

# Beth Am COMMENTATOR

VOL. 11, No. 32

MIAMI, FLORIDA

MAY 5, 1972

## RELIGIOUS SERVICES



FRIDAY, MAY 5  
7:30 p. m.

### Family Worship Service

Rabbi Baumgard

### 'Why Moses Climbed The Mountain'

Choir of the Month: Second Grade  
Mrs. Sapp's First Grade Hebrew Class

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SATURDAY, MAY 6  
11:15 a. m.

TORAH SERVICE

## OLD MEMBER REUNION SERVICE

Friday, May 12

Rabbi Herbert Baumgard will speak

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## SISTERHOOD AWARDS LUNCHEON

Wednesday, May 17, 11 a. m.

A Tribute to Rabbi Arthur Steinberg

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## CONFIRMATION EXERCISES

Sunday, May 21, 10:00 a. m.

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## BROTHERHOOD BREAKFAST

Sunday, May 28, 9:30 a. m.

Awards and Installation of Officers

## Dr. Maxwell Dauer An Activist

Dr. Maxwell Dauer has been a member of Temple Beth Am since he came to Florida in 1961. He is married to Reba B. Dauer and has a son, Rodger A., who is married and a Chairman of the Math Department in the North Miami Beach Junior High. He has another son, Edward, who is in his first year in medical school at the University of Miami.

Dr. Dauer has four degrees--his A.B. from New York University, his Master's from New York University, and his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. He also received his L.L.B. from George Washington University, and is a member of the Bar of the State of Maryland, District of Columbia.

Dr. Dauer's specialty is Medical Physics and Hospital Design and Development. He is currently a full professor at the University of Miami School of Medicine in the Department of Radiology, since 1961. He has completed 20 years of service as a Lt. Col. in the U.S. Army in the Medical Service. He was formerly Assistant Medical Director of the Manhattan Project that built the first atomic bomb. He has lived in various locations in the United States and throughout the world. He is now president of National Medical Center, Inc., which is building the new 230 bed Miami-Dade General Hospital. He is also president of the Lauderdale Lakes General Hospital and Medical Center being built in Lauderdale Lakes. He is the secretary of the American Technion Society, Florida Chapter, which is the Israeli M.I.T. He is active in many other Jewish community affairs.

As President, Dr. Dauer brings strong leadership to the Temple and is looking for suggestions from the congregation on ways to improve Temple Beth Am. He will be reporting to the members once a month in the pages of the COMMENTATOR.

## Temple Elects Dauer

The annual membership meeting of Temple Beth Am was held on Tuesday, April 25, in the Social Hall, and the following officers were elected for the coming year:

For president, Dr. Maxwell Dauer; Executive Vice President, William Sanes. Vice Presidents are Bernard Goodman, Samuel Steen, Eleazer Greenstein, Dr. William Silver, and Dr. Samuel Berkowitz. Financial Secretary, Harry Gunther; Treasurer, Max Feld; Secretary, Shirley Schultz; and Corresponding Secretary, Jackie Rose.

Those elected to the Board will be listed in next week's COMMENTATOR.



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

## "Rabbi, will you officiate at my marriage if my spouse isn't Jewish?"

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

You write to ask if I will officiate at your marriage if you marry a non-Jew. First, let us clarify one thing. If your spouse-to-be converts to Judaism, he will stand before me at the wedding ceremony as a Jew, and there is no problem. Sincere converts who wish to embrace our faith, who wish to join our small band of people which has given so much to the world, and who wish to raise Jewish children, are heartily welcome to our midst (even though statistics tend to show that the children of such marriages tend to have less loyalty to our people). Abraham, himself, did not have Jewish parents, but he was clearly able to attract disciples. The issue, then, is the conviction of your spouse-to-be, and we will be happy to participate in his effort to learn more about what being a Jew means.

