he went out," she exclaimed as she saw him trying to climb the tree. "He's going to rescue that bird's nest from the tree before they take it away."

Dad ran out after Joel and pulled him away from the tree. "Do you want to fall and get hurt?" he asked him. "Take it easy and we'll get the nest in the morning. But we'll use a ladder instead of

climbing the tree."

Before the men arrived in the morning Dad and Joel went out and carefully took the bird's nest from the tree and placed it in another tree in back of the house.

"It was always a sure sign of spring when we saw the birds flying to and from their nest in that tree," Mother said to Judy. "Why, that tree was almost like a member of our family."

"Do you remember when Daddy trimmed some of the leaves and branches so we could use them for our Succah at Religious School? Rabbi Herman even came over and thanked Joel and me for bringing them with us."

Joel and Dad stayed outside watching the men tie heavy ropes to the tree so it wouldn't fall on the house when they pulled it up from the ground. As they carried it away in the long trailer-truck Mother took out her handkerchief to wipe away a few tears. A wide hole remained and Dad put a small fence around it so nobody would fall into it. Later that day during a brief rainshower the hole became filled with muddy water and it soon ran all over the sidewalk. "While the tree and its roots were there," explained Dad, "they held the soil together so that rain wouldn't wash it away. Now look at it!"

On Monday when the children returned to school they told their teachers and classmates about the tree that had been taken away. Judy's teacher commented, "I know we're all very sorry to hear about Judy's tree. But I think that her little story will help us to really understand Arbor Day which will be celebrated this Thursday."

One of the pupils asked the teacher why Arbor Day was observed

every spring and she explained. "Arbor Day is observed so that one day each year we may call to people's attention the beauty and the importance of trees. We try to plant many young trees on Arbor Day so that we will always have plenty of trees. Instead of telling you let me show you these magazine pictures."

The first pictures that she passed around for the children to see showed forests of millions of trees in parts of the country; especially in northern Wisconsin and Minnesota. Then she showed the pictures of the southwestern states like New Mexico and Arizona with plenty of sandy desert and no trees. "It's only when we see that there aren't any trees in some parts of the country that we really appreciate the trees and the other wonders of nature which God has created for us."

Judy was reminded of her tree which no longer stood in front of the house and she was rather sad. The teacher passed out other pictures showing the use of trees. "As you can see from these pictures, the wood from trees is used for many things; for furniture, for houses, for fuel, for telephone poles, and even for making paper. We also get fruits from trees and maple syrup too."

"Ours was an apple tree," said Judy sadly.

"Arbor Day isn't only celebrated here in America," interrupted Karen. "In Religious School we learned about an Arbor Day in Israel. They don't have many trees there so trees are very important. They plant new ones whenever they can. They call their Arbor Day Tu-b'Shevat and also the New Year of the Trees."

"That's right, Karen. Arbor Day is celebrated in other countries; in Spain and in England too. Trees are important all over the world."

And now, class, I have a surprise for you. Mr. Shelley has sent over, from his tree nursery, a present for each of you. When you leave school today I'll give each of you a young tree which you may plant at home in observance of Arbor Day."

"Oh boy," shouted Judy, "I can plant mine on our front lawn in the big hole."

"It may take quite a while for it to grow as big as your old tree, Judy, but it will certainly take its place."

Joel also received a tree in his class and later that afternoon both children planted their trees in the same spot where the big apple tree had stood before it was hit by lightning.

PARENTS' DAY

It was a beautiful morning. The warm sun shone brilliantly upon the grass and flowers which were still damp from the dew. Most people were still asleep except for the boys who were delivering the Sunday newspapers and for a few milkmen who were just finishing their morning deliveries. Yes, most people were still asleep, but not Judy and Joel. They were awake and whispering in the kitchen.

"It sure is a lovely morning," commented Judy as she accidentally knocked over a kitchen chair.

"Shhhh, be careful," Joel said. "Do you want to wake up Mother and Dad? Let's start preparing breakfast to serve to them in bed."

The calendar on the kitchen wall indicated that this particular Sunday was being celebrated as Mothers' Day. In Religious School, however, the children had decided to observe Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day at the same time and called it Parents' Day. This seemed like a wonderful idea since Religious School would be closed for summer vacation when Fathers' Day usually was celebrated in June.

"What kind of juice shall we have?" asked Judy. "Pineapple or orange juice?"

