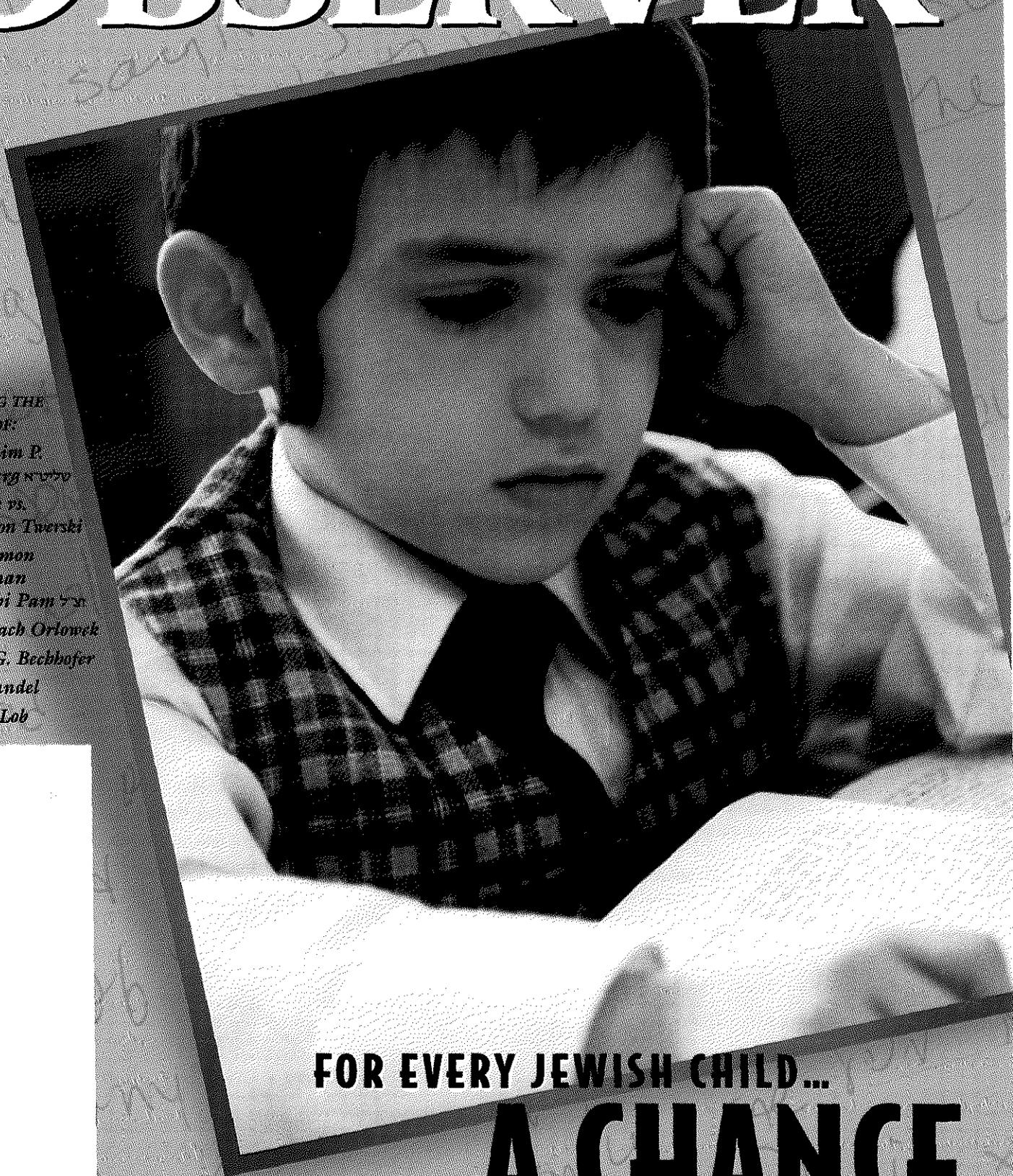


THE Jewish OBSERVER

Chester 5763 • October 2002
U.S.A. \$3.50/Foreign \$4.50 • VOL XXXV/NO. 8



FEATURING THE
INSIGHTS OF:

*Rabbi Chaim P.
Scheinberg* אשכנז

*Avi Schick vs.
Dr. Aaron Twerski*

*Rabbi Shimon
Finkelman
on Rabbi Pam* אשכנז

Rabbi Nach Orlowek

Rabbi Y.G. Bechhofer

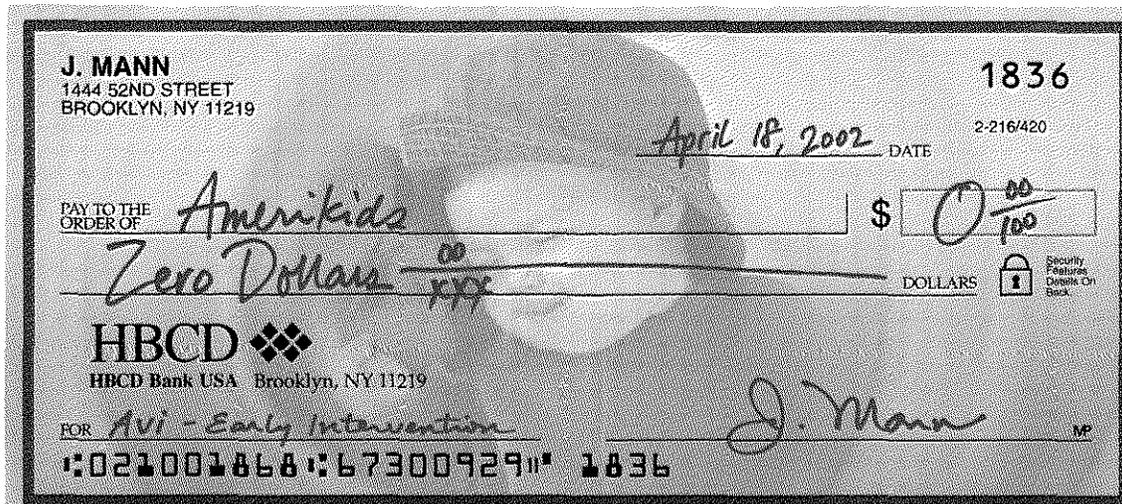
David Mandel

Dr. Jerry Lob

FOR EVERY JEWISH CHILD...

A CHANCE

It costs nothing to ensure your child has the best of everything.



ALL PROGRAMS ARE PERFORMED AT CLIENT'S HOME, FREE OF CHARGE AND INCLUDE:

- CORE & SUPPLEMENTAL EVALUATIONS
- SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY
- PHYSICAL & OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
- FAMILY AND/OR NUTRITIONAL TRAINING & COUNSELING
- SOCIAL WORK
- SPECIAL INSTRUCTION
- NURSING
- BI-LINGUAL THERAPISTS (YIDDISH, RUSSIAN, HEBREW AND OTHER LANGUAGES)
- THE PEACE OF MIND THAT COMES FROM WORKING WITH SHOMER SHABBOS, WARM AND CARING THERAPISTS AND PROFESSIONALS

At **Amerikids**, our early intervention programs are more than just among the best available in the state, they're also **free**. That means you get the level of professionalism – and performance that only one of the state's top healthcare providers can deliver, and you get it with **no out of pocket cost to you**.

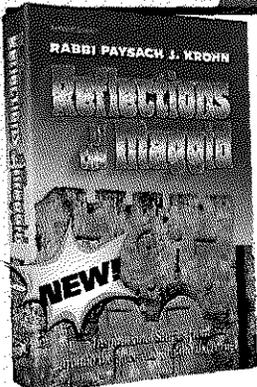
Think about it, a program custom tailored to the unique needs of your child and implemented with an eye towards your child's future – all delivered in the comfort of your own home...and all for free. And because we're part of the Americare Family of Companies – a company with over two decades of experience as a leader in healthcare services, you know your child is getting the absolute best care possible.

If your child is between newborn and age three, and needs help with talking, walking, feeding, paying attention or getting along with others, you may be eligible for our **free** Early Intervention Program.

Call us today to give your child the best of everything... today and tomorrow.



new from ArtScroll



Rabbi Paysach J. Krohn, one of the most sought after Jewish speakers today and author of the immensely popular ArtScroll *Maggid* book series, travels the world, attracting and inspiring audiences young and old.

During his international travels, Rabbi Krohn meets every variety of Jew and collects their fascinating true stories. In his new volume, he shares scores of never-before-printed stories — gathered from four continents, each meticulously verified and brought to vivid life by his considerable talents.

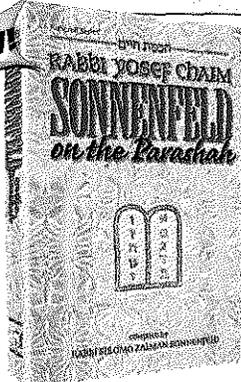
Reflections of the Maggid promises to be Rabbi Krohn's best collection yet!

by Rabbi Paysach J. Krohn

Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld was the illustrious Rav of the Old Yishuv of Jerusalem during the British Mandate and the Arab anti-Semitic uprisings.

His great-grandson has compiled Reb Yosef Chaim's comments on the parashah, resulting in this outstanding collection of insights, comments and interpretations of the weekly Torah reading. This volume presents gems of Torah wisdom written in a readable, fluid style that will uplift readers on every level. What could be better than enhancing your Shabbos with the timeless words of Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld?

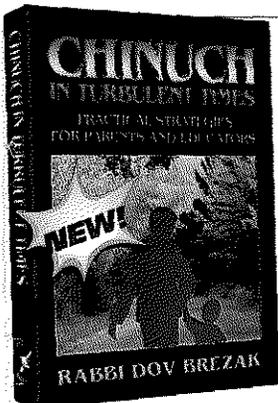
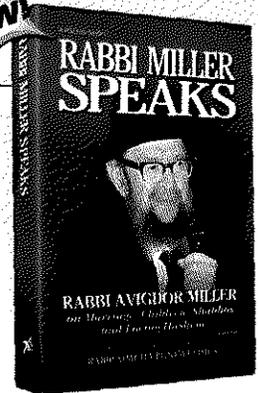
Compiled by Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Sonnenfeld



Rabbi Avigdor Miller זצ"ל was one of the *gedolim* of our time. He was tireless — in his learning, his teaching, and his striving for personal growth.

The inimitable logic, wit, and candor of his discourses captivated, uplifted, educated, and encouraged. The essence of his thought, which he presented in his meticulously prepared lectures, is captured in this first volume of essays compiled from his recorded lectures. This compelling selection is dedicated to talks he gave on *Love of G-d; Marriage; Children, and Shabbos*, and it includes a list of every source referenced in the essays.

Compiled and Annotated by Rabbi Simcha Bunim Cohen



"Fortunate will be parents who study this work and follow its advice" — *Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe*

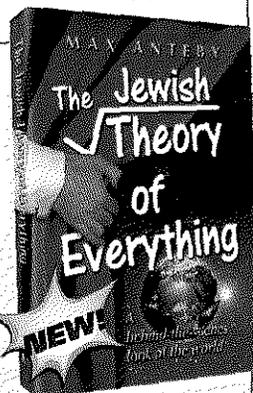
Beautifully written, with an uplifting blend of wit and candor, this book is a joy to read. More importantly, adopting the author's positive mindset and putting into practice the techniques he clearly describes will benefit every member of your household now, and for many years to come.

The book features a chapter of "Frequently Asked Questions" on chinuch, and many chapters include a "Question and Answer" section responding to actual issues raised by parents.

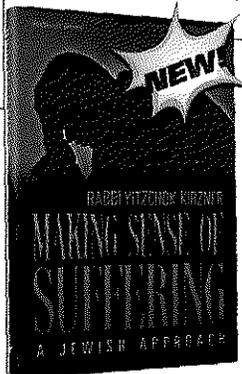
by Rabbi Dov Brezak

This thought-provoking book will challenge, amaze, and amuse you as you discover the answers to these and many other deep and not-so-deep questions. The author **Max Anteby**, Senior International Lecturer for Aish HaTorah/Discovery, has intrigued and entertained thousands of people in over 50 cities. **A Shaar Press book.**

- How come some people are givers and others are takers?
- Why is gravity not just a good idea, it's also the law?
- How does Darwinism prove the survival of a theory?
- Is seeing believing?



by Max Anteby

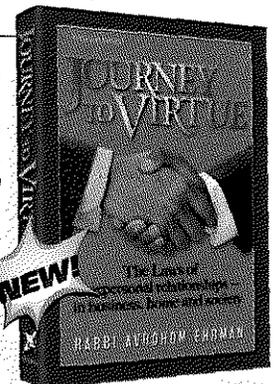


Rabbi Yitzchok Kirzner

How would the world look if everyone behaved according to Jewish law in business and in *bein adam l'chaveiro* matters? This book based on the author's original work, *Halichos Olam*, systematically discusses the laws that guarantee a harmonious, humane, ethical society. Topics are realistic and familiar. For example:

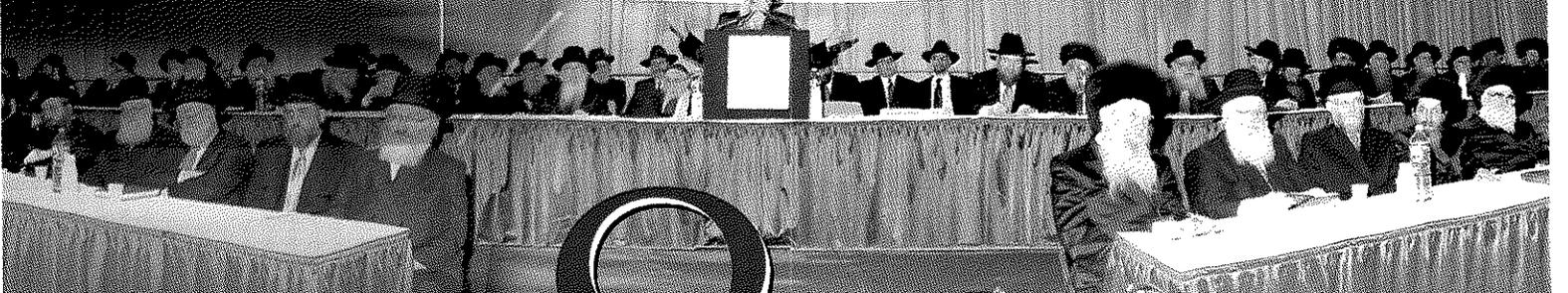
- You are buying a new refrigerator "on line." Are you permitted to go to a local appliance store to see what it looks like?
- Are you required to reveal negative information regarding a potential shidduch, even if you are not asked?
- Are there guidelines about what takes precedence for tzedakah?

This is a book that could make the world a better place!



by Rabbi Avrohom Ehrman





CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

A roach-filled Shabbos graced by the presence of Gedolei Torah

ליל שבת — שבת ארום — inspiring

Festive
Melave
Malka



Divrei Torah
from leading
rabbim,
roshei
vestiva, and
rebbim



Weekday
symposia
confronting
the major
issues of
the hour



Roundtable
discussion
groups



Shiurim on Daf Yomi,
Parsha and other topics

Special women's program



50TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

AGUDATH ISRAEL OF AMERICA

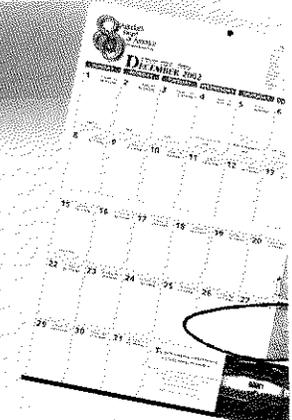
אגודת ישראל באמריקה

NEW DATE

THURSDAY EVENING
THROUGH SUNDAY

DEC. 26-29, 2002

כ"א - כ"ד טבת תשס"ג



NEW LOCATION

THE STAMFORD
WESTIN HOTEL
STAMFORD, CT



RESERVATION INFORMATION

Call the Agudath Israel of America
Convention Desk: 212-797-7380

THE Jewish OBSERVER

Cheshvan 5763 • October 2002
U.S.A.\$3.50/Foreign \$4.50 • VOL XXXV/NO. 8

THE JEWISH OBSERVER (ISSN) 0021-6615 is published monthly except July and August by the Agudath Israel of America, 42 Broadway, New York, NY 10004. Periodicals postage paid in New York, NY. Subscription \$24.00 per year; two years, \$44.00; three years, \$60.00. Outside of the United States (US funds drawn on a US bank only) \$12.00 surcharge per year. Single copy \$3.50; foreign \$4.50.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Jewish Observer, 42 Broadway, NY, NY. 10004. Tel: 212-797-9000, Fax: 646-254-1600. Printed in the U.S.A.

RABBI NISSON WOLPIN, EDITOR

EDITORIAL BOARD
RABBI JOSEPH ELIAS
Chairman

RABBI ABBA BRUDNY
JOSEPH FRIEDENSON
RABBI YISROEL MEIR KIRZNER
RABBI NOSSON SCHERMAN
PROF. AARON TWERSKI

DR. ERNST L. BODENHEIMER Z"l
RABBI MOSHE SHERER Z"l
Founders

MANAGEMENT BOARD
AVI FISHOF, NAFTOLI HIRSCH
ISAAC KIRZNER, RABBI SHLOMO LESIN
NACHUM STEIN

RABBI YOSEF C. GOLDING
Managing Editor

Published by
Agudath Israel of America

U.S. TRADE DISTRIBUTOR
Feldheim Publishers
200 Airport Executive Park
Nanuet, NY 10954

ISRAELI REPRESENTATIVE
Intl. Media Placement
POB 7195 / 5 Even Israel
Jerusalem, ISRAEL

BRITISH REPRESENTATIVE
M.T. Bibelman
Grosvenor Works
Mount Pleasant Hill
London E5 9NE, ENGLAND

BELGIAN REPRESENTATIVE
Mr. E. Apter
Lange Kievitstr. 29
2018 Antwerp
BELGIUM

FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE
Rabbi Bamberger
21 Boulevard Paixhans
57000 Metz
FRANCE

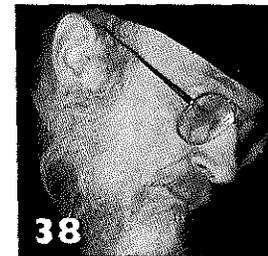
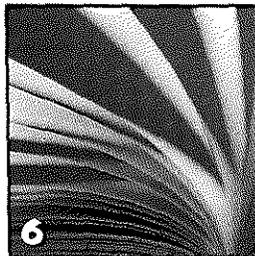
SOUTH AFRICAN REPRESENTATIVE
Mr. V. Taback
PO Box 51552
Raedene, Johannesburg
2124 SOUTH AFRICA

SWISS REPRESENTATIVE
Mr. S. Feldinger
Leimanstrasse 36
4051 Basel, SWITZERLAND

THE JEWISH OBSERVER does not assume responsibility for the Kashrus of any product, publication, or service advertised in its pages

© Copyright 2002

October 2002
VOLUME XXXV/NO. 8



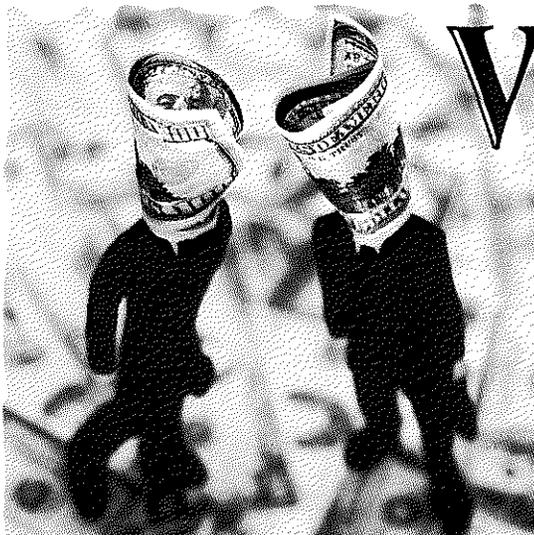
FOR EVERY JEWISH CHILD... A CHANCE

- 6 Vouchers...And the Fiscal Viability of Our Yeshivos, Avi Schick**
- 13 Vouchers: An Idea Whose Time Has Come,**
a response by Dr. Aaron Twerski
- 15 "Professor Twerski and I Agree... And Disagree,"**
a rejoinder by Avi Schick
- 18 Husband, Wives and Children,**
Rabbi Chaim Pinchos Scheinberg שליט"א
- 25 Support, Stigma or Shame, David Mandel**
- 30 Rav Pam's Special Friend, Rabbi Shimon Finkelman**
- 35 The Price Of "Just Joking," Dr. Jerry Lob**
- 38 Rabbi Ephraim Eisenberg זצ"ל – A Primary Conduit of Torah,**
Rabbi Yosef Gavriel Bechhofer
- 41 Raising Roses Among Thorns, by Rabbi Noach Orlowek,**
a review article by Rabbi Shlomo Furst
- 43 That I Can Survive Until You Remember, Sarah Shapiro**
- 46 Postscript: A Call to Arms, Rabbi Aryeh Zev Ginzberg**
- 47 Letters to the Editor**

Important Notice

Through technical error, the full-page display ad, as prepared by the advertiser, which appeared in the September '02 issue of *The Jewish Observer*, on page 4, facing the Table of Contents, contains passages from *Tanach* with the Name of *Hashem* inadvertently spelled out – an unintended departure from precedent.

As a result, this page has the sanctity of *sheimos hakedoshim*, sacred writings, and must be treated with respect: not to be discarded, and so on. We regret the inconvenience.



VOUCHERS◆◆◆

and the Fiscal Viability of our *Yeshivos*

I. THE BURDENS OF EXPLOSIVE GROWTH

The growth and development of the network of *yeshivos* and day schools across the United States is perhaps the American Jewish community's single greatest achievement of the last half-century. Few observers of American Jewish life immediately after World War II would have believed that by the beginning of the 21st century there would be more than 700 Jewish schools educating more than 200,000 full-time students. Fewer still might have believed that the overwhelming majority of those schools and students would be Orthodox.

As with all rapid growth, the explosive increase of *yeshivos* has come with growing pains. The development and maintenance of *yeshivos* is enormously expensive. As *yeshiva* enrollment has increased, so has the cost of education. To a greater degree than ever before, parents are now expected to bear that cost.

For many parents, *yeshiva* tuition is a welcome expense; others fulfill their obligations somewhat more grudgingly. For too many parents, the process of enrolling their children in *yeshivos* and day schools is uncomfortable. The application and interview process can at times appear to be as concerned with a parent's finances as with a child's future.

Avi Schick is Deputy Counsel to New York State Attorney General Elliot Spitzer. The opinions expressed in this article are his own.

Frum, committed parents grin and bear it; it is impossible to calculate the effect on those only marginally interested in obtaining a *yeshiva* education for their children.

Yet *yeshivos* are for the most part still underfinanced, and their *Rabbeim* and teachers still underpaid. The crushing tuition burden that confronts many parents is still insufficient to fund first-class facilities, and both *limudei kodesh* and secular studies programs would be enhanced if money were more plentiful. Thus, we are faced with the conundrum of parents who are often asked to pay more than they can afford while *yeshivos* still lack the funds necessary to properly educate their students.

It is against this backdrop that the United States Supreme Court's decision this past June in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* was received. In that case, the Court held that a Cleveland, Ohio, program that provided school vouchers to underprivileged students in underperforming public schools, and allowed those vouchers to be used to pay for an education at other schools – including religious schools – was constitutional.

Within hours of the Supreme Court's decision, the national Agudah office was receiving calls from relieved parents inquiring about where they can obtain their voucher applications. Who could blame them? For years, politicians have been promising them some form of "tuition relief," and the promise of vouchers is viewed as the quickest way

to secure the support of the Orthodox electorate. Now that the Supreme Court had ruled that vouchers were constitutional, the inquiring parents were simply looking to collect on that promise.

Unfortunately, even after the *Zelman* decision, the likelihood is that vouchers will remain a false promise for almost all *yeshiva* parents for some time to come. That is not to say there is no immediate benefit to be derived from the *Zelman* decision.

Some schools and students may indeed benefit from the implementation of voucher programs. Beyond that, the *Zelman* decision alters the political and legal landscape in ways that should make government more receptive to providing assistance to students attending religious schools. But to obtain that assistance, one must comprehend the current economic, political and legal realities and the limitations that they impose.

