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Abridged

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Editor's View

BRING THEM HOME

By Rabbi Pinchos Lipschutz

Sadly, it is a familiar script.

We face the tragedies of three sweet *bochurim*, and at the same time, we cannot help but feel the isolation. Even as our people are consumed by concern, interrupting weddings, graduations and gatherings to join in reciting *Tehillim*, embracing the *Shabbos* earlier and with more focus than usual, and continually *davening*, the apathy of the wider public and the mainstream media is a reminder of the eternal truth of the *posuk* which states, "*Hein am levodod yishkon.*" We are alone.

Any student of history or intelligent observer of the world scene does not expect better and is not surprised when the nations of the world join to once again condemn us for having the temerity to be victims. Those experienced with global affairs don't even react anymore when they read how the United Nations terms the kidnapping "alleged" and when Israel is condemned for showing single-minded dedication to bringing its boys home.

When such things occur, we should not be depressed. Instead, we should be heartened by the lessons found in this week's *parsha*.

This world and its transitory values and flesh-and-blood leaders are temporary and will soon vanish from the scene, to be replaced with yet other transitory people.

We live with a higher ideal: "*Zos chukas haTorah, adam ki yomus ba'ohel.*" The people whose souls are fused to the Torah throw off every physical mantle. They succeed by ignoring realities that do not contribute to spiritual existence, and concentrate their lives on Torah.

To succeed in our goal of cleaving to Torah, we must disregard the current thinking of those around us and stubbornly persist with our Torah way of life, despite the many detractors.

We are bound to the *chok*, the bond of Torah living, which goes beyond reason and logic. To be attached to Hashem means to be detached from the world and to recognize that it neither accepts nor values us.

This is the explanation of the first *Rashi* in this week's *parsha*. *Rashi* quotes a *Medrash Tanchumah* which says that the *Soton* and the nations of the world mock us and ask us for the rationale of this *mitzvah*. Therefore, says *Rashi*, the Torah spells out that *Parah Adumah* is a *chok*, a *gezeirah min haShomayim*, and we are not permitted to question it.

The nations of the world, and those who mock us and attempt to wrestle us from the path of our forefathers, question us and our practices. They say that the *mitzvos* are backward and without reason. We don't answer them. We don't try to explain it to them. We reinforce to ourselves that we are following the word of Hashem, which is a *chok*. This is the only way we are able to succeed and flourish in this world of *sheker*.

Torah, the ultimate wisdom, doesn't operate with the conventional rules, the wisdom of university classrooms and laboratories, but quite the opposite.

Crafting logical sales pitches for the Torah will only do half a job. In the end, we must accept the *chukim* as well as the *mishpotim*, recognizing that we work for a Master and that alone is

reason enough to follow each and every dictate and command.

Torah greatness and fidelity aren't born of brilliance, but of toil, purity and diligence. Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach *zt"l* would often quote from the *sefer Sheim Hagedolim*, which says that before *Rashi* set out to write his landmark *peirush*, he traveled extensively to ascertain whether a better *peirush* than he envisioned existed. It was only after he was unable to find an extant exposition explaining the Torah that he set out to write the classic *peirush* that has endured until this day.

As *Rashi* wrote his work, he fasted hundreds of *taaneisim* to ensure that his words would help propel people to the truth.

Rav Shach would weep when he would mention this about *Rashi*, because to him, this anecdote represented all that is right and true about our *mesorah*. It underscores the fact that *chochmas haTorah* isn't about reason alone, but also about humility coupled with commitment to the truth and *mesorah*.

People in our day are led astray by those who claim to understand the reasoning for different *halachos* and temper them to mesh with the times. Such thinking lies at the root of the fallacy of the Conservative and Reform movements, which ultimately caused so many to deviate from *halacha* and *mesorah*, leading millions of Jews astray. It sounds funny to us that they maintain institutions they refer to as *yeshivos* and have *halachic* decisors who write so-called *teshuvos* in *halacha*. In their fanciful world, they believe that they are legitimately following the Torah.

Once you begin to rationalize the commandments and inject human understanding of them and their concepts, you begin compromising them and sully the holy with pedestrian thought processes.

Their assumption that they have mastered the Torah is their undoing. Critical thinking and analysis lacking *yiras Shomayim*, a sense of *mesorah* and humility results in individuals who destroy instead of build, obscure instead of reveal, and cause others to repel Torah instead of drawing closer to it.

Our fellow Jews in the Open Orthodoxy movement, who follow in the path of the founders of the Conservatives, have fallen into this trap. Insistent as they are on being termed Orthodox, we must never stop denying their claim, because, in fact, they are not Orthodox in thought, practice, attitude or approach.

A story is told about a poor couple about to celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary. The wife decided to treat her beloved husband by preparing a dish he always craved. Throughout their marriage, they never had enough money to afford lamb stew. Now that they had reached this great milestone, she was determined to find a way to prepare this delicacy for her husband.

The resourceful woman went to a library, found a good recipe, and wrote it down. She then set out to gather the ingredients. When she arrived at the butcher shop, she decided that lamb was too costly. She reasoned that it would be okay if she replaced the lamb with much less expensive chicken necks. The recipe called for barley, potatoes and carrots. Those were also too expensive, so she replaced them with kasha. When she got home, she saw that she was missing many of the spices necessary. She figured that if she uses plentiful amounts of salt, the stew would taste

just as good.

After expending much effort in preparing the celebratory stew, she proudly placed the steaming dish before her husband. He could barely contain himself in his desire to finally fulfill his dream of eating lamb stew. He took one bite, and then another, and finally offered his assessment. "I don't know why rich people make such a big deal about lamb stew," he mused. "Now that I have finally tasted it, I see that it's nothing special."

Friends, if it doesn't have lamb and it doesn't have barley, chives, thyme, garlic and seasoning, then no matter what you call it, it is not lamb stew.

These people lack the meat and potatoes, and they lack the spice, yet they carry the name Orthodox and refuse to let it go. They have the potential to inflict damage on the *shuls* and schools that naively hire their members thinking that they are loyal to Torah and *mesorah*. We must persist in calling them out as the impostors that they are.

Rav Elchonon Wasserman zt"l would explain the *posuk* in *Te-hillim* (119:142) of "Tzidkoscha tzedek le'olam" to mean that man cannot fathom the depths of Hashem's justice, for society and its concepts are ever changing. What is considered just in one generation is viewed as unjust in the next. But "veSorasha emes," the truth of Torah is everlasting. It neither changes for the times nor conforms to them.

Zos chukas haTorah. Torah is a *chok*. Torah is neither about impressive dissertations nor social welfare and maintaining a good PR firm. It is about following the will of the Creator as expressed in *Torah Skebiksav* and *Torah Shebaal Peh*. That's just the way it is.

When Rav Shach would deliver a *shiur* in Ponovezh Yeshiva, he would pose a question and a storm of responses would follow from the Ponovezher *talmidim*. He would address them and then proceed with his *shiur*, sometimes incorporating what the *bochurim* said into his *shiur* and other times shoot-

ing them down.

One day, he presented a question that had caused him great angst in understanding a particular *sugya*. The boys tried to answer the question in many different ways, but nothing that any of them said pleased him. Consumed by the difficulty, he traveled to Yerushalayim to pose his question to the Brisker Rov. The next day, Rav Shach excitedly shared the Rov's answer in his *shiur*.

After the *shiur*, a *talmid* went over to him and protested that he had given the very same answer the day before, only to have it rejected. He wanted to know what had changed and why the *sevara* was better today than yesterday.

"It is true that you said the same *p'shat* as the Rov," Rav Shach explained, "but you took it out of your *keshene*, your pocket. The Rov's answer came from his vast knowledge accumulated by years of toiling in Torah. His response was arrived at with authority, responsibility and clarity."

Another time, Rav Shach entered *shiur* armed with a penetrating question on a *Baal Hamaor*. Suffering from vision problems at the time, he held up the *Gemara* in an attempt to quote the words of the *Rishon*. As hard as he tried, and as close as he brought the text to his eyes and struggled, he was unable to read the small print of the *Baal Hamaor*. Sadly, he closed the *Gemara*, explaining that he hoped his eyesight would improve sufficiently by the next day to be able to read aloud the piece that he wished to comment on.

The next day, he entered the *bais medrash*, happily holding the large *Gemara*, prepared to read aloud the words of the *Baal Hamaor* that had failed him the previous day. But first he asked a question: "How many of you looked up the *Baal Hamaor* after yesterday's *shiur*?" Nobody answered.

"How many of you tried to figure



Friends, if it doesn't have lamb and it doesn't have barley, chives, thyme, garlic and seasoning, then no matter what you call it, it is not lamb stew.

out the *p'shat* in what he says?" No answer. "How many of you thought about the *Baal Hamaor* since yesterday?" No hands went up.

"Then forget it," said the *rosh yeshiva*. "*Farges vegem dem. Ihr zeit dos nisht vert.* If none of you cared enough to look up the *Baal Hamaor* to figure out the question or to attempt an answer, then you aren't worthy of me standing here, straining to read it to you and enrich you with the proper understanding of the *Rishon* and the *su-gya*."

Rav Shach was an exceedingly humble person, one of the most modest people of his generation. He didn't make that comment because his ego was hurt. He said it because he wanted to remind the young *talmidim* that there is no success in Torah without struggle. There is no growth without hard work, tilling and plowing in order for crops to grow. Simply transcribing the teachings of a great man will not engender greatness. If it comes easy, from a silver spoon, then it will not last. Effort and travail strengthen and fortify us.

Perhaps this was part of the *klalah* meted out to Adam and Chava after they ate from the *Eitz Hadaas*. "You tried to obtain knowledge that is removed from you," said Hashem, "so from now on, *bezeias apecha tochal lechem*, everything good you attain will be lost if it is not attained through the sweat of your brow. Nothing will come easy. *Be'itzavon teildi bonim*. New life will be preceded by terrible pain."

Chazal say (*Taanis* 30, et al), "*Kol hamisabel al Yerushalayim zocheh veroeh besimchosah*." In order to merit enjoying the rebuilding of Yerushalayim, you must first mourn its destruction.

The fact that unity is brought on by division was part of that curse. Yosef was sold into slavery by his brothers. It was a terribly divisive act, but one that led to their salvation in Mitzrayim. The Mitzriyim mistreated the Jews, plunging them to the worst degrees of *tumah*. Hashem then freed them, fashioning them as His people and gifting them the Torah.

Eis tzorah hee leYaakov. It is a dangerous time for our people. Terrorist havens have been established in Iraq, Syria and Iran. Radical Islamists who seek our destruction are on the march, gaining territory, adherents, military material and much capital. The world's greatest power is led by a man who doesn't seem to have our security and wellbeing high on his list of priorities. He

created a huge vacuum, pulling all American army personnel out of Iraq and drawing down the army's presence in Afghanistan, while providing no help for freedom-seekers who want to topple Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad.

While he continued the previous administration's search for Osama bin Laden and signed off on the order to execute him, the president viewed killing him as decimating the terror threat the al Qaida head represented. Obviously, while that may have worked as an election campaign slogan, in the real world the bad guys are gaining strength and spreading like wildfire. The specter of terrorism is as real as ever, yet there is no overall strategy as to how to battle it or how to proceed in Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria and Egypt.

Israel takes great pride in its vaunted army, yet, for over a week, its members wandered through the West Bank, trying desperately to find the three kidnapped boys and encountering dead ends everywhere

they turn. It's clear that they need *siyata diShmaya*, and we need to keep beseeching Heaven for their success.

An elderly *chossid* once shared a precious *vort* which was passed down to him from previous generations. When Jews suffer, he related, they say, "*Oy, tzaros*, things are rough." But that comment, "*Oy, tzaros*," forms the word *otzaros*, meaning treasure chests. The travails and suffering of our people contain a repository of growth and blessing. From suffering comes joy, and out of destruction emerges rebirth.

Since those *bochurim* were captured, we have seen the depth of our *achdus*. We see that we are indeed a people that dwells alone. But we are okay to be alone, because we are united and have each other.

Let us open these *otzaros*, these store-houses of riches, the newfound connection to each other, the new intensity in *tefillah*, and the new sense of the ability of each individual to effect change through prayer. The kidnapping of the *bochurim* has served as a catalyst to bring disparate people together as brothers and appreciate being part of an *am bodud*. Let it not go to waste.

Hopefully, we will rejoice united, a nation giving thanks as one for the safe return of our sons and brothers. May the unity of these days be as enduring as the Torah we live and learn.

Let's open the otzros.





SPECIAL LINEAGE

Dear Editor,

As one who is a *Kohain* and has had the *zechus* to participate in the inspirational *Birchas Kohanim* at the *Kosel* several times, I wish to thank you for Rabbi Yehuda Spitz's excellent article on *Birchas Kohanim* in last week's *Yated*.

D. H. W.

BRACHOS AND YESHUOS

Dear Editor,

I'm writing to compliment and give recognition to one my all-time favorite writers, Rabbi Yossi Rosenberg. His articles are always thought-provoking and on target. He is able to get across important, true, *Yiddishe* concepts in an inimitable and sometimes humorous way. His articles and those like them make the *Yated* a worthwhile newspaper to read.

Last week's essay by Rabbi Rosenberg, "*Im Yirtzeh Hashem By You*," really hit home. I wish people would appreciate it and change their way of thinking about this *brachah* and answer with a sincere *amein*. Maybe these *brachos* and the sincere *ameins* will be catalysts for the *yeshuos* people are waiting for.

I would like to suggest to the *Yated* editors to feature Rabbi Rosenberg's articles weekly, as opposed to bi-weekly.

Wishing the *Yated* future success,

A. A.
Lakewood, NJ

A SHABBOS OF SERENITY

Dear Editor,

On *Shabbos Parshas Bechukosai*, members of Samcheinu and Nagilla were treated to an unforgettable *Shabbaton* at the Stamford Plaza Hotel in Connecticut. It was a *Shabbos* of serenity. Our wonderful leaders, Breindy Halberstam, Shani Stefansky, Mindy Glanzman and Shani Friedman, planned and executed it to perfection.

Upon our arrival on Friday, we were greeted warmly and shown to our beautiful accommodations. On Friday afternoon, we had fun-filled craft projects. We made jewelry and mosaics, and created heated crayon design on canvas. We could compete with our granddaughters, for whom we brought these beautiful gifts.

We had activities around the clock and excellent *shiurim*. Rabbi Y. Bender shared *divrei hisorerus*, Rabbi Y. Salomon spoke about how to find *shalom* in your *tefillah*, Rabbi Y. Milstein taught us how to find inner peace, and Rabbi Y. Eisen addressed *hilchos lashon hara* in *shidduchim*. After the *divrei Torah*, Rabbi N. Muller suggested a plan for us to finish the entire *Sefer Tehillim* each day by dividing it among ourselves. Hopefully, this will bring *Moshiach* closer. The plan is already in motion.

All the *shiurim* gave us much *chizuk* and true spiritual uplifting. The roundtable discussions conducted by talented women were interesting and informative.

We enjoyed Rochel Miller's beautiful *zemiros* at the *Shabbos seudos*. Many thanks to L'Chaim caterers for their elegant and tasty *seudos*. What a beautiful job they did! We can't forget about the terrific 24-hour tearoom, with its delicious smorgasbord.

On *Motzoei Shabbos*, we celebrated *Lag Ba'omer* with music and dancing, and even a surprise bonfire complete with marshmallows. There were fabulous prizes for the lucky winners.

Everything flowed smoothly and not a single detail was omitted.

Before leaving, everybody was treated to lovely presents of pearls, blankets and pocketbooks.

Mere words are not sufficient to thank our wonderful leaders for the time, effort and *kochos* that they put into planning this memorable *Shabbaton*. May Hashem *bentch* you with much *siyata*

diShmaya to be *matzliach* in all these projects as well as in your personal lives.

With love and admiration,
Rachel Feigelstein

BRING BACK OUR BOYS

Dear Editor,



There is a *segulah* for finding lost things that I have used many, many times, and it has always come through for me. I would like to suggest that everyone try this *segulah* as a *zechus* for the kidnapped *bochurim* in Eretz Yisroel. May we be *zocheh* to their safe return soon.

The *Chidah* says that the source of this custom is the *Gemara* in *Maseches Avodah Zarah* (18a-b), where we find that Rav Meir bribed a guard to release his imprisoned sister-in-law. The guard asked what will happen if he's caught. Rav Meir told him to say, "*Elaka d'Meir aneini*" (G-d of Meir, answer me) and he will be saved, and that's what happened. From there the custom emerged to donate money or oil for the *neshamah* of Rav Meir, saying, "*Elaka d'Meir aneini*," three times.

Rav Meir Baal Hanes said he would help those who give to the poor of Eretz Yisroel for the sake of his *neshamah*. After giving *tzedakah*, say the passage of "*Amar Rebbi Binyomin, hakol b'chezkas sumin...*," three times.

The English translation of the passage is as follows: "*Rebbi Binyomin said: All are in the presumed status of blind people, until The Holy One, Blessed Be He, enlightens their eyes. From here*

(Bereishis 21:19), 'And G-d opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water, and she went and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. G-d of Meir, answer me. G-d of Meir, answer me. G-d of Meir, answer me. In the merit of the charity that I give to the ascending of the soul of Rebbi Meir Baal Haness, may his merit protect us, may I find the article that I lost.'

(The derivation is that the well was always there, but Hagar did not see it. Only after praying did Hashem open her eyes and she saw what was already there.)

The first part, *Amar Rebbi Binyomin*, is a citation from *Bereishis Rabbah* 53:14. When Rav Binyomin said this, he had no idea that his *devar Torah* would be developed into a *segulah*. The second part, about Rav Meir, has its basis in *Maseches Avodah Zarah* 18a-b.

One benefit of this *segulah*, from the perspective of the segment of *Amar Rebbi Binyomin*, is that if one really understands what he is saying, it leads to a transformative realization. A person thinks he is in control of things. Suddenly, he cannot find something. Realize that it is all in the Hands of Heaven. If you want to find it, pray to Hashem, as Hagar did. It is probably there, under your nose, but you just cannot see it until Hashem enables you to.

An Eim B'Yisroel

FOR GOOD REASON

Dear Editor,

I read the recent letter from a distressed young man complaining about his *shver farhering* him every time they meet. While I understand that he doesn't feel comfortable being questioned by someone else, he has to understand that his *shver* is not "someone else." In most cases, he is someone who is currently supporting you, and for many fathers-in-law, it doesn't come so easily. Most of the time, they are forced into debt for many years.

Young man, I guess it's only natural for your *shver* to want know if he's supporting a good cause, as every person wants to see the results of his hard work, and although you are almost 40, your *shver* is probably still paying up

his debt from the many years of support.

Sincerely yours,
S. I.

SUPPORT SILLINESS

Dear Editor,

Thank you very much for your wonderful publication. We eagerly look forward to reading it from cover to cover.

I am writing this letter regarding an issue that has been on my mind for a while. The world of *shidduchim* is very complicated, and in any given *shidduch* there are many nuances that need to be *tzugepast*. However, there is one aspect that has gone too far: demanding support.

I am the first to admit that money is important, but money should not be the deciding factor. I have a friend who is a top girl in every area. She is what any good boy who really wants to learn is looking for. She will make an excellent wife and she really knows what is important. She does get *redd shidduchim*, but the second the boy's side hears that her family cannot commit to full support (because she comes from a large amazing family), they say no. Does this make sense? Have we come to a point where money is the driving force in a *shidduch*?

Support does not last forever. Is there not a *maalah* to a girl who will do everything she can so that her husband can learn forever? When the five years of a couple's support is up, many times they cannot manage and the husband needs to leave learning. When a couple starts off being self-sufficient, they learn how to manage on their own. My friend is going for a degree and has been saving up money for many years, yet boys' parents automatically say no.

Hashem is in charge of the world and He controls our *parnassah*. If He wants us to have money, we will, and if He does not want us to, we will not.

Parents, it is time to learn to look at the girl and what she is and wants, not at what her parents are willing to give.

Just remember, Hashem controls the world.

Sincerely,
Name Withheld

THE TRUTH ABOUT PRIORITIES IN SHIDDUCHIM

Dear Editor,

As a mother of many boys, an aunt to many nephews, and a friend of many mothers of boys, I am tired of reading

letters such as the one in last week's *Yated* titled "*Sheker Hachein Vehevel Hayofi?*" The writer decries the state of *shidduchim*, in which mothers and boys care more about appearance, money and other externals than they do about *middos*.

In most cases - obviously there are always exceptions - exactly *the opposite* is true, but it is perceived the wrong way for the following obvious reason.

It is no secret that boys these days have a much longer list of names than girls. The reason for that we'll leave for all the other letter writers to discuss, but this seems to be a fact (again, of course, there are always exceptions). Therefore, the following scenario inevitably takes place. The mother of a boy proceeds to investigate the many girls on her list, first choosing the girls with excellent *middos* and *yiras Shomayim*, who are *ehrllich*, have proper *hashkafos*, are *tzniusdik*, and come from a family that suits her son. *Middos* is a priority and is the *first* question asked. Then the list is eventually narrowed down to those few girls who are the most outstanding in *middos*, *hashkafos*, *frumkeit* and family. Since her son can only marry one girl, she now has to choose from all the narrowed-down candidates. What should be the deciding factor for all these wonderful *frum* girls with the best *middos*? They all seem equally wonderful. Do you think the mother should purposely now choose the one with the *least* appealing appearance? Obviously not, so the mother, at that point, might inquire about the externals, which is the *last* question on the list...*yet it is the deciding factor*. That's how mothers of boys get a reputation of caring only about the externals when, really, the opposite is true.

There is no reasonable, rational mother who would choose appearance over *middos*. It's just that the good boys today have the luxury of getting both due to the imbalance in the numbers. Since there are fewer boys available than girls, the boys obviously have the upper hand in choosing. It is a mistake to blame the mothers and portray them as having mixed-up priorities.

Thank you.

Signed,
Middos Come First

SHADCHANUS MONEY

Dear Editor,

This letter is in response to the wom-

an who wrote to the *Yated Shidduch Forum* about the financial compensation she received for making a *shidduch*.

Would you like to be the *shadchan* for my son? I would gladly pay you the \$1,000 you feel you deserve. I have already married off a few children and have always paid \$2,000 for the *shadchan* who carried out the *shidduch*, plus some more to the people who came to us with “*taynos*” that they had mentioned the *shidduch* to us first.

When my daughter got engaged, we got a call from a man claiming he was the *shadchan*. Yes, he had called us and mentioned the name, but that was the last we heard from him until after the *shidduch* came about. Not wanting anyone to hold a grudge against the young couple, we compensated him too. I know *shadchanim* work hard (I try it, too) and we are happy to reward them for their work.

What upsets me, though, is the *shadchanim* who won't touch us because they only deal with people who can give them the big bucks - \$5,000 and up. One *shadchan* took up a lot of my son's time, asking him for names of *bochurim* and information about them, yet now that my son is in *shidduchim*, he can't be bothered to make a phone call for him. These are the same *shadchanim* who only *redd* rich people to rich people, even when a rich person is willing to fully support the couple.

I understand their thinking: If we're going to put in the same hard work the *shidduch* requires, we might as well get paid well.

What happened to *shadchanus* also being a *chesed*?

B. F.
Brooklyn, NY

DATING A GROUCH

Dear Editor,

I'm sure I wasn't the only person shaken up by last week's letter to the editor written by a 24-year-old girl. It was certainly a “loaded” letter and many thoughts went through my head as I read it.

On one hand, dear letter writer, you have a point. We live in a shallow society. But upon further reflection, look around at all the single girls in your community. Are they all struggling with their weight? There are plenty of wealthy and thin girls who are in their upper 20s or older. There are also girls who are not thin and yet married young.

So being thin is not a guarantee to marry Prince Charming and live happily ever after.

There are *baalei teshuvah* who married young while FFBs with lots of *yichus* are older singles.

Being thin, smart, beautiful, *yichus-dik* or wealthy doesn't guarantee a *shidduch*. The opposite doesn't necessarily nix a *shidduch* either.

Yet, there is some truth to your letter. You are hurting and it's difficult to help ease your pain. You are (somewhat) justified in your feelings, but it seems that the first thing you must do is find a way to overcome your bitterness. You claim to promote respect as an ideal, but you degrade the parents of every *bochur* and half the girls. If you truly had exemplary *middos* (as you claim), your cynical letter might have had a different tone.

Boys may be looking for thin girls, but a bitter girl is certainly less attractive than an overweight girl. No one wants to date a grouch.

On the other hand, the boys and mothers of boys can take note of your message as well. There is what to learn from your letter and I repeated the message of your letter to a few people over the weekend.

The best advice is to find a mentor you trust and see if there is something you can do to ease your situation. And *daven*, *daven* and then *daven* some more. Hashem can do anything. M a y Hashem help you find your *zivug*, a boy who will appreciate you for who you are, and may you be at peace with yourself.

Hatzlachah.

Hindy R.

READ LABELS CAREFULLY

Dear Editor,



I was recently at a party where *fleishigs* was served. During the party, it was discovered that one of the condiments, accidentally purchased, was dairy.

While such mistakes can happen to anyone, please do yourself a favor and read condiment labels very carefully before purchasing and consuming them. Be especially careful when purchasing brands with which you are not familiar.

Sincerely,
A Concerned Jew

EDUCATING WITH SUGAR

Dear Editor,

It was very interesting to read the coverage of the *asifas chizuk* for *mechanchim* in the *Shavuos* edition.

Many of the speakers mentioned the challenges in *ruchniyus* of our times and bemoaned the lack of *kedushah* in our generation. Rav Chaim Leib Epstein quoted the *Chazon Ish* as attributing this to our long sojourn in *golus*. He pointed out that many of us are no longer cognizant of our purpose in this world.

The solution of the *Chazon Ish* is to bring back our youth to *ruach Yisroel* by exposing them to the greatness and beauty of Torah and *Yiddishkeit* so that they will genuinely desire to reclaim this *kedushah*.

Sadly, rewards of candies, cookies, sodas and other unhealthful foods are considered integral to the *chinuch* system today. Not only does this indulge children's *taavos*, but it puts health at risk, since it increases one's risk for diabetes and pre-diabetes. Even moderately elevated blood sugar is recognized to increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, Alzheimer's and other health problems. It would be unrealistic to expect children raised on a high sugar, high refined carbohydrate diet to suddenly start eating healthfully when they grow up.

There are many non-food and even non-prize ways of motivating and rewarding children. Some schools use *nachas* calls to parents or grandparents, or “treats” such as lunch with the principal or helping the *menahel*. I am sure that our talented *rabbeim*, *moros* and *mechanchim* are quite capable of creating incentives and rewards along these lines, and I hope that they do.

Such an approach, coupled with the *varmkeit* and the *bren* that many of the *asifa*'s speakers stressed is crucial in *chinuch*, could go a long way towards the goal of decreasing materialism and increasing *kedushah*, and of raising healthy children, physically and emotionally.

Name Withheld



LESSONS FROM A POEM

By Rabbi Yitzchok Tzvi Schwarz

Time has a way of making us forget and time has a way of lulling us to sleep. Things that long ago seemed unthinkable can slowly but surely become a reality, and with the passing of time, we are resigned to accept it. For someone who remembers the euphoria following the lightning victory of the Six Day War in 1967, for someone who recalls the awe and respect that the world accorded the State of Israel at that time and for someone who can reminisce about the staunch support the United States gave to Israel in the past, the dramatic change we are witnessing today is shocking. In the interim, close to half a century has passed, with the political landscape subtly being transformed from year to year. We now find ourselves in dire straits.

Even before we heard the heart-wrenching news on that *Erev Shabbos* that three precious Jewish sons were kidnapped by terrorists, the situation in Eretz Yisroel was not a rosy one. The alliance between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas doesn't bode well for us. Throughout Europe, anti-Semitism is on the rise, with pressure being exerted on Israel to forge a treaty with those who seek its destruction or face a boycott of its companies.

Our old reliable Uncle Sam has tried twisting Israel's arm to sign a deal certainly not with our own best interests in mind. And if the Middle East wasn't yet saturated with bloodshed, suddenly Iraq has exploded into more mass carnage, as Sunnis slaughter Shiites and vice versa. This state of disarray in addition to the conflict in Syria is most threatening to peace in Eretz Yisroel.

And now this, horrible story of the kidnapping. Those poor boys, their fear of being in the hands of monsters who don't value life at all. That feeling of helplessness. And how can their parents cope with this, the anguish and constant worry for their children? One cannot think about it for too long, for it is so painful, it can drive one mad. But how can we not think about them? We share their misery and must not let up in our *tefillos* for them.

One begins to daydream and think about a tale in this week's *sedrah*, when *Klal Yisroel* found itself in a much better situa-

tion in the shadow of Hashem: "*And Yisroel sent emissaries to Sichon, king of Emori, saying: 'Let me pass through your land: we shall not turn off to field or vineyard, we shall not drink well water; on the king's road we shall travel till we pass your border. But Sichon did not permit Yisroel to pass through his border and Sichon assembled his entire people and went out against Yisroel to the midbar... And Yisroel smote him with the edge of the sword and took possession of his land...'*" (*Bamidbar* 21:21-24).

***One cannot think about it for too long,
for it is so painful, it can drive one mad.
But how can we not think about them?***

What a chesed it was for the *Yidden* that Sichon came out to the *midbar* to fight against them. Had they been forced to enter his cities, it would have been

much harder for them. *Chazal* say that if Cheshbon, the city of Sichon, would have been empty of humans and merely populated with insects, it would have been impenetrable because of its fortification. And if Sichon had lived in a weak city, it would have still been impossible to conquer him. Surely, then, conquering Sichon in the city of Cheshbon was inconceivable. Hashem said, "Why should I bother My children with laying siege to Sichon's cities?" He placed in the minds of all Sichon's warriors to go out to one place, and there they fell. Now the *Yidden* were free to enter the cities void of defenders and they easily conquered them (*Rashi*). How easy it was back then, when we could clearly see the *Yad Hashem*.

When Sichon first tried conquering this land from its original inhabitants, the Moabites, they put up a formidable resistance, so he hired Bilam and his father, Be'or, to curse them. With Sichon's subsequent victory, Bilam and Be'or celebrated the victory with a poem. Strangely enough, the Torah quotes this poem following *Klal Yisroel's* victory over Sichon. "*Al kein yomru hamoshlim... Regarding Sichon, the poets (Bilam and Be'or) said: 'Come to Cheshbon. Let it be built and established as the city of Sichon. For a fire had come out of Cheshbon, a flame from the city of Sichon...'*" (*ibid.* 27). This meant that Cheshbon, the Moabite stronghold, had become Sichon's capital, and from there he would advance like fire to devour other Moabite cit-

ies. Alas, this was not to be, as Sichon ran into the *Bnei Yisroel*, who were guided by *Hakadosh Boruch Hu*, and he was easily vanquished.

The *Gemara* (*Bava Basra* 78b) gives a homiletic interpretation of this poem: “*Al kein yomru hamoshlim, this refers to those who are moshlim, who are rulers over their yeitzer hara. What do these people say? Bo’u Cheshbon. Come, let us make a cheshbon hanefesh, an accounting of our deeds. Tiboneh vesikonein, if you do this, you will be built up in this world and established in the World to Come. Ihr Sichon - on the other hand, if one acts like a young donkey who is enticed by sweet talk of his evil inclination, then ki aish yotzoh micheshbon, a fire will shoot out from those who give an accounting for their sins and destroy those who don’t...*”

The *meforshim* ask: Why did the Torah find it important to quote a poem composed by the *resha’im*, Bilam and Be’or, in honor of the wicked Sichon? What is the connection between this verse and the miraculous victory over Sichon and his fortified city? And what about the *cheshbon hanefesh*? What possible connection does that have with the war against Sichon?

Whatever is written in the Torah is the word of Hashem. The simple, superficial meaning of this poem is that it was celebrating mighty Sichon’s victory. But his victory was depthless and of no lasting value, for as strong as he was physically, and as mighty as his men were, they were depraved people who followed the enticement of the *yeitzer hara*. Thus, they disconnected from Hashem. On the other hand, the *Yidden*, the *Dor Dei’ah*, who walked in the ways of Hashem, who carried the yoke, and who were constantly making a *cheshbon hanefesh*, were able to overcome the seemingly insurmountable odds against them. The fire shot out from those who made the *cheshbon hanefesh* and consumed those who didn’t.

This is why the Torah records this poem. It teaches us how we can be victorious in a battle that seems impossible to win. In the physical world, “might makes right.” Victory is decided by the numbers of troops, weaponry, and battle tactics. For the children of Hashem, “right makes might.” Walking on the straight path and maintaining a close relationship with Hashem provides us with a supernatural strength to overcome our adversaries. This is meant as a lesson to us for all generations.

Unfortunately, we are far removed from the level of the *dor hamidbar*. How can there be peace in Eretz Yisroel when the intellectual, elitist Left has such an influence on the media, which constantly bombards its readers and listeners with crooked ideology? A glimpse into the whacky thinking of Dr. Yossi Beilin, chief formulator of post-Zionism and a major influence, shows us just how far removed they are from the truth.

Beilin is upset that Jews opposed Theodor Herzl’s idea to adopt Uganda as a Jewish homeland. He urges Israelis not to be concerned about whether their children will remain Jews. Israel is evolving into a right-wing and religious version of the old ghetto, he says. Religious pluralism is the answer for terminating the Orthodox stronghold on Jewish life in Israel. We must compensate for the loss of Jewish numbers to intermarriage and low birthrate by finding creative ways to accept those who are

not *halachically* Jewish. He encourages secular conversions to be determined by the applicant’s self-definition as a Jew or possibly by two members of the Jewish faith, “as is customary... when joining a club” (*excerpted from Faith and Fate by Rabbi Berel Wein*).

Were this the convoluted thinking of one misguided individual, there wouldn’t be much to worry about. But this is the opinion of many Israeli politicians. To them, there is no special *kedushah* to Eretz Yisroel. To them, our Jewish heritage has no value. To them, the *chareidi* way of life *beruach Yisroel sabba* is archaic and embarrassing. Is it a wonder, then, that these post-Zionists are willing to give away large chunks of our Holy Land for some imagined peace? Is it a surprise that they cut off funding for our most valued asset, the *bnei Torah*? With this poisonous attitude so persuasive amongst secular Jews in Eretz Yisroel, what chance is there of the community there surviving the attempts of its violent neighbors to engulf it?

The very fact that we have endured until now is most encouraging. We are called *she’airis nachalaso*, the remnants of Hashem’s heritage (*Michah* 7:18). The *Tomer Devorah* points out that *she’air* also means that we are Hashem’s relative. Hashem refers to us with terms of endearment, calling us, “*My daughter, My sister, My mother, My mate.*” He is very reluctant to punish us, for it only brings Him pain.

As far as meriting salvation, one of the prominent phrases in *Shemonah Esrei* is “*vezochair chasdei avos.*” Hashem recalls the kindness of the *avos hakedoshim*. This is a perfect place for us to have *kavanah*. “*Ribono Shel Olam*, if we are not worthy of salvation, then please remember the merits of our patriarchs.” The *Chofetz Chaim* says that it is a mistake to think that the *geulah* will be brought about by the merits of one generation. Rather, it is the collective *zechuyos* of all generations combined. There is enough merit there to override the inequities of misguided, unaffiliated Jews.

After the sin of the *meraglim*, Moshe Rabbeinu begged Hashem, “*Forgive now the sin of this people according to the greatness of Your kindness...*” (*Bamidbar* 14:19). One *Rosh Hashanah* night, the holy *tzaddik* Rav Dovid Moshe of Tchortkov cried out, “*Ribono Shel Olam*, it is true that we are full of sin, but You are full of mercy. And no matter how great and numerous our sins are, they are miniscule in comparison to Your boundless mercy and kindness. If so, please forgive us according to your abundance of kindness.” Our hope is that Hashem will constantly protect us from the overwhelming forces against us despite our inequities.

Finally, the *Tomer Devorah* says another remarkable thing. Every *Yiddishe neshamah* has in it a tiny part of every other Jewish *neshamah*. This is why *kol Yisroel areivim zeh lozeh*, for if one sins, not only does he sully his own *neshamah*, but he taints everyone else who is connected to his soul. Conversely, when we conduct ourselves according to the will of Hashem, we affect all of the other *Yiddishe neshamos* in a positive way. You never know. If we, the *shlumei emunei Yisroel* are strong in our convictions and act accordingly, we can have a favorable impact on the other misguided *neshamos*.

THE *EMUNAH*, NOBILITY AND DIGNITY OF JEWISH MOTHERS AND FATHERS

By Avrohom Birnbaum

Klal Yisroel is holding its breath. It is hard to quantify the feelings of hope combined with dread, of *tefillah*, and of worry that Jews collectively around the world are experiencing. It is something that straddles continents, both geographically and *hashkofically*. No caring Jewish heart has remained unmoved. Just seeing the pictures of the smiling teenage faces - innocent Jewish youth on the cusp of adulthood, their lives ahead of them, ruthlessly abducted while returning home from *yeshiva* to spend *Shabbos* with their families - is enough to fill every Jewish heart with emotion.

The way that *Klal Yisroel* has come together illustrates the beauty of our people. It doesn't matter who you are or what *hashkofoh* you adhere to. The feelings of *rachmonus*, Jewish unity, Jewish solidarity, collective *tefillah* and *tikkun hamaasim* have been almost universal in the Jewish world.

The great Agudas Yisroel leader, Rabbi Moshe Sherer *zt"l*, would say, "We Jews are like tea bags. The best flavor comes out when we are in hot water."

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

There is another point that bears thought, contemplation and admiration. I am referring to the tremendous ongoing *kiddush Hashem* being created by the families of the abducted boys. There are no words to describe the horror and mental anguish being endured by these families, the Yifrachs, the Shaers and the Frenkels, as these words are being written. They are sick with worry. They are no doubt thinking about their children, wondering how they are faring, whether they are suffering or being tortured, and even whether they are still alive. For parents, thoughts like these are perpetually there. They don't leave, day and night, in wakefulness, in sleep and in dreams. Their minds are constantly dwelling on their beloved boys.

Mr. Yehuda Wachsman, father of Nachshon Wachsman *Hy"d*, who was kidnapped twenty years ago and killed by his captors as the Israeli army was trying to rescue him, related that he especially feels for the parents. "The parents are in a fog, lacking information. I was there and I can tell you that emotionally it is an untenable situation. They need a great deal of support... I have been there..."

All three parents, in different venues, both open to the media and otherwise, have expressed a tremendous amount of *emunah* in Hashem, in the power of *tefillah*, in their belief in Hashem's righteousness and goodness, and in their belief in the collective goodness and power of *Klal Yisroel* to bring about their children's release with their *tefillos*.

NOBILITY OF SPIRIT IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY

No one would have any claims against them if they acted otherwise due to their anguish, but these families have shown their nobility of spirit and their endless *hako-ras hatov* to everyone helping - to the army, to the political leadership, and to the everyday Jews who have been standing together with them with such solidarity.

For fathers and mothers to get in front of cameras and, before talking about their own anguish, to talk about how thankful they are for everyone's efforts, and for a mother to write a letter to the soldiers going door to door in dangerous neighborhoods in Chevron and other locales and tell them she is *davening* for them, and that they, too, are sons of *Klal Yisroel* and Hashem should watch over them and protect them, is a most exalted form of Jewish nobility and *kiddush sheim Shomayim*.

"I wholeheartedly believe the boys will return, but if not, remain strong," Rachel Frenkel, mother of Naftali Frenkel, said to a group of well-wishers who congregated with the family at the *Kosel* for an *atzeres tefillah* as a *zechus* for the boys.

Mrs. Frenkel continued: "But whatever happens, whatever happens, [we must understand that] Hashem does not work for us [we cannot tell him what to do], but I do believe they will return."

She further told the large crowd of supportive youths, "Please don't be broken if something else happens, okay? Stay together, stay *b'achdus*, stay strong." With her eyes closed in *tefillah*, she concluded, "I believe they will return quickly."

What *emunah*! While she is sick with worry about her own son, she is able to think of the *chinuch* message and remind children that our *emunah* must remain strong, no

matter what the outcome. Is that not the beauty of the Jewish *neshomoh*? Here is a Jewish mother transcending her own suffering, transcending what might be the greatest mental anguish a mother can experience, and resonating holy *emunah* passed down from generation to generation, from mother to mother.

When a father begs *Klal Yisroel* to keep *Shabbos*, to accept *Shabbos* early, and to light *Shabbos* candles, it is something that simply defies description. He is projecting his *emunah* in Hashem and his knowledge that *Shabbos* has the power to engender *brochah* for all of *Klal Yisroel*.

The parents of these children have shown us the beauty and the nobility of *Klal Yisroel*. They have shown us the dignity and the graciousness of the Jewish nation and, most of all, the ironclad *emunah* of Jewish mothers and fathers that has sustained *Klal Yisroel* throughout our terrible *golus*.

Veteran Israeli journalist Nadav Shragai put it succinctly in his column in *Israel Hayom*: “Within days, three women - Rachel Frenkel, Bat-Galim Shaer and Iris Yifrach - succeeded in changing the perception of many. Despite going through a personal nightmare, their public conduct communicates a message of strength and faith in Israel’s G-d and people. Their demeanor suggests that they understand that this ordeal is not their personal story, but rather ‘all of ours,’ as Rachel Frenkel said.”

Indeed, at a time like this, all of us come together. Our differences are put aside as we collectively beseech Hashem for *rachamim*.

RAV PAM ON THE KIDDUSH HASHEM OF PARENTS

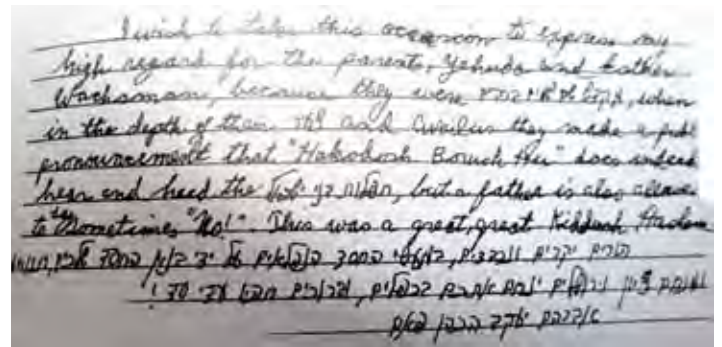
I am reminded of a comment made by Rav Avrohom Pam *zt”l* some 20 years ago after the terrible tragedy of the abduction and death of Nachshon Wachsman.

During the days after Nachshon’s kidnapping, his wonderful parents, Reb Yehuda and Mrs. Esther Wachsman, were interviewed by Israeli and worldwide media. They exuded powerful and tangible *emunah*, stressing over and over that only *siyata diShmaya* and only Hashem could save their son. After their son’s tragic death, Mr. and Mrs. Wachsman were further *mekadeish sheim Shomayim* in an amazing way. When Reb Yehuda was interviewed, he remarked, “If people will ask why our *tefillos* did not earn us the reply that we sought from our Father in Heaven, I will tell them: We did receive a response, we did get an answer. The answer was, ‘No,’ because sometimes a father can answer, ‘No.’”

When Nachshon’s mother, Mrs. Esther Wachsman, was interviewed, she said, “The only thing that kept us sane

and functioning through all this was our faith. When a person fulfills his mission, then that is the end... Our faith tells us that these were the years allotted to our son and he fulfilled what he was supposed to fulfill. Our faith is what kept us going.”

Rav Pam was extremely moved by their *kiddush Hashem* and gave a *shmuess* in Yeshiva Torah Vodaas praising the worldwide *kiddush Hashem* they created. Not only that, but when Mrs. Wachsman visited America, Rav Pam spent a half hour talking to her, calling her “a true heroine of our time.”



