

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

A Yom Kippur Story by Marvell Ginsburg,
Early Childhood Director of the BJE of Metropolitan Chicago

Jasper was a little boy
Who never had to share a toy
There were no children near his home
He always had to play alone.

He had no sisters and no brothers
He didn't know how to play with others.
He had trouble starting school
He broke almost every rule.

In the beginning he slammed the door,
Knocked Billy's blocks to the floor.
Didn't pick them up or anything,
Just ran outside to the swing.

He couldn't wait for his turn,
That was something he didn't learn.
He pushed Jenny off the swing
Didn't care about her or anything.

When he finished, he ran to play
In the sand, throwing it every way.
It got in Dan's eye. It really did sting!
Jasper ran to the climbing ring.

He went to the slide, wouldn't get in line.
Yelled at the children, "Go 'way. It's mine!"
So it went, all day long.
He seemed to do everything wrong.

He wanted to paint. It wasn't his turn yet.
He grabbed a brush, got Marge all wet.
When Marge saw the paint on her shoe,
She said, "Jasper, I'll NEVER play with you!"

Then, when Marge began to cry,
Jasper Joseph wondered why.
He wondered why when children played train
They didn't invite him on the trip to Spain.

When Billy brought his truck to show,
Jasper asked to see it. Billy said, "No."
Jasper grabbed it and ran away,
Shouting, "Now it's mine. You can't play."

Billy was an angry boy.
He chased Jasper and got his toy.
The other children, busy at play
Sang, "Jasper, Jasper, go away."

At first he thought, "I don't care,
If I play alone, I don't have to share."
Jasper felt lonesome, then Jasper felt sad.
He had no friend to make him glad.

Jasper Joseph began to think.
Jasper Joseph began to blink.
Soon a tear rolled from his eye.
"Hey," noticed Billy, "look at Jasper cry."

Teacher came over to where he sat
Picked him up with a kindly pat,
Sat down with him, wiped away his tear.
He felt better with her so near.

Teacher told him to watch the play
To help him learn a better way.
"Look to see what the others do.
Maybe that will be a help to you."

Jasper watched another child.
Saw what happened when she smiled.
She had friends, there were no fights.
Smiling seemed to be alright.

"It's Clean Up Time," the teacher said.
An idea popped into Jasper's head.
He jumped up from his seat.
Thought he'd help make things neat.

Went over to Billy near the door
Helped pick up the blocks from the floor.
Helped stack them neatly on the shelf.
"It's more fun together than by myself."

"I know, Bill, why you got mad.
I bumped your blocks and made you sad.
I didn't mean to spoil Marge's shoe
When I took the brush. Paint soak through?"

Jasper sighed, "I promise I'll try
Not to throw sand in anyone's eye.
And though it's hard not to grab the toys
I'll wait my turn with the girls and boys."

The children weren't sure he meant what he said
But each was polite and nodded his head.
They all thought they would wait and see
If he kept his promise and became friendly.

It's never too late to change, you know
It's never too late to help yourself grow
To make up with friends when we play
Is good to do before Yom Kippur Day.