II. ECONOMIC REALITIES

In the words of one federal judge (speaking anonymously), "Vouchers are a creature of budget surpluses. Constitutionality is second to the question of government ability to pay."¹

To date, there have been limited voucher programs implemented in a handful of localities. In each instance, the program was appropriately charac-

¹ Hamilton, Findlaw's Legal Commentary, July 1, 2002

terized as “experimental” because it was available only to a small group of students residing within a particular city or school district. The purpose of the “experiment” was to attempt to deal effectively with failing students in failing schools.

These experiments only increase the cost to government, at least in the short term. They require an investment of several thousand dollars per student without providing a concomitant reduction in the funds that must be provided to the public schools that the voucher students are leaving.

Unlike corporations, governments rarely experiment, because that process requires short term expenditures and offers only the hope of long-term gains. Government is rarely that farsighted, even when running a surplus. Now that the surpluses of the 1990s are being replaced by huge budget deficits, it is unlikely that there will be a willingness to incur the additional expense necessary to implement even a limited voucher program.

Any lobbying effort aimed at obtaining increased aid for *yeshivos* must take into account the current economic climate. Given the deficits that are currently being reported, it may be an inopportune moment to advocate on behalf of expensive, new programs.

That is not to say that one must wait for the economy to improve before lobbying for increased assistance for yeshiva students. But it does counsel in favor of seeking ways in which to establish the principle that government has an obligation to assist all students — even those attending religious schools — without exacerbating the current fiscal crisis faced by state and local legislatures.

III. LEGAL OBSTACLES

Even after we get beyond the current economic crisis and its impact on vouchers, there remain legal questions about the legality of voucher programs. As strange as this may seem to non-lawyers, the Supreme Court’s decision in *Zelman* will in all likelihood

mark the beginning, not the end, of the legal wrangling over vouchers.

Education policy and funding is largely set by the States, and States that

unpalatable to *yeshivos*. Requiring *yeshivos* to refrain from maintaining an admissions policy that favors Jewish children could effectively strip them of their

Unlike corporations, governments rarely experiment, because that process requires short term expenditures and offers only the hope of long-term gains. Government is rarely that farsighted, even when running a surplus.

attempt to implement vouchers will probably be challenged by voucher opponents invoking state constitutional prohibitions. Federal courts will also be faced with new challenges to voucher programs that are implemented without all of the features and safeguards present in the Cleveland program approved in *Zelman*.

The Supreme Court cited numerous features of the Cleveland program that made it especially sympathetic. These include the fact that vouchers exercised at a neighboring public school are worth two to three times as much as vouchers used at private schools; that participation was limited to families earning no more than twice the federal poverty level; that all schools participating in the voucher program — public or private — are required to accept students “in accordance with rules and procedures established by the state superintendent of education,” including rules that prohibit participating schools from discriminating in admission based on “race, religion or ethnic background”; and that schools that accepted the vouchers were not permitted to charge voucher students more than \$250 above the \$2250 (maximum) value of the vouchers.

Although the Court noted the presence of these features, it did not state whether any or all of them are constitutionally relevant or required. Some of the features would be particularly

character as Jewish schools.

A Cleveland-style limit on family earnings and a strict cap on the amount of any tuition co-payment would also limit the efficacy of vouchers within the Orthodox community. While there is no doubt that there are many yeshiva families whose income would fall within the approved limits and who currently pay a limited amount of tuition, most *yeshivos* simply cannot afford to enroll large numbers of students paying less than \$2500 (which is the maximum payment permitted in the Cleveland program). There is also reason to suspect that if there is no limit on tuition co-payments, schools might not appreciably lower the tuition they charge.²

Any voucher program implemented without some or all of the features present in the Cleveland program upheld by the Courts will occasion new federal court challenges. In light of the fact that the *Zelman* court was itself sharply divided, it is impossible to be certain that these challenges will be unsuccessful.

² In an effort to support *yeshivos* and day schools that accept students without a Jewish education background, the Avi Chai Foundation has provided \$2,500 per student for approximately 2500 students enrolled in more than 75 different schools. In a follow-up study, they noted that the grants “have not had an appreciable impact on tuition charges. Participating schools have not reduced tuition or offered scholarships to these students as a consequence of the philanthropic support they have received.” Marvin Schick, *The Effectiveness Of Preparatory Tracks In Jewish Day Schools*, Avi Chai (2002).

The "Blaine Amendment" Factor

State constitutional challenges will be based largely on what are known as "Blaine Amendments." They are named for James G. Blaine, a Congressman and Senator from Maine. Blaine worked tirelessly but unsuccessfully in the mid-1870's to win passage of an amendment to the United States Constitution that would have gone far beyond the First Amendment prohibitions with respect to religion and would have banned all assistance to religious institutions.³

Although Blaine's efforts failed⁴, more than thirty states' constitutions contain similar provisions.⁵

Although the precise language varies from state to state, the gist of the provisions is that they prohibit the expenditure of public funds to aid religious

³ Blaine's proposed amendment, introduced on December 14, 1875, read as follows: "No State shall make any law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; and no money raised by taxation in any state for the support of public schools, or derived from any public fund therefor, nor any public lands devoted thereto, shall ever be under the control of any religious sect, nor shall any money so raised or lands so devoted be divided between religious sects or denominations."

⁴ Blaine's proposed amendment actually passed the House of Representatives with the required two-thirds supermajority. It received a majority of the votes, but not the required supermajority, in the Senate.

schools. In "tribute" to the late Senator, these state constitutional prohibitions on aid to religious institutions are known as "Blaine Amendments."

New York's Blaine Amendment,⁶ adopted in 1894, prohibits the State from spending "public money . . . directly or indirectly . . . in aid or maintenance of any school or institution of learning wholly or in part under the control or direction of any religious denomination, or in which any denominational tenet or doctrine is taught."

In *Zelman*, the Supreme Court ruled that the United States constitution is violated only when the challenged government program does not have a "secular legislative purpose" or if its "primary or principal effect is to advance religion." The Court correctly found that the Cleveland voucher program had a secular purpose (to offer educational choice to students in underperforming schools) and did not have

⁵ In fact, Congress required several prospective States to include such provisions in their constitutions as a condition for admission into the Union.

⁶ New York is particularly relevant, because more than two-thirds of the total number of the nation's yeshiva students reside there; more than a third of that total reside in Brooklyn alone. (Marvin Schick, *A Census of Jewish Day Schools in the United States*, Avi Chai, 2000). In any event, other States that have Blaine Amendments include California, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

the effect of advancing religion (since the use of a voucher at a religious school was triggered by private parental choice, and is not attributable to the government).

The Blaine Amendment is not, at first glance, interested in inquiries concerning purpose and effect. It appears to impose a blanket prohibition on any aid to religious schools. There can be no doubt that voucher opponents will invoke the Blaine Amendment in their efforts to defeat voucher programs.

In fact, voucher opponents almost certainly overstate the reach of the Blaine Amendment's restrictions. Whatever the precise boundaries of its prohibitions, the Blaine Amendment is certainly flexible enough to permit certain forms of aid. For example, New York courts have said that it permits the State to provide textbooks to students attending parochial schools, and New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer – for whom I work – recently issued a report concluding that the State can significantly increase the aid that it provides to parochial school students without running afoul of the Blaine prohibitions⁷.

It has been nearly thirty-five years since New York's highest court last visited the issue of Blaine's reach. Advocates on either side of the issue would be doing their clients a disservice if they attempted to predict with any degree of certainty how New York courts would currently construe the Blaine Amendment.⁸ While it is possible that the Court would narrowly construe its prohibitions, it is just as likely that if confronted with the question today, it would find that a voucher program violates the State constitution.⁹

⁷ Attorney General's Report on Non-Public Education, May 2002.

⁸ State constitutional challenges to voucher programs have had mixed results in the few cases decided to date.

⁹ As one prominent voucher advocate has noted, "The Blaine amendment is still part of the New York Constitution. It is unclear how the courts would respond to school-choice legislation that would provide tuition relief to parents who want to send their children to religious schools." Viteritti, "Choosing Equality: Religious Freedom and Education Opportunity Under Constitutional Federalism," 15 *Yale Law & Policy Review* 113 (1998).



Entrance Examinations

for

Masores Bais Yaakov High School

for the school year תשס"ד, 2002-2003
will be administered, א"ה

ה' כסלו תשסג

Sunday, November 10, 2002, 10:00 a.m.
in our High School Building
1395 Ocean Ave., Corner Avenue I, Brooklyn, NY 11230

For applications and further information, please contact
Masores High School, 718-962-0537, ext. 224

Rabbi Yosef M. Gelman, Menahel
Mrs. S. Pinter, Principal, General Studies

Rebbetzin M. Isbee, Menahel
Mrs. T. Yanofsky, Asst. Principal

In sum, there are sufficient ambiguities to call into question the permissibility of such programs in Blaine states.¹⁰ There can be little doubt that the significant legal uncertainties will affect the political realities. It will be an uphill battle to obtain legislative approval of programs about which there is a legitimate legal dispute.

IV. POLITICAL CLIMATE

For all of the unquestioned support for vouchers that one hears in Orthodox circles, it remains the case that they are not wildly popular with the general public. Voucher opponents have prevailed in the few instances in which the issue was placed before the voters in a referendum. New York public school parents also recently rejected the chance to have five failing public schools turned over to a private operator that promised to spend millions of dollars to improve those schools.

Those who would believe that the *Zelman* decision will quickly usher in voucher programs across the nation would do well to consider the status of tuition tax credit programs. It has been almost twenty years since the Supreme Court gave its approval to a Minnesota program that provided a tax credit to parents who incurred education expenses – even if those expenses were incurred at a religious school. Despite the unquestioned legality of such programs, few states have implemented or even seriously considered them.

We must therefore recognize that without the support of other constituency groups, voucher programs will not garner even serious consideration in state legislatures. And while the Jewish community does have allies who support vouchers, their interests differ in

¹⁰ Another prominent voucher advocate recently wrote that even after the *Zelman* decision, “supporters of school choice must not believe we have moved on from the endless court battles. . . . A heavy set of shackles [was] removed, but there is yet another ball and chain to be dealt with: the Blaine Amendments.” Treene, “The Grand Finale is Just the Beginning: School Choice and the Coming Battle Over Blaine Amendments” (Federalist Society, 2002).

several crucial respects.

There are at least three other groups whose support for vouchers is crucial if they are ever to become a reality: the Catholic Church, inner-city minorities, and free-market conservatives.

The majority of non-public school students in the United States attend Catholic schools, and no institution would reap more benefits than the Catholic Church from the widespread implementation of vouchers. But their interests differ from the Jewish community’s in some important ways. Most

significantly, Catholic schools do not limit their enrollment to Catholics. To the contrary, they actively seek to enroll non-Catholics.

The challenges facing Catholic schools are also far different than those facing *yeshivos*. While *yeshivos* are experiencing an enrollment that is increasing by 2-3 percent a year, Catholic schools have been losing students. They see vouchers primarily as a tool to help them boost enrollment; they are not nearly as concerned as is the Jewish community with relieving the tuition bur-

אנו מדברים ומקבלים שכר



הם מדברים ואינם מקבלים שכר





By signing up with Cucumber Communications™ for your long distance,
you'll be directly helping a public school child enter a Yeshiva.

1.877.CUCUMBER

www.800cucumber.com

4.5¢ State to State, 8.5¢ to Israel. In-State rates vary. State to state calls are billed in 6-second increments from beginning of call. International calls are billed in 6-second increments after first 30 seconds. International cell phone rates are higher. Bills under \$15 will be charged a billing charge of \$2.50. Existing customers must call to receive new rates. Not available in all areas. Cucumber Communications™ is a division of Oorah. All proceeds go directly to sponsor a child's Jewish education. Customer Service: 1.866.942.8686

den confronting private-school parents.

The effect of this divergence is two-fold. First, Catholic schools have no reason to object to voucher programs that require — as did the Cleveland program upheld in *Zelman* — all participating schools to admit students “in accordance with rules and procedures established by the state superintendent of education,” and regardless of “religion or ethnic background.”

Second, because they are not motivated primarily by economic concerns, Catholic schools are unlikely to be bothered by rules that require — again, as the Cleveland program did — that vouchers be limited (i) to children living at or near the federal poverty levels; (ii) to a maximum of \$2250 per students; and (iii) to schools that agree not

to charge voucher students a tuition co-payment of more than \$250 above the value of the vouchers.

These requirements, or others like them, will not preclude low-income parents from benefiting from vouchers but — as noted above — will render them of limited utility to most Jewish schools and students.

Jewish and Catholic groups have long been allied in the battle to obtain government assistance for their schools and students. Nevertheless, it remains likely that in the face of the inevitable opposition from voucher opponents, there will be attempts to compromise that will fail to accommodate the Jewish community's needs. It is unreasonable to expect the Catholic Church to risk their chance of obtaining vouchers by insisting on pro-

visions that are of no interest to them.

Similar fissures are likely to develop with other powerful groups whose support for vouchers is necessary if they are to become a reality. The few localities that implemented vouchers did so largely to address the complaints of minority, inner-city parents unhappy with their children's public schools. Inner-city parents remain the most potent wild card in any discussion about vouchers; their support of vouchers would certainly alter the debate dramatically. In the cities that have implemented voucher programs, the Orthodox community has worked closely with their leadership to help gain the support necessary for those programs.

But not only is it unclear whether there is widespread support for vouchers in most minority communities, it is unlikely that if their support existed, it would necessarily extend to voucher programs that would benefit Jewish schools. A voucher program constructed to address the concerns of inner-city families would look very much like the voucher program implemented in Cleveland — and for good reason, because Cleveland's program was adopted to address those concerns. But as noted above, such a program is of questionable value to the Jewish community.

Finally, free-market conservative groups that support vouchers are interested mostly in “breaking” the public school monopoly on education. Again, their interests do not dovetail all that neatly with the Orthodox community's interests.

These differences hardly mattered when vouchers were just a figment of Professor Milton Friedman's imagination.¹¹ In the face of total opposition to vouchers, all interested groups were able to set aside any differences and advocate on behalf of vouchers. But if vouchers are going to become a reality, the details matter. And the Orthodox frankly need details that its allies do not.

¹¹ Friedman is the Nobel-Prize-winning University of Chicago economist who first conceived of education vouchers in 1945.

MAALOT - NY

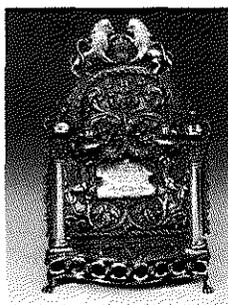
THE NY SEMINARY WITH THE ERETZ YISRAEL FLAVOR!

SEMINARY & POST-SEMINARY

**HUNDREDS OF SUCCESSFUL
GRADUATES - WORLDWIDE!**

**Regular Program or Lishma - Full or Half Day
Optional Summer in Yerushalayim!**

931 Coney Island Ave Bklyn 11230 (718)377-0222



*Important Hanukkah Lamp
possibly Galicia, 17th-18th century
Estimate: \$60,000-80,000*

EXHIBITIONS
from October 25th

**INQUIRIES AND
CATALOGUES**
Esta Kilstein (*Judaica*)
Daria Glúck (*Art*)
Tel 972 3 560 1666
Fax 972 3 560 8111

Tel Aviv Sales

Judaica

30 October at 7pm

International and Israeli Art

31 October at 8pm

New York
Jennifer Roth
212 606 7916

46 Rothschild Boulevard
Tel Aviv 66883
www.sothebys.com

Sotheby's

V. WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

This discussion of the obstacles to vouchers is important when considering alternative forms of aid for Orthodox schools and students. The singular pursuit of vouchers might be worthwhile, regardless of how unlikely it is to succeed, if there were no other forms of assistance that would benefit yeshiva parents. In fact, however, a number of worthwhile programs are being neglected.

The most obvious and beneficial program that would address the Orthodox community's needs are tuition tax credits. In 1973, the Supreme Court struck down a New York State tax credit program whose fatal flaw was that it only benefitted parents whose children were enrolled in private schools. Since nearly all private school children were in religious schools, the Court held that the New York program impermissibly benefited religion.

A decade later, in 1983, the Supreme Court approved a Minnesota tax credit program that fixed that problem by making the tax credits available to parents of all schoolchildren. Tax credits cost less than vouchers, and have the added political benefit of not requiring government to write a check. While you or I may see no appreciable difference between my giving you \$1000 or relieving you of your obligation to pay me \$1000, it remains the case that it is easier to get the government to forgive a \$1000 obligation than to write a \$1000 check.

Tax credits are also far less likely than vouchers to be struck down by the courts, because under such programs the connection between government funds and the religious school is nonexistent, or at least extraordinarily attenuated. There is also no divergence of interest among advocacy groups or the likelihood that the program can or will be constructed in a way that is contrary to the needs and interests of the Orthodox community.

There are also other more direct forms of aid that could be obtained. This past May, New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer released a report that rec-

ommended that the State provide increased assistance to non-public school students in the areas of remedial education, computer hardware, teacher training and special education.

The Attorney General contributed a lengthy legal opinion that concludes that there is no legal or constitutional impediment to the implementation of the recommended programs. In 2000, the Supreme Court held that local school districts could use federal funds to buy computers that were then loaned to religious schools.

This is not to suggest that getting tax credits and these other proposals enacted will come easily. To the contrary, achieving even these more limited gains will take a great deal of work. But they are far more likely than vouchers to win legislative approval.

It would be ironic or worse if these other, more readily available forms of aid that would bring some measure of immediate relief to overburdened schools and families were ignored in the pursuit of vouchers. Moreover, adoption of any or all of these programs would help fur-

CENTER FOR RABBINIC DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL COUNCIL OF YOUNG ISRAEL

RABBINIC TRAINING PROGRAM Now in its 10th Year!

SPONSORED BY: NATIONAL COUNCIL OF YOUNG ISRAEL,
YOUNG ISRAEL COUNCIL OF RABBIS AND TOURO

CURRICULUM INCLUDES

The Jewish Life Cycle, Counseling, The Jewish Wedding, Kiruv, Aveilut/Death and Bereavement, Drasha/Sermonics, Youth Programming, The Field of Rabbanut, Contemporary Jewish Issues, Kashrut, Geirut/Adoption, Pastoral Care, Mila, Safrut, Mikva, Professional Development, Synagogue Programming and Management.

COURSE OF STUDY ALSO INCLUDES

Specific training and reference materials, direct observation and hands-on experience, mentoring and full service placement. Those who successfully complete the course of study are awarded a Post-Graduate Certificate in Advanced Rabbinics and Synagogue Management from Touro.

PROGRAM BEGINS NOVEMBER 2002. ENROLLMENT IS LIMITED.
CALL NOW FOR AN APPLICATION!

ENDORSED BY PROMINENT ROSHEI YESHIVOT AND RABBANIM

AS PART OF OUR ONGOING COMMITMENT TO RABBINIC EXCELLENCE
THROUGHOUT NORTH AMERICA

THE CENTER FOR RABBINIC DEVELOPMENT

- OFFERS • PROFESSIONAL CONSULTATIONS • RABBINIC PLACEMENT
- ANNUAL RABBINIC CONFERENCE • THE RABBI'S LETTER
- ASSEH LECHA RAV - THE RABBINIC SEARCH MANUAL • DIVREI TORAH BULLETINS
- NITZOTZEI YISRAEL DRASHOT • AUDIO TAPE SERIES • Y'MEI IYUN

For information about our Center for Rabbinic Development and its various services, or to join the Young Israel Council of Rabbis, please contact Rabbi Binyamin Hammer at National Council of Young Israel, 3 West 16th St., New York, NY 10011, Tel: 212-929-1525, ext. 285, Fax: 212-727-9526, e-mail: rabbis@youngisrael.org

ther the principle that government is obligated to assist all schoolchildren, regardless of where they attend school. The Jewish community's foremost goal should be to establish that principle.

VI. ARE WE DOING ENOUGH?

There is one other point worth noting when considering the appropriate approach toward securing funding for *yeshivos*. The importance

and the centrality of Jewish education to sustained Jewish life is widely acknowledged. Despite this, it remains the case that *yeshiva* education does not receive the appropriate level of support from within the Jewish community. Federations have long been criticized for their tepid support for Jewish education. But we must also ask whether the Orthodox community provides its *yeshivos* with the support they deserve.

We are a community of enormous *chessed* and *tzedakka*. From *kimpiturins* to *chevra kadishas*, every aspect of Jewish life is provided to those who cannot afford it on their own. Those who need a helping hand — with a job, with food for *Shabbos*, clothing for their children or medical care for a family member — need only to extend their own hand. The community willingly bears the burden of supporting those who need its help in a remarkably gracious manner.

Yet, when it comes to educating our

children, families are much more likely to be told that this is their burden to bear alone. Why does a community that is so sensitive to the economic and social needs of its members not bring that same sensitivity and generosity to the educational needs of its children?

As the Orthodox community looks to government to meet its obligations to its schoolchildren, it needs to look inward as well, to question whether it has lived up to its responsibility to those very same children.

VII. CONCLUSION

The Supreme Court's decision in *Zelman* was an important victory for those who advocate on behalf of students attending religious schools, and presents the Jewish community with an opportunity to renew its case for increased government aid for its schools.

The history of the civil rights movements of the last fifty years teaches that great legal victories effecting societal change are not often achieved with a single swipe at the brass ring. They are more likely to come about after a process that requires the accumulation of many small victories, each establishing a principle leading inexorably toward an ultimate goal. The pursuit of support for Jewish schools and schoolchildren should be approached in much the same manner.

At this time, the goal should be to establish the principle that government has an obligation toward all schoolchildren — even those choosing to attend religious schools — without focusing too heavily on the dollar value of that aid. After that principle is firmly established, one can set about to maximize its effect.

If all of the community's efforts are geared toward winning approval of voucher programs, it will not only overlook more realistic opportunities to obtain immediate aid for its schools, but also delay if not deny the day when government recognizes its obligation to our children. ■

**CHEVRA OSEH CHESED
OF AGUDATH ISRAEL**

**BURIAL PLOTS
IN ERETZ YISROEL**

Interment in a Shomer Shabbos Beis
Olam near Beis Shemesh

Please phone or write to:
Chevra Oseh Chessed of Agudath Israel
42 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
(212) 797-9000

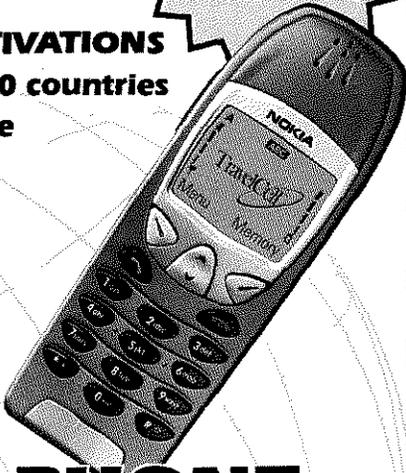
THE LEADER IN GLOBAL CELLPHONE RENTALS

TravelCell®
Global Cellphone Rental
"The Name You Trust"

DOMESTIC CORPORATE ACTIVATIONS

- Cellphone Rental for over 150 countries
- Nationwide delivery available
- Voice mail & text messaging
- Guaranteed lowest rates
- 24 hr. customer support
- Fax & data service
- Itemized bill
- Call waiting
- Caller ID

SATELLITE PHONES AVAILABLE



877.CELL PHONE
8 7 7 . 2 3 5 . 5 7 4 6
www.travelcell.com

Vouchers: An Idea Whose Time Has Come

Schick is Both Right and Wrong

Avi Schick has written a brilliant and insightful article. I am reminded of a remark made to me many years ago when I was a student in Bais Medrash L'Torah in Chicago. My *rebbe* was the beloved Rabbi Nochum Sachs זצ"ל. During the *shiur* I asked what apparently was a very good question. I shall never forget Rabbi Sachs's response. He paused, looked at me, and said, "Tverski, you are a hundred percent right. Now I show you ver you're wrong." I can only respond, "Schick, you are a hundred percent right. Now let me show you where you're wrong.