In a remarkable letter that Rav Pam penned, he wrote, “I wish to take this occasion to express my high regard for the parents, Yehuda and Esther Wachsman, because they were *mekadeish sheim Shomayim berabim* (publicly sanctified Hashem’s name), when in the depth of their pain they made a public pronouncement that *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* does indeed hear and heed the *tefillos* of *Bnei Yisroel*, but a father is also allowed to sometimes say, ‘No.’ This was a great, great *kiddush Hashem*.”

THE EMUNAH AND BITACHON THAT HAVE UPHELD KLAL YISROEL IN GOLUS

Certainly, the parents of Eyal (*ben* Iris Teshura) Yifrach, Gil-ad Michael (*ben* Bat Galim) Shaer, and Yaakov Naf-toli (*ben* Rochel Devorah) Frenkel did not ask for this moment in the spotlight. Without a doubt, they wish this incident would all be one big bad dream. Surely they would rather return to anonymity. Yet, once this role was thrust upon them by Divine Providence, all three sets of parents, each in their own way, have displayed remarkable strength, *emunah* and *bitochon*, creating, in the words of Mrs. Frenkel, “waves and waves of positive energy and *achdus*.” With their heroism, they continue to uncover the beautiful *pintele Yid* in *Klal Yisroel*. May that *zechus* stand them in good stead and enable them and all of us to celebrate a collective *seudas hodo’oh* with the return, *besholom, beguf uvenefesh*, of their boys, who have become *Klal Yisroel*’s adopted sons. *Amein kein yehi rotzon*.



THE KINGDOM OF LAWYERS

By Yonason Rosenblum

That the state of the Jews has the highest number of lawyers per capita in the world should hardly occasion surprise. Those lawyers – or at least a small cadre of Supreme Court justices and government lawyers -- wield a degree of power unknown anywhere in the world.

Former Supreme Court President Aharon Barak viewed the Court as a modern day *Sanhedrin* with authority to render judgment over every governmental action, including troop movements in time of war. In Barak's eyes, lawyers are blessed with a degree of discernment in all matters of public policy – not just the interpretation of traditional legal materials, such as statutes and case law – equal to the members of the *Sanhedrin Hagadol*, and their wisdom is far above mere politicians and other government officials. Unlike politicians, who are always suspect of the most venial motivations, judges and their emissaries are totally disinterested seekers of justice.

Barak's predecessor as Court president, Moshe Landau, responded by accusing him of creating a judicial dictatorship according to his own moral views. He added acidly that the role of Platonic Guardians appropriated by Barak and his colleagues was one for which they had no training and showed little aptitude.

THE STORY OF HOW BARAK wrought his legal revolution step by step has been frequently told. He first dispensed with all traditional legal doctrines of standing (who may challenge a government action) and justiciability (what types of issues are appropriate for the judicial system), and thereby placed every government action within the purview of the Court. As the coup de grace, he then subjected those decisions to the standard of "reasonability" in the eyes of judges guided by the views of the "enlightened population" in whose midst they dwell.

The laws passed by the people's elected representatives and the decisions of the executive branch were thus entitled in Barak's eyes to the most minimal presumption of validity. In the Pinchasi case, for instance, the Supreme Court ruled that cabinet members *indicted* for crimes involving moral turpitude must resign, even though the relevant statute read that only those *convicted* of a crime involving moral turpitude is ineligible to serve.

Less well-known and more insidious because of the lower public visibility of the decisions made is the way that Barak turned the Attorney-General and all his or her

subalterns in every government office into his emissaries to ride herd on the other branches of government. In the aforementioned Pinchasi case, then State Attorney (as well as Barak's successor as Supreme Court president) Dorit Beinisch argued before the Supreme Court against the government's position.

Barak ruled that the Attorney-General was duty bound to argue in accord with his or her legal understanding, and that as far as the executive branch is concerned, the Attorney-General's opinion defines the legal reality. Thus, the Attorney-General was given an almost absolute veto over government position, without even the requirement of providing written opinions in support of his or her opinion. The Attorney-General, as the unchallenged and unchallengeable legal authority for the executive branch, has subsequently extended that veto authority to the legal advisors in each governmental ministry, who are appointed by him and not by the ministers.

The authority granted to government attorneys is without parallel anywhere in the world. Contrast the United States. The U.S. Attorney-General serves at the behest of the president. Even at the height of Watergate, no one contested President Nixon's right to fire Attorney-General Elliot Richardson for refusing to follow his orders. And it is assumed that government attorneys serve as legal staff to the executive branch. Thus, former Yale Law Dean Harold Hongshu Koh, a spiritual disciple of Aharon Barak, in his eagerness to import "international law" into the American judicial system, nevertheless spent his days as State Department Legal Advisor writing memos defending the administration's drone strikes.

The transfer of power to legal bureaucrats has been labeled "juristocracy" by legal scholar Ran Hirschl and is discussed at length in a forthcoming article by Professor Moshe Koppel titled "*Israel's Runaway Juristocracy*," on which I have drawn.

That power is awesome. When Deputy Attorney-General Mike Blass expressed the opinion that the planned Yerushalayim-Tel Aviv railroad line violated the Geneva Accords because 250 meters of track crossed the Green Line, the government scuttled its plan at the cost of years of delay and several billion dollars in additional costs.

Blass's position is itself extremely dubious. The main Yerushalayim-Tel Aviv highway crosses the Green Line

at almost the same point as the proposed rail line. And the logic of his position would render illegal every road built by Israel across the Green Line. Even a French court found in 2013 that Israel's building of transportation infrastructure across the Green Line does not violate international law.

But far more outrageous than Blass's opinion was the absurdity that the government could not even test its own legal view in court. Under Barak's jurisprudence, every single citizen of Israel (and non-citizens as well) are entitled to challenge almost any government action, no matter how slight or non-existent their interest in the issue at hand, before the BaGaTz sitting as a court of original jurisdiction. The only party that cannot gain a hearing for its legal position is the government itself, if the Attorney-General or one of his delegates disagrees.

(The problem with the American judicial system is almost exactly the opposite. Even when the president effectively rewrites Congressional laws by executive order, as President Obama has done more than a dozen times with respect to Obamacare, strict standing requirements make it almost impossible to challenge those actions in court. The common element in both systems is the fulfillment of the progressive dream of the most crucial governmental decisions being made by the anointed wise men – justices and the juristocracy in Israel, President Obama in America. Anybody besides the elected representatives of the people.)

IN THE 1986 RESSLER decision, Aharon Barak unequivocally answered yes to the question of whether “going to war or making peace are also justiciable decisions that can be ‘confined’ by legal norms and judicial discussions.” That dictum has become reality in Israel.

No army in the world is subject to such a high degree of legal supervision. Every battle plan contains an opinion from the Judge Advocates corps. Every building in Gaza and southern Lebanon has been marked, in light of the latest intelligence, as to whether, and under what circumstances, it is a legitimate military target.

The Second Lebanon War may have been a military defeat for Israel, but in the opinion of then Attorney-General Manni Mazuz, it was worthy of celebration as the most “lawyerly” war in human history. As Caroline Glick pointed out recently (“*Hezbollah and Israel's Lawyers-in-Chief*”), Israel's generals and political leaders limited their goals from the start in accord with perceived legal restrictions.

To some degree, that legalization of the military is prudent, given the certainty that any Israeli military operation will be condemned as “disproportionate” and otherwise in

violation of that nebulous entity “customary international humanitarian law.”

But we dare not forget, to paraphrase Voltaire, that “customary international humanitarian law” is neither customary nor law nor humanitarian. It is not customary, because it does not conform to the actual practice of nations throughout history. Nor is it international, since the only country to which its strictures are ever applied is Israel. It is not law in that it was not enacted by any body to which sovereign states have ceded the right to legislate with respect to them. And finally, it is not humanitarian in that as applied to Israel it provides incentives for non-state actors and terrorists to conduct their operations from among civilian populations.

But that does not mean that Israel's juristocracy will view the matter in that fashion. The government legal bureaucracy is overwhelmingly leftist in orientation, and thus likely to give far more credence to so-called customary international humanitarian law than it deserves and adopt unduly restrictive limitations on the IDF. Professor Ruth Gavison, as a member of the Winograd Commission, pointed to this danger in noting that “international law in the context of international conflicts is very biased and very political.” Internalizing its supposed rules, she argued, constitutes a “strategic danger.”

The strength of the IDF has always been the ability of its junior commanders to improvise and make quick decisions in rapidly changing circumstances on the battlefield. If those commanders are constantly looking over their shoulders at embedded IDF lawyers, they may lose their decisive advantage.

Perhaps the IDF felt it had the luxury of such deliberation in the Second Lebanon War, when Hezbollah was not yet a fully trained military force capable of large-scale ground operations. But Hezbollah's capacities have grown exponentially as a consequence of the combat experience gained in Syria and perhaps soon in Iraq.

The laws of war will not weigh heavily on Hezbollah if they decide to launch their huge missile arsenal at Israeli civilian population centers and infrastructure. And if, *chaveshalom*, those missiles start flying, Israel cannot afford to be making fine legal judgments on the permissibility of striking the buildings and homes in which those missiles are housed and from which they are fired.

Rule by the *Sanhedrin Hagadol* might well be the ideal form of government, but only because those who sat on the *Sanhedrin Hagadol* were truly able to lift themselves above any personal consideration or interest. When those lacking that quality attempt to act as a *Sanhedrin*, tyranny results.

Yated Chinuch Roundtable

MODERATED BY RABBI YISROEL BESSER
Questions are welcome at chinuch@yated.com

Q

My seven-year-old son brought home a nice report card and we sent a copy to his grandparents to give them *nachas*. Subsequently, my in-laws called to tell my son how proud they are of him and promised that the next time they see him, they will give him a few dollars in honor of the wonderful report.

I feel that giving money to a seven-year-old for a good report card is totally misplaced and sends an inherently wrong message. What is the opinion of the *choshuve* panel on this matter?



RABBI YISROEL HISIGER

Brooklyn, New York

I see no problem in grandparents calling and telling their grandson how proud they are of him and giving him a monetary reward as well.

I'm not sure what wrong message is being conveyed. Is it that your son might think that he is only going to do well in anticipation of a few dollars from his grandparents? I highly doubt that a small token of their esteem will have such a negative effect. If anything, it will encourage him and make him feel good, spurring him on to work hard so that he can continue to experience success in his work.

If you'd like, you can tell your youngster and your in-laws that you will have the money put in a savings account earmarked for his future needs. Of course, have your son thank his grandparents and do not let on that you are displeased with the choice of a gift.

In short, feel blessed that your son has grandparents who are proud of him and want to express their *nachas*. You and your son are quite fortunate. Embrace your good fortune.



RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY

Rosh Yeshiva,
Yeshiva Toras Chaim at South Shore

Excuse me? What planet are you on? Which century are you from? A few dollars? Is two dollars from a *zaidy* and *bubby* for a great report card a wrong message? These are your in-laws! (I assume that they are not your parents, as you call them "his grandparents," a very subtle distancing. I assume that you have other issues with them [or with life in general], or this is a made up question, or I am really out of touch.) Let him enjoy the sense of accomplishment and recognition.

I wonder what kind of message we send by giving "a few bucks" for *shemiras hasedorim*, *shtiklach Torah*, et al. And if you argue that those people are older and can handle "a few bucks," maybe you should start teaching your children about money. A few bucks can perhaps buy a slice of pizza and a soda. Let the child get a reward and choose what he wants to do with it.

P.S. At a meeting in 1964 of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah, I assume that they said that grandparents can give grandchildren a few dollars as a reward for a good report card or learning *Mishnayos* or *Chumash* well.

How do I know?

Because I got money as such from none other than my grandfather, Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky *zt"l*. And despite your feeling that he sent me the wrong message (whatever that means), I somehow was *zocheh* to become a member of this "*choshuve* panel."

Enjoy the love and interest that they are showering upon your son, and unless your in-law's name is Bloomberg, go out and buy him a Slurpee.



RABBI SHMUEL YAAKOV KLEIN

Director, Publications &
Communications, Torah Umesorah

If that were to be the MO of the child's learning, you would be absolutely right. If that is a way that parents are motivating the child, that could be problematic, as you suggest. In this case, though, we are speaking about grandparents. Such little gifts are the prerogative and one of the inalienable rights of loving grandparents. So, rather than speculating about the "harm" that this might produce (and there is *no* harm, by the way!), be appreciative and concentrate on the *zechus* that your children have to have a *bubby* and a *zaidy* who can spoil them a bit.



RABBI NOSSON SCHERMAN

General Editor, ArtScroll
/Mesorah Publications

What about a *rebbe* giving prizes? Has the writer ever rewarded her children for any good deed or for learning or *davening* well? I hope so. A few dollars is no different than any other reward. And let's not forget that it's important for grandparents to have a relationship with their grandchildren, especially when, as in this case, they live in different cities.

The way for children to develop a healthy attitude toward money is not by depriving them of a few dollars. It's by the parents showing by example that money is not the most important factor in their lives, necessary though it may be. The home atmosphere is the key. Never argue about money. Never let a child feel that life depends on it and that it overrides Torah values. If that attitude permeates the family day in and day out, a monetary gift will do no harm and can even do a lot of good.



RABBI SHNEUR AISENSTARK

Dean, Beth Jacob Seminary, Montreal

In order for “an inherently wrong message” to be sent and internalized, there must be consistency, and the *chashivus* of the person who is sending the constant message must be identified. “One swallow does not a summer make.”

If a parent constantly gives money to a child as a reward for achievement, it could be considered as giving the wrong message. On the other hand, a “*tzukeret*” would be a nice form of recognition. However, a grandparent who gives monetary gifts intermittently without making it a habit should not be considered to be “giving the wrong message.” *Aderaba*, it lifts the spirits of the child for having done so well in school that even his grandparents appreciate and applaud his efforts.

It has been my practice as a grandparent to do exactly as your in-laws are doing not only for report cards but for any worthy achievement.



RABBI YAAKOV BENDER

Rosh Yeshiva, Yeshiva Darchei Torah, Far Rockaway

Wrong message? Nonsense! What are *zaidies* and *bubbies* for? Your in-laws are correct.



RABBI DOVID ENGEL

Menahel, The Toronto Cheder

Your sentiment about *parents* not giving money to young children for good effort report cards or for doing household chores is very accurate. We need not reward children for doing things that are expected of them. Our responsibility is to be *mechanech* them to learn and perform acts of *chesed - shelo al menas lekabel pras*. Your question, however, focuses on the grandparents, who don't have the same responsibility as the parents in terms of being *mechanech* the children. Their job is to make their grandchild feel special. Every interaction should be pleasurable. The child should anticipate spending time with his grandparents. They don't berate him and discipline him; he is their source of *nachas* and joy.

We say in *Shemoneh Esrei*, “*Vezocher chasdei avos umeivi goel livnei veneihem.*” *Livnei veneihem* seems incongruous with *avos*. It should just say *veneihem*. Perhaps we can suggest that this underscores the difference noted above between parents and grandparents. A father loves his son more than anything, but he is constantly trying to lead

him *biderech hayoshor vehatov*, so he notices the imperfections and the need to work on *middos*. The *zaide*, on the other hand, waits with bated breath for his *ainekel* to visit. The entire visit is one of pure, unmitigated enjoyment, with praise and nosh doled out in loving fashion. We tell the *Aibishter*, “If You look at us like children, You will see our faults and the long *golus* will persist. Please look at us as Your *ainiklach* and bring the *geulah bemeheirah.*”

Another point to consider is the way your in-laws went about providing the incentive. Their approach was proper *chinuch*. They didn't dangle the carrot and promise the money if your son did well. After hearing the pleasant news, they provided the *knip in bekel* that is a nice idea to give as grandparents. Your son will fondly look back on his younger years and remember his doting grandparents, who are always there to provide him with love and warmth.



RABBI AVROHOM NEUBERGER

R"m, Yeshiva Gedola Ohr Reuven

I cannot fathom the mindset of a parent who would not want to see his seven-year old rewarded for a good report card, or one who would not *fargin* his parents the *nachas* of demonstrating their love. You really should go for parenting classes.

Kol tuv.



RABBI ARON FINK

Menahel, Ateres Bais Yaakov, Monsey

By all means, you should *fargin* your son's grandparents a bit of good old fashioned *Yiddishe nachas*. Step back and enjoy it! *Im yirtzeh Hashem*, you will do the same for your *ainiklach* one day. Denying Bubby and Zaidy their expression of *nachas* and pride is a *middas achzariyus no ben Torah* should want to be part of.



RABBI YECHIEL SPERO

Rebbi, Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim, Baltimore

I hate to be so blunt, but you are thinking way too deeply into this one. Grandparents love to show their love for their grandchildren by giving money. It certainly has been that way for many years. My grandmother loved to give me money and the same is true with my parents and in-laws.

Buying actual presents is so complicated. You never really know what the child wants. Giving them money makes things much easier. If you are really so hung up on the matter, then tell your son that he can think of something that he wants as a present and ask your in-laws to buy it for him. Give him a price range of a few dollars. In all honesty, I think you are over-thinking the matter.

Upon reading the question a second time, I realize that your hesitation might be that your in-laws are giving your child a reward for a good report card. If that is the case, then you are certainly over-thinking the matter. Why shouldn't a child be rewarded for good grades?



parenting
that works



By Rabbi Dov Brezak

FIGHTING (PART 5)

The Parenting Challenge

Parenting Challenge: "I'm very pressured and don't have much patience on Erev Shabbos. I don't have paid help, and my husband works. Naturally, I turn to my children to pick up the slack. Not only do I need their help, I can't do without it. One of my children often protests and gives me a hard time. To be honest, I don't know if the workload I give him is fair or if it's even good for him, but it makes no difference to me. I need the help, and he has to know that he has to listen.

"I don't always have the patience to do what's best for him, and I don't think I have to. Children need to know that they have to listen to their parents and they have to help them. This comes first on the list of priorities. Then, when I have the time and patience, I can also think about what's best for the child."

Is this mother right or wrong?

Please email or fax your comments and/or responses to rabbibrezakyated@gmail.com or 718.732.2522.

Your comments and responses are appreciated and may make their way (anonymously) into this column.

Last week's Parenting Challenge: A mother and her family were going away for Shabbos. Her husband was away, and she decided to spend Shabbos with a friend who lives about an hour away by bus. It was Erev Shabbos and everyone was getting ready. Suddenly, her oldest, an eleven-year-old boy, announced that he was not going. One of the other children was not well, and he knew that he would have to work extra hard this Shabbos. He turned to his mother and said, "I don't want to work like a slave! I'm not coming."

"But you have to have kibbud av va'eim," the mother countered. "That's your responsibility!"

The boy wouldn't budge. An hour later, when the mother was ready to leave with the family, the eleven-year-old took off his socks and declared, "I'm not going!"

The mother called one of our counselors and asked, "What do I do?"

What should she do?

Q. There is no question that the mother has to be strong and firm and insist that this boy come along.

A. But she did all of that and he's still not willing to go with her. What should she do now?

Q. She should threaten the child with severe punishments and consequences, and if he still resists, she should follow through with them.

A. Will that get the child to go with her for Shabbos?

Q. That's not relevant.

A. If it won't work - if it won't get the child to go with the family for Shabbos - then why are you suggesting that the mother administer these severe consequences?

Q. Because the child has to know who is boss. He has to know that he has to listen to his parents, whether he likes it or not.

A. But if the child continues to resist, then the consequences didn't work. He's still doing what he wants and is not going along for Shabbos.

Q. Let's be honest: This child is going to go along at the end; he's not going to stay home by himself. Since he's going to go anyway, we might as well teach him a lesson, so he'll know that we, the parents, are in control over here. This is our home and he can't just do whatever he wants.

A. I regret to inform you that the mother did what you said she should do and the boy stayed home for *Shabbos*. The mother took all the other children with her, but he didn't go along. He certainly was taking advantage of the fact that the father was away.

Q. The mother should have called the father.

A. The timing didn't work out, as he was overseas, and it was not yet morning for him.

Q. What did the boy do and what happened in the end?

A. *Boruch Hashem*, the mother has a very good neighbor who took the child in for *Shabbos* and took care of him.

Q. So the child learned his lesson.

A. The child got his way. He didn't learn any lesson at all. The lessons were wasted on him. In fact, the child learned that he can do whatever he wants and get away with it.

Q. Just wait until his father comes back home. Boy, will he teach this child a lesson!

A. Perhaps. But what will happen the next time the father goes away on business? Is this the kind of *chinuch* you're promoting - the police-officer approach? When the police are there and looking, everyone is afraid. The minute they leave the premises, people breathe a sigh of relief and begin once again to speed, talk on their cell phones while driving, and commit other violations. It's unfortunate that this is how crime control works. Because it's *control*, it works only when you are there to control it, or when people are afraid that you might show up. It doesn't work when you're not there, or when the kids can get away with something behind your back.

Q. But children have to listen to their parents!

A. Agreed.

Q. No, you don't agree. Otherwise you would agree that I could use any harsh methods necessary to enforce what I tell my child to do.

A. Actually, *you* don't agree, because if you did, you would use only methods that work, not methods that make things worse and force the child to oppose you and rebel even more.

Q. But my child has to know that I'm the boss.

A. And your method of reacting is not teaching him this.

Q. Then what do you suggest?

A. Teach him to listen and comply.

Q. But you see it doesn't work.

A. The harsh way that you're using doesn't work.

Q. What way does work?

A. When you take the child and his feelings into consideration, you can teach him in ways that work.

Q. You're suggesting that I spoil the child.

A. Treating the child with respect and preserving his dignity, instead of treating him like a sack of potatoes, is not called spoiling. It's called

ve'ahavta lerei'acha kamocha.

Q. That *posuk* doesn't refer to children. When it comes to children, we have to be *mechaneich* them whether they like it or not.

A. Rav Avrohom Pam ז"ל disagreed with you. He said that the Torah's words, "*velo sisa alav cheit*," refer to children as well. Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman also speaks out against embarrassing children for the sake of *chinuch*. They both say that this type of discipline doesn't work and has serious repercussions. My *rosh yeshiva*, Rav Yehudah Ades, said that *ve'ahavta lerei'acha kamocha* certainly applies to children as well.

Q. But don't we have to be *mechaneich* them?

A. Indeed. Be *mechaneich* them in a way that preserves their dignity and you'll see how quickly they begin to respect you and listen to you. Because you are respecting the fact that they have feelings, they will have respect for you and your request, and they'll want to please you and will begin to listen to you.

Q. What do you advise regarding the *Erev Shabbos* situation?

A. I told our counselor to tell the mother that she should 1) empathize with the child: "I see that you're afraid of the workload that you'll have to face if you go."

Then she should 2) reassure him and say, "Don't worry. I'll help you and we'll work together, so that you won't have to work too hard this *Shabbos*."

Q. But the child *has* to help because of *kibbud av va'eim*.

A. True. And this way the child *will* help instead of running away.

Q. This is modern psychology, not Torah *chinuch*.

A. We asked this exact question to Rav Shteinman, and he agreed that this is the correct way to deal with the child.

This is Torah *chinuch*, and it works, *be'ezras Hashem*.

•••••

Experience "Chinuch Live" with Rabbi Brezak, beginning at only \$9 a month. For information, call 732.440.9437.

Parenting to Ponder Summary:

1. *Chinuch* is not "crime control."
2. Control works only when you are there to control it or when people are afraid that you might show up. It doesn't work when you're not there, or when the kids can get away with something behind your back.
3. Treating the child with respect and preserving his dignity, instead of treating him like a sack of potatoes, is not called spoiling. It's called *ve'ahavta lerei'acha kamocha*.
4. Rav Yehudah Ades said that *ve'ahavta lerei'acha kamocha* certainly applies to children as well.

NOTED and QUOTED

BY I. GREENWOOD AND AVI YISHAI

“The only serious black mark against the [British] NHS, National Health Service [its government-mandated socialized medicine], was its poor record on keeping people alive.

EDITORIAL, THE GUARDIAN, LONDON, JUNE 20

“So as long as you don’t mind dying, the NHS is great.

JAMES TARANTO,
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, JUNE 20

“To begin withdrawing before our commanders tell us we’re ready would be dangerous for Iraq, for the region and for the United States. It would mean surrendering the future of Iraq to al-Qaeda. It’d mean that we’d be risking mass killings on a horrific scale. It’d mean we’d allow the terrorists to establish a safe haven in Iraq to replace the one they lost in Afghanistan. It’d mean we’d be increasing the probability that American troops would have to return at some later date to confront an enemy that is even more dangerous.

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH IN A SPEECH



GIVEN IN 2007

“President Obama is proving Bush right, sort of. He is deploying 275 troops back to Iraq, not for combat, but to secure American assets there and protect those in the U.S. Embassy. We will not engage. We will secure and protect. Won’t that make a charming picture for America’s enemies - the “Great Satan” retreating in the face of a few thousand members of “Allah’s army”? It will serve as a productive recruiting film for more jihadists to come join the fight.

“It is a direct result of Obama’s abdication and withdrawal without leaving anything behind in Iraq and telling the Iraqis that he really didn’t care that America would withdraw and leave it to whatever was going to happen. As a result, there are no good options.

CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER IN AN INTERVIEW WITH FOX NEWS,
JUNE 22

“Soon after he became president, Obama pulled every last troop out of Iraq, despite the fact that the war was over and we had won. Now Iraq is on fire, torn apart by terrorist invaders. We still have more than 100,000 troops in defeated Axis powers Germany, Italy and Japan. But Obama couldn’t leave a few troops in Iraq simply to preserve our victory. Now it’s gone.

ANN COULTER, JEWISHWORLDREVIEW.COM, JUNE 19

“The Democrats’ only concept of how to support the troops is to treat them like their other constituent groups - single women, blacks and the poor - and offer them more government benefits.

IBID.

“Enemies and adversaries of the United States no longer fear this country. Under President Obama, people like Russia’s Vladimir Putin, dictators like Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and jihadists of no known national origin, see an opportunity for chaos created by a president who appears to think “climate change” is a greater threat

to the world than terrorism. If President Obama fought terrorism with the same zeal he devotes to “climate change,” the terrorists might be the ones retreating, not America.

CAL THOMAS, THE WASHINGTON TIMES,
JUNE 19

“Iraq is at risk of falling to a radical Islamic terror group and Mr. Obama is talking climate change. Terrorists take control of more territory and resources than ever before in history and he goes golfing. He seems blithely unaware, or indifferent

to the fact, that a resurgent al-Qaeda presents a clear and present danger to the United States of America.

FORMER VICE PRESIDENT DICK AND LIZ CHENEY, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL,
JUNE 17

“Rarely has a U.S. president been so wrong about so much at the expense of so many. Too many times to count, Mr. Obama has told us he is “ending” the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan - as though wishing made it so. His rhetoric has now come crashing into reality.

Watching the black-clad ISIS jihadists take territory once secured by American blood is final proof, if any were needed, that America's enemies are not "decimated." They are emboldened and on the march.

IBID.

“Al-Qaeda and its affiliates are resurgent and they present a security threat not seen since the Cold War. Defeating them will require a strategy, not a fantasy. It will require sustained difficult military, intelligence and diplomatic efforts, not empty misleading rhetoric

IBID.

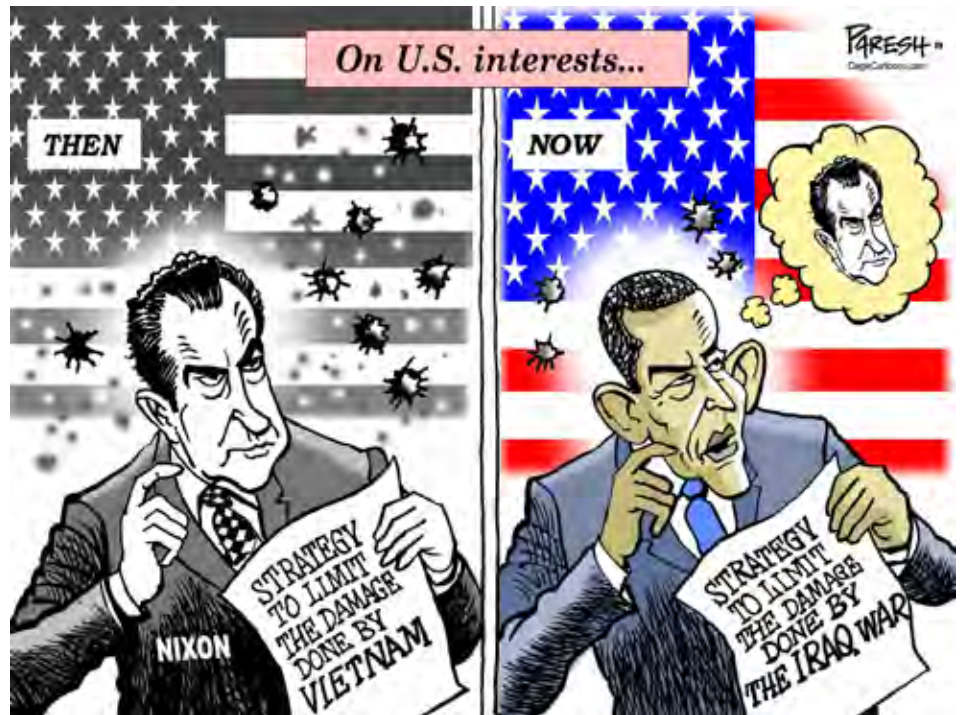
“American freedom will not be secured by empty threats, meaningless red lines, leading from behind, appeasing our enemies, abandoning our allies, or apologizing for our great nation - all hallmarks to date of the Obama doctrine. Our security, and the security of our friends around the world, can only be guaranteed with a fundamental reversal of the policies of the past six years.

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan said, “If history teaches anything, it teaches that simple-minded appeasement or wishful thinking about our adversaries is folly. It means the betrayal of our past, the squandering of our freedom.” President Obama is on track to securing his legacy as the man who betrayed our past and squandered our freedom.

IBID.

“Megyn Kelly: In your op-ed, you write as follows: “Rarely has a U.S. president been so wrong about so much at the expense of so many.” But time and time again, history has proven that you got it wrong as well, sir. You said there were no doubts that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. You said we would be greeted as liberators. You said the Iraq insurgency was in its last throes back in 2005. And you said after our intervention, extremists would have to “rethink their strategy of jihad.” Now with almost a trillion dollars spent there with 4,500 American lives lost there, what do you say to those who say you were so wrong about so much at the expense of so many?”

Former Vice President Dick Cheney: Well, I just fundamentally disagree, Megyn. You've got to go back and look at the track record. We inherited a situation where there was no doubt in anybody's mind about the extent of Saddam's involvement in weapons of mass destruction. We had a situation where if we - after 9/11, we were concerned about a follow-up attack, it would involve not just airline tickets and box cutters as the weapons, but rather something far deadlier, perhaps even a nuclear weapon.



Saddam Hussein had a track record that nearly everybody agreed to. We had an overwhelming vote of approval from the Congress. More votes for the action than we'd had in Desert Storm some ten years before. Bill Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, numerous others, spoke to the difficulties of the intelligence that all of us saw with respect to the threat that Saddam Hussein represented. It would have been irresponsible for us not to act. We did do the right thing, and I think the troops performed magnificently, and now we're in a situation where what Liz and I posted in our op-ed this morning is it's not just Iraq, but it's a whole

pattern of behavior over the last six years that has refused to recognize that there is a War on Terror, that we've got to move very aggressively to be able to deal with that, and this administration has repeatedly demonstrated that they don't believe it. Barack Obama has stated repeatedly that the terrorist threat is gone, we've got bin Laden. That's clearly not the truth. And in fact, we have a situation tonight where terrorism is potentially in charge of a larger part of the Middle East than ever before in our history.

FORMER VICE PRESIDENT DICK CHENEY IN A CONVERSATION WITH MEGYN KELLY



“You have to hand it to Dick Cheney. How many people, knowing what has happened in Iraq over the last 12 years, would dare to write an op-ed in *The Wall Street Journal* containing this line: “Rarely has a U.S. president been so wrong about so much at the expense of so many” - and not be talking about George W. Bush? The man has *chutzpah*.”

PAUL WALDMAN, CNN, JUNE 19

“As we weigh our response, one of the last people who should say anything on the subject is a man who is partly responsible for the problem.

But former Vice President Dick Cheney, who was in the administration that deceived us into a nine-year war in Iraq, just can't seem to keep his peace.

In an op-ed published with his daughter, Liz, in *The Wall Street Journal* on Tuesday, the Cheneys write: “Rarely has a U.S. president been so wrong about so much at the expense of so many.” This from the man who helped lead us into this trumped-up war, searching for nonexistent weapons of mass destruction, a war in which some 4,500 members of the American military were killed, many thousands more injured, and that is running a tab of trillions of dollars.

During the lead-up to the war, Mr. Cheney said to Tim Russert: “I really do believe that we will be greeted as liberators.” Nothing could have been further from the truth.

CHARLES BLOW, THE NEW YORK TIMES, JUNE 19

“[Obama] won the presidency being anti-war, so he had to anti-the-war before his re-election. He did it without appropriate care and commitment, which probably guar-

anteed we'd wind up where we are. He is out of his depth. Amazingly, he radiates a sense that he isn't all that invested, that he doesn't drag himself to the golf course to get a break and maintain balance, but plays golf because at the end of the day, Iraq, like other problems, challenges and scandals, isn't making him bleed inside.

PEGGY NOONAN, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, JUNE 20

“But the old American emotionalism, the assumption that the people of Iraq want what we want, freedom and democracy, is over. Ten years ago, if you announced you had reservations about what the people of Iraq really want, and maybe it isn't freedom and democracy first, such reservations were called ethnocentric, belittling, bigoted. That's over, too. We are hard-eyed now.

IBID.

“The mischief of the Nixon administration was specific to it, to its personnel. When Chuck Colson left, he left. All the figures in that drama failed to permanently disfigure the edifice of government. They got caught and their particular brand of mischief ended.

But the IRS scandal is different, because if it isn't stopped - if it isn't fully uncovered, exposed, and its instigators held accountable - it will suggest an acceptance of the politicization of the IRS, and an expected and assumed partisanship within its future actions. That will be terrible not only for citizens but for the government itself.

PEGGY NOONAN, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, JUNE 19

“The major problem today is that the international community denies the barbaric nature of Islamic fundamental-

ism. Surely the carnage taking place in Syria and Iraq, which matches the worst examples of medieval butchery, should have served as a wake-up call. The behavior of the Sunni jihadists in the capture of Mosul, in which hundreds, if not thousands, of soldiers and policemen were decapitated and their heads placed on display, explains why over half a million of the city's inhabitants fled. Likewise, the 185,000 butchered by both sides in the Syrian civil war and the 300 Nigerian schoolgirls kidnapped and apparently sold as slaves. The jihadists - Sunnis and Shiites alike - are barbaric monsters.

But in relation to Israel and its neighbors, the international community finds it far more convenient to portray the conflict in terms of Palestinians seeking national independence from their Israeli “occupiers.”

ISI LEIBLER, YISRAEL HAYOM, JUNE 19

“If the [Palestinian] unity government can survive only by being permitted to carry out terrorism against Israel without response or consequences, it is not so much a government as a sadistic terrorist gang.

SETH MANDEL, WHOSE SON, KOBY, WAS KILLED BY TERRORISTS FOURTEEN YEARS AGO, COMMENTARY MAGAZINE, JUNE 19

“A video caused the Benghazi attack... If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor... The website works for a vast majority of people... Not even a smidgen of corruption occurred at the IRS... Oops, we lost Lois Lerner's emails... Veterans don't wait long for health care... Watchdog journalism isn't a crime... Our administration protects whistleblowers... NSA doesn't collect any type of data on hundreds of millions of Americans - at least not wittingly.

Too often, the Obama administration has peddled bad information - knowingly (a lie) and unknowingly (incompetence and recklessness), because the president and his team have determined that, in Washington's toxic environment, the unmitigated truth is a vulnerability. They couldn't be more wrong.

RON FOURNIER, NATIONAL JOURNAL, JUNE 22

“Iraq has been a civil war waiting to happen for many decades. And I don't think we can blame the president. This president, like all presidents, is suffering from what Greg Weiner, a very smart political scientist, calls narcissistic policy disorder. Narcissistic policy disorder is a belief that everything in the world happens because of us or somehow about us and that we can do something about it. In fact, we can't.

WASHINGTON POST COLUMNIST GEORGE WILL ON FOX NEWS SUNDAY, JUNE 22

“This poll is a disaster for the president. You look at the presidency here: Lowest job rating, tied for the lowest; lowest on foreign policy. His administration is seen as less competent than the Bush administration, post-Katrina... On the issue of do you believe he can still lead? A majority believe no. Essentially, the public is saying your presidency is over.

CHUCK TODD OF NBC ON A NEW POLL SHOWING OBAMA'S DIPPING SUPPORT, JUNE 18

“There really isn't much better dietary advice than eating your veggies, exercising and limiting calories. People just seem to like making eating difficult for themselves.

NYU PROFESSOR MARION NESTLE ON FOOD TRENDS, INCLUDING THE GLUTEN-FREE FAD, THE NEW YORK TIMES, JUNE 18

“There isn't any news reported anymore. All there is: the daily narrative that advances the Democrat Party agenda, the Obama agenda. That's what the news is today. There isn't any news.

RUSH LIMBAUGH, EIB NETWORK, JUNE 18

“There's only one party in Washington. It's the Party of Power. It's got members from the Democrats and the Republicans and the Libertarians and the Socialists, the Marxists, you name it. It's the Party of Power.

IBID.

“I apologize if I sound like a broken record, but this administration is not over. It is just hitting its stride. These next 2-1/2 years are going to shock people. Obama doesn't face the electorate anymore. It doesn't matter what the electorate thinks, therefore.

RUSH LIMBAUGH, EIB NETWORK, JUNE 19

“It was Obama who couldn't wait to get us out of Iraq to placate his pacifist, childish, immature, selfish base, which is why we are where we are.

IBID.

“This is key to everything the left does: good intentions. Their good intentions cover all of their failures. It doesn't matter if it's a domestic policy failure; it doesn't matter if it's a foreign policy failure; good intentions are how the left disguises and camouflages all of their failures.

IBID.

“Jewish teenagers are kidnapped by Palestinian terrorists in Israel and it's their fault. An old, handicapped Jewish man was thrown over the deck of a cruise ship and America's premier opera house says it's art. Jewish teenagers are violently assaulted on the

streets of Europe, and Europe yawns. There is a pattern here. And it has nothing to do with peace.

CAROLINE GLICK, YATED NE'EMAN, JUNE 27

“I hate that man Obama more than any man I've ever met, more than any man who ever lived.

FORMER PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON ACCORDING TO A NEW BOOK BY JOURNALIST EDWARD KLEIN

Be it resolved that the South Dakota Republican Party calls on our U.S. Representatives to initiate impeachment proceedings against the president of the United States.

A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE SOUTH DAKOTA REPUBLICAN PARTY AT ITS STATE CONVENTION, JUNE 21

“It's an amazing miraculous coincidence. Religions have been founded on less.

GEORGE WILL ON IRS CLAIMS THAT SIX COMPUTERS JUST SO HAPPENED TO CRASH, DELETING INCRIMINATORY EMAILS, FOX NEWS, JUNE 22

“Hillary was stunned when she heard the president talk about the Benghazi attack. Obama wanted her to say that the attack had been a spontaneous demonstration triggered by an obscure video on the internet that demeaned the Prophet [of Islam].

Hillary told Obama, “Mr. President, that story isn't credible. Among other things, it ignores the fact that the attack occurred on 9/11.” But the president was adamant. He said, “Hillary, I need you to put out a State Department release as soon as possible.”

AN UNNAMED CLINTON TOP LEGAL ADVISOR RECOUNTING A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY OF STATE THE NIGHT OF THE BENGHAZI ATTACK ACCORDING TO A NEW BOOK BY JOURNALIST EDWARD KLEIN, JUNE 22

“Mayor of Toronto Rob Ford is returning to Canada. He's been in the United States in rehab. He's going back to Canada. He traded himself for five Taliban prisoners.

DAVID LETTERMAN, CBS, JUNE 18

“President Obama's approval rating in the U.S. is at its lowest point ever, 41 percent. After hearing this, the president said, “When did I become less popular in this country than soccer? How did that happen?”

CONAN O'BRIEN, TBS, JUNE 18

“This morning the Pentagon announced that the United States has captured a leader responsible for the Benghazi attacks. Republicans were ecstatic and said, “So, they finally got Hillary?”

CONAN O'BRIEN, TBS, JUNE 17

“Protesters at the World Cup got into trouble for burning American flags. It's a shame, because children in China worked very hard to make those flags.

IBID.

“President Obama is sending a couple hundred troops to Iraq. We spent six years trying to figure a way to get out of Iraq. And now we're back. But this time there is an exit strategy. Barack Obama has an exit strategy. In 2016, he's gone.

DAVID LETTERMAN, CBS, JUNE 17

“President Obama just had his annual physical, which showed that he's suffering some pain in his right foot. When asked why he doesn't get it treated, Obama said bitterly, “It's not covered by Obamacare.”

JIMMY FALLON, NBC, JUNE 16

“The president's doctor said Obama passed his physical. That's the first thing he's passed in the second term.

DAVID LETTERMAN, CBS, JUNE 16

“The Palestinian terrorists are threatening to die in hunger strikes. The government is passing a law to force feed them and the terrorists and extreme leftists are very angry. This time, I completely agree with them. There is no need to force feed them. Let them die.

ISRAELI DEPUTY EDUCATION MINISTER AVI WORTZMAN

“Worth nothing.

POLISH PRESIDENT SIKORSKI, IN A SECRETLY TAPED CONVERSATION, DESCRIBING THE VALUE OF HIS COUNTRY'S SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES

“When future generations try to understand how the world got carried away around the end of the 20th century by the panic over global warming, few things will amaze them more than the part played in stoking up the scare by the fiddling of official temperature data.

CHRISTOPHER BOOKER, AUTHOR OF “THE REAL GLOBAL WARMING DISASTER,” IN THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH OF LONDON, JUNE 22


“If I will be president, or in any position close to the US presidency, I will work at full strength and with all my heart for Israel. As it says in the Bible, ‘those who curse you are cursed and those who bless you are blessed,’ and as a believer I would love to be blessed from helping the state of Israel as much as I can.

GOV. MIKE HUCKABEE WHILE VISITING ISRAEL, JUNE 24



Reb Zev Nochum Schlesinger z"l

BY AVROHOM BIRNBAUM



Klal Yisroel lost a true solider of Hashem; the *hashkofah* of Agudas Yisroel lost one of its most dedicated adherents; his dear family lost a beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and guide; and this writer lost a dear mentor/friend, a friend who was always supportive but never afraid to critique - a true friend.

The loss of Reb Zev Schlesinger z"l, Reb Zev Nochum ben Reb Dovid, who passed away this past Thursday night, June 19, is not just the severing of another tenuous link to the previous generations. It is the loss of a model of a Jew that is virtually discontinued. A *baal habayis* whose *hashkofos* was so strong, so solid, so rooted in the Torah viewpoint that nothing could move him from his *emes*. He possessed an unswerving adherence to the views of the *gedolei* Torah of the generation and they in turn saw him as a trusted, dedicated emissary who would execute their *shelichus* without veering right or left.