Your letter seems to indicate, however, that you are not even certain that you want your marriage committed to the raising of Jewish children. You seem to think that you can be a Jew in a vacuum, that you can be Jewish, while your husband will be whatever he chooses and the children will be whatever they choose. Let me caution you, this is the thinking of fantasy. Sociological studies show definitely that in a marriage where the husband and wife do not attempt to lead the children strongly to one faith, the children tend overwhelmingly to turn to the majority faith (in this case Christianity). In other words, even if your husband does not attempt to teach and persuade your children to become part of his religious tradition, the force of the Christian environment in which we live will lead them to Christianity. When not lead, children take the road of least resistance. Please do not deceive yourself. In the situation you describe, you will be raising Christian children.

Let me assure you that I will be always happy to talk to you and to your fiance. I understand the social forces which have brought you together. We live in a time when old ties are being broken, for better or worse. You are caught in that stream, and there are some good things about the decline of prejudice in our time. On the other hand, there are some basic facts of life that every Jew ought to study. There are over 215 million Christians in America, but only five million Jews. Should five million Christians marry individuals of a different faith and raise their children in a neutral background, there would still be 210 million Christians in America. But should five million Jews take this same step, as you propose to do, the Jewish community in America would be wiped out. On a statistical basis, your choice is 40 times more significant than the choice of your spouse. It is clearly, then, not the same choice. His choice will not affect the future of the Christian community significantly. Your choice is potentially a death blow for a people struggling to survive.

Please note that what I am saying has nothing to do with the worth of your fiance. He may well be a finer person than the Jewish boys you have been able to meet. Judaism does not teach that Jews are superior to Christians. We do teach that each Jew is critical to the survival of our small people, especially since Hitler decimated the entire European community.

Any objective study of human history will show that the Jews have not been like other peoples. What we have given to the world cannot be matched by the contribution of any community many times our size. Our representation in the critical fields of human endeavor far exceed our proportion to the world population. It is by no accident that the goal of the United Nations, spelled out on the "Isaiah Wall," was developed within the Jewish community. It is by no accident that the words on the Statue of Liberty were written by a Jewess. All the world talks of "loving your neighbor," a concept from our Book of Leviticus (quoted by Jesus), and few speak yet of "loving the stranger," a concept also from that same Book. It is by no accident that Moses spoke of a world based on moral law while Einstein tried to prove (while his colleagues laughed at him) that the physical world is also based on predictable law. It is by no accident that Abraham Maslow, the great psychologist, should speak of the fact that "man is greater than the sum of his parts" and that a Sigmund Freud should be the founder of the science of mind-healing. There is in the Jewish community a great thrust towards establishing a deeper meaning for human life. Do you propose now to dilute that thrust?

Do you propose to deprive the Jewish community of the fruit of your womb? Do you propose to deprive your children of that silent teaching which is in the bones of the Jew, because it so deeply intertwined in the life of the Jewish community? Does the struggle of Moses to lead men out of bondage end with you? Will the teaching of Hosea (forgiveness) and Jeremiah and Isaiah and Brandeis and Einstein and Maslow end with you?

Would you have me approve an arrangement that makes for the death of the Jewish people? I don't think you want to ask me to do that. I don't think you have thought about many of the things I have just stated. May I invite you to think about it, and may I invite you to come see me? I do understand the siren voices pulling you away from your people. One need not be shallow or evil to be pulled in their direction. But Jews have survived through the centuries only because they could turn aside from these voices.

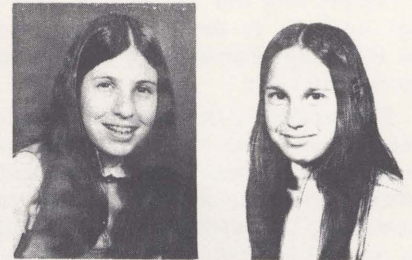
A non-Jew may be making only an individual choice when he decides how to raise his children. A Jew makes a choice for his entire people when he makes this decision. He makes a choice also for the victims of Hitler who have been deprived of the chance to make a choice. Your choice is important not just for your own welfare. Perhaps the welfare of civilization and of mankind depend on it.

Fondly,  
Herbert M. Baumgard  
Rabbi, D.H.L.

P. S. I hope this is just the beginning of our discussion.

## B'nai Mitzvah

SATURDAY, MAY 6  
11:15 a.m.



Pamela, daughter of  
Mr. and Mrs. Allen Abelson  
Cynthia Goldstein, daughter of  
Mrs. Estelle Kfare