Schick is right. A whole host of economic, legal and political obstacles will have to be overcome before vouchers become a reality. The barriers appear formidable. But... there are other realities that he has not taken into account. Vouchers is an idea whose time has come. The power of an idea that is simply right is a force to be reckoned with. Education is not the sole prerogative of the state. The notion that "public schools" are neutral and not value-laden with the prevailing *zeitgeist* is nonsense. They are not really public schools, but state schools run and administered by state or city employees. They do not reflect the values and interests of many groups in society whose values and lifestyles are either not respected or scorned by the system. A free society would recognize that educating children is the foremost civil right that should reside with individual citizens, not the state. Of course, the state has an interest to see to it that appropriate educational standards are met. But

the state should not have a monopoly on education. To give the right to parents to educate their children, and then tell them that we only support *our* system and you are to sink or swim on your own, is for altogether too many, a cruel hoax.

The Supreme Court opinion in *Zelman* is of far greater import than inferred from Schick's article. The narrow holding of the opinion that the Cleveland voucher system does not violate the establishment clause, even though a large percentage of the funds will go to support children who attend religious schools, is significant. Far more important is the breakthrough that parents who seek vouchers and an out from public school education have a legitimate claim on the public fiscal resource. I know that is not the direct holding of *Zelman*. But the public perception will be that those who have been clamoring for vouchers for years on end deserve a serious hearing.

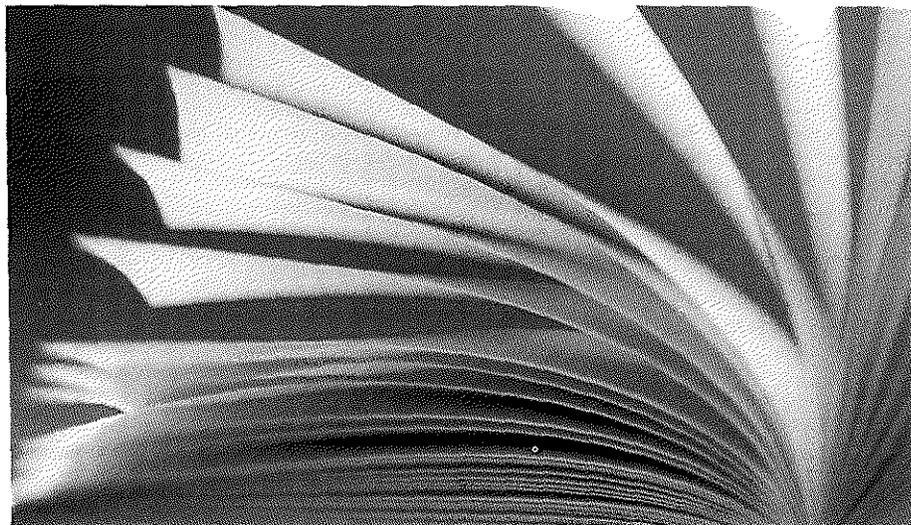
What about the political and economic difficulties that stand in our way? Small constituencies can have a powerful impact on the agenda in government. In many states and in Congress, key fig-

ures can decide that one program or another should be given some attention. Voices that are unabated and speak with a sense of moral rectitude can get their cause heard. Witness the recent success by a small group of advocates to get legislation passed in New York that will force insurers to pay for the cost of infertility treatments. Their cause was just and the pressure by a small group supporting the bill was relentless. Everyone knows that the cost of insurance will have to rise to meet this need. But it was an idea whose time had come.

COALITION POLITICS

Schick argues that tuition voucher plans that would satisfy Catholics and blacks will be of little assistance to *yeshivos*. This is simply not the case. The number of children in *yeshivos* from homes that are at the poverty level is staggering. The financial impact of vouchers on the betterment of education is incalculable.

Furthermore, Schick assumes that we will have to be subservient to Catholic and black groups in advocating which plans should be submitted to government. To the contrary. The experience that we have had to date with vouchers (as well as other issues) is that they seek our involvement and support. They need to break the false perception that all Jews are opposed to anything that smacks of state aid to private education. They need desperately to broaden their



Dr. Twerski, a member of the Editorial Board of *The Jewish Observer*, is a professor in Brooklyn Law School and serves as chairman of the board of Agudath Israel of America's Commission on Legislation and Civic Action.

base. They need our political and financial resources to help mount a campaign for vouchers. We will be equals at the bargaining table.

THE LEGAL LANDSCAPE

Schick points out that the state constitutional provisions (the Blaine Amendment) may block vouchers even though they may not violate the federal constitution. I do not have the gift of prophecy. But courts have the

good sense not only to recognize an idea whose time has come but to ignore an idea whose time has gone. The Blaine Amendment was passed in an era when fear and hate of the Catholic church was rampant. It has no firepower today.

As to the seemingly confining language of the Blaine Amendment, Schick correctly notes that the language is sufficiently broad to allow for vouchers. It will be especially difficult for courts to deny blacks who seek to exit the public school system that has served them so poorly on the ground of a hundred-year-old constitutional amendment written to deflect an enemy that no longer exists. The blunt fact is that the bugaboo of the state support of religion is not a real problem today. In a world where one has to worry about switch-blades, drugs and lewd behavior in the public schools, the issue of subsilento support for religion is not foremost in the minds of the body politic. To be sure, there is some fear of the Christian religious right, but the church-state issue has lost its steam.

CONCLUSION

It is important that we mount a well-financed and politically-sound campaign for vouchers. First, we are likely to be more successful than we ever dreamed. The new ingredient in the political mix – minorities who want out of the public schools – is of vital significance. Second, when we argue for vouchers as a matter of right, we are likely to receive benefits for such items as tax credits and aid for special education. Third, we will create ad hoc political coalitions with blacks, Catholics, and other groups that will serve us well on a host of issues that are important to our communities.

Avi Schick has done us a service by forcing us to confront the obstacles that we must overcome before vouchers become a reality. But I detect a note of surrender in his writing. My view is much more optimistic. The time is right for an assault on the citadel of state monopoly of education, and our community should be in the front line of the battle. ■



NEGINAH ORCHESTRA

1537 50th Street,
Brooklyn, NY 11219
(718) 854-2911

Boro Park ✕ Flatbush ✕ Queens ✕ Monsey ✕ Lakewood ✕ Minneapolis ✕ Switzerland ✕ France

ATTENTION GRADUATING BAIS YAAKOV SENIORS AND RETURNING SEMINARY STUDENTS

סמינר בית יעקב החדש
THE NEW BAIS YAAKOV SEMINARY

Join the many talmidos who have successfully completed our program!

Earn MAXIMUM credit for Limudei Kodesh & "Professional" Courses

Spend the upcoming year within the right institution, with the right chevrah, with the right content.

- ✕ Challenging program of Limudei Kodesh
- ✕ Faculty of Exceptional Caliber
- ✕ Weekly Guest Lecturer Series
- ✕ Opportunity to earn full accreditation as a Licensed and Certified Teacher

CHINUCH:

- ✕ Outstanding content and quality of training
- ✕ Prerequisites for training as a Speech/Language Pathologist
- ✕ Special Education - exceptional program in both Limudei Kodesh and General Studies

COMPUTERS:

- ✕ Cutting edge technology
- ✕ Fully networked
- ✕ Learn 4 (or more) Programming Languages
- ✕ Assistance with job placement

BUSINESS:

- ✕ Accounting
- ✕ Marketing
- ✕ Finance
- ✕ Halacha and Business Ethics

FINANCIAL AID:
PELL, TAB, AND SEMINARY SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

REBBETZIN SORA F. BULKA, מנכ"ל
 RABBI YESHAYA LEVY, סגן מנכ"ל
 MRS. GITTE NEUFELD, ASST. PRINCIPAL

2600 OCEAN AVENUE, BROOKLYN, NY 11229 ✕ 718.769.8160 ✕ FAX: 718.769.8640

Classes held at our Brooklyn and Monsey sites.

Switzerland ✕ Boro Park ✕ Flatbush ✕ Far Rockaway ✕ Lakewood ✕ Minneapolis ✕ France

PROFESSOR TWERSKI AND I AGREE... AND DISAGREE

Professor Twerski and I agree and disagree. We agree that “the number of children in *yeshivos* from homes that are at the poverty level is staggering,” and that they need immediate relief. We disagree, however, on the prescription. Professor Twerski is wrong when he suggests that “a well-financed and politically sound campaign for vouchers” is what they need.

Professor Twerski believes that “vouchers is an idea whose time has come,” and takes issue with my assertion that future voucher programs, like the one approved in *Zelman*, will be constructed in a manner that limits their benefit to the Orthodox community. He also sweeps aside my concerns about the Blaine Amendment, declaring that “courts have the good sense not only to recognize an idea whose time has come but to ignore an idea whose time has gone.” Finally, he writes that minorities who want out of the public schools will fuel the voucher drive.

VOUCHERS: NO VOTERS' BACKING, NO USE TO THE ORTHODOX

Like Professor Twerski, I too lack the gift of prophecy. But the recent experience with vouchers contradicts his every supposition. As I noted in my article, vouchers do not enjoy the support of most voters, or even most minorities. Voucher advocates have not prevailed in a single referendum, and even the Reverend Floyd Flake — a Queens minister and former Congressman who leads the largest African-American church in New York City — was unable to convince parents at five

failing public schools to allow those schools to be operated by a for-profit corporation that promised to invest millions of dollars to improve them.

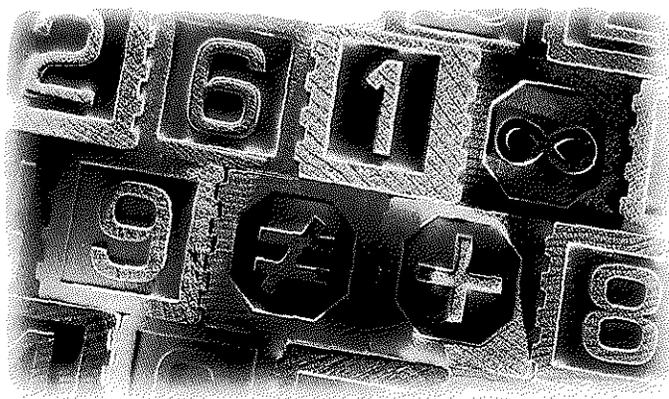
The experience in the three jurisdictions — Cleveland, Florida and Mil-

Zelman, the Supreme Court upheld Cleveland's voucher program, which placed strict limits on the recipient families' income and on the tuition co-payment participating schools were permitted to charge, and required participating schools to adopt an admissions policy that barred discrimination on the basis of religion or ethnic background. Not surprisingly, there are no *yeshivos* or yeshiva students participating in Cleveland's voucher program.

Although one yeshiva does participate in Milwaukee's voucher program, it has been confronted with the difficult task of responding to applications from non-

waukee — that have implemented vouchers to date is also instructive. In

Jewish students. However it has dealt with that difficult issue, there is no doubt



YOUR CAR IN ISRAEL



FREE*

SHABBAT

* Minimum 3 days rental, exc.ins. subject to offer regulations.

U.S.A New-York
1-800-938-5000 212-629-6090
www.eldan.co.il

FROM -

15.90

* US\$ PER DAY

TYPE OF CAR	PER WEEK \$
A FIAT PUNTO 3 DR	112
B FIAT PUNTO 5 DR	126
C FORD FIESTA	147
CI PEUGEOT 306	182
MT MINIBUS 10 SEATS	518
D OPEL CORSA	189
E DAEWOO LANOS	217
F SUZUKI BALENO 1.6	245
XL PEUGEOT 406 2.0	357
VX VOLVO S-70	630
EX MERCEDES E240	770
KX MAZDA MPV	651

* unlimited mileage, exc. ins.
* Valid low season only



that the experience will be repeated and that participating *yeshivos* will be scrutinized. Finally, Professor Twerski is wrong when he declares that the Blaine Amendment "has no firepower today." To the contrary, in early August — a mere six weeks after the *Zelman* decision — a Florida court declared that state's voucher program unconstitutional and in violation of Florida's Blaine Amendment.

The sum total of the experience, then, is that (i) vouchers do not enjoy widespread support among minorities and other voters; (ii) the Blaine Amendments pose a real threat to voucher programs; and (iii) voucher programs will likely be constructed in a manner that limits their utility within the Orthodox community.

WANTED: COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Before the Orthodox community leads the "assault on the citadel of state monopoly of education,"

someone ought to undertake to do a serious cost-benefit analysis of that effort.

A cost-benefit analysis looks not only at the benefit that an action might confer, but at the cost associated with that action. In economic terms, a cost includes not only direct or hard costs, but also "opportunity" costs. For example, if one takes a day off from work to visit an amusement park, his total "cost" includes not only the price of admission and travel but also the pay that one foregoes by not working.

The single-minded pursuit of vouchers is likely to yield few benefits, and will come at the cost of foregoing other, more attainable forms of aid. Tax credits would be easier to achieve than vouchers, and there are a host of programmatic proposals on the table that would immediately benefit *yeshivos* and their students. One ought to be very careful before recommending that the Orthodox community turn

their backs on those proposals.

Professor Twerski seems to concede that those benefits are more realistically attainable when he argues that by pursuing vouchers "we are likely to receive benefits for such items such as tax credits and aid for special education." But there is currently no place for those items on the communal agenda because vouchers has crowded out discussion of less grandiose visions of state aid. Organizations and communal leaders all must compete for the attention and support of their constituencies. In that world, there is simply no currency in promoting tax credits — which themselves require a fair bit of work before they can be a reality — while others are peddling vouchers.

I thank Professor Twerski for his participation in this dialogue, and hope that it will serve as a catalyst for a healthy debate and a renewed inquiry into the approach that might best serve the Orthodox community's interest. ■

We take pleasure in announcing to the *עולם התורה* the first appearance of an addition to the series of *ספרי פחד יצחק* למרן הגאון רבי יצחק הוטנר זצוק"ל

ספר מאמרי פחד יצחק

These *מאמרים*, covering *שבת ויום טוב* and many *פרשיות התורה*, were delivered throughout the *ימי חג הסוכות*.

For information contact:

Rabbi Aryeh Laib Chaifetz
718-377-0777

Rabbi Yeshaya Thau
718-376-1265

In Eretz Yisroel: Rabbi Ahron Lasker
02-537-2257



changing lives

"I had no idea anyone at OHEL could understand my son's pain. I never knew there were other young men and women suffering in silence like my son did."

OHEL is making a difference every day, helping people, strengthening people, changing lives - in its addiction treatment program, in its domestic abuse counseling & shelter programs, in its molestation treatment program.

Living in an OHEL or Bais Ezra group residence or apartment, receiving counseling at OHEL's main counseling center or having a visit in your home from a psychiatrist from one of its two Mobile Crisis Teams - OHEL is there. For your neighbors. For your family. For your children. For you.

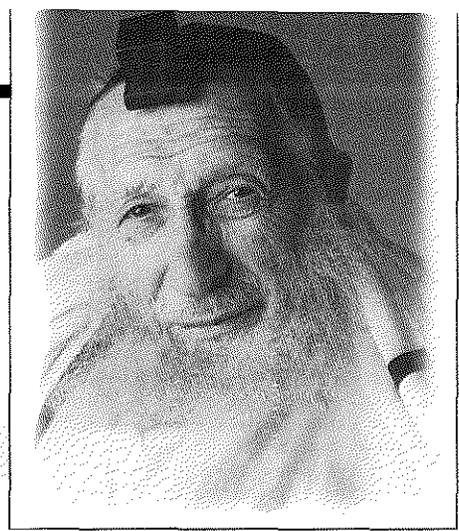
Changing lives every day.

Everyone needs a Family
Ohel
CHILDREN'S HOME AND FAMILY SERVICES

OHEL OPERATES OVER 20 PROGRAMS & SERVICES FOR THE ENTIRE JEWISH COMMUNITY INCLUDING:
■ Residential Rehabilitation for Adults & Children with Psychiatric Disabilities ■ Bais Ezra Programs for the Developmentally Disabled ■ The Lifetime Care Foundation for the Jewish Disabled ■ Robert & Roselyn Vegh Preventive Care Program ■ The Milton Schulman Foster Care Program ■ Tikvah Out-Patient Mental Health Clinic ■ Services for Adolescents ■ Domestic Abuse Counseling & Shelter Program ■ Addiction Treatment Program ■ Child Molestation, Prevention & Treatment Program ■ Mobile Outreach Team ■ Kadimah Psychiatric Day Program ■ Supported Employment Program ■ Project Liberty at Ohel ■ Summer Camps ■ Institute for Advanced Professional Training

Citicomi (718) 852-0999

Husbands, Wives and Children



Based on an address to a gathering of young married yeshiva men by **Rabbi Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg**, שליט"א, *Rosh Hayeshiva* of Yeshiva Torah Ore in Jerusalem, and a senior member of the *Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah* (Council of Torah Sages). This article was prepared for publication by Rabbi Shlomo Furst.

WHAT GOES WRONG IN CONTEMPORARY FAMILIES?

I am frequently asked to help people deal with problems of *shalom bayis*. Tensions between husbands and wives are very common throughout modern society, even within our religious families. If unchecked, a sequence of events begins that can unfortunately result in divorce.

I am not always able to determine the true initial cause of the problem. When I question the couple, however, the mutual answer that they usually give is incompatibility and lack of communication. I ask them what happened to break up their relationship; the couple was not always estranged. Originally, the couple had felt that they were compatible and there was communication between them. The many hours that they spent dating must have been filled with conversation. During the course of their courtship, they must have compared their views about life and their expectations regarding marriage.

Weeks, perhaps months were spent evaluating all the possibilities of a Torah life together. There must have been broad agreement about a variety

Rabbi Furst, who was a *talmid* of Rabbi Scheinberg for fifteen years, serves as *Mashgiach* of Kollel Ruach Chaim in Jerusalem.

of important life issues for them to both agree to marry each other. They looked at the situation from all angles until they finally decided that, in fact, this was the person whom they wanted to be their mate — their partner for life.

After such efforts and careful consideration, what happened to change everything? Why did their marriage bring them further apart rather than closer together?

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE: A STUDY IN CONTRASTS

The usual answer — which I believe to be a true one — is that it is easy for a couple to enjoy casual meetings, spending a pleasant evening talking about topics that they enjoy. After the date, they return to their homes to lead their separate lives.

By contrast, life together as husband and wife can result in a clash of personalities. Everyone has his or her particular pattern of behavior and way of thinking, and this can lead, at least temporarily, to disharmony. When faced with the many challenges of life, spouses will not, at first, always agree with each other because, until their marriage, they were two separate individuals. Getting the two different personalities to merge and to live together in harmony is the essence of

marriage. Married life consists of many growth experiences — sometimes, difficult situations — which are really opportunities for the new couple to adjust to each other; to compromise and learn to live together.

Marriage is not a matter of spending an hour or two together.

When dating, both the man and the woman seek to find favor in the eyes of the other person. They will exert themselves, to the limit, to make as nice a showing as possible. They will each act graciously, hoping to be seen as the perfect choice. People, however, cannot keep up a show all the time; yes, it is possible for an hour or two, but marriage is a lifetime experience.

THE CRUX OF THE MATTER: BEING CAUTIOUS AND CARING

The crux of the matter, which is in fact the solution to many of our problems, lies in the amount of interest and motivation we devote to being cautious and caring enough to remain in control of ourselves to maintain our best behavior when trouble threatens. Marriage challenges us to strive and, therefore, rise above natural, unthinking responses. Disagreements and difficulties will always arise, but the test — and the success of our efforts — is determined by how we react.

The same rule applies to our children. Some children behave better than others, some worse. Nonetheless, the father and mother must take them in stride. Patiently, parents must raise and educate their offspring in a gentle, kind-hearted way.

Parents try to correct areas of stress and difficulty with their children as much as possible. Whatever they can do will be done, for parents will persevere, and not give up on their child. As difficult as the child may be, parents still nurture hopes for their child. Unfortunately, husband and wife do not always feel that way about their marriage. Sometimes they do give up. They may feel that it does not pay to go on together. The opposite, however, is true, for divorce is not a solution. In fact, it creates more problems. There are new issues of child custody, visitation and alimony...and loneliness. In many cases, the attitude that spouses are expendable is not *daas Torah*.

Chazal teach us that one's wife is equivalent to the husband's own body — "*ishto ke'gufo*." The husband and wife form a complete unit. The *Zohar HaKadosh* refers to the woman as "*plag guf*" — that is, half of the person. Until marriage, there is separation — one physical half here, the other physical half there.

Forging a bond of love, respect, and kindness between a man and wife calls for special effort because there was no previous natural bond between them. Living together, a joyful fusion of man and wife — and consequently, providing a conducive atmosphere for raising children — is the great challenge that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* expects us to live up to.

WHERE CHESSED BEGINS

The *Gemora* (*Sota* 14a) teaches us that the Torah begins with *chessed* and ends with *chessed*. The Torah starts with an act of kindness — for, after the sin of *Adam Harishon*, *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* prepared special garments for Adam and Chava. Furthermore, the act of kindness was complete in its every aspect, for the *passuk* in *Bereishis* 3,21 states that *Hashem* even dressed them.

The *chachmei ha'mussar* (Torah ethicists), however, ask: Was this act the true beginning of *chessed*? The very creation of *Adam Harishon* in Gan Eden was an unmatched act of perfect kindness!

HaKadosh Baruch Hu created *Adam Harishon* with His Divinely fashioned *guf* (body) and *neshamas* united and vibrant in Gan Eden. Our highest spiritual aspiration is for our *neshamas* to reside there. Obviously, the creation of *Adam Harishon* was an act of kindness. Why does the *Gemora* overlook this as the first instance of *Hashem's* kindness to man,

and instead choose to cite the making of clothes and dressing *Adam Harishon* as *Hashem's* first act of kindness?

The answer that is given is that to do *chessed* with *Adam Harishon* would be very easy — in fact, effortless. Anyone would feel honored — and it would be our greatest pleasure — if, for example, one were able to do *chessed* for the *Chofetz Chaim* זצ"ל. We would vie with one another to be of some service to such a great and blessed individual, and we would feel no hardship or difficulty in doing it. So much moreso for *Adam*

**It hurts
to call
a domestic
abuse
hotline.**

**It hurts
more
not to.**

It feels better just to talk about it. That's why we're here. Our staff is made up of caring and sensitive individuals. Together, we can help you explore your options. We can refer you to recognized professionals for counseling, legal advice or help in finding a safe environment. We can also put you in touch with some very special Rabbis. But in order for us to reach out to you, you must first reach out to us.



Confidential Hotline 1.888.883.2323

(Toll Free)

718.337.3700

(NYC Area)

**Do it for yourself.
Do it for your children.**

Shalom Task Force is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization

Harishon, who was far holier and infinitely close to perfection. There is then nothing exceptional in the act itself, because recognizing the greatness of the recipient automatically spurs us on to perform acts of kindness toward him.

By contrast, what would common sense tell us about Adam Harishon after his sin? Through his act, he brought death and destruction to the world. We would be convinced that such an individual is not deserving of our *chessed*. What had been the easiest,

most desirable thing to do is now difficult, even impossible to imagine. Therefore, precisely after the sin is when the Torah reveals to us what true *chessed* is. Not *chessed* defined by common sense and intellect, but *chessed* based on Torah.

Thus, when Chazal say that the Torah begins with *chessed*, it refers to kindness that Hashem did with Adam and Chava after their sin. Obviously, Hashem infinitely exceeds our mortal limitations of mind and heart. We do

see, however, that Adam Harishon acted towards Chava after the sin in a special way, and we can certainly relate to that.

CHAVA AFTER THE SIN – “MOTHER OF ALL LIFE”?

Adam Harishon named Chava — “*Eim Kol Chai*, The Mother of All Life” — only after the sin. Logic would say to name her “the mother of all death”! Eating from the *Eitz Hadaas* (The Tree of Knowledge) brought death to the world. How does the name *Eim Kol Chai* benefit Chava after her sin?

In spite of what had happened, Adam recognized Chava’s greatness and potential, especially her potential for life. Before the sin, no name was appropriate. A name must reflect the essence of its bearer. Before the sin, words could not truly depict the full extent of what Chava was. After the sin, the tragedy and its consequences did not numb Adam. It is *chessed* to forgive and move on. He did not lose himself. Life could and would continue. Chava would help him bring life to the world.