Champion of Hashkofah

Reb Zev was a grandson of Moreinu Reb Yaakov Rosenheim, the great Agudah leader who was instrumental in establishing Agudas Yisroel and helping shepherd it through some of the most difficult, turbulent times that Am Yisroel has experienced in its 2000 year *golus*. He grew up in a home steeped in clear *hashkofah*, a *hashkofah* that taught that the *gedolei* Torah of each generation are those who set the agenda for *Klal Yisroel* and Reb Zev never tired of relating the numerous stories and anecdotes from *gedolei* Yisroel that he had witnessed firsthand in his youth.

In his later years, he deemed it his holy duty to transmit the *mesorah* and *hashkofah* that he had received from the previous generation. In his autobiographical book entitled, "In Defense of Torah Values" it is clear that his only purpose and objective in writing the book was to transmit the values that he himself had absorbed from the *gedolei* Torah and their emissaries, such as his



grandfather, Moreinu Reb Rosenheim.

He would often bemoan the fact that, in our generation, so little emphasis is placed on ideology, on *hashkofah*. He greatly desired that coupled with the tremendous strides in *limud haTorah* that the younger generation has made, they should conversely also make sure to be rooted in *hashkofah tehorah*. That combination of *limud haTorah* and deep commitment to Torah ideology is one

AT A FAMILY WEDDING: REB ZEV, LEFT, SITTING NEXT TO HIS BROTHER, RAV ELYAKIM SHLIT"l.

REB ZEV WITH HIS GRANDFATHER, MOREINU REB YAAKOV ROSENHEIM, AND HIS UNCLE, REB SHMUEL ROSENHEIM.



REB ZEV'S UNCLE, RAV YECHIEL MICHEL SCHLESINGER, FOUNDING ROSH YESHIVA OF YESHIVA KOL TORAH, BY WHOM HE LEARNED IN YESHIVA KOL TORAH.



REB ZEV WITH HIS GRANDFATHER, MOREINU REB YAAKOV ROSENHEIM, AND HIS SIBLINGS AT THE BAR MITZVAH OF HIS OLDER BROTHER, RAV ELYAKIM SCHLESINGER OF LONDON.

that ensures the continued existence of *Klal Yisroel* throughout the difficult *golus* and empowers young people to withstand the onslaught of challenges that attack our lifestyle both from without and within.

A couple of years ago, after Bais Medrash Govoah of Lakewood celebrated the 50th *Yahrtzeit* of Rav Aharon Kotler in Lakewood, Reb Zev penned an emotional letter to the *Yated* that sheds light on his own exalted value system.

Dear Editor,

This past Sunday, an *azkoroh* for the fiftieth *yahrtzeit* of the *manhig hador*, Rav Aharon Kotler *zt"l*, was organized by the Lakewood Yeshiva. I was debating whether, due to my advance age, I have the energy and the strength to travel to Lakewood from my home in Queens, NY, to participate in this event. I met Rav Aharon Kotler seventy-five years ago in Vienna in my parents' home after the third *Knessiah Gedolah* of Agudas Yisroel in Marienbad. All the newly elected officers of Agudas Yisroel, including Rav Aharon Kotler, attended a meeting in our house, where the world president, Moreinu Reb Yaakov Rosenheim, was staying with his oldest child, my mother. I also recalled that many years later, during the week of my wedding, Rav Aharon Kotler sent one of his *talmidim* to invite me with my *kallah* to celebrate *sheva brochos* in the *yeshiva* at 617 Sixth Street in Lakewood. I can't forget the warmth and *kedushah* I felt as I sat next to him.

Last week, after reading the long article in the *Yated* ... describing the life story of Rav Aharon, I firmly decided to participate in this extraordinary event. I started to realize that I may be the person who knew Rav Aharon the longest, having met him seventy-five years ago. Upon arriving in Lakewood, I was

assigned a seat at the very large dais due to the fact that I had met Rav Aharon Kotler seventy five years ago as well as due to my age. Sitting on the dais, I was able to look down and see tens of thousands of *yeshivaleit* and participants suddenly bursting into dance and song in a massive way. I suddenly came to the realization that this is the way it is going to look when we will be greeting *Moshiach* at the moment of the *geulah*. I became so emotionally affected by the thousands of people spontaneously reacting so joyously. I was not able to control the tears that ran down my face. Rav Aharon came to an assimilated America, and one aspect of his greatness was that he was not willing to compromise on *Yiddishkeit*, no matter how enticing the opportunities may have been. He prepared masses of *Yidden* for the *geulah*. The event was proof of the *nitzchios* of Torah. You had to be there to see the tens of thousands of people celebrating Rav Aharon Kotler's achievements. No movie or film would be able to capture the feeling of this *heilige* event.

Zev W Schlesinger,
Queens, NY

He Absorbed and Imparted A "Fragrant Spice"

Despite the fact that due to the upheavals of World War II, Reb Zev was not able to spend years learning in yeshivos as he would have liked, the depth and degree of *ahavas haTorah* that Reb Zev possessed was one of a person whose life was devoted to Torah.

At the first part of his *levaya* held at the Lakewood Yeshiva, Reb Zev's son-in-law, Rabbi Yaakov Gerstel addressed this by quoting the profound words of the Chazon Ish (*Emuna U'Bitachon*, 4-11) "Being punctilious in *din* can at times be found also in a person who did not [merit] to toil in Torah properly, provided that he is educated from his youth by his parents and Rabbeim

in punctiliousness and he is taught to ask and seek advice from *talmidei chachomim* in everything he does. Accustoming himself to constantly ask [and follow their guidance] becomes part of his very essence, causing him to fear even the slightest deviation from the *din*....”

Indeed, the Rosh Yeshiva of Lakewood, Rav Malkiel Kotler in his *hesped* compared Reb Zev to a store that sells fragrant spices. Reb Zev absorbed the fragrance of the *hashkofah* of the *gedolei hador* from two and three generations ago and he transmitted that wonderful fragrance and beauty to the coming generations. In fact, perhaps he saw this as his primary *shelichus*, his primary objective and with loyalty and trustworthiness he never tired of fulfilling that task. In fact, when someone asked him why he often repeated over and over the stories of *gedolei Yisroel* from the previous generations that he had witnessed, he responded. “Do we say Shema Yisroel once or do we say it twice a day, every day?!” Things that are important need to be repeated and repeated and internalized.

Illustrious Forebears/Ancestors

How did a man - born in Vienna between the two World Wars nearly ninety years ago - a cosmopolitan city where assimilation was rampant, merit to become such a repository of true Torah values? The answer is rooted in the home of his father, Reb Dovid Schlesinger and the influence of his grandfather, Moreinu Reb Yaakov Rosenheim.

Reb Zev was blessed to be part of a family of *gedolei Yisroel*. His father, himself a *talmid chochom* of stature, was born in Hamburg, Germany to his grandfather Rav Eliezer Lipman Schlesinger, *zt”l*, fondly known as the Tzadik of Hamburg. The best illustration of Reb Eliezer Lipman’s *tziddkus*, is a story told over about Rav Yeruchem Levovitz, *zt”l*, Mashgiach of the Mir Yeshiva in Lithuania. Once, while on a visit to Hamburg, Rav Yeruchem met Rav Eliezer Lipman. Upon his return to Mir, he told the *bochurim*, “Here in our Yeshiva we learn *Mesilas Yeschorim*; during my visit in Hamburg I met a living *Mesilas Yeschorim* by the name of Reb Eliezer Lipman Schlesinger”.

Throughout his life, Reb Zev distinctly remembered and retained the impression of living with his grandparents. When he was about 4 or 5 years old his parents sent him from Vienna to Hamburg, to spend a few weeks with his grandparents, to see and experience the life of a *Tzadik* in his home. He would fondly recall sleeping on a couch in the living room, waking up early while it was still dark outside. There, in the living room, a group of people would be sitting around the table with *Gemaras* in front of them, while his grandfather said the *shiur*, *ba'al peh* (by heart). His poor eyesight precluded him from using a *Gemara*.

Following the *shiur*, Rav Eliezer Lipman would go to the *mikva*. Since there were no heated *mikvaos* at the time, he was sometimes forced to chop away the ice during the winter.

A Hamburg resident at the time when he lived there once said, “If I would be allowed to say so, I would say that he was certainly one of the thirty six *tzaddikim*. He was a *talmid chochom* of tremendous stature and also a doctor of philosophy, mathematics and physics.

“He had a snow white beard and it appeared as if the *Shechina* was resting on him. His humility and *tznius*, his unique *middah* of *bittul*, of making nothing of himself is simply impossible to depict with pen and paper. One had to witness it to understand it.

When he davened in the Klaus in Hamburg he looked like a *malach elokim*...”

In the Home of His Father

It was in the home of this *tzaddik* that Reb Zev’s father, Reb Dovid, was raised. He was an accomplished *talmid chochom* whose vast stores of Torah knowledge were by and large gained from the private tutelage of his father.

Reb Zev, in his book, writes much about his father and the home in which he was raised:

“My father served as a role model par excellence. Throughout daily life we absorbed the importance of Torah, *mitzvos* and *mid-dos tovot* just by interacting with him. For example, on those occasions when one of the children broke or spilled something, my father would never get upset. Rather, he would explain to us that, “The only time a person should get upset is if one sins against Hashem! Otherwise, if one gets upset over a mishap, it would lose its effect when someone does an *aveirah* which is a real reason to be upset!”

Perhaps the words of Rav Shmuel Vosner said years later at the *levaya* of Reb Dovid best sums up the greatness of Reb Dovid. Rav Vosner, today one of the senior Poskei Hador and the person who was appointed by the Chazon Ish to be the Rav of Zichron Meir neighborhood in Bnei Brak grew up in Vienna and he knew Reb Dovid from his youth.

At Reb Dovid’s *levaya* he began to cry, exclaiming, “*Ich zog tzu as Reb Dovid Schlesinger is a Ben Olam Haba*”—I [Rav Vosner] can promise that Reb Dovid Schlesinger is a *Ben Olam Haba*.”

Growing Up in A Gathering Place for Gedolim

Reb Zev was very proud and devoted to his *mesorah* from the *Chassidei Ashkenaz* and would often relate that when *ybl”ch* his older brother, Rav Elyakim Schlesinger, today a Rosh Yeshiva in London, went to learn by Rav Yosef Tzvi Dushinsky, *zt”l*, Rav Dushinsky told him, “You will see here different *minhogim* and behavior from what you have seen in your father’s house. However, I want you to conduct yourself the way you have been used to and have been taught by your father.”

The Schlesinger home in Vienna was a true *bais vaad l’chachomim* and a home of *chesed*. As a child, young Zev was privileged to meet the greatest Roshei Yeshiva, Rabbonim and Admorim who frequented Vienna and often stayed or attended meetings at his parents’ home with his grandfather, Moreinu Rosenheim.

Reb Zev would speak of the time in 1936 when the Rogatchover Gaon, Harav Yosef Rosen came to Vienna to undergo surgery. Unfortunately, he was *niftar* shortly after while still in Vienna. His *aron* was brought into the home of the Zeirei Agudas Yisroel (Jugendgruppe) where *hespedim* were delivered. After the *hespedim*, he was brought to Poland for *kevura*.

A watershed in young Zev’s life was the Third Knessiah Gedolah of the World Agudas Yisroel movement in Marienbad, Czechoslovakia in 1937. Mr. Schlesinger recalled several meetings to plan the future of the fledgling Agudah movement held in his apartment in Vienna before the newly-elected leadership of Agudas Yisroel in Marienbad returned to their respective countries. His grandfather, Moreinu Reb Rosenheim, who stayed in their house, chaired all of those meetings. Throughout the meetings, throngs of people milled around outside to catch a glimpse of Reb Yaakov Rosenheim and the other dignitaries in attendance.

It was during this period of time that Reb Zev first met Rav Aharon Kotler, who was one of the younger participants. He also

distinctly recalled the impressive appearance of Rav Moshe Blau who had come especially from Eretz Yisroel to attend the convention and the meetings.

On one occasion, he heard a heated discussion taking place between the various participants, which was followed by loud voices. Moreinu Reb Yaakov Rosenheim, who was sitting quietly at the head of the table listening, suddenly arose and said, "Gentlemen, I simply cannot tolerate this noise!" At that, the room fell totally silent, thereby showing the respect towards the person who was chosen to receive the title of Moreinu by the Chofetz Chaim, Reb Chaim Ozer, the Imrei Emes [the Gerer Rebbe], and other luminaries. This event, that attested to the deep respect that his grandfather engendered by even the greatest Rabbonim, leaders and *askonim*, is one that remained permanently engraved in his memory bank!

Escape!

With the rise of Hitler in Germany and his subsequent invasion of Austria, Reb Dovid Schlesinger realized that he and his family had to escape. With the help of family members already living in Eretz Yisroel, his wife and children were miraculously able to escape Austria and journey to Eretz Yisroel via Switzerland. The family settled in Eretz Yisroel and Reb Dovid followed them a bit later, leaving all of his material possessions behind. Many who couldn't bear to leave behind anything remained in Austria and ultimately perished under the Nazis. Reb Dovid who never attached importance to the material was able to overcome that *nisayon* and thus saved his life.

Eventually the Schlesingers settled in Tel Aviv, where Reb Zev attended the Sinai Day School and subsequently Yeshiva Kol Torah in Yerushalayim, then headed by his uncle, Rav Yechiel Michel Schlesinger.

On the "Battlefield"

At the time, there were two concurrent battles going on in Eretz Yisroel. The first was the battle against the British Mandatory government by many Jews and the second was the battle for the soul of religious youth. In those years Zionism, both its secular form and also its religious incarnation as the Mizrachi Party was capturing the hearts and minds of religious youth and they were leaving their yeshivos, their families and in many cases abandoning their religious observance to join the splinter paramilitary groups, like Etzel and Lechi that fought against the British. Young Zev was rooted in the authentic Agudah *hashkofah* and not only was he not enticed to join these forces when many of his friends were, but to the contrary he tried to convince his friends not to fall for the tinsel of Zionism and Nationalism, even in its religious form.

It was for that reason that, for his entire life, Reb Zev felt very strongly that the ideology of religious Zionism, or Mizrachi as it was called back then, was so dangerous and so wrong. He would constantly point out that the *hashkofah* of religious Zionism was impossible to reconcile with authentic ideology as espoused by the *gedolei* Yisroel and he railed against those who, in the name of false *achdus* tried to paper over these differences. In fact, he devoted a whole chapter in his book to exposing these fallacies.

Even as a *bochur* he was so strong in his ideology that there were threats against his life from Etzel who saw him as a pernicious force that sought to discourage young people from joining them and therefore being considered a traitor to the Zionist enterprise.

Change of Location; Change of Life!

Things got so bad that his father decided to send him, in early



REB ZEV AT RAV AHARON KOTLER'S 50TH
YAHRTZEIT ASIFA IN LAKEWOOD.



1948, to the United States to visit his grandfather, Moreinu Reb Rosenheim who was then living in New York. Thus, young Zev Schlesinger found himself in New York for a visit which ended up changing the course of his life. In New York he lived with his grandfather for two years, until the latter moved to Eretz Yisroel.

el. He became very active in Zeirei Agudas Yisroel joining Mike Tress and later Moshe Sherer.

Throughout his life Reb Zev chose to focus on the ideology of Agudas Yisroel. Notwithstanding the wonderful things that Agudah did to bring together the youth of that time and later to advocate on behalf of Jews and *mosdos haTorah*, Reb Zev as a member of Zeirei and later a member of the Agudah and an active member of their Vaad Hapoel, never let them forget why the Agudah was founded and how the message and ideology of Agudas Yisroel must remain relevant and be transmitted to the youth.

Marriage

Another watershed in his life was his engagement in 1953 to Tziporah Goodman of Baltimore. Her father, Reb Eliyahu Zalman Goodman, was born in Timkowitz, a small town on the Polish-Russian border, and was fortunate to have learned at an early age in the yeshiva of Reb Isser Zalman Meltzer, *zt"l*. Reb Zev would frequently recount the following incident involving his father-in-law. One evening he [Reb Eliyahu Zalman] fell asleep on a bench in the *Bais Medrash*. When he awoke he found himself covered with a fur-lined coat. Later he was stunned to discover that the coat with which he was covered belonged to none other than Reb Isser Zalman Meltzer!

Reb Zev's mother-in-law, Menya, was born in Yerushalayim to her parents Rav Aryeh Leib Hacohen and Rivkah Lapin, who ultimately settled in Baltimore.

Tziporah Goodman was a student and graduate of Rebbetzin Vichna Kaplan's Bais Yaakov located in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. When the couple met, she was already teaching in the Bais Yaakov on the West Side.

Mrs. Schlesinger was supremely devoted to her husband and throughout their life together she embodied the ideal of being an *ezer k'negdo*. On many occasions Mr. Schlesinger would say that he would not have been able to accomplish even a fraction of what he did without her. They embodied that which *Chazal* say, "When a man and women live in harmony the *Shechina* resides among them. The harmony of purpose, the fact that his goals became her goals, was a tribute to her. The way that she cared for him in his later years when he was plagued by ill health was truly remarkable.

Choosing a Kehillah... The Influence of Rav Yaakov Teitelbaum

After his marriage, Reb Zev, who strongly felt that being part of a *kehillah* was imperative to family life, insisted on joining a *kehillah* that had an active Rov that would give his congregants *hadrocha*; a Rov who could maintain respect from his *mispallelim*; and simultaneously a Rov with the courage to express his Torah *hashkofos* without fearing any of his *mispallelim*.

When Rav Yaakov Teitelbaum whom Reb Zev had known from Vienna, moved after the war from London to America, their friendship was renewed. Ultimately, Rav Teitelbaum settled in Kew Gardens, Queens, New York, where he opened a *Bais Medrash*. Even before their marriage Reb Zev would join Rav Teitelbaum and the many friends from Vienna whom he would invite, for a yearly *seuda* on *Tu B'Shevat*. Reb Zev would look forward to those *seudos* with great excitement because they enabled him to meet many old friends from his childhood in Vienna. In addition, they afforded him the opportunity to come into close contact with the many distinguished *rabbonim* who were in attendance, such as the Kapishnitzer Rebbe, who also hailed from Vienna.

His contact with Rav Teitelbaum made him realize that this

was the Rov he was seeking. The Schlesingers therefore decided to move to Kew Gardens and become part of Rav Teitelbaum's *kehilla*, Khal Adas Yereim. It was a decision they never regretted.

After Rav Yaakov Teitelbaum's passing, Reb Zev continued to be an integral part of the shul led by his son, Rav Shlomo Teitelbaum.

Reb Zev was the founder of the Bais Yaakov of Queens and served on its board of directors for many years, and was involved in many other *mosdos* in Queens and areas of *askonus*, that went well beyond Queens and even beyond the United States.

The Loss of a Discontinued Model

The loss felt with Reb Zev's passing is the loss of a discontinued model of a Jew - A Jew who was not a Rosh Yeshiva or Rov or Rebbi, but nevertheless, the way he lived his life was something that every Jew could learn from. He lived his life without contradictions. He was a Jew who was *oisgehalten*, totally consistent in everything he did. His *emunah* was ironclad, his *bitochon* was such that he once said, "It is not good to be engaged in a *parnassa* where one is on salary. It is far better to be in a business, where you never know what you will make. In this way you see Hashem's *hashgocha protis* in everything that you do."

His *avodas Hashem*, his dealings in business, his every action was done with a sense of responsibility to Hashem and His people and to his illustrious ancestors so that he should be a worthy link in the chain and not shame them with his conduct.

Moreover, his *emunah* in the coming of *Moshiach* was literally tangible. He worried about *Klal Yisroel*. He was terrified that we were so complacent in *golus* that we were not noticing the *simonim* of potential *hester ponim*. He was simultaneously afraid of what the future would portend but at the same time deeply longed for *Moshiach*. He didn't stop talking about *Moshiach*... and now, it is our fervent hope that he will go in front of the *kisei hakovod* and intercede on behalf of *Klal Yisroel* whom he so loved.

The Levaya

His *levaya* was held on *erev Shabbos Parshas Korach* at Bais Medrash Govoah in Lakewood. *Hespedim* were delivered by the Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Malkiel Kotler; his nephew, Rav Eliezer Schlesinger, Rosh kollel- Harama London, and his son-in-law, Rav Yaakov Gerstel. The *levaya* then proceeded to Queens where Rav Teitelbaum and members of his shul where Reb Zev had davened for sixty years took leave of him. As it was after *chatzos* on *erev Shabbos* no *hespedim* were delivered.

On *motzoei* Shabbos, the *aron* was flown to Eretz Yisroel where Reb Zev was buried on Sunday, next to his father in the Ponovezh Bais Hakevaros, not far from Rav Shach, with whom Reb Zev was very close.

In Bnei Brak, *hespedim* were delivered by his older brother, Rav Elyakim Schlesinger of London who spoke via live telephone hook-up, his cousin, Rav Moshe Yehuda Schlesinger, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva Kol Torah, Rav Reuven Hochster, Mashigach of the Mir Yeshiva in Kiryas Brachfeld, Rav Leizer Turk, a cousin, Rav Amram Schlesinger, a cousin and his grandson, Rabbi Dovid Gerstel.

Reb Zev Schlesinger leaves behind his devoted wife, Mrs. Tziporah Schlesinger, his daughter and son-in-law, Rabbi and Mrs. Yaakov Gerstel of Lakewood, and his daughter Mrs. Sara Axelman, their children and grandchildren. He deeply loved and cared for them and imparted the foundations of his *hashkofah* to the coming generations. His children cared for him with tremendous *mesiras nefesh* during the last period of his life. *Yehi zichro boruch*.



Parshas Chukas

AHARON HAKOHEIN AND THE CLOUDS OF GLORY

By Rabbi Ahron Rapps

The *posuk* in *Parshas Chukas* states, “The entire community saw (*vayiru*) that Aharon died, and they wept for Aharon thirty days.” *Rashi* cites the *Gemara* in *Maseches Rosh Hashanah* which explains the verse of *vayiru* not as they saw, but as *vayarahu*, meaning that the community was exposed. This refers to the idea that as a result of the death of Aharon, the *Ananei Hakavod*, the Clouds of Glory, departed, and *Klal Yisroel* was exposed to the dangers of traveling in the *midbar*. We are to understand from here that the Clouds of Glory were granted to the *Bnei Yisroel* in the merit of Aharon. The *Maharal* in *Netzach* explains why those clouds reflected the role that Aharon served amongst *Klal Yisroel*.

There were three people responsible for *Klal Yisroel*’s existence during their sojourn in the *midbar*. Their food was provided by the *mann* that fell from the sky in the merit of Moshe, the well that provided them with water was in the merit of Miriam, and the Clouds of Glory that protected them were in the *zechus* of Aharon. In attempting to explain the relationship between the *Ananei Hakavod* and Aharon, we will contrast it in terms of the *be’er* that was provided in the *zechus* of Miriam.

The *Maharal* says that in a relationship, the two parties relate to each other in accordance with their role in the relationship. The man represents the *nosein*, while the woman serves as the *mekabel*. This relationship isn’t coincidental. Rather, it is a reflection of their true essence. The *ishah* strives for true growth provided by her husband. Thus, the *be’er* was granted to *Klal Yisroel* through a woman, Miriam. Water is provided to man through the natural process of rain falling from heaven. Well water requires specific effort to be physically elevated and made usable to man. It thus reflects the true element of growth, personified by a woman, who represents growth. Thus, the desire of *Klal Yisroel* to connect to their ultimate *Nosein*, Hashem, is reflected through the *be’er* in the merit of Miriam. The *Maharal* adds that the role of Miriam was to represent the yearning of *Klal Yisroel* to connect with Hashem, while the role of Aharon Hakohein was to represent the *ratzon* of Hashem to connect to His nation, *Klal Yisroel*.

The *Gemara* in *Maseches Kiddushin* discusses the actual role the *kohein* serves amongst *Klal Yisroel*. He is a messenger, but who is considered his sender? The *Gemara* explains that he is considered the messenger of Hashem. The *kohein*

serves Hashem by performing the *avodah* of the *korbanos* of the *Bnei Yisroel*. The *Maharal* in *Gur Aryeh* says that although Moshe was initially meant to serve as the *kohein* for the *avodah* of *Klal Yisroel*, in a sense he lost his role as the *shliach* of Hashem, because he initially refused to serve as the messenger of Hashem to go to Paroh and demand the release of the *Bnei Yisroel* from *Mitzrayim*. He could not serve as the *shliach* of Hashem by being a *kohein* if he wasn’t willing to be the *shliach* of Hashem to go to Paroh. Aharon, on the other hand, became the messenger of Hashem and reflected the *Nosein*’s *ratzon* to relate to His *mekabel*, *Klal Yisroel*.

When Hashem wishes to, in a sense, come to earth, He is concealed in a cloud. The *posuk* in *Parshas Yisro* describing the awesome scene of *Har Sinai*, when Hashem gave the Torah to His people, states, “It was on the third day, in the morning, that there was thunder and lightning, a heavy cloud was on the mountain.” The *posuk* in *Parshas Vayeilech* states, “Hashem revealed Himself in the tent Tent in a pillar of cloud.” The *Maharal* explains that in our limited physical perception, clouds provide the source of life, water, to a needy world. The true Source is Hashem, and it is through *teva*, the natural order of the physical world, that Hashem has provided its needs in a form that won’t remove the capacity for *bechirah*, freedom of choice. Thus, when the true Source, Hashem, wishes to be concealed and relate to the physical world, He is hidden within a cloud.

Miriam represents the desire of *Klal Yisroel* to connect with their Creator. The Clouds of Glory reflect Hashem’s will to relate to *Am Yisroel*. Aharon, as the *shliach* of Hashem, serves to reveal Hashem’s will to relate. Hashem relates within the clouds, and thus they protected *Klal Yisroel* because of Aharon. The identity of the messenger is purely in terms of his sender; therefore, it was this quality that defined Aharon. As a *kohein*, Aharon merged worlds. He connected husband and wife, man and his fellow man, and man and his Creator. Miriam reflects our will to be subjects of Hashem, while Aharon represents Hashem’s will to be our G-d. Thus, when Aharon died, the *Ananei Hakavod* departed, for in Aharon lies the connection to the Clouds of Glory.

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CALENDAR CALCULATIONS

BY RABBI DOVID HEBER

Last week's question:

Where in the Continental United States does candle-lighting time never get later than 7:10 p.m. due to the fact that they do not observe Daylight Saving Time? Where in the Continental United States is there a place that observes DST, yet candle-lighting time is still never later than 7:30 p.m.?

Answer to last week's question:

During this time of year, candle-lighting time is very late on Friday afternoon. For example, in South Bend, Indiana, candle-lighting time (for those who light 18 minutes before sunset) will be as late as 9:05 p.m. and candle-lighting time in Grand Rapids, Michigan, will be as late as 9:07 p.m. Even "early Shabbos" at *plag haminchah* cannot begin there until 7:50 p.m.

However, some locations remain relatively early, even throughout the summer. Candle-lighting time never gets later than 7:10 p.m. in the southeastern corner of Arizona. For example, the latest sunset in Douglas, Arizona, is at 7:27 p.m. Therefore, the latest candle-lighting time there is at 7:09 p.m. The reason the time is so early is because Arizona does not observe Daylight Saving Time. The "earliest-latest" candle-lighting time for a *kehillah* is 7:16 p.m. in Tucson, Arizona. This means that *licht bentching* in Tucson never gets later than this time. [The only other state that does not observe DST is Hawaii. Times also run very early there. For example, the latest sunset in Hilo is 7:03 p.m. However, since it is not in the Continental United States, it is not the correct answer.]

Even though DST is observed, candle-lighting time in the eastern-most section of the Central Time Zone region in the Florida Panhandle is never later than 7:30 pm. For example, the latest candle-lighting time in Wewahitchka, Florida, is at 7:28 p.m. CDT.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

On Rosh Chodesh (that occurs on a weekday), the prevalent minhag is that the posuk of "Ve'amarta lobem" is first lained in the Kobein's aliyah and then repeated in Levi (the minhag haGr)"a is different; that issue is beyond the scope of our question). This means that this posuk is lained during the year in an aliyah for a Kobein, Levi and Yisroel (it is in Chamishi of Parshas Pinchos). What other pesukim can be lained in one calendar year for a Kobein, Levi and Yisroel? [Do not include aliyos that can be lained by anyone - e.g. maftir, acharon, etc.].



1 TAMMUZ

- Yaakov and family went down to Mitzrayim, 1523 B.C.E.
- Twenty of Ashkenazic Jewry's greatest rabbonim including the *Baal Rokeach* met in the Mainz yeshiva to decide upon a list of *takonos* to protect the Jewish community from the incited non-Jewish populace during the Crusades, 1223. These *takonos* known as *Takonos SHU" M* (Takonos of the cities of Spier-Vormeiza-Magenza [Speyer-Worms-Mainz]), included the following provisions:
 - 1) Every *Yid* must make time to learn Torah, and those unable to learn *Gemora*, should learn *chumash*, *parshas hashavua* or *Midrash*.
 - 2) No talking in *shul* where everyone should conduct themselves with the proper decorum and awe.
 - 3) Everyone must pay their fair share of taxes, not turn to non-Jewish courts, must observe the prohibition of *ribis*, and the provision for the use of money from endowments to support the education of the youth.

Accompanying the *takonos* was a severe warning that whoever transgressed them would be ostracized, and if he didn't do *teshuvah* within a month, the community could give his money to the authorities and disenfranchise him. Since the time of *Rashi*, the French and Rhineland *gedolim* met regularly to pass *takonos* for the community's welfare including in 1160 in Troyes, 1196 in Mainz, 1220 in Mainz, 1223 in Speyer, and 1381 in Mainz.

- The pope entered Rome and spurned the *sifrei Torah* taken out by the Jewish community to honor him, 1295.
- 4,000 Jews were killed by a bloodthirsty mob in Seville, 1391. Thousands more Jews agreed to be baptized to save their lives. The riots spread from here, throughout Spain.
- Lithuanians viciously massacred 2,300 Jews in Kovno, 1941.
- Bialystok, Poland fell to the Germans, 1941.
- Dr. Israel Kastner, a Hungarian Jew, and leader of the Zionists in Budapest, was found guilty by a district court in Israel of collaboration with the Nazis, 1955.

2 TAMMUZ

- The sun stood still in Givon and the moon in Emek Ayalon for *Yehoshua* in the war against the kings from the south, 1270 B.C.E.
- 12 Jews of Cologne were martyred, 1266.

- First printed edition of the *Sefer Hachinuch*, 1523.
- Rav Menashe b. Yisroel petitioned for permission for Jews to immigrate and practice Judaism in England, 1656. Permission was debated by the Council of State who couldn't reach a final decision. Nevertheless, the authorities closed their eyes to Jewish immigration which began to trickle into the country.
- An Auto da Fe' was held in honor of the marriage of Carlos II to Louis Marie d'Orleans, 1680. It lasted 14 hours and was the last time a royal Auto da Fe was held. The king himself set light to the quemadero (bonfire). Eighteen people were burned to death and the remaining 54 were sentenced to the galley or life imprisonment.
- In Kamenitz-Podolsk, the Sabbatean Frankists supported by the local Bishop Dembovsky forced a disputation with the local *rabbonim*, 1757. The *rabbonim* had earlier put the Frankists into *cherem* due to their immoral and heretical behavior.

After the bishop declared the Frankists victors in the disputation, the *Gemora* was condemned and thousands of copies burned. Subsequently, the Frankists became Christian openly and eventually assimilated into the Polish gentry. One of the Frankists' most famous sons was the musical composer Chopin.

- General Yona Yakir, along with eight other high ranking officials and officers (five of them Jewish), were murdered by Stalin, 1937. Yakir, one of the founders of the Red Army, had been appointed commander of the Leningrad military region less than three weeks earlier. A 3-time recipient of the Order of the Red Banner for his impressive achievements, he was killed on trumped up charges of being a "Trotskyist" and a "Nazi agent."

Yakir was one of the creators of the first large tank and air force formations in the world. He strongly supported and developed the theory of deep operations, which was considered the most outstanding theoretical innovation in the entire history of military art. His reforms made the Red Army into the most advanced army in the world. The German Wehrmacht copied Soviet innovations in preparation for World War II.

Yakir's murder marked the beginning of the 1930's Great Purge in which, in a series of show trials, Stalin moved to consolidate his

power by eliminating all potential sources of opposition within the Communist party, the army, the secret police, and the administrative apparatus. Jews exercised a great deal of influence within all these institutions and, as a result, formed the largest group of victims of the Stalinist purges.

Four out of five Soviet marshals, some 90% of the generals, 80% of the colonels, and in all, 80% of officers above the rank of captain, were shot or detained in labor camps. The purge greatly weakened the army and almost cost Stalin WWII.

Jews comprised about 500,000 of the ten-million purge victims. The secret police forces used to implement these purges were often led by Jews who in turn were killed, until the influence of Jews within the secret police was substantially diminished.

Of the 1,500 high-ranking Jewish victims of Stalin, many were fanatic Communists who had given a hand to the persecution, murder and deportation to Siberia of tens of thousands of their religious Jewish brothers for the crime of "religious indoctrination" during 1920-1937.

3 TAMMUZ

- The Haidamak Massacres in the Ukraine, 1768. The peasant serfs and Cossacks united in paramilitary bands, and led uprisings similarly to Chmielnicki (*Gezeiros Tach V'Tat*) 120 years earlier. The Poles and Jews defended the city of Uman together under the Polish commander, Ivan Gonta. The next day, convinced by the Polish revolutionary Zheleznyak that only the Jews would be attacked, Gonta allowed the fortified city to be entered without a fight.

Approximately 8,000 Jews were killed, many of them trying to defend themselves near the *shul*. As soon as the Jews were all massacred, the Haidamaks began to kill the Poles. Although they were murderers who killed 20,000 innocent Jews, the Haidamaks were Ukrainian nationalists who are celebrated in Ukrainian folklore and literature until today.

- 1,500 Jews in Kovno and 11,000 Jews in Kishinev were killed, 1941.
- Emperor Alexander II of Russia gave the Jews permission to print seforim and Jewish books, 1871.

4 TAMMUZ

- Crusader massacres of the Jews in Xanten and

Eller (Germany), 1096. This was the second massacre at Xanten in a month, leaving fifty Jews dead. At Eller, five Jewish community leaders were assigned the task (by the community) of killing all the members and then themselves, rather than be slaughtered by the Crusaders. Only four wounded were left from the 300 member community.

- Rav Meir of Rothenberg was imprisoned and 40 Jews killed on charges of ritual murder, 1286.
- *Chumash* with *Ramban* first published in 1490.
- Jews and Poles of Tulczyn were massacred after they were fooled by a Cossack ruse, 1648. An agreement between the 2,000 Jews and 600 Christians of Tulczyn to defend their town at all costs succeeded in preventing the Cossacks from capturing it. Kryvonos, the Cossack leader, contacted the local governor and told him that their hatred was directed solely against the Jews, and if they would be delivered up, the Cossacks would leave the Poles alone. When the nobles asked the Jews to deliver up their arms, the Jews realized they were being betrayed, and wanted to revenge themselves on the Christian traitors. However, their leader Rabbi Aharon warned them that the Catholic Poles everywhere would take vengeance for a Jewish massacre by exterminating Jews.

After the Cossacks had taken everything from the Jews, they offered them the choice between death and baptism. One thousand Jews who remained steadfast were tortured and executed before the eyes of the Polish nobles. The Cossacks spared ten *rabbanim* to extort large ransoms from their communities.

The Poles were immediately punished for their treachery and slain by the Cossacks. This was beneficial in the end as throughout the long Cossack wars that followed, the Poles then sided steadfastly with the Jews.

- The Jewish Quarter in Prague was destroyed by French troops who shelled the area, 1689. In one *shul* the roof caved in, killing the 100 people who had sought refuge there. Most of the population was taken in by their Christian neighbors until new homes could be built.
- Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand was assassinated at Sarajevo, precipitating World War I, 1914. The two alliances consisted of Russia, Britain and France against Germany and Austria. Turkey allied itself with Germany and Italy with Britain. Numerous other countries also took sides.

In all, out of the 65,000,000 men who fought, 1,500,000 were Jews. One hundred thousand German Jews fought, of whom 12,000 were killed. In Russia, a reputed quarter of a million Jews fought for the Czar who they hated. Facing them on the Eastern front were

three Jewish field-m Marshals and eight Jewish generals commanding the Austro-Hungarian forces.

World War I caused immense havoc and turnover in the Jewish world. The old world order was shattered, and the secular and assimilationist elements were able to gain the upper hand in most Jewish *kehillos* and marginalize the *frum Yidden* who were put on the defensive and forced to find new strategies to maintain and uphold their traditional lifestyle.

The situation similarly changed dramatically in favor of the Zionists in Palestine. After Turkey entered the war in November 1914, a Jewish member of the British cabinet, Herbert Samuel independently submitted a memorandum, *The Future of Palestine*, to the cabinet in January 1915 introducing “the dream of a Jewish state, prosperous, progressive, and the home of a brilliant civilization”. He showed that the British war effort would clearly be assisted if such an apparently all-powerful Jewish ally was on board. This eventually led to the Balfour Declaration in 1917 and to the Zionists taking control of Palestine from the Yishuv Hayoshon.

- Nazis murdered the male Jews of Drobian, Lithuania, 1941.
- Yerushalayim was bombed for the first time during the War of Independence, 1948.

5 TAMMUZ

- *Yechezkel ben Buzi Hakohen* gave his prophecy (mentioned in the beginning of *Sefer Yechezkel*) at the *Kvar River*, 5 years after *Golus Yehoyochin*, 428 B.C.E.
- Massacre of the Jews of Wiener-Neustadt, Austria, 1298.
- The Pope allows Italian Jewish converts accused by the Inquisition the right to know who their accusers were, 1299.
- Rav Yom Tov Lipmann Heller, the *Tosfos Yom Tov*, was imprisoned for 40 days, 1629.
- Death of Daniel Mendoza, a Sephardi Jew who was known as the father of scientific boxing, 1876. Billing himself as Mendoza the Jew, he became one of England’s greatest boxing champions.
- Mass killings of Jews in Auschwitz by the Nazis began, 1942.
- A postwar pogrom in Kielce, Poland, left 42 people, mostly Jews, dead and 50 wounded, 1946. Army and security officers took part in the attack that was sparked by the false story spread by Walenty Blaszyk that his son had been kidnapped by Jews and taken to the basement of the house on 7 Plany St., where there were possibly other dead children buried there. The fact that this house had no basement did not deter the Poles from carrying out the pogrom. The event is considered Europe’s last pogrom.

6 TAMMUZ

- Titus set up battering rams to assault the walls of Yerushalayim, 70 C.E.
- Crusaders massacred Jews of Mehr, 1096.
- Massacre of the Jews of Ifhauben, Austria, 1298.
- Solomon de Medina was the first professing Jew to receive a knighthood in England, 1700. Medina had helped finance what became known as the “glorious revolution” — which instated William of Orange and Mary (the daughter of James II) on the throne. Their rule ended any hope for a restoration of Catholic rule in England.
- Catherine II of Russia restricted the area where Jews were permitted to trade, 1794.
- Pogrom in Jassy, Romania claimed 5,000 Jewish lives, 1941.
- In a daring operation, Israel rescued the hostages hijacked to Entebbe, Uganda, 1976. The 256 hostages from an Air France plane were held prisoners by Palestinian terrorists and Ugandan soldiers under the rule of Idi Amin. After 8 days they were rescued by Israeli commandos under the command of Yonatan Netanyahu (brother of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu) who was shot in the back during the rescue. Naturally, the United Nations condemned Israel for violating Ugandan Sovereignty.

7 TAMMUZ

- Jewish Quarter of Prague was burned and looted, 1559.
- Jews of Ostroha established this day as Purim Ostroha, to commemorate their community being saved during the Russian-Polish war when Russian troops attacked the *shul*, mistaking it for a fortress, 1792.
- The Swedish government abolished discrimination against Jews, 1838. Unfortunately due to public objections ruling was repealed. Another 30 years were to pass before Jews were given the right to vote.
- Alexander II issued a decree returning Cantonists under the age of 20 to their parents and ordering that they be exempt from service until they had reached that age, 1859.
- Ukrainian Petliura pogrom kills many Jews, 1919.
- President Roosevelt called for an international conference to consider the “displaced persons” problem, 1938. The negligible results highlighted the passive role of the Western world and emboldened the Nazis to continue with their genocidal plans.
- Hundreds of Jews of Yurburg, Lithuania were executed by the Nazis, 1941.
- Nazi-instigated pogrom claimed many Jewish lives in Lemberg, 1941.



YAHRTZEITS

- 1 Tammuz - Yosef Hatzaddik born and died on this date (1560-1450 B.C.E)
- 1 Tammuz - Rav Kalonymus Kalman Hal-
evi Epstein of Krakow, author of Me'or
V'shemesh (1827)
- 1 Tammuz - Rav Shlomo Halberstam, the
first Bobover Rebbe (1905)
- 1 Tammuz - Rav Yisroel Najara, Rav of Gaza,
mechaber of *Koh Ribbon Olam* (1628)
- 2 Tammuz - Rav Nachman of Horodenka,
talmid of the Baal Shem Tov and grand-
father of Rav Nachman of Breslov, after
whom he was named (1765)
- 2 Tammuz - Rabi Shmuel b. Yechiel H"yd of
Cologne, killed by the Crusaders (1096)
- 2 Tammuz - Rav Avrohom Twersky, the
Trisker Maggid (1889)
- 2 Tammuz - Rav Tzvi Meir Panet, Dejher
Rebbe of Williamsburg (2003)
- 2 Tammuz - Reb Elimelech Gavriel (Mike)
Tress, American Agudah and Hatzolah
leader who with superhuman *mesiras
nefesh* spearheaded tremendous efforts
on behalf of *Klal Yisroel* both in the USA
and for the *she'eiris hapeitah* left in
Europe (1967)
- 3 Tammuz - Rav Yosef Chaim Shneur Kotler,
Rosh Yeshivas Lakewood (1982)
- 3 Tammuz - Rav Yaakov Sapir, author of *Even
Sapir*
- 3 Tammuz - Rav Menachem Mendel
Schneerson, 7th Lubavitcher Rebbe
(1994)
- 4 Tammuz - Rabi Ya'akov ben Meir of the
Ba'alei Tosfos (Rabbeinu Tam) (1171)
- 4 Tammuz - Rav Pinchos Halevi Horowitz,
the Baal Hafla'ah (1805)
- 4 Tammuz - Rav Ezriel Hildesheimer, talmid
of the Aruch La'ner (1899)
- 4 Tammuz - Rav Chaim Moshe Mandel,
mekubal in Bnei Brak (1996)
- 4 Tammuz - Rav Mordechai Shakovitzky, Rav
in Leeds (England) Rosh Kollel in Johan-
nesburg and one of the founders of the
South African Kiruv Movement (1998)
- 5 Tammuz - Rav Ezriel Meir Eiger, Hy"d, Rosh
Yeshivas Ahavas Torah in Lublin
- 6 Tammuz - Rav Yaakov Yisroel Algazi, Rav of
Sephardic community of Yerushalayim,
and Rosh Yeshiva in the Beit El Yeshiva
(1756)
- 6 Tammuz - Rav Chaim De la Rosa, mekubal
and author of *Toras Chaim* (1886)
- 7 Tammuz - Rav Boruch Frankel-Teumim,
author of *Boruch Ta'am* (1828)
- 7 Tammuz - Rav Simcha Bunim Alter, the
Gerrer Rebbe - the Lev Simcha (1992)
- 7 Tammuz - Rav Gedalia Schorr, Rosh Yeshi-
vas Torah Voda'as (1979)

NEWS ROUND-UP

by M. Gardner

NO CHRISTIANS REMAIN IN MOSUL AS EVERYONE FLEES THE JIHADISTS

Vatican Radio reports that Chaldean Archbishop Amel Nona said he thought Mosul's last remaining Christians had left the city which until 2003 was home to 35,000 faithful.

