

THE JEWISH OBSERVER

IYAR, 5737 / APRIL, 1977
VOLUME XII, NUMBER 5
SEVENTY FIVE CENTS

THE LATE
GERER REBBE זצ"ל

an appreciation

BETWEEN
PARENTS AND CHILDREN

defusing the crisis

THE
CONVENTIONAL YESHIVA
AND KIRUV RECHOKIM

notes

by a baal teshuva

RABBI YAAKOV CULI
THE MEAM LOEZ

champion

of the common man

BOOKS IN REVIEW

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



in this issue

The Late Gerer Rebbe זצ"ל, <i>Menachem Lubinsky</i>	3
Crisis in Parent-Children Relations , <i>Aaron Brafman</i>	10
Coming Closer: The Conventional Yeshiva and "Kiruv Rechokim," <i>Avrohom Henfield</i>	15
Rabbi Yaakov Culi, the "MeAm Loez," <i>Aryeh Kaplan</i>	18
Shir Shel Shavuos , <i>a poem</i>	22
Cataloguing Jewish Life , <i>Elchonon Oberstein</i>	24
Books in Review	
Rational Irrational Man	27
The Book of Samuel	28
The Israeli Elections	29
Letters to the Editor:	
<i>Gershon Seixas, The "Real" Novardoker, In Flight From Confrontation, and others</i>	31

THE JEWISH OBSERVER is published monthly, except July and August, by the Agudath Israel of America, 5 Beekman St., New York, N.Y. 10038. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Subscription: \$7.50 per year; Two years, \$13.00; Three years, \$18.00; outside of the United States \$8.50 per year. Single copy seventy-five cents. Printed in the U.S.A.

RABBI NISSON WOLPIN
Editor

Editorial Board
DR. ERNST L. BODENHEIMER
Chairman
RABBI NATHAN BULMAN
RABBI JOSEPH ELIAS
JOSEPH FRIEDENSON
RABBI MOSHE SHERER

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

APRIL 1977 VOL. XII, No. 5

Typography by **Compu-Scribe**
at **ArtScroll Studios, Ltd.**

**Subscribe
Renew
or Give
Now
and
SAVE**

Clip, and save

The Jewish Observer
5 Beekman Street / New York, N.Y. 10038

One Year \$7⁵⁰ Two Years \$13.00
 Three Years only \$18.00

Send Magazine to:

Name.....

Address.....

City..... State/Zip.....

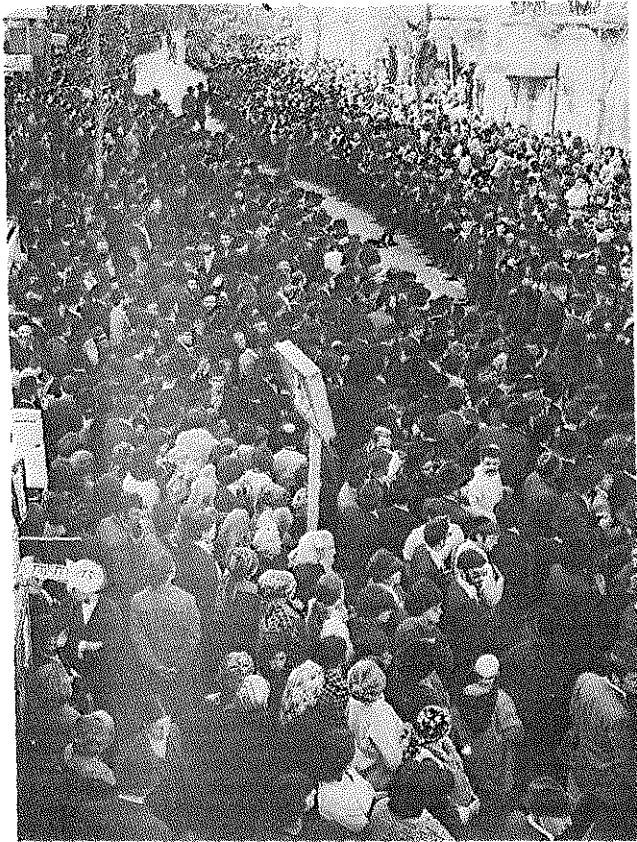
From:

Name.....

Address.....

City..... State/Zip.....

Enclose gift card Bill me: \$..... Enclosed: \$.....



Where did all these people come from? What drove them to crowd the streets?

It is barely 4 p.m. The radio had broadcast the bleak tidings at noon. To all except the closest, the news was totally unexpected. The morning papers surely had no mention of the Gerer Rebbe's passing. Even the more popular afternoon dailies did not report it. Who, then, amassed this crowd of 100,000 mourners — or 200,000, as police estimated them?

What contact did these tens of thousands of Jews have with Gerer Chassidus, or with the late Rebbe? They never caught a glimpse of his features on the TV screen — he kept himself as removed from the instrument as he would from fire. Radio? His few chosen words were never squandered on radio frequencies. The papers seldom reported his activities — his entire demeanor was in total opposition to the games of publicity-seeking. So what triggered this flow of

humanity to flood Jerusalem's streets in tribute to this man in just three-four hours?

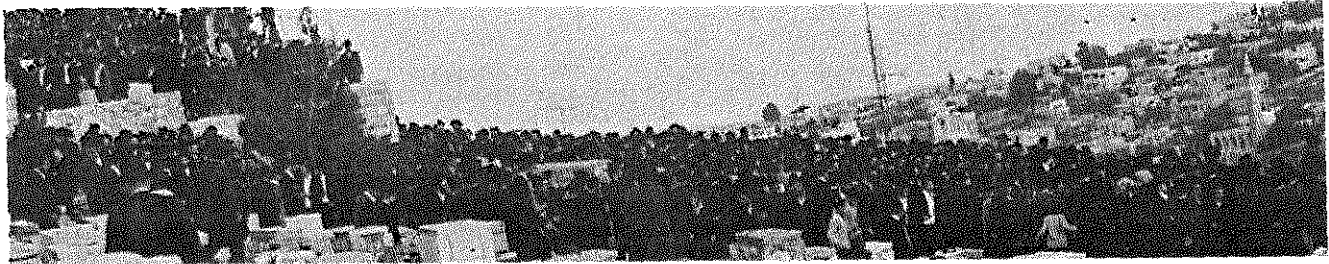
The range of the representation is staggering. And so is the contrast they present ... the faces: The obviously Chassidic bachurim and yungeleit, whose every expression and gesture bespeak devotion to Torah and Chassidus. . . . Middle-aged men, elegantly dressed in modern attire, tears flowing down their cheeks, unwiped. . . . Jerusalem natives, in full Me'ah Shearim garb, white crocheted skull-huggers peeking out from beneath their black velour hats, the gravity of generations weighing down their features. . . . The young Sabra generation, representing the Yeshivot Tichoniot, much in evidence — heads usually cocked audaciously, crowned by kipot s'rugot, now hung low. . . . And so many plain Jews, who bear no particular stamp of affiliation.

A glance upward, and the eye sweeps over balconies and rooftops, crowded with yet more Jews. . . . The rich bouquet of Sephardic Jews of all hues and shades, the mix that only Jerusalem can boast ... mothers with their young, some huddling infants in their arms.

One look around, and it is obvious that they are not spectators at all, but fellow mourners grieved over the terrible irreparable loss.

(from a description by Moshe Prager, featured in Maariv)

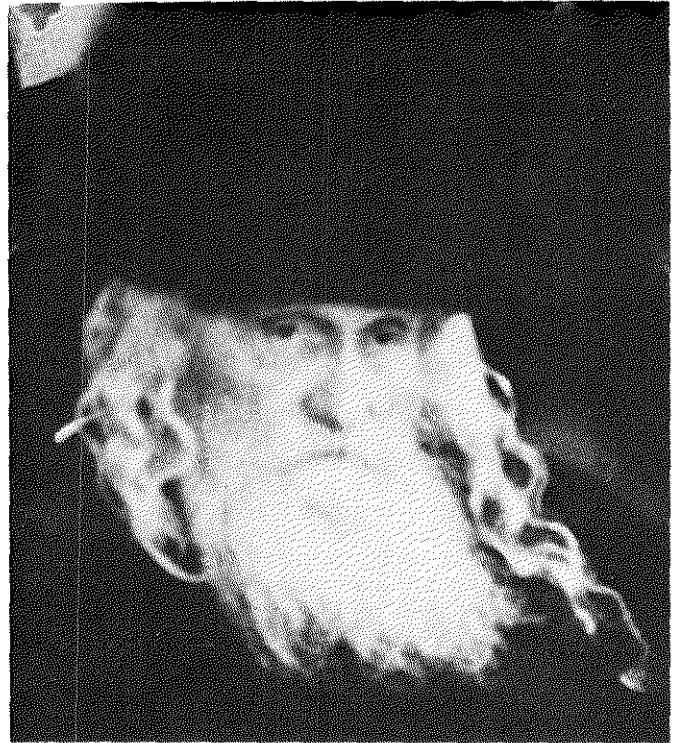
It was the response of those who had known him as Rebbe ... of others who had found in him the deep concern of a father — their father ... of still others who saw in him a rebuilders of shattered people and communities ... of yet others who had appreciated the leadership role he had assumed in the affairs of religious Jewry in the Holy Land — in Agudath Israel, Chinuch Atzmai. . . . But primarily it was the instinctive response of every Jew to the trauma of losing a great man. All knew the loss and felt its pangs with an immediacy that drove them into the streets to mourn — both the simple Jew who could not point to more than the simple fact, the "Ma zos," and those who knew: Those who savored the fine points of Kotzk, how they were perpetuated for four generations of Ger, only to be destroyed; and then rebuilt again in the Holy Land. How the specifics of Ger — the fierce devotion to Torah, the uncompromising pursuit of truth, the jealous watching of minutes, the careful training of the youth, the sparing of the words — how they were all recreated by this prince of Ger. They live on, but he is gone.