"I'd like orange juice," her brother answered. "But wait, since this is Parents' Day we should have the kind of juice that they want instead of what we'd like."

And so the children opened three cans of juice that morning. One kind for Mother, one kind for Dad, and a third kind for themselves. While Judy was busily preparing scrambled eggs Joel made the toast and brought out some cold cereal. This was going to be

the beginning of Parents' Day and Judy and Joel wanted to begin in a big way.

The two children each carried a tray with breakfast into their parents and woke them up saying: "Good morning, Mother, good morning, Dad. Since this is Parents' Day we've brought you breakfast in bed."

"Yes, it's only fair that at least once a year we make breakfast for you. During the rest of the year on weekdays and Saturday and Sunday too, you usually get up to prepare our breakfast."

"This is certainly a very pleasant surprise," said Mother when she had opened both eyes.

"Indeed it is," added Dad. "But isn't it about time you two started getting dressed and ready for Religious School? Wouldn't want you to be late because of us."

As the children started for their rooms to get ready for Religious School, Joel turned and said, "Don't forget that you're also coming to Religious School today."

"Yes," said Mother, "but not until later in the morning for the Parents' Day Service and Assembly. You had better hurry. Don't worry about us. We'll be there."

Judy and Joel got all dressed up for Religious School and after kissing their parents good-bye, left the house. A few hours later they were dismissed by their teachers so that they could sit with their parents for the Parents' Day Assembly. The Temple was extremely crowded and all the parents and children looked colorful in their spring clothing. When everybody was seated the Rabbi came in and took his place at the pulpit. After greeting all the parents and children he asked everybody to stand for the opening prayer.

"O Lord, our God, parents and their children have gathered in Thy Temple on this day to worship together. They are united in prayer just as they are bound by love that is strong and beautiful. We thank Thee, dear God, for this wonderful day. We thank Thee for parents and children. We thank Thee for the opportunity to honor these fathers and mothers. Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this day. Amen."

"And now the children are going to sing a song (by Ray M. Cook in SING FOR FUN, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, New York: 1955) which they learned especially for Parents' Day."

"Bless our parents	Bless our parents
Lord we pray	Keep them strong
Bless our parents	Bless our parents
On this day	All year long."

"That certainly is a lovely song," whispered Judy's mother to her. "And it's just perfect for Parents' Day."

"I am very glad," said the Rabbi, "to see such a large crowd in here today. Our Jewish religion teaches us many times of the importance of honoring our parents. If you consider the Ten Commandments for example, the fifth commandment which tells us to 'honor thy father and thy mother' is in the same group as the first four commandments which speak of God instead of being with the last five which talk about man. This teaches us that honoring our parents is considered as important as honoring God. After all, our parents are partners with God in

bringing the child into life. And think of all the things our parents do for us...."

As the Rabbi said this, Judy and Joel began to think of just a few of the things their parents had done for them... They thought of the many things their parents had taught them, of their lovely home, of their food and clothing, of the many enjoyable times they had spent together. They thought of the care and attention that had been shown them whether they were well or sick. They thought of the numerous gifts which they had received from time to time. They thought of getting scolded by their parents so that they wouldn't make the same mistake again. All these things occurred to them as the Rabbi continued.

"We should be very grateful for our parents and for their love and we should honor and respect them today and every day, for so we are taught in the Torah."

When the Rabbi finished his brief talk he invited the parents to go to the classrooms with their children. In the classrooms, he promised, they would find some nice surprises.

Judy and Joel and their parents first went to Joel's classroom where he gave them three pretty pictures of Biblical scenes which he had painted. Most of the younger children in the Religious School had made things in class for their parents. In addition each child was given a small plant to give to his mother.

The older children, including Judy, had saved some money and bought presents for their parents in the Temple Gift Shop. Judy gave her parents a lovely pair of Sabbath candlesticks.

When they left Religious School the entire family went out to dinner and then to spend the afternoon with Grandma and Grandpa so

that Mother and Dad could honor their parents.

MEMORIAL DAY

It had been raining all day and all evening. Judy and Joel were very upset. The next day was Memorial Day and they were looking forward to going on a family picnic. Judy had already thought of what she would pack in the picnic basket and Joel had bought a new baseball to take along.

"I sure hope it stops raining," said Judy as the two children cleaned up their rooms before going in to the kitchen for a snack.