The Archbishop, 46, said: "We received threats... [and] now all the faithful have fled the city. I wonder if they will ever return there." He described reports of attacks to four churches and a monastery in Mosul.

The Christians headed for the surrounding Nineveh Plains, taking refuge in a number of ancient Christian villages. The Archbishop also sought sanctuary in Tal Kayf, a village two miles from Mosul. He described a rush to find a place for refugees in schools, classrooms and empty houses.

Nona said: "We have never seen anything like this – a large city such as Mosul attacked and in chaos." He explained that the initial attacks against the city began on the west side. Suddenly the armed forces and the police fled Mosul, leaving it to the mercy of the

attackers.

The militants responsible for the attacks are part of the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIS), a terrorist organization linked to al-Qaeda and in control of key areas of north-west Syria.

The Archbishop reported, "We have to wait until we have a better understanding of the situation. What we do know is that they are extremists."

The moderator of Jihad Watch poses: Imagine if 35,000 Muslims had received threats and fled a city. The media coverage would be intense. The UN would issue resolutions. Obama and David Cameron would offer aid and contemplate military action. But when 35,000 Christians flee Mosul because of threats from Islamic jihadists, no one cares. As long as no one committed any "Islamophobia," all is well.

SHOCKEN JEWISH DEPARTMENT STORE HEIRS AWARDED \$68M FROM GERMANY IN REPARATIONS

JTA reports that German courts ordered

Germany to pay the heirs of a Jewish department store chain nearly \$68 million more in restitution and interest for properties confiscated by the Nazis. Their value is estimated at about \$41 million; the rest is interest.

Before World War II, brothers Simon and Salman Shocken had numerous department stores, mostly in what later would be East Germany. The most well known was the store in the city of Chemnitz, in a building designed by the architect Erich Mendelsohn that contained the first elevator in the city. In 1938, the department stores were confiscated by the Nazis. Last year, Shocken family members attended the inauguration of a museum about the Shocken department stores which was opened in that building.

After German unification, the state paid the family about \$27 million in restitution for the Chemnitz building alone.

The family claimed the other buildings were undervalued. In the present ruling, the court ordered the heirs, who live in Israel and the U.S., to receive an additional 50 million euros.

Salman Shocken also founded Schocken Books in prewar Berlin. He later moved

the company to the United States and Israel where currently his descendants have a partial ownership of the Ha'aretz newspaper.

SHOOTING ATTACK AT PARIS SHUL, OTHER ASSAULTS



A recent potentially deadly terrorist attack on a Paris *shul* attempted on *Shabbos* in broad daylight, was thwarted at the very last minute

A pair of unidentified attackers approached the *shul* on Julien Lacroix Street in the French capital's 20th Arrondissement on heavy motorcycles, armed with an AK-47 assault rifle and a handgun. They began aiming their guns at bystanders and the building itself and pretended to open fire, but fled the scene when they saw armed French police officers guarding the *shul*.

No shots were fired, and although the incident took place at a time when few people were in the building, it has left the local Jewish community extremely shaken.

Other attacks included two assaults of Jews on the Metro. In one episode on June 12, a Jewish man and woman were the target of anti-Semitic taunts by three passengers. A Middle Eastern man confronted them and called them "dirty Jews" while saying, "I'm a Nazi, I'm German, long live Hitler, we're going to gas you, he didn't finish the job." A younger woman praised him for "telling the truth." A third passenger then hit the Jewish man in the leg while the woman shouted: "We're the Muslims, we will blow you up."

Earlier that day, a 14 year-old Jewish girl was assaulted by 4 other girls of African and Middle Eastern appearance, while traveling on a metro to her Jewish school.

ISRAELI POLICE: PALESTINIANS FLOODING EMERGENCY CALL CENTER WITH FAKE KIDNAPPING ALERTS

Ma'ariv reported that police officials in Israel say that some 42 percent of all #100 emergency calls they field in Yesha are

placed by Palestinians intentionally trying to tie up the lines to hinder response time to real alerts.

A former police official who was in charge of the region until 2009, explained that dispatchers dealt with insults and abuse on a daily basis. "It was insufferable. I saw with my own eyes how our people in the center had to cope with it," he said.

The officer was explaining why the police dispatcher who received a phone call from one of the kidnapped boys quickly whispering, "We've been kidnapped, we've been kidnapped..." before the line went dead, ignored it as prank call.

Overall Israeli police statistics say that some 75 percent of the approximately 2 million calls that reach dispatchers annually do not require a police response, or are listed as "annoyance" calls.

Because the police didn't take the call seriously, the captors had an eight hour lead in escaping detection. Security sources said that even if the call had been correctly identified immediately, the chances of rescuing the teens was low because it would have taken many long minutes for the forces to reach the scene and alert other security bodies.

Police blamed the Shin Bet for not foiling the abduction, which it said was an intelligence blunder. The Shin Bet has thwarted several similar attempts in the last few months.

THE SYRIAN AND IRAQI WARS ARE RESHAPING THE REGION

Pinchas Inbari of the Institute for Contemporary Affairs discussed how the Syrian War is reshaping the entire Middle East:

•Syria is being transformed from a Sunni to a Shiite country. A key aim behind the recent Syrian elections was to form the country more of Alawites, Shiites, and minorities, and less of Sunnis. The overwhelming majority of refugees who have fled are Sunnis.

About three million of its pre-war population of 22 million have fled the country. Five million have abandoned their homes for other places within Syria, meaning that more than one-third of the citizens of Syria have left their homes. Even though the Alawite-Shiite elements are still minorities, they are increasingly powerful ones.

The Syrian army destroyed densely populated Sunni neighborhoods in Damascus that supported the rebels. The Assad regime has no intention of allowing the refugees to return, and is issuing new identity cards to Syrian citizens to invalidate the refugees' citizenship.

•The Syrian ethnic-cleansing policy also includes the Sunni Palestinians in Syria. The

regime is systematically destroying the refugee camps in Syria to cause (Sunni) emigration. Senior Palestinian figures have been assassinated, and attacks on PLO offices occur routinely.

•Lebanon and Jordan, where most of the refugees have fled, are also being altered:

Lebanon is becoming more Sunni and less Shiite – dramatically so. While official UN statistics state that 20 percent of Lebanon's four million residents are Syrian refugees, the actual number reaches 40-50 percent. These are embittered people who seek revenge. The Lebanese president says behind closed doors that the Syrian refugees in Lebanon are an existential threat to the country. The radical Sunni influence in Lebanon has indeed been strengthened by the infiltration of al-Qaeda members among the Palestinian refugees from the destroyed camps in Syria.

The growth of the Sunni population in Lebanon has also spelled trouble for Hezbollah, exposing it to Sunni terror on one hand and undermining its status in the Lebanese Shiite community on the other.

The influx of refugees from Syria to Jordan, in addition to the previous influx of refugees from Iraq, is causing the Jordanian government many security, economic, and social problems, but it has also reduced the Palestinians in the country to a minority.

In Jordan the demographic equation is not related to the Sunni-Shiite balance since Jordan is an overwhelmingly Sunni country.

Damascus is intentionally neglecting the Daraa border near Jordan so Syrian refugees can stream into Jordan. Meanwhile the Syrian refugees have abandoned the camps built for them there and are now dispersed throughout the country, becoming part of its societal fabric.

Egypt, a country with an ancient history and Sunni demographic stability, is spared the problems that are plaguing the Levant. Libya is mired in anarchy as the Bedouin tribes and Salafi groups prevent the state from organizing itself.

•The West Bank is undergoing pressures which will certainly be copied in Gaza. Amid the deteriorating economic conditions, many young Palestinians are seeking to emigrate.

•Some minority communities in the Levant and in Libya are expressing a positive attitude toward Israel and repudiating pan-Arabism.

Libya's Berber minority (30% of the country) – the Amazigh – held its first world conference of the Amazigh in Tunis in October 2011. Amazigh president Fathi Ben Khalifa said, "The interest of the world Amazigh movement lies with Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, and the Palestinian problem is the problem of the Palestinians alone."

The Kurds' websites also lean pro-Israel. The Kurds in Syria are estimated at 20-30 percent of the population. Minority communities in the Levant and in Libya look at Israel positively and are repudiating pan-Arabism.

INCREASE IN U.S. OIL PRODUCTION LAST YEAR WAS AMONG LARGEST EVER



UPI reports that BP's 63rd annual energy review reports that the U.S. oil production last year saw a large annual rise, according to BP Chief Economist Christof Ruhl. The British company report, which assesses the oil sector, said, "The U.S. increase in 2013, up by 1.1 million barrels a day, was one of the biggest annual oil production increases the world has ever seen" and accounted for nearly all of the production gains from outside the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Nevertheless, U.S. consumption didn't keep up with production. The increase in the U.S.'s demand of 400,000 bpd was the largest, even outpacing the Chinese demand growth of 390,000 bpd for the first time in 15 years.

The increase helped offset global supply disruptions in Libya to keep prices stable.

UN ENVOY PROSOR TO WORLD: WHERE IS THE CONDEMNATION FOR KIDNAPPING BOYS?

Yisrael Hayom reported that Israeli Ambassador to the U.N. Ron Prosor reproached the international community for its silence in the days following the kidnapping of three youths.

"It has been five days since our boys went missing," Prosor said. "I ask the international community -- where are you? Where are you?"

Next to pictures of the kidnapped youths, Prosor said, "The kidnapping took place just 10 days after Fatah and Hamas formed a unity government. All those in the international community who rushed to bless this marriage, should look into the eyes of the heartbroken parents and have the courage to take responsibility by condemning the kid-

napping.

"We have gotten a taste of the bitter tragedy that comes with Hamas in a Palestinian government. Terrorism is what they know, is what they preach, and is what they teach.

"The Palestinians recently signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child. They obviously signed without reading it.

"I call on the Security Council and the international community to unequivocally condemn the kidnapping and ensure that our boys return home safely to their families."

After five days of silence, European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton finally found the energy to condemn the kidnapping.

"We condemn in the strongest terms the abduction of three Israeli students in the West Bank, and call for their immediate release and safe return to their families," Ashton said in a statement. "Such acts can only undermine international efforts to encourage a resumption of peace negotiations."

In Israel EU Ambassador Lars Faaborg-Andersen issued a strong condemnation of the kidnapping.

NEW CONSTRUCTION PROJECT FOR 172 SETTLEMENTS IN HAR CHOMA GIVEN THE GO-AHEAD

Jerusalem Online reported that Israel approved the construction of 172 new homes for Jewish settlers in the Har Choma neighborhood.

As usual, the announcement drew furious reaction from the Palestinians and the international community, with U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon saying he was "deeply concerned" and urging Israel to freeze its settlement activity.

PROPERTY TAXES ON YERUSHALAYIM'S ABSENTEE APARTMENTS TO DOUBLE

The Jerusalem Post reported that a sweeping measure to double property taxes on the capital's over 10,000 "ghost apartments" is being approved this week.

The secondary residences, which are utilized for a fraction of the year, will be subject to the new tax beginning on January 1, 2015 if they are uninhabited for nine months of the year.

"The phenomenon, typically propagated by wealthy Diaspora Jews, has markedly reduced the city's housing supply, resulting in under-uninhabited neighborhoods and stalled housing and economic growth," said Deputy Mayor Ofer Berkowitz, who has campaigned for 3 years to tax the absent homeowners.

"We believe that some of these people will

rent their apartments because of this decision," Berkowitz said. "The message is clear: Owning an apartment and not using it hurts the market," he said. "I don't want to penalize these people -- I really don't think they are aware that they are hurting Yerushalayim. If we increase the number of apartments on the market, we will increase revenue coming into the city."

"On top of the 10,000 empty apartments in the capital, there are 1,500 abandoned buildings that we're also trying to get back on the market," he said. "We are proposing to make another law about this issue so we can improve the economy."

Current commercial property laws stipulate that once a building is declared abandoned, its owners are not required to pay property taxes for up to eight years.

INTEL EXEC FRENKEL SAYS PALESTINIAN COLLEAGUES ARE REPULSED BY NEPHEW'S ABDUCTION

Globes reported that Yishai Frenkel, General Manager of Intel's Yerushalayim R&D Center and a veteran figure in Israeli high tech, took an unofficial leave of absence from Intel Corporation following his nephew Naftali Frenkel's kidnapping, to spend time with the family. Frenkel and his brother Avi, Naftali's father, both live with their families in Nof Ayalon, near Modi'in.



Frenkel said the news has been very hard on his family, which had just celebrated Naftali's grandfather's 85th birthday together.

Frenkel said, "We're supporting each other and getting updates from the security forces."

Frenkel has five children, ages 9 to 21, who he said are very upset: "They are coping with a painful reality, each in their own way. Naftali is their cousin, friend and neighbor. It is not easy for any of them."

From the software world, he said many have been in touch to offer their support: "I have received many calls and messages of support and solidarity from Intel people in Israel and around the world" including many Palestinian colleagues from the software industry in Ramallah who said they were "repulsed" by the abductions of the three boys.

In Israel, Frenkel is known for his efforts to integrate the *chareidi* and Palestinians communities into jobs in the software industry, where Intel employs 8,500 workers. "We have

succeeded in integrating over 100 *chareidi* men and women in various jobs at Intel. We also work with Palestinian software houses in the Ramallah region. This is very important and close to my heart.”

SHENKAR PROF. DODIUK'S NANO-COATING PREVENTS ICE FROM ADHERING TO AIRPLANES

Israel21c.org reports that Prof. Hanna Dodiuk, head of the polymers and plastics engineering department at Israel's Shenkar College of Engineering and Design, has developed a novel nanotechnology that will prevent ice from sticking to airplane wings, car windshields or electrical lines- a world where grime and graffiti are easily cleaned off walls, and windows repel dust.

Prof. Dodiuk's lab's coatings were introduced to the industry at the June 15-18 Nanotech 2014 conference in Washington, DC, and are more effective, more durable and more environmentally friendly than anything currently on the market.

After earning her doctorate in chemistry from Tel Aviv University in 1979, Prof. Dodiuk worked at Rafael Military Industries for 18 years and became a renowned expert in adhesion technology. She devised coatings used widely in the avionics, aeronautics and defense industries. She has 15 patents to her name.

Named for a grandmother murdered in Auschwitz, Dodiuk was urged by her parents to get a good education and choose a portable profession in case she might have to flee her home as they did.

Dodiuk, who recently celebrated 20 years at Shenkar and has published two books, says, “For me, the need to show the world that we are here, and no-one can make us vanish, is a real motivation.”

Through Shenkar's PhD program with the University of Massachusetts-Lowell, sponsored by the Pernick Foundation, two of Dodiuk's graduate students are fine-tuning the product in a nano-manufacturing lab. Massachusetts is financing the project because ice buildup is a huge problem for aircraft and electrical infrastructure in the cold Northeast.

Dodiuk says she invented the idea for an anti-stick product ten years ago, but had to prepare it in a way that the price, production and durability were reasonable.

“The problem of durability is the hardest. Every day on the Internet you see new commercial materials meant to repel ice, and I've

tried them all. They don't work.”

Dodiuk's invention was inspired by her study of leaves. “Around 1999, I was invited to Bayer AG in Germany as a consultant to develop a coating to which nothing would adhere. In medical devices, it is important that the surface does not get wet. I looked in the literature and there was nothing. So I went to nature.”

She discovered that leaves repel water because the surface is made up of nanoparticles and microparticles with the space between them so small that water cannot penetrate. Her course of action was to create a technology that mimics leaves' hydrophobic quality.

When the Israeli minister of defense approached her about solving the problem of ice adhesion on plane wings, she realized the same principle would work.

DAVID CAMERON: ISIS IS PLANNING TO ATTACK UK

According to The Guardian, Prime Minister David Cameron has warned that the crisis in Iraq must not be dismissed as “nothing to do with us” since the same Islamic jihadists are also planning to attack the UK.

Speaking in the House of Commons, he said, “The right answer is to be long term, hard-headed, patient and intelligent with the interventions that we make, and the most important intervention of all is to make sure that these governments are fully representative of the people who live in their countries and they remove the support for the extremists. Not just in Syria, but we have to help in Iraq, in Somalia, in Nigeria, in Mali, because these problems will come back and hit us at home if we don't.”

Cameron recommended that the Iraqi government take a more inclusive approach to the Shia, Sunni and Kurd populations who live in the country.

Cameron declared the UK would take a consistent approach to countries in the Middle East, saying it was possible to have a dialogue with a country that had destabilized the region while supporting the “voices of moderation, the voices that support democracy, inclusive government, pluralistic politics, under the rule of law”.



He went on to reassure MPs that “our engagement with the Saudi Arabians, with Qataris, with Emiratis and others is all on the basis that none of us should be supporting those violent terrorists or extremists.”

ISRAEL FEARS US SELLING OUT TO IRAN DUE TO IRAQ CRISIS

French Press Agency reported that Israel fears that a jihadist offensive in Iraq may prompt concessions to arch-foe Iran from its longtime ally the United States. There is already talk of possible cooperation between Washington and Tehran to help stop the insurgency.

After US Secretary of State John Kerry stated that he would be open to cooperating with Iran on Iraq, a top Iranian official said Tehran could consider working with the United States over the crisis in Iraq, if talks on its nuclear program are successful.

US Deputy Secretary of State William Burns held a brief meeting with Iranian officials in Vienna on the sidelines of talks between Tehran and the major powers over its controversial nuclear program.

A Voice of Israel public radio cited a senior official as saying, “If Washington needs Tehran's help to solve the Iraq crisis, the United States will need to be more flexible in negotiations on Iran's nuclear program.”

JEWISH MAYOR RETURNS TO KHARKIV AFTER ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

Kharkiv Mayor Gennady Kernes, 54, who was discharged from the Israeli Elisha hospital where he was treated since being shot in April, has returned to Kharkiv. Kernes arrived at the Kharkiv Airport in a wheelchair.

The mayor of Ukraine's second-largest city was shot in the back on April 28 while cycling on the outskirts of Kharkiv. The following night, he was transported to Israel, where he underwent a complicated ten-hour surgery of the spine and vital organs at the Rambam hospital followed by rehabilitation in the Elisha clinic.

Kernes' right leg has fully recovered and left leg function has been restored up to the knee. The Kharkiv mayor can already walk independently with plaster splints.

“The prognosis is positive,” said Kernes' Israeli doctor. His wounded internal organs are expected to recover.

Kernes pledged he would return to Kharkiv City Hall. “My plans are to do

everything to make the life in Kharkiv stable and peaceful,” he says.

AUSTRALIAN VITAMIN A REINFORCED BANANA NOW STARTING HUMAN TRIALS



French Press Agency reported that a super-enriched banana genetically engineered to improve the lives of millions of people in Africa will soon have its first human trial, to test how much it raises vitamin A levels in humans.

The bananas are now being sent to the United States, to undergo a six-week trial.

The special banana varieties were enriched with alpha and beta carotene which the body converts to vitamin A. They are scheduled to be grown in Uganda by 2020.

The Queensland University of Technology (QUT) project hopes to see conclusive results by year end. “Good science can make a massive difference here by enriching staple crops such as Ugandan bananas with pro-vitamin A and providing poor and subsistence-farming populations with nutritionally rewarding food,” said project leader Professor James Dale.

Dale said the Highland or East African cooking banana had low levels of micro-nutrients, particularly pro-vitamin A and iron. “The consequences of vitamin A deficiency are dire with 650,000-700,000 children world-wide dying ... each year and at least another 300,000 going blind,” he said.

Researchers decided that enriching the staple food was the best way to help ease the problem.

The modified banana’s flesh is more orange than cream.

IDF UNCOVERS SECRET TUNNELS, EXPLOSIVES LABS IN WEST BANK

(JNS.org) The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Combat Engineering Corps uncovered numerous secret underground compartments in Palestinian homes during the course of the ongoing search for three Israeli teens kidnapped in the West Bank.

Engineering Corps Special Forces discovered the secret compartments in various locations, in one case under a washing ma-

chine. Israeli troops also uncovered more than a dozen explosives laboratories, the IDF said.

“We were not surprised, but the number [we discovered] is not what you see every day,” an officer from the unit said, reported *Israel Hayom*. “Still, on the first floor lives a family and on the third floor there is an explosives lab.”

PALESTINIANS TO PUSH FOR FULL EU RECOGNITION BY END OF YEAR

(*Israel Hayom/Exclusive to JNS.org*) In light of the collapsed peace talks with Israel, the Palestinian Authority (PA) is planning a diplomatic push for full recognition by the European Union by the end of 2014, PA Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki told the Ramallah-based newspaper *Al-Ayyam*.

Al-Maliki said he had raised the issue before European foreign ministers, who promised to consider the Palestinian initiative favorably.

FOUAD AJAMI DIES



Foad Ajami, a Middle East scholar who rallied support for the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 and advised policy makers in the Bush administration, died at the age of 68.

He served as a senior fellow in the Hoover Institution at Stanford University.

Ajami wrote hundreds of essays on Arab and Islamic politics and US foreign policy.

Malcolm Hoenlein, Executive Vice Chairman, of the Presidents Conference praised Ajami as “a great friend, courageous advocate and brilliant analyst. The passing of Dr. Ajami is a profound loss on many levels. I, like many others, was privileged to benefit from his insight and wisdom. He was a friend of Israel and the American Jewish community.

He said, “The clarity and depth of his understanding of events, particularly regarding the Middle East, enabled him to anticipate developments and to offer sound policy recommendations. He often went against conventional and politically correct thinking and ably stood his ground against detractors. His voice will be sorely missed by all who knew him, read his analysis, and those who value

truth and integrity. We extend condolences to his family and myriad friends”.

ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO INVESTIGATE ARAB MK ZOABI FOR INCITEMENT

(JNS.org) Israeli police say there is enough evidence to investigate Arab-Israeli MK Haneen Zoabi for incitement over controversial statements she recently made about the three kidnapped Israeli teens.

Israeli police received several complaints after Zoabi said the kidnappers were not terrorists. Police authorities have passed their opinion to Attorney-General Yehuda Weinstein, who will conduct the investigation.

“They are people who cannot see any way to change their reality, and they are forced to use these means until Israeli society wises up a bit and sees and feels the suffering of the other,” Zoabi had said in an interview with *Radio Tel Aviv*.

Zoabi, who is a member of the Arab nationalist party Balad, has had a controversial political career. She has been an outspoken opponent of Israel and participated in the 2010 flotilla that tried to break the naval blockade on Gaza.

“I didn’t break any law, rather, I am fulfilling my moral, human and political obligation to fight against oppression and for justice,” Zoabi said in response to the police statement, the *Jerusalem Post* reported.

HAMAS TERRORIST FREED IN SHALIT DEAL ARRESTED FOR PASSOVER ATTACK

(JNS.org) A Hamas terrorist who was freed as part of the 2011 Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal was arrested last month for his role in the *erev Pesach* terror attack in April, the Israeli Shin Bet security service revealed Monday.



The flag of Hamas.

According to the Shin Bet, Ziad Awad, 42, a Hamas operative who had been jailed for 11 years for terrorist activity, along with his son Azzadin Ziad Hassan Awad, 18, were arrested May 7 for the shooting attack on April 14 that killed Baruch Mizrachi and injured his wife and child as they drove to attend a *Pesach seder* near Hebron.

The Shin Bet said that the father was accused of carrying out the shooting, while the younger Awad allegedly assisted him in the planning and the escape. During interrogation, the son implicated his father in the shooting and gave the police the gun used in the attack.

Additionally, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu ordered that Awad's home be destroyed, resuming a policy of home demolitions of terrorists that had been suspended since 2005.

"I gave the directive to destroy the home of the terrorist, a Hamas man, as part of the general effort to combat Hamas," Netanyahu said in a statement.

In case, fifty-one prisoners released in the 2011 deal that secured Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit's freedom were re-arrested June 18 among a group of more than 65 Palestinians detained by the IDF as part of the search for three kidnapped boys.

NETANYAHU BLASTS PRESBYTERIAN DIVESTMENT FROM ISRAEL

Prime Minister Netanyahu blasted Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) for its vote to divest from Israel.

"When the Middle East is fragmented in this horrible war, this savage, savage war between militant Shiites and militant Sunnis... the only place where you have freedom, tolerance, protection of minorities... protection of Christians and all other faiths, is Israel," Netanyahu said.

"It should trouble all people and of conscience and morality because it's so disgraceful," he said of the vote. "You come to Israel, and you see the one democracy that upholds basic human rights, that guards the rights of all minorities, that protects Christians."

"I would suggest to the Presbyterian organizations — fly to the Middle East. Come and see Israel for the embattled democracy that it is, and then take a bus tour. Go to Libya, go to Syria, go to Iraq — and see the difference. And I would give them two pieces of advice — make sure it is an armor-plated bus and, second, don't say that you're Christians."

"Christians are persecuted throughout the Middle East. So most Americans understand that Israel is a beacon of civilization and moderation," he said.

PCUSA leaders voted at the church's biennial general assembly in Detroit to divest from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions, all companies that do business with Israel, in a 310-303 vote.

"Because we are a historical peacemaking church, what we have done is we have stood up for nonviolent means of resistance to oppression, and we have sent a clear message

to a struggling society that we support their efforts to resist in a nonviolent way the oppression being thrust upon them," Rev. Jeffrey DeYoe of the Israel/Palestine Mission Network told The Associated Press.

HUCKABEE VISITS MISSING ISRAELI TEEN'S FAMILY

(JNS.org) Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee visited the family of kidnapped Israeli teen Naftali Frenkel on Sunday.

"I came here to show solidarity with the Frenkel family. This is a young man who is also an American citizen and I am here not just as an American, but as a father," Huckabee said, according to *Israel Hayom*.

The former Republican presidential candidate said Israel and the world should do everything possible to get the three abducted teens back, and that the U.S. would always stand by Israel's side in such difficult times.

"I think Israelis have every right, and America should be with Israel in saying: You touch that boy, who's an American citizen, and you will have to pay for it. That should be the only message we are sending right now," Huckabee said.

ARMED GAZAN ARRESTED NEAR YATED

(JNS.org) A terrorist armed with a grenade infiltrated southern Israel from the Gaza Strip on Sunday. He was apprehended between the Yated and Sdei Avraham communities by a local patrol, *Israel Hayom* reported.

Israeli forces called to the scene arrested him and brought him in for interrogation. The man said he infiltrated the border to Israel from southern Gaza. No casualties were reported in the incident.

NETANYAHU: PROOF HAMAS IS BEHIND KIDNAPPING

(Israel Hayom/Exclusive to JNS.org) As the massive effort to rescue three kidnapped Israeli teens continued, Prime Minister Netanyahu declared on Sunday that Israel possesses "clear-cut evidence" that Hamas was behind the abduction.

"Soon, this information will be made public and then the world will put the remarks made by Mahmoud Abbas in Saudi Arabia to the test in a practical manner," Netanyahu said, referring to Abbas' call for the release of the captured boys.

In his remarks last week, Abbas said the three teens are "human beings like us and should be returned." He also vowed to dissolve the Fatah-Hamas unity government if Hamas is proven to have been behind the

kidnapping, adding that those who kidnapped the three teenagers "want to destroy us" and that the Palestinian Authority would "hold them accountable."

ISRAELI STUDENTS' NANOSATELLITE LAUNCHED INTO SPACE



(Israel Hayom/Exclusive to JNS.org) Israel successfully launched its first nanosatellite into space, from the Yasnay Airbase in Russia, along with 36 other civilian satellites sponsored by various countries.

The Duchifat-1 nanosatellite was designed and built by Herzliya Science Center high school students, in a project partially sponsored by the Israel Space Agency and the Herzliya Municipality.

The 1.9-pound cube-shaped satellite, which is 3.9 inches long in each dimension, was named for Israel's national bird, the hoopoe ("duchifat" in Hebrew).

The satellite was designed to assist travelers and hikers who lose their way in area where there is no regular cellular reception, enabling them to send a distress call to the satellite from any communication device. The satellite will broadcast a signal back to a control center set up in Herzliya, identifying the stranded individuals' location.

NEW EMERGENCY ALERT APP RELEASED

(JNS.org) In the wake of the kidnapping near Hebron, United Hatzalah released a new emergency alert app.

"Our main mission at United Hatzalah is to get to medical emergencies within two minutes all over the country," said Eli Beer, president and founder of United Hatzalah. "With the recent kidnappings, we feel obliged to share our knowledge and technology to provide that extra layer of protection for the people of Israel."

Dubbed "SOS," the app utilizes existing GPS-oriented emergency technology called LifeCompass used by United Hatzalah for medical emergencies.

According to United Hatzalah, when a person uses the app, a call simultaneously goes out to the police and a United Hatzalah dispatch center with the person's GPS coor-

dinates. The system will also contact any family members or friends.

IRANIAN LEADERS BLAME ISRAEL AND U.S. FOR ISIS JIHADIST ATTACKS

(JNS.org) Iranian Army Chief of Staff Gen. Hassan Firouzabadi blamed Israel for creating and supporting the jihadist terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

“ISIS is Israel’s cover up for distancing the revolutionary forces from Israeli borders and creating a margin of security for the Zionists, and the Zionist media have also admitted this fact,” he said, according to the Iranian *Fars News Agency*.

Meanwhile, the commander of Iran’s Basij force, Brig.-Gen. Mohammed Reza Naqdi, blamed the recent ISIS surge on a U.S. plot.

“The scene they have created in Iraq is the result of the United States’ behind-the-scenes attempts to sow discord and they are certainly the main mastermind of these events,” said Naqdi, *Fars* reported.

KERRY SAYS U.S. WILL SHARE INFORMATION WITH IRAN ON IRAQ CRISIS

(JNS.org) Secretary of State Kerry said that the U.S. will share limited information with Iran over the crisis in Iraq, but the two foes will not work closely together.

“We are interested in communicating with Iran. That the Iranians know what we’re thinking, that we know what they’re thinking and there is a sharing of information so people aren’t making mistakes,” Kerry said in an interview with *NBC*’s “The Today Show.”

But when asked about stronger cooperation with Iran, who has deep ties with Iraq’s Shi’a population, Kerry said, “No. We’re not sitting around contemplating how we’re going to do that or if we’re going to do that. That’s not on the table.”

Israeli officials, along with numerous American leaders, have expressed caution over cooperating with Iran over Iraq, fearing that Iran could use it as leverage in nuclear talks.

ALAN GROSS’S MOTHER DIES AS HE REMAINS IN CUBAN PRISON

(JNS.org) The mother of Alan Gross, who has been imprisoned in Cuba since December 2009 after he was sentenced to a 15-year term for bringing communications devices to the country’s Jewish community, died June 18.



Gross was working for a U.S. firm called Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI) to promote democracy. Cuba convicted him of “crimes against the state.”

Evelyn Gross, 92, died in Plano, Texas, from lung cancer. The Gross family said in a statement that she was diagnosed four years ago and that her “last wish was to see her son before she died.”

“Cuban officials refused to give Alan a humanitarian furlough to visit his mother, despite repeated pleas and the certainty that she was dying,” the family said.

ISRAELI KILLED BY MORTAR FIRE FROM SYRIA

(JNS.org) A 13-year-old Israeli boy was killed Sunday in the Golan Heights by an explosion resulting from a mortar shell fired from Syria.

Three others were injured after the detonation of the mortar, which was fired from near the Quneitra crossing between Syria and the Israeli-controlled portion of the Golan Heights. The teenage victim, identified as Mohammed Karaka, was killed while riding in a vehicle with his father, an Israeli Defense Ministry employee working to bolster Israel’s border fence with Syria.

TUNISIAN JIHADIST GROUP MAY TARGET JEWISH TOURISTS DURING RAMADAN

(JNS.org) A report by a Tunisian counterterrorism expert claims that the North African jihadist group Ansar al-Sharia may be planning attacks against Jewish tourists as well as other Western targets in North Africa during Ramadan.

According to the report published by the Jihad and Terrorism Threat Monitor of the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), Ali Zawi, a Tunisian counterterrorism expert, told the London-based Arab daily *al-Quds al-Arabi* that he believes Jewish tourists visiting the Tunisian island of Djerba, home to one of the oldest synagogues in the world and a small Jewish community, may be targeted.

U.S. AND ISRAEL DISCUSS ADVANCING ECONOMIC COOPERATION

(JNS.org) Secretary of the Treasury Jack Lew met with Israeli economic leaders to discuss advancing economic ties between the two countries as part of the U.S.-Israel Joint Economic Development Group (JEDG).

During his first trip to Israel in his current position, Lew, who is an observant Jew, praised Israel for its high-tech prowess.

“As one of the most technologically advanced and innovative economies in the world, Israel is an important economic partner to the United States,” Lew said.

“We look forward to taking concrete steps to liberalize trade standards, increase market access for agricultural products, and advance a new bilateral science and technology agreement, which would allow for close cooperation on innovation and research,” Lew added.

The JEDG is an annual bilateral meeting between the U.S. and Israel to discuss how to improve economic ties between the two countries as well as with the global economy.

PALESTINIAN SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN CELEBRATING KIDNAPPING GOES VIRAL

(JNS.org) Palestinian activists have formed their own viral social media campaign to celebrate the June 12 kidnapping of three Israeli teenagers.

Called “Three Shalits,” the Palestinian social media campaign references Gilad Shalit, the former Israeli soldier who was abducted by Hamas in 2006 and swapped for 1,027 Palestinian terrorist prisoners in 2011.

The campaign’s logo is characterized by a three-finger salute in reference to the three recently kidnapped Israeli teens.

Using the “Three Shalits” hashtag on Facebook and Twitter, there are hundreds of photographs of Palestinians and their supporters, including many young children, brandishing the three-finger salute in

hopes that the Israeli teens will be used to free more Palestinian prisoners.

“While containing Palestinian messages, the [Three Shalits] campaign has spread to include Arab countries, as well as Arab and Palestinian ex-patriots the world over,” the official Palestinian daily *Al-Quds* reported.

MET CANCELS SIMULCAST OF ANTI-ISRAEL OPERA, PROCEEDS WITH LIVE SHOWINGS

(*JNS.org*) New York’s Metropolitan Opera (Met) canceled an HD transmission of the anti-Israel opera “The Death of Klinghoffer” following widespread outreach efforts that began with a letter from a media watchdog organization, but eight live performances of the opera will proceed as scheduled this fall.

The opera, about the 1985 hijacking of the Achille Lauro cruise ship and Palestinian terrorists’ murder of one of its Jewish passengers, has been heavily criticized for its sanitization of Palestinian terrorism and invoking of anti-Semitic canards.

Myron Kaplan, an opera expert and a senior research analyst for the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA), was the first commentator to publicly criticize the Met’s planned Nov. 15 simulcast of the anti-Israel opera. In an open letter to Met General Manager Peter Gelb that was published by *JNS.org*, Kaplan wrote that the HD transmission would give “wide international distribution to what is, at its heart, an anti-Jewish slander.”

Kaplan’s letter sparked a broader Jewish community campaign against the Met’s simulcast and live showings of the opera. The Met then announced June 17 that it would pull the simulcast, but not the eight live performances from Oct. 20 to Nov. 15, citing discussions on the issue between Gelb and Anti-Defamation League National Director Abraham Foxman.

“I’m convinced that the opera is not anti-Semitic,” Gelb said in a statement. “But I’ve also become convinced that there is genuine concern in the international Jewish community that the live transmission of ‘The Death of Klinghoffer’ would be inappropriate at this time of rising anti-Semitism, particularly in Europe.”

63% OF ALS PATIENTS SHOW IMPROVEMENT OR STABILIZATION AFTER TREATMENT WITH BRAINSTORM’S NUROWN

Brainstorm Therapeutics reports that interim results from the Company’s Phase IIa ALS (Lou Gehrig’s) trial conducted at Hadassah Medical Center in Yerushalayim, Israel were presented at the Joint Congress of European Neurology by Professor Dimitrios Karussis.

BrainStorm Cell Therapeutics Inc. has developed first-of-its-kind adult stem cell therapies from autologous bone marrow cells for the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases.

In the company’s previous Phase I/II trial and this Phase IIa trial, a total of 26 patients were treated with NurOwn™, BrainStorm’s stem cell therapy.

In the three month pre-treatment period, 71% of the patients showed progression of disease with decline in neurological function. After treatment with NurOwn, none of the 26 patients suffered serious adverse events and in the three months post-treatment period, 63% of the patients showed stabilization or improvement in neurological function. The IT



transplanted patients also showed indications of neurotrophic and regenerative effects in the treated arm.

BrainStorm will soon launch its Phase II study in the United States.

Chaim Lebovits, BrainStorm’s President, said, “The fact that some of the patients actually demonstrated clinical improvement surpassed our expectations of achieving stabilization or reduced rate of decline. We look forward to building on these results in our double-blind, placebo controlled, multi-center study currently being launched in the USA.”

ISRAELI LEADERS URGE GLOBAL CONDEMNATION OF KIDNAPPING

(*JNS.org*) Meeting in Jerusalem last week with Middle East Quartet representative and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Prime Minister Netanyahu said, “Anybody who supports peace must tell the Palestinian Authority that they cannot build a government that is backed by the kidnapers of children and the murderers of innocents.”

Netanyahu said the international community “has to condemn” Hamas, which recently formed a unity government with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas’s Fatah party, for terrorist activities such as the kidnapping of three Israel teenagers.

Blair said Hamas has “a very clear choice to make.”

“There cannot be a choice that has political engagement on the one hand, and violence on the other. And the only way this is ever going to work is if all violence stops—the terrorism, the kidnappings, the killings,” he said.

Israeli Ambassador to the U.N. Ron Prosor called out the international community for its silence on June 12 kidnapping.

Prosor said, “I ask the international community, where are you? Where are you?”

After five days of silence, European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton condemned the kidnapping.

JEWISH MUSEUM IN RADOMSK POLAND TARGETED IN HATE ATTACK

Yeshiva World News reports that just before re-opening following extensive renovations, the Jewish museum in Radomsk, Poland’s city square was targeted by vandals.

The outdoor museum’s stone façade was damaged significantly. Police launched an investigation and it is hoped that surveillance videos will reveal the perpetrators.

The museum’s re-opening took place as scheduled on Monday, 25 Sivan, and was attended by local officials and diplomats throughout Europe.

UNCLASSIFIED US STATE DEPARTMENT REPORTS SHOW OBAMA ADMINISTRATIONS CLOSE TIES TO THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

The Gulf News reported that the Obama administration maintained close ties to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Tunisia, Syria, Libya and beyond.

The Obama administration conducted an assessment of the Muslim Brotherhood in 2010

and 2011, beginning even before the events known as the “Arab Spring” erupted in Tunisia and in Egypt. The President personally issued Presidential Study Directive 11 (PSD-11) in 2010, ordering an assessment of



the Muslim Brotherhood and other “political Islamist” movements, including the ruling AKP in Turkey, ultimately concluding that the United States should shift from its longstanding policy of supporting stable authoritarian regimes in the Middle East and North Africa, to a policy of backing “moderate” Islamic political movements.

To this day, PSD-11 remains classified, in part because it reveals an embarrassingly naïve and uninformed view of trends in the Middle East and North Africa region. However, the Al Hewan centre in Washington, DC obtained the documents in question and revealed them.

Through an ongoing Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuit, thousands of pages of documentation of the US State Department’s dealings with the Muslim Brotherhood are being declassified and released to the public.

The documents obtained under the FOIA confirm that the Obama administration maintained frequent contact and ties with the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood. At one point, in April 2012, US officials arranged for the public relations director of the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood, Mohammad Gaair, to come to Washington to speak at a conference on “Islamists in Power” hosted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

A State Department Cable classified “Confidential” report says the following: “On April 2 [2012], Mission Benghazi met with a senior member of the Muslim Brotherhood steering committee... He described the Muslim Brotherhood’s decision to form a political party as both an opportunity and an obligation in post-revolution Libya after years of operating underground...”

Another State Department paper marked “Sensitive but Unclassified (SBU)” contained talking points for Deputy Secretary of State William Burns’ scheduled July 14, 2012 meeting with Mohammad Sawan, the head of the Brotherhood’s Justice and Construction Party. The document is heavily redacted, but nevertheless provides clear indication of Washington’s sympathies for the emergence of the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood (LMB) as a major political force in the post-Gaddafi Libya.

NANOSE: THE BREATHALYZER TEST THAT SNIFFS OUT LUNG CANCER BEFORE IT SPREADS

No Camels reports that lung cancer is considered the deadliest of all cancers, the culprit for over 27 percent of all cancer deaths in the U.S. annually, because it is so difficult to detect its deadly progression.



Now a new device developed by a team of Israeli, American, and British cancer researchers may turn the tide by both accurately detecting lung cancer and identifying its stage of progression. The breathalyzer test, embedded with a “Na-Nose” nanotech chip to literally “sniff out” cancer tumors, was developed by Prof. Nir Peled of Tel Aviv University’s Sackler Faculty of Medicine, Prof. Hossam Haick (inventor) of the Technion, and Prof. Fred Hirsch of the University of Colorado School of Medicine in Denver.

A study was conducted on 358 patients in Denver, Tel Aviv, Liverpool, and Jacksonville, who were either diagnosed with or at risk for lung cancer.

“Our NaNose was able to detect lung cancer with 90 percent accuracy even when the lung nodule was tiny and hard to sample,” said Dr. Peled. “The bigger the tumor, the more robust the signature.”

Lung cancer tumors produce chemicals called volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which easily evaporate into the air and produce a discernible scent profile. Prof. Haick harnessed nanotechnology to develop

the highly sensitive NaNose chip, which detects the unique “signature” of VOCs in exhaled breath. In four out of five cases, the device differentiated between benign and malignant lung lesions and even different cancer subtypes.

Dr. Peled explains, “We’re hoping to have a device that would be able to give you a go/no-go result — something’s wrong, go get an X-ray.”

The Boston-based company Alpha Szenczor has licensed the technology and hopes to introduce it to the market within the next few years. Meanwhile, a new, smaller version of the device that can plug into a computer’s USB port, has since been developed.

EZRA SHAAH VISITS WITH RAV CHAIM KANIEVSKY, ASKS WHAT TO DO AS A ZECHUS FOR HIS GRANDSON

Kikar Shabbos reported that Mr. Ezra Shaar, grandfather of captive Gilad Shaar, visited Rav Chaim Kanievsky and asked for a brocho for his grandson. According to the report, Rav Kanievsky responded in a pained voice, “Hashem Ya’azor shehu yimalet mi’tzara u’shivya bimheira - May Hashem help, and may he speedily escape his tribulations and captivity.”

When asked what the family members can do as a zechus, Rav Chaim told them to increase their limud haTorah and yiras shomayim. Men should learn Hilchos Shvi’is ahead of the upcoming shemittah year. Women should bentsch licht earlier than required. His words prompted Jewish women all over the country (and throughout the world) to be mekabel Shabbos early as a zechus for the kidnapped boys.

Rav Chaim gave a brocha that Hakodosh Boruch Hu should help that in the zechus of all these ma’asim tovim, there will be a yeshuah bimheirah.

UZI LANDAU: OBAMA ADMINISTRATION IS AN ACCESSORY TO TERROR

Times of Israel reports that Minister Uzi Landau accused the US government of contributing to a rise in the number of terror attacks against Israeli citizens by recognizing the Hamas-Fatah unity government headed by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.



Speaking at a meeting with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, Landau (Yisrael Beiteinu) said, “Unfortunately, with the establishment of the Abbas-Hamas government, we warned of the harm the Israeli public may suffer, and unfortunately our predictions were confirmed,” Landau said, referring to the recent abduction of 3 teenagers. “This act reveals the true face of the terror government led by Mahmoud Abbas.”