Similarly, the *chessed* of the Torah begins only after Adam’s sin, to teach us that Hashem did not forsake Adam even when he disobeyed His command. His *Tzellem Elokim* was not destroyed, and so Adam was still able to see Chava’s greatness — even after her mistake. Accordingly, Adam called her “The Mother of All Life” because this was her true essence and potential. She did bring death, but bearing in mind the significance of the *Tzellem Elokim* within her allowed Adam to deal kindly with her.

The Torah tells us all of this to let us know that we, too, must have compassion, regardless of our emotions or our logical justification to act harshly. This is especially important in our relationships with our spouses and our children.

RISING ABOVE NARROW PERSPECTIVES

Many of our family problems would be solved if we would give thought to the basic goodness of those people who are clos-

Simcha Guidelines

THE VORT

- The Vort celebration is to be discontinued. The *L’chaim* (held at the time that the engagement is announced) should also not turn into a Vort.

THE WEDDING

- Only 400 invited guests may be seated at the *chassuna seuda*.
- The *kabbolas panim smorgasbord* should be limited to basic cakes, fruit platters, a modest buffet, and the caterer’s standard chicken or meat hot dishes.

- The menu for the *seuda* is limited to 3 courses followed by a regular dessert.

- No Viennese table and no bar.

THE MUSIC

- A band may consist of a maximum of 5 musicians (one of the musicians may act as a vocalist) or four musicians and one additional vocalist.

- A one-man band is recommended.

FLOWERS & CHUPA DECOR

- The total cost of these items for the entire wedding should not exceed \$1,800.

FOR THE FULL VERSION OF THE **SIMCHA GUIDELINES**
AND THE ACCOMPANYING KOL KOREH,
please email info@simchaguidelines.com or call 212-612-2300

We the rabbinical signatories — barring familial obligations — and unusual and extraordinary circumstances — will not participate in or attend a wedding celebration that disregards these guidelines. (Rabbinical Listing in formation)

Rabbi Shmuel Birnbaum

Rosh Hayeshiva, Mirer Yeshiva

Rabbi Elya Svei

Rosh Hayeshiva, Yeshiva Gedola of Philadelphia

Rabbi Shmuel Kaminetzky

Rosh Hayeshiva, Yeshiva Gedola of Philadelphia

Rabbi Yaakov Perlow

Novominsker Rebbe

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Feigelstock

Rosh Hayeshiva, Yeshiva of Long Beach

Rabbi Moshe Wolfson

Mashgiach, Yeshiva Torah Vodaas

Rabbi Aron Moshe Schechter

Rosh Hayeshiva, Yeshiva Chaim Berlin

Rabbi Yosef Rosenblum

Rosh Hayeshiva, Yeshiva Shaarei Yosher

Rabbi Eli Simcha Schustal

Rosh Hayeshiva, Bais Binyomin, Stamford

Rabbi Yisroel Rokowsky

Rabbi Yisroel Simcha Schorr

Roshei HaYeshiva, Yeshiva Ohr Somayach

Rabbi Aryeh Malkiel Kotler

Rosh Hayeshiva, Beth Medrash Govoha, Lakewood

Rabbi Yisroel Tzvi Neuman

Rosh Hayeshiva, Beth Medrash Govoha, Lakewood

Rabbi Dovid Tzvi Schustal

Rosh Hayeshiva, Beth Medrash Govoha, Lakewood

Rabbi Yeruchem Olshin

Rosh Hayeshiva, Beth Medrash Govoha, Lakewood

Rabbi Mattisyahu Salamon

Mashgiach, Beth Medrash Govoha, Lakewood

Rabbi Elya Ber Wachtfogel

Rosh HaYeshiva, Yeshiva Gedolah of

South Fallsburg

Rabbi Chaim Boruch Wolpin

Rosh Hayeshiva, Yeshiva Karlin Stolim

Rabbi Zecharia Gelley

Rav, Khal Adas Jeshurun

Rabbi Lipa Margulies

Rosh Hayeshiva, Yeshiva & Mesifita Torah Temimah

Rabbi Dovid Kviat

Chairman, Conference of Synagogue Rabbonim of Agudath Israel

Rabbi Shlomo Mandel

Rosh Hayeshiva, Yeshiva of Brooklyn

Rabbi Ephraim Wachsman

Rosh Hayeshiva, Mesivta Meor Yitzchok

est to us. *Shalom bayis* problems are a result of narrowness of spirit. The time for *chessed*, real *chessed*, is when our spouses need our forgiveness and our hearts... hearts that are willing to look beyond the mistakes and frustrations of daily life and see the spouse's true virtues and greatness; hearts that are big enough to forgive.

This is especially important now, for our current lifestyle – even amidst our bounty of luxuries – still contains many tensions and pressures. Our grandparents did not enjoy the many conveniences of today's world. There were no refrigerators or canned foods in their days. Meals had to be prepared from scratch. It was hard work, and there was poverty.

Nonetheless, they led a harmonious life. Luxuries do not guarantee *menuchas ha'nefesh* — tranquility and peace of mind. Neither does poverty decree a sad life. Our attitude is the controlling factor, and not the material benefits. Work does not weaken and break a person, but pressures and tension do. Together, the husband and wife can plan and seek out ways to reduce the pressure within the home. They will have more *menuchas ha'nefesh* and at the same time, as a team, deal more effectively with their concerns.

We have been blessed with spiritual greatness, so we must not lose our tempers and allow our emotions to rule over us. We have to live up to the *Tzellem Elokim* within us, which means to think beyond the normal response, and rise above the moment's disappointment. So many times petty considerations taint our perceptions. In turn, this can lead to frustrations that only worsen the situation.

We must remember that our spouses — just like ourselves — have *Tzellem Elokim* within them. This should lift our thoughts above the daily difficulties of married life. In addition, since we possess an element of *Tzellem Elokim*, we have infinite potential to overcome any situation, and maintain patience with our spouses and understand them and their needs.

DISCUSSIONS: LATER...
ON THE SAME DAY

The *chessed* of the Torah begins when there is a problem. When everything is fine, doing *chessed* is

simple. Real *chessed* starts when something did go wrong — during times of stress and trouble — for this is the exact moment when we are tested and are expected to live up to our potential. In the midst of our disappointments and

david@david.com
www.apply4amortgage.com

David Winiarz, President
"We make you feel at home"

GEFEN FINANCIAL CORP.

Registered Mortgage Brokers
NYS Dept. of Banking

800 Manor Road, Suite #1
Staten Island, New York 10314
Phone 718-983-9272 • 914-MORTGAGE

Loans arranged through 3rd party providers



Frum Therapist

• Individual and Family Therapy • Marriage Counseling • Relationship Skills Enhancement

Counseling for
At-Risk Youth
and for issues related to
Shidduchim and Shalom Bayis

Daytime, Evening, & Sunday Appointments available

Jules Brotsky, A.C.S.W.
35 Years experience

908-289-0101

Licensed in NY & NJ Elizabeth, N. J. Endorsed by Rabbonim

יצא לאור ספר

גדר עולם

ממרן רבן של ישראל בעל החפץ חיים זצ"ל

בהוספת קונטרס על קדושת בית הכנסת

וגודל החיוב לעשות מחיצה כשירה בבית הכנסת

אפשר להשיג הספר אצל:

(718) 856-6671 • (718) 462-6894

CHALLENGE

INFANT DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER

Child Development
Specialists serving
infants/toddlers
& their families



EARLY • INTERVENTION • MAKES • A • DIFFERENCE

**Evaluation & Therapy
at our center or in the
privacy of your home
Free of Charge**

Bi-Lingual Services Available

Executive Offices
4228 Tenth Avenue,
Brooklyn, New York 11219

718•972•0880

SERVING BROOKLYN, QUEENS, STATEN ISLAND & MANHATTAN

Funded & Regulated by NYS Dept. of Health & NYC Dept. of Mental Health,
Mental Retardation & Alcoholism Services

frustrations, we must all must strive, for the sake of *shalom bayis*, to remain gracious and understanding — to summon forth the spiritual greatness within us. This is the key to *shalom bayis*. Then later, the matter can be discussed without tension and frustration. Having the patience to wait is greatness...and *chessed*. It will solve many of the problems that crop up in the home.

In general, our concerns should be discussed the same day. If left until the next day, the problem will fester with additional frustrations. Bottled-up emotions will inevitably spill over into outbursts, which are counterproductive. Then, in the chaotic aftermath, the couple must seek to renew their mutual trust and respect. Friendly behavior builds respect, while the opposite has terrible repercussions. It is always best to clear up the issue — calmly and with consideration — on the same day. Look for the first chance to talk over the problem, preferably, if possible, before retiring.

The husband and wife should be comfortable discussing their mutual and personal problems. In this way, they both feel that they are a part of each other's lives. This builds self-esteem and mutual respect, for it is an acknowledgment that the spouse's feelings and opinions are valid and useful. When we express our concerns, we feel relieved and are encouraged. Husband and wife are meant to be partners in marriage and best of friends in life.

CONSULTATION AND SEEKING ADVICE

Consulting a third party can be essential in making major decisions, helping keep families together. In general we often need to rely on other people to cope properly with our problems. We must have a positive outlet for our frustrations in life. Feelings can become bottled-up if we do not share difficulties with someone we can trust. It is important to have a good friend, a confidante with whom to share what is bothering us. We will then be equipped to cope positively with life's difficulties, and depression will not creep into our lives. Disappointments

will not sour into ill feelings.

Unless there is an issue of mental health, most problems in *shalom bayis* can be resolved. Normal, sound and sensible individuals can, with proper guidance, solve their family difficulties — provided that the problems and their frustrations have not become too unbearable. This is when depression can occur. Their relationship weakens and communication breaks down. Long before the marriage gets out of control, couples need to seek sound advice. This advice must be based on the Torah's teachings and principles, bearing in mind that the Torah has a solution for all situations.

When we compare our relationships with our spouses to our relationships with our children, we see that there is often a different standard of behavior. Parents are naturally much more patient and understanding with their offspring. They will make great sacrifices for their children. Many parents come to me for advice about how they can save their child. Parents do not throw their children away. There is no option of divorce — a parent cannot separate from his or her child. Therefore, parents look for advice to improve the situation.

Many times, I ask spouses why, when it comes to doing *chessed* with other people, we are quick to help. We seem to have so much sympathy and compassion for strangers. *Klal Yisroel* is famous for its excellence in helping those who are poor, sick and helpless. Our great forefather Avraham *Avinu* excelled in this *midda*, and bestowed it on his offspring. We all try to emulate his great example, but unfortunately, we do not work as hard on it at home as we do in the public domain.

What seems to be such a burden at home is a pleasure in public. We must work faithfully to remove all barriers that hinder us from doing *chessed* in our homes. As difficult as it may be, the home is not a place for misbehavior or cruelty. Fear is destructive to our relationships, especially with children, for they look to their parents for love and security.

Our children require sympathy and understanding, patience and love. Fear

will only cause emotional scars and psychological complexes — sometimes for life. Our moods and reactions — sadness, anger and dissatisfaction — cause unwanted negative influences in our families. We can win over our spouses and children — gain their respect and cooperation — just by being gracious to them.

CONFRONTING PROBLEMS WITH JOY

We need to keep our senses and see situations clearly. Everyone has problems. Normal people cope, and in the end are successful. We can have *simchas hachaim* in spite of our problems. If we persist and maintain a good attitude, knowing that there are solutions, we will not aggravate the difficulties. This is greatness. Small-mindedness, however, makes us shortsighted. We do not see clearly and we can lose hope.

True, many times a situation may call for greatness, for there may be a very severe problem in the home, but that is when the *chessed* of the Torah begins. When our logic says *No*, the Torah says *Yes*. Yes, this person — my wife, my husband, my child — needs my *chessed*, my compassion, my smile. We have the spiritual capacity within us to overcome the moment's tragedy. We can rise above it and *Hashem* will help us. We were created *b'Tzellel Elokim*, and it remains within us, and so we can transcend difficult conditions.

This excellence — the splendor of the Divine Presence within us — obligates us even in the face of the worst problems, to know and believe that any problem can be solved in a good way. Through their sin, Adam and Chava brought death to the world, but they made a comeback. They did *teshuvah*. We have the same greatness as they had — *Tzellel Elokim* — and so we too should never give up. The denial of this greatness within us results in an attitude that is limited to human logic and common sense. It leads to hopelessness and depression, and ends in failure.

Hashem expects us to do *chessed*, the true *chessed* of the Torah. We must act with sympathy and understanding with-

in our homes and be *b'simcha*. *Simcha* creates a healthy home environment that children, today more than ever, need so much. If they are to grow up to be well-adjusted and sound individuals, they require a happy home life. Giving our spouses and our children a pleasant household — this is *chessed*! Our obligation to them is so much greater than with strangers. If we run to do *chessed* outside the home with strangers, why not do it at home as well? ■

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1. Publication Title: THE JEWISH OBSERVER

2. Issue Frequency: MONTHLY EXCEPT JULY AND AUGUST

3. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: OCTOBER 2002

4. Issue Period: 10

5. Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

6. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

7. Circulation (Net press run): 834,000

8. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

9. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

10. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

11. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

12. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

13. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

14. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

15. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

16. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

17. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

18. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

19. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

20. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

21. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

22. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

23. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

24. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

25. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

26. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

27. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

28. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

29. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

30. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

31. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

32. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

33. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

34. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

35. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

36. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

37. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

38. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

39. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

40. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

41. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

42. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

43. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

44. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

45. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

46. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

47. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

48. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

49. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

50. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

51. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

52. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

53. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

54. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

55. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

56. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

57. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

58. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

59. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

60. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

61. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

62. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

63. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

64. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

65. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

66. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

67. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

68. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

69. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

70. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

71. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

72. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

73. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

74. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

75. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

76. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

77. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

78. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

79. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

80. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

81. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

82. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

83. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

84. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

85. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

86. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

87. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

88. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

89. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

90. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

91. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

92. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

93. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

94. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

95. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

96. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

97. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

98. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

99. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

100. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 834,000

HAT PLUS

Hats • Shirts • Ties • Accessories



**Your #1 Stop
for
Quality Hats**

WE ALSO DRY CLEAN & RESHAPE HATS
(All work done on premises)

LARGEST SELECTION OF CHOSONIM TIES IN BROOKLYN

1368 Coney Island Avenue
(718) 377-5050
Major credit cards accepted • We ship UPS

YOU CAN NOW LISTEN TO Torah Essentials Parsha Tapes

A new, convenient way for everyone to learn/review the weekly parsha. Each line of text is explained clearly on cassette. (with many of Rashi's comments included)

by **Rabbi Ephraim Baer**

Great for commuters!
Great for the whole family!

Learn the parsha of the week and be prepared for the Shabbos table

For more information, or to place your order, Please call: **(845) 425-2177** or e-mail: **torahessentials@msn.com**

Jonah's Fashion Inc.

Girls Yeshiva Uniform Manufacturers
in business for 8 years



GOOD SERVICE IS OUR SPECIALTY

- We make skirts and jumpers, solids and plaids, from size 5 thru junior and pre-teens
- Bais Yaacov blouses made from our own custom made (extra heavy) material

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL
(732) 229-0667
OR FAX (732) 229-0247

An Education for Life

OPEN HOUSE: Sunday November 10, ז'ב כסלו, 1:30-4:00 pm
ENTRANCE EXAM: Sunday November 17, י"ב כסלו, 1:30-4:00 pm

Machon Yaakov offers a four year program that prepares students for the challenges of life.

Excellence in Torah and general studies, midos, enrichment programs and carefully selected faculty and student body provide for an exceptional education.

- Accredited member of the prestigious New York State Association of Independent Schools.
- State of the art, fully equipped modern building.
- Exceptional scores on PSAT, SAT, Regents and A.P. Exams.
- Extraordinarily high rate of National Merit Awards.
- Visits and lectures by prominent Roshei Yeshiva, Torah personalities and notables in Jewish life.
- Tours of nearby cultural institutions and landmarks.
- Small classes and individualized attention.
- Transportation is available.

מכון יעקב לבנות

MANHATTAN HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

154 East 70 Street (off Lexington Ave.), New York, NY 10021

Tel: 212.737.6800

Fax: 212.737.0766

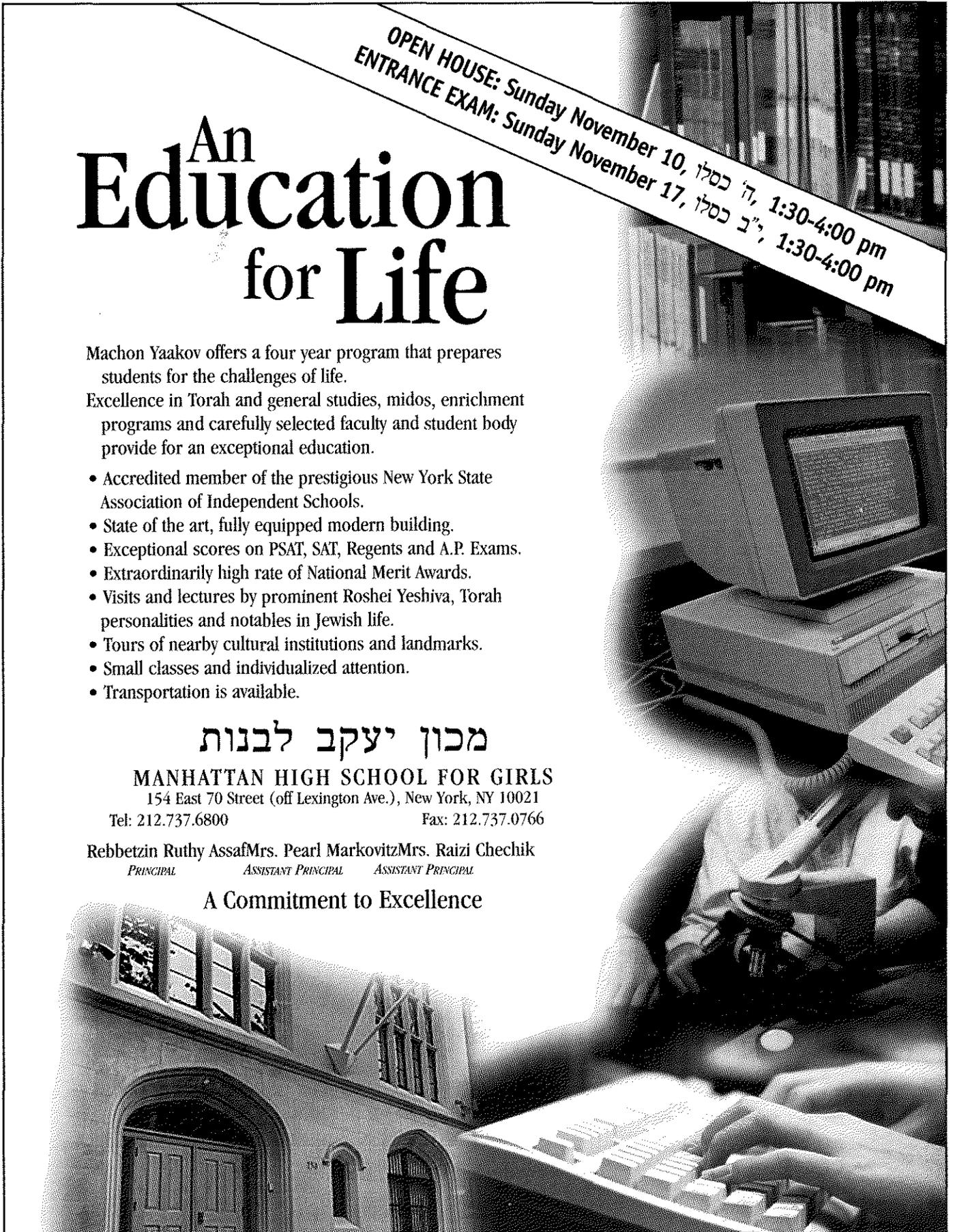
Rebbetzin Ruthy Assaf Mrs. Pearl Markovitz Mrs. Raizi Chechik

PRINCIPAL

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

A Commitment to Excellence



Every morning at the very beginning of *davening*, we say *berachos* (blessings), including “*Poke’ach ivrim* – Bless You, *HaShem* our G-d, King of the Universe, who gives sight to the blind.” *HaShem* gives us the ability to see His wonderful creations, all living creatures, the beauty and splendor of the world.

Yet, when we see people with disabilities, how do we view them? Do we see *Hashem’s* creations *betzellem Elokim* (in G-d’s image)? Or do we see people who are different, people who may shame us and people whose families we shame, albeit inadvertently, in the way we view them, how we shy away from them or isolate them by stigmatizing them with our gossip and avoiding *shidduchim* with their families?

Where do people with disabilities fit into our world in the Jewish community? How do we view them, how do we treat them and what do we teach our children about them?

Close your eyes for a moment and try to envision a person with a handicap. Can you picture him? Or her? Does the picture in your mind capture the entire person, or did your imaginary lens just zoom in on this person’s disability?

Keep your eyes closed for another brief moment and think of this person’s parents and brothers and sisters. Surely you know such a person with a disability – the son or daughter of a relative, someone in *shul*, a neighbor down the block. Are you picturing parents who are going about their life in a normal routine, as you would? Or are they caught in a maze where their daily life routine revolves around their child with a disability?

Maybe you know such a family, but don’t realize it because they’ve never told anyone about their twenty-five-year-old son with schizophrenia, or never divulged a life-long secret of not taking home their newborn child with Down Syndrome from the hospital.

SECRETS

People have secrets. Our everyday lives may be full of them – personal quirks we don’t choose to reveal, personal or business relationships gone sour, dreams of hope and fears we never divulge.

Every secret has a story, and every person has a reason why he or she wants it to remain private.

I was recently at a bris in Flatbush. I said hello to the father of a thirty-year old man who was living at one of OHEL’s many residences for people with psychiatric disabilities. We chatted briefly, and then this gentleman, a man in his seventies, told me that no one in his shul knew of his son’s existence; could I please not divulge this to any person in his circle of acquaintances.

Parents of a child with disabilities often do not share information about their son or daughter because they fear your reaction. They’re concerned you will now view their child with mental illness through jaundiced eyes. Hence, their need to

David Mandel is the Chief Executive Officer of OHEL Children’s Home and Family Services in New York. His article, “Teamwork,” was included in JO’s second dedicated issue on “Children on the Fringe... and Beyond” (March ’00).

SUPPORT, STIGMA OR SHAME

*Our personal and collective
reactions to people
with disabilities*



keep this family information private, and at times, a secret for years and even decades.

There are two interwoven reasons why parents may not have revealed they have a child with a psychiatric disability. It is the stigma of shame our entire community inadvertently, but very regularly, imposes on the family. This, then, directly correlates to *shadchanus* panic for the siblings of this person with a disability. This is not an imbroglia of problems recently developed. This issue is hundreds of years old. It has, however, reached a fevered pitch in our community's frenzied quest for the ever-elusive perfect *shidduch* for each of ours, the perfect child.

Need we have the credentials of *Avraham Avinu*, who had his *Yishmael*, to earn the right to make a *shidduch* for our other children? Must we have *ruach hakodesh* like *Yaakov Avinu*, to withstand the shame of a brother such as *Eisav*, so as to marry off our children? Do we have to achieve a level of *malchus* (nobility), like *David Ham-elech*, with an *Avshalom* – a rebellious son – to be able to walk proudly in our neighborhood amongst our friends? We are an *am of rachamim*, a nation of compassion. We are a people that have been taught by *Hashem* to understand other's suffering and to accept the differences amongst us.

NOT BY JEWS ALONE

A prominent frum businessman requested placement in an OHEL residence for one of his six children, a nineteen-year-old with mental illness. Would it be OK for him to be admitted under a pseudonym so the community should not know and it would not affect shidduchim for his other five children?

The *frum* community, of course, does not have the market cornered on stigma and shame associated with disabilities. The general public also looks askance at people with mental illness.

In a front-page *Wall Street Journal* story on June 26th, 2002, Larry Gellerstedt III, a prominent and successful Atlanta businessman, openly discussed his bouts with severe depression, a form of mental illness. Mr. Gellerstedt spoke of "his secret demon" and admitted that for decades "it has haunted me physically, and my embarrassment of the stigma of mental illness kept me from getting it properly treated." Mr. Gellerstedt concealed his illness for twenty years!