Menachem Lubinsky

The Gerer Rebbe

זכר צדיק לברכה



Ger – A Dynasty of Torah and Chassidus

The late Gerer Rebbe, Rabbi Yisroel Alter, זכר צדיק לברכה, was scion of a family of nobility, and heir to a demanding Chassidic tradition that had its spiritual source in the fountains of unadulterated truth that flowed from Parshys'che and Kotzk.

An impoverished Jew came to the Kotzker Rebbe and begged him, "Help me! I haven't a bit of food to feed my family!"

"That's not a problem. Just daven to Hashem with emes."

"But I don't know how to daven with emes."

"Then you do have a serious problem!"

Kotzk was not known for miracles. In its pursuit of truth – in Torah study, in life, in *avodas Hashem* – there was no time for miracles. But the truth that emerged from Kotzk was indeed miraculous.

Rabbi Yitzchok Meir, disciple of Kotzk, was the first Rebbe of Ger. His penetrating *Chidushei HaRim* on Talmud is widely studied. His thirteen children had died during his lifetime. His grandson, Reb Arye Leib,

RABBI LUBINSKY is director of Project COPE, Agudath Israel's manpower project. His article on "Orthodox Vocational Guidance – Is There a Need?" was featured in the June '76 edition of JO. He is a member of a family with a long association with Gerer Chassidus.

succeeded him. He was known by the title of his commentaries on Torah and Talmud, *Sfas Emes* (Truthful Speech), which are basic volumes in every Talmudic scholar's library.* Indeed, Ger is renowned for its emphasis on Torah learning, for all of the Gerer Rebbes were also leading Torah scholars in their generation.

His son and successor, Rabbi Avrohom Mordechai Alter, continued in this tradition. He had amassed a huge library of *seforim*. There were those that claimed that most of the books were superfluous, for he had committed their contents to memory in his first perusal.

During a visit to Berlin, he inspected the private library of a bibliophile. His host took out an old sefer, whose author was unknown to him – both the title page and first page of the work were missing. Reb Avrohom Mordechai asked permission to take the sefer to his room and his host readily agreed. The following day the sefer was returned with the title page and first page – written in by hand.

* The great Rabbi of Sochachov son-in-law of the sainted Kotzker, author of the *Avnei Nezer*, is said to have maintained two bookcases, one for *Rishonim* (earlier commentators) and another for the *Acharonim* (later ones). The volumes of the *Sfas Emes*, written at the turn of the century, were found to be amongst the *Rishonim*. . . . To study some portions of the Talmud without the *Sfas Emes* is unthinkable to the modern day scholar.

He is said to have left dozens of volumes of his own written commentary, which were never recovered from the destruction of World War II.

Reb Avrohom Mordechai was extremely reluctant to assume the leadership of Gerer Chassidus, deeming himself inadequate to the assignment. "He who commanded oil to burn can command vinegar to burn" — My sainted father was the 'oil' and his flame illuminated. I am the vinegar. . . ."

The growth Ger had experienced under the *Sfas Emes* was duplicated many times over under his son's leadership. While the town of Ger was over an hour's train-ride from Warsaw, and involved a long, difficult and expensive journey through the hills and valleys of Central Poland from other regions, 10,000 Jews would routinely undertake the trip to spend a *Shavuos*, a *Yomim Noraim* or a *Succos* in the company of their sainted leader. It was always considered a homecoming of sorts for Gerer Chassidim who, until the precious moments of greeting the Rebbe with "*Sholom*," considered themselves spiritually unfulfilled.

To be part of Ger for even a short while was to leave worldly concerns back home, to know the true meaning of serving Hashem with *emes*, to don the royal *levush* of Chassidic garb, and to muscle your way amongst the throngs for a glimpse — A word? That was a priceless commodity in Ger. For those few hours, the Chassid underwent a lapse of identity and it mattered little whether he was from the aristocracy or one of the numerous poor of Polish Jewry. Now he was a *chassid*. . . . It is said that the world-renowned giant of Talmudic scholarship, Rabbi Menachem Ziemba, מנחם זימבא, would sit anonymously at the foot of the Rebbe's *tisch*, imbibing the atmosphere, drinking in each cryptic word.

The ranks of Ger swelled to include some 250,000 followers. Indeed, Gerer Chassidim were the dominant force in many phases of life in countless Polish cities, towns, and villages.

Rebuilding the Ruins

That was yesteryear, in pre-war Poland of the 1920's and 1930's, under the leadership of the Gerer Rebbe, Rabbi Avrohom Menachem Alter. Then, Hitler intervened with his plan to wipe out Jewry, and this majestic empire ended up in total ruins. The Rebbe and three of his sons escaped destruction, finding refuge in Eretz Yisroel.

One question hovered above the smoke: Could illustrious Polish Jewry, now in ruins, ever be revived? Would this spiritual edifice ever again reach the epitome of G-dliness, Torah, and Chassidus? The Rebbe died in 1948, leaving the mantle of leadership on the shoulders of his oldest son, Rabbi Yisroel Alter. He had also suffered personal losses, for amongst the millions

of *kedoshim* were his wife, their son and daughter, and their families.

At the time of his father's passing, Jerusalem was under siege. Despite the threatening Arab armies and the terrible food shortages, *Chutz L'Oretz* was only a memory, never to be considered as an option for escape — not for himself, nor for others To a Rov, a refugee from the concentration camp, inquiring whether to settle in America or to stay in Eretz Yisroel, he remarked — "This may be *Medinat Yisroel*, but *Chutz L'Oretz* doesn't compare to it." Indeed, he rarely left Yerusholayim and never left the Holy Land once he arrived there.

It was time to rebuild, to strengthen his own soul and to work for Jewish continuity. For Polish Jewry, and particularly for the remnants of Gerer Chassidim, he was a link to a world that was no more.

The Emerging Rebbe

Rabbi Yisroel Alter was always recognized as a brilliant scholar. While only five, his grandfather, the *Sfas Emes*, prophesized greatness for him. Not given to little jokes, he referred to his favorite grandson as "Reb Yisroel." At 16, that genius of scholars, the Rogachover, is said to have remarked, "This young man knows *Shas*!" When still 15, he was engaged to be married to the daughter of a renowned Polish Torah Gaon, Reb Yaakov Meir Biderman, son-in-law of the *Sfas Emes*. In Torah correspondence that he exchanged



The Gerer Rebbe, Reb Avrohom Mordechai, at the spa in Marienbad, accompanied by his sons, Reb Yisroel (rt.) and יב"ל a young Reb Pinchas Menachem (foreground).

with his father, the latter would address him in terms reserved for those destined for greatness — unusual in Ger, but not in his case. Before long, Polish Jewry recognized him as an outstanding Torah scholar.

The Gerer Priority: The Youth

The Chassidic courts of Kotzk, the "Rim," and the other Rebbes of Ger had a preponderance of young men. Rabbi Avrohom Mordechai especially had gone out of his way to encourage younger Chassidim, much to the consternation of some of their seniors. But in time, the barriers between old and young all but vanished.

"Sharfe yingeleit — sharp young men" they were called — sharp-witted, sharp in intellectual acumen, and sharply outspoken in their fierce intolerance of indolence, hypocrisy, and complacency. The Rebbe assigned the supervision of the yingeleit to his son, Reb Yisroel, and he took to the task with a zeal that never waned.

Batei Midrashim cropped up all over Poland — in Warsaw, Lodz, Cracow, and other communities — where Gerer youth crowded their days with Torah and Chassidus. Some were full-time scholars, others were out in the world of commerce, but all had made the Beis Midrash the focal point of their days . . . They were prominent among those who streamed to Ger to more fully experience the kedusha of a festival, the awe of the Ten Days of Repentance. And they were outstanding among those who had heroically demonstrated the tenacity of their convictions by learning and living Torah around the clock in Ghettos under the worst of the Nazi terror. (Some of their exploits are recorded in Moshe Prager's אלו שלא נבועו.)



Warsaw Ghetto round-up of Ger yingeleit . . . among the very few who preserved beard and payos under Nazi terror.

No sooner had the previous Rebbe, Rabbi Avrohom Mordechai, arrived in the Holy Land, but what he again focused on the needs of the young, began to build Torah. First he devoted attention to the Yeshiva Sfas Emes in Jerusalem which he had founded on one of his five previous trips to the Holy Land. Sfas Emes was greatly expanded by his heirs, Reb Yisroel, and the present Rebbe, שליט"א Reb Bunim Alter יב"ל. Reb Yisroel continued to honor this priority of devoting special at-

tention to the bachurim and yingeleit, for they were his pride of the present and hope for the future. This was of extreme importance, for at the time he took over the leadership of Ger, the outlook for the future was bleak, indeed — a Chassidus without Chassidim.

In the words of David Zaritzky, well-known Israeli writer:

His task was more difficult than that of his great father, for he was standing on ruins; from under his feet curled the smoke of crematoria, of charred Batei Midrashim, and their members. Around him gathered half-dead, fully-despondent Chassidim, whose attachment to Ger was their sole spark of life, surviving lost parents, wives, children.

Not only did he rebuild the Ger empire, he rebuilt tens of thousands of people, endowing them with new neshamos, forming new features on their faces — it was a brand-new start, from Bereishis. . . . It was not simply a matter of teaching them to think like Chassidim, but to think like human beings, then like Jews . . . like Chassidim, and then ultimately in the singularly Gerer approach.

He created it all. Quietly, with a soft word, a sharp gesture, an understanding nod. He quickly perceived not only the kvittel (the paper with the name and request written on it), but the person as well. The person? — he himself did not know what he wanted, so first the Rebbe taught him to want, then what to want. Finally, he taught him to ask for what he wanted — then he allowed himself to smile.