"If it doesn't stop soon," said Mother, "the ground will be too wet for a picnic."

"Then I'll be able to sit home and watch the baseball game on television," commented Dad.

"You never enjoy planning for a picnic," Mother responded. "But once we get out to a picnic you never want to leave. Why, sometimes you're just like a child."

"All right, I'll go on the picnic. But only if it stops raining, and I don't think it will."

When the sun rose early the next morning Judy and Joel awakened. "Oh boy, we can have our picnic today," Joel shouted. He got out of bed and began to throw his new baseball up in the air.

"You'd better stop that," his sister warned him. "You're going to break something. Hurry and get dressed so you can help me pack the lunch basket."

Joel was too busy running around to help pack the lunch basket. Judy and Mother finished getting lunch ready, and before 11:00 the family was on their way to the big park outside of town for their picnic. Dad didn't seem too happy since he wouldn't be able to see

the baseball game but he didn't complain. Well, not at first.

When they reached the highway traffic was moving very slowly. They were able to stop, and start for ten minutes before they could go no further. Joel leaned out of the window and said, "There must be a hundred cars in front of us and none of them are moving."

Some of the cars started honking their horns as the hot sun beat down on the metal roofs of the cars. The people were getting very impatient, and very warm. "Let's turn around and go home," said Dad.

"You promised us that we were going on a picnic. That's not fair," Joel mumbled with tears in his eyes.

"I don't know why we had to pick a holiday when everybody is out driving."

Judy answered, "That's the only time you're home during the week."

The cars again began to move, but very slowly. They were driving along when Mother said, "I think I know why all the cars are moving so slowly. The Mayor is speaking today out at the cemetery in observance of Memorial Day and there are probably many people driving out there to hear him."

Mother was right. When they reached the cemetery it was crowded with people decorating the graves with tiny American flags and with flowers. People were driving very slowly to try to hear part of the Mayor's speech. Judy and Joel wanted to know why all the graves were being decorated with flowers and flags.

Dad said, "Shh, if you listen carefully perhaps you can hear the Mayor."

Just as they came close enough to hear the Mayor's voice clearly the cars up ahead began to move and they couldn't stop and block traffic. So on they went as Judy and Joel questioned their parents.

"Dad," said Judy, "I heard the Mayor say something about the Civil War. I thought he was going to talk about Memorial Day."

"He was, Judy. In America, Memorial Day was first celebrated about one-hundred years ago during the Civil War, the war between the northern and the southern states. A number of southern women decided to remember those northerners and southerners who had died in the war by decorating their graves with flowers."

"How about the sailors who were buried at sea?" asked Joel curiously.

"They didn't forget them either. They made little ships of flowers and set them afloat so that the tide might carry them out on the great waters."

Judy wanted to know why we still have a holiday to remember those men who died in the Civil War. Her father explained that Memorial Day is celebrated each year to remember those people who have done so much for us so that we may live healthier and happier lives.

"We might mention, for example," said Mother, "Nathan Strauss who did so much to save the lives of children."

"We just learned about him in Religious School," interrupted Judy.

"Then suppose you tell us what he did, Judy."

"I forgot," Judy answered.

"Next time perhaps you'll pay attention. Then maybe you'll know that Nathan Strauss was the person who insisted that milk be pasteurized. When he learned that many children were dying because of impure milk, he went to France to look into the work of Louis Pasteur. He then came back here and set up pasteurization stations where milk could be made pure and sold at a very low cost to the poor."

"Don't we have Memorial Services in Temple?" Joel asked. "I remember the Rabbi saying something about remembering the dead near the end of the Sabbath Services, last Friday night."

"You're correct, Joel. We do remember the dead each year at Sabbath Services on the anniversary of their death. And on Yom Kippur we have a special Memorial Service at Temple during the afternoon," Dad explained.

"Then why do we also observe Memorial Day?" Judy asked.

"At our Temple services on the Sabbath or on Yom Kippur when we remember those who have died, we are remembering those who were very close to us; usually members of our own family. We recite certain prayers to remember them. On Memorial Day we are remembering and paying tribute to people not directly related to us...to people such as Nathan Strauss, or Albert Einstein, who have given their lives for a good cause."

Joel wondered whether we pay tribute only to famous people who have died. His mother explained that on Memorial Day we also remember people who were not famous; men and women who through their work helped us to live better lives.