Mike Wallace, the veteran newsman, recently revealed his decades-long bout with alcoholism. The problems of drugs and alcohol abuse have invaded our *frum* community in recent years in greater numbers, yet for the most part,

treatment is not actively sought for young people until it becomes a crisis because of parents' concern of the stigma to their family.

Senator Pete Domenici, of New Mexico, discussed his daughter Clare's schizophrenia in a *New York Times* article on September 15, 2002. Zealously guarding his family's privacy in his thirty years as a senator, he speaks of a secret world inhabited by all those whose lives had been touched and ineluctably changed by mental illness.

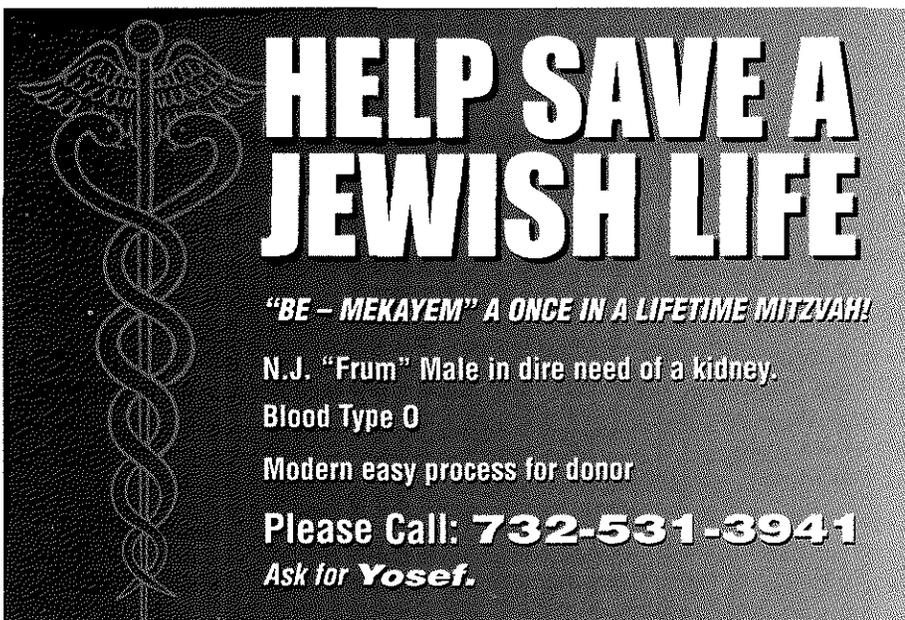
WHAT IS A DEVELOPMENTAL OR PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITY?

A developmental disability includes mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism and neurological impairment. Most people with a developmental disability are categorized in the mild to moderate range, generally functioning at an IQ below 70. Many people with mental retardation are born with this disability and it is a lifelong condition. By contrast, there are people with cerebral palsy, epilepsy and neurological impairments that have average or above average intelligence and therefore theirs is a physical disability and not a developmental disability.

The overwhelming majority of people with developmental disabilities live at home with their parents, attend mainstream or special education classes, can and do enjoy an enriched life, learning academics and social skills.

One especially egregious situation is the number of babies born with Down Syndrome over the last thirty years that have been abandoned in the hospital or "given away." It is, *chas v'shalom*, not my nor anyone's place to judge parents who made these very difficult life choices. The point is that these decisions were made more so because of the stigma associated with and the accompanying shame of having a child with a disability, rather than the level of difficulty of rearing such a child.

There is a prominent family in New York with four sons with developmental disabilities. This Rav of a shul, manhig of a



HELP SAVE A JEWISH LIFE

"BE - MEKAYEM" A ONCE IN A LIFETIME MITZVAH!

N.J. "Frum" Male in dire need of a kidney.
Blood Type O
Modern easy process for donor

Please Call: 732-531-3941
Ask for Yosef.

community, and his Rebbetzin, describe the fervor of activity in their home every morning:

These four sons daven loudly with a "bren" for Kriyas Shma, berachos and Birkas Hamazon. Their expressions of ahava and derech eretz for each other is heart-warming. These boys like to learn Torah. They range in age from fifteen to twenty-three. One of the four recently made a siyum on a Mesechta of Mishnayos with the help of two tutors over a two-year period.

A small number of people with developmental disabilities are placed in group residences such as those operated by OHEL/Bais Ezra, Women's League, Mishkon/JBCFS, HASC and Pesach Tikvah. Since the mid 1970's, many such homes and apartments opened in neighborhoods throughout New York City and Nassau County. Similar residences are being developed in Chicago, Los Angeles and other communities. Individuals in these homes tend to be adults whose parents have aged and can no longer care for them, or those with severe behavioral issues or requiring extensive assistance in activities of daily living.

HEREDITARY – OR OTHERWISE

Mental illness – including schizophrenia, paranoia, depression, bipolar disorder, and personality disorders – is often the result of a breakdown in late adolescence or the early twenties. Unlike a developmental disability, which is a lifelong condition and from which people don't recover, a person with mental illness can "recover" through a combination of medication, psychotherapy and rehabilitation. We might describe the psychiatric condition as being in remission.

Because mental illness may be hereditary as well as caused by social and environmental pressures, the shame parents feel and the shame a person with mental illness experiences is considerably greater than that of parents of a child with mental retardation. The latter group rationalizes that it is Hashem's work, that it wasn't so much the parents' "fault."

When a seventeen-year old has a nervous breakdown or goes into a severe depression, his or her parents may go through great lengths to "hide" this problem. The young man may suddenly disappear from the neighborhood – he's off learning in yeshiva or he's away in college, as the neighbors and even relatives are told. It's a result of the shame the disability will cast on the family and the resulting consequence of *shidduchim* concerns for the siblings.

As a community, we have established an unwritten double standard on *shidduchim* for medical and psychiatric conditions.

When we hear that a young man had a medical problem as a child, such as one grand mal seizure that was successfully treated with medication, or rheumatic fever, we tend to overlook it, even though these may be a lifelong condition and may recur.

On the other hand, should we hear this same person as a child had seen a therapist when we was eight years old for a serious behavioral problem, which was immediately treated with success and did not recur, we tend to categorize him as a boy with a psychiatric history.

Similarly, if a fourteen-year-old girl suffered from depression or an eating disorder and was successfully treated by a psychologist, social worker or psychiatrist with therapy and anti-depression medication, her chances for *shidduchim* in our community can be severely diminished because of our collective attitude, even though she has "recovered." The mere mention by a family acknowledging their son or daughter

Suggestions for dealing with people with disabilities

- Teach your children at an early age about the concept of disabilities.
- When there is a *Shabbaton* in your neighborhood for people with disabilities such as is organized by Yachad or OHEL/Bais Ezra, open your home to host people with disabilities.
- There is a group residence for people with disabilities in your neighborhood. Invite a few men or women for a *Shabbos* meal, for a BBQ. It will provide your children with an important lesson in life, teaching them to better appreciate differences in people.
- Encourage your teenage son or daughter to baby-sit for a family who has a child with a disability. They are often desperate to find such a babysitter so they too can get a break and go out for an evening.
- Encourage your teenage son or daughter to tutor a child with a disability, become a mentor for an adolescent going through a difficult period in his life, or be a counselor in a camp for children with special needs. It will teach your child a lifelong lesson.

AREIVIM HOTLINE

From crisis to control.
Helping our boys and girls

Parents: 1-866-6AREIVIM
Teens: 1-866-OURGUYS

Email: Areivim@juno.com

All calls are confidential.

לע"נ בן ציון בן צבי אלימלך

Gitty Pinter

Experienced Shadchan
for all age groups
for the Orthodox Jewish community.

Rabbinical references available

Home: (718) 338-1765
Pager: (917) 486-5655

was in therapy or taking anti-depressant medication sounds alarm bells, when, in fact, it would be more appropriate to ask additional thoughtful questions – questions that will help define reality rather than reflect prejudice and stigma.

Please close your eyes again for a moment, and picture a sixteen-year-old with a drug problem; or a woman who may have been beaten by her husband; or a nineteen-year-old young man who was molested when he was ten years old. Can any of these people safely share their stories, their secrets, with their neighbors and with the community and seek treatment without fear of social and *shidduch* repercussions for themselves, their siblings or their children?

Several years ago, Moishe Hellman, President of OHEL, and I met with a group of parents whose sons and daughters were living in one of OHEL/Bais Ezra's group homes or apartments. We asked them what they would like for their children. They answered simply and directly: They'd like their children to have a good place to live, the opportunity to work and to have friends.

Sounds familiar? This is exactly what every parent wants for their child: a good Jewish home, a good job and friends. So people with disabilities have the same interests, the same desires as we do. What often prevents them from achieving their life's goals are not their disabilities but our community's attitude towards them.

IN THE BEST FAMILIES

Various OHEL programs have served family members of *roshei yeshiva* and prominent community leaders. Children and grandchildren of *roshei yeshiva* with psychiatric problems have lived in an OHEL residence

and others have entered OHEL's Substance Abuse Program. Wives from prominent families have entered our shelter for battered women. Such examples speak to the fact that these issues do occur in all facets of our *frum* community, among the "*posheta mentchen*" as well as the "*chosheva mentchen*."

But we also have to be practical. If there was full disclosure, why be *meshadech* into the family with a problem and take a risk that it may be hereditary? That is a reasonable question. Moreover, parents who have a child with a disability should be honest about their child's circumstances – including hospitalizations and medications – and respond appropriately to inquiries, lest they "set up" a problem situation for the future. There are too many circumstances where parents were not forthright about their son's bout with depression, that he was "slow," or that he had a tendency to lose his temper. Hiding this information to marry him off only delays his need for treatment. Unfortunately, much of the time these issues manifest themselves shortly after the marriage, and then the problems are compounded.

On the other hand, when inquiries are made about such a *shidduch*, we should avoid gossiping, the use of pejorative terminology and labeling, which only serves to stigmatize the person with a disability and his family. Seeking rabbinical guidance in such matters is crucial.

While the emphasis here is on the need for our community to view people with disabilities and families in crisis within a broader context, the inherent message here is also to reach out to families with a son or daughter with disabilities to help them take advantage of

the many good programs that are now available, from early intervention programs that diagnose, treat and offer support, to elder care management for the older parents and their child with a disability. There are excellent day programs and outpatient clinics, housing programs and crisis teams staffed by *frum* professionals, opportunities for married couples who have a disability to live in a supervised setting with the support of professionals. Parents can reach out to parent-sponsored organizations such as OTZAR and Tafkaid. The service system has greatly expanded and people with disabilities and their families should take complete advantage of all these opportunities.

A man recently related the following: "My wife and I are so proud of our son. He's twenty four years old with dual diagnosis, both developmental and psychiatric disabilities, and we never imagined this for him. He's sharing an apartment with another person like him. He's learning to cook, he's learning skills to prepare him for a job, he's living on his own. He's actually doing better than several of his siblings who don't have any disability."

There are more parents now who are no longer willing to sacrifice their family's well being and are more openly seeking treatment. They understand that it is more important to get help than to impress their neighbors. The question the rest of us need to ask ourselves when we're asking about such a family for *shidduchim* reasons: Will we view their quest for help and treatment as a strength, or will we punish them by quietly shaming them and thereby discouraging them from seeking help?

Most important, consider the sting and impact of your words when referring to people with disabilities, especially as it concerns *shidduchim*. Be mindful of your sweeping comments when speaking about the family. Focus on subtle, nuanced, positive attributes rather than a biting negative dismissive statement. Let us appreciate Hashem's daily gift to us when we say "*Poke'ach ivrim*," that He opens our eyes to see people with disabilities in a new light. ■

Considering a move to MONSEY?

For careful attention to your
individual needs, call us today!
(845) 354-8445



Jumpstart

EARLY INTERVENTION

A Division of Women's League Community Residences, Inc.

*Serving delayed infants & toddlers,
in the Brooklyn / NYC area.*

SERVICES PROVIDED:

- ✧ OT, PT and Speech Therapy
- ✧ Special Instruction
- ✧ Nutrition, Vision Therapy, Assistive Technology
- ✧ Psychological Counseling / Social Work Services / Parent Training
- ✧ Respite
- ✧ **Unparalleled Service Coordination**
(small caseloads with personal attention by experienced case coordinators)

Our comprehensive evaluations and therapies are performed free of charge, in the privacy and convenience of your home!

Sheindel (Jeanne) Warman
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Pinchus Lerner Ph.D.
CLINICAL SUPERVISOR

For more information please call

718-853-9700

Approved by the Department of Health and the OMRDD

This early intervention program is funded and regulated by the New York State Department of Health, and in New York City, by the New York City Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services.



Rav Pam's Special Friend



In the winter of 1989, a son was born to Rabbi and Mrs. Baruch Rabinowitz of Ditmas Park, Brooklyn. The child, to be named Nota Shlomo, was born with Down Syndrome.

Though Rabbi Rabinowitz was close to Rabbi Avraham Pam, he did not immediately inform him of Nota Shlomo's birth. *Shabbos* morning, the father was given an *aliya* at the Torah reading in Mesivta Torah Vodaath, and as is customary, a "*Mi Shebeirach*" was recited for mother and child. Rabbi Pam, whose seat was in the center of the *beis midrash* only a few steps from the *bima*, wished "*Mazel tov*" to Rabbi Rabinowitz, who in turn informed Rabbi Pam that the baby had been diagnosed as having Down Syndrome. Rabbi Pam's eyes welled with tears. Rabbi Rabinowitz tried to comfort the *Rosh Yeshiva* by saying that though he and his wife were broken when they first received the report, they had already

Rabbi Finkelman, a *rebbe* in Yeshiva Darchei Torah, Far Rockaway, NY, is a frequent contributor to these pages, including "*Middos Instruction: Prerequisite for Torah*," (March '01). He is the author of several biographies published by ArtScroll Mesorah Publications, as well as the recently published book, *The Gift of Speech*.

made peace with the situation.¹

"I'm not crying for you," Rabbi Pam responded. "I'm crying because *Chazal* state that *Moshiach* will come and heal all who are infirm. Now, there is one more reason why *Moshiach* has to come."

Rabbi Pam was Nota Shlomo's *sandak*, and at the *seuda* following the *bris*, he addressed the assemblage. He prefaced his words of Torah by saying, "Yesterday, on the Tenth of Teves, we relived the *Churban* (Temple's destruction). Today, we shall endeavor to say words of *nechama* (comfort)."

Rabbi Pam then quoted a verse in which the prophet Yoel describes the spiritual levels that will be attained with the coming of *Moshiach*:

And it will be after this, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy; your elders shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions (*Yoel* 3,1)

Malbim sees this verse as referring to three levels of prophecy. At the End of Days, the Jewish people will receive a flow of prophetic inspiration from Above, and the level that each Jew will attain will be in inverse proportion to

the level of his exposure to the spiritual decadence before the exile ended. For prior to the exile's end, the world will sink to astonishingly low levels of sin and immorality. The elders, who lived most of their lives in the sinful, pre-Messianic period, will attain the lowest of the three levels of prophecy, that of dreams. By contrast, children, who will enter the days of *Moshiach* young and relatively unscathed spiritually, will attain the highest of the three levels.²

Rabbi Pam concluded: "We see tangibly that we are not far from this glorious period. Thus, every child who is born in these times has a great possibility of benefiting from this tremendous spiritual flow that will descend from Above, and which will enrich Jewish children

¹ They were helped, in no small measure, by Rabbi Rabinowitz's *rebbe*, Rabbi Moshe Shapiro of Jerusalem.

² Rabbi Pam, quoting the Chofetz Chaim, said that before any force breathes its last, it rises up to attack its adversaries as never before. Because the Messianic era will herald the destruction of the forces of evil, these forces are particularly powerful as the exile draws to a close. The Chofetz Chaim said this of the times in which he lived. Surely, said Rabbi Pam, this is true of our time, in which we have seen the world sink to levels not known since the generation of the Flood.

with awesome powers and abilities, the likes of which cannot be fathomed.

"I would like to bless the little boy, Nota Shlomo, who as I have heard, carries the name of a *gaon* and *tzaddik*. May the name he has been given have impact upon his soul, and may he merit to receive the spiritual blessings of which the prophet foretells. May he utilize these spiritual blessings to develop beyond the plane of nature; may he become an *ish kadosh* (holy individual) and be a source of *nachas* to his family and a blessing for *Klal Yisroel*."

A LOFTY NESHAMA

In the years that followed, Rabbi Pam developed a deep attachment to Nota Shlomo Rabinowitz. When the child was past the age of four, his father began taking him to *shul* on *Shabbos*. Nota Shlomo did not disturb the *davening*; instead, he would circle the perimeter of the Torah Vodaath *beis midrash* with quick steps, again and again. Someone suggested that perhaps this was not in keeping with *k'vod hatefilla* (respect for prayer). Rabbi Pam disagreed. "Perhaps this is his way of *davening*," he said, for he perceived that Nota Shlomo possessed a lofty *neshamah*. "If it's not really disturbing, we should not stop him."

Sometimes during *davening*, Nota Shlomo would place himself to the right of the *aron kodesh* with a *Tehillim* in hand and shake to and fro, lift both his hands upward and make sounds as if he was *davening*. Rabbi Pam mentioned this in a *shmuess*, and commented that one cannot know what such a child accomplished with his "*tefilla*." Similarly, when Nota Shlomo hurried to open the *aron kodesh* prior to the Torah reading, Rabbi Pam remarked that certainly it was of great significance for the *minyán* that he was the one performing this honor, though what Heavenly ramifications this has is beyond us.³

For a few years, Nota Shlomo's standard greeting to everyone in *shul* was,

³ The verse "*Shema Yisrael...*" was said word for word.

"*Gut Shabbos* – what name?" Rabbi Pam would respond, "*Gut Shabbos*, Nota Shlomo; my name is Avraham." For a few weeks, Nota Shlomo said, "*Gut Shabbos*, Avraham," which, of course, was more than a bit disconcerting to Rabbi Rabinowitz.

One day, Rabbi Rabinowitz showed his son a picture of Rabbi Pam and asked him, "Who is this?" When Nota Shlomo responded, "Avraham," his father said, "No, this is Rav Pam." They practiced saying "Rav Pam" a number of times, after which Rabbi Rabinowitz told his son, "So next time you say *Gut Shabbos*, it's, '*Gut Shabbos*, Rav Pam.'"

The next *Shabbos*, when Rabbi Pam said, "*Gut Shabbos*, Nota Shlomo, my name is Avraham," Nota Shlomo responded, "No, not Avraham – Rav Pam!" Rabbi Pam laughed and with genuine happiness exclaimed, "Oh, he is a smart one!" Rabbi Rabinowitz recalls that Rabbi Pam looked for every opportunity to point out Nota Shlomo's progress and to praise him for his accomplishments.

A HEAVENLY SIGN

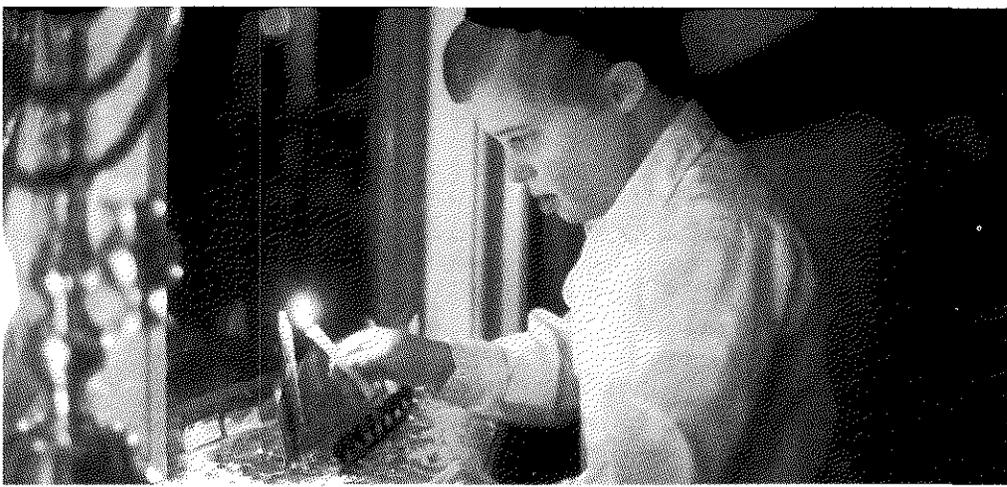
Rabbi Pam took seriously ill in the winter of 1997, and underwent major surgery. On the seventh day of Pesach that followed, Rabbi Pam *davened*, as usual, at Torah Vodaath. As a rule, no one, neither adults nor children, would disturb the *Rosh Yeshiva* during *davening* or *krias haTorah* (the Torah reading). If someone, even a child, wanted to speak to Rabbi Pam, he would wait until the conclusion of *davening*. Thus, it was very unusual when on that Pesach morning, Nota Shlomo approached Rabbi Pam between *aliyos* during the Torah reading, shook his hand, and then pointed to a *shtender* nearby on which two *sefarim* and what appeared to be a pamphlet were lying. Thinking that the child wanted to hold a *sefer*, Rabbi Pam picked one up and tried to hand it to Nota Shlomo. But Nota Shlomo shook his head, "No!" after which Rabbi Pam tried to hand him the second *sefer*, but again Nota Shlomo refused to accept it. Rabbi Pam then held

out the pamphlet to Nota Shlomo, who accepted it, smiled and handed it back to Rabbi Pam, who placed it back on the *shtender*. Nota Shlomo was obviously unhappy with this and exclaimed, "No, no, no!" The entire scenario was repeated again with Nota Shlomo refusing to accept each of the two *sefarim*, and finally accepting the pamphlet. This time, the child pointed to the pamphlet before handing it back to Rabbi Pam. At this point, Rabbi Pam smiled broadly and patted Nota Shlomo's hand as if to thank him, and left the pamphlet on his own *shtender*. After *davening*, someone asked Rabbi Pam what had transpired, but Rabbi Pam evaded answering.

A few months later, on a summer morning, Rabbi Rabinowitz approached Rabbi Pam after *Shacharis* to discuss something. As he began to walk away when the conversation ended, Rabbi Pam said, "*Al timna tov mi'ba'alav* – Do not withhold good from its rightful recipient (*Mishlei* 3,27). Your Nota Shlomo is so precious – I have to tell you a story that happened with him." Rabbi Pam proceeded to relate what had happened on the morning of the seventh day of Pesach and then explained:

When he had taken ill that winter, he decided to undertake an additional study session as a *zechus* (source of merit) for his recovery. Rabbi Pam was undecided as to what form of study to

YOU CAN NOW LISTEN TO
Torah Essentials
In less than 60 minutes a day!
A new, convenient way for everyone to master
TANACH, MISHNA & MISHNA BRURA.
Each line of text is explained clearly on cassette by innovative mechanich,
Rabbi Ephraim Baer
Great for commuters!
Great for the whole family!
Each tape contains:
1 perek of Chumash 1 perek of Mishna &
1 perek of Navi 1 page of Mishna Brura
For more information, or to place your order,
Please call: (845) 425-2177 or
e-mail: torahessentials@msn.com



pursue. His choices were: a *mesechta* of *Gemora*, an order of *Mishna*, or the Chofetz Chaim's works on *shemiras*

halashon (guarding one's speech). To his mind, each choice had specific merits which would seem to make it an ideal

selection for such a purpose.

For weeks, Rabbi Pam could not resolve this matter. He was determined to make a decision, come what may, by the close of the seventh day of Pesach. On that morning in the *beis midrash*, Nota Shlomo refused the two *sefarim* offered to him by Rabbi Pam – but he happily accepted the pamphlet, which was the yearly *Shemiras HaLashon* calendar for the study of the Chofetz Chaim's works on the subject. The second time, Nota Shlomo had even pointed to the Chofetz Chaim's picture on the cover before handing it back. Rabbi Pam took this as a Heavenly sign that he should undertake the study of the Chofetz Chaim's works.

"You should know," Rabbi Pam told Rabbi Rabinowitz, "that as a result of my decision, the *talmidim* of our *beis midrash* and of Beis Medrash Elyon (in Monsey) have also undertaken the study of *shemiras halashon* – and this is all because of Nota Shlomo."