In three decades, the Gerer Rebbe built a network of Torah institutions which were to educate thousands of children. Gerer Chassidim from Europe and the Americas sent their children to learn in the Torah institutions of Ger and from the Rebbe's greatness. They



קולת ישבת חידושי הר"מ



ישיבת שפת אמת בירושלים



בית התלמוד לחוכמה בני ברק



ישיבת חידושי הר"מ בני ברק

Ger Torah institutions in Israel: Yeshiva Sfas Emes, Jerusalem (upper rt.); Yeshivas Chidushei HaRim, Tel Aviv (l.); Yeshiva (lower rt.) and Kotel (l.) in Bnei Brak.

joined Israeli youngsters in the Yeshivos *Sfas Emes*, *Chidushei HaRim*, and numerous *kolelim* spread across the land. The *kolel* in Bnei Brak (*Beis HaTalmud LeHora'a*), for example, is well-known for having produced some of the outstanding Torah scholars in the land.

His involvement in building Torah went beyond his own *Chassidus*; the Gerer Rebbe was one of the founders of Chinuch Atzmai (the Torah School network in Israel) actively serving on its Board of Governors. Besides guiding the growth of many other Torah institutions, he was also at the side of his cousin, Rabbi Pinchas Levin, who is leader of the Beth Jacob movement in Israel, and heads the Jerusalem B. J. Seminary.

His interest in Torah youth was also not limited to his own. Thousands of yeshiva students visited him regularly and this writer personally witnessed his closeness with the *talmidim* of Chevron, Kol Torah, Etz Chaim and other Jerusalem yeshivos. While *levush* — the traditional Chassidic attire — is of great importance in Ger, it mattered little to the Rebbe how a visitor was dressed — that was *chitzonius*, exterior. What was more significant on such occasions was *p'nimius* — the inner content of Torah and *midos*.

The Rebbe's building plans also reflected a concern beyond parochialism. He ordered the building for the Yeshivas Chidushei HaRim to be constructed in an extremely modern section of Tel Aviv, predominantly inhabited by secular Jews. The Rebbe felt that the Yeshiva could have an inspiring effect on the whole community. . . . Ger recently began constructing Chatzor, a new settlement town in Galilee. Ger always had a special attachment to the Holy Land, and encouraging building in *Eretz Yisroel* was one of the Rebbe's important goals. His own father, Reb Avrohom Mordechai, would stress that the *mitzva* of settling and building *Eretz Yisroel* is applicable in our times, and was above political considerations.

Leader of Klal

The Rebbe enhanced his many innate qualities by a relentless pursuit of personal perfection, making him into a Torah giant. This, however, did not lead him to withdraw from public life, and he forcefully used his unusual perceptive abilities in public leadership.

Like his father before him, who had joined the Chofetz Chaim and other leading figures of his time in founding Agudath Israel, he too chose to be one of the prime movers of the Agudath Israel movement. It was there that he saw his hopes for unifying Torah Jews — *Chassid* and *Misnagid* — into one strong movement. The Gerer Rebbe was one of the pillars of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah (Council of Torah Sages), and there was hardly a problem affecting Jewry in which he was not involved. Indeed, he felt it a sacred trust, and was often heard to refer to "my father's Agudath Israel."



At the Fourth Knessia Gedola in Jerusalem, with Rabbi Aharon Kotler (rt.), Rabbi Eliezer Silver (l.), and Vizhnitzer Rebbe — Rabbi Chaim Meir Hager (far l.).

He shunned personal publicity and offered his signature only where he saw a long range benefit to *Klal Yisroel*. Agudath Israel was his vehicle for public expression and on almost every occasion he sought to strengthen the movement in the *Yishuv* as well as anywhere around the world. He felt a special kinship with the Agudath Israel of America, and often wrote his followers in the United States to assume active roles in its affairs. Outside of Agudath Israel proclamations, he was not given to issuing public statements.

He was extremely close with other *Gedolei Yisroel* — it mattered little what the background of the *Gadol* was. Although he had occasional ideological differences with other Chassidic leaders, these never interfered with his relationship with them. The Rebbe never waited for a famed Torah scholar to visit him, but was quick to travel to see them — such as the Chazon Ish, Rabbi Issur Zalman Meltzer, Rabbi Eliezer Silver, and Rabbi Aharon Kotler. Torah, more than anything else, was his criterion for determining greatness, and he responded accordingly.

People knew the extent of his involvement in *Klal*; they also sensed the depth of his devotion to being a loyal servant; their only questions were — When? — How?

Unity and peace amongst Torah Jews are known to have preoccupied his last days. One of his last actions was to take the initiative to heal a breach in political activity that had grown between him and the following of the Ponovezher Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Eliezer Schach — a split that had resulted from the Rebbe's policy of extending Agudath Israel's areas of cooperation to include some debatable factions. As if to underscore this fierce determination, he was stricken as his lips uttered "Shalom," the final blessing of *Birchas Kohanim*.

The Value of Time

The Gerer Rebbe seemed to have an obsession with time. No material commodity was more precious as a tool in *Avodas Hashem*. His clocks and watches were meticulously synchronized and never had he arrived

even a minute late for *tefilla*. *Z'man tefilla* (the halachically prescribed time for prayer) was scrupulously observed in Ger.

One could see his face nervously sweat at the slightest hint of wasted time. His every minute was accounted for and he often appeared edgy at public gatherings, in grief over time slipping by. Nor could time be measured without precision, and even his driver learned never to be late. . . . "*Fabreng nisht de tzeit — don't while away the time*" he was often heard to say.

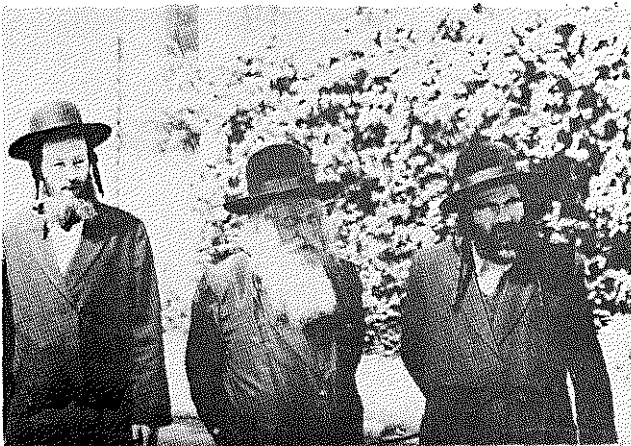
Following the Yom Kippur War, the Rebbe was besieged by visiting delegations from all over the world. He detested discussion on the political and military situation. To all queries he had one answer, "We must pray."

Once a distinguished American Rabbi asked him, "What do you say to the current situation?" Replied the Rebbe: "I say Tehillim."

Time also meant organization and as if to preach by example, his day was a model of structured planning. There was time set aside to pray, to learn, to receive *Chassidim*, to take interest in his institutions, to lead in the affairs of Agudath Israel and *Klal Yisroel*. . . . To be *koveya ittim*, setting aside time for Torah study, was the substance of many of his messages to his followers.

When he was not busy receiving *Chassidim* or occupied with his involvement with *Klal*, he was totally immersed in Torah. His *Rebbetzin* was known to complain that he never slept, even after a serious operation in 1972. A familiar sight in Jerusalem's *Ge'ulah* section was the Rebbe strolling through the deserted streets well before daybreak. His *bachurim* were expected to have begun their day in Torah learning and he would not hesitate to awaken those who were not so quick.

Dawn: It was a time to take a deep breath of the brisk Jerusalem air — and to sigh for the woes of the individuals and the *Klal*. Equally as important was the opportunity it offered to signal the start of another day of *Avodas Hashem* to his followers. . . . *Chassidim* remember the Rebbe performing essentially the same



The Rebbe on a stroll in Jerusalem.

role in Poland, where he had also watched over youth.

The before-dawn stroll was also a time when soldiers from the Schnellers Army Base (just opposite the courtyard of the Rebbe) would jog — and often would respond to a nod with "*Boker tov, Rebbe.*"

The Private Encounter

The Rebbe had the unusual ability to sweep over a crowd of hundreds with one glance. . . . Somehow, each of the people in the crowd felt he had locked eyes with the Rebbe for one brief but powerful moment. In private consultations, he literally spent only minutes with each Jew who came to see him, yet he was able to swiftly profile the problems of the man before him. Scores of people would queue up outside his office and within a half-hour he would have seen everyone; each problem thoroughly aired and every response measured — but all in lightning time. He was privy to tens of thousands of problems — spiritual, economic, medical — and pronounced his advice within minutes. Surprisingly he would recall these brief encounters 10 and 20 years later, referring to names, dates, situations asking after the welfare of those troubled. Sadness and joy passed quickly before him — through him — yet he was able to adjust his mood to a fresh start with each person.

Each man walked out with a substantial response. To a young yeshiva student who had been summoned home with dozens of telegrams on the eve of the Six-Day War, he said: "If you are afraid, stay here. If it is a matter of *kibud av v'eim*, go home." In little less than 30 seconds, a response, a *halacha*, and Torah philosophy.

An elderly Jew from Romania with a wholesale toy business in Tel Aviv, told his tale simply:

My wife became seriously ill with yener machala (a veiled reference to cancer). The doctors could not decide: "Operate." "Don't operate." People in the street said to me, "Take a trip to the Gerer Rebbe. Everybody goes to him for advice and a brocha." So I traveled to Yerusholayim.

When I was younger I used to seek brachos at the courts of the Romanian rebbes. And the procedure was simple. I'd put a sizeable pidyon (contribution) down on the Rebbe's table and he would devote a considerable amount of time to hear me out, question me on all the details, and rain down a host of brachos on me. . . .

At the Gerer Rebbe's, everything was different. That he doesn't accept pidyonim, I knew; but I had no idea everything went so fast. Before the people ahead of me even get inside they're out. What am I to do? I didn't even prepare a kvittel because I'd have to fill up a whole notebook with details.

I was very upset, and suddenly I was inside. To this day I don't understand what happened. I said only, "My wife's life is in danger," and the Rebbe understood everything. He asked me all kinds of questions and I felt sure it was taking a lot of time. He said "Don't operate!" and gave me a strong brocha. I felt wonderful. I looked at the clock when I came out — the whole thing had taken maybe two minutes. I still don't understand it. I know that "A tzaddik decrees and G-d fulfills." But I had not come for a brocha alone, but for advice as well. How did this tzaddik read my mind?