Landau further urged the international community at large to refrain from offering any legitimacy to the Palestinian unity government.

ISRAELI LEGO-LIKE SMARTBRICKS WILL REDUCE CONSTRUCTION COSTS BY 50%

Green Prophet reports on a new Israeli invention called SmartBrick. The Magink company owned by Ronnie Zohar has invented a new material solution for the building industry: modular bricks which stack, creating both form and function for new housing while costing 50 percent less.

SmartBrick looks like LEGO blocks but the sides of the bricks can unlock revealing wiring and inner support structures. Each brick costs about \$25 dollars.

For now the blocks are made from cement but “greener” materials of the future could be used to print these bricks of the future. The blocks can

be assembled to be utilized as part of the floor, wall, and roof.

NETANYAHU SAYS STERN'S GEIRUS BILL WILL NOT PASS IF BAYIT YEHUDI IS AGAINST

Arutz-7 reports that Bayit Yehudi party chairman, Economics Minister Naftali Bennett, announced at a Yom Iyun conducted for his party's MKs at Beit Harav Kook in Yerushalayim, that the members of his Knesset faction will use all parliamentary tools at their disposal to fight "anti-Jewish" legislation.



Bennett said that he and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu had agreed that the Conversion Bill will not pass against the wishes of the faction.

The bill, submitted by MK Elazar Stern (Hatnua), would allow the rav of any city to open a religious court for Geiru – thus ending the Chief Rabbinate's control of the conversion mechanism and allowing any unscrupulous rabbi to sell out the Jewish people for a few pennies. A secular parallel would be a law allowing any three lawyers to confer Israeli citizenship on any one they want.

Bayit Yehudi demands – along with the Chief Rabbis – that only a rabbi who is a recognized qualified dayan or one who has been approved for performing conversion by the Chief Rabbinate will be able to open a beis din for Geirus.

Rabbi Nachum Eliezer Rabinovich, Dean of the Hesder Yeshiva in Maaleh Adumim, Rabbi Dov Lior, rav of Kiryat Arba, Rabbi Chaim Druckman, Dean of Or Etzion Yeshiva, and Rabbi Yaakov Madan, Dean of Har Etzion Yeshiva took part in the Yom Iyun.

Rabbi Druckman defended the Bayit Yehudi from critics within religious Zionism. "I am very sorry," he said, "that there are people and groups that attack Bayit Yehudi with actual lies, without checking things. It is shocking, how can people act in such an evil way under the guise of righteousness, and simply write things with no connection to reality, while the truth is the opposite?"

Will these rabbis be the vanguards in preventing phony conversions? Rabbis Rabinovich, Druckman, and Madan all contributed articles to a new booklet funded by a non-religious Australian Jew, pushing a new conversion system which deviates from halachic norms. They propose a new category of ger who comes from "zera yisroel" — a non-Jew descended from Jews, a category never mentioned before by the poskim. Claiming that new conversion standards are necessary to solve the problem of a large population of non-Jews for the State of Israel — another halachic non-starter — they recommended "leniencies" such as allowing children to convert while the home remains secular and the mother even remains non-Jewish as long as the children learn in a state religious school.

The book was lambasted in a long article published in the Hebrew Yated Neeman, which included a severe critique by Rav Avraham Sherman, a former dayan on the Supreme Rabbinical Court close to national religious circles, who had a kesher with Rav Elyashiv.

DISAPPEARING SHOES TRACED TO AN ARAB VILLAGE NEAR CARMIEL

Yediot reports that the owner of a shoe store chain kept finding single expensive lady's shoes stolen from the display windows in his branches throughout the country.

Putting two-and-two together, he realized that in every case the left shoe had been taken from one store, while the right matching shoe had disappeared from another branch in the area. Dozens of pairs of shoes had gone missing in the course of three months.

A detective planted a miniature GPS tracer in the heel of a flashy platform-heeled shoe and waited for someone to take the bait. Sure enough, within days the shoe was lifted and the GPS signal led to an Arab village adjacent to Carmiel. The private eye cornered the shoplifter with the goods, and called in the cops.

LEFTIST JOURNALIST: CHAREIDIM EVEN IN THE OPPOSITION ARE STILL THE ONES THAT SUPPLY THE MERCHANDISE

Ze'ev Kam, Makor Rishon's political commentator, had approved the alliance between Yesh Atid Lapid and Bayit Yehudi Naftali Bennett which kept the chareidim out of the coalition, but he recently wrote an article praising the chareidim's unity which was evident in the vote for Israel's President:

"They said the [chareidim] had lost their power and political influence, which they had held for so many years. They told us that their political era had finished, and that slowly their power would wane, and in fact, their (political) time had passed. So what if they said it. Besides the Bayit Yehudi, there wasn't one party that acted like one man in the Presidential elections. Besides for the chareidim. It was the third presidential election (in a row) in which the chareidi parties determined who would be the State's president. This doesn't include many other things which the chareidi MKs have determined.

"So, true, in the last year and a half, they have populated the ranks of the opposition and are not represented at the government level. Nevertheless, it is still the chareidi MKs who are the body that can supply the merchandise, at any moment, and for a focused goal, better than anyone else in Israel's Knesset. Especially when it involves secret elections behind a curtain.

"Even if there are some who won't like to hear this, the chareidi MKs proved that they were the ones who functioned in the presidential elections like the responsible adult. While the other parties carried out all kinds of intrigues, deals-making and scheming, the chareidi MKs (or at least the vast majority) had a short consultation, reached a clear decision, and like one man went to fulfill it. It was refreshing, and primarily surprising. For one second, which returns at least once in seven years, the chareidi MKs showed the other parties how to act.

"When Netanyahu looks at the chareidi behavior from the side, and then throws a look at his fragmented and quarreling coalition, all that remains is to be filled with jealousy and ask himself how to roll things back. But he knows that at least at this moment, it's not possible, despite him wanting it very much. Netanyahu also has a certain part in the unity displayed by the chareidim. It was partially directed against him, to cause him harm..."

Frantic Hunt for Kidnapped Boys



AFF/GETTY IMAGES

BY AVI YISHAI

As Jews through the world remained united in fervent prayer for the safe return of the three boys who were kidnapped while seeking to hitch a ride home on a West Bank road on the evening of June 12, at press time the Israeli army and security forces were continuing their intensive search centered in the Arab villages around Chevron. Acting on evidence that Hamas was responsible for their abduction, security forces continued to arrest Hamas operatives and to close down its institutions in the West Bank. The kidnapping has caused a division within Palestinian ranks, with Hamas leaders denying responsibility for it, but praising the deed. PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas belatedly condemning the abduction as damaging to Palestinian interests.

The international media has been generally hostile in its reporting of the army's search in the West Bank, but the families of the missing boys have received a significant amount of sympathetic coverage.

Over 15,000 Israeli soldiers are involved in the nightly raids and searches, and their morale is still high. "Despite the crowded conditions in the army camps, no one complains. They understand the magnitude of the task at hand," a senior army commander said.

"We get calls from reservists who want to volunteer and help in any way they can to locate the hostages. We have to politely turn them down," another officer said.

He remains confident that progress is being made in the search for the boys. "It's like peeling an onion; you need to do it step

by step. There is no way that this secret, which is known by more than one person, will not ultimately be revealed to us," he concluded.

"Obviously, it's not easy to maintain efficiency, searching for the boys day after day" another officer admitted, "but our men understand that these mothers are waiting at home for their sons, and we will do everything we can to bring them back."

As of Tuesday, 1,800 buildings had been searched in the Chevron area, in what the army calls Operation Brother's Keeper. More than 360 terrorists, mostly members of Hamas, have been arrested in the nightly sweeps, including more than 50 who were released in the 2011 exchange for Gilad Shalit. "Now they will spend decades in prison," a high army official said. "Hamas never thought it would happen like this, and I am sure it will change the status quo."

GROWING ARAB UNREST

The West Bank crackdown has sparked growing resentment from Palestinians who feel that the kidnapping is justified to free terrorists from Israeli jails. The crackdown and arrests have caused a backlash against Abbas for allowing continued cooperation between PA security forces and Israel, and for having condemned the kidnapping. Abbas told a meeting of Arab foreign ministers in Saudi Arabia last week that "the three teens are human beings like us and they should be returned to their families."

On Tuesday, in response to warnings about growing Arab unrest in the West Bank, the army dismantled some of the road-

blocks it put up around Chevron since the kidnapping to ease the pressure on Arabs living there. It also slowed the pace of arrests of Hamas suspects, while continuing an intensive search for any clues to the whereabouts of the missing boys.

JEWISH WORLD INSPIRED BY THE 3 FAMILIES

Meanwhile, the Jewish world has been inspired by the quiet courage of the three families waiting for word on the fate of their sons, including the parents Naftali Frankel and Gilad Shaar, both 16, talmidim at the Mekor Chaim Yeshiva at Kibbutz Kfar Etzion, and the parents of Eyal Yifrach, 19, a talmid at the Yeshiva Shavei Chevron in Chevron.

The English-language media has given the most coverage to the parents of Naftali Frenkel, American citizens who came to Israel before Naftali was born, providing him with his dual Israeli-American citizenship. In an interview with the Washington Post over the weekend, at the family's home in Nof Ayalon, halfway between Yerushalayim and Tel Aviv, Mrs. Rachel Frenkel expressed the hope shared by the three families as the search for their son entered its second week without positive results.

"We believe the children are alive, that they will be brought back to us," she said. "We believe they're hiding them someplace. I don't like to think about that, where they're hiding them. I like to think about them coming home."

A NIGHT OF ANGUISH

She recalled the events of the night of June 12. She and her husband Avi were awakened by a call from the police at 3 a.m. to ask about the whereabouts of their son, and the panic they felt when they went upstairs to check his room and discovered that he had not returned home and was not answering calls to his cell phone.

They had expected to find him in his bed. "He texted us at 9:30 (pm) that he's on his way, and then all of this happened," Mrs. Frenkel said.

"It's been a very hard time; it's hard to breathe – but we're doing it," she added. "We try not to think of the details of what Naftali might be going through, but to hope and are very, very optimistic that we'll see him soon. It takes an effort to eat, it takes an effort to sleep, but we're trying to stay sane. We have other children to take care of and the family is extremely supportive, the community is extremely supportive; we get so much love and positive energy and prayers from all over the world."

She expressed appreciation for everything that was being done to return Naftali safely. She thanked Prime Minister Netanyahu and his wife as well as US Ambassador to Israel Daniel Shapiro for visiting her home. She thanked Abbas, for "saying that you don't take children on their way home. So everything is being

done to bring the children back home. You do what you have to do. We can't let them hold on to these children."

As the days passed with no word on Naftali's fate, the family continued firm in its faith that he will be rescued. Naftali's aunt in New York, Ittael Fraenkel, said, "We believe what will be will be. That G-d has a plan. And so we let the authorities do their job and search for the boys and we do our job. We pray."

MOTHERS SPEAK TO THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL IN GENEVA

On Tuesday, the three mothers went to Geneva to address a meeting of the UN Human Rights Council. Rachel Frenkel served as their spokesperson.

On behalf of all three families, she expressed "our profound gratitude for the waves of prayers, support and energy pouring in from around the world."

She thanked the US Secretary-General and others for "condemning the abduction of our boys, expressing his solidarity with the families, and calling for their immediate release."

She thanked the International Red Cross for stating clearly that "international humanitarian law prohibits the taking of hostages and for demanding the immediate and unconditional release of our boys.

She urged the international community to do more to bring their sons home. "Much more can be done and should be done by so many," she said. "It is wrong to take children, innocent boys and girls and use them as instruments of any struggle. It is cruel. This council is charged with protecting human rights. I wish to ask, doesn't every child have the right to come home safely from school?"

The three families have been in close touch with one another ever since the boys went missing. They have been giving each other chizuk, sharing information and coordinating their public statements.

Frenkel's speech and the trip by the three mothers to Geneva was sponsored by UN Watch, which is a non-governmental organization recognized by the UN Council. Her speech came during the set portion of the council's agenda at every meeting to discuss Israeli "abuses" of Palestinian rights.

The UN Security Council meeting in New York debated issuing a statement condemning the kidnapping but was unable to reach agreement on a mutually acceptable text. Jordan insisted that the language include a strong condemnation of Israel's actions, while the US did not want any mention of Israel in the statement at all.

Earlier, UN political affairs chief Jeffrey Geltman warned the council that tensions in the West Bank due to the Israeli army's search for the missing boys could lead to a third intifada. He



SOLIDARITY EXPRESSED IN KFAR SHMUEL AND WHEREVER JEWS LIVE.

urged Israel to carry out the search in strict compliance with international law, and to avoid punishing the Arabs living there for a crime they have not committed.

REMEMBERING A MISSING ROOMMATE

Meanwhile, Eyal Yifrach's roommates at Yeshiva Shavei Chevron spoke of how they missed his presence.

Micky Zivan, 20, raised in New York before his family moved to Israel, described Eyal, who came to the yeshiva in March, as "the type of person everybody would want as a brother." As an example of his generosity, Zivan described how Eyal used to place a jar of cookies outside the Bais Medrash with a sign that read 'Please take.'

Or Turjeman, said that he found it difficult to reconcile himself to Eyal's not being there. Like everyone else in the yeshiva, Eyal was "seeking the truth, and [looking] for his role as a Jew in the world," Turjeman said.

Yeshiva Shavei Chevron is located in the middle of Chevron, in a building known as Beit Romano, which was built by a Turkish Jew, Avraham Ramano, in 1879. After Chevron was recaptured by Israel in 1973, the building was turned over to the yeshiva and additional stories were added to it, including the Beis Medrash. It is heavily guarded by Israeli troops, and the street on which it stands is closed to Arab traffic.

The five sisters of Gilad Shaar have written a public letter to thank and encourage the soldiers searching for their brother. Since the abduction, we cannot sleep at night," they wrote. "We know that you can't sleep at night either, as you do everything you can to bring the boys back safe and sound. We feel that every soldier out there looking for Gilad is like our own brother, part of our family. We believe that you will be able to bring our brother home to our mother's embrace."

WHY THE ARMY THINKS THE 3 ARE STILL ALIVE

Despite the amount of time since their disappearance, the army is working on the assumption that the boys are alive. The army says the captors have an interest in keeping them alive so that they can be traded for the freedom of a large number of jailed terrorists.

When asked in an interview with Arutz Sheva whether the fact that there had been no word from the kidnappers so long after the abduction was a source of worry, retired General Yigal Pressler, a former Israeli government advisor on terror, said not necessarily. He said that the kidnappers could be keeping silent because the army is very close to finding them and they don't want to

Racheli Frenkel Speaks To UN

Racheli Frenkel, mother of Naftali Frenkel (16), addressed the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on Tuesday. She asked them to rally the world to pressure Hamas to release the kidnapped boys. Accompanying her were Bat Galim Sha'ar and Iris Yifrah, mothers of Gilad and Eyal.

She said, "My name is Rachel Frankel, and I live in Israel. I've come here today as a mother. Twelve days ago, my son Naftali, and two other teenage students, Eyal Yifrah and Gilad Sha'ar — whose mothers are sitting behind me — were kidnapped on their way home from school. Since then, we've heard nothing — no news, no sign of life.

"My son texted me — said he's on his way home — and then he's gone. Every mother's nightmare is waiting and waiting endlessly for her child to come home.

"We wish to express our profound gratitude for the waves of prayers, support and positive energy, pouring in from around the world.

"Being in this assembly, I wish to thank the UN Secretary-General for condemning the abduction of our boys, expressing his solidarity with the families, and calling for their immediate release.

"And I thank the International Red Cross for stating clearly that international humanitarian law prohibits the taking of hostages, and for demanding the immediate and unconditional release of our boys.

"At the same time, I believe much more can be done — and should be done — by so many. That is why we three mothers have come here today — before the United Nations, and before the world — to ask everyone, to do whatever they can, to bring back our boys.

"Mr. President, it is wrong to take children, innocent boys or girls, and use them as instruments of any struggle. It is cruel. This council is charged with protecting human rights. I wish to ask: Doesn't every child have the right to come home safely from school?

"We just want them back in our homes, in their beds. We just want to hug them again. Thank you, Mr. President."

The international community has had a decidedly blasé attitude toward the kidnapping, with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon saying that he is "unsure" the abduction really happened and UN officials urging Israel to show "restraint" in cracking down on the terrorists responsible.

Some progress appears to have been made. On Monday, the United Nations Security Council failed to agree on a statement that would have condemned Israel over the deaths of Palestinian Arabs as part of its security operation in Judea and Samaria, dubbed 'Operation Brothers' Keeper.'

Despite this, the UNHRC meeting held just before Frenkel spoke featured an ongoing barrage against Israel, with several countries making wild claims against the Jewish state, including that it had occupied Syria and Lebanon and that it is participating in ethnic cleansing.

give themselves away.

Netanyahu told the cabinet Sunday that he had shared incontrovertible evidence with allies that Hamas was responsible for the kidnappings. He said that the proof confirming Hamas' involvement would soon be released to the public.

MEDIA CRITICISM OF THE ISRAELI SEARCH

The army has left no stone unturned on the West Bank in the

effort to find the missing boys. The search uncovered a network of tunnels and underground weapons and explosives workshops in the Chevron area of which the army had previously been unaware.

The Arabs in the West Bank resisted and attacked the searchers, forcing them to defend themselves, leading to the death of four young Arabs.

This has prompted the media to set up a false moral equivalence between the three innocent boys kidnapped while on their way home from yeshiva for Shabbos and the Arab rioters who died after attacking Israeli soldiers seeking to find the missing boys.

ARMY DEFENDS ITS TACTICS

An Israeli army commander defended the tactics his troops were using in carrying out the operation, and insisted that the peaceful Palestinians in the West Bank understand that the target of that operation is Hamas and not them. "We are well within the boundaries of legitimate action in the eyes of the Palestinian public. They understand that the kidnapping was an aberration and our response was predictable because a red line has been crossed."

Regarding the complaints about Palestinian casualties during the operation, the officer said that given the size of the operation and the resistance it encountered, the casualty rate was very low. "I wish every army in the world could take 5,000 soldiers into villages with the resistance we encountered, and the result would be four Palestinian deaths, with three of them justified," he said.

The operation has done considerable damage to the institutions of Hamas operating in the West Bank, with he said are no longer active. With regard to the continuing search for the missing boys, he said that the public needs to remember that it is "not that difficult for someone who wants to hide to get swallowed up in a population of 300,000 people." He believes that the kidnapers "have not yet completed their escape," which might explain why they have not claimed credit for the kidnapping or issued any ransom demands yet. They may be waiting for the high security situation which the army has created on the ground to calm down before going public.

The officer also thought that it would have been hard for Israeli security services to prevent the kidnapping because there was no specific alert in the sector at the time, and in his opinion it looked like the work of just two people.

ABBAS AND NETANYAHU TRADE CHARGES

In an interview with Haaretz, Abbas denounced both the kidnappings and the Israeli response. He asked, "What does Netanyahu have to say about the killings (of Arabs)? Does he condemn it? Look at what's happened all over the West Bank over the past days, the violence and the destruction of homes. Is that justified?" He issued a warning that continuing the crackdown could throw the West Bank into chaos.

Netanyahu answered Abbas indirectly the next day in his comments to the weekly cabinet meeting. He said, "We are in the middle of an ongoing and focused effort to return our boys home. That effort involves a certain degree of friction with the civilian population of the West Bank, but we have no intention of maliciously harming anyone."

Abbas denied that Israel has any "credible information" that

Hamas is responsible for the kidnapping and that it was killing Arabs "in cold blood" in the process of conducting the search.

"When Netanyahu has such information, he needs to update me and we will take care of the matter according to our own laws," Abbas told an Israeli reporter.

ABBAS CRITICIZED FOR CONDEMNING THE KIDNAPPING

Abbas is reacting to harsh criticism from Hamas for having said last week, "Those who kidnapped the three teenagers want to destroy us. We will hold them accountable."

A spokesman for Hamas in Gaza harshly criticized Abbas for permitting PA security forces to continue their cooperation with Israel. The extent of that cooperation in the search for the boys has been limited to withdrawing when Israeli troops arrive to conduct an operation in the West Bank.

Arab mobs turned on the Palestinian security forces, hurling stones at a Palestinian police station that was used by the Israeli army as a staging area, and breaking the windows of parked cars nearby.

On Sunday, several dozen Arab demonstrators marched in downtown Ramallah to protest Israeli-Palestinian security coordination. "Why security coordination? We get hit once by the Palestinian Authority and once by the Israeli army," they chanted

Mohamed Nazzai, a senior Hamas official in Gaza, publicly accused Abbas of violating the national unity agreement with Hamas by agreeing to continue security cooperation with Israel on the West Bank in the search for the three missing boys. He said that Israel was using the effort to combat terrorism as a pretext to carry out a crackdown on the resistance to the Israeli occupation. Hamas also insists that the PA now assume responsibility for meeting the payroll for the 50,000 civil servants Hamas has hired in Gaza.

He warned that Fatah's actions could mean a swift end to the national unity agreement.

ARABS IN DENIAL

Most West Bank Arabs support the kidnapping. Many of them believe that it was either staged by Israel in order to give the army an excuse to stage a crackdown on Hamas, or that it didn't take place at all.

Ismail Haniyah, the Hamas prime minister in Gaza, said that the crackdown in the West Bank has started a third intifada.

Khaled Mashaal, the chief of Hamas' international political movement, denied that Hamas was responsible for the kidnapping, and questioned whether it actually took place. He then added, "if the boys were kidnapped, then we should applaud the kidnapers and take our hats off to them, since it is a Palestinian obligation to release prisoners and make the occupiers pay a price for Palestinian suffering."

He added that Netanyahu is the one who is ultimately responsible for the kidnapping because of "his disregard for Palestinian suffering and his opposition to the national unity agreement between Fatah and Hamas."

EVIDENCE FROM THE MOUTH OF THE HAMAS LEADER

Netanyahu responded to the accusation. He said that by prais-



PATROLLING THE HILLS AROUND CHEVRON.

GETTY IMAGES

ing and defending “the brutal kidnapping of the three innocent Israeli teenagers who were making their way home from school. Mashaal once again made clear that Hamas remains committed to its war against Israel and its war against every Israeli citizen, and coincidentally, against every Jew around the world.” He then asked “how can President Abbas make an alliance with these terrorists who extol kidnapping?”

The Israeli prime minister again praised Abbas for what he said, “a few days ago in Saudi Arabia, rejecting the kidnapping. I think these were important words. Now, if he really means what he said about the kidnapping, and if he is truly committed to peace and to fighting terrorism, then logic and common sense mandate that he break his pact with Hamas. This is the only way that we can move forward.

“I think this is something that is shared by many in Europe who understand that the quest for peace and stability and tranquility means that we have to fight the forces of terror, intolerance and darkness. There can be no alliance with the kidnapers of children,” Netanyahu said

DOES ABBAS DESERVE MORE CREDIT?

In light of the criticism that Abbas has been taking from his fellow Arabs for condemning the kidnapping, two members of Netanyahu’s cabinet, Justice Minister Tzipi Livni and Finance Minister Yair Lapid called upon Netanyahu to give the PA leader more credit.

Livni praised Abbas for his “important, correct and accurate

representation of reality.”

She said Netanyahu was wrong for continually criticizing Abbas for his unity deal with Hamas. “Our immediate goal should be to find the boys and the kidnapers. Israel needs to take on a two-pronged strategy. It needs to hit Hamas hard, and it needs to remember who its partner in the negotiations is. Our cooperation with the PA is in accordance with Israel’s interests. Abbas represents the nonviolent Palestinian struggle for statehood, which is precisely why Israel needs to talk to him,” Livni said.

Lapid said that Abbas was “courageous” for “going to the Arab League and saying in Arabic that the abduction is a terrible thing. I welcome the fact that Abbas speaks boldly and says the kidnapping is a terrible thing and talking about the security coordination [with Israel].”

Lapid said he supports the army crackdown on Hamas, and that the discovery of the extent of its West Bank activities is “disturbing.”

“This operation has raised issues that need to be taken care of,” Lapid said. “We have to break Hamas, both in terms of infrastructure as well as financially. We also need to take care of the Hamas leadership, not just activists in Chevron. We need to create a separation between Abbas and Hamas.” This harder line may indicate a change of position for Lapid, who earlier this month said that Israel should take time “to evaluate” Hamas’ participation in the Palestinian unity government before deciding what to do about it.

ISRAELI ARAB MK REFUSES TO RETRACT PROVOCATIVE WORDS

In Israel, near universal condemnation continued of Arab MK Hanin Zoabi, who denied that those who kidnapped the three boys had committed an act of terrorism. She that Hamas was justified in kidnapping the boys due to the “frustration” of Palestinians with their current lives. She said that she was expressing the “majority opinion” of the Israeli Arabs who voted for her party in the Knesset elections.

She said her statement was legal and not an incitement to violence, and she suggested that Netanyahu should be “put on trial” instead of the kidnappers.

Zoabi claimed that she had a legal right to express her opinion, “honest, sharp and emotional as it may be. I do what a real opposition is supposed to do.”

She opened her comments by declaring that by speaking out, “I am fulfilling my moral, human and political duty, the obligation for which I was sent to the Knesset: to fight oppression, and for justice.”

NETANYAHU WANTS ABBAS TO DO MORE

The first reaction of the prime minister’s office to Abbas’ statement last week in Saudi Arabia condemning the kidnapping was that he will ultimately be judged by his actions rather than his words.”

On Sunday, Netanyahu was more generous in praising Abbas’ public stand against the abduction, but then calling on him to do more. In an interview on American television Netanyahu said that he thought that it was “good” that Abbas had said that. He then added that Abbas “would be tested now by his willingness

to stop the incitement against Israel and the glorification of terrorists.”

Netanyahu reiterated his demand that the unity government with Hamas be dismantled. “I think you can’t have it both ways: You can’t talk about peace with Israel and be in a unity government with Hamas that kidnaps Israeli teenagers and calls for Israel’s destruction. You can have one or the other but not both. I hope President Abbas chooses the right thing.”

Netanyahu added that once the evidence Israel has that Hamas was responsible for the kidnapping of the three boys becomes public, Abbas would come under new pressure to dissolve his partnership with Hamas.

WORLDWIDE JEWISH RESPONSE CONTINUES

The extraordinary Jewish response in communities around the world to the kidnapping continued. Shuls everywhere recited Tehillim 3 times a day for the boys. Many individuals took on the learning of specific portions of Torah and the heightened practice of other mitzvos in their zechus, such as making Shabbos earlier last week.

The concern for the safe return of the boys was the subject of countless Shabbos drashos. The focus of the secular media quickly turned to the Arab complaints about the Israeli army’s crackdown in the West Bank, as well as the dramatic advances of al Qaeda in Iraq. But the attention of the Jewish community has remained focused on the fate of the three boys, and the pursuit of every effort to facilitate their return.

VIOLENCE ON ISRAEL’S BORDERS

Meanwhile, the situation remained unsettled along both Israel’s northern and southern borders.



GETTY IMAGES

An Israeli teenager was killed and two civilians, including the boy's father, were injured Sunday by a Syrian anti-tank missile. Israel said it was the most serious intentional cross-border attack from Syria into the Golan Heights since the Syrian civil war started three years ago. Israel retaliated with plane and tank fire against nine targets in Syria early Monday.

"This is not a case of errant fire but of an intentional attack," Colonel Peter Lerner of the Israeli army said. While it was not clear whether the missile was fired by Syrian government or rebel forces, Israel said that it was holding the Syrian government responsible for maintaining border security.

THE FIRST DAY OF SUMMER VACATION

The dead boy was identified as Mohammed Karaka, from the village of Arraba in the Gallil. Various reports put his age at between 13 and 15. His father, Sami, is a worker under contract to Israel's Defense Ministry. He had been driving a truck delivering water to a construction site near the border when the vehicle was struck. The father said his son had accompanied him to work on his first day of summer vacation from school. "He was very happy when I agreed to take him with me today, and now this joy has turned into a tragedy," the father said. "I don't want to go back to work. I can only hope that something like this will never happen to any family, because no one can deal with this type of death."

Netanyahu spoke to the boy's father and issued a statement saying, "The enemies of Israel are not ashamed to use any means, to attack civilians and to kill children, as they have this morning. They do not distinguish between Jews and non-Jewish citizens of Israel."

According to Eyal Ben Reuven, a former deputy head of the Israeli army's northern command, "this is a very severe event and marks another step in deterioration on the border with Syria."

There have been several incidents over the past two years involving gunfire from Syria between rebel and Syrian government forces reaching Israeli territory as well as deliberate attacks along the border. Israel has responded by investing almost \$60 million in a state-of-the-art fence to prevent the violence in Syria from spilling over the border.

In March, four Israeli soldiers were injured by a bomb planted along the border fence. Israel responded by striking Syrian army positions on their side of the Golan Heights.

The Israeli army filed a formal complaint with the UN peace-keeping force stationed along the Israeli-Syrian border, claiming that the incident was in breach of the 2006 cease-fire agreement between the two sides.

Meanwhile, three more rockets were fired from Gaza motzoei Shabbos and fell harmlessly in open areas. The Israeli air force promptly retaliated with strikes against 3 terrorist sites in Gaza.

Netanyahu Condemns The Hamas 'War On Israel'

[Arutz Sheva] Prime Minister Netanyahu responded to Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal's blessing toward the abductors of the three yeshiva students Tuesday, calling the terror organization out on the difference between its face to the international community and its statements to the Arab world.

"Last night we heard Khaled Meshaal, the leader of Hamas, praise and defend the brutal kidnapping of the three innocent Israeli teenagers who were making their way home from school," Netanyahu said. "Meshaal once again made clear that Hamas remains committed to its war against Israel and its war against every Israeli citizen, and coincidentally, against every Jew around the world."

The Prime Minister expressed his appreciation for PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas's condemnation of the abduction, but clarified that he will be tested in actions, not words.

"How can President Abbas make an alliance with these terrorists who extoll kidnapping?" he asked. "I appreciate what President Abbas said a few days ago in Saudi Arabia, rejecting the kidnapping. I think these were important words."

"Now, if he really means what he said about the kidnapping, and if he is truly committed to peace and to fighting terrorism,

then logic and common sense mandate that he break his pact with Hamas. This is the only way that we can move forward."

"I think this is something that is shared by many in Europe who understand that the quest for peace and stability and tranquility means that we have to fight the forces of terror, intolerance and darkness," he added. "There can be no alliance with the kidnapers of children."

Earlier this week, Meshaal denied all knowledge of the abduction, and gave the kidnappers his "blessing" in an interview to Al-Jazeera.

He added that the abduction is "a logical and natural reaction to the violations of occupation forces," and that "we support every resistance attack against the Israeli occupation, which has to pay for its tyranny."

The comments came hours after Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh stated that a third intifada had started, citing ongoing unrest in the PA as the IDF cracks down on Hamas in Judea and Samaria.

Despite Meshaal's denial that Hamas is involved in the kidnapping, Prime Minister Netanyahu and other security officials have repeatedly confirmed that the terror organization is behind the abduction.

Klal Yisroel Storms the Heavens for Second Week

BY DOVID HOFFMAN

For a second straight week, *Klal Yisroel* continued to storm the heavens and perform *mitzvos* for the speedy return of 19-year-old Eyal ben Iris T'shura (Yifrach), and 16-year-olds Gilad ben Bat-Galim (Sha'ar) and Naftali ben Rachel Devorah (Frenkel). *Tehillim* gatherings took place worldwide in Israel, the USA, Europe, Australia, South Africa, and elsewhere. *Rabbonim* of all streams of Orthodoxy prevailed upon Jews everywhere to start Shabbos early and use the time to study Torah for the teens' *zechus*.

This was in reaction to Rav Shteinman's announcement that: "It was of great importance to come early this Friday to *shuls* and *yeshivos* and have a special learning *seder* on *erev Shabbos* for the *zechus* of the three boys that they should soon return to their homes in peace."

Women were advised to recite *Tehillim* during this special time.

Rav David Stav, head of the Tzohar organization, also conveyed Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman's message. He wrote that, "In these days, as the people of Israel pray for the healthy, peaceful and speedy return of our sons, I call on communal rabbis to join the call of Rabbi Shteinman *shlita* and to usher in Shabbat a quarter of an hour earlier, to institute Torah lectures during that [extra] time period and to increase their prayers and Torah studies."

On *erev Shabbos*, hundreds of women separated *challah* for the *zechus* of the missing boys.

Rav Shteinman also proclaimed that in general, "Shabbos is the protection of all *Klal Yisroel* and one should do all possible to observe it." He urged *kiruv* organizations to strengthen people's observance particularly in this area.

Private and public *tefillos* rose heavenwards without pause around the globe. In thousands of *shuls* and *yeshivos*, *Tehillim* was recited after every *tefillah*.

"We are *davening* for you all the time," Rav Chaim Kanievski told the Yifrach family when they visited him in his home.

Hundreds of El Al workers at the Ben Gurion International Airport arranged a special prayer rally. El Al director David Maimon interrupted a weekly management meeting and went with top brass to join simple airport workers in reciting three *pirkei Tehillim*, the *yud gimmel midos*, and hearing *teki'as shofar*.

Even Yair Lapid admitted that he said a special prayer upon hearing of the tragedy.

"I too won't be able to look in the mirror knowing that I didn't do the maximum," he told Gil-Ad Sha'ar's mother during his visit

to her home. "I haven't prayed for six years. Since the bar mitzvah of my son, I haven't been in a *shul*. When the story of your sons broke, I looked through the entire house searching for my grandfather's *siddur*. I sat and prayed."

In Amsterdam, dozens of young *rabbonim* of the Rabbinical Center of Europe met at the location where Jews were rounded up in 1940 before being sent to death camps. They held up a banner calling for the return of the kidnapped boys, and called upon leaders to respond. Hundreds of Amsterdam's residents expressed identification with their cause and said they were ashamed that Jews were still in danger after seventy years.

In Rio De Janeiro, dozens of Brazilian Jews held a demonstration at the location of the Soccer World Cup to call for the release of the kidnapped teens. They feared that the boys' plight would be forgotten in the furor surrounding the match.

"The international media has been silent so we decided to broadcast the screams of the kidnapped teens at the event that the world is watching every day," said Rav Rami Avigdor, chairman of the Centro Kehila organization, which works to enhance Jewish identity in South America and organized the rally.

The *mekubal* Rav Yaakov Adas son of Rav Yehuda Adas Rosh Yeshivas Kol Yaakov, collapsed on Shabbos after fasting the whole week on behalf of the *bochurim*. Since hearing of the kidnapping, he never stopped *davening* for their welfare and fasted the entire week.

Iris T'shurah Yifrach, mother of Eyal Yifrach, sent an emotional letter to mothers of children of the Beis Dovid *Talmud Torah* of Chinuch Atzmai, begging them to *daven* at holy sites.

"I, Iris T'shurah, mother of Eyal Yifrach, beg you with a mother's heart, please pray for our sons Eyal, Gil-Ad and Naftali by Kever Rochel, the mother of us all. Please shed tears like water. The heart is torn, the heart is broken, our boys are not with us. We are believers, sons of believers, they will return even today in the merit of the *tefillos* and tears at Mamme Rochel and Aba Rav Ovadiah *zt"l*. I am strengthened; your prayers are what give us strength. Do not let up."

Stores in Lakewood, Boro Park and Flatbush distributed thousands of "Bring Back Our Boys" bumper stickers for people's cars. "During the days after the kidnapping, we felt a need to increase awareness of the kidnapping, to emphasize the fact that these kidnapped boys are regular innocent kids like all of ours," the bumper sticker promoters said. "We want everyone to feel about them as if they were their own children... We want the campaign

to reach every place where there are Jews in the USA. The goal is to prevent people from becoming apathetic.”

Matan Nachmani, head of the Headstart business consulting company initiated the collection of a 500,000 shekel reward for anyone providing information leading to the location of the kidnapped *bochurim*.

“The idea is that first of all, we, the citizens of Israel who care, become the first to donate what is required for the creation of the reward,” he said. “Afterwards, we ask the rest of the world to help us in the effort and increase it. I intend to use part of the amount collected to advertise in Arab media and social networks, targeting relevant sectors of the Palestinian population, which is likely to supply quality information.”

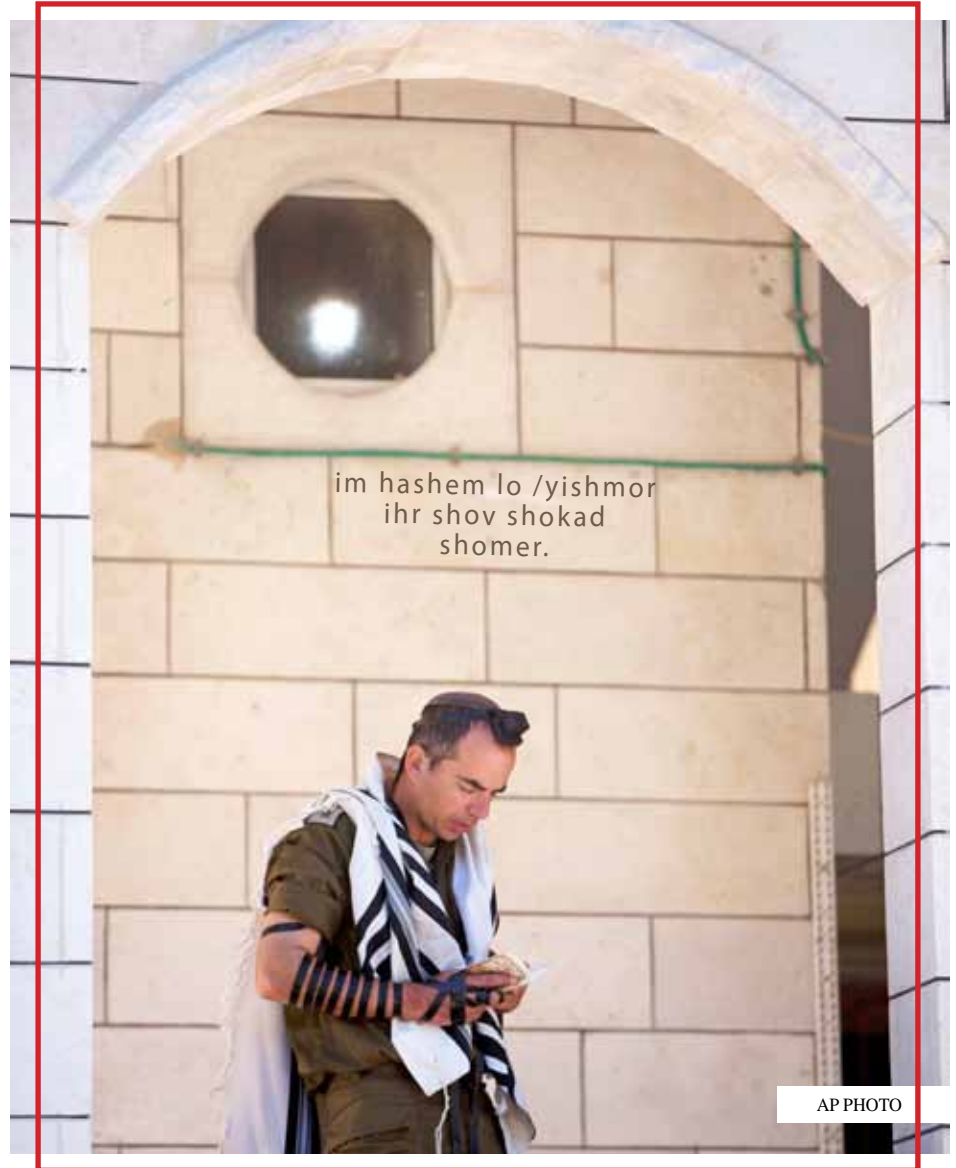
Another group collected funds to raise the morale of soldiers toiling day and night to locate the lost boys.

“Wanting to show their support for the soldiers and for all the families involved, a group of local citizens began mobilizing as well, ‘adopting’ these soldiers and bringing over extra drinks, food, care packages, pizza, anything we could do to keep up their morale and put a smile on their face in an otherwise tense and dangerous situation,” the organizers wrote. “We know that many of you in the global community want to help as well. We wanted you to be able to have a direct hand in the search arena and in the efforts to bring our boys home, and so we are asking you to join us in this Unity Initiative. This campaign is already taking action and is being run by concerned citizens, who love their brethren in Israel, with proceeds going directly to the stores who have agreed to provide their wares at reduced prices.”

Yeshiva students of the Yesh Tikvah organization, which helps sick and destitute people the whole year traveled to the Chevron area to provide the soldiers with hot food, cold drinks, and refreshments.

“When we reached the soldiers, we immediately saw their faces break into big smiles as if they were waiting for us to come and ease the tension involved in their work,” a volunteer said. “We felt we were giving them strength to continue with hope they would soon find the three *bochurim*.”

At the same time, signatures were collected worldwide to petition the Obama administration to demand from the terrorists the release of 16-year-old American student Naftali Frenkel. Over the course of the week, it was discovered that a fourth boy almost became a victim in the kidnapping. The grandmother of Barak Bar Chai, a neighbor of Gil-Ad Sha’ar from Talmon who learned with him at the Mekor Chaim Yeshiva in Kefar Etzion, related that on the night of the kidnapping, Gil-Ad asked Barak to come along on his trip home. Bar-Chai said that he still needed to learn a certain amount to reach the goal he had set for himself and would only be ready in half an hour. By the time Barak reached the bus stop, his friends had left and he was certain they were already on the way home.



GORAL HAGRA

Asked to make a *Goral Hagra* in order to find the lost teens, Rav Chaim Kanievsky said: “A person needs *ruach hakodesh* to make a *Goral Hagra*. Go to the *Rosh Yeshiva* [Rav Shteinman] and ask him to do it.”

In the end, the *goral* was conducted by Rav Yosef Sholom Elyashiv’s son, Rav Binyomin Elyashiv, at the request of friends of the Frenkel family. The following *posuk* emerged through paging through a *Tanach* according to a special formula: *He [Shimshon] came to Lechi and the Plishtim came shouting to meet him. Then the Spirit of Hashem came upon him, and the ropes on his arms became like flax that caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands (Shoftim 14:15).*

“The Plishtim caught Shimshon, imprisoned him, and tied his hands, yet he managed to remove the ropes; this hints that they will be freed,” Rav Elyashiv explained.

He added that the *bochurim* were apparently in the Chevron area, the likely location of the town Lechi mentioned in the *posuk*.

“People close to the Frenkel family asked me to do this,” he said. “The family itself did not make the request. Generally, I don’t do it, it’s not a simple matter, but they asked me a lot and I

could not refuse.”

COLLECTIVE PUNISHMENT

Deputy Defense Minister Danny Danon of Likud said that the operation to find the boys should include harsher measures such as cutting off electricity for a few days. Citing the example of Dinah’s brothers, former IDF Chief Rabbi Rav Avichai Ronsky said that much more could be done.

“The steps already taken are very basic, we must cause an earthquake, at least within Hamas,” he said.

On the other hand, Palestinians and eleven human right groups including Amnesty International claimed that the IDF’s wave of incursions, arrests, restrictions of movement, and other measures amounted to collective punishment.

“Thousands of residents of the Hebron district who have permits to work inside Israel or in Israeli settlements cannot reach their places of employment. Residents of the Hebron district under the age of 50 have also been prevented from leaving the West Bank via the Allenby Crossing to Jordan,” Amnesty complained.