REJOICING WITH THE TORAH

For most Down Syndrome children, singing and dancing have special meaning. For Nota Shlomo, *Simchas Torah* is a highlight of the year. When Nota Shlomo was almost eight years old, his grandparents bought him a child's *sefer Torah* to hold on *Simchas Torah*. Throughout the night and day in *shul*, he held the Torah tightly to his bosom, displaying an attachment that was cause for wonder. Only with great encouragement did he relinquish the *sefer Torah* from time to time and dance.

On the morning of *Simchas Torah* when the Torah reading commenced in the *beis midrash* of Torah Vodaath, Nota Shlomo approached the *gabbai* at the *bima* and offered him his *sefer Torah* to use for the Torah reading. The *gabbai* politely refused the offer, but Nota Shlomo continued to ask that his *sefer Torah* be used. And though his father instructed him to return to his seat, the child returned to the *bima* a number of times to again make his request. Finally, Rabbi Rabinowitz told his son quietly but firmly that the *gabbai* will not use

Subscribe or give a gift of The Jewish Observer and \$ave!

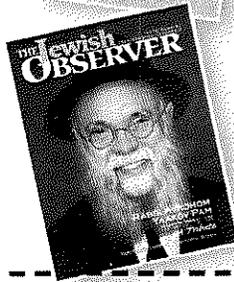
WHY NOT GIVE OR GET A PRESENT
THAT WILL LAST AN ENTIRE YEAR?

Subscribe, or give a gift at these reduced prices and *The Jewish Observer*—filled with the views of leading *Torah* thinkers on current issues—will be delivered each month, directly to your door.

The longer you subscribe for, the larger your savings.

Of course, this offer is unconditionally guaranteed; you may cancel at any time and receive a refund for all undelivered copies.

So order today, and the very next issue will be on its way to you as soon as possible.



YES, I want to take advantage of this money saving offer! Enter my order as follows:

SELF GIFT

	USA ONLY	*OUTSIDE USA
<input type="checkbox"/> 3 years Cover Price \$105 Your cost \$60	\$96	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 years Cover Price \$70 Your cost \$44	\$68	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 year Cover Price \$35 Your cost \$24	\$36	

THE Jewish OBSERVER

42 Broadway, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10004
The Jewish Observer is published monthly except July and August.
Please allow 4 - 6 weeks for delivery.

*Outside U.S.A. price reflects \$12 extra per year to defray air shipping costs. Foreign payment must be made in U.S. dollars, either by check drawn on a bank in the U.S.A. or by VISA or MasterCard.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Send gift card from: _____

Enclosed: \$ _____ or

Charge my: MasterCard VISA

Account No. _____

Expiration Date: (month/year) _____

Signature _____

his *sefer Torah*, and that he should return to his seat and sit quietly.

Rabbi Pam, who was sitting in his regular seat only a few feet away from the *bima*, overheard this. He motioned for Nota Shlomo to come over to him. Rabbi Pam spoke to the child in a whisper for less than a minute and succeeded in calming him. Nota Shlomo happily returned to his seat. When *Mussaf* got underway, Nota Shlomo became a bit anxious, and every few minutes he asked his father how much time was left until *davening* would end.

As soon as *davening* ended, Nota Shlomo said, "Abba, now my turn." He then took his *sefer Torah* to the *bima*, put it down and said, "Rabbi Pam said that now my turn."

Rabbi Rabinowitz approached Rabbi Pam, who explained, "I told Nota Shlomo that right now we are using the big *sefer Torah*, but after *davening* we would do more *leining* from his *sefer Torah* and that we will call up people to the Torah."

And so after most of the congregants had left, Nota Shlomo's *sefer Torah* was opened on the *bima* in Mesivta Torah Vodaath and with some fifteen people crowded around the *bima*, three people were called up by name for their "*aliyos*." After each man pretended to recite the blessing over the Torah, Nota Shlomo, standing on a chair, proudly "read" from his *sefer Torah*. When the third "*aliya*" was completed, two men were honored with "*hagba*" and "*gelila*." Then, the *sefer Torah* was given to Nota Shlomo and an enthusiastic *rikud* (dance) ensued.

One *Shabbos* afternoon, Nota Shlomo walked home from Pirchei groups alone, which involved crossing three streets. His parents were very concerned, especially when they spoke to him and he insisted that he was "big enough" to cross streets by himself.

His father told him, "Nota Shlomo, whenever we have an important question, we ask Rav Pam what to do. We're going to Rav Pam and he will *pasken* (decide) whether or not you are old enough to cross the street alone."

They came to Rabbi Pam and Rabbi

Lofty Soul

(Excerpted from an address by Rabbi Pam to parents of special children)

"I am here as a grandfather, a grandfather of a special child, the kind of child this meeting is all about. I would like to share with you the experience of our family – *Baruch Hashem*, a very positive experience.

"...When the oldest daughter (i.e. the child's oldest sibling) heard that this baby was a special child, she remarked with enthusiasm, 'We will love her, we will raise her, we will take care of her,' and that was the feeling of the entire family. And Miriam is, indeed, a very popular member of the family, much loved and cared for, the center of attention, who, in turn, brings great joy into the *mishpacha*. She has her limitations, naturally, but with all that, she is a delightful child, a happy child, a well-adjusted child, sociable, comfortable in any setting, in school and among friends... I think it's all due to the attention, love and care given her by my daughter-in-law and son primarily, as well as her siblings and the entire family – and of course, *siyata DiShmaya*.

"I have heard that some women in similar situations have asked, 'But why me?' In other words, these women understand that the *Ribbono shel Olam* creates all sorts of *neshamos* – 'But why me?' is their question.

"I have never heard the mother of a brilliant child ask, 'Why me?' We don't question the *Ribbono shel Olam's* judgment when He sends us a gifted child. [By the same token,] we should not question Him when, in His Divine wisdom, He chooses to send the special child to our family. Perhaps He did this because He wanted to entrust his or her care to a family that is worthy of the trust, that will take good care of it, with love and affection, and give fullest attention to its development. This is a *shelichus* (mission) with which the family has been entrusted by the *Ribbono shel Olam* – why question it?

"... I watch Nota Shlomo Rabinowitz run around the *shul* on *Shabbos* with such *simcha* – I feel that this is his form of *avodas Hashem* (service of *Hashem*). And as Rabbi Rabinowitz says, the *Ribbono shel Olam* accepts and treasures every form of *avoda*, and coming from such a child, a truly *heilig'e neshama* (lofty soul), I feel this is a true expression of his soul.

"You see the same in all these children. They have very sensitive, very intense feelings. Their *neshamos*, like all *neshamos*, are radiations of the light of *Shechina*, which shines through them.... You look at these children and you see their souls shining through – literally."

Rabinowitz said, "Nota Shlomo feels that he is big enough to cross the street by himself, but his parents feel that he should not cross. What does the *Rosh Yeshivah* say?"

Rabbi Pam smiled and took the child's hand in his own. "Nota Shlomo, you are very big," he said kindly, "but in order to cross the street, you must be even bigger. *Im yirtzeh Hashem* (G-d willing), the time will come when you will be able to cross the street alone – but not yet."

Nota Shlomo accepted Rabbi Pam's decision happily and said, "Thank you." From that day and on, if someone asked

Nota Shlomo if he crossed the street by himself, he replied, "Rav Pam said 'No!'"

"RAV PAM MISSES HIM"

The last years of Rabbi Pam's life, when walking was very difficult for him, a *minyán* would gather in his house for all the *tefillos* of *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*. Rabbi Rabinowitz would bring Nota Shlomo for *Mincha* on *Shabbos* afternoon, and Rabbi Pam would always seat the boy to his immediate left. If someone else was already occupying the seat when the Rabinowitzes walked in, Rabbi Pam would have

Nota Shlomo stand next to him. Rabbi Pam would greet Nota Shlomo with a hug and the child would always ask, "How's Rav Pam?"

As time went on, the size of the *minyan* grew to the point that the overcrowdedness in the Pams' small dining room area made it stuffy and unhealthy for a man in Rabbi Pam's condition. With great reluctance, Rabbi Pam permitted that a sign be hung on the front door which stated that though the *Rosh Yeshiva* would love to have everyone join the *minyan*, his medical condition no longer allows for it, and that if the sign is hanging, it means that there is already a *minyan* inside and everyone is requested to *daven* at "one of the good *battei midrash* in the neighborhood."

As a result, Rabbi Rabinowitz no

longer came to *Mincha* – until he was contacted by Rabbi Pam's devoted grandson, Reb Binyamin, who explained that Rabbi Pam had made it clear from the outset, that the "regulars" who were fixtures at the *minyan* should continue coming even if they found the sign hanging. "And my grandfather misses Nota Shlomo," R' Binyamin went on. "He misses seeing him and he misses the *simcha* (joy) that he brings to him. So please make sure to bring him."

On *Shabbos* afternoon, when Nota Shlomo entered the Pam residence, he ran straight for Rabbi Pam, grabbed hold of his legs and hugged him. And Rabbi Pam responded in kind, holding the child close to him. Someone attempted to get the child away, for instructions had been given that to pre-

vent any passing of germs, no one was to shake Rabbi Pam's hand. But Rabbi Pam told the person, "For him [Nota Shlomo], it's O.K."

Nota Shlomo let go, took a step back and noticed how visibly ill Rabbi Pam appeared. (He had been discharged from the hospital only a few days earlier.) "Why Rav Pam so weak?" he wanted to know. "Why am I so weak?" Rabbi Pam responded softly, a slight smile on his lips. "What do I know? Ask the *Ribbano shel Olam*."⁴

Nota Shlomo looked upwards and said, "*Hashem*, why Rav Pam so weak? Make him all better. Give him *refua sheleima!*"

Rabbi Pam took hold of the boy and said with emotion, "Nota Shlomo, may *Hashem* answer your *tefillos* and grant us both a *refua sheleima*, so that we can together go to greet *Moschiach tzidkeinu, bimheira v'yameinu, Amein*."

In June, when Rabbi Pam was again hospitalized, Nota Shlomo drew a picture of someone in bed and wrote, "Dear Rav Pam, feel all better, *refua sheleima*. Love, Shlomo." When the letter arrived in the mail, Rebbetzin Pam brought it to Rabbi Pam and read it to him. Rabbi Pam remarked that he derived an enormous amount of joy from Nota Shlomo and he instructed his grandson to inform the child that he had received the letter and that he appreciated it. "But tell him," he said, "that his name is not plain Shlomo – it is Nota Shlomo."

The morning of Rabbi Pam's funeral, by which time the Rabinowitz family had heard the tragic news, Rabbi Rabinowitz arrived home from *Shacharis* to find Nota Shlomo sitting on the porch. He said, "Rav Pam sick, Rav Pam hospital, Rav Pam died. Now Rav Pam happy." He then marched into the house, grabbed a *Chumash* and said, "Me learn *Chumash* for Rav Pam." Each day of *shiva*, he sat for a while learning *Chumash* and to this day, when he remembers, he learns *Chumash* for Rabbi Pam's *neshama*. ■

⁴ Rabbi Pam never uttered a word of complaint over his afflictions and almost constant pain. He told a grandson that he felt such gratitude towards *Hashem* for the kindness which He had shown him throughout his life, that he found it difficult to even acknowledge that he was in pain.

"I wish I could speak to a frum therapist on the phone without giving my name."

You can! Just call
The Yitti Leibel
Helpline.

HOURS:

Monday-Friday.....8am - 12pm
Monday-Thursday.....8pm - 11pm
Sunday.....9am - 12pm, 9pm - 11pm

718-HELP-NOW
(718) 435-7669

Chicago.....(800) HELP-023
Lakewood.....(732) 363-1010
Cleveland.....(888) 209-8079
Baltimore.....(410) 578-1111
Detroit.....(877) 435-7611
San Diego.....(866) 385-0348

לעזי נשמת חיה רוסא בת ר' שמואל ברוך ווילהלם ע"ה
(נפטת י"א אדר תשל"ה)
ר' ישעיה בן ר' משה ז"ל בראון ע"ה
(נפטר ב' סיון תשל"ה)

Dedicated by Mr. & Mrs. Shmuel Boruch Wilhelm

PINCHAS MANDEL

Over 50 years experience in *Kvura* in Eretz Yisrael
Serving the North American Public and Funeral Industry

קרקע און קבורה אין ארץ ישראל

Personal responsibility throughout service – NOT JUST "PAPERWORK"

ORIGINATOR OF THE PRESENT RABBINICALLY APPROVED METHOD

Highly recommended by Gedolai Hador-- Here and in Eretz Yisrael

1043-42nd Street, Brooklyn, NY 11219

Day & Night phone: (718) 851-8925

פנוי עצמות נאר כדין — קיינע קאמפראמיסען

Kavod Haniftra with *Mesiras Nefesh* and compassion for the bereaved family.

TAHARAS HANIFTRA SHOULD NEVER BE COMMERCIALIZED

The Price of "Just Joking"



This article is about the painful issue of Ona's Devarim – causing pain to others with words. It is written to children and adolescents, but we all know that the problem is not limited to this group alone. In shul and in the business world, at simchos and in all social interactions, words, gestures, and behaviors are often used, by adults, as weapons. Don't believe that old adage about sticks and stones. Names will always harm you.

I'm so tired of witnessing the hurt, the deep hurt of your victims. Boys like Shloime, someone you consider to be a loser; you say, "Look at his clothes! His jokes aren't funny, his *hashkafos* (outlook on life) aren't good enough, he doesn't know how to learn, or his parents just don't fit." Or the girl you roll your eyes about: "Poor Rivkie, she just doesn't get it – the way she dresses, or talks, or laughs, or thinks, or even breathes." His/her very existence seems to offend you.

And you have the power: you are wonderful, perhaps physically, certainly emotionally. You're the one that the others look to for approval. If you find someone acceptable, he/she is. If you say they're in, they're in. And if you say they're out, they're out. The other boys are afraid of you, find it too difficult to

Dr. Lob is a clinical psychologist in Chicago, working with families and teen-agers in the *frum* community. He is a *talmid* of Rabbi Yitzchok Feigelstock (Long Beach, NY) and a *musmach* of Bais Medrash Govoha of Lakewood. His article, "Hereby Resolved: A Father's *Kabbalos*," was featured in JO, Nov. '99.

stand up to you, and even though in their hearts they feel uncomfortable – at the very core of their being, they know this is wrong, wrong to hurt another – they still go along with you. The other girls laugh with you, perhaps inwardly praying that they won't be next, that you spare them.

Oh yes, you are very powerful. You have the power to break, to break the spirit of your victims, to break their confidence, and their belief in themselves. I have seen the broken pieces. I know this is not your intent, but this is what happens. And you have the power to instill dread, a literal dread of coming to school, or to *shul*, or of seeing you or your helpers at a *simcha*. And you have the power to change the life of a human being. From a trusting, happy individual to a fearful, distrustful one.

You say, "Oh, what's the big deal! Everyone goes through it. Be a man, grow up, it's just a joke." "I'm doing her a favor, she has to know that she just doesn't fit in." "I'm doing it to teach him *kavod haTorah*, good *middos*, or instructing him

in the name of '*shtoltz*' (dignity) to let this younger boy know his place." Sometimes you even convince yourself that you are engaged in a *mitzva*. So you push him around, physically or verbally, and you know what's best for him.... You don't.

I know the damage. I have seen the terrible pain, and I know that even if he/she doesn't know how to act, or dress, or speak, or how to stand up to you, it is still wrong, and will never be right, to hurt them. It's not a joke, it's not funny. IT'S NOT FUNNY. It is deadly serious, with consequences that can last a lifetime. This is not a guess. I know this, I am a witness.

Haven't you learned about Chana

¹ *Shmuel I*, Ch. 1. Penina and Chana are both married to Elkana. Chana and Elkana have no children together, while Penina and Elkana have ten. The *Navi* tells us that Penina caused Chana pain, teasing her about her childlessness, and *Chazal* explain that Penina acted *l'shem Shamayim* – for the sake of Heaven. Her intent was to motivate Chana to greater depth of *tefilla*, but the consequences and punishment were enormous: the loss of eight of her children (see *Rashi*).

and Penina, with its terrible conclusion, even though Penina acted *l'shem Shamayim*?¹ And the explanation of Horav Chaim Shmuelevitz, זצ"ל that hurting another person is a fire, it burns, no matter the intent. And the explicit *halachos* of the Chofetz Chaim found in the *P'sicha* to his classic *sefer, Lav* 13 and 14.² Probably you don't realize, you didn't know. Please know now.³

But I know something else, as well. I also know that, in your essence, are not an *achzor* (a cruel person). You may act with *achzarius*, with great cruelty, but you are not an *achzor*. I know that as a *ben* or *bas Yisroel* you are of the people defined by the *midda* of being *Rachmanim Bnei Rachmanim*, and you are a *Rachaman* (merciful). So I mourn for you as well, stuck in a cycle that is so foreign to who you really are, causing, I am sure, great inner discomfort for you. You know, when you look at yourself in the

² לא תזנו איש את עמו: ולא תשא עליו חטא

³ This is discussed at length in the *sugya* of *אונאת דברים* - causing pain through speech - in *Bava Metzia* 58b.

mirror, that you do not want to be cruel. Perhaps an older sibling, or a parent, or teacher, or a boy/girl in your neighborhood or in your school, has treated you in the same way. And in order to cope with the pain, humiliation, or fear, you may have become hard, acting like you don't care, even convincing yourself that it's no big deal, that you really don't care, maybe even that it's good for you.

But it is a big deal, and you do really care. And inside, deep inside, the pain and the rage is unresolved and it just sits there, and can come out on others. Don't get me wrong. Do not misunderstand me. These last comments are meant only to say that you too are hurting, and you too deserve compassion, and are probably unaware of how devastating your actions can be. The fact that you've been hurt and you have suffered doesn't change the reality that it is not OK to continue the damage. Hurting another may provide some relief for the moment, but it just perpetuates the cycle of hurt, and sends your own pain deeper, making it less

accessible for healing. The price of bullying, of "just joking" is a high one, perhaps highest for you. This includes, among others, teasing, ignoring, taunting, joking at the expense of, frightening, intimidating, threatening, pushing, hitting, anything that brings suffering to another, or encouraging others to act in these ways.

What should you do, you ask. First, STOP. If you feel you can't, you must get help. Now. Talk to your parents or your *Rebbi*, teacher, Rabbi, or friend. If the person you talk to tells you, "Don't worry about it, it's not so bad," don't believe him or her. They are trying to be kind but it is not helpful to you to minimize your actions. In order to change, you must know that it is unacceptable. You must internalize a commitment to zero tolerance for these behaviors. And the people around you, including your silent friends who have gone along with you until now, must help you in this process by insisting on zero tolerance as well. It may also be necessary to talk to a therapist to begin the hard work of change.

Second, please be courageous and ask *mechilla* (forgiveness) from your victim. I say "courage" because this is very difficult, and a scary thing to do. Do not wait until Yom Kippur, do it now. Asking forgiveness has many benefits; it is obviously your obligation, an integral part of *teshuva*, and it helps in the healing of the person hurt. But more than that, it helps you in a powerful way, it helps you change your behavior, and begins the process of your own healing.

Third, know that you are gifted. *Hashem* has given you a gift in your personality. Your charisma, your ability to influence others, is an incredible gift from *Hashem*, and like all gifts from *Hashem*, it comes with an *achrayus* (responsibility), the *achrayus* to use it in a Torah way, in *Hashem's* ways of kindness and compassion: "Just as *He* is *rachum* (compassionate), so should you be *rachum*." You have the power to make a difference, to affect the lives of other human beings. Yes, I have been a witness to the pain, but I have also witnessed the extraordinary

ARE YOU MOVING?

IS YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS PRINTED INCORRECTLY ON THE JO MAILING LABEL?

We need your help to ensure proper delivery of the Jewish Observer to your home. Please attach current mailing label in the space below, or print clearly your address and computer processing numbers that are printed above your name on the address label.

Affix old label here

Name _____

New Address _____

City, _____

State, _____ Zip _____

Date Effective _____

Send address changes to: The Jewish Observer
Change of Address
42 Broadway, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10004

Please allow 4-6 weeks for all changes to be reflected on your mailing label. We will not be responsible for back issues missed unless you notify us 6 weeks prior to your move.

impact of someone just like you, changing. The boy who now uses his power to protect, to reach out, and to encourage an atmosphere among his peers of mutual *kavod*; the girl who uses her popularity and charisma to create a community of gentleness, tolerance, and kindness. When this occurs, it is breathtaking. I have witnessed this, and it is amazing and can lead to a snowball effect, slowly building to an avalanche of kindness, compassion, and respect, with lifelong ramifications.

May Hashem send you the courage to change, and to use your gifts in ways that build *ahavas Yisroel*, and may you feel Hashem's love and compassion in your life.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE TO
SCHOOLS AND PARENTS:**

For many years, in my role as *Rebbe*, psychologist, and parent, I have seen firsthand the damage

done by bullying. The effects are profoundly damaging; how can our children thrive, both academically and emotionally, when they are afraid, when their home/school feels unsafe? And this can start as young as five or six years old. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of instituting a zero tolerance policy in our *yeshivos*, for both boys and girls, and in our homes.

But please, please, don't bully the bully. Be firm, do not bend one inch, but reach out with love and compassion to these boys and girls. They too are suffering, even if you, or even they are unaware of it. Do not give in to your outrage for the victim, and treat the bully with disgust or hatred. You are the adult, he/she, even a teen, is still a child. Yes, a child, who certainly is in need of firm, assertive guidance, but also, quite often in desperate need of attention, approval, warmth, and love.

Lastly, you must avoid blaming the victim. While it is true that there are behaviors that the victim can do to better the situation, and it is important for a parent/teacher to help the child with some ideas and strategies, it is not their fault. Do not compound the inquiry by implying that they somehow deserve what they are getting. They don't. No one does. ■

Admiral Weaver Inn
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND
The Only Kosher Bed & Breakfast
 28 Weaver Avenue, Newport, RI 02840
 Tel.: (401) 849-0051 • Fax: (401) 847-5902
 www.kosherbedandbreakfast.com

Enjoy the freedom and convenience of a kosher guesthouse, located only minutes away from the Touro Synagogue, the oldest synagogue in North America



Group discount available for Simchas and Shabbos

For reservations call: 1-888-465-0051

Join doctors, lawyers, accountants, businessmen, professionals, rabbis, mashgichim and rebbes from around the world!

בס"ד

The Shulchan Aruch Learning Project

The Shema Yisrael Torah Network of Yerushalayim

Has developed a structured learning program for those who work full time.

All shiurim are given in English following the exact order of the text of the TUR and SHULCHAN ARUCH. One will receive weekly a written shiur sent to you via email.

You will learn: MECHABER, RAMA, SHACH, S"MA, MISHNA BRURA and more.

There are separate programs in
Choshen Mishpat, Shabbos, Yoreh Deah, Niddah, Aveilus,
 and soon **Orech Chaim and Even HaEzer**



For further information and details,
 please call us at 732-370-3344 or 1-800-747-2434
 email: shulchanaruch@shemayisrael.com url: www.shemayisrael.com

www.g-rati-x.com

Rabbi Ephraim Eisenberg זצ"ל

A Primary Conduit of Torah

In a Manner Most Unique

Shortly after *Shavuot*, the festival marking the giving of the Torah at Sinai, we lost one of those who imparted Torah to us in an uncommon way: *Moreinu v'Rabbeinu* Rabbi Ephraim Eisenberg זצ"ל.

In a unique way, Reb Ephraim was a "specialist." When we entered Reb Ephraim's *chabura* (discussion group) in Yeshiva Ner Yisroel, Baltimore, some twenty years ago – later it was a *shiur* (formal lecture), but the principle was the same – it was our first year beyond the structured framework of our long stints in *yeshivos* until then. Through *yeshiva ketana*, *mesivta* and *beis midrash*, we had been under the tutelage of one *rebbe* after another, imbibing their Torah, guided by their approaches, and absorbing their perspectives. In a sense, those were years in which we still had training wheels on our Talmudic bicycles.