(from "An Appreciation," by Moshe Prager)

When he spoke, his answers were a remarkable blend of caution and razor-sharp wit. He yearned for the sharpness of Kotzk and he was overheard to have said, "Oh, how I wish I could lead like Kctzk!" But he considered the generation too weak for such leadership.

To *Chassidim*, *Misnagdim*, *bnei yeshiva* and just plain Jews, he was the Gerer Rebbe. Regardless of who you were, you were untruthful if you denied that your knees knocked in fright when you stood before him. — I heard this from people with no connection to *Chassidus*. His penetrating eyes were enough to make anyone quiver. But soon you were reassured, and once you walked out you realized that the Gerer Rebbe had left you with a lifelong impression.

The late Rav of Ponovezh once remarked: "Before the war, when my heart ached, I traveled to Radin to see the Chofetz Chaim and I felt better. After the war, I travel to Jerusalem to see the Gerer Rebbe and I feel better."

Such was the power of the late Gerer Rebbe — to penetrate minds, to soothe and to inspire. To people, big and small, he was the "big brother," the surrogate father, on whom to pour out all the world's woes. . . . Grandfathers saw in him the vanished patriarch in whom one could trust.

Whence the diversity of the Rebbe's followers? He had opened his door to everyone, and there is something about the Jewish soul, the *pintele Yid*, which hones in on its source.

The Loss and the Legacy

What did the Rebbe leave behind for us? A rebuilt, revitalized *Chassidus*, consisting of thriving institutions and devoted followers . . . an enriched *Klal Yisroel*. *Seforim*? It is widely believed that like his father and grandfather, he had recorded his Torah thoughts. No one is certain, but he did say, "Although there are differences of opinion amongst Torah leaders whether or not to write Torah, I say that in our impoverished generation everyone should write."

And he left us with indelible memories of a penetrating glance, a sharp word, a *tisch* . . . and a funeral — the silent procession of multitudes, where the



only sound was the shuffling of feet and the wiping of tears. . . . A silence.

In Judaism there is a kind of inverse relationship between authority and words, and never was this more acutely demonstrated than in the "court" of Rabbi Yisroel Alter. A man of immense presence, a person who said a thousand words with a mere glance, the Rebbe needed to say almost nothing to work an internal revolution in his followers. A single sentence from him appeared to carry the authority of generations. . . .

The Gerer Rebbe became a "Rebbe's rebbe," as Chassidic leaders from all over the world sought his counsel and submitted to his leadership. Nearly a year ago, following the death of the Amshinover Rebbe of Jerusalem, the Gerer Rebbe reputedly motored from his residence in the Ge'ula section of Jerusalem to the Bayit Vegan section. There he met with the grandson of the late Amshinover Rebbe and spoke with him for about half an hour, convincing him to carry on the Amshinover line and assume the position of Amshinover Rebbe.

A half hour. How frequently do we throw away a half-hour's words? If the Rebbe spoke half an hour, it had to be an unprecedented occasion. In measuring words, a person deepens his wisdom and impact. Thus it really wasn't ironic that when the Gerer Rebbe died, thousands were left speechless, and, in accord with Polish Chassidic custom, no eulogy was delivered. Nothing needed to be said. The loss spoke for itself.

(from an article in the Denver Intermountain Jewish News, by Hillel Goldberg)

Silence. How fitting a tribute to man who led with such an economy of words!

Crisis in Parent-Children Relations

— an analysis with some prescriptive suggestions

Sickness in the Family

The contemporary weakness in parental authority, part of the commonly bemoaned generation gap, is hardly a new phenomenon. Recently, however, problems in the viability of the family and in respect for parents in general society have reached crisis proportions. Inasmuch as the values and attitudes of the non-Torah world become incorporated into our own thinking, this problem calls for more than passing comment.

Today's children are being raised in a world that does not seem to want them — where having children is a luxury of sorts; where abortion is not only acceptable, it can even be a liberal "humanistic act"; where zero population growth is one of society's goals. In fact, a recent study of people with children showed a shockingly high percentage saying that in retrospect they would have preferred not to have had children. So children sense that they are excess baggage to the senior generation.

Further, the tendency for singles to live together without marriage has gained a currency bordering on social acceptability; and inner cities are finding themselves populated by childless couples and liking it (see *New York Times*: "Seattle: City Without Children"). In this kind of a setting, many of the normal tensions between generations are exacerbated and aggravated.

Moreover — in this country at least — the traditional reasons for valuing the family just do not seem to apply: Thanks to general affluence, and the emergence of the welfare state, adults fend for themselves even in their Social Security years, without their grown children's financial contribution. And children, in turn, are not dependent on parental sanction for experimentation with "alternative life styles." The youth of the 60's proved once and for all (to their satisfaction) that the older generation is made up of hypocrites who de-

RABBI BRAFMAN is Menahel of Yeshiva Derech Ayson of Far Rockaway (High School and Beis HaMidrash). A frequent contributor to these pages, his article on Euthanasia was featured in the May '76 JO.

mand that children "do as we say, not as we do" — so who cares? More important, peer approval can be found for almost anything, if one finds the right peer group. So, more and more, adults are throwing up their hands in helplessness at the antics of the young, since "everyone's doing it" anyway — in a sense abandoning their own offspring, leaving them without much-needed guidance and direction. Thus, on the surface of it, neither generation recognizes a need for the other, and all concerned are much the poorer for it.

If among the general populace the family is disintegrating at an alarming rate, this is also cause for concern in the Torah camp. Indeed, there are enough signs that within our own community the family structure and relationships between parents and children are also suffering. This is evident in incidents of defection of younger people from Torah Judaism; for more often than not, kids rebelling against Yiddishkeit are actually rebelling against a father, a mother, or a home situation not to their liking. True, other factors are involved, and society is exposing children to more than their share of temptations unknown to most adults years ago. But with all that, the key to stability is in the home — with the father, the mother, and the family. When the family structure is stable and the family provides warmth, guidance and direction, there is little reason for negative attitudes toward Torah and Yiddishkeit.

Tensions: A Torah Attitude

There is much that we can do to bolster the strength of the Jewish family, and enhance the respect between generations. First, let us accept that differences between generations are inevitable. Indeed, the Torah recognizes the drive for self-assertion as an inborn need, for each generation and every individual requires the opportunity to use its own particular resources in service to G-d, making its own individual imprint on history.

Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler points out how each of the Patriarchs used his own gifts of personality to serve G-d in his own way rather than merely to shadow his father's achievements. While Torah laws and customs have eternal validity, one must still find ways to use

one's individuality to experience them with a freshness. For that which one merely does out of habit or in response to a particular environment is not sufficient to give one the stature of a *tzaddik*.

Rabbi Meir Simcha HaCohein (on *Parshas Bechukosai* in his work, *Meshech Chochma*) in discussing the various cycles one finds in Jewish history, makes a similar point: each generation, in a sense, is competing with its predecessor. And each generation has need to assert its own creativity, to add its own innovation into the pattern of the history of the Jewish people. Inasmuch as this inborn need exists among other nations, it has yielded growth in artistic creativity, scientific development, and technological endeavor. Among Jews, however, the urge for "innovation" can at times be fruitful; other times, as we grow more distant from Sinai, it can become increasingly difficult and frustrating to find new ways with which to serve G-d, resulting in departure from tradition. For better and for worse, then, no two generations are identical, and friction is almost inevitable.

The Obligations

Accepting this split between generations, let us examine the Torah obligations that serve to bind children and parents. Everyone is familiar with the Torah commandments: "Honor your father and mother" (*Shemos* 22, 12) and "A person must fear his mother and father" (*Vayikra* 19, 3). And most people are familiar with the *Gemora's* explanations: "What is fear? One should not sit in his place, speak in his place, nor contradict his words. And what is honor? Feeding ... clothing ... assisting in entry and exit" (*Baba Metzia* 32).

Indeed, because they are so well known, numerous aspects of these obligations may suffer, as we simply pay lip service to them. We accept the role of dutiful son/daughter, but we do not examine the *mitzva* imperatives of these roles. Studying this aspect of our roles and incorporating our findings into our outlook can make appreciable differences in our behavior.

As a first step, I would challenge the common belief that *kibud av v'eim* — honoring one's parents — is a *mitzva sichlis* — a *mitzva* of such compelling logic that man would have devised it on his own, had the Torah not commanded it. Rather, this *mitzva* is at best a *mishpat* — one that can be understood now that G-d has commanded it; but we could not have ever fashioned it on our own.

One might compare honoring one's parents to *Shabbos* — a *mitzva* with profound meaning for us, yet one we would never have created on our own. This is perhaps implicit in the passage in *Parshas Kedoshim*: "A man should fear his mother and father and keep my *Shabbosos*" — juxtaposing the two, for both are commands that have authority because they are G-d given; they are not part of natural law or a natural process.

This can also be inferred from the placement of "Honor your father and mother" on the *first* side of the Two Tablets of the Law, with those commandments that deal with obligations "between man and G-d." The second five are obligations between man and his fellow, which man could have devised on his own. The only way we can properly fear and honor our parents is if we view these obligations as G-d given commandments beyond human understanding. Otherwise we could never rise above the myriad difficulties encountered in this *mitzva*.

Accepting the status of this *mitzva*, we must also recognize its importance as transcending social convenience or necessity; the family is not merely a convenient social device, conceived by man for his own benefit. For Jewry, the family is that unit which has enabled us to survive a hundred generations of *golus*. It is a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts — the individuals that it includes.

□ It is the primary means for the transmission of the *mesorah* of Torah and Judaism from generation to generation, as witness the *mitzva* of "And you shall tell (the Exodus) to your child," which is the basis of the *Pesach seder*.

□ Also, the actual command to teach Torah "ושנתתם לבניך — And you shall teach them to your children" — is from father to son.

□ Moreover, when one seeks to "understand the years of every generation," he is advised: "Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders and they will inform you" (*Devarim* 32:7). The linkage between generations is part of our affirmation as a nation, as a nation of G-d, as a holy nation.

Honoring and fearing one's father and mother, then, are as integral a part of being Jewish as is the *Shabbos*.