As they continued their drive out to the picnic grounds in the big park, Judy and Joel saw quite a few American flags waving in the breeze. Some of them were only raised half-way and some had already been raised to the top.

"We learned in school that when the flag is flying at half staff it's a way of remembering someone who died," said Joel. "That's why they fly at half-staff on Memorial Day."

Before long they arrived at the park and took the lunch-basket, baseball, and even bathing suits out of the car. While Mother and

Judy spread out the picnic lunch Joel and Dad wandered off to play baseball. When it was time for lunch, Judy had to look all around for the ball-players.

After a very enjoyable afternoon Mother suggested that they leave for home before the roads became too crowded. Judy asked, "On the way home, may we stop for a few minutes at the cemetery? I picked some flowers this afternoon and would like to place them on some of the graves."

Dad answered, "If traffic isn't too heavy, I think that would be a very nice way to finish our Memorial Day observance."

And off they went.

VACATION TIME

Holidays don't take a vacation during the summer. They occur throughout the year and even though we don't have school we certainly can't forget those holidays which are celebrated while we are on vacation.

Two of the holidays which Judy and Joel will be observing with us are Independence Day and Labor Day. The first is thought of by many people as the unofficial beginning of summer, while Labor Day usually means that summer vacation is over.

Let's join Judy and Joel for their observance of July 4th, and then Labor Day. We hope you won't forget about these holidays while you are vacationing.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Everybody was sitting very quietly when suddenly a sky rocket was shot off. "Whoosh".....and then a quiet "pop" in the distant dark sky. "Oooh," said the people as the black sky was lit up by a shower of bright and colorful sparks.

"Look," said Judy as she turned to Joel, "The fireworks have formed a picture of George Washington." Almost before she finished her sentence the red, white, and blue fireworks had lost their glow and had floated slowly toward the earth.

A few thousand people were gathered near the lake even before the sun had set. It was, of course, July 4th, Independence Day, and the boys and girls and their parents were very anxious to see the colorful fireworks. This was only the third time the city had planned a fireworks show but the other two were terrific so the crowd came early for this safe and enjoyable celebration.

When the picture of George Washington grew dim the sky again became dark until the next "whoosh" and "pop" were heard. "Look at that one!" called Joel. "It's a picture of a man on a horse."

"It's Paul Revere!" said Judy as the people sitting next to her agreed.

When the lights again faded it became quiet and dark. Joel whispered, "I wonder if it was as dark and quiet the night Paul Revere rode around telling people that the British were coming."

"I don't know how quiet it was when Paul Revere began his ride," said Judy. "There were certainly plenty of fireworks -- of a different kind -- afterwards."

As the 4th of July fireworks continued Judy and Joel began to think about the fireworks, the battles that led to the Declaration of

Independence. They thought about the unfair taxes which the British government had tried to collect from the colonists and about the Boston Tea Party.

In a few minutes their thoughts carried them back to the days of the American Revolution. They spoke to a few of the colonists and heard them complain.

"Why, young fella', let me tell you we are really being treated unfairly by these British. They make us pay high taxes without letting us have anything to say about making the laws."

"Yes," said another to Judy, "It's been horrible. They have even taken over our homes for their troops."

The two children watched the battles of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill. "Get down," shouted Judy to Joel. "Do you want to get hit by one of the bullets?"

Judy and Joel quickly learned why these American colonists wanted to be free; why they wanted their own government; why they didn't want to be ruled by the King of England.

One afternoon they were wandering around the streets of Philadelphia. "Let's take a look and see what's going on in here," said Joel as they entered the State House.

"The sign says, 'keep out'. We might get thrown out," Judy answered. But Joel had already quietly opened the door so Judy followed him into the room.

Five men were sitting around a table at the other end of the room. Judy recognized Thomas Jefferson and Joel said, "Isn't that Benjamin Franklin?" They stood near the door without making a sound as the men talked about the paper they were writing -- the Declaration of Independence.

"I'm sorry, visitors are not permitted in this room," said a voice behind the children. Judy and Joel had become so interested in the meeting that they had forgotten that they didn't belong there. When they realized this man was talking to them, they turned and ran.

The next day they went back to the State House. Again they very quietly entered the room and listened. One of the five men was saying, "But gentlemen, I think that we should definitely include a few sentences about Moses and the children of Israel and how they were persecuted by Pharoah. After all, they were one of the first groups to want freedom and independence."