Now, we had advanced to the level often called "*lehrnen fahr zich*" – learning on one's own. We were cast adrift upon the Sea of The Talmud to "sink or

Rabbi Yosef Gavriel Bechhofer was a *talmid* in Rabbi Ephraim Eisenberg זצ"ל's *chabura* in Yeshivas Ner Yisroel, Baltimore, in 5742 ('81-'82). Rabbi Bechhofer is an editor for ArtScroll/Mesorah's *Yad Avraham Mishnah* Commentary, and a lecturer at Yeshivas Ohr Somayach in Monsey. He is the author of *The Contemporary Eruv* and *Bigdei Shesh* (forthcoming on *Sefer Shoftim*), both published by Feldheim. Rabbi Bechhofer contributes frequently to these pages, most recently with a biographical essay on Rabbi Avraham Eliyahu Kaplan זצ"ל (April '02).

swim." To swim would be to develop several capacities simultaneously: to maintain *hasmada* (diligence) in a more unstructured setting (after all, the focus was no longer on the *shiur*), and to hone skills and techniques for intellectual independence – mastering the abilities to analyze a *Rishon* (classic commentators, 11th-15th centuries), to abstract the concept from an *Acharon* (later commentators), to compare inferences and to contrast rationales.¹

Rebbe זצ"ל would listen to his talmidim and they would feel he really wanted to hear what they said. He always wanted to know how we learned the Gemora, how we responded to his comment. He wanted us to learn how to learn a Gemora and not just to hear his own chiddushim....

When I was in Rebbe's shiur, I had a [health] problem.... Rebbe constantly asked me how I was feeling and gave me names of doctors to see. When I went home for two months, Rebbe spoke on the phone with me around three times a week for fifteen to twenty minutes. He would tell me how he learned the Gemora in shiur, and then would ask how I learned the Gemora and what my insights were. The chizuk (encouragement) I got from these phone calls was tremendous. This also strengthened my learning, because

1. The indented and italicized sections are quoted from letters received by the Eisenberg family during and after *Shiva*, very slightly modified to make heartfelt and hastily transcribed thoughts more suitable for publication.

I knew I had to know the Gemora very well to speak to Rebbe. Whenever I tell anyone about those two months, it amazes them that a rebbe could feel such responsibility to a talmid to give up so much of his precious time....

Above all else, the imperative that encompassed and transcended all specific areas of development was the drive for *chiddush* (creative insight). In *yeshivos*, everything leads to this ultimate goal: That a *talmid* make the transition from *kli kibbul*, a receptacle, to *ma'ayan ha'misgaber*, a fountain.

I am not sure Reb Ephraim זצ"ל ever [directly] demanded anything from the bachurim. But his being, his devotion and his total connection to Torah, these made the demand on us! I knew that when he would see me, he would ask, "Nu! Where are you holding?" For me, as a ba'al habayis (layman), this was not an easy question to answer. I could not just say, "I am learning this," for the "Nu" demanded – a question, an answer, something more! It was mussar: Where am I holding? If I am not ready for Reb Ephraim, how will I be ready for the next world?

This is not just me talking. I spoke to a friend, a rebbe, who said the same thing: "I always had to be ready!" And this person had nothing to worry about!

One Man, So Many Approaches

What kind of *rebbe* could shape many *talmidim*, whose diverse backgrounds and varied personalities – "Just as their faces differ so too do their traits"² – mandate a special approach for each individual? The answer lies in an insight of Reb Tzaddok Ha'Kohen of Lublin זצ"ל³ that I heard Reb Ephraim interpret.

Rabbi Chanina states: "Much I learned from my teachers, more from my peers, but from my students more than from the rest."⁴ As Reb Ephraim explained it: Each *talmid* has his own

2 See *Sfas Emes, Korach* (5647).

3 *Tzidkas ha'Tzaddik* paras. 216 and 231. See *Yisroel Kedoshim* para. 5 *V'zeh haya isko shel Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair*.

4 *Ta'anis* 7a.

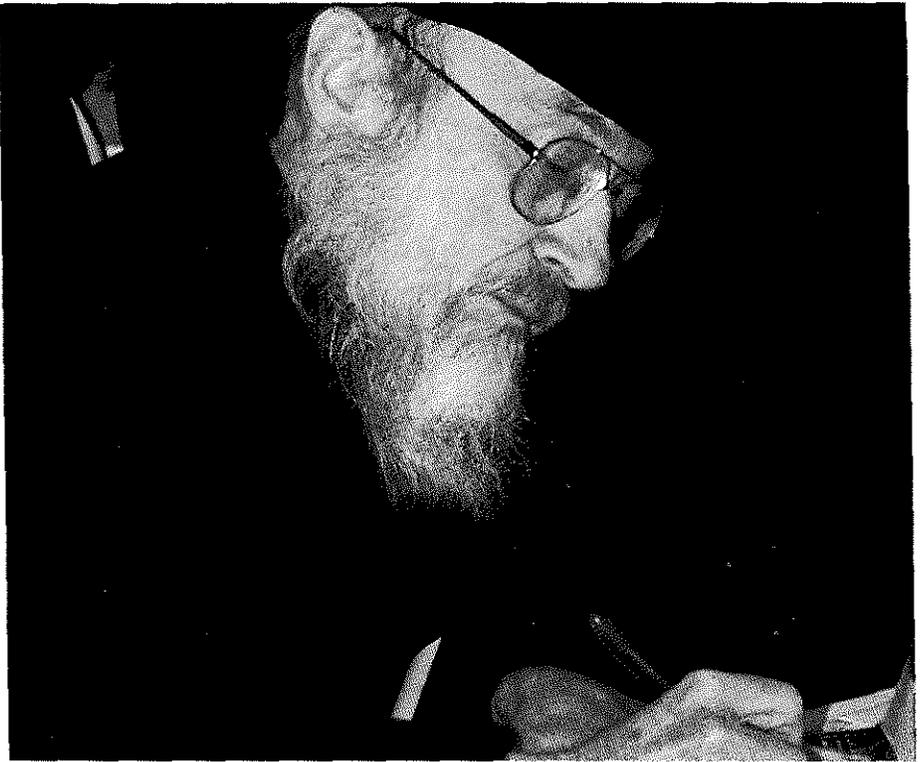
unique conduit (“*tzinor*”) of Divine influence that he must develop to tap into his portion in Torah. That conduit, perforce, flows through the *rebbe* to the *talmidim*. From one’s own *rebbe*, one gains one’s own conduit, modified by its passage through the *rebbe*’s conduit. Through contact with one’s peers one is influenced by multiple conduits, laterally. When a *rebbe* has *talmidim*, however, multiple unique conduits must flow through that *rebbe* for him to convey teachings to each respective *talmid*. He becomes the “master pipeline,” flowing into the proper sub-channels for each *talmid*.

But experience demonstrates that not every *rebbe* is alert to the subtle differences between those conduits. Not every *rebbe* is attuned to the careful calibration and application of the right influences to the right person. Many *rabbeim* impose one uniform mold, as though one size would fit all.

We were accustomed to a shiur served on a platter – the rebbe came with a few questions and presented an approach to resolve them. Great! Then my friends and I encountered Reb Ephraim’s method, which we came to prefer. Sure, he came in with something to say. But when we raised a question, he would give it “due diligence” – thinking and going through all the implications: “If you say that idea here, then you have to say this there. And if you say that, it’s going to be shverrr from....”

” It was open-mindedness that only someone totally comfortable with changing his mind and totally dedicated to Truth – a truly humble person – can do. “And truth will sprout from the land”⁵ – it may come through the question of the bachur who was not from the top half of the shiur.

*At the beginning of the year, the bachurim explained that they would prefer a shiur based on the intricacies of the text and the basic commentaries itself rather than upon the theories of the extrinsic commentaries (“*reid*”)..... So what did Reb Ephraim do? He changed his style! It was amazing! – I don’t think I ever had a rebbe that*



would or could do that, but he did. He still managed to say the same profound shiurim, but from the perspective of the text and the basic commentaries, showing how the big implications fit into inferences from the words in the Gemora and Rashi.... We all loved the shiur.

Several of his *maspidim* (eulogizers) noted that Reb Ephraim was not brilliant. Rather, from his teens he constantly immersed himself in Torah. His *hasmada* – under the most difficult circumstances – is legendary. (Perhaps. By the time we met him, however, he seemed, to us, quite brilliant.) His capacity for *chiddush* was amazing – “*noch a kashya*,” “*noch a teirutz*,” “*noch a he’ora*,” “*noch a daherr*” – another question, another answer, another comment, another insight. Others mentioned that he was “holding all over” – he mastered the breadth of the *Yam haTalmud*, and was a brimming reservoir of cross-references and insights on even the most obscure topics.

Yet we, the *talmidim*, had our own reasons for maintaining a devoted connection to Reb Ephraim over the years. We cherish our recollections of Reb Ephraim because of the extraordinary array of faculties he brought to bear as our *rebbe*: His keen insight into a

talmid’s intellectual needs, his capacity to provoke each individual’s own development, his extreme patience and tolerance of every *talmid’s* idiosyncrasies and petulance, his masterful orchestration of the *seder* and the *shiur*.

Before I was even officially part of the yeshiva...., Rebbe drew me close and encouraged me.... I never before, or since, had a rebbe who would go over to his talmidim to initiate a talk in learning.... It was during those first months in Ner Yisroel that Rebbe’s enthusiasm, motivation and, of course, Rebbe’s smile made me feel right at home.

I remember (how could I possibly forget!) how much of an interest Rebbe took in my plans and how my parents would feel about them. I do not know that anyone else in my life took such initiative to help me....

We were learning Makkos and several times a week Rebbe would speak to me privately, sometimes for almost two hours, about the sugya. Until then I never knew what it feels like to share Torah thoughts with an outstanding talmid chacham of Rebbe’s caliber. How can I find words to describe the debt I owe Rebbe!

⁵ Tehillim 85,12.

Not Eloquent... But So Nuanced

Reb Ephraim was not an orator. He did not wax eloquent. He had the broadest repertoire of inflections and nuances of "takkeh" that I have ever heard, using it – and "yeah," as well – to connote a remarkable array of ideas, messages and reactions. But through his endless capacity for *chiddush*, he expanded the frontiers of our minds, and presented before us broad, new and fertile tracts for us to work and cultivate, developing our own skills and techniques.

I'm writing to you, but it's really for me too. The first picture of Rebbe זצ"ל that comes to mind is of him bent over a Gemora... no difference where, when – singing, humming a tune (or not), but just totally engrossed, with nothing else in the world – simply a picture of pure ahavas Torah, no distractions. Then we would come over and wait for him to look up and say "yeah" (the same yeah that ended almost every shiur, started almost every conversation in learning or advice. And "yeah... gut" ended them...).

Rebbe זצ"ל was the one we went to, because he was so available – too available. Never would you ask about something and leave without at least one extra gem: an idea, a resolution, or clarity in an issue or topic.

Rebbe זצ"ל always had the patience to explain or repeat the point to you again or to another bachur or pair of chevrusos. I know, because I sat only a couple of rows in front of him for a period. I would go and talk to him about something from shiur, and then I would hear him tell it over and over again to others, every time with the same excitement and emphasis, yet with a different nuance for each one.

Transition From Dependence to Autonomy

This critical period in our lives, however, was not just one of transition in learning, but in life. We were beginning to develop into autonomous individuals capable of dealing with the broader world. This "broad-

er world" lay not necessarily beyond the walls of the yeshiva, but beyond the external and extrinsic structure and regimen it imposed upon us. The time when we had to begin considering marriage and building a home drew nearer as well.

In these areas, Reb Ephraim also helped us along our path towards full maturity – as did, תלמידה, the *Rebbitzin she'tichyeh*, who passes along her own particular heritage from her father, Rabbi Mordechai Gifter זצ"ל. The Eisenberg home had an open-door policy – *talmidim* could and would come any time to discuss issues concerning themselves and their friends, their struggles and difficulties, to receive counsel and derive guidance.

This, then, is the aspect that we, the *talmidim*, sensed. The *maspidim* at the *levaya* – Reb Ephraim's great peers and close relatives – could not necessarily capture the *rebbe-talmid* relationship. It was not the nature of their respective experiences. But we loved Reb Ephraim because, without fanfare or presumption, he nurtured us and cared for us through the critical years that brought us from dependence to autonomy, and because we sensed his, and his family's, warmth and concern for us in their orchestration of that process.

I once saw a Maharal (Nesivos Olam, vol. 2, Nesiv ha'Ahavah, chaps. 1-2) that says: "The ideal love is when one loves Hashem Yisborach for Him Himself, when one recognizes His greatness and loftiness, that He is Truth and that His mitzvos are Truth. When I first saw this remark, I had a hard time relating to this concept. What does it mean to love Him by recognizing His greatness? As far as I've ever known, the love and care that my relatives or friends had for me generated the love that I had felt toward them. Even with my rabbeim, I only seemed to feel a love for them because of the care and concern they had for me. It didn't seem possible that love should be generated by anything other than someone else doing good for me.

But then, it hit me so, so hard. There was one individual in my life that I loved so much, but I could never

explain why.... Now, with this Maharal, I can convey the very real and deep love that I felt and feel for my beloved rebbe... Reb Ephraim ben Reb Chaim Ha'Levi זצ"ל.

When I first entered his shiur he was not [yet] involved in my personal, mundane struggles... yet I immediately loved my rebbe. His greatness and loftiness were so obvious to me, they resulted in an automatic love, so similar to the love that I must have for Hashem. The saying "to know him is to love him" is so true. How can I explain what it means for a bachur in our generation to be involved with a rebbe who was, so visibly, always thinking in learning – even when not sitting in front of a sefer?... I would approach him to talk in learning. He would be squinting, gazing forward, his mind totally in Torah, oblivious to the fact that I was standing right in front of him! To know him is to love the Torah!

How privileged we were to have a rebbe that wouldn't just say a shiur for an hour and then disconnect from the bachurim. He would come to us during Seder and immerse himself in learning with us....

... Ultimately, I also loved him for the same reason I love some of my closest friends. Although he was so great, he still connected with me on a mundane level. He was always concerned with my happiness – both material and spiritual. When it came time for shidduchim, he cared for me like a father would....

We will attempt to emulate him, and fortify our own diligence, quest for *chiddush*, *simcha* in Torah, perhaps even his abstinence. Above all, however, we must fully devote ourselves to helping others in their growth in Torah and *avodas Hashem*. This is the *nefesh*, the monument, the soul-force, that we set as our commemoration of our *Rebbe*.

Whenever I told Rebbe: "I'm an all-American kid. What do I have to do with a life in the yeshiva world?!" He would always retort: "I was also an All-American, and so was my shver. If we did it, so can you!" ■

A Better Jew, a Better Parent

Raising Roses Among Thorns, by Rabbi Noah Orlowek, (Feldheim Publ. Ltd., Nanuet, NY, 2001 \$22.95)

Raising *Roses Among the Thorns* is a comprehensive Torah-based guide to parenting. More importantly, it is also a guide to husband-wife relationships, parent-children interaction, with pointers on dealing with schools – in other words, a guide to enhanced functioning as a Torah Jew, resulting in being a better parent. As the author, Rabbi Orlowek, puts it, “Our Torah is a powerful guide to all areas of life, and certainly to the all-important area of parenting.”

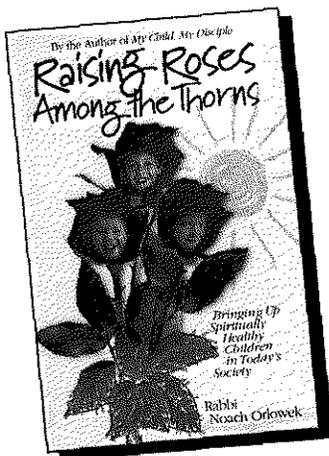
At the onset, the book’s tone is set with a quote from *Chovos HaLevovos*, “The reason that a little bit of light drives away a lot of darkness is because the light is real and the darkness is not.” Just as *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* creates unique challenges for each generation, so too, correspondingly, does He give *siyata d’Shmaya* to our spiritual leaders, that they may reveal and apply the Torah’s eternal truths to our generation’s unique situation.

More than ever before, raising children to become Torah Jews is a complex and often exasperating task, and we may feel tempted to enlist the spurious trends of contemporary opinion to succeed at the task. This book provides viable alternatives based on *daas Torah*.

Rabbi Orlowek quotes the *Alter* of Kelm, Rabbi Simcha Zissel Brody, to the effect that “one factor in children not loving their parents as much as parents love their children is that they think the parent does not really know what is best for them.” This statement was written perhaps a hundred years ago, when the world was much different from how it is now. “Today, especially,” adds Rabbi Orlowek, “we are at constant risk of losing our

Rabbi Furst is *Mashgiach* of Kollel Ruach Chaim in Jerusalem.

parental influence. In our fast-changing society, our children often have valid reason to doubt that we understand them or their world.”



Societal instability only adds to a child’s natural sense of insecurity, and so our parental responsibility to support and encourage our children is, at this time, even greater. Likewise, our efforts to reach out and understand our children must be even greater. As Rabbi Orlowek emphasizes: “The effort you make trying to understand someone is a powerful expression of love.... When you trouble yourself to understand someone, you get a glimpse of his innate nobility of soul, the trials and tribulations that are uniquely his, and you begin to perceive the Divine spark that glows within each of us.”

We should not be deceived by the simplicity of the book’s message – that every nuance of *chinuch* and the almost infinite combinations of behavior between parent and child must flow from a basic principle: parental love and happiness. In fact, Rabbi Schach זצ"ל, was questioned about *chinuch*, and he is quoted as saying, “The best education is happy parents.” To this, add the advice to parents expressed by the author’s *rebbe*, Rabbi Simcha Wasserman זצ"ל: “The single greatest ingredient in successful *chinuch* is love.”

If parents loved and tried to under-

stand their children, then, even amidst all the difficulties and distractions of modern life, *chinuch* can proceed successfully towards its goal. As Rabbi Orlowek defines it, “Successful *chinuch* is actually an ongoing transfer to the child of responsibility for his decisions and his fate.” Obviously, if this is what our Torah leadership is teaching us, it is something we must learn to perfect.

HOW TO RESPOND TO DIFFICULT CHALLENGES

Even without the overwhelming influence of our *galus*, family life can be, at the very least, a daunting challenge, for “the reality is that in all families — especially those with an infant, or several young children, or a few teenagers, or all of the above — it’s normal for things not to go smoothly.” How we react to it all is the key to success – as Rabbi Orlowek cautions: “But this does not have to result in the anger, shouting and confrontations that can too easily become commonplace.”

The book provides us with general rules, supported by the words of *Chazal*, as well as classical and contemporary Rabbinic sources. In addition, there are many practical exercises listed at the end of every chapter, which help us to acquire and reinforce proper habits and attitudes that are so essential for parents to model for their children.

Our obligation as parents is to raise roses — our children, the offspring of the *Avos*, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov — amongst the thorns...the thorns of today’s amoral, pleasure-driven, secular world, a world that glorifies and promotes all that the *Avos* abhorred. This can be done, Rabbi Orlowek offers, but only if we build a bastion against it all: a warm, understanding and loving Jewish home.

At first blush, there is little comfort from the adage, “The apple does not fall far from the tree.” Don’t we see children from illustrious Torah homes straying

KARKA IN ERETZ YISROEL
Call Rabbi Gavriel Beer for information
on obtaining cemetery plots in Beth
Shemesh and other locations in Israel.
011-972-2-656-9427

from the path of their parents? Indeed, they say “that the apple does not fall far from the tree when the winds are mild, but when there are gale-force winds, the apple can travel very far.” And as Rabbi Orlowek writes, “Today we are living in times where unbelievably powerful winds are blowing.”

Nevertheless, this book tells us, we can overcome the elements, beginning with self-improvement – not only for our own sake, but for the sake of our children. As Rabbi Orlowek phrases it, “The first step in any process of change is motivating yourself to begin.”

Yes, our children are products of their innate, G-d-given, physical, mental and emotional qualities. But all of this is initially combined with their home environment — the parental influence. Children look to their parents for their first sense of self-worth. “We dare not betray this innocent trust.” We must love and nurture our children to trust us and to trust *Hashem*.

“Parents need to behave in such a way that their children trust them totally, if they hope to instill in them a trust in *Hashem*. This will be, *b’ezras Hashem*, one of the most important elements in raising a child in today’s world.” Correspondingly, “The greatest gift you can give your child is the knowledge that he is never alone. *Hashem* is always there with us, at all times.”

MAINTAINING CALM AND STABILITY

In our time, when powerful winds can blow the apples — our children — far from the tree, parents must provide calm and stability for their children. Our personal stability depends upon the degree to which we have “made eternal truths into a reality” in our own minds. If so, “we will be able to maintain our calm and happiness. Then we will be able to inspire our children to want to emulate our life ideals.” The foundation of happiness is Torah, for “Torah frees the person to look at life correctly, and the correct perception leads to happiness.”

Rabbi Orlowek teaches us that we must understand, sympathize and communicate with our children. “Now, more than

ever, when our children are under such a massive barrage of spiritually lethal influences, it is incumbent upon us to maintain an ongoing dialogue in order to know what’s on their minds and in their hearts . . . time together, even in silence, is a sign of love. It implies: I enjoy your company.” Our homes are thus the one hope for these last generations of *galus Yidden*.

This book can be read and applied by all, ideally long before the first child is born and even before marriage. After all, we of the past generation are far from perfect. We have our own problems and hang-ups to contend with. But we cannot postpone improving our *middos*, strengthening our *emuna*, practicing our skills in empathy, communication and problem solving until after we have been blessed with the responsibilities of caring for our children’s — or a spouse’s — spiritual, emotional and physical needs. We cannot wait because our behavior as parents — the growing child’s primary role models — is crucial to their *chimuch*, their future and their place in *Klal Yisroel*. For example, Rabbi Orlowek stresses, “How important it is for the parent to be at ease, because the child’s ability to speak, or even think, is deeply affected by his parent’s degree of calm.”

Indeed, the mood of the parent can make or break the child. “I strongly believe that the worst time to ask children to do chores is when the parent is desperate for their help. Doing chores is a normal part of being a family member, and should be regarded as part of family life. It is part of training our children to be givers, and should not, therefore, be invoked mainly when the mother is having a mini-crisis of exhaustion or time-pressure. At pressured moments, there will be an undercurrent of demanding and negative emotion that the child may rebel against.”

READY FOR SCHOOL?

If the parents have done their job, then their children will have experienced love, understanding and trust. They will have self-esteem and be ready to start school, a place where “the greatest drop in self-esteem, in 60 percent of the students, occurs between the first and fifth

grades.” This is a serious and difficult time for parents and children, and Rabbi Orlowek explains the causes and offers solutions to combat this great potential disaster.

Rabbi Orlowek speaks to the parent and the school: “The school must consciously make its goal the inculcation of happiness in learning. It must bring about in its students an identification of school with pleasure; school has to be a place they like to be.” This book is thus for educators as well, for “even in the earliest days in school, the teacher must create an atmosphere in which the children *want* to follow along.”

If not, what can we expect of our children and students? In today’s world, if our boys are not in love with learning by the time they are *bar mitzva* — what *will* they be in love with? And who will wean them off it? At a similar age, if our girls do not value an act of *chesed* and dream of Jewish motherhood, how will we awaken them from the chimera of fashions, and the unwholesome relationships they attract?

Whatever happens in the home, at the school, or on the street, we must remember that our children, like us, are potentially destined for greatness. We are the beloved offspring of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov. The source of our *neshamos* is a place of purity. This should guide us, and imbue us with the hope that we can and will be successful in raising our children in these difficult times. No doubt, *Hashem* will help us. I would suggest to the readers of this book to begin by turning to page 141 to read a few lines: “We must, at the beginning of our search for a solution to a vexing and painful problem, purify our hearts and set out with the humility and prayer that will bring help from *Hashem*.”