The Mitzva Perspective: Not Just a Matter of Heart

Another aspect of understanding "honoring and fearing parents" as *mitzvos*: We are not to fulfill these obligations because of our feelings toward our parents *per se*, but because G-d commanded us to do so. To be properly carried out, *kibud av v'eim* must become objectified, requiring us to adhere to objective norms — rather than to be left as subjective responses on the part of children, as part of the moral obligation and emotional commitment that ordinarily motivate honor and fear.

To be sure, *kibud av v'eim* is a sterling example of gratitude in action; and at optimum, the performance of this *mitzva* should express a full-hearted recognition of all the good one's parents have done. But performance should not depend on this emotional reservoir of gratitude, for sometimes, in children's myopic view of things, this reservoir runs dry. And even in the best of circumstances, *kibud av v'eim* can have its hardships.

Giving honor to one's parents should not depend on an emotional reservoir of gratitude, for sometimes, in the children's myopic view of things, that reservoir runs dry. When accepted as a mitzva, with objective requirements quite apart from subjective feelings, the volatile relationship between parent and children is defused.

In fact, it is its standing as a *mitzva* that best prepares one for these difficulties ... *Shabbos* can also be difficult, and indeed, many are those who succumbed to the difficulties of keeping *Shabbos*. But those who rose above them elevated not only the *Shabbos*, but elevated themselves in the process. Similarly, when faced with the demands of *kibud av v'eim* at its most difficult, one can rise to the challenge it represents by bearing in mind that it is a *mitzva* to be fulfilled — much as we would fulfill the *mitzva* of *tefillin* or *succah* or *kashrus* regardless of hardships.

As the Rambam Describes It

The *Rambam's* presentation of this *mitzva* makes this clear. First, the *Rambam* does not discuss *kibud av v'eim* in a section of its own, but includes it with *Hilchos Mamrim* (Laws of Apostasy) alongside those that deal with a *zokein mamre* — an elder who defies the Sanhedrin (the Great Judiciary). This surely defines *kibud av v'eim* as a *mishpat*, perhaps also alluding to its importance in the chain of tradition binding us all to Sinai — not unlike the authority of the Sanhedrin.

Then, drawing on several *Gemoras*, the *Rambam* describes the parameters of the *mitzva kibud av v'eim* (הל' ממרים, פרק י' הל' ז):

To what extent is "honor" required? Even if one's parents take one's wallet full of gold and throw it into the ocean, he should not shame them, nor be angry towards them. He should accept upon himself the Torah law and be silent.

To what extent do the requirements of "fear" go? Even if one was wearing expensive clothing, sitting at the head of a large group of people, and his father and mother came, and ripped his clothing, beat him on his head, and spit in his face, he should not shame them, but should remain silent, and be fearful before the King of Kings who charged him with this *mitzva*. Had a mortal king decreed upon him something even more difficult than this, he would not show any reaction nor say anything. How much more so must we accept the command of He who spoke, creating the world!

This is an unusual passage in the *Rambam's* halachic writings for he is not known to use words unnecessarily, nor is he given to bolstering a *mitzva* with admonition or moral support. Yet, here the *Rambam* seems to be responding to the inevitable tension and difficulties that arise from the *mitzva* of *kibud av v'eim*, especially in its most extreme expressions. It is as though he were telling us: "I know that what's being asked of you is difficult, almost impossible. But realize that you're doing the bidding of G-d, and it is incumbent upon one to fulfill this *mitzva*, if so be His will."

If we could imbue our children with this attitude, it would go a long way toward easing some of the tensions that plague so many a home situation. Once a child realizes that he is not expected to obey his parent only because he loves them: "since I feel good about my parents, I'm going to honor them" ... once he realizes that he must obey his parents because G-d commanded him to do so, just as he puts on *tefillin* and keeps *Shabbos*, then this volatile relationship is defused of much of its built-in explosive power.

This objectification of filial responsibilities may well be more necessary now than ever, as the experience of these past fifteen years has demonstrated. The best educated generation of parents in all history, who had thought that they could raise a generation of responsible, productive children, were shaken out of their complacency: These very children, who are themselves highly educated and intelligent, had violently rebelled against the very people who had thought they were doing them so much good. They had been trained to formulate their own judgments and to act on them. And they did. Their subjective feelings toward their parents were no longer positive; they did not feel love and gratitude toward them, and they found themselves without any basis for respect or awe or fear or obedience toward them. So they chucked it all — parents and their values — throwing out the whole generational package as one Thus today more than ever, we must instill in ourselves and in our children the fundamental principle that *kibud av v'eim* first and foremost is a *mitzva*.

From Parents to Children

Parents also have a role to play in the *kibud av v'eim* situation. Yes, they are the figures of authority and the object of fear and honor — but they cannot be the willful autocrat. Not only may parents not demand whatever they wish of their children, they are even restricted in their control over them. Of course this is true as it affects their children's Torah study or interferes with their fulfillment of *mitzvos*. But they are limited in other areas as well.

Again we quote the *Rambam*:

Even though as children we are commanded in the fulfillment of this *mitzva*, a person is forbidden to burden his children excessively, and to be overly concerned about their respect for him, so as to cause them to falter in this *mitzva*. Instead, he should be forgiving and look away, for halachically, a father may effectively release his children from an obligation to honor him.

The directive to parents not to overburden their children certainly refers to psychological burdens among others, and very often the stress and pressures that parents bring to bear on their children can be unbearable. Some of these will be discussed later in a different context.

The Imbalance ...

Another aspect of the parent-child relationship deals with a lack of reciprocity in the loyalties between parents and children. On one level, it was expressed in a well-known Chassidic tale:

An old, impoverished Jew complained to the Kotzker Rebbe that he had struggled all his years to provide for his children. He cannot work any longer, and his children who are wealthy have forgotten him. "Where is their rachmonus (mercy) for me?"

The Kotzker replied, "How can you expect otherwise? The Torah teaches us that parents' rachmonus for their children is far greater than children's for parents: When Judah pleaded with Joseph not to keep Benjamin in Egypt, he stressed that Jacob would die of heartbreak if his son did not return. Yet no mention is made of the fear that Benjamin's ten children would die should their father not return. Obviously, the feelings parents have for children are far greater, and the loss of children to parents is far more traumatic than the reverse."

This phenomenon* is substantiated by many of the tragic life situations to which we are witness.

... and its Source

When he heard of the Kotzker's remarks, the Ostroftser Rebbe commented that man's love for his

offspring outshadows his love for his parents because parental devotion is primal, dating back to the creation of man himself: Adam, the first man, was fashioned by G-d's own hands. He had no parents. He did, however, have children of his own. Thus, as children of Adam, all mankind possesses the capacity to love its children, as a primal characteristic. Love for one's parents, however, was not acquired until the second generation after Creation, by Adam's children. It was never experienced by the original Man. Thus, it occupies a secondary place in man's ontological makeup.

Indeed, the Torah frequently refers to parents' love for children (G-d's command to Abraham: "Take your son, your only child, whom you love ..."; Isaac's love for Eisav ...), but only speaks of children's duties to honor and fear their parents, but not to love them.

Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, in his *Kuntras HaChessed*, offers a psychological basis for this phenomenon of unrequited love. Contrary to common assumption, love does not happen by itself. Nor do we simply give to others as an expression of love. Rather, he explains, love is an outgrowth of giving. The more one gives, the more one invests of one's resources in others — whether in a plant, in an animal, or in another human being ... through marriage, through acts of kindness, or through caring for one's children — the more one has invested of one's self in others. He comes to see himself in that object, in that person to which he has been giving of himself. And that sense of identification is the most intense love that exists — a type of self love. Love, then results from an action. It does not happen by itself.

By the same token, parents love children because they give so much to them from the time they are born: they care for them in infancy, they raise them, worry over them, and suffer with them through illness and personal anguish. It is this intense investment in their children, says Rabbi Dessler, that breeds parental love.

By contrast, children who give nothing to their parents are in a sense limited in their ability to love them. This may well be part of the present-day crisis. Children have been raised without having to give anything in return. (Remember the Old Days when all children were expected to have *pflichten* — duties?) Most of the rebellious children of the hippie generation

*A halachic expression of this can be found in a *Gemora* (*Sanhedrin* 62): One may kill an intruder who breaks into a house in anticipated self-defense — as a pre-emptive strike — for it can be assumed that the intruder is prepared to kill the inhabitants of the house, if need be. When it is obvious that the intruder's intention is not to kill, however, then the home-owner has no right to take the intruder's life. As an example of such, the *Gemora* cites the case of a father breaking into the home of his son: the son has no right to kill him, because the father will surely not resort to killing his son to carry out his designs. But should the son break into his father's house, the father may kill his son because the possibility does exist that a son would intend to murder his own father.

We have created a very narrow field in which a child can achieve success — namely, through excelling in school. This is desirable in a certain context, yet, it is only one phase of the total Torah personality. Shouldn't a Torah family instill in its children a sense of worth in being an oveid Hashem — a servant of G-d?

came from wealthy or upper-middle class homes, where they were given whatever they desired: toys, money, cars, all kinds of conveniences and luxuries. And they were expected to give nothing in return. As a result, their relationship with their parents was an empty one. That special love that comes from giving of oneself was not there. Perhaps this is why the Torah requires honor and fear for parents; they are translatable into actions, and are not abstract emotional demands. By honoring, obeying, respecting — *giving* to one's parents — not only does one fulfill a *mitzva*, one is sowing the seeds of love. One is investing in an association that can produce a loving relationship.

How Children Deliver

While children should be expected to give of themselves to their parents, there must be limits to parental expectations, as the *Rambam* warns. This is especially pertinent in regard to symbolic demands parents often make on their children, for some of these can be unreasonable and can cause great harm. Indeed, they can be accountable for much of the current stress between parents and children which crosses all boundaries in our Orthodox world.