"Yes," said another, "The Exodus of the Jews from Egypt was one of the first struggles for freedom."

"Gosh," exclaimed Judy. "We learned about that in Religious School."

Thomas Jefferson interrupted, "I certainly agree that fight of the Jews against the tyrant, Pharoah, was an important model for us. However, instead of including it in our Declaration of Independence let's try to use it somewhere else."

"An excellent idea," said Franklin. "Let's remember that event for the seal of the United States. We can show the Jewish people crossing the Red Sea as they left Egypt to win their independence."

They did suggest this idea for the first seal of the United States even though it was never used. When the committee of five finished the Declaration of Independence it was presented to the Continental Congress for their approval.

On July 4th, 1776, Judy and Joel were among the crowd of excited people who stood outside the State House in Philadelphia where the Congress was meeting. All business was forgotten while the people

waited. Some watched the bell tower where the old bell-ringer awaited his signal. The bell had been brought from England and words from the Bible had been engraved on the bell. (Leviticus 25:10) "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."

Joel was getting slightly tired and asked his sister, "Do you think we'll have to stand here much longer waiting for them to ring the bell?"

Suddenly a boy ran out of the building into the street, waving his arms and shouting wildly to the bell-man: "Ring! ring! ring!" In a few seconds the famous Liberty Bell sounded its message to the people. The Declaration of Independence had been signed, and liberty was being proclaimed throughout the land.

The people began to shout, "We're free from the rule of King George III." "Now we can have our own government and our own laws." "Freedom at last." Other bells began to ring and cannons were shot to announce to all that independence had been proclaimed.

The noise of the cannons sounded a lot like the sound of the "pop" from the fireworks. When the crowd at the Independence Day fireworks celebration heard the "pop" they looked up, saw a picture in the sky of the American flag, and they stood and sang the Star Spangled Banner. Mother leaned over to Judy and Joel and said: "Judy, Joel, stop day-dreaming and stand up."

"Huh?" "What?" "What did you say?" the children answered.

"I said, stand up. Can't you hear everybody's singing the National Anthem --- the Star Spangled Banner? What have you been thinking about that you don't know what's going on here?"

After they finished singing, Judy and Joel told their parents about the first Independence Day, and the Declaration of Independence.

Judy added, "Don't forget that they got the idea for freedom and independence from our Bible."

"Do you know which Jewish holiday that we celebrate is a kind of Independence Day?" Mother asked.

"I do," said Dad. "It's Passover. And right now it's time for us to go. The fireworks are over and it's almost midnight."

It was Monday afternoon, the first Monday in September, when Dad, Joel, and their parents returned from their vacation in the country. They were sun-tanned and looked very healthy. Joel was still helping Dad unload the car while Judy and Mabel began to unpack some of the suitcases and cartons in the house. "It's very warm here," said Judy. "We haven't had lunch yet."

"Don't forget all about it," said Mother. "You'll have to go home and get some food for me."

Mother wrote out a list of things she needed, gave Judy the list, and sent her to the stores. When she came out of the house she called to Joel, "Come to the stores with me. I have to buy some things for Mother."

Joel had already gotten tired of unloading the car so he joined Judy to go shopping. "Where are we going first?" Joel wanted to know.

"We'll go to the butcher first and get the meat for the hamburgers. Then we'll go over to the supermarket for the other things."

"If you go to the butcher store, I'll go to the supermarket," suggested Judy. "Otherwise we'll have to wait for each other."

"That's a good idea. It will save time. Let's hurry, they're waiting for us."

LABOR DAY

When September arrives each year it's time for vacation to end and thoughts of school to begin. So it was with Judy, Joel and their parents. Those summer days were getting cooler and here and there a few leaves were beginning to turn colors and fall from the trees.

It was Monday afternoon, the first Monday in September, when Judy, Joel, and their parents returned from their vacation in the country. They were suntanned and looked very healthy. Joel was still helping Dad unload the car while Judy and Mother began to unpack some of the suitcases and cartons in the house. "I'm sure hungry," said Judy. "We haven't had lunch yet."

"I forgot all about it," said Mother. "You'll have to do some shopping for me."