In Tel Aviv, dozens of peace activists from the Coalition of Women for Peace, the Peace Bloc, the Anarchists, and The Social Struggle, demonstrated against the IDF’s measures outside the defense ministry. They shouted and waved signs with slogans like, “Closures and arrests won’t bring back the kidnapped,” “a closure of Chevron won’t bring security,” “administrative detention is kidnapping under guise of law,” “politicians are taking advantage of children’s abductions.” “Drummers Against the Occupation” stood in a circle at the center of the demonstration drumming to the words, “Enough with the Occupation.”

“Of course, we hope with all our hearts that the three boys kidnapped are alive and well and return to the bosom of their families,” said Adam Keller, spokesman of the Peace Bloc. “This does not mean that we can put up with a big military operation causing great suffering to hundreds of thousands of residents, a military operation designed to strengthen the grip of the occupation and oppression in the West Bank.”

However, international law professor Eugene Kanterowitz, who teaches at Northwestern and Hebrew universities, told Haaretz that such contentions are wrong.

“Rounding up suspects, or potential witnesses, is not punishment, but rather rudimentary investigative process,” he said. “Especially when the crime is thought to be committed by a complex terror organization, the number of potential witnesses is high. There is no evidence whatsoever that the Palestinians are being rounded up just to get back at Palestinians, without any regard to their having potentially useful information.”

Regarding the roundup of terrorists, Kanterowitz said that “members of a criminal group can be punished for each others’ crimes as part of joint criminal enterprise. This is widely used against everyone from the Nuremberg defendants to drug dealing gangs.”

Kanterowitz added that even cutting off electricity from the PA and Gaza would be legal if these places are behind in paying their electricity bills.

“The fact that Israel might not choose to exercise this right until it is otherwise angry would not make it collective punishment,” he said.

MASHGICHIM CAN’T GET IN

Due to the military operations, all *kashrus* supervision in Yehuda and Shomron is frozen. Rav Rafael Menat, a representative

of *mehadrin batei din*, said that at a meeting held on the same day as the kidnapping, the head IDF administrator told him that in the event of any security issues, no *mashgichim* or merchandise would get in or out and *kashrus* issues would be frozen.

“Within a day, the kidnapping took place and everything was finished,” he said. “If it was *Shemittah* now, we would have spent ten days without cucumbers. There is no merchandise. Nothing goes in or out, there’s nothing. They won’t let *mashgichim* get near the place or come in because of the fear of kidnapping. If they kidnapped kids or youths from a *yeshiva*, there’s no doubt that *mashgichim* would also be a target for kidnapers.”

“There are different levels in security,” he added. “If there’s a level that they want to kidnap soldiers, *mashgichim* don’t interest them. But if the situation is that they are willing to kidnap even a *yeshiva* student, a *mashgiach* would suit them as well. In light of this, we need to find other alternatives. What will happen to *Shemittah*? There’s another three months to go. At the moment, everything’s frozen.”

PANIC BUTTONS

In response to the kidnapping, a group of programmers developed a new cell phone application. To operate *Aliti Al Tremp* (I hitchhiked), as it is dubbed, all a person needs to do is press the application button. The program automatically records one’s position once every minute until one exits the vehicle. In an emergency situation, by pressing the “send emergency message” button of the program, all information will be sent to security forces and relevant parties.

At the same time, *chareidi* MKs proposed a law requiring police and emergency agencies to monitor distress calls via text messages and not only via telephone calls. This was in response to claims that the police telephone message left by one of the kidnapped teens was garbled.

“In light of the kidnapped teens who contacted the Israeli police, but apparently, due to their plight, could not clearly describe the situation in which they found themselves, and therefore were not able to receive instructions how to operate, and in light of similar situations of distress such as a person hiding during a violent incident in which he is unable to talk to a police hotline, it is proposed to require the police to enable contact to them to be made via SMS or e-mail correspondence,” the bill explained.

RAV GROSSMAN - YOUR SON IS IN HASHEM’S HANDS

When Rav Yitzchok Grossman head of the Migdal Ohr Institutions visited the Sha’ar family in Talmon, he was surprised to see a photo of him and Gil-Ad hanging on the wall. It turned out the two met three years earlier.

“Gil-Ad was ready to accept the yoke of *mitzvos* when he was 12,” his father told Rav Grossman. “He was very excited and busy preparing for it from the beginning of the year. Together, we learned the *halachos* of *tefillin*. He asked to take part and see the *parshiyos* of the *tefillin* placed in their *batim*, and he chose his *tefillin* bag.”

“Shortly before the day of the *bar mitzvah*, he asked my wife and me for a special request: He wanted to receive a *brochah* from you on the day of the *bar mitzvah*. Nu, what won’t one do for a son? We got up and traveled to Migdal Ha’emek. We were certain that Rav Grossman who is a busy person would receive us for a minute or two, but a surprise awaited us. You devoted over half-an-hour to Gil-Ad and radiated with kindness.”



NO STONE WAS LEFT UNTURNED AND NOTHING THAT MOVES PASSED BY UNINSPECTED.

Rav Grossman then also recalled the visit.

“It happened on a Sunday,” he said. “My secretary called to say a *bar mitzvah* boy was here. I was supposed to leave for Yerushalayim, but in order not to disappoint the boy I happily received him. Before leaving, Gil-Ad approached me and whispered in my ear: ‘You are *Mekadesh Shem Shomayim* with the Migdal Ohr institutions I too want to sanctify *Shem Shomayim* like you. I blessed him and we parted.’”

“Gil-Ad, Eyal and Naftoli are imprisoned in the hands of Hashem and not the hands of the Hamas,” Rav Grossman said before leaving. “For when a Jew accepts *malchus Shomayim* upon himself he is placed in the hands of Hashem who will surely do him only good and *chesed*.”

GRODNO BOCHUR DISAPPEARS FOR THREE DAYS

During these troubled times, there were frayed nerves at the Grodno Yeshiva in Ashdod when an 18-year-old *bochur* disappeared for three days. There was no way to contact him, as he does not carry a cellphone. The *bochur* told a friend that he didn’t feel well and was going home to Bnei Brak, but he never reached there and his parents notified the Ramat Gan police. Some theorized that maybe he’d gone somewhere else to take a break as *bochurim* sometimes do in the middle of *z’man*.

After three days, the *bochur* was located studying quietly in a *yeshiva*. A message he left on his parent’s phone apprising them of his plans had gone unnoticed.

KIRYAT ARBA RAV BLAMES KIDNAPPING ON ANTI-RELIGIOUS GOVERNMENT POLICIES

JTA reports that Rav Dov Lior, *rov* of Kiryat Arba, blamed the kidnapping on the government’s offensive policies against reli-

gious observance.

“To our chagrin, we have been witnessing a serious deterioration in the government’s attitude toward the state’s Jewish character,” he said. “There is a barrage of laws whose common denominator is to damage and chip away at the Jewish character of our public life.”

Rav Lior said that proposed laws “that harm the structure of the family unit” or reform the process of conversion were part of a deliberate attempt “to obfuscate the uniqueness of the Jewish nation and make it like all non-Jewish nation.”

JEW AND MUSLIMS JOIN IN PRAYER

Chief Rabbi Rav Dovid Lau said that members of minority communities including Bedouin and Druze told him they were also praying for the return of the three abductees. At the junction where the kidnapping took place, two dozen Gush Etzion residents and *rabbonim* gathered to pray together with a handful of Muslims. Times of Israel reports that the session was organized by Tag Mechir forum, an organization that opposes extreme nationalism of the sort that leads to price tag attacks.

“Our hearts are torn at this moment, and my heart goes out the mothers of these children,” Sheikh Ibrahim Al-Hawa from the Jerusalem neighborhood of A-Tur said at the rally. “There is a wall between our two nations, and we hope to remove the wall separating the hearts of humans ... we pray that G-d return these youngsters to their mothers as soon as possible, G-d willing.”

One of participating *rabbonim* said that Islamic clerics he spoke to expressed concern and demanded the boys’ immediate release “without any debate or negotiation.”

“Any person of faith should be here today,” Ziad Sabatin, a Palestinian peace activist from near Beis Lechem told the Times of Israel. “Man is holier than land.”

Bedouin Trackers Hunting for Clues to Kidnapped Boys

BY JODI RUDOREN

BEIT KAHIL, West Bank - Maj. Mohammed Mazarib of the Israel Defense Forces ducked into an old stone hut on a hillside above a riverbed here Monday afternoon, quickly determining that footprints inside belonged to soldiers who had beat him there. He nonetheless drew his rifle and shone its spotlight into a hole on the far side of the hut, then grabbed a stick to poke around.

Nothing but animal droppings - a wolf, he decided. More than a hundred years ago, the cave within a cave was probably used as a cool spot to store food. Now it was one of hundreds of holes Mazarib and his men checked and rechecked for any trace of the three Israeli teenagers kidnapped on June 12 from a hitchhiking post about 15 miles away.

"In every corner and in every room and tunnel that I go into, I see them in front of my eyes," Mazarib, 37, commander of the southern West Bank's specialized tracking unit, said in Hebrew. "As long as there are three missing, we're going to keep going."

Mazarib and his 50 trackers, all Bedouin citizens who serve voluntarily in the Israeli military, were among perhaps 1,000 troops who converged Monday around the village of Beit Kahil. The village of 6,500 northwest of Hebron has become a fo-

cal point of the sweeping search for the teenagers, their captors, and operatives of Hamas, the militant Islamic movement that the Israeli government says is behind the abduction.

Combat soldiers went house to house. Divers took underwater cameras into two concrete-walled pools. Special forces followed intelligence clues along the riverbed itself.

And the trackers tramped through a cauliflower patch and between grapevines draped over metal wires, examining a dead plant in a green bush, a fresh hole in the dirt, any sign suggesting even the slightest unusualness.

Earlier that morning, Mazarib's team had found backpacks containing grenades, knives, masks and traces of blood, "It's not somebody who hopes to be in the area for a picnic," he said. The day before, the team discovered a tunnel 20 yards deep under a ditch strewn with smelly trash. The day before that, Mazarib was summoned to a site that soldiers thought was stained with blood, but he told them it was berries regurgitated by a bat.

A chorus of human-rights groups have condemned Israel's aggressive West Bank crackdown since the abduction as "collective punishment." By Monday, some 400 Palestinians had been arrested, and four killed by Israeli troops; more than 1,400 locations had been searched over a week in which movement around Hebron was tightly restricted.



AFP/GETTY IMAGES

ISRAELI SOLDIERS STAND BEHIND BARRELS IN CHALCHUL WHILE THEIR COLLEAGUES SEARCH FOR THE MISSING BOYS.

“The rising death toll as a result of Israeli security operations in the West Bank is alarming,” Jeffrey Feltman, the U.N. undersecretary for political affairs, told the Security Council on Monday. A group of leftist Israeli organizations sent a letter to security chiefs on Sunday saying “the measures adopted and their extent do not seem to serve a military need that can justify the damage they have caused.”

But Israel’s defense minister, Moshe Yaalon, told troops during a visit here Monday morning that theirs was a “holy” mission.

“We’ll continue looking until we can rule out every possibility,” Yaalon said. “As you know, we haven’t started searching today, but we’ll come back again and again, and we’ll come back again with trackers and dogs and specialists, and you with your eyes, to try and find them.”

There have been no credible claims of responsibility for the kidnapping, or ransom demands. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who first declared Hamas culpable a week ago, has been criticized for failing to publicly provide proof.

“We’ve pretty much figured out who are the kidnapers - the actual perpetrators, the supporters, the command structure - and there’s no question, these are members of Hamas,” Netanyahu said in an interview broadcast Monday on National Public Radio. He added, “We’ll make it public as soon as the investigation enables us to do so.”

Khaled Meshal, the political leader of Hamas, said in an interview on Monday, “I cannot confirm or deny the abduction,” but “blessed are the hands” that did it.

For now, the search goes on.

Under a half-built villa on the far side of the riverbed, Mazarib’s trackers entered what seemed to be a well to find a series of rooms - good hiding places, but no hint of the boys, Eyal Yifrach, 19, and Gilad Shaar and Naftali Fraenkel, both 16. A pair of trackers entered a nearby home, where a stern-faced youth named Adam quietly led them through the first floor. They lifted a mattress, peered under an old couch and left within minutes. Another soldier kicked an errant stone, then put it back.

They are like a forensics unit, in nature. An intact spider web means no one has crossed. Dewdrops on a horse print says it was made that morning. Different-colored dirt close by suggests someone might have recently dug a hole.

“When you buy a newspaper, you look at the headline, you know what’s inside,” Mazarib said. “I look at the ground, and it’s like my headline.”

About 1,000 of Israel’s more than 250,000 Bedouin, a Muslim and Arab minority, serve in the military, many in the tracker units that support each geographic division. Most, like Mazarib, are from the north.

The father of a 5-year-old daughter and a 2-1/2-year-old son, he is from something of a royal family of Bedouin in the Israeli Army. An uncle, who changed his name to the Jewish-sounding Amos Yarkoni, joined up before the modern state was founded in 1948, created the trackers and other elite units, and retired as a lieutenant colonel before his death in 1991.

Mazarib is the youngest of seven brothers to make military careers, one of them a lieutenant colonel. He himself has served 20 years, the last two commanding the 70 trackers in the southern West Bank.

“I know the area like the palm of my hand,” he said on Monday as he drove an armored jeep through Beit Kahil. “All of this, to our right and to our left, I walked on foot.”

The terraced hillside was dotted with green rucksacks: hundreds of soldiers, including the trackers, would spend the night. As the sun beat down, scores crowded under a tree for lunch, a few of them fast asleep. Scores more stalked up a dirt road.

Eleven jeeps were neatly parked on a hill under a house. About 20 soldiers were taking a break in a driveway’s shade. A hundred yards away, another 20 stood on a corner. A few rested on the porch of a mosque. A few others were talking to residents outside houses they had just searched. A Palestinian woman holding a baby ducked into a doorway as Mazarib’s jeep passed.

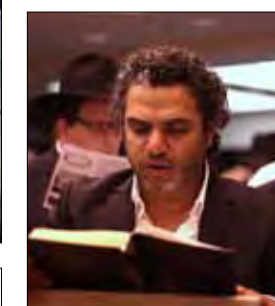
At the bottom of a hill, more soldiers were combing what looked like an empty lot.

“There are soldiers that are looking, but they won’t find anything - you know why?” Mazarib asked. “Because I was already there.”

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Tefillos Around the World



נא ללמוד ולהתפלל לזכות

יעקב נפתלי
בן רחל דבורה

גיל-עד מיכאל
בן בת גלים

תשורה אייל בן
אירים

שנשבו בידי בני עולה





A BIZARRE WELCOME

ON SCENE AS MIKE HUCKABEE IS HELD UP AT THE KNESSET

"IF I WILL BE PRESIDENT, OR IN ANY POSITION CLOSE TO THE US PRESIDENCY, I WILL WORK AT FULL STRENGTH AND WITH ALL MY HEART FOR ISRAEL. AS IT SAYS IN THE BIBLE, 'THOSE WHO CURSE YOU ARE CURSED AND THOSE WHO BLESS YOU ARE BLESSED,' AND AS A BELIEVER I WOULD LOVE TO BE BLESSED FROM HELPING THE STATE OF ISRAEL AS MUCH AS I CAN."

**GOV. MIKE HUCKABEE, VISITING
ISRAEL, JUNE 24**

BY TZVI YAAKOVSON

The story you are about to read may sound bizarre, even impossible, but it is exactly what took place on Monday morning. And it is very apropos, both for the State of Israel in general and for the Knesset in particular.

I arrived in the Knesset, where I work, at 12:00 that day, as I do every Monday. I have a learning *seder* until 12:00 (with Rav Uri Zohar, if you really must know). Every person arriving at the Knesset must pass through a security checkpoint, where his car is inspected and the guards decide whether he has a valid reason to approach the Knesset building. Most motorists are asked to turn back, since the Knesset is a sterile area. The majority of those who are allowed to enter are instructed to drop off their passengers at the entrance to the Knesset, where anyone who wishes to enter the building - generally an invited guest, a government worker, and the like - is asked the reason for his visit. If he claims to be invited, a computer check is run to ascertain whether an invitation has actually been issued in his name. Assuming that such an invitation is found, the visitor passes through a security checkpoint featuring the type of equipment familiar to those who frequent airports. While the security guards do not make visitors remove their shoes, the rest

of the rather humiliating procedure endured by airplane passengers is performed here, as well. Visitors are also not permitted to bring bags or documents into the Knesset. These items are stowed in lockers at the entrance, and each visitor receives a key to his own locker. He can collect his belongings on his way out.

Not many people are allowed to bring their cars into one of the Knesset's indoor parking lots. Naturally, I am one of those privileged few. At the security gate at the indoor entrance, I noticed a small commotion: A Jeep-like car with American license plates had become the focus of a good deal of attention. It was not an unusual sight. It simply meant that someone had been told that he would be allowed to enter

Before I could even finish speaking, Nissim Zeev came running out of the building, gasping for breath. "Tzvika, do something!" he said to me. "This is a disgrace! They're not letting him in, even though we arranged for the entry permits two days ago."

I parked my car on the side and summoned the guards' supervisor. He understood the problem, but he still did not grant permission for Huckabee and his men to come inside with their car. "Let him go in through the regular entrance, on foot," he insisted.

"You are treating him disrespectfully," I shot back.

"Then you go in with him and take him through quickly," was the supervisor's suggestion.

"HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MINDS? DO YOU KNOW WHO YOU'RE HOLDING UP? THAT MAN WAS ALMOST THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES!"

the premises by car, and there was supposed to be an invitation for the car and its occupant on file, but the right hand of the security forces had no idea what the left hand was doing. That was my assumption.

Since I have been coming and going at the Knesset for many years, and I have struck up close friendships with many of the security guards, I was able to ask what had caused such a commotion. The guard in charge of the parking lot entrance replied, "I don't know. Some American is insisting that he was supposed to be allowed in with his car, but there is no approval on file in his name. Who do these Americans think they are, anyway?"

I peered into the car and found myself looking at a familiar face. I surmised immediately that it was Mike Huckabee, knowing that he was scheduled to come to the Knesset on Monday on behalf of a lobby dealing with Israel's foreign relations. He was supposed to be the main speaker and number-one guest, in addition to several other visitors. One of the event organizers was my good friend, MK Nissim Zeev of Shas.

"Tell me," I said to the guards, "have you lost your minds? Do you know who you're holding up? That man was almost the president of the United States!"

"Are you making some kind of joke?" they demanded.

"No, I'm not," I told them, "and you had better let him in before you cause a humiliating diplomatic incident."

And so I did. That was not a simple matter, either. A policewoman shouted at us, "Just a minute! What are you doing? Why are you cutting the line, and why are you skipping the security check? And why doesn't he have a visitor's permit?" She was not interested in

who Huckabee is or even in the fact that he was scheduled to broadcast on Fox News that day. Even now that Huckabee has left politics, he still has plenty of influence, perhaps even more than before.

Fortunately, the officer in charge of the parking area was intelligent enough to signal for me to continue on my way without stopping. We completed the security check, which usually takes half an hour, in two minutes. Huckabee's aides, to my chagrin, were forced to remain behind.

Huckabee's face was bright red, not from anger, but from embarrassment, as well as from the intense heat, which had left its mark on him. He felt uncomfortable, knowing that a large audience was already waiting for him inside the building.

"I'm so sorry," I said to him, "but this is the way we are. We handle the big things very well, but we tend to make a mess of the small things. Don't take it personally," I concluded with a chuckle.

Huckabee did not laugh at all. Five minutes later, he took his seat in an auditorium in the Knesset, where he received an ovation, but not before he delivered a quick interview to a television crew, which had identified him and immediately pounced.

And that is how a visiting American public figure was greeted in the halls of Israeli government.



**OUTSIDE THE KNESSET, AS AIDES
ARGUE WITH GUARDS.**

HUCKABEE AT THE KNESSSET

Arutz Sheva - Former Arkansas governor and Republican presidential primary candidate Mike Huckabee arrived in Israel on Sunday. On Monday, he spoke at the Knesset.

He remarked that he has been coming to Israel for 41 years since the



HUCKABEE AT THE EVENT IN YERUSHALYIM.

summer of 1973, and “seen nothing less than the miraculous transformation of this land.”

There are “long lines to condemn, criticize and even destroy Israel,” said Huckabee, but the line of those aware that the “only explanation for Israel’s existence is G-d’s providence is a very short one, and since I always like to get in very short lines, I don’t mind being in the very front of that line.”

“There are those who wish harm on Israel, that’s undeniable. ...Some of the most vicious, some of the most violent acts in human history have been targeted towards Israel as a nation and the Jewish people as a whole. Some of the acts are irrational. How else can one describe the BDS movement other than an irrational punishment of Israel,” remarked Huckabee.

“Truth is the best friend Israel has. Unfortunately it doesn’t have many friends telling the truth,” commented Huckabee. He noted the historical, Biblical, theological and logical definitions supporting Israel’s right to exist, adding that it fits the United Nations description of an indigenous nation.

“The nonsense of two people sharing the same land is irrational enough to begin with, but if one of them thinks the other doesn’t have the right to exist, the continuation of the nonsense of the two state solution is no solution,” charged the former presidential candidate.

“Can anybody celebrate the kidnapping?”

Huckabee defended Israel’s right to demand that its “children live in a place that is safe and secure and is not threatened by mere single digit miles from those that wish to destroy them.” He noted that directly after landing on Sunday he visited the home of Naftali Frenkel, one of the kidnapped teens, an American citizen.

He spoke to Frenkel’s mother, saying “I’m not talking to you as an American to an Israeli, I’m not talking to you as simply someone who comes with a diplomatic mission. I’m looking into the eyes of a mother whose son was just coming home from school, and someone took him from here.”

“Will anybody on earth justify what happened to those three boys? Can anybody celebrate that? If they can, they are very sick indeed. And if there are those who think you can defend and justify such a horrid action...then those are people made of a very different cloth than me, and it is very important that there is across the world unified condemnation,” stated Huckabee.

The former governor added that the international delegitimization of Israel is “rabid irrational anti-Semitic hatred, and we cannot allow the world to pretend that this is simply a political viewpoint that sponsors movements like BDS. It is anti-Semitic hatred and bigotry.”



MK NISSIM ZEEV RUSHING TO THE INNER SQUARE.

Spreading Simcha!

BIRTHS

♪Mazel Tov to Chaim Moish and Adina Lipschutz upon the birth of a baby boy! Mazel Tov to the Lipschutz and Kuntslinger grandparents. Mazel Tov to the excited siblings and to the entire extended family.

♪Mazel Tov to Mutty and Shira Safrin (Yerushalyim) upon the birth of a baby boy! Mazel Tov to the grandparents, R' Tuvia Heller (Yerushalyim) and Mr. and Mrs. Yisroel Safrin (Monsey). Mazel Tov to the excited siblings, aunts and cousins. May he be a tremendous source of nachas to his family and all of Klal Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Meira and Ari Federgrun upon the birth of a baby boy. Special Mazel Tov to the Bechhoffer and Federgrun families. May he be a great source of nachas to the entire family.

♪Mazel Tov to Shea and Shiffy Zell (Eretz Yisroel) upon the birth of a baby boy. Mazel Tov to the Zak and Zell grandparents.

♪Mazel Tov to Binyamin and Hindy Weinberger upon the birth of a baby girl. Mazel Tov to the grandparents and great-grandparents.

♪Mazel Tov to Doivy and Zahava Weingarten upon the birth of a baby girl. Mazel Tov to the Katz and Weingarten grandparents. Mazel Tov to the great-grandparents and the entire mishpacha.

♪Mazel Tov to Dan and Leora Suissa upon the birth of a baby boy. May they have much nachas from him and all of Klal Yisroel.

♪Mazel Tov to R' Mandy and Peri Silberman (Montreal) upon the birth of twin boys.

♪Mazel Tov to Rabbi Chaim Dovid and Faigy Lonner (Lakewood) on the birth of a baby boy. Special Mazel Tov to the grandparents, Rabbi and Mrs. Yaakov Lonner (Brooklyn) and Rabbi and Mrs. Moshe Z. Brodsky (Lakewood) and to the great grandparents, Rabbi and Mrs. Menachem Rottenberg (Lakewood) and Mrs. Temma Freedman (Detroit). May they all see

much nachas from him.

BAR MITZVAHS

♪Mazel Tov to Avrohom Svei upon his Bar Mitzvah! Mazel Tov to his parents, Rabbi and Mrs. Chaim Yosef Svei (Monsey). May he be a continuous source of nachas to the entire family.

♪Mazel Tov to Mendel Kestenbaum upon his Bar Mitzvah! Mazel Tov to his parents Rabbi and Mrs. Kestenbaum (Fallsburg). May he be a continuous source of nachas to the entire family!

♪Mazel Tov to Shloimy Kinraich upon his Bar Mitzvah. Mazel Tov to his parents Chesky and Mimi Kinraich and to the Kinraich and Lichter grandparents. May he always be a continuous source of Yiddish nachas to the entire family.

ENGAGEMENTS

♪Mazel Tov to Shavy Weiss (Brooklyn) and Yehuda Keshirim upon their engagement! May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Batsheva Bak (Far Rockaway) and Chaim Shereshvsky upon their marriage! May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel tov to Miri Shmookler and Ashaer Munk upon their engagement! May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Mimi Arem (Brooklyn) and Moishy Gardyn (Montreal) upon their engagement! May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Yaffa Binder (Passaic) and Yoel Hirsch (Monsey) upon their engagement! May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

LET'S HELP
SPREAD
JOY &
INCREASE
HAPPINESS
IN OUR
WORLD!

♪Mazel Tov to Meira Goldscheider (Monsey) and Yitzy Smith upon their engagement! May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Eliyahu Rosenthal and Shayna Gold upon their engagement. Mazel Tov to the Gold, Rosenthal, Leben and Weissman mishpachos. May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Nechama Krupenia (Lakewood) and Yaakov Khoshkerman (Atlanta) upon their engagement! Mazel Tov to their parents, grandparents, and entire mishpacha. May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Yehuda Reichman (Brooklyn) and Nechama Lebovits (Brooklyn) upon their engagement! A big Mazel Tov to their parents, grandparents and siblings. May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪ WEDDINGS ♪

♪Mazel Tov to Tzipporah and Yisroel Leiner upon their marriage! Mazel Tov to their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sol Edelstein (Brooklyn) and Rabbi and Mrs. Herschel Leiner (Monsey). May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Naftali and Esti Halberg upon their marriage! Mazel Tov to their parents, Shlomo and Meira Halberg (Lakewood) and Mordechai and Yocheved Teichman (Brooklyn). May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Menachem and Mimi Vann upon their marriage! Mazel Tov to their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ahron Kalish (Monsey) and Mr. and Mrs. Shmuel Vann (Monsey). May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Shloimy and Ahuva Hoberman upon their marriage! Mazel Tov to their parents, Rabbi and Mrs. Eliyahu Hoberman (Brooklyn) and Mr. and Mrs. David Spiegel (Toronto). May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Chana and Binyamin Clyman upon their mar-

riage. Mazel Tov to the Shkarofsky (Atlanta) and Clyman (Passaic) families. May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Nachum and Devorah Wolmark upon their marriage! Mazel Tov to their parents, Rabbi and Mrs. Mordechai Wolmark (Monsey) and Mr. and Mrs. Avi Szenberg (Brooklyn). May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Shain and Zevi Arem upon their marriage! Mazel Tov to their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Nissy Katz (Brooklyn) and Mr. and Mrs. Yanky Arem (Brooklyn). May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Elisheva and Doods Cahn upon their marriage! Mazel Tov to their parents, Rabbi and Mrs. David Klugman (Lakewood) and Mrs. Dina Cahn (South Africa). May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Perri and Binyamin Greenes upon their marriage. Mazel Tov to their parents, Rabbi and Mrs. Osher and Chani Sternbuch (Brooklyn) and Rabbi and Mrs. Chaim and Sima Greenes (Lakewood). Mazel Tov to their special grandparents Rabbi and Mrs. Hershel and Esther Waxman (Monsey) and Mrs. Hirsch (Washington Heights). May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Yisroel and Tehila Goldfeder upon their marriage! Mazel Tov to their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sholom Goldfeder (Cedarhurst) and Mr. and Mrs. Efraim Fruchthandler (Flatbush). May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Shloime and Shira Milstein upon their marriage! Mazel Tov to their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Asher Hirth (Brooklyn) and Mr. and Mrs. Milstein (Brooklyn). May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Avi and Batsheva Herskowitz upon their marriage! Mazel Tov to the Rosenthal and Herskowitz families! May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!

♪Mazel Tov to Eli and Chaya Rivky Bodner upon their marriage! Mazel Tov to the Serebrowski and Bodner families. May they be zoche to build a Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel!



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Magazine



WILL MODERN HEBREW SURVIVE?
STRANGE SIDE OF HISTORY

THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS
FROM THE INSIDE OUT

THE MAHARAL
AND THE STARGAZER
ZAIDY'S MAYSELECH

SPICES ON MOTZOEI SHABBOS
TOWARD A MEANINGFUL SHABBOS

BEING ALONE WITHOUT BEING LONELY

GROWING WITH PASSION

THE REPLACEMENT

A powerful story of hashgacha

Rabbi Gavriel Shimon, the principal of the English department at Yeshiva Torah V'emunah, is desperate to find a replacement seventh grade teacher for a challenging class. Out of desperation, he interviews Herbert Saffir, a retired Vietnam army veteran who taught in the public school system. Saffir makes an excellent impression, with his charismatic personality and years of experience.

"So, you'll take the job?" asked Rabbi Shimon.

"I think I will," said Herb with a smile. "If you'll have me, that is. I just have one condition, and this is non-negotiable."

"Well, I can't fulfill your condition if I don't know what it is. So why don't you enlighten me?"

Saffir smiled. "I don't want to work on Sundays. Ever."

The principal breathed a sigh of relief. "That's it? I thought you were going to ask for four paid vacation weeks a year, or something like that. Sundays is a no-brainer. We don't have English sessions on Sunday."

"So it's settled, then," said Mr. Saffir. "Let's discuss my schedule. When do I start and what do I teach?"

For the next half hour, the principal reviewed the curriculum with his newest hire, giving him the teacher's edition of the relevant books. They agreed upon a salary, and Herb signed contract. "We'll see you next Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. sharp," said Rabbi Shimon. "*Bezras Hashem.*"

"What's that?"

"That means G-d willing," he explained. "Without G-d's help, no one can accomplish anything."

"Hmmp," said the old man, clearly unwilling to argue. He doffed his hat, turned, and left, nearly staggering under the pile of books.

After his departure, the principal sat, deep in thought, for a long time. "What have I done?" he moaned. "I hired an elderly army vet who is antagonistic to religion. How will the boys handle him? And how will he handle the boys?"

It was too late to turn back the clock. He'd already

signed contract; it was a done deal. Besides, there was no one else for the job. Though he'd begun with high hopes and dozens of applicants, by some fluke, the only suitable candidate was Herbert Saffir.

Well, there was nothing else to do now but hope, and daven. Resolutely, Rabbi Shimon pushed all thoughts of regret aside, and got up to patrol the hallways. Fortunately, it was relatively quiet, aside for Rafi Netzach, Moishy's older brother, who'd been sent out for throwing spitballs. Rabbi Shimon was reluctant to involve Mrs. Netzach, who would come to school and kick up a fuss, so he just gave Rafi a warning and sent him back to class.

"It's the old rule of 20/80," he later told the frustrated teacher. "I'm busy with twenty percent of the students eighty percent of the time."

"But this Netzach boy—he's really out of line," said Mr. Sanders. "And it isn't the first time, either."

"If he misbehaves again, we're sending him home," said the principal. "No ifs, ands, or buts."

Mollified, Mr. Sanders continued teaching the fifth grade.

The week passed quickly, and soon it was *Erev Shabbos*. Rabbi Shimon savored his extended weekly vacation, relishing the time he spent with his family, away from school business. He made it a rule not to think about, nor discuss, school issues during the weekend.

This time, however, he couldn't put thoughts of Herb Saffir out of his mind. What if he was just an eccentric old man who would let the boys go haywire? What if he was too tough, like a typical military man? What if he didn't know how to teach? The what-ifs drove him crazy.

"That's it!" he finally told himself. "All this rationalizing has got to stop. I hired him, and now I have to hope for the best."

Monday afternoon finally arrived, and with it the gala party hosted by the seventh grade for their outgoing teacher, Mr. Taubman. The boys had gone all-out, their obliging mothers and sisters baking up a storm.

There were several sheet cakes, various types of muffins, and even a particularly appealing ice cream pie. Rabbi Shimon graciously allowed himself to be invited to the festivities, and partook of some of the treats. The goodbye party was bittersweet; he was sorry to see Mr. Taubman go, though glad the teacher was fulfilling his dream of moving to Eretz Yisroel.

"So, did you speak to your replacement?" the principal inquired.

Taubman shrugged. "I tried him once or twice, but there was no response, and no machine, either."

"That's strange." He shrugged. "Keep trying. Unless you're too overwhelmed with everything you need to do before the move."

"I'll try him once more," said Mr. Taubman. "But after that, I give up."

Mr. Taubman shook hands with the principal, parted with his students and fellow teachers, and left. That evening he called Rabbi Shimon, to report that he'd tried reaching Herb Saffir, to no avail. "I think he's hard of hearing or something. Maybe he just doesn't hear the phone ring."

"Or maybe he's simply not home. I forgot to take his cell phone number," said Rabbi Shimon with a gasp.

"What cell? Do you really think a Vietnam vet has a cell phone?" Taubman laughed out loud at the thought.

"Good point. Anyhow I wish you well on your move. Keep me posted."

On Tuesday afternoon, promptly at 1:59 p.m, Mr. Herb Saffir strode into the teacher's room, attaché case in hand. His moustache was freshly waxed, his shirt was starched, and he had an old-fashioned handkerchief in his pocket.

"Morning. Er, afternoon," he asked Mr. Sanders. "Can you show me which way to the seventh grade classroom?"

"Follow me," said the veteran fifth grade teacher. "Just a word of advice: these boys are tough. I'm not looking forward to teach them in two years from now. Consider yourself warned."

"I'm warned, all right. As long as nobody waves a gun in my face I'll be fine. If they start with their tricks, they'll find I'm a tough nut to crack."

Trying to hide his smirk, Mr. Sanders led the new arrival to his classroom.

The seventh graders, who'd heard, through the grapevine, about their new teacher, were well prepared. There was a frog in the teacher's desk, glue on his chair, and garbage strewn around the classroom.

Mr. Saffir opened the door and strode into the classroom with surprising confidence. He affixed the startled students with a glare, and said, "Okay, out with it. Where's the glue on my desk? The spider on my seat?"

The boys were too shocked to respond. It was uncanny. How had their new teacher read their thoughts?

He opened the teacher's desk drawer with a flourish, and didn't even wince as a mouse jumped out. The boys began to shriek,

"THEY'RE A SMART
GROUP OF BOYS,
RABBI. I THINK
WE'LL DO JUST
FINE TOGETHER."



but Mr. Saffir silenced them with a look that could freeze a bowl of chicken soup. In one fell swoop he caught the mouse with his bare hands, and gently deposited it on the open window sill, from where it crawled to safety. Then he took a package of tissues out of his attaché case, carefully wiped his seat from glue, and sat down.

“So. Now that I took care of all the er, distractions,” he said, in a voice that brooked no nonsense, “Let’s get down to business. My name is Mr. Saffir. I will be your new English teacher. I expect perfect attendance and impeccable behavior. No one, and I repeat, no one, may talk out of turn, or even whisper to their friends. If you have something of value to say, raise your hand and say it to me.”

The silence that followed his small talk was profound. The boys gazed at the little old man, who, on second thought, wasn’t so little after all, with newfound respect.

“And another thing. Lateness or plagiarism will not be tolerated. You will be on time, and do your own work—your best work. I don’t care if you get a seventy or a ninety-five, as long as it was your own effort. And don’t try to fool me, either. I can spot your mother or great-aunt’s writing efforts in a nano-second.”

Now this was truly spooky. It was as if Mr. Saffir had been sitting in their classroom, a silent shadow all these years. How had he known about the last-minute help some of the boys were finagling from obliging relatives? And Mr. Taubman, despite his superb classroom control, had overlooked chronic tardiness with an obliging nod. The boys realized that everything was about to change.

For the next forty-five minutes, until the recess bell rang, the seventh-grade classroom resembled a tomb. The boys just sat and listened, writing copious notes and staring at their teacher like statues. Rabbi Shimon passed several times, and could not believe his ears. Where was the noise, the chaos? Where were the gleeful screams, the spitballs that had characterized that class whenever there was a substitute? And why were there no students in the hallways?

As soon as Mr. Saffir left the room for a brief recess, Rabbi Shimon accosted him. “So, how did it go?” he asked, more admiring than curious.

“Just as I thought it would. They’re a smart group of boys, Rabbi. I think we’ll do just fine together.”

An accurate prediction, indeed.

For the next few months, things went rather smoothly. In fact, as Rabbi Shimon often mused, hiring Mr. Saffir was the very best thing he could have done for the yeshiva. Not only was his own seventh grade thriving, indirectly, the teacher was having an influence on his peers in the teacher’s room. His emphasis on coming on time, and entering class on time, subtly encouraged the other teachers to begin their lessons on time. The perfect classroom control in the seventh grade, the liveliest class in the school, had a ripple effect on the others. Even the Netzach boys, known for their antics, were unusually subdued for the rest

of the year.

Aside for the perfect classroom control, the new teacher’s lessons were fascinating as well. He lugged handmade experiments for science class, a model of the lung for biology class, (along with a blackened smoker’s lung to show the boys the damage of cigarette smoke,) and used an overhead projector to explain complicated math examples. It was fair to say that his students hadn’t learned as much since they finished first grade. Herb Saffir was one in a thousand. Actually, make that one in ten thousand. He was modest, down-to-earth, and rarely complained. In short, every principal’s dream.

Things began to change toward the end of May. Mr. Saffir called unexpectedly one morning, saying he wasn’t feeling well, and couldn’t make it to school. Since it was too late to find a sub, Rabbi Shimon took over the classroom. Once again, he couldn’t stop marveling at the decorum and knowledge of the boys. Were these the same students who were once the bane of the yeshiva?

The following day Mr. Saffir returned, albeit with a pronounced limp. He looked weary and spent, as if he’d had a difficult experience.

“I tripped over an electric cord in my living room,” he explained. “Had to go to the hospital for X-rays. Fortunately it was only sprained, but I have to take it easy for a couple of days.”

“You should have taken another day off,” the principal solicitously said. “We would have tried to find someone.”

“A job is a job,” he replied forcefully. “I don’t shirk my commitments. I’m an army man.”

Despite his determination to continue teaching, Mr. Saffir’s leg was clearly giving him a lot of trouble. He appeared to be in terrible pain as he hobbled about. His classroom control was still perfect, but he taught without his usual enthusiasm and drive.

And then, about a week after he’d returned to yeshiva, he was absent once again. This time, no one called.

To be continued...





Halachah Talk

How Many Should be Saying Kaddish

Question

Is it better that each mourner recite only one *kaddish*, or that all the mourners recite all the *kaddishim*?

Answer

Most people are under the impression that whether the “mourner’s *kaddish*” (*kaddish yosom*) is recited by only one person or whether many recite it simultaneously is a dispute between the practices of Germany and those of Eastern Europe. However, we will soon see that this simplification is inaccurate. There were many communities in Eastern Europe where *kaddish* was said by only one person at a time. This was the universal *Ashkenazic* practice until about 250 years ago.

The custom that many people recite the mourner’s *kaddish* simultaneously was accepted and standard *Sefardic* practice (meaning of the Jews of North Africa and the Middle East), going back at least to the early 18th century (see *Siddur Yaavetz*, comments after *Aleinu*), although when this custom was instituted is uncertain. But before we explore the issue of whether more than one person may say *kaddish* simultaneously, let us first examine the origins of reciting the mourner’s *kaddish* altogether.

Origins of Kaddish

Although the *Gemara* refers to *kaddish* in numerous places (*Brochos* 3a, 57a; *Shabbos* 119b; *Sukkah* 39a; *Sotah* 49a), it never mentions what we call *kaddish yosom*, the *kaddish* recited by mourners, nor does it recommend or even suggest anywhere that a mourner lead the services. The *Gemara*, also, makes no mention of when *kaddish* is recited, with the exception of a very cryptic reference to *kaddish* recited after studying *aggadah* (see *Sotah* 49a). A different early source, *Masechta Sofrim*, mentions recital of *kaddish* before *borchu* (10:7) and after *musaf* (19:12). The fact that the *Gemara* says nothing about a mourner reciting *kaddish* or leading services is especially unusual, since the most common source for these practices is an event that predates the *Gemara*. The *Or Zarua*, a *rishon*, records the following story:

Rabi Akiva once saw a man covered head to toe with soot, carrying on his head the load that one would expect ten men to carry, and running like a horse. Rabi Akiva stopped the man, and asked him: “Why are you working so hard? If you are a slave and your master works you this hard, I’ll redeem you. If you are so poor that you need to work this hard to support your family, I’ll find you better employment.”

The man replied, “Please do not detain me, lest those appointed over me get angry at me.”

Rabi Akiva then asked him: “Who are you and what is

your story?”

The man answered: “I died, and everyday they send me like this to chop and carry these amounts of wood. When I am finished, they burn me with the wood that I have gathered.”

Rabi Akiva then asked him what his profession was when he was alive, to which he answered that he had been a tax collector (which, in their day, meant someone who purchased from the government the contract to collect taxes), who favored the rich by overtaxing the poor, which the *Or Zarua* calls “killing the poor.”

Rabi Akiva: “Have you heard from your overseers whether there is any way to release you from your judgment?”

The man responded: “Please do not detain me lest my overseers become angry with me. I have heard that there is no solution for me, except for one thing that I cannot do. I was told that if I have a son who would lead the *tzibur* in the recital of *borchu* or would recite *kaddish* so that the *tzibur* would answer *yehei shemei rabba mevorach...*, they would release me immediately from this suffering. However, I did not leave any sons, but a pregnant wife, and I have no idea if she gave birth to a male child, and if she did, whether anyone is concerned about teaching him, since I have not a friend left in the world.”

At that moment, Rabi Akiva accepted upon himself to find whether a son existed and, if indeed he did, to teach him Torah until he could fulfill what was required to save his father. Rabi Akiva asked the man for his name, his wife’s name, and the name of the town where he had lived. “My name is Akiva, my wife’s name is Shoshniva and I come from Ludkia.”

Rabi Akiva traveled to Ludkia and asked people if they knew of a former resident, Akiva, the husband of Shoshniva, to which he received the following answer: “Let the bones of that scoundrel be ground to pulp.” When Rabi Akiva asked about Shoshniva, he was answered: “May any memory of her be erased from the world.” He then inquired about their child, and was answered: “He is uncircumcised -- for we were not interested in involving ourselves even to provide him with a *bris milah!*” Rabi Akiva immediately began his search for the son, whom he located -- it turned out that he was already a young adult. Rabi Akiva performed a *bris milah* on him, and attempted to teach him Torah, but was unable. For forty days, Rabi Akiva fasted, praying that the child be able to study Torah, at which time a heavenly voice announced: “Rabi Akiva, now go and teach him Torah!”

Rabi Akiva taught him Torah, *Shma, shmoneh esrei, birchas hamazon*, and then brought him to *shul* in order for him to lead the *tzibur* by reciting *kaddish* and *borchu*, to which the *tzibur* responded, *yehei shemei rabba mevorach le’olam ulemei olemaya* and “*Boruch Hashem hamevorach*

le’olam va’ed.”