I know of crises in the homes of *Roshei Yeshiva* and *baale battim* in every neighborhood, in every subculture. The common denominator in all of these situations would seem to be a lack of communication and a growing hostility between parents and children. While this may be analyzed from many perspectives, the fundamental needs not being met in all of these situations are those of understanding, respect, and too often, the patience of parents towards children. Every child needs to be loved by his parents, and most important, to be accepted for what he is. This seems to be such a simple solution. And yet how often (as I have seen in my own career, and according to the findings of other professionals in the field) this is overlooked!

We — or is it society at large? — have created a very narrow field in which a child can achieve success and deliver symbolic reward to their parents, while winning self-esteem for themselves — namely, through excelling in school. This is desirable in a certain context, and would be beneficial for children who are intellectually equipped to achieve this end. Yet, it is only one phase of the total Torah personality. Shouldn't a Torah family instill in its children a sense of worth in being an


oveid Hashem — a servant of G-d? Somehow, in the stress on academic achievement, something has happened to the importance of character development, *chessed*, and *tzidkus*. In addition to this one dimensional emphasis on intellectual performance, we have adopted a secular scale of values, with the earning of a college degree as the ultimate achievement (surely not a measure of values based on Torah standards!), while effort and commitment are ignored.

How often have we seen child after child in *yeshivos* destroyed because they could not measure up to arbitrary academic standards; others who have performed brilliantly in school up to the age of 18 or 20, and then headed downhill. They had been programmed all their years to work for some magical grade, which suddenly has absolutely no significance to them ... and their emotional health has been lost in the process. I've known yet others who did continue and did make it through college and into a career, but they have been so emotionally crippled in the process that they cannot give any warmth, direction, or recognition of significance to their own children.

Without parental love and attention — possibly the two most difficult commodities for some people to deliver — a child withers. For their part, children must also deliver, but within reason. Thus, parents have the taxing obligation of making demands of their children, yet accepting them for what they are.

In Anticipation of Moshiach

In describing the era preceding Moshiach's coming, the *Mishna* (*Sota* VII, 10) speaks of "youngsters accusing parents, and parents rising before children, children betraying their elders." A frighteningly apt description of our own times.

By contrast, the Prophet tells us that Eliyahu HaNavi will come just before Moshiach's arrival and "He will return the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers (*Malachi* 3, 24)." Obviously, the inherent tension that exists between parents and children must be resolved before we have the ultimate peace that the world is waiting for so desperately. Thus, this topic is not only significant; it is timely. Perhaps if we can restructure our families on a better footing, we will be bringing that day of peace just a bit closer. 

Coming Closer: The Conventional Yeshiva's Role in "Kiruv Rechokim"

The Formidable Obstacles

I consider myself one of a rare breed, a living proof that an "establishment" yeshiva — one whose major population comes from *frum* homes — can successfully incorporate into its student body an individual with a background devoid of Yiddishkeit. This is no small accomplishment for the yeshiva, mind you. The yeshiva is not generally the arena to "make people *frum*." The scheduled *shiurim* are on an advanced level, and to put a twenty-year-old into a classroom with *bachurim* seven or eight years his junior can breed miserable frustration. In addition, the novice is unfamiliar with basic *yedios* (factual information) that are an essential integral part of Torah *hashkofa* (philosophy). These tenets generally have been absorbed by the others somewhere along the line, beginning at the *Aleph-Bais* level.

The discrepancies would seem formidable. Yet, drawing from my own experiences, it would seem that it is precisely these Yeshivos that are best equipped to integrate the *baal teshuva* into the Torah community without altering the overall yeshiva program in any appreciable way.

The Way I Found It

I saw three and a half years of college before I ever set foot inside a yeshiva — the Telshe Yeshiva in Wickliffe, Ohio. In college, I could do "B" work with a minimum of exertion. When I was enrolled in a course whose professor would obviously rather be elsewhere finishing his book than teaching a class, I paid him little attention and proceeded to limit my aspirations to fulfilling the minimum course requirements. In yeshiva, *lehavdil*, there is needless to say, no substitute for pure *hasmoda* (diligence). I therefore felt very much distressed to discover that the yeshiva *modus operandi* is to sit at intensive study for ten or more hours a day.

AVROHOM HENFIELD is a full-time student at the Telshe Yeshiva — Wickliffe, Ohio. This is his first appearance in these pages.

At first this seemed an impossible obligation. I was comforted to find that the yeshiva was satisfied to have me work on this "toughening of the *zitsfleish*" as I progressed.

During my first week in the yeshiva, I must admit that I felt like one huge outsider, as though I had green hair. Paranoia set in. Every step I made, everything I did, I asked myself, "Am I doing the right thing? Am I acting in a proper manner? What is the *halacha*?" I also felt as though everyone were watching me, whispering, "Who is he? What is he doing here?" Yet, I was determined to see this through and, in time, the other *bachurim* (yes, I too was a "yeshiva *bachur*") came alive.

I was sincerely delighted to see the manner in which people were accepting me, wishing me *Sholom Aleichem*, being patient when I needed criticism — and I needed plenty. I instructed one of my roommates, "Tell me whatever I do wrong and I won't do it again." I suppose I was over-adamant in my attempt to fit in, but in time I found myself quite at home; yes, "home" is indeed the right word. Words like "eppes," "takeh," and "mamash" had somehow crept into my vocabulary. I also considered myself fortunate to have been placed under the auspices of a *kolel* member who, as our relationship grew, was able to see me through most of the rough spots during the transition period . . . There is really no substitute for a "big brother" system on an official basis wherever it is feasible. I sensed a feeling of pride and accomplishment not only in myself, but — equally as important — in the entire yeshiva when it became evident how I had "become a *mentsch*" (— a *ben Torah*, that is; for truthfully, can a person be one without the other?).

The Yeshiva Community

My pride in the yeshiva was really the other side of a coin — a side that probably impressed me more than any other aspect of yeshiva life; that is, its solid sense of community. Here, people depend on other people. The

sincerity of this attitude truly amazed me and for a while I could not accept it as genuine. The "outside world" is a cold place. I went through four years of college with the same group of people, never knowing most of them. Just once, in college, I would have liked a fellow student to say "hello" or to ask me how I was doing. In yeshiva, the atmosphere is exactly the opposite. The prevalent feeling was one of *Weltschmerz* — a bonafide interest in the other's well-being, with constructive criticism of performance of *mitzvos*, concern for each other's *aliya in ruchnius* (spiritual elevation).

I was also gratified that the only credential I needed to be accepted was that I was Jewish — from there on the ball got rolling. I could sense the attitude: "Here is a fellow *Yid*. Let's see what we can do for him" — and they got me on my way.

Equally impressive was the *Bais Midrash*, where 300 people are sitting *lernen Torah*, needing no supervision — each knowing that he is fulfilling *Hashem Yisborach's* requirements. It was encouraging to realize that if there was anything I did not understand in learning, I literally had my "pick" of whom to ask. A patient explanation was sure to be found.

I must return to the constant inspiration found from belonging to the Yeshiva community. The people around me had determined a purpose in life and conducted their lives accordingly. This was totally new to me. I had graduated high school with a mixed lot of people — some are now on drugs, others have committed suicide; some of them were brilliant people who are wasting away their lives. They never found a meaning to their existence — and for a long while I hadn't either. The concern of the people around me in Telshe has kept me in Telshe, and continues to do so, guiding me in planning my life along Torah principles and goals.

The Logic of It

My entry into the Torah world has been through the conventional yeshiva — as I already wrote. But aren't there other methods of becoming a Torah Jew, and a number of movements especially created to meet this need?

HoRav Moshe Feinstein has stated (as quoted in *The Jewish Observer*, June 1973):

This leaves us none (for leading those who seek guidance) but the ben Torah, whose spiritual stamina is fortified by the Torah as taught by the heads of our great yeshivos. Only he is equipped to address the masses and return them to the truth.

It would seem quite obvious, then, that the Rosh Yeshiva's words were a call to yeshivos: somehow, as the situation permits, they should open their doors to the serious *baal teshuva* — for in what environment is one more likely to find the *ben Torah*?

Granted, there are now in existence a growing

number of fine yeshivos geared specifically for meeting the needs of the *baal teshuva*, but these exist primarily in New York and *Eretz Yisroel*. What about the many young searchers in St. Louis, Cleveland, Detroit, Los Angeles, who, for whatever reason, are not to be expected to transpose themselves — and why should they? At this very moment, the yeshivos already in existence are sociologically and intellectually the most likely centers for the absorption of *baalei teshuva* into normal Torah lives. No, I'm not advocating the expenditure of even one moment of a *bachur's* time to going outside the *daled amos* (immediate confines) of the yeshiva to reach out to others, at the expense of his own Torah study. Rather, I am referring to an ever increasing number of young Jewish men who, either from their exposure from visiting *Eretz Yisroel* or from domestic exposure, have already accepted a commitment to *Yiddishkeit*. These men need guidance, and the most likely candidates for bearing responsibility for directing these young men are to be found in the yeshiva population. At the most basic level, the yeshiva with a *kolel*, or even the *kolel* without a yeshiva, is a veritable gold mine of direction and guidance.

Parenthetically, I would call attention to a highly successful program in Cleveland whereby many *kolel* men (and even some *bachurim*) do go into the outlying Jewish community twice a week to learn with older and younger men. This type of program could easily be adopted in any community with a yeshiva or yeshiva graduates, achieving highly significant results. Each set of *chavrusas* could decide for itself what to learn — be it *Gemora* — be it *Siddur*. And along with the learning, comes advice and help in dealing with individual problems.

I might add that the Cleveland yeshiva community conducts a similar program for women. It is an embarrassment that generally there is such a void of classes for women on the fundamentals of *Yiddishkeit*. Here, twice a week, classes are offered in *Chumash* and *Halacha* plus periodic guest lectures on the 613 *Mitzvos* delivered by Telshe *Kolel* members.

But it is not to the needs of the part-time scholar that this article is dedicated. Rather, I am concerned with the *baal teshuva* who is in a position to devote himself entirely to a yeshiva program — what possibilities exist for him outside of the specialized *baal teshuva* yeshivos in New York and *Eretz Yisroel*?