Mother wrote out a list of things she needed, gave Judy the money and sent her to the stores. When she came out of the house she called to Joel, "C'mon to the stores with me. I have to buy some things for Mother."

Joel had already gotten tired of unloading the car so he joined Judy to do the shopping. "Where are we going first?" Joel wanted to know.

"I think we'd better go to the butcher first and get the meat for hamburgers. Then we can go over to the supermarket for the other things."

"If you go to the butcher store, I'll go to the supermarket," proposed Joel. "They're next door to each other."

"That's a good idea. It will save time. Let's hurry, they're just around this corner."

When the children reached the stores they were surprised to find that both of them were closed. So were the rest of the stores on the street. Judy and Joel couldn't understand why. They turned around and headed for home. As they passed one of the neighboring houses they heard the radio loudly playing. "Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States," said a voice.

Then the familiar voice of the President was heard saying: "It is a pleasure to be able to speak to you today via radio and television. Today we are again observing the first Monday in September as Labor Day. It is a day set apart each year as a day of rest for those who work, and a day when we pay tribute to them....."

Judy and Joel reached home and Mother and Dad were still unpacking. Mother looked up and asked, "What did you do with the meat, the bread, the milk, and the other things I asked you to buy?"

"We couldn't get them," said Judy.

"What do you mean, you couldn't get them. I gave you the money to buy them. Did you lose it?"

"No, we didn't lose the money," explained Judy. "But the stores were all closed."

"We heard the President say that today is Labor Day and it's being celebrated as a holiday all over the country," Joel added.

"I forgot all about it," Mother said. "No wonder the stores are closed. We'll have to get dressed up and go out to eat," Mother said.

"I don't feel like getting dressed up," said Joel. "Why do they have to celebrate Labor Day at all?"

"Well, Joel," said Dad, "there are quite a lot of people who are working for us all the time though we usually forget about them. The

farmers who work in all kinds of weather so that we may have food. And the truck drivers who bring the food to market, the storekeepers who sell it or the people in the factories who package it in cans or in boxes for our freezers. They are just a few."

"But we tried to get food today and we couldn't."

"That was our fault because we forgot today was a holiday. Even though today is a holiday many of these people are still working for us. The policemen and firemen don't get a holiday; nor do the telephone operators, bus drivers, or gas station attendants. Yet they do so much for us today and every day it's only right that one day a year we honor them and all the people who work."

"Does that mean you too, Dad?" asked Judy.

"It certainly does mean your father," Mother commented.

"Yes, I'm one of the millions of working people whom we remember on Labor Day. We're also honoring the many people who have done so much to improve conditions for the workers."

"What kind of working conditions, Dad?" asked Joel.

"Until a few years ago boys and girls your age were working in factories instead of going to school. They worked from early in the morning until late at night and they and other factory workers worked without proper lights, without enough time for meals, without fresh air."

"Didn't they get sick?"

"They got sick, and didn't have enough money to pay for doctors, or medicine. They were all very unhappy. The children didn't go to school and didn't have time to play ball or go to the movies. And the adults were too busy and too sick to care for their children."

"I'm glad we don't have to work in factories," said Joel.

"Things have changed. You couldn't get a job in a factory because you're too young. There are now laws to prevent it. People who do work there have a much easier time now. They work fewer hours, the machines have safety guards, the rooms are not too crowded, and they get paid more money."

"Well, how come?" asked Judy. "What happened to change things?"

"Men like Samuel Gompers, Sidney Hillman, and even Rabbi Stephen Wise realized that those poor conditions were all wrong and they came up with some new ideas about treating workers. Actually they weren't new ideas because they are even found in our Bible. There we are taught not to persecute those who work."

"What do you mean, persecute them?" asked Joel.

"We shouldn't treat them unfairly. They should be permitted to observe the Sabbath as a day of rest and they should always be paid promptly. Gompers, Hillman, and Rabbi Stephen Wise helped to get laws passed which have improved working conditions for everybody."

"That's why Labor Day is still a very important holiday," said Mother. "Judy, turn the radio on and see if the President is still talking about Labor Day."

Judy turned on the radio just as the President was finishing. They heard him say, "We must remind people of the progress that has been made, and each year on this day provide a day of rest for as many people as possible."

The President finished and the band played the Star Spangled Banner. Judy suddenly reminded herself that she was hungry and soon the entire family was in the car on their way to have dinner in a restaurant....if they could find one open.

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