Raising Roses Among the Thorns is a resource written to help us. The outside world, as always, is the biggest threat, the most dangerous “thorn” to the generation that we have been entrusted to raise. Yet — because of the destructive influence of *galus* upon our *middos*, and our homes and schools — we have the potential to become thorns, as well. It is a sobering thought, but there can be no excuses. Especially if we have a book such as this to guide us. ■

Blessed are You...our G-d...Who recalls the kindnesses of our forefathers and brings a Redeemer to their children's children...with love.... I will always recall the deeds that were done...A snake [Haman] descended from serpents [Amalek]. When his vileness is recalled, may his memory decay for angering G-d. That thorny enemy blossomed from the nation that was a constant threat to Israel, And generation after generation kept doing so...If Israel, with human weakness, violated the covenant to remember, You, Who are G-d and are not a human, why do You not remember? Though I know that You are to remember, my soul is despondent until You finally do remember. Do I have the strength to hope? And when will my life end, that I can survive until You remember?

YOTZER FOR PARASHAS ZACHOR

Dear Sarah,

I hope that you and yours are well and healthy after the terrible bombing so near your home.

On a magnificent morning in spring, I've just finished lodging my whole litany of complaints, pleas, thanks, worries, fears and regrets at the *Kotel*. Walking backwards a few steps, as is the custom, so as not to immediately turn my back to the Wall, I'm thinking of an email I got last night.

I spent the day in one of the semi-intensive care rooms at Hadassah, rushing through my routine activities and waiting for the immanent arrival of one of the wounded, a 7-year-old boy with burns over 70% of his body.

It was from my friend Chana Siegel, a nurse at Hadassah, and the email happened to arrive the same day we'd had a rug put in in one of the bedrooms. On the phone with the store, I'd said something I can't recall having ever said so flatly before, in all these

Mrs. Shapiro of Jerusalem is a frequent contributor to these pages, most recently with "When Grown-Ups are Helpless" (Sept. '02). Her most recent book is *A Gift Passed Along: A Woman Looks at the World Around Her* - ArtScroll.

That I Can Survive Until You Remember

years: "I don't want Arab workers." That shift can probably be attributed to the bombing the night before, which, as Chana said, took place close to our home. Our fifteen-year-old daughter later realized that it had probably been the suicide bomber whom she and her friends, sitting on a bench outside, late *Shabbos* afternoon, had seen about a half hour before the explosion. He'd been wandering around, probably hoping to come across a crowd — which soon he did. One of those who died was a little girl in a carriage. When the child went up in flames, her mother reached madly to pull her out but couldn't, because her hand had been blown off.

You clear out a space in the room, which means picking which patient is most suitable to move to a lower level of observation, you move the bed and the dresser out, get the cleaning people to mop up and you try to snag an electric eye IV pump that is not in use. You fill up the nebulizer unit with distilled water, and you make sure you have both an oxygen mask AND an oxygen hose, because the patient will almost certainly need supplementary oxygen.

"No, no, *geveret, al tidagi*," the man at the carpet store assured me. "*Raq poalim Yehudim*." Only Jewish workers.

But when I opened the door — who knows how these things happen — it was two young Palestinian men who stood there facing me. One was in his

twenties, one a teenager. I showed them in — their eyes averted, as were mine — with all their tools, and buckets, and the roll of carpet.

They worked all day, steadily, with a break for lunch out on the porch. Eyes averted, I had served them *café chahor*. Every once in a while, tense, I'd looked in on them as the work progressed.

They were doing a good job.

At six o'clock, the older one told me they were done. I was out of checks, so I paid in cash. "Can you give me a *kaballa*?" I asked.

He shook his head, no.

"But" — I didn't know what to make of this. "I'll need a receipt."

"No." He shrugged slightly. "I can't."

"You don't have any from the store?"

He shook his head.

"You can just write it on a piece of paper, then. I'll give you paper."

"No, no." He seemed to be reddening. His eyes, brown, glanced into mine. "I — can't write." He was ashamed.

"Oh!" He was a very slender, olive-skinned young man. "That's all right." He looked like one of my cousins, Michael, at that age. "So I'll write it and you can sign it."

He shook his head. "I can't write Hebrew."

"Oh!" I exclaimed, still trying to get this straight. "So you mean you can't write in Hebrew. What about Arabic?"

You rush through the burn treatments of the two burn patients you already have in the room, and you try to rush the doctors of the various staffs

who are planning to release patients today into finishing their release letters so you can hurry up and check the patient out on the computer, and then explain the release letter to the patient's family. You do whatever you can to thin out or finish the workload so that you'll be free to deal with the transfer of what will be a difficult, physically and emotionally demanding patient, and a family that is bound to be an exhausted emotional wreck.

Shrugging *maybe*, he shook his head, no.

"Really, Arabic would be fine. It would be interesting for me!"

I went to get some paper and a pen and pulled out a chair for him at the dining room table, then watched, over his shoulder, how the Arabic writing appeared, as if of its own volition, and then the numbers. He signed it, rose, and handed me the note. I looked at his signature.

"May I ask what your name is?"

He told me the name (which I've forgotten). Something occurred to me, to ask him. "What do you think of what's

happening?"

And then the patient does not come. Because he is not doing so well, after all, and because in spite of two terrorist attacks (you heard the helicopters coming in with the wounded from Ofra), the patient still cannot be released from the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. Who were we kidding, anyway? Seventy percent second and third degree burns is a big deal, a disaster to the body's ecological system. Thank G-d they could still keep him in PICU.

Heaven knows, you will get to know him well enough in the weeks and weeks and weeks he will be with you all in semi-intensive care, assuming, G-d willing, he makes it that far. You know, within certain parameters, what will be, and it will not be pretty.

Pain flitted over his face. He shook his head, lifting both hands, palms up. "I don't know," he said, pressing one hand lightly to his heart. "I am just a small person."

It will involve oceans and oceans of

pain, for the child, for his family, and, to a more limited extent, for you.

"Does it hurt you at all, what's happening?" My mind veered crazily into the thought of the woman reaching for her little girl and ricocheted crazily away. "When your people do things, when they hurt children?"

You wish you could just be doing appendectomies and hernias.

"Yes," he said, as I wondered if he meant it. "I don't want to die. I don't want to send my children to die."

The self-preservation instinct? Could one safely assume, then, that this was not a likely candidate for martyrdom?

"Oh," I said, "so you have children?"

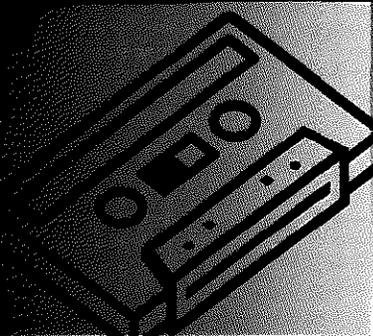
"Would you like to see?"

You try to prepare a face for all the Arab faces you will meet.

He took out his wallet. First, a girl, two years old, but it was the little boy, aged seven, that got me. A sweet face. Disturbingly sweet.

Faces of children you will care for, about whom you will also bring yourself to care.

Once again, "I don't want my children to die."



ZICHRON R' SHLOMO ARYEH V'RIVKA

Tape Library

לע"נ ר' שלמה ארי' בן ר' נחום שטיין ז"ל
וז' רבקה בת יעקב יודא ע"ה

NOW WITH OVER 2000 TITLES IN ENGLISH AND YIDDISH!

FEATURING:

R' Nachman Bulman זצ"ל	R' Yisroel Reisman	Reb. Zehava Braunstein
R' Yissocher Frand	R' Zev Smith	Reb. Tzipora Heller
R' Mordechai Gifter זצ"ל	R' Mattisyahu Solomon	Reb. Tehilla Jaeger
R' Dovid Gottlieb	R' Akiva Tatz	Reb. Yehudis Karelitz
R' Yitzchok Kirzner זצ"ל	R' Ezriel Tauber	Reb. Leah Kohn
R' Paysach Krohn	R' Berel Wein	And Many More...
R' Avigdor Miller זצ"ל	R' Noach Weinberg	

920 East 24th Street, Brooklyn, NY • 718-377-8635
124 Village Path, Lakewood, NJ • 732-730-3931

The Western Wall Plaza stretches out before me. As I head toward the long flight of stairs that I'll be climbing to the Jewish Quarter of the Old City, I notice two Arab women on their way down, arm in arm, one leaning on the other for support.

It's a slow, laborious descent. I slow down as I approach, watching.

You remind yourself that you do this for you, not necessarily for them, because this is part of what it means to be "rachmanim bnei rachmanim." Because at the end of the day, this is what makes you different from them.

I see them better now. The difficulty of the older one's walking, and the younger one's difficulty, supporting the weight. A scarf's wrapped around the younger one's head and tied under the chin, as is the custom, but the other one's dressed in secular fashion.

You put your anger in a box and nail the top on tight, because this is not the place, this is not the forum to let it out.

Amazing how hard a mundane thing like going downstairs can be, when you're in pain. At the foot of the stairs is a wheelchair, waiting. The younger one must have brought it down and gotten it set up there beforehand.

And you know that tomorrow will be another day in the ward, that no matter how tempting it may be to fall apart, you will continue to function, just as you did today, because tomorrow that little boy, or another one, will be there, and will need you, and a lot of other people who can keep the lid on the box and just get on with it.

They get to the bottom. The older one's not so old, after all — maybe in her mid-fifties.

You will try to stop dramatizing yourself by doing things like writing in the second person.

Grimacing, she grips the arm rests as the other woman lowers her down. For all I know, the one in the chair, in pain, has dedicated her motherhood to raising suicide bombers. The younger one could very well view it as her sacred duty to hate — or who knows, kill — his Jewish infidel coming their way, who for some unknown reason seems to be look-

ing in their direction.

Even to be civil to these people might be a betrayal of myself and my people's blood, but if the two of them are blossoms of Amalek, here and now there's no way for me to know. All I can do is to practice self-preservation — Jewish self-preservation — and perpetuate our survival as *rachmanim bnei rachmanim*.

I nod politely towards the wheelchair. A shadow of the bombing looms up, blocking the sun. "Shalom, geveret. Boker tov."

The younger one's face is a hard steely surface; her lowered gaze darts instantly away. But the other woman's bleakly stricken countenance tips up towards me from under her body's pain and the dead-weight hatred of three thousand years.

Stay well. Stay healthy.

Suspicion flickers under her skin, but for a fraction of a moment,

We are all in Hashem's hands.

an uncertain moment, her face dawns tentatively in grateful surprise.

Love,
Chana

MONUMENTS

Erected in all Cemeteries
Call Toll-Free: 866-851-1314

Rabbi M. Premock

Recommended by many Rabbonim

Digest of Meforshim לקוטי בתר לקוטי

מחברת: ג' שמואל אלטער זצ"ל

Available at

LEKUTEI

clo Yitzchok Rosenberg

1445 54th Street

Brooklyn, NY 11219-4228

718-854-6701

20 Volumes on Torah, Perek, Medrash,
Megilos, Talmud, and Tehilim.

Proceeds of sales distributed among
Yeshivos and used for reprinting of
volumes out-of-print

PRICE: \$8.00 PER VOLUME

Rabbi Aryeh Schechter
SOFER S'TAM
1558 41st Street
Brooklyn NY 11218
We make "housecalls"
(718) 972-4003
מתב • בודק
ספר תורה
תפילין ומזוזות
שכ"ה אריה
שכ"ה

Specializing in small batim for a perfect fit.

BEGIN THINKING MILWAUKEE
Join the Growing Jewish Community

Milwaukee Can Work for You

Sherman Park Jewish Initiative

Complete Family Resources

- Healthy Job Market
- Affordable Housing
- Nurturing Community
- Learning Opportunities
- Shomer Shabbos Medical Residencies
- Community Activities

Total Torah Environment

- Cheder
- Yeshiva Gedola
- Mikveh
- Wisconsin School Tuition Vouchers for Qualifying Families
- Bais Yakov
- Kollel
- Eruv

The Torah Community of Rabbi Michel Twerski invites your interest 1-800-226-3129

A Call to Arms

Becoming One Family

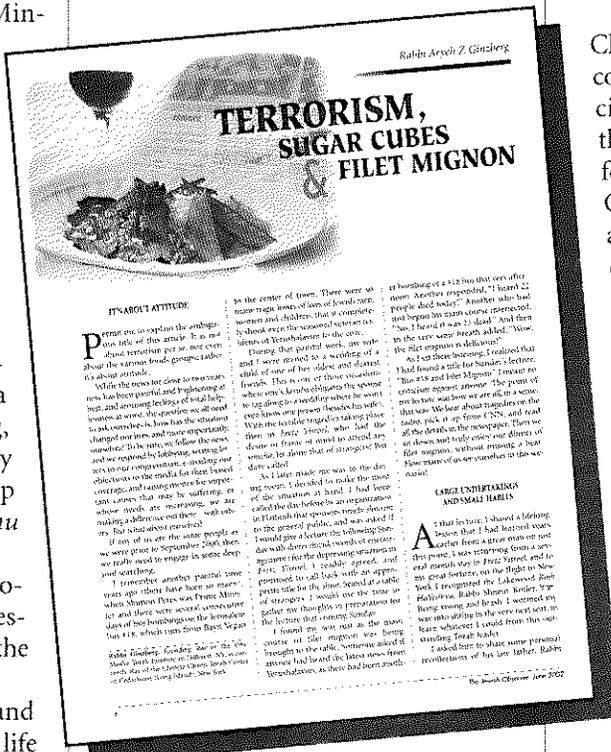
In response to an article this writer wrote in the June 2002 edition of *The Jewish Observer*, titled "Terrorism, Sugar Cubes, and Filet Mignon" (about our attitudes towards events in *Eretz Yisroel*), there has been a remarkable flow of responses via phone calls, faxes and letters, from eleven cities in three countries (including a call from Sydney, Australia) with similar sentiments – that the message of this brief article touched their souls. Almost all correspondents had the same troubling question, though asked in a variety of ways: "Rabbi Ginzberg, what do you suggest that I and my family do to demonstrate our deep feelings for the suffering of *Acheinu Bais Yisroel* in *Eretz Yisroel*?"

My immediate response was twofold. First and foremost, it is a question for *Gedolei Yisroel* and beyond the purview of the writer.

The second point is to understand that one need not make major life changes (they usually don't last, anyway)

Rabbi Ginzberg, founding *Ray* of our Ohr Moshe Torah, Institute in Hillcrest, NY, is currently *Ray* of the Chofetz Chaim Torah Center of Cedarhurst (Long Island), New York.

to effectuate *zechusim* for *Klal Yisroel*. Even a modest *kabbala* (resolution) can make a world of difference.



IT'S ABOUT ATTITUDE

Parents are to explain the obligations of this article. It is not about terrorism per se, nor even about the various Jewish groups' rather than all-out attitude.

While the news let close to two years ago has been painful and enlightening, and the feelings of real helplessness and anger, the question we all want to ask ourselves is, how has the situation changed over time, and more importantly, what can we do to follow the news and we respond by looking, reacting, and we in our commitment, a reading our objections to the media for their reporting, and our own reactions to the reports, are we making a difference, or are we just making a difference in our heads?

LARGE UNDEVELOPED AND SMALL HAZELS

As I later made my way to the dinner, I decided to make the most of the situation at hand. I had been in Eretz Yisroel for a long time, and I would give a lecture on the following day. I would give a lecture on the following day. I would give a lecture on the following day.

I would give a lecture on the following day. I would give a lecture on the following day. I would give a lecture on the following day.

IT'S ABOUT ATTITUDE

Parents are to explain the obligations of this article. It is not about terrorism per se, nor even about the various Jewish groups' rather than all-out attitude.

While the news let close to two years ago has been painful and enlightening, and the feelings of real helplessness and anger, the question we all want to ask ourselves is, how has the situation changed over time, and more importantly, what can we do to follow the news and we respond by looking, reacting, and we in our commitment, a reading our objections to the media for their reporting, and our own reactions to the reports, are we making a difference, or are we just making a difference in our heads?

va, Rabbi Naftoli Trop זצ"ל, was deathly ill, the *talmidim* organized around-the-clock Torah learning and *Tehillim*, with public fasting, and so on. They then approached the Chofetz Chaim זצ"ל to join them in their efforts on behalf of Reb Naftoli. The Chofetz Chaim זצ"ל thought for a few moments, and said, "Yes, I would like to participate in accepting something upon myself in the *zechus* of Reb Naftoli. I will learn two minutes extra in *zechus* of his *refua* (recovery)."

The *talmidim* were stunned at the Chofetz Chaim's seemingly lack of concern for the grave situation, especially in view of the great sacrifices that they were prepared to undergo for their beloved *Rebbe*. But the Chofetz Chaim taught them a valuable lesson. Even two minutes of sincere learning can be a powerful *zechus*. This devoted *talmid* of the Chofetz Chaim concluded that Reb Naftoli did have a miraculous recovery, and resumed saying his brilliant *shiurim* in the Yeshiva. While some believed it was due to the great personal sacrifices they had made on his behalf, some understood that it was more likely due to the Chofetz Chaim's two minutes of additional learning on his behalf.

There is one idea, though, that does weigh heavily on my mind and in my heart. So many families have been decimated by terrorist attacks over the last two years, and have lost all hope of being able to restore some quality to their shattered lives. More important, they have come to feel alone, ignored and isolated as their plight is reduced to a statistic.

In my opinion, if every *shul* in the U.S. would adopt just one family as *their* family and their responsibility, what a world of difference it could make! The members of the *shul* would not only provide much-needed financial support, but equally important, they would provide moral and emotional support. When member go to *Eretz Yisroel*, they would visit with their family (as they would their own relatives). The member would keep up on the progress of

"Acquire A Friend"
say our Sages (Avos 1:6),
"BE A FRIEND"
is the title of a new book by Targum/Feldheim. Enjoy both.
Available through Box 82 S.I., N.Y. 10309

MASTER DAF
• 4-5 blatt per tape
• Each Daf is read, translated, and explained slowly and clearly in just 20 minutes
• \$4 per tape (plus S&H)
• Subscription rate: \$3 per tape (plus S&H)
1-718-435-5438 • 1-800-966-6026
A project of the Slabodka Yeshiva

the children in school, health matters and their overall well-being.

Imagine the *chizuk* that each family would feel, knowing that while the pain of missing their loved ones will never disappear from their lives, their family will have now grown tenfold and they are part of a much larger family. They would participate in *simchos* of the new members, as these members would participate in theirs.

In a sense it was like the Klausenberger *Rebbe* זצ"ל had said: "The Nazis took eleven children from me. In response I will open eleven *yeshivos*. One in memory of each of my children. Every one they took, I will replace with hundreds."

So, too, we say to the Arab murderers, ש"מ: "You tried to destroy a small family; we replaced it with a much larger one – one that may contain hundreds of new family members."

While the *chizuk* and benefit the family would derive is obvious, members of participating *shul* also have much to gain: the knowledge that they have joined together as one to save a family in *Klal Yisroel* will give much *nachas* to them and to the *Borei Olam*. They can participate in *Hashem's* work of being *zokeif kefufim* – helping those bent stand upright, and since only one family would be assigned to each *shul*, it need not become the burden on the individual members. This would apply to every *shul*, large and small, with the larger ones adopting the larger families.

The first step would be consultation with *Gedolei Torah* for their *daas Torah*. I have discussed this idea with my own *Rebbe*, Rabbi Henschel Leibowitz שליט"א, *Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshivas Chofetz Chaim, who felt it would be a *chessed shel emmes*, and that it is worthy of further exploration. Also needed is a group of concerned *ohavei Yisroel* whose broken hearts are crying at the current situation in *Eretz Yisroel* (like the people who called me after reading the previous article).

And we could hear from the respected readers of *The Jewish Observer* who would like to comment on the feasibility of such a program being implemented. ■



"KIRUV PROFESSIONALS
DESERVE OUR RESPECT"

To the Editor:

I read Rabbi Keller's response to a letter regarding unconventional approaches pursued by various *kiruv* organizations in their attempts to reach out to alienated Jews ("Let Us Build Torah With Torah," Sept. '02). I cannot understand why you published this exchange.

While admittedly some of their programs were quite unconventional and may have been out of line with established norms in the Torah community, why was this aired in a public forum? Shouldn't these criticisms have been conveyed directly to the organizations and only then – if there were no satisfactory response – published in your pages? *Kiruv* professionals are dedicated workers, engaged in a heroic spiritual *hatzala*. Don't they deserve love, respect, encouragement and more discreet treatment?

YISROEL MEYER FEINERMAN
Brooklyn, NY

EDITORIAL RESPONSE:

We share the letter writer's admiration for the extraordinary dedication of the *kiruv* professionals. They are truly on the front line in our war against intermarriage and assimilation, and continue to win countless battles for the spiritual revival of our Jewish brothers and sisters, one *neshama* at a time.

This was clearly stated in both Rabbi Keller's original article and his response to the letter to the editor. Both articles also stressed that the concerns raised and the examples of unacceptable tendencies cited are not to be considered as characteristic of the movement as a whole.

Contrary to the writer's assumption,

Rabbi Keller did speak to some of the organizations referred to, and unsuccessful attempts were made to meet with others. But that is really immaterial to the question of whether the exchange should have been published. That these organizations, whose names were not mentioned in the articles, could be identified and feel slighted is due to the fact that these activities were public and openly advertised. That very fact is what called for a public discussion of the propriety of these activities, which, although not universal to the *kiruv* movement, are definitely part of a trend. What one group does publicly without any criticism or protest, leads others to emulate. It is literally impossible to track down and personally contact all the organizations that may be adopting these practices. In fact, many in the movement have said that the article was long overdue. Positive corrections have already begun to be made as a result of it.

It is precisely because the movement is so precious and so vital to the future of *Klal Yisroel* that its integrity and the dignity of its activists should be zealously guarded.

Corrections and calls for close scrutiny should be made publicly, to correct misconceptions and to avoid the erosion of accepted standards of modesty, *halacha*, and *K'vod HaTorah*. Thus the public discussion in our pages. It would be to the benefit of all concerned if policy matters and the details of new projects were first submitted to *Gedolei HaTorah* for review. N.W.

**HELP FOR PARENTS OF
TEENS IN CONFLICT**

MASK
MOTHERS & FATHERS ALIGNED SAVING KIDS

TEL: 718-758-0400

CONFIDENTIAL 10 AM - 10 PM

✓ SUPPORT GROUPS
✓ REFERRALS
✓ HOTLINE

17, 2002

7 KILLED, 17 HURT IN AMBUSH OF BUS BY PALESTINIANS

AT LEAST 14 DEAD AS SUICIDE BOMBER STRIKES JERUSALEM

ליל התעוררות עם גדולי ישראל

up in crowded Israeli restaurant in Jerusalem, including six children. Police officers occupy the area in East Jerusalem.

LEIL HISORIRUS WITH GEDOLEI YISROEL

NOVEMBER 28/כ"ט כסלו - 8:00 PM - BROOKLYN MARRIOTT HOTEL

RABBI YAAKOV PERLOW
NOVOMINSKER REBBE

RABBI MATSYAHU SALOMON
MASHGIACH RUCHANI, BAIS MEDRASH GOYCHA

RABBI ELYA FISHER
ROSH KOLLEL GUR

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND
ROSH YESHIVA, YESHIVAS NER YISROEL

IS THERE ANYWHERE MORE IMPORTANT YOU HAVE TO BE?



PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE AGUDATH ISRAEL OF AMERICA TERROR VICTIMS EMERGENCY FUND

Yes! I want to participate in the Leil Hisorirus with Gedolei Yisroel.



- Please send me _____ Reserved Section Men's Tickets
_____ Reserved Section Women's Tickets
Enclosed please find my contribution of \$ _____
(Suggested minimum contribution \$18 per seat)
- I would like to sponsor the *Leil Hisorirus* and support the AIA Terror Victims Emergency Fund. Enclosed please find:
\$1800 -- Event Sponsorship (includes 12 sponsor section seats)
\$360 -- Double Chai Sponsorship (includes 2 sponsor section seats)
\$180 -- Sponsorship (includes 1 sponsor section seat)
 (Sponsor section seating: _____ men _____ women)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TEL (DAY) _____ (EVE) _____

Check Enclosed Charge my: VISA MasterCard (min. \$50 for credit card charges)

ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

EXP. DATE _____ / SIGNATURE _____

Please mail this form and your generous tax-deductible donation (payable to AIA Terror Victims Emergency Fund) to:
Leil Hisorirus with Gedolei Yisroel • Agudath Israel of America • 42 Broadway, 14th Floor • New York, NY 10004
Tel: 212-797-9000 • Fax: 646-254-1600