No Time for the "Baalei Teshuva"?

It will surely be argued that the yeshiva's main commitment is to its own, and its hands are indeed filled just with its existing syllabus of study. Indeed, there is the contention that the yeshiva should be separated from the community-at-large to better concentrate on its own students' growth. This isolated state has been justified to the general public by comparing it to the in-

ternship every doctor must undergo: During this rigorous training period, he often finds himself completely tied to the hospital. So, too, must the yeshiva necessarily cut itself off to a very great extent for the yeshiva population to gain optimum benefit from their years of study.

Yet, it would seem from my own experience and treatment in Telshe that the conventional yeshiva could adopt a program for the novice with negligible effect on the over-all running of the yeshiva. Besides, it could be argued that the importance of such a program for novices would outweigh any negative aspects of the innovative program.

In my first semester in Telshe, I did not learn the same tractate *Gemora* as the rest of the yeshiva. By the second semester, however, my reading ability had improved and it was suggested I try out the lowest *shiur* in the Yeshiva (as opposed to going to a *shiur* in the *Mechina* — prep school). This proved to be somewhat disastrous. It was very difficult for me to learn the day's *Gemora* on my own in the morning, before *shi'ur*, to appreciate even half of the things the *Rebbe* brought out when he "took the *Gemora* apart" during his lecture.

Once I was in *shiur*, most of my day was being devoted to *Gemora*. I had to squeeze in time for *Chumash*, *Mussar* (the existing yeshiva *Mussar seder* was not enough), *hashkofa*. I was embarrassed that I knew more *Gemora* than *Chumash*. When a *Shiur Meyuchad* (special *shiur*) was eventually established, I began to devote time in the afternoon to these other subjects while the other *bachurim* were still studying *Gemora*. I felt then, and I feel now, that devoting attention to *Chumash* at the expense of *Gemora* is vital to the novice's growth. (*Chumash* is not only first chronologically, it is also a prerequisite in knowledge and attitude.)

The potent Torah environment in every yeshiva is the best source of guidance the *baal teshuva* could ask for. Here, he witnesses the fervor of *tefilla b'tsibbur*, *Shabbos* undisturbed in its halachic integrity and purity of atmosphere, and an over all twenty-four hour per day example of *Yiddishkeit* in progress. By fitting himself into the pattern of life that surrounds him, he is able to become integrated much faster and much more thoroughly than he would be able to anywhere outside of a *yeshiva gedola*.

The Specialized Touches ...


If possible, the incorporation of just one special class — a *shiur* in basic *Gemora* taught at a mature level — would be ideal and of untold value in the long run. Such a *Shiur Meyuchad* already exists in many yeshivos. If feasible, the *shiur* could even devote time daily to learning and discussing *Mussar* and *hashkofa*, as was the case in the class I attended in Telshe. This is

essential, for while the *yeshiva gedola* leaves these studies to the *bachur's* own discretion, the *baal teshuva* requires a firm foundation in *Mussar* and Torah *hashkofa* as early as possible. After one to three *zmanim* (semesters), a beginner could conceivably enter one of the lower *shiurim*.

The Midrash criticizes Avraham, Yitzchak, and David for using a double standard in bringing up their respective sons, Yishmael, Eisav, and Avshalom, differently from their brothers (*Shemos Rabba*). The Midrash emphasizes the verse in *Mishlei*, "He who spares the rod, spoils (lit. hates) the child." By the same token, one could plead on behalf of the *baal teshuva* that he not be treated separately, but rather that he be exposed to the *yedios* — fundamental concepts — in *Chumash*, philosophy, ethics, that are prevalent in a *yeshiva gedola*. To hold back a mature individual from these *yedios* and instead to concentrate on vocabulary lists is embarrassing, frustrating, and even dehumanizing.

There are those who maintain, on the contrary, that one must start out keeping vast vocabulary records, making note of *Gemora* expressions and hermeneutics to become equipped to study Torah. But this practice in itself is not Torah study at all; it is just the tip of the Torah iceberg, and leaves the student untouched, uninspired, and undirected. When leaping right into the mainstream of learning, as we did in our class in *Mesechta Brachos*, the individual encounters the same words over and over again along with the *Gemora's* expressions, and he becomes well-rounded with much less unnecessary effort. Vocabulary mastery comes in time. In the meantime, at the age of twenty or so, he is intellectually capable of coming to grips with the *Gemora's* supreme logic and arguments, with *Rashi*, *Tosofos*, and even many of the other *Rishonim* and *Achronim*. He finds himself swimming along in the refreshing, all-encompassing Torah mainstream with the very first plunge, becoming a part of this elite world without all the tedious technical prerequisites.

It must be added that the task has become that much simpler today as compared to several years ago, for now that so many *seforim* are being translated into English, the novice can gain so much more basic knowledge in his discretionary time than he ever could in the past. The ArtScroll Tanach Series and *Lev Eliyahu* (to name just a few) contain essential information and teachings; it would be shameful to be forced to wait until one is able to learn these in the original language to pick up the knowledge, although one will surely want to study the originals eventually.

There is a world of young creative minds eager to learn, eager to contribute to our way of life. By opening our doors just a little and lending of ourselves a lot, we can help thousands of Yiddishe *neshamos* return to Torah. 

Rabbi Yaakov Culi, זצ"ל

Author of MeAm Loez

— Champion of the Common Man

"It makes you feel like becoming a better Jew."

This was the first reaction of a friend after examining several chapters of *MeAm Loez*, which I had recently begun to translate into English. His words did not surprise me. While working on the book, I too had felt tugs at my heartstrings, and I found myself saying blessings with more feeling, being just a bit more careful of my religious obligations. The *sefer* is indeed like a magnet, drawing a person closer to Torah.

For close to 200 years, *MeAm Loez* enjoyed unparalleled popularity among the common folk of Sephardic Jewry. A large and expensive set was often given as a gift to a new son-in-law, much as a *Shas* (set of the Talmud) is today. In many synagogues, the regular evening Torah-study session between *Mincha* and *Maariv* centered on this book, and a number of groups were formed for the express purpose of studying it. It is said that Rabbi Chaim Medini, famous as the author of the encyclopedic work *Sedei Chemed*, would join such groups, so greatly did he value its wisdom.

Nowadays *MeAm Loez* in Hebrew has become a popular Bar Mitzva gift. Nevertheless, many yeshiva students seem to shun it, as part of a common prejudice against anything written in the vernacular — for the *MeAm Loez* was originally written in Ladino.

True enough, this work was specifically written for the common man. Far from talking down to the common man, however, the author uplifts the reader with a rich anthology of Torah thought from the Talmud, Midrash, *Zohar*, halachic literature, and philosophy, together with in-depth discussions and analysis.

The Author

The author of *MeAm Loez*, Rabbi Yaakov Culi, had enjoyed a reputation as one of the giants of his generation. He was born in Jerusalem in 1689 to Rabbi Machir

RABBI KAPLAN is a writer and lecturer on numerous Judaic topics. A number of his books have been published. A frequent contributor to these pages, his most recent article, "A Get in Monsey," was featured in the Dec. '76 issue of JO.

Culi (1638-1728), a well known scholar and saint who was a scion of one of the leading Jewish families of Crete (Candai). Crete had belonged to Venice, but in 1645, the Turks invaded this island, and laid siege to its capital and chief cities. This siege lasted for twenty-five years, one of the longest in modern history, and resulted in almost two hundred thousand casualties.

When the Turks were finally victorious in 1669, the island's economy was in shambles, with the Jews suffering most of all. Fleeing with his remaining wealth, Rabbi Machir eventually settled in Jerusalem around 1688. Here he found a city of scholars, boasting such luminaries as Rabbi Chezkiel di Silva (author of *Pri Chadash*) and Rabbi Ephraim Navon (author of *Machane Ephraim*). Leading the community was Rabbi Moshe Galanti, who had been appointed as the first Rishon LeTzion, Chief Rabbi of the Sephardic Jews, in 1668. Rabbi Machir was drawn to another prominent sage, Rabbi Moshe ibn Chabib and soon married his daughter.

Their first son, Yaakov, was born in 1689, a time of great upheaval in Jerusalem. It began with one of the worst famines in memory, causing many to flee to other locales. A second, even more severe blow to the Jewish community was the death of the illustrious Rabbi Moshe Galanti. This Torah giant had been undisputed leader for twenty years, and his passing left a great void in the community. His place was filled by Rabbi Yaakov's maternal grandfather, Rabbi Moshe ibn Chabib.

His Grandfather's Legacy

As a child, Rabbi Yaakov showed great promise, rapidly gaining reputation as a prodigy. He was raised on his grandfather's knee, and by his sixth year, was questioning some of his Talmudic interpretations. Although he was only seven when Rabbi Moshe ibn Chabib died, the memory of his grandfather deeply impressed him for the rest of his life.

A year later, tragedy struck again, when his mother

died. His father soon remarried and the family moved to Hebron, and then to Safed. Here the young genius advanced rapidly in his studies, and began the major task of editing his grandfather's numerous writings. Probing his father and other local rabbis for information, he became aware of the gigantic stature of Rabbi Moshe ibn Chabib.

Among the things that he learned was that his grandfather had been born in Salonica in 1654, descending from a famed family with origins in Spain. Among his ancestors were Rabbi Yosef Chabiba (circa 1400) — the *Nimukey Yosef*, and Rabbi Yaakov ibn Chabib (1459-1516) — the *Eyin Yaakov*. His grandfather had lived in Constantinople for a while, and then came to Jerusalem at the age of sixteen. In 1688, when but thirty-four, he was appointed head of the great Yeshiva founded by Moshe ibn Yeush, a philanthropist friend from Constantinople. When Rabbi Moshe ibn Chabib died at 42, he had already earned a reputation as one of the greatest sages of his time.

The Constantinople Venture

Rabbi Yaakov was determined to publish his grandfather's works. Since adequate printing facilities did not exist in the Holy Land at the time, he went to Constantinople, where he had hoped to find financial backing for this task. He arrived in the capital of the Ottoman empire in 1714.