At that moment, Akiva, the husband of Shoshniva, was released from his punishment. This Akiva immediately came to Rabi Akiva in a dream and told him: “May it be *Hashem’s* will that you eventually reach your eternal rest in *Gan Eden* -- for you have saved me from *Gehennom.*” (This story is also found, with some variation, in the second chapter of *Masechta Kallah Rabasi.*)

Other Versions

When a different *rishon*, the *Rivash*, was asked about this story, he reported that it is not found in the *Gemara*, but perhaps its origin is in *Midrash Rabbah* or *Midrash Tanchuma*. He then quotes a story from the *Orchos Chaim* similar to that quoted by *Or Zarua*. In conclusion, the *Orchos Chaim* emphasizes that, for the twelve months of mourning, a mourner should recite the last *kaddish* of the *davening* and *maffir* on Shabbos and *Yom Tov*, and lead the services for *ma’ariv* every *motza’ei Shabbos* (*Shu”t Harivash* #115).

A similar story is recorded in an earlier *midrashic* source, the *Tanna Devei Eliyohu*, where the protagonist is not Rabi Akiva, but his *rebbe’s rebbe*, Rabi Yochanan ben Zakai (see *Rambam, Peirush Hamishnayos*, end of the fifth chapter of *Sotah*). In this version, the man was punished until his son turned five and the son was educated to the point that he could **answer** *borchu* in *shul* (*Eliyohu Zuta*, Chapter 17). No mention is made of the son reciting *kaddish*. However, the *halachic* sources all quote the version of the *Or Zarua*, in which the protagonist of the story is Rabi Akiva.

Merits for the Deceased

This story serves as the basis for the practice that a mourner lead the services and recite *kaddish*. Relatively little of this topic is discussed until the time of the *Maharil*, who was asked the following question:

“Should someone who is uncertain whether his father or mother is still alive recite *kaddish*?”

To this question, frequent in earlier times when cell phones were not so commonplace, the *Maharil* replied that he is not required to recite *kaddish* and he should assume that the person is still alive (*Mishnah, Gittin* 3:3). Once the parent reaches the age of eighty, one should view it as uncertain whether the parent is still alive. Upon this basis, I am aware of a *gadol be’yisroel* who had escaped Hitler’s Europe before the war, who began to recite *kaddish* for his parents, once the Nazis invaded the part of Russia where his parents were living.

The *Maharil* continues that if there are two people in *shul*, one who is reciting *kaddish* for a deceased parent whereas the other is uncertain if his parents are still

alive, that the second person should not recite *kaddish*. This is because of the *halachic* principle of *ein safek motz'i midei vadai*, someone who has a questionable claim does not preempt someone who has a definite claim or right – in this instance, the person whose parents might still be alive should not recite *kaddish*, rather than someone whose parents are known to be deceased. We see from this ruling that the *Maharil* assumes that *kaddish* is recited by only one person at a time.

The *Maharil* explains that, for this reason, he himself did not say *kaddish* when he was uncertain whether his parents were still alive or not. He then explains that someone uncertain if his parents are still alive who is capable to lead the services properly should lead the services in honor of his parents (*Teshuvos Maharil* #36).

Conclusions Based on the Maharil

We see from the *Maharil's* discussion that:

Only one person recited *kaddish* at a time.

The reason that someone whose parents are alive should not recite mourner's *kaddish* is because he is taking the *kaddish* away from people who are mourners.

If there is no mourner present to lead the services, then the person uncertain if he is a mourner should lead services, if he can do the job properly.

Obligatory versus Voluntary Kaddish

The *Maharil* (*Shu"t Maharil Hachadoshos* #28) was also asked how a minor can recite *kaddish* if it is a requirement, as only one obligated to fulfill a mitzvah may fulfill a mitzvah on behalf of others. The *Maharil* answered that the *kaddishim* that are recited by the *shliach tzibur* as part of davening cannot be recited by minors. These *kaddishim* are obligatory and therefore must be recited by an adult, who thereby fulfills the mitzvah on behalf of the entire community. However, non-obligatory *kaddishim*, such as *kaddish derabbanan* and the *kaddishim* recited at the end of davening, may be recited by minors. As a curious aside, the *Mesechta Sofrim* (10:7) explains that these *kaddishim* were established primarily as make-up for people who arrived late and missed the *kaddishim* that are required.

It is interesting to note that, already in the time of the *Maharil*, people assumed that the mourner's *kaddishim* are more important than the *kaddishim* recited by the *chazzan*. The *Maharil* points out that this is incorrect, since the *kaddishim* recited by the *chazzan* are required, and it is greater to perform a mitzvah that one is required to

observe than one that is not required (*gadol ha'metzuveh ve'oseh mimi she'eino metzuveh ve'oseh*). The main merit that one performs for his deceased parent is to recite the *kaddishim* that are said as *chazzan* as part of the davening.

Since minors cannot serve as *chazzan*, the *Maharil* considers it a great merit that they receive *maftir*, which a minor may receive, since they thereby recite *borchu* in front of the *tzibur*.

Mourners Kaddish on Weekdays

It appears from the *Maharil's* responsum that, prior to his era, *kaddish yosom* was recited only on Shabbos and Yom Tov. In his day, a new custom had just begun in some communities to recite mourner's *kaddish* on weekdays. The reason for the new custom was so that minors could recite *kaddish* on a daily basis and to accommodate adults whom the *tzibur* did not want to lead the services.

Which Kaddishim Should Be Said?

The *Maharil* writes that although these *kaddishim* are not required but only customary, they should still be recited after a *shiyur* is completed, after *bameh madlikin* is recited Friday evening, and after *pesukim* are recited, such as when we recite *kaddish* after *aleinu* and the *shir shel yom*. He rules that someone whose parents are still alive may recite these *kaddishim*. However, if his parents do not want him to recite these *kaddishim*, he should not.

One at a Time

At this point, let us address our opening question: Is it better that each mourner recite only one *kaddish*, or that all the mourners recite all the *kaddishim*?

Clearly, when one provides rules and priorities as to who says *kaddish*, one is assuming that only one person at a time is reciting *kaddish*. Thus, the obvious answer is that in *Ashkenazic* practice it is preferable that one person recite *kaddish* at a time.

It appears that, initially, whoever wanted to recite what we call today the mourner's *kaddishim* would do so. Knowing the story of Rabi Akiva, it became an element of competition, different people trying to *chap* the mitzvah, which sometimes engendered *machlokes* and *chillul Hashem*. To resolve this problem, two approaches developed for dealing with the issue. Among *Sefardim*, the accepted approach was that anyone who wanted to say *kaddish* did so, and everyone recited *kaddish* in unison. This

practice is noted and praised by Rav Yaakov Emden in his commentary on the *siddur* (at the end of *Aleinu*). Among the *Ashkenazim*, the approach used was to establish rules of prioritization, whereby one person at a time recited *kaddish*.

These lists of prioritization are discussed and amplified by many later *Ashkenazi* authorities, thus implying that, in the *Ashkenazi* world, the early custom was that only one person recited *kaddish* at a time. We do not know exactly when the custom began to change, but by the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century, several major *Ashkenazi* authorities, among them the *Chayei Odom* (30:7) and the *Chasam Sofer* (*Shu"t Orach Chaim* #159; *Yoreh Deah* #345), discuss a practice whereby *kaddish* was recited by more than one person simultaneously. About this time, we find another custom in some communities, in which the mourner's *kaddish* was said by only one person, but where everyone who chose could join in the recital of a *kaddish derabbanan* that was recited at the end of the daily morning prayer (see *Shu"t Binyan Tziyon* #1:122), presumably after the *rav* taught a *shiur* in *halachah*.

Merged Community

With this background, we can understand the following mid-nineteenth century responsum. A community had two *shullen* and several *shteiblach*, and the main *shul* was in serious disrepair, so they made an agreement to close all the smaller *shullen* in order to pool resources and invest in one large, beautiful new *shul* and have no other *minyanim*. Included in this decision was a new *takkonah* that everyone say all the *kaddishim* together. Subsequently, some individuals claimed that the community should follow the practice of the *Rema* and the *Mogen Avrohom* of prioritizing the recital of *kaddish* and have one person say it at a time. The community leaders retorted that this would create *machlokes*, since there was only one *shul* and many people would like to say more *kaddishim* than they can under the proposed system. Apparently, the dispute created even involved some fisticuffs. The community sent the *shaylah* to Rav Ber Oppenheim, the *rav* and *av beis din* of Eibenschutz. He felt that the community practice of having all the mourners recite *kaddish* together should be maintained, but first wrote an extensive letter clarifying his position which he sent to Rav Yaakov Ettlinger, the premier *halachic* authority of central Europe at the time. I will refer to Rav Ettlinger by the name he is usually called in Yeshiva circles, the *Aruch Laneir*, the name of his most famous work, the multi-volumed *Aruch Laneir* on Shas. The *Aruch Laneir* replied with a responsum that was subsequently published in his work of responsa called *Shu"t Binyan Tziyon*.

The *Aruch Laneir* contended that one should not change the established *minbag* of Germany and Poland, in practice for more than three hundred years, in which only one person recites *kaddish* at a time. He further notes that although the *Yaavetz* had praised the practice that several people recite *kaddish* in unison, the *Yaavetz* himself had lived in Altona, Germany, where the accepted practice was that only one person said *kaddish* at a time. (The *Aruch Laneir* notes that he himself was the current *rav* of Altona and had been so already for several decades.)

Furthermore, the *Aruch Laneir* contends that one cannot compare *Ashkenazic* to *Sefardic* observance for a practical reason. The *Sefardim* are accustomed to praying in unison, and therefore, when they say *kaddish*, everyone exhibits great care to synchronize its recital. When *Ashkenazim* attempt to recite *kaddish* in unison, no one hears the *kaddishim*. The *Aruch Laneir* notes that when the *kaddish derabbanan* is recited by all mourners, the result is a cacophony. He writes that he wishes he could abolish this custom, since, as a result, no one hears or responds appropriately to *kaddish*.

In conclusion, the *Aruch Laneir* is adamant that where the custom is that one person at a time recite *kaddish* one may not change the practice. On the other hand, we have seen that other authorities do cite a custom whereby all the mourners recite *kaddish* in unison, and this seems to be the norm by Ashkenazim today.

Conclusion: How Does Kaddish Work?

The *Gemara* (*Yoma* 86a) records that any sin that a person commits in this world, no matter how grievous, will be atoned if the person does *teshuvah*. This does not mean that the *teshuvah* accomplishes atonement without any suffering. Some sins are so serious that a person must undergo suffering in this world in addition to performing *teshuvah* before he is forgiven.

The greatest sin a person can be guilty of is *chillul Hashem*. Only *teshuvah*, suffering, and the individual's eventual demise will be sufficient to atone for this transgression. Thus, a person's death may result from his having caused a *chillul Hashem*.

The *Maharal* of Prague's brother, Rav Chaim, authored a work entitled *Sefer Hachaim*, in which he writes that most people die because at some point in their life they made a *chillul Hashem*. The reason a mourner recites *kaddish* is to use the parent's death as a reason to create *kiddush Hashem* – by reciting *kaddish* – thus, atoning for the original *chillul Hashem* (*Sefer Hachaim* end of chapter 8). May we all merit to create *Kiddush Hashem* in our lives.



Spices on Motzoei Shabbos

I only met Rav Aharon Felder *zt"l* once, but the impression lasted for a lifetime. I sat with him at a wedding, and pearls of wisdom, *piskei halacha* and stories of *gedolim*, especially about Rav Moshe Feinstein *zt"l*, came pouring forth. I was one of thousands who were deeply saddened by Rav Felder's recent *petirah*.

The following is one small sample of Rav Felder's amazing Torah knowledge. It comes from a *maamar* he wrote regarding *Shabbos*, specifically the reasons we smell spices on *Motzoei Shabbos*.

The *Gemara* in *Maseches Beitzah* (16a) tells us that on *Shabbos* we receive a *neshomah yeseirah*, an additional soul. While the exact nature of that soul is widely discussed by the commentaries, suffice it to say that on *Shabbos* we are given a greater capacity for holiness and spirituality. During the week, the *neshomah* and the *guf*, the soul and the body, are engaged in a "tug of war," each pulling toward spirituality and physicality respectively, while on *Shabbos* the soul has more power

so as to allow the spiritual pull to be stronger.

Rav Felder points out that this concept of the *neshomah yeseirah* is not merely a *hashkafic* one, but one that has *halachic* ramifications. The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim, siman 297*) states that as the *neshomah yeseirah* departs, we should smell spices. What is the reason for this? *Tosafos* (*Beitzah 33b*) offers two reasons for smelling spices. Firstly, when *Shabbos* ends, the fire of *gehennom* that punishes the sinners, which always ceases on *Shabbos*, returns, and the smell of this fire weakens the soul. Therefore, we smell pleasant smelling spices to counterbalance the stench of *gehennom* that our souls detect, even if we do not consciously encounter this smell in the physical realm.

The second reason *Tosafos* offers is what the *Shulchan Aruch* refers to: The *neshomah yeseirah* leaves the body, thus creating a spiritual void within us. The spices serve to calm our souls from this loss.

The *Tur* (*ibid.*) says similarly, without mentioning the



neshomah yeseirah. He writes that the departure of *Shabbos* causes sadness, and we cheer ourselves up with the spices. Perhaps the *Tur* is in line with the *Rashba* (*Teshuvos Rashba*, Volume 3, *siman* 290, cited by Rav Felder), who says that we don't actually have a *neshomah yeseirah* on *Shabbos*. Rather, the rest and the pleasure that the soul enjoys on *Shabbos* is tantamount to us having a *neshomah yeseirah*. It follows, then, that when *Shabbos* leaves, it is as if a *neshomah yeseirah* departed, and that is why we smell the spices.

Rav Felder cites another related explanation from his father's *sefer*, *Yesodei Yeshurun* (Volume 5, page 486). Rav Gedalia Felder quotes the *Sefer Hamatamim*, who says that it is difficult for the *neshomah yeseirah* to enter the "stench" of the physical world, but when the *neshomah yeseirah* enters, it arrives with *Shabbos*, and this counters the earthly stench. When *Shabbos* leaves, the *neshomah yeseirah* is forced to go into the physical realm on its journey back to the spiritual worlds and is exposed to the stench of the earthly world. We smell the spices to help the *neshomah yeseirah* equalize the stench with the good smelling spices.

All of the above reasons for the spices revolve around the *neshomah yeseirah* and *Shabbos* leaving. Interestingly, Rabbeinu Bachya (*Bereishis* 34:25) offers a reason that has no connection to *Shabbos* at all. Adam was created on *Erev Shabbos* and the third day of his life was Sunday. Rabbeinu Bachya says that all created beings are weakened on their third day of life, just like we find that one is weakened on the third day after a *bris*. Since Adam's third day of life was Sunday, he became weaker that day, and this weakness affects every one of us every Sunday. *Yom Rishon*, Sunday, begins on *Motzoei Shabbos*. To fortify ourselves against this weakness, we smell the spices to give us added inspiration and strength.

What might this *Motzoei Shabbos* weakness be? How does it manifest itself?

Perhaps we can explain it while adding insight into the custom to recite the collection of verses beginning with "*Hineh Keil yeshu'osi*" before making *Havdolah*. Rav Tzadok Hakohein of Lublin says that we have just experienced a wonderful *Shabbos* filled with holiness and meaning. We felt its sanctity and for 25 hours lived in a different and sublime plane of existence. All the physical pleasures we engaged in were part of the *mitzvos* of *oneg Shabbos* and were spiritual experiences.

At *Havdolah*, we face the fact that we are returning to the ordinary and routine of the week, and we are weak and afraid. We have just ended our rendezvous with *Olam Haba* on *Shabbos*. We have gone from genuine sanctity to the mundane once again. We have experienced a literal *Havdolah*, a vast separation between *Shabbos* holiness and the regular aspects of life. We recite *Havdolah* to bring us back down to earth - *hamavdil bein kodesh lechol*. We are in need of comfort. We fear getting back to physical pleasures that are not directly tied to the holiness of a *mitzvah*. We dread facing the challenges that the *yeitzer hara* throws at us without the *kedushah* of *Shabbos* as a background. Therefore, we recite these verses, which refer to the necessity of salvation that we require, asking Hashem to save us from the tests and challenges that the workweek poses. This could also be a deeper reason why it is forbidden to eat before saying *Havdolah*. We do not want to engage in the physical activity of eating, which can potentially bring out the animal in us, without first praying for Hashem's help in combating our base temptations.

These thoughts and feelings may be part of the weakness that Rabbeinu Bachya describes in his explanation of why the spices are used.

Smelling spices at *Havdolah* is a quick and easy act, but there is tremendous meaning in it which we should try to contemplate.

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Family Electronic Goodbye

Bashevkin
Musings for the Soul

The Poetic Wisdom of
Chaim Bashevkin

Imagine if just suddenly
A charge would fill the air
Sending electronics
Into total despair

And all the cell phones
That text and type and chat
Would all get fried
At least inside
Can you imagine that?

All the screens would just go dark
The gadgets they would freeze
Imagine kids would have to talk
Instead of clicking keys

We could not text a neighbor
Send pictures to a friend
And all the under-thirties
Would think the world will end

There would be no more texting
And people just would talk
Instead of sending email
A mailman would soon walk

The kids would learn
To laugh out loud
With a hearty hoot
And when they wanted
Just to talk
There's no need to reboot

And being friends
Would be for real
With truest admiration
No silly letters
Doing that
In an abbreviation

You'd have to say
I'm sorry
Or call to say thank you
Things your fingers just may type
But your mouth forgot to do

And notes to teachers
Or your spouse
Would be written by ink
With nuances and touches
That showed that you did think

And stationery
Would embrace
The simple words we pen
To be cherished for its feel
And read and read again

Remember that most of us lived
In such a crazy time
When all this would be daily fare
And I would not need to rhyme

We say that this technology
Has bridged our existence
I think sometimes that it just made
A certain sort of distance

We cannot turn off
All the toys
Or disconnect them all
But I just ask
That once a week
Instead of text
Please call!



family

| Dovid Hoffman

STRANGE SIDE 
OF HISTORY

WILL

MODERN

HEBREW

SURVIVE?

Jiraffa Or Camel-Leopard

Granddaddy of the Academy of the Hebrew Language was Eliezer Ben Yehuda. In league with the Safa Brura (Clear Speech) organization, he founded a Literature Committee in 1889 dedicated to collecting and publicizing Hebrew words.

The first person of modern times to collect and create Hebrew words was Mendele Mocher Seforim (Sholem Yakov Abramovich, 1836-1917), born 22 years before Ben Yehuda. His objective was to turn Hebrew and Yiddish into literary languages replete with enough words to meet all of life's exigencies. Unlike Ben Yehuda, he was not interested in turning Hebrew into a spoken language. One story he wrote mocked those who tried to do so.

As part of Mendele's efforts to broaden the Hebrew vocabulary, he published *Natural History* in three volumes between 1862 and 1872. New words he invented for the animal kingdom included *chazir hanohor* (tapir), *ez hagomol* (lama), *nemer hagomol* (giraffe) and *ha'pere* (zebra). Modern Hebrew rejected many of his clumsy attempts at nomenclature. Today, the zebra is *zebra* and a giraffe is *jiraffa*.

Ben Yehuda's language organization disbanded in 1891. It was succeeded in 1905 by the Language Committee founded by the Union of Teachers in the Land of Israel. This body wanted to establish Hebrew as the common speech in schools. It also dealt with issues of pronunciation and the invention of Hebrew words to replace foreign terms.

After the British takeover of Palestine in 1918, the committee negotiated with the British to establish Hebrew as an official language and backed Hebrew as the national language of the modern Jewish settlement and its institutions. In 1928, the quarterly publication *Leshoneinu* was established. This publicized word lists and professional dictionaries which eventually included 30,000 terms in 60 professions.

The Academy of the Hebrew Language opened its doors in 1949 and was legislated in 1953. Reportedly, the four-year gap was due to Ben Gurion's refusal to accept the word "academy" as part of the organization's name. The committee members stuck to their guns and an academy it remains until this day.

The academy creates grammar and pronunciation rules, and most importantly, it creates Hebrew words to keep Hebrew relevant. Professor Ze'ev Ben-Chaim, co-founder of the academy and its president from 1973 to 1980, wrote in 1953 that the uniqueness of Hebrew

is its sheer power of survival.

"The unique characteristic of Hebrew is not changes in meanings of words [as is typical of every language]... but rather its uniqueness lies in the fact that nothing was lost," he wrote. "...Thus our language has... multiple layers *alongside* each another and not *atop* one another as in the case of other languages that have continued to exist over time."

Due to the survivalist propensity of Hebrew, the institute searches millennia of Hebrew literature to find inspiration for some 2,000 new words per annum. It divides Hebrew into four epochs. First comes Biblical Hebrew with words such as *ahavah* (love), *deror* (freedom), and *emes* (truth). Mishnaic Hebrew adds thousands of more words such as *ilon* (tree), *chozar* (returned), *chotem* (nose), *tinok* (child), *kaveres* (beehive) and *gesher* (bridge).

Medieval Hebrew added thousands more such as *eichus* (quality), *kamus* (quantity), *ofek* (horizon), *lochon* (tune), and *mivchon* (test). During the modern period starting from the mid-18th century, Hebrew writers strove to find and create new words to fit all expedencies of the modern age.

The academy's words often come from other languages. *Adiv* (polite) comes from the Arabic *adib*. *Dugri* (straight forward), *bastab* (market stall), *falafel*, *chumus* and *chamsin* are all Arabic. So are *chamulah* (extended family), *zimzum* (hum), *achlah* (excellent), and *retzini* (serious).

To create genuine Hebrew words, the committee recycles words from Hebrew's rich past. Bulldozer is *dachpor*, a combination of *dochaf* (push) and *chofar* (dig). *Leshadreg* (to upgrade) is a verbal form of *madreigah* (level). Collage is *hedbek*, based on the word *debek* (glue).

The academy has many success stories. Does anyone remember when people called a *milga* (stipend) a *stipend*, a *chom* (temperature) an *infektziya*, and a *masok* a *helikopter*?

Sometimes it takes years for words to catch on, and sometimes words are outright rejected. An example of the latter case is telephone. The public still insists on calling the telephone as such; for decades, it has rejected the academy's suggestion of calling it a *sach rachok* (distant speaker). Other hardy survivors from the wider world include *technologia*, *autobus*, *akademia*, *elektro nika*, *meteorologia* and *pyschologia*.

Tot And Fot

The academy never attempted to change everything, well aware that Hebrew is crammed with Hebrew words of foreign origin.

The *Gemara* (*Sanhedrin* 4b) famously mentions Rabi Akiva's saying that we learn about the four compartments of the *tefillin* from the word *totafos*, because *tot* in Coptic means two, and *fot* in Afriki means two. Hebrew includes thousands of words borrowed from Greek, Latin and Aramaic such as *partzuf* (face), *Sanhedrin*, *sandal*, *kirkas*, and *ilon* (tree). Old Arabic words include *merkaz* (center) and *ofek* (horizon). Myriads of Arabic terms were introduced when Jews translated the Arabic works of the Rambam, Rav Saadya Gaon. The academy

laughs at purists who think it imperative to replace every foreign word with a Hebrew substitute.

Many Israelis help the academy with its work, calling in to complain about faulty Hebrew usage and pronunciation. When trains and busses began announcing upcoming stops, people complained that it was all wrong. Ib'n Gabirol Street was incorrectly pronounced as Iben Gebirol, they said. Hechalutz Street was pronounced as Hachalutz, and worst of all, instead of announcing upcoming stops as *hatachanah haba*, the public system croaked *tachanah haba*. The companies involved were ordered to clean up their act.

One Man's Crusade

Aside from the academy, a one-man army is fighting for increased Hebrew usage in Israel. Chaifa mayor Yona Yahav utilizes his job to encourage the prevalence of Hebrew.

"Recent years have seen an increasing use of English in our daily life," the Chaifa municipal site reports. "English pervades our consumer culture from music to cellphones, from hamburgers to nametag brands... and in some places has even become part of our basic Israeli culture.

"Mayor Yona Yahav decided he had heard enough. It all started when he went to his regular hairdresser and saw a huge sign in English describing the hairdresser as a 'hair stylist.' The Mayor rebuked the young hairdresser and demanded that he replace the sign right away, saying that this was a form of Hellenism. When the hairdresser refused to change the sign back to Hebrew, the mayor

stopped frequenting his business.

"Lately, Mayor Yona Yahav has banned the use of foreign words in municipal documents. From now on, no one may use words such as 'global,' 'audition,' 'fine tuning,' 'test,' 'scouting,' 'project,' 'sound' and other words commonly used by municipal employees in official documents. The first department to get used to the new directive was the sanitation department, which was to begin a project to separate wet and dry garbage for recycling. This could no longer be called a 'pilot' project, but a *mitzab nisyoni* of separating garbage at its source.

"Yona Yahav also spoke to the business licensing department and the attorney general to check the feasibility of creating municipal bylaws that would require business owners to stop using English signs. The municipality emphasizes that it does not want to remove English from signs, but to add a business name in Hebrew as well."

Latest Bugaboo

The Academy of the Hebrew Language's most recent bugaboo was a request of the Ramat Gan Academic College of Law and Business to open an English language bachelor's legal degree with the official sanction of Israel's Council for Higher Education. The academy was shocked.

"A hundred years after the language wars in Israel [the struggle to introduce German as the language of instruction], the prominent and impressive achievement of the Zionist enterprise, the restoration of Hebrew to life, is being nibbled away," complained Academy head Professor Bar Asher. "There is a serious personal responsibility to prevent Hebrew being pushed from institutions of higher education. Unfortunately, the process has begun, but it is

still possible to prevent it sliding down a slippery slope."

Ben Asher prevailed. The Council for Higher Education decided not to approve the establishment of an English-language bachelor's legal degree, saying that the Hebrew language is central to such a program and it would be "very difficult to translate into a foreign language legal terms and the cultural context from which they sprang."

But the Ramat Gan college demanded that Education Minister Shay Piron, who acts as the council's chairman, intervene immediately to reverse the decision. Is Modern Hebrew on the skids? Time will tell.

Sources include the Academy of the Hebrew Language website.



The Maharal And The Stargazer

The Maharal of Prague was born on the first night of *Pesach*, 1520, in Posen. During his childhood, the Maharal learned intensively with his father, achieving greatness in Torah and *yiras Shomayim*.

When he was twelve years old, the Maharal was accepted in the *yeshiva* of Premishla, headed by Rav Yaakov Pollack, himself a *talmid* of Rav Yaakov Margulis. The *rosh yeshiva* would often say that Yehuda (the Maharal), the youngest *bochur* in the *yeshiva*, was the third point of the *segol*, triangle, which included Rav Meir Katzenellenbogen, Rav Sholom Shachna of Lublin, and the Maharal.

After his marriage, Rav Yehuda remained in Prague for nine years, supported by his father-in-law as he continued to learn. After this time, the brilliant *talmid chochom* was invited to become the *rov* of Nikolsburg, in Moravia, where he remained for twenty years.

During these two decades, the Maharal had great influence upon Moravian Jewry, then one of the bustling centers of Torah and *yiras Shomayim*. He founded a distinguished *yeshiva*, to which *bochurim* flocked from all across Europe. In addition, his frequent *drosbos* to the ordinary *Yidden* had a powerful impact on them, raising their level of observance. His *takonos*, which minimized the amount of luxuries and excessive materialism of the wealthy sector, were universally accepted.

The following two issues were among the many issues the Maharal addressed. The first issue was that among some of the wealthier Jews, it had become common to drink *stam yainom*, drink wine together with their non-

Jewish business associates. Another travesty that the Maharal could not condone was talking during *davening* and *kriyas haTorah*. The Maharal spoke out forcefully against this habit, explaining to the congregants how much spiritual and physical harm this caused.

After twenty years of leading the *kehillah* in Nikolsburg, the Maharal decided, in 1573, to move to the glorious city of Prague. The *rov* of Prague at the time was Rav Yitzchok Meling.

Upon the Maharal's arrival, he immediately founded a *yeshiva* in the new *shul* that the wealthy Rav Mordechai Meisels had built. During those early years in Prague, the Maharal published his renowned sefer *Gur Aryeh*, a *peirush* on *Rashi*. Four years later, he published the sefer *Gevuras Hashem*.

For eleven years, the Maharal served as *rosh yeshiva* of Prague, until Rav Meling's passing in 1583. It was self-understood that the Maharal would be appointed *rov* of the entire *kehillah*.

During his first fiery *Shabbos Shuvah drashah*, before his official appointment, the Maharal censured those who ran after honor, and those who humiliated their enemies by calling them "*nadler*," a term which meant that one was not worthy of *davening* in *shul*. The Maharal then gathered a *minyan* of *talmidei chachomim* to declare a *cheirem* upon those who would disobey his command.

One of the wealthy *baalebatim*, who had humiliated his enemies in this manner, was insulted by the *rov's cheirem*. He decided to take revenge by giving the position of *rov* to Rav Yitzchok Chayos, the scion of a distinguished family in Prague. He gathered a group of

influential men. During the voting process, it soon became clear that the Maharal had lost the position to Rav Chayos.

As an aside, Rav Yitzchok Chayos happened to be a step-brother to Perel, the wife of the Maharal. The Maharal and his *rebbeztzin* understood that once the news would become public, a storm of controversy would erupt in Prague. In order to prevent a conflagration, the Maharal and his family quietly left Prague, the city where they had made such an impact on the community. They settled in nearby Posen, where the Maharal became the *rov* and *rosh yeshiva*.

The new *rov* of Prague, Rav Chayos, was unable to exert his authority over the *kehillah*, and after only four years, he was forced to leave Prague. Only then did the Maharal's extended family and *talmidim* summon him to return.

The Maharal returned to Prague in 1589. Due to his ingrained *midos tovos* and refinement, he refrained from becoming the official *rov*, because he did not want to hurt his relative, Rav Yitzchok.

Instead, the Maharal concentrated his efforts on his *yeshiva*. Despite holding no official position in the city, he was recognized as the most prominent authority, not only in Prague, but in the entire Bohemia.

At the time of his return to Prague, the Maharal published his third *sefer*, *Derech Chaim*, which contains a *peirush* on *Maseches Avos*.

The Stargazer

During the years when the Maharal was the *rosh yeshiva* in Prague, a man named Binyomin lived in a small *shtetl* in southern Galicia. He was a humble and *ehrblich* man who gave his children a Torah *chinuch* and raised them in the proper path.

In those days, it was common for large households to employ a full-time maid who lived on the premises. After all, the housework before the days of washing machines, refrigerators, and other amenities was far too time-consuming and back-breaking to be done without assistance.

Binyomin and his wife employed a non-Jewish maid, a young orphan named Maria, who had been homeless and destitute when her parents died. Binyomin's wife took mercy on the girl, who lived in their village, and provided her with room and board. In return, Maria helped with the housework, took care of the younger children, and made herself useful.

Maria was a good-natured girl who tried her best to please her employers, and never gave them any trouble.

Over the years, she slowly absorbed the atmosphere in Binyomin's home, learning basic *halachos*, and even the *aleph beis*. An intelligent and curious young woman, she kept on learning more about *Yiddishkeit*.

By the time she reached her teens, Maria knew more about *halachos* and Jewish concepts than the average Jewish girl. She constantly told her employers that she wanted to convert to Judaism, but they were afraid to allow it. After all, the villagers were known for their anti-Semitism, and a possible riot or pogrom could break out if Maria's *geirus* became public.

Though Maria understood the situation, she found it hard to make peace with reality. Finally, seeing that she was getting nowhere, she decided to marry Stephan, a young peasant who also lived in the village. Perhaps once she was married and had a home of her own, her burning desire to become a Jewess would fade.

Shortly after her wedding to Stephan, Maria realized that everything she had heard about him was a lie. Instead of being a kindhearted, hardworking peasant, Stephan was a drunken lout. He would spend his days in the local tavern and return late at night, venting his rage on whomever he met. More often than not, poor Maria was the target of his fury.

The situation soon deteriorated, and Maria no longer felt safe in her own home. And so, after much deliberation, she decided to escape. Early one morning, when Stephan was asleep in a drunken stupor, she gathered her meager possessions and the money she had accumulated over her years of work. Tiptoeing out of her house, she closed the door for the last time, went to the marketplace, hired a wagon driver, and disappeared from the village.

Maria spent the next few weeks wandering from one place to another, until she was satisfied that Stephan would not find her. Then she settled down in a bustling city, and tried to rebuild her shattered life. As soon as she recovered from her ordeal, she went to the local *rov* of the Jewish community and told him the story of her life.

The *rov* was very impressed with Maria's knowledge of *halachah* and her sincere desire to become Jewish. And so, after a lengthy period, during which she learned with the *rebbeztzin* of the community, Maria underwent a kosher *geirus*, and became known as Sarah.

As soon as her conversion was complete, Sarah left Poland, seeking to rebuild her life far away, where no one would know her background. For several months she wandered along with a group of impoverished women, until they arrived in the glorious city of Prague. She had heard that in Prague there was an established Jewish community where she would be accepted.

Sarah was tired of her nomadic life and wanted some stability. She rented a room in an inn, and began inquiring about a job. She heard that one of the *gevirim* in the city, Reb Moshe, was looking for someone to take care of the children and do housework. She decided to apply for the job.

Reb Moshe and his wife were very impressed with Sarah, who seemed to be a refined and educated young woman. Sarah did not reveal details of her background, telling her potential employers that she was a widow with no children who was in need of *parnossah*. Based on her qualities, Sarah was hired on the spot.

Within a short while, she became indispensable in the household. Reb Moshe's small children grew very attached to her, and she cared for them with devotion. She also helped cook, clean, and perform the myriad household chores without complaint. Every Shabbos, she would go to *shul*, where her superior knowledge of *halachah* and davening impressed the women. After a short while, Sarah was asked to learn *halachos* with the women, and she became their unofficial teacher.

Within a short time, the local *shadchanim* became interested in Sarah and began suggesting *shidduchim* to her. However, every *shidduch* that was suggested was soon discarded by Reb Moshe's wife, who felt that Sarah was far superior to any of the young widowers in question. Perhaps subconsciously, she wanted to prevent Sarah from leaving her employ.

Three years passed in this manner. And then, suddenly, tragedy struck. Reb Moshe's wife, who had always been in perfect health, became sick. At first the doctors said it was just a temporary illness, from which she would soon recover. Yet her condition worsened from day to day, until she was at death's door.

Reb Moshe spared no expense, hiring the best doctors to come and take care of his wife, yet none of them could heal her. In every *shul* in Prague, men, women and children gathered to daven that this young mother merit a *refuah*.

One day, the deathly ill woman called her husband, and said she felt her end was near. She had an important request to relate, before it would be too late.

"I feel that my end is near," she said, in a weak voice. "I am very distressed about you, and the children, who are still very young and need a mother's care. What will happen to them upon my passing? Who will take care of them, and raise them in the proper path?"

Reb Moshe was too distraught to respond.

"And so, I beg of you, with my last ounce of strength, to listen to what I have to say. After my passing, do not look for a woman with a distinguished *yichus* or money, who will want to marry into an influential family. In-



stead, I beg you to marry Sarah, our helper, who loves our children dearly and will take care of them with love and devotion. The children are very attached to her and feel secure in her presence. By marrying Sarah, you will enable them to have a happy and stable childhood.

"Please promise me that you will take my request seriously and do as I ask. Only then can I leave this world without any anxiety."

Reb Moshe was overwhelmed with emotion and left the room, unable to contain his tears. He did not feel ready to make this promise, as he still hoped his wife would recover.

After he left, the sick woman summoned Sarah and repeated the same message, begging her to agree to marry Reb Moshe and raise the soon to be orphaned children as her own. Sarah was also overcome, and began to sob, pleading with her beloved employer to stop thinking such morbid thoughts. G-d willing, she will recover, and care for her children for many more years.

Then she, too, left the room, unable to make the promise.

To be continued...

RUFFLED FEATHERS

The sky was a remarkable pristine blue, a balmy breeze practically pulled Avi by the shirttails, advising him to stay outside and enjoy the perfect weather. Avi didn't need much convincing. After a long day in school, who wouldn't want to dribble a ball and shoot some baskets?

"Thanks, Ma," Avi said, eating two brownies and downing a cup of milk.

Mommy gazed after him fondly, knowing that in a minute she would hear the repeated bouncing of a ball. She enjoyed supper preparations more when they were in sync with the ball's cadence, somehow feeling connected to Avi - she chopped, he bounced - almost like they were working together.

"Yes!" Avi hooted, watching the ball circle the net a few times before neatly sliding through the hoop.

"Avi, may I ask you a question?" Avi looked up to see Mrs. Hendler watching him from next door.

"Sure, Mrs. H. How are you?"

"*Boruch Hashem*," she replied, sounding a bit preoccupied. Her eyes roved Avi's face nervously, and she tapped her toes as she spoke. "Here's the situation. Our family is going to Eretz Yisroel for a few weeks; our son is making a *chasunah*. But my father is not up to the trip, so he's staying here. And he doesn't really get out much, especially when he's by himself. So I wondered if you would be able to visit him while we're away - maybe stop over a few times a week. He's great at board games; checkers, chess, backgammon, Monopoly..." Mrs. Hendler smiled tentatively and waited for Avi's reaction.

"I would love to," Avi replied. "Your father is a really nice man, Mrs. H. I'd be happy to visit him."

"Oh, Avi, thank you so much!" Mrs. Hendler breathed a huge sigh of relief. "This has been weighing on me for months, ever since we got our tickets. I felt so bad leaving him alone. You have no idea how much peace of mind you just gave me."

"It's my pleasure," Avi said. "When are you leaving?"

"Wednesday," she answered. "Maybe *Shabbos* would be a

good time to start?"

"Sure," he agreed, wondering if he could recruit Shloime to go with him. Shloime was his younger brother by two years, and Avi thought it might be nice to have company for this *mitzvah*. That way, if they ran out of conversation, there would be someone to pick up the slack.

Whoosh! Avi sent the orange sphere spinning towards its target. He watched it swivel, as if it were deciding whether or not to humor him, and finally agreed to make its descent. Jumping a foot off the ground, Avi whirled in delight, feeling that all was right with the world.

"So we'll go on *Shabbos*, okay, Shloime? After lunch?" Avi asked after giving Shloime the rundown later that afternoon.

That *Shabbos*, right after the *seudah*, the brothers headed over to see Mrs. Hendler's father, Mr. Yelinsky.

"Come in, come in." Opening the front door, Mr. Yelinsky greeted the boys with a broad smile. "It's so nice to see you."

Mr. Yelinsky led the boys into the dining room, and their eyes opened wide in surprise to see a plate of assorted cakes and pastries waiting for them.

"My daughter told me you would probably stop by," he explained, "so I prepared this special for you. How's school?"

Avi and Shloime ran through their favorite and worst subjects, laughingly putting recess on top of the list.

"I'm also in the choir," Avi volunteered. "I have a solo."

Shloime grimaced, wishing Avi didn't have to be such a show-off. *Just because he has a great voice, did that mean he has to talk about it 24\7?*

Shloime's taut lips didn't escape Mr. Yelinsky's eagle eye, and he deftly shifted the spotlight to zoom in on Shloime.

"And you, Shloime? Is there anything special that you enjoy?"

"No, not really." Shloime hung his head. He was so... average when standing next to his brother. His brother had a golden voice while he, Shloime, could barely carry a tune. Avi

I never got to tell him 'I'm sorry'. We never made up. The silence has stretched over eighty years. What I would give to say two words to him now..."



was a whiz in sports, and he, Shloime, was a klutz. Avi had a million friends, while he had two or three to call his own. He was just a shadow, a dark, nondescript image that was barely noticeable when the sun was shining bright.

"Well how 'bout we take out a *Mishnayos* and learn a little?" Mr. Yelinsky invited. "Shloime, you read first."

Avi opened his mouth in surprise. Usually he was always asked to go first. Why, he would have zipped through the first few *mishnayos* in the amount of time you could say, "Let's learn." But then he glanced at his brother, who looked pleasantly surprised.

When Shloime hesitantly read and translated the first *mishnah*, Mr. Yelinsky clapped his hands in delight.

"Wonderful!" he exclaimed. "You tackled that one beautifully. Thank you, Shloime." And Shloime smiled and sat up just a little taller.

When they finished their little *seder*, Avi pointed to something on the mantle.

"Mr. Yelinsky, that's a really beautiful *Havdolah* set. I've never seen one like that before."

A cloud swept over Mr. Yelinsky's features before he answered. Slowly, haltingly, he got up and took the *besomim* box and *Kiddush* cup down for the boys to examine. The *Havdolah* set was made of stained glass, with intricate and colorful designs engraved.

"My father was a glazier," he explained. "My brother and I picked up the art. I never did it professionally, but I've always loved working with my hands, especially with glass. So did Yeruchom."

"Yeruchom?" Shloime echoed.

"My younger brother," Mr. Yelinsky said sadly. "The last time I saw him he was ten years old. When the Nazis stormed through our door and took my parents away, Yeruchom wasn't home. I was hiding in a bedroom closet, and somehow they didn't find me- it was a real miracle. A few hours after they left, those beasts, I was able to find shelter with a non-Jewish family, longtime friends of my family. But I never found my brother."

"That's so sad," Avi and Shloime said together.

"Yes." Mr. Yelinsky fell silent, waiting for the strength to continue. "But the worst part is that we were in a fight when it happened; we hadn't said a word to each other for two straight days. So I never got to tell him 'I'm sorry'. We never made up. The silence has stretched over eighty years. What I would give to say two words to him now..."

The boys didn't know what to say. They looked down at the floor, then at Mr. Yelinsky, and back at the floor. Avi traced circles with his foot, and Shloime busily inspected his fingernails.

"On a more cheerful note," Mr. Yelinsky said, wanting to dispel the gloom that had settled, "how about swinging by on Thursday? I'll be turning 89, and I think it would be fun to celebrate my birthday with the two of you."

Avi's brain immediately started churning up exciting ideas. What fun! He and Shloime could make Mr. Yelinsky a party to end all birthday parties! They would put together a whole program and make this one birthday that their 'new-old friend' would never forget.

"So, Shloime, what do you think of arranging a choir? We'll sing Mr. Yelinsky some of our best songs. We'll get the whole class involved. And we can make a banner. Maybe we'll invite everyone on the block! It'll be awesome! The question is how we can get Mr. Yelinsky to come over without spilling the beans."

There he goes again, Shloime rolled his eyes. *Drumming up another way to throw out that voice of his...*

"But Avi," Shloime protested in his usual mild mannered way. "What if Mr. Yelinsky doesn't want all the noise and commotion? What if he just wants the two of us? You know how Mommy always says that old people can't handle too much excitement. Too much for their hearts, I think."

"Let me handle this," Avi insisted, dismissing Shloime's comments with a wave of his hand. "Mr. Yelinsky's got a lot of spunk. He'll love it."

He makes me feel like a pesky fly, Shloime thought resentfully as he clamped his lips together. *In his eyes, I'm just a nuisance.*

Chugging full steam ahead, Avi continued making plans. He made a food list, a guest list, and an entertainment list. And then he proceeded to inform Shloime of his responsibilities to help make the party happen. When Avi finished outlining his plan, Shloime put his foot down.



"I'm not doing this," he said quietly.

"What?" Avi roared, and Shloime wavered uncertainly as he watched his brother's face turn assorted hues of reds. This was the first time he could remember ever opposing one of Avi's brilliant ideas. But as he stood his ground, a warm feeling crept up his back. It was nice to listen to his own voice for a change.

"I think we can bring a small cake and make a little celebration, but I'm not going to make this big scale party without Mr. Yelinsky knowing or even wanting it." Shloime folded his hands across his chest firmly. *Besides, you'll get all the credit for everything, like you always do, and I'll get a smattering of polite applause. I'm tired of that.*

"Some sport you are," Avi hissed. "Okay, then. I'll find someone else I can rely on. Someone who wants to make an

old person happy and bring some joy into his life. Thanks, brother - for nothing."

Avi stomped off, and Shloime watched him head towards the kitchen. *Maybe I'll sleep on the couch tonight?* He wondered. *I have a feeling that the temperature in our room may be a little frosty.*

Shloime could hear Avi talking on the phone and rounding up some helpers for his big shebang. *Maybe I should just give in?* he wondered to himself. *Or maybe not. What should I do?* Shloime couldn't decide. He finally opted to take a walk; sometimes that helped his mind think clearly.

Maybe I should go along for the sake of shalom, Shloime wondered, walking briskly down his street. *Wasn't Mr. Yelinsky telling us the story about how he and his brother never had the chance to make up? Or maybe not. Maybe this is just wrong, and I need to be assertive like Mommy and Tatty are always telling me. Hey! That's it! I'll ask Ma. She'll tell me what to do.*

"No, you definitely don't spring something big and unexpected on an older person," Mommy agreed. "It's very sensitive of you to know that, Shloime," she said approvingly, and Shloime blushed, feeling two feet taller.

"Thanks for nothing," Avi snarled at Shloime later. "Thanks to you, all my plans are ruined. It would have been a great party. I wish you weren't my brother."

"I'm sorry," Shloime said. "I just didn't think it was the right thing to do here." He hesitated. "Are you coming with me to wish him a happy birthday on Thursday?"

Avi turned and aimed a fiery glare at Shloime. *That could have melted a glacier,* Shloime cringed, turning away. "Okay, then," Shloime said softly. *I get the hint.* "I guess I'll go myself."

"I'll come," Avi answered shortly. "We should bring a cake."

"Yeah," Shloime agreed.

Thursday found the boys greeting Mr. Yelinsky with a Happy birthday."

"I'm so glad you came," the old man replied. "Birthdays are no fun alone."

Avi stared pointedly at Shloime. *You see?* his eyes were saying. *If he's happy with company, imagine how much happier he would have been if we had followed through on my plan.* Shloime turned away, flames of hurt flickering in his eyes. 'I wish you weren't my brother' echoed in his mind.

"Is something wrong, boys?" Mr. Yelinsky asked, turning from one to the other.

"Everything's great!" Avi answered, pushing a smile onto his lips. "Just be happy. Today's your day."

"Brothers shouldn't fight," Mr. Yelinsky said softly, gazing knowingly into each of their eyes, and then quickly changed the topic.

Over some cake and drinks, Mr. Yelinsky regaled them with stories from the olden days, and the three had an enjoyable visit. By the time Avi and Shloime were ready to head home, they almost forgot they weren't speaking to each other. Until Mr. Yelinsky casually tossed out a line of how lucky they were to have each other as brothers. And suddenly they remem-

bered, and they didn't say another word to each other for the rest of the night. Things would have continued in this vain if not for Mr. Yelinsky's call on Monday.

"Hi, Avi? Yossel Yelinsky calling. Can you and Shloime come over? I want to show you something."

Curious, the boys headed over.

"My family came home, *baruch Hashem*. I want to show you what they brought me."

Mr. Yelinsky pointed to a large picture of a Jewish family saying *Havdolah*. It was a beautiful picture, and had the *possuk* of '*Hinei mah tov umanayim sheves achim gam yachad*' written on the bottom.

"Hey!" Shloime said. "Mr. Yelinsky, that looks like the glass-work you do!"

"You got it," Mr. Yelinsky said. "My daughter thought I would appreciate this because I work with glass. But here comes the unbelievable part."

On the bottom right hand of the picture was a signature. Mr. Yelinsky pointed to it with shaking fingers.

"My brother," Mr. Yelinsky said.

"Wow!" Avi whooped. "So now you can contact him after all these years!"

"No," Mr. Yelinsky continued, shaking his head sadly. "My daughter asked the bookstore owner where he got the picture. He told her that his son had been a close friend of the artist, and before the artist succumbed to his final illness..." Mr. Yelinsky choked up and had to pause before continuing. "He said that he wanted him to have the picture, a memento of sorts. But the son didn't really want the picture, so he brought it to his father's store to sell."

"Wow," Avi whispered, overcome.

"You know," Mr. Yelinsky whispered in a hoarse voice, his eyes closed. "I can hear my father's voice. '*Havdolah*,' he used to tell us, 'is to remind us that we're different from them. We have a different purpose. It brings us together and sets us apart at the same time.' Pretty powerful."

"So Yeruchom sent you a message," Shloime continued. "It sounds to me like he was telling you he loves you. That even though you're apart, you're still together."

"Yes." Mr. Yelinsky wiped his eyes. "I think so, too."

"I wanted to share this with you. I finally have my answer after all these years. He was a good brother," Mr. Yelinsky finished emotionally.

Avi and Shloime looked at each other.

Wishing Mr. Yelinsky a good night, they walked home thoughtfully.

"Wanna shoot some baskets?" Avi asked Shloime.

"Love to," Shloime agreed.

"You first," Avi said, smiling.

"Thanks, brother," Shloime replied, taking the ball.

And as the last rays of the setting sun danced across the sky, two brothers played a game together. Peering through his window, Mr. Yelinsky clutched the picture to his heart and watched the boys, a smile on his lips.

"For you, Yeruchom," he whispered. Birdsong interrupted his musings as two sparrows fluttered past his window and landed on a nearby branch. One pecked the other's wings, and then flew off, the other in hot pursuit. The very next moment, they perched beside each other, chirping contentedly.

"Probably brothers," Mr. Yelinsky mused. And humming '*Hinei ma tov*,' he noticed that Avi and Shloime were still going strong.

"Good shot!" he heard Avi exclaim as Shloime's ball whizzed through the net.

"Chirp!" the birds called, sounding like they couldn't agree more. And Mr. Yelinsky chuckled softly to himself as he gazed at the *Havdolah* picture.

"Yesiree," he murmured. "Apart from the world, together in our hearts."

Looking up, he noticed a bright streak of gold painting the darkening sky, looking mighty similar to the dancing flames of a *Havdolah* candle.



The Good-News Day

A typical Sunday. After their half-day of school, Rina and Chavi were walking home together. “Want to do something this afternoon?” Chavi asked, as they neared the Melman home.

To her surprise, Rina shook her head. She wore an air of suppressed excitement. “No, I’m staying home today. I want to be close to the phone. I’m expecting an important call...”

“Really? From who?”

“If you don’t mind, I’d rather not talk about it yet...”

Chavi was disappointed—and curious. Who was Rina expecting a call from? But Rina wasn’t talking.

They reached Rina’s house. Before Chavi could say another word, Rina threw a “See you!” over her shoulder and practically flew up the path.

Chavi watched the door close behind her. She was feeling bored already.

Five minutes and three blocks later, she walked through her own front door. The afternoon stretched ahead, long and empty.

The image of her friend’s excited face would not leave her. What kind of call was Rina expecting, anyway?

Or... was she really expecting a call at all?

Chavi’s heart twisted queerly in her chest.

Pausing only long enough to hang up her jacket, she went up to her room to think the whole thing over.

...

Rina was on tenterhooks. Every time the phone rang, she leaped up to answer it. But it was never for her.

“What’s going on?” her mother finally asked as she walked

into the living room after the third false alarm.

Rina perched on the couch again. “Remember when I tried out for that girls’ choir last month? The really professional one that performs all over the place?”

Mrs. Melman nodded. “How could I forget? You were a nervous wreck for days beforehand.”

“Well, I’m even more nervous today. At the audition, the choir head—Miriam Shechter—said that we’d be hearing from her today... *if* we were accepted.”

“And if not?”

“Then no call...”

Now Mrs. Melman knew why Rina had been sitting and staring at the phone as though willing it to ring. She smiled. “Good luck, Rina.” Then, to her daughter’s dismay, she added, “I need you to bring Sarala over to her friend’s house.”

“But I need to be here, in case she calls!”

“You won’t be gone long,” Mrs. Melman said firmly. “Now, please take her to the Newmans. She’s all ready to go.”

Rina knew there was no point arguing. Much better to just get it over with... In short order, she had her little sister by the hand and was hustling her out the door.

...

Chavi propped her chin on her hands and thought about Rina.

She thought about Rina a lot these days. Chavi’s family had

only moved into the neighborhood a few weeks before, and she'd been thrilled to make such a good friend so soon. But something about Rina's manner today had made her feel a bit... insecure. Rina seemed to be hiding something from her.

Was she really staying home to wait for a phone call? Or did she just use that as an excuse for not spending time with Chavi today? Maybe she was going somewhere with other friends, and didn't want Chavi to know...

There was only one way to find out.

Chavi went to the phone. She wasn't proud of herself for needing to check up on her friend. On the other hand, she couldn't bear not knowing the truth. Her fingers were punching in Rina's number even before her brain realized it had given the order.

A young voice answered: Rina's little brother, Shepsie.

"Hi. Can I please speak to Rina?"

Five-year-old Shepsie had been trained by his mother in the correct way to answer the phone. "I'm thorry," he lisped. "Rina'th not home right now. Can I take a methage?"

"Um, no. No message." At the news that her friend wasn't home—after declaring that she planned to be *glued* to the phone all day—Chavi's heart dropped with a thud.

"Who's calling, pleath?"

Anxious to hang up, Chavi pulled out a name at random. "Uh, it's Miriam. I'll call back later. Thanks!" She clicked the "Off" button to disconnect.

Brooding on Rina's deception, she flung herself on her bed. She was mortified.

Mortified that she'd called Rina's house in suspicion.

Mortified that her suspicions had proved correct.

Mortified that she'd trusted Rina's friendship.

She closed her eyes and let the tears flow.

...

The instant Rina came home—minus her little sister—she ran to find her mother. "Did anyone call for me while I was out?"

"Actually, someone did. I was saying my Tehillim, so Shepsie took the call."

"Who was it?" Rina held her breath.

"Someone named Miriam. She said she'll call back later."

"Miriam!" The caller had been the choir head, Miriam Shechter, calling with the good news. Rina was in!

Rina danced around the room. For a while, all she could say was, "I can't believe it!" and "I'm so-o-o happy!" It wasn't hard for her mother to decipher the way her daughter was feeling, or why.

"It might be a different Miriam," she cautioned. "She didn't leave a last name."

"There are no Miriams in my class. I don't know a single other Miriam. No, it *has* to be Miriam Shechter. She *said* she'd be making the acceptance calls today. I'm in!"

The phone rang again. It was Mrs. Bluestein, whom Rina babysat for occasionally. A few days earlier, Mrs. Bluestein had asked if Rina would be able to look after her children every Sunday night for the next few months. Rina had told her that she would let her know. Apparently, Mrs. Bluestein was impatient for her answer.

Rina thought quickly. Choir practice, she knew, took place every Sunday night, plus extra weeknight rehearsals before a performance. There was no way she could take this job.

"I'm so sorry, Mrs. Bluestein. I'm not going to be available on Sunday nights for a while. Good luck finding another babysitter..."

That taken care of, Rina danced off to share the wonderful news with her diary. And after that, she planned to do the same thing with all her friends.

...

"Hello—is this Chavi?" The voice was unfamiliar.

"Speaking," Chavi replied listlessly. She'd stopped crying, but her spirits remained low.

"This is Mrs. Bluestein. I work with your mother, and she mentioned that she has a daughter who babysits..."

"Yes!" Chavi perked up, interested now. She was too new in the neighborhood to have any regular babysitting jobs yet, and she could really use the extra cash.

"Well, I'm going to need someone to watch my kids every Sunday evening for the next few months, while I attend a class. I was wondering if you'd be available?" It seemed to Chavi that Mrs. Bluestein was holding her breath.

"As a matter of fact, I *am* available," Chavi assured her.

"Wonderful!" Mrs. Bluestein was happy.

Chavi was happier. A regular job—every week! In her mind, she began counting the money she would make. Now she wouldn't have to ask her parents every time she needed something. In her old neighborhood, she'd had plenty of babysitting

The image of her friend's excited face would not leave her. What kind of call was Rina expecting, anyway? Or... was she really expecting a call at all?

jobs. She was thrilled to have just landed her first one here!

Her dismay over Rina's betrayal was tempered by her joy over the new job. Her heart felt split in half, filled with happiness and sadness at the same time. She hung up with Mrs. Bluestein and went downstairs to tell her mother the good news.

...

The first person Rina called, after she'd written all about it in her diary, was Chavi.

"Chavi, you'll never guess what happened!" Rina's voice held the same excitement that her face had worn on the way home from school.

"What?" If Chavi's manner was cooler than usual, Rina didn't notice.

"Remember when I told you I was expecting an important call? Well, it came!"

"Who was it from?"

"Miriam Shechter. The head of the choir I tried out for last month? She said we'd get a call today—but only if we're accepted." Rina settled herself more comfortably as she prepared to tell the story. "There I was sticking to the phone like glue, when my mother told me to take my little sister to her friend's house. And of course—would you believe it?—the call came *in the exact ten minutes* I was out!"

Chavi caught her breath. "When was this?"

"I was gone from about two o'clock till two-ten. Shepsie picked up the phone, and he actually remembered to ask who was calling. She said 'Miriam', and that she'd call again later..."

Chavi's mind whirred like a buzz saw. *She* had called Rina at two-oh-five. Hurt and mortified to find that her friend was not home, Chavi had given Rina's little brother a random name. *Miriam...*

And now, because of her, Rina thought she'd been accepted to the choir!

"Well, enough about me," Rina said gaily. "What's new with you?"

All Chavi could think about was her horror over what she'd inadvertently done to Rina. "Uh... er..." She collected her wits. "Actually, I just got a babysitting job. Mrs. Bluestein wants me to watch her kids every Sunday night. *Baruch Hashem!*"

Rina knew all about Chavi's desire to earn extra cash to cover her expenses. They were on a tight budget at Chavi's house. "*Baruch Hashem,*" she repeated automatically. Her voice sounded suddenly abstracted. "That's great news, Chavi..."

For a second, Rina was tempted to tell Chavi that *she* had been Mrs. Bluestein's first choice.

Almost as quickly, she changed her mind. What was the

point? Chavi was thrilled about her new job. There was no reason for her to say a word about it. No reason at all.

"I'm so happy for you, Chavi," she said instead. "I guess this is a good-news day for both of us!"

"R-right." Chavi almost choked over the word. She soon found an excuse to say good-bye and hang up.

She sat very still at her desk, staring at nothing.

...

Rina had not lied to her. She had not betrayed her. It had been Chavi's own insecurity that had played a trick on her. Rina was a good friend. A very good friend.

And Chavi's thoughtless phone call had raised hopes in her very good friend that might never come true.

She glanced at the clock on her desk. It was nearing supper-time. The *real* Miriam Shechter had not phoned Rina yet. With each passing hour, the chances of her being accepted into the choir were lessening. Chavi hoped with all her heart that Rina would still get the call. But she shuddered as she imagined her friend's devastation, if she didn't.

A devastation that would be ten times more painful because she was already convinced that she'd been accepted...

Chavi felt the waves of guilt and sorrow wash over her. She was helpless to help her friend. In the privacy of her room, she shed some more tears.

And then, suddenly, she remembered something her mother had once told her.

Chavi's mother said *Tehillim* every day. Not just for herself and her children, but for everyone she loved and cared for. And that included all sorts of Jews in need, even if she didn't know them personally.

You're never really helpless, she'd told Chavi once. *There's always something you can do—in any situation. You can daven to Hashem for help...*

Chavi knew where the *Tehillim* was. She brought it to her room, sat back down at her desk and opened its well-worn pages.

And she began to daven like she'd never davened before.

...

Miriam Shechter sat at her table that evening, reading through the list of names one more time.

There were seventeen names in all. Seventeen girls whom she'd called today with the good news. Seventeen girls who had been accepted to the professional choir that she ran. The names belonged to the best voices she'd heard in a full week of auditioning. The cream of the crop.

Miriam frowned slightly. Seventeen was an odd number. Maybe it would be better to add one more girl—just to even

things up? She liked the number eighteen. It was the equivalent of *chai*—life. An auspicious number for what she hoped would be a very successful venture...

Still, she hesitated. The seventeen names on this list represented the best talent she'd found. The rest of the girls had been put on a waiting list. In other words—rejected.

She glanced at the name at the top of the waiting list. Rina Melman hadn't made the grade in the first selection. She wasn't really up to the choir's standards.

On the other hand, with some coaching her singing could

probably make the grade. And including her would bring their numbers up to eighteen.

She teetered at the edge of a choice. Yes—or no?

Something seemed to push her, ever so gently, in one direction. Miriam made her decision.

It was nine p.m.—hours after she'd made all her other acceptance calls. But she figured it's never too late to deliver good news.

She glanced at the number listed next to Rina's name, and reached for the phone.



Between Bubba and Baby

After three days of staying at her best friend Mindy's house, Chaya'la was finally allowed to come home. She dashed up the front stairs, her blue eyes shining and her blond pony bouncing, threw open the door, dropped her suitcase and ran up to her mother's room. And yes – there they were! Her mother and...

"She's so small!" Chaya'la gasped at the first glimpse of her new baby sister.

"Yes," smiled her mother. "That's how they start. Eleven and a half years ago, you also weighed six pounds four ounces. Come; help me put her into the infant seat so I can go through this bag of baby clothes."

Her mother sat in the rocking chair, matter-of-factly folding one piece of small pink clothing and the next, and Chaya'la sat on the floor, next to the infant seat and examined her brand-new sibling: her tiny little pug nose, fine, blond eyelashes, rose colored lips that looked like they belonged to a doll. She stretched out her own finger that looked strangely huge compared to the baby's thin ones, and gently slid it between the baby's tiny fingers. Her eyes grew wide as she watched the fingers wrap around her own larger one and grip it. "Hello, little baby sister," she whispered. "Do you like to hold my hand? Do you know who I am? I'm your big sister Chaya'la. We don't know your name yet, but we will on Shabbos. What do you think your name is going to be?"

"Babies don't think," Mommy laughed, placing a neatly folded pile of tiny t-shirts on the bed and reaching for the bag of stretchies.

"What do you mean? All people think. I think all the time!"

"What are you thinking now?" Mommy asked.

"I'm thinking that it's so nice that you're home from the hospital already and that we're making a *kiddush* on Shabbos and everyone is coming!"

"Bubby's not coming for Shabbos, though," Mommy said, beginning to match tiny yellow, blue and pink socks. "She's driving in this afternoon to see the baby with Bubba Rechel – your great-grandmother. You know Bubba Rechel returned from *Eretz Yisroel* and moved back in with my parents a few weeks ago, right?" A shadow passed over Mommy's face for a second. "Bubby has to stay home because it would be too much for Bubba Rechel to come for a whole Shabbos."

"I'm going to make Bubba Rechel's 'Lemon Balls' for this afternoon. I'm old enough to bake on my own. I'll bet she'll be thrilled

to see that her great-granddaughter in America, who she never met, uses her recipe."

Mommy gave Chaya'la a smile. "Good idea, Chaya'la. It's amazing how you've grown. I still remember bringing you home wrapped up in – well, in this very same pink blanket Bubba Rechel crocheted," she said, holding up a cozy square piece of fabric. "You've gotten so big and smart."

"Looks like my sister is smart, too," Chaya'la said, now running the palm of her hand ever so softly across the fuzzy top of the baby's head. "I can tell. She's wondering what her name is going to be."

"You're wondering what her name is going to be," Mommy corrected her. "Why would she care about her name? Babies don't know anything at all about words. Their brains are like blank computers, hard-wired to learn, but empty. They hear sounds, but they don't figure out words until they listen for months to people talking and they hear the same thing over and over. Eventually, our baby will figure out that the sound 'Mommy' means the person that comes to feed her, and 'Tatty' means the man with the scratchy beard..."

"And Chaya'la is me. Your big sister. See?" she said, leaning over very close to the baby and pointing to herself. "Me Chaya'la."

The baby's eyes fluttered open for a second and Chaya'la looked at her mother, satisfied, but her mother shook her head.

"Too early, Chaya'la. When she opens her eyes, she looks around, but she simply has no ideas in her head to make sense out of what she sees or hears."

Chaya'la frowned. "Sounds pretty dumb."

"Oh, no. Brilliant. You'll see. Over time, by keeping track of patterns, she'll figure everything out. She'll notice, for example, that the strange, moving shape that keeps whizzing by her eyes is her own amazing hand and that she can make it move! Then she'll experiment thousands of times until she can get those fingers into her mouth. From there, she'll learn so much more. Little babies are real scientists. She'll drop a spoon over the edge of her high chair over and over, and after a while, she'll discover gravity. That's how

babies learn.”

Chaya’la watched as her new baby sister wiggled and crinkled up her forehead and barely opened her eyes and peered at her, at the light in the room, at the blanket two inches from her face... gave a tiny shudder, then closed her eyes again, her fingers still gripping Chaya’la’s pointer. “She already loves me,” Chaya’la said. “I’m sure.”

“You’re sure? That’s pretty funny. Babies don’t love. They don’t talk. The only thing they do is cry when something hurts. Believe me, Chaya’la. Babies don’t think. They just *are*.”

Mommy continued methodically picking up pieces of laundry and folding them, and Chaya’la stared intently at the new little life.

What are you thinking about if you’re not thinking? she asked silently. *Could you be dreaming without words?*

After a few minutes, the baby gave a little kvetch, and then, as if startled by her own voice, her eyes flew open, and then squinted, and closed, and then she opened her mouth and began to complain: “Waa-a-, Wa-a-a... Eh-eh.. Wa-a-eh..” Her cheeks turned bright red, and she broke out into a howl. That tiny, doll mouth was tremendous when it stretched!

Mommy put down the laundry and gently reached over, lifting the baby from her infant seat. “See, Chaya’la? It hurts to have an empty tummy so she automatically cries, but she still doesn’t have tears or emotions. Come,” she said, kissing the baby on the top of her head. “Come to Mommy.”

“Her cute ducky socks fell off!” Chaya’la said. “She wants her socks.”

Mommy shook her head. “She doesn’t care. All she cares about right now is eating.”

“I’m hungry, too,” said Chaya’la. “Wa-a-a-.”

Her mother smiled. “Words are so much better than crying. Please go set the table for lunch. Bubby and Bubba Rechel will be here soon to eat a quick lunch and to see the baby.”

I still think the baby loves me already, Chaya’la thought to herself, as she put the forks and plates on the table. Then she picked up the recipe box and flipped through the index cards for the well-worn recipe, the one with “Lemon Balls” written in her great-grandmother’s old, looping script on the top. She quickly pulled out the mixer and got to work.

...

Bubba Rechel, Bubby, Mommy and Chaya’la sat at the kitchen table ready for lunch. “Where’s my pocketbook?” Babba Rechel asked, looking around in confusion.

“It’s here, Bubby,” said Chaya’la. “On the back of your chair.”

“Oh.” For a second, Bubby looked as if she were lost.

“Did you have a hard trip from *Eretz Yisroel*, Bubby?” Mommy asked.

“It’s always hard,” Bubby said. “So where’s my new granddaughter?”

“We just put her to sleep. Remember you saw her a few

minutes ago?” Mommy said slowly. After a brief pause she continued. “Here. Bubby. Have some cookies. They’re your favorites. Home-baked.” She handed the plate of lemon balls to Bubba Rechel.

“Mmmm,” said Bubba Rechel, appreciatively. “Did you make them?”

“No, Chaya’la made them,” Mommy said, smiling at her daughter.

“Ah. Chaya’la. That’s right.” Bubby picked up another cookie, looked at it and said with a smile, “Mmmm... Home-made lemon balls. My favorites. Who made this?”

Chaya’la looked at her mother, stricken. Her grandmother was forgetting everything! Maybe soon, she’d be just like the baby, with nothing in her brain at all! She stared, one more moment, horrified at the thought, and then she bolted from the table.

That evening, Chaya’la unpacked her suitcase, put on her favorite nightgown and climbed into bed early. It had been fun by Mindy’s house, but she hadn’t slept that well, and she was happy to be back in her room, down the hall from her parents. She yawned, said *Shma*, curled up, and closed her eyes.

But the house was noisier than usual. Chaya’la tried to fall asleep, but each time she practically drifted off, she was awakened by noise. First it was the baby’s cries, then the phone ringing. Then the baby, then the phone. She heard her mother’s voice, alternating between soothing the baby, talking on the phone, singing to the baby, more talking on the phone.

“She fell on the stairs after everyone in the house was asleep? She had forgotten to call you for help... ?

“Try your pacifier, sweetheart...”

“You called Hatzola?... ”

“Hush, baby, Mommy loves you...”

“They took her to the hospital? Internal bleeding? Oh, my! They don’t know how long... ? ...

“Here’s a new diaper... There you go, nice and clean....

“Oh, Mommy, I’m sorry, (–and a sob–) *Baruch Dayin Emes*... The funeral is scheduled for 10:00 tomorrow morning?... ”

“Ssshhhhh, baby... go to sleep...”

...

Chaya’la stood in *shul* that Shabbos, straining to hear her new sister’s name. She heard her father called up for an *aliyah*, and then lots of *mazal tovs*, but what was the baby’s name?

“Rechel,” confirmed the woman standing next to her in *shul* with a nod. A glimmer of a tear appeared in the corner of her eye. “After your Bubba Rechel. I knew her years ago. A true *tzadekes*. She should grow up to be just like her.”

Rechel? After Bubba Rechel? That was a *terrible* name! She didn’t want her baby sister to grow up to be like Bubba Rechel – the scary woman who couldn’t remember anything! *I hate the name Rechel. I’ll call her Mindy,* Chaya’la decided suddenly. *That’s*

my best friend's name, and she'll grow up to be my best friend.

The *kiddush* was set to be held in their living room, for people to come by after *davening*. Most of the cake and cookies and fancy pink napkins were set out the night before, but Chaya'la came home from *shul* early to help put out the last minute refrigerated items like the iced coffee and herring. She stood back, admiring the tables, and then noticed her left-over lemon balls sitting on a fancy china dish. She shuddered, remembering the last time they were served.

"Chaya'la," her mother called from upstairs, "can you come hold the baby so I can get dressed before anyone comes to say *mazal tov*?"

"My pleasure." Chaya'la ran upstairs and grinned when she noticed her mother had dressed the baby in the outfit *she* had chosen: lacy white on top of flowery pink and purple background. She lifted up the sweet, small bundle, sat down on the rocking chair and carefully cradled her in her arms, and began to hum a *Shabbos niggun*. "Mmmmm...there. Do you like that song, little Mindy?"

Suddenly, she heard a gasp. "Mindy!?" her mother choked.

Chaya'la looked up and saw her mother's eyes bulging, her hand to her chest. "Her name was supposed to be Rechel, after Bubby Rechel who just passed away yesterday! My mother was so happy to know that a baby would be named after her within the week of *shiva*. Oh, Chaya'la! They called her 'Mindy' in *shul*!"

Chaya'la shook her head. "No, Mommy," she mumbled. "They called her Rechel."

"Phew!" Her mother's face lit up, relieved. "But Chaya'la, then why did you call her 'Mindy' just now?" She glanced at the baby and then Chaya'la, puzzled.

"Why would you want to name the baby after such an old, mixed-up lady?" Chaya'la burst out. "She scared me, Mommy. I don't want to think of her ever again!"

Mommy softly put her arms around Chaya'la and Rechel. "Your great-grandmother was a wonderful person," she said. Her eyes focused on Chaya'la's, and then drifted, and she looked out the window at the branches, swaying in the wind. "I loved her very much. She taught me how to bake and how to knit. When I was your age, she lived with us, and when I came home from school, she would be there waiting on the front steps, wearing her apron, and a big smile. When she came to America after the holocaust, she worked in a fabric store, and -oh, so often women would stop me on the street and tell me how much good advice she gave them, not only about fabric and dress design, but about life itself. Still, she always dreamed of *Eretz Yisroel*. One day, before you were born, she decided to move so she could *daven* at the *kosel* whenever she pleased."

Chaya'la tried to picture Bubby Rechel going on a bus to the *kosel*. "She'd never find it," she said.

"For many years she remembered everything. Her mind was



crystal clear. The she got older," Mommy said softly. "She was close to 100. I think her brain needed a rest."

Mommy finished getting dressed and put on her *sheitle*, while Chaya'la observed the baby's even, soft breaths. *Getting old is like shutting down the computer*, Chaya'la thought. *It's like erasing the memory. What was left if the memory was gone?*

"Mommy," she said, looking up, her eyes filling with tears, "why bother learning at all? The baby is going to experiment like a scientist and figure out all sorts of brilliant things. She's going to go from playgroup all the way through seminary, stuffing her brain. But in the end, she could forget it all like Bubba Rechel. What's the point?" She stared miserably into Rechel's face. "Poor kid."

"But that's life," her mother said. "We do what we can with the gifts we're given, and pack up as many packages of Torah and *mitzvos* that we can while we have the strength. Then we finish our job, and give back our *neshama* to Hashem, Who remembers everything, even if we forget. Bubby Rechel accomplished a lot in her life, and she took her *mitzvos* with her. Even if her mind wasn't clear, her *neshama* is reaping the rewards in *Gan Eden*. That's the point, Chaya'la."

Chaya'la was quiet. So the brain was only a tool, like an arm or a leg, to do *mitzvos*. There was more to a person than their thoughts and ideas – something much deeper. The new Rechel and the old Rechel were both essentially *neshamos*, only one was a newborn and one had just left the world. Hmmm. This was something she'd have to talk to Mindy about!

But in the meantime, she could hear someone knocking on the door downstairs.

"Time for the *kiddush*, Chaya'la. I'll go open the door. Can you please bring the baby?"

So Chaya'la carefully brought her baby sister downstairs to her very first *simcha*: A *kiddush* to celebrate the opportunities life offered to the new little Rechel.

The Purple Balloon

“Ari, can you help me with the camera, please? The shutter won’t open again!”

Ari placed the shiny black camera he’d been fiddling with into its case, and held out his hand for the beat-up one that his sister was holding.

Yup, the shutter was stuck again. It had a tendency to jam while halfway open, allowing you to see a narrow diagonal strip of world through the lens. Not very conducive to picture taking.

Delicately, Ari pried the shutter open with the thumb and forefinger of his right hand. Then he opened and closed it a couple of times to loosen it up. The shutter stayed open.

“Here you go!” he said. “Hope it keeps working for you!”

“Thanks a million, Ari,” said Deena. She slipped the old family camera into its threadbare case.

“Hey,” said Ari, awkwardly. “I’d lend you mine, but-”

“No way,” Deena cut him off. “That’s your new camera, and no way I’d want that responsibility on my shoulders even if you did want to lend it to me. Anyway, I don’t care about pictures like you do. And Shaindy said she’ll share hers with me after school Shabbos. I just want to have a camera on me – just in case.” She smiled. “Thanks for fixing it for me.”

“Sure,” said Ari. He was relieved that Deena didn’t expect him to lend her the new one. He’d saved up money for months, he wasn’t ready to lend it out just yet.

...

The sun was hot as Ari pushed the stroller down the street. He’d have felt self-conscious about the carriage and the three little kids around him, if it wasn’t for Meir at his side.

Meir was a great best friend. When Ari told him that his mother had asked him to take the kids to a backyard carnival a few blocks away, Meir had said, “Fun! Be right over!”

And the really wonderful thing was that Meir meant it. He was the youngest in his family, and he really got a kick out of Ari’s younger siblings – even Sari, who was *not* the easiest four-year-old in the world to deal with.

“Who’s going to go on the moonwalk?” asked Meir.

“Me!” chorused Efraim, Sari, and Shev.

“You’re not scared?” Meir questioned, his eyes twinkling.

“No!!”

They turned the corner, and were greeted by the sight of brightly colored signs, fluttering tablecloths, and balloons dancing merrily over the street. Music was blaring out of a small loudspeaker, and teenagers were loudly inviting children over to check out the carnival booths.

“I want to go on the moonwalk first!” shouted Efraim.

“No, me!” Sari yelled.

And the kids were off, stampeding toward the large inflatable bouncing toy that stood in one corner of the big backyard.

“What do you say we check out the moonwalk first?” drawled Meir.

Ari laughed. “Sounds like an amazing idea.”

It wasn’t bad. Yes, there were more mothers and

older sisters supervising than boys, but Meir and Ari weren't the only boys their age there, either.

Ari waved at a classmate, Yehuda Leib.

Yehuda Leib came over, a sheepish smile on his face. "Watching your brothers and sister, huh?"

"Nah," Meir. "We both came purely for the phenomenal entertainment offered."

"Well," Yehuda Leib grinned, "I notice *you're* not on line for the moonwalk. Hey – new camera?" He nodded toward the camera case hanging from the stroller handle.

"Yeah," said Ari.

"Can I see? What kind of camera?"

"Canon G16. It just came out a couple of months ago."

The next few minutes were spent in camera bliss, as Ari proudly showed off the various features of his new camera. Every few seconds, he'd glance up to make sure that his siblings were still enjoying themselves safely on the moonwalk. The baby had dozed off in the carriage.

During a break in the conversation, Ari took some pictures of the kids jumping happily on the moonwalk. He loved the way this camera handled action shots.

It was turning out to be a pretty enjoyable day after all.

After an hour or two of exploring the booths and activities, multiple return trips to the moonwalk, and a paper cone of cotton candy for everyone, it was time to go.

Except-

"My balloon!" Sari screeched.

Everyone else was gathered around the carriage, ready to go. And Sari had lost her grip on the string of her purple balloon – free with carnival admission – which was rising higher and higher over the backyard.

For a second, Ari thought it would catch in the branches of a nearby tree, but it escaped, string floating lightly through leaves and twigs and then sailing unencumbered, up into the blue sky, growing smaller with each passing second.

"Uh oh," he mumbled.

"MY BALLOON!" Sari screamed again, then burst into racking sobs.

"Let's get you another one, then," Ari said.

"But there's no more purples! I saw! They don't have more purples and I only want purple!"

"Let's see

what colors they do have, then," Ari said coaxingly. "Come on, maybe even two balloons?"

"No, no, no! I only want purple!" In the end, Meir pushed the carriage out of the backyard, with Efraim and Shev holding onto either side. Ari carried Sari, still crying.

It took half a block before Sari quieted down, but when she did, Meir said, "Did you ever hear the story of the purple balloon?"

"My purple balloon?" asked Sari, sniffing. "Nope. A different purple balloon. But something very similar happened to it. This purple balloon was owned by a little girl named Rivky. She got the balloon at a shoe sale, where the store was giving out balloons. And as she walked down the street holding her purple balloons, a big gust of wind came and – poof! It grabbed the balloon right out of her hands." "Oh no!" said Rivky. She watched her balloon fly away, and she was very sad.

'But, two blocks away was another little girl, named Esty. This Esty was also very sad. She was sad because her best friend had just moved far, far away. She was feeling very lonely.

'All of a sudden, she saw something purple blow into a nearby tree. It was a balloon! Esty went and called her amazing older brother, who climbed the tree and brought the balloon down to Esty.

'Esty's favorite color was purple. Her best friend knew that. Any time she got Esty a present, she made sure it was purple. Now, Esty felt as if her best friend had sent her a present from far away. Esty felt happy. She felt like her friend was thinking about her right then."

"Was she?" asked Sari.

"I don't know," answered Meir. "But you know who was thinking about her?"

"Who?"

"Hashem was. He sent her that balloon to make her happy. And maybe sad little Rivky would have been hap-

py,
t o o ,
if she
knew how her
balloon was mak-
ing another girl so happy.”
Sari thought about that. “So
maybe my balloon is making some-
one else happy?”
“Maybe,” said Meir. “But it’s for sure do-
ing exactly what Hashem wants it to be do-
ing. Because Hashem’s in charge of everything.
Even balloons.” He looked solemnly at Sari, who
stopped sniffing.

Ari put her down, and reached over to take a turn
pushing the carriage. By now, Shev was riding the
back of it, and it had become heavier.

“Where – oh no!” he said. “My camera! It’s not
here on the handle!”

“No way,” said Meir. “That’s impossible!
You had it a few minutes ago, at the carnival.”
“I was watching it the whole time!”

“Yeah,” Meir said slowly. “Except when Sari was
screaming, and we were both trying to calm her
down.”

They looked at each other, and Ari swung the cari-
age around.

Meir was already running ahead, back toward
the carnival. “The quicker we look, the better!” he
shouted back over his shoulder.

But the camera wasn’t there. Not at any of the
booths, not on the ground.

It was gone. A half hour later, Ari and Meir found
themselves walking slowly home.

“I’m sorry,” said Meir.

“What for?” asked Ari hollowly. “Thanks for help-
ing me look. It was my fault. I should have been carry-
ing it around my neck.” His shoulders were hunched
over the carriage handles.

Meir didn’t say anything.

“I guess it’s like the balloon then, huh?” Ari said,
feebly attempting to inject some humor into the situ-

ation.

“No,” said

Meir, seriously. “I’m not tell-
ing you that. You worked hard for that
camera, and it’s worth a lot to you. Not in a little
kid way, but in a real way. It’s not just a purple bal-
loon, Ari, and I know I can’t make up stories to make
you feel better, so I’m not gonna try.”

Ari shook his head. “It wasn’t made up. Hashem
has a plan for cameras, just like balloons, right?”

“Yeah,” said Meir. “But I don’t know that would
make me feel so much better, if I was the one who
lost a new camera.”

Ari tried to smile. “Well, I can try to learn from
Sari.”

Sari was skipping along, holding a green balloon,
which she’d decided to ‘share’ with the baby, who
didn’t really care either way since he was only a year
old.

Well, thought Meir, at least there was still the old
family camera. It still worked – if you could get the
shutter to stay open.

• • •

“I heard,” said the lady at the door, “that you were
missing a camera?”

Ari nodded, eyes opening wide.

The lady held out a case – his new, black-and-gray
case, the one that had come with his new Canon
G16... His fingers fumbled as he opened the case.

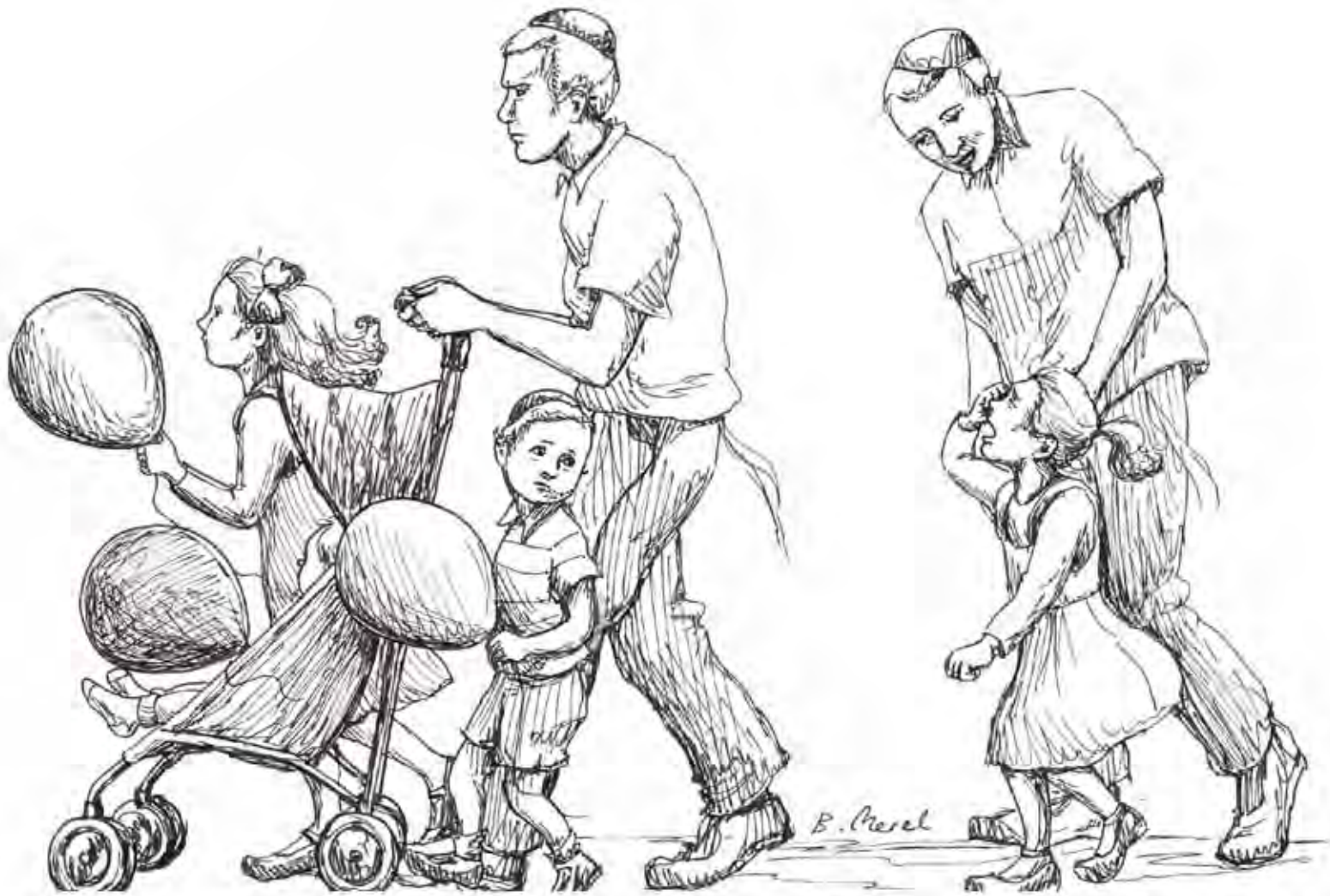
It sure looked like his camera.

“I’m sorry,” said the lady. “My kids were hav-
ing such a good time at that booth with the shaving
cream. I asked my oldest to grab the camera, and she
really doesn’t know one carriage from another, or one
camera from another... So she started snapping pic-
tures, and then put it back in the case. And then later,
somehow, we were carrying around two cameras in-
stead of one!”

“How’d you find out I lost it?” asked Ari, eyes still
on the camera, fingers moving gently over the but-
tons. He couldn’t believe he had it back in his hands.

“Oh, one of the girls at the carnival remembered
that you were looking for it. She said she remem-
bered you because your sister lost a balloon, too.”
The woman hesitated. “I hope you don’t mind, but
can I ask you one last favor?”

“Sure,” said Ari, his mind spinning. So, there had



been a reason for the lost balloon – to bring his camera back home and make *him* happy!

“My grandmother is very sick, and is actually having surgery later today. She loves seeing updated pictures of the great grandchildren, and I think these would cheer her up and give her some strength.” She hesitated again. “Can I send the pictures to my mother, to show my grandmother? It would be just in time for her to see them before the surgery.”

Ari blinked. “Sure.”

“Thank you so much!” the woman said. There were actually tears in her eyes – or, at least, Ari thought there were. “I’m so sorry for the mix-up, but this was actually so amazing for me and my family.”

A lost camera... also to make someone happy. In this case, an elderly woman about to have surgery. And her whole family.

“No problem,” was all Ari said.

“Thanks so much for bringing

the camera right over. And what’s your grandmother’s name, for *Tehillim*?”

A minute later, the lady was gone. Ari sat down to say a *perek* of *Tehillim*. Then he hurried toward the phone.

“Meir?” he said, as soon as his friend picked up. “I’ve got a great story to tell you... Yeah, yeah, I know I’m not into stories, but listen.

This one’s about a camera... and a purple balloon.”