A sensitive young man of 24, Rabbi Yaakov was aghast at conditions in Constantinople. True, the city had many sages who toiled day and night to uplift the community, as well as a great Kolel (institute of advanced study), known as The Hesger. But in general, community life was sinking. Constantinople had been a center of Shabbatai Tzvi's false Messianic movement, and more than any other city, it had suffered from this heretical spirit. Jewish education was virtually nonexistent, and most of the populace was barely literate in Hebrew. People did attend synagogues, but beyond this, Jewish life was on the verge of total disintegration.

Winning support from a Chaim Alfandri, he began work on his grandfather's classical work *Get Pashut*, a profound treatment of the extremely complex laws governing Jewish divorce (see JO, December, 1976). This was finally printed by Yitzchak Alfandri, a relative of Chaim, in 1719 in Ortokoi, a suburb of Constantinople. (The only other *sefer* I know of published in Ortokoi is *Bnei Chayay*, in 1717. This is described in JO April, 1975.)

Disciple of the "Mishna LaMelech"

At this time, the undisputed leader of Sephardic Jewry was Constantinople's Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Yehuda Rosanes (1658-1727). He learned of the brilliant scholar who had come to town, and before long, had appointed him to his *Beis Din* (rabbinical court) —

no mean accomplishment for so young a man. Rabbi Yaakov Culi soon became the prime disciple of this leader of world Jewry.

Rabbi Yaakov had just finished printing his grandfather's *Shemos BeAretz*, when tragedy struck the Jewish community. His great master, Rabbi Yehuda Rosanes, passed away on 22 Nissan (April 13), 1727. During the mourning period, the sage's house was looted, and a number of his manuscripts were stolen. The rest were left in a shambles, scattered all over the house. Assuming authority rare for a man his age, Rabbi Yaakov Culi undertook the responsibility of reassembling these important writings and editing them for publication.

During the first year, he completed work on *Perashas Derachim* a collection of Rabbi Yehuda's homilies. In his introduction to this book, Rabbi Yaakov Culi mourns the loss of his great master But his main work had just begun: Rabbi Yehuda had left one of the most significant commentaries ever written on the Rambam's *Mishne Torah*, the monumental *Mishne LaMelech*.

Rabbi Yaakov spent three years carefully assembling and editing this manuscript. Contemporary scholars struggle through the lengthy, profound sequences of logic found in this commentary; to be sure, the editor was in perfect command of every one of these discussions. Where certain points were ambiguous, or where additional explanations were required, Rabbi Yaakov added his own comments in brackets. In 1731, the work was completed and printed as a separate volume. Just eight years later, it was reprinted with the *Mishne Torah* — below the *Rambam's* text, on the same page — one of a half dozen commentaries accorded this singular distinction.

Today, the *Mishne LaMelech* is included in all major editions of the *Rambam's* code. Studying it, one also sees Rabbi Yaakov Culi's bracketed commentaries and notes. At the beginning of every printed *Rambam*, one can find his introduction to this work. Thus, at the age of forty, he had already won renown as a leading scholar of his time.

His Own Life Work

Having completed the publication of the works of both his grandfather and his master, Rabbi Yaakov began to search for a project that would be his own life work. There is no question that he could have chosen to write the most profound scholarly work, joining the ranks of so many of his contemporaries. Instead, he decided to write a commentary on the Torah for the unlettered Jew. As he writes in his preface: *This might strike many of his colleagues as strange. Why would he, a scholar of the first water, write a work for the masses? Surely one of his stature should address himself to the scholarly community.* But apparently he

was otherwise motivated: *How could he engage in scholarship when he saw Jewish life disintegrating all around him? How could he close his eyes to the thousands of souls, crying out for access to the Torah?*

Ladino — The Language of his Work

As his vehicle of expression, Rabbi Yaakov chose Ladino, the common language spoken by Sephardic Jews. Ladino is to Spanish as Yiddish is to German. Written with Hebrew letters, it looks very strange to the untrained eye; but with a little experience and a good Spanish dictionary — it rapidly becomes comprehensible.*

Ladino was developed among the Jews of Spain. As long as the Jewish community flourished there, Ladino was written with the Spanish alphabet, with a liberal sprinkling of Hebrew thrown in. It was not very different from the language used in much of today's Torah literature, where Hebrew is intermingled with English.

After the Jews were expelled from Spain, they gradually dropped use of the Spanish alphabet, and began writing it with Hebrew letters, which they knew from their prayers. At first there was no literature in this language; it was used primarily in correspondence and business records. The first books in Ladino appeared in Constantinople — a translation of the Psalms in 1540, and one of the Torah in 1547. A few years later, the first original work was published in this language, *Regimiento de la Vida* (Regimen of Life) by Rabbi Moshe Almesnino.

While a few other classics, such as *Chovos HaLevavos* (Duties of the Heart) and the *Shulchan Aruch* had been translated into Ladino, the amount of Torah literature available to those who did not understand Hebrew was extremely sparse. It was this vacuum that Rabbi Yaakov Culi decided to fill. As he points out, even such major works as the Rambam's commentary on the *Mishna*, and Saadia Gaon's *Emunos VeDeyos* (Doctrines and Beliefs) had been written in Arabic, the vernacular in their time. But no work of this scope had ever been attempted in the vernacular.

The Scope of MeAm Loez

What Rabbi Yaakov had planned was nothing less than a commentary on the entire Bible, explaining it from countless approaches. Where the Scripture

*In my own efforts to translate *MeAm Loez*, I found the Hebrew, itself a translation from the Ladino, unwieldy — every ambiguity seems multiplied tenfold. Struggling with the Ladino original was far more fruitful, and with a little experience, the words started to take form. Thus, גיורימו, a very strange and foreign looking word — when sounded out was simply the Spanish *Judaismo* — nothing more strange than Judaism.

Another expression that took me by surprise, סיניור דיל מונדו, when sounded out, yielded *Sennor del Mondo* — "Master of the Universe."

touched on practical application of the Law, it would be discussed in length, with all pertinent details needed for its proper fulfillment. Thus, for example, when dealing with the verse "Be fruitful and multiply," the author devotes some fifty pages to a discussion of the laws of marriage, including one of the clearest elucidations of the rules of family purity ever published in any language.

Then, as now, considerable money could be gained in publishing a successful book. Here the saintliness of the author comes to the fore. In a written contract, he specified that all the profits realized from sales of the book were to be distributed to the yeshivos in the Holy Land, as well as the *Hesger Kolel* in Constantinople. He would only retain for himself the standard commission given to charity collectors.

The work was originally planned to consist of seven volumes, encompassing all the books of the Bible. In the two years that the author worked on it, he completed all of the book of Genesis (*Bereishis*), and two-thirds of Exodus (*Shemos*), a total of over eleven hundred large printed pages. (In the current Hebrew translation, this fills over 1800 pages.) Then, at the age of 42, on 19 Av (August 9), 1732, Rabbi Yaakov Culi passed away, leaving his work unfinished.

The contemporary Sephardic sages saw the strong positive effect *MeAm Loez* was having on the community, and thus sought others to complete the work. Rabbi Yaakov had left over voluminous notes, and these would be incorporated into the continuation. The first one to take on this task was Rabbi Yitzchak Magriso, who completed Exodus in 1746, Leviticus in 1753, and Numbers in 1764. Deuteronomy was finished by Rabbi Yitzchak Bechor Agruti in 1772. These latter sages followed Rabbi Culi's style so closely, that the entire set can be considered a single integral work.

Never before had a work achieved such instant popularity. But even greater than its popularity was its impact. Thousands of readers who had been almost totally irreligious suddenly started to become observant. A new spirit swept through Sephardic communities, similar to that engendered by the Chassidic movement a half century later. Very few *sefarim* in modern times have had such a great impact on their mileau.

Reprints and Translations

The *MeAm Loez* was reprinted at least eight times, in cities around the Mediterranean region. The volumes were so heavily used, that few copies of the older editions are existent — they were literally worn out, just like a *Siddur* or *Chumash*. An Arabic translation published under the name of *Pis'shagen HaKasav*, was prepared by Rabbi Avraham Lersi, and was published in various cities in North Africa between 1886 and 1904. An edition of *Bereishis*, transliterated into

Spanish letters, was published in 1967 by the Ibn Tibbon Institute at the University of Grenada, Spain.

Although this was one of the most popular volumes in Sephardic countries, it had been virtually unknown to Ashkenazim, who generally do not read Ladino. With the destruction of most Ladino speaking communities in World War II, the number of people who could read the *MeAm Lo'ez* in the original diminished. Translation of the entire set into Hebrew in the late 1960's finally brought it to the attention of the contemporary Torah world. Although the original name of the *Sefer* was *MeAm Loez*, in the Hebrew edition, the word "Yalkut" (Anthology) was added. One reason for this was the fact that certain portions, which the translator felt were not pertinent to our times, were omitted.

In naming his work, Rabbi Yaakov Culi based the title on the verse, "When Egypt went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a strange-speaking people (*MeAm Lo'ez*), Yehuda become His holy one, Israel His kingdom" (*Psalms* 114:1). Through the medium of this book, he had hoped that his people would emerge from the shackles of ignorance. Yehuda in his own reference alludes to Yehuda Mizrach, a Constantinople phil-

anthropist, who underwrote the costs of the printing of the first edition. His reference to the last phrase in this verse was then meant to be a prayer that this work would bring Israel to once again become part of "His kingdom."

He succeeded, perhaps beyond his fondest dreams. A half century after his death, Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azzulai (the *Chida*) wrote of him, "He was expert in the Talmud, codes and commentaries, as we can readily see from his book *MeAm Loez*, which he wrote to bring merit to the multitudes. Fortunate is he and fortunate is his portion."

והגית בו יומם ולילה

DID YOU STUDY TORAH TODAY?

There are a thousand reasons why it's difficult, but not one reason why it's impossible.

Let us help you (*free of charge*) with:

- a study group in YOUR home or neighborhood
- learning what YOU want to learn
- ... and when it's convenient for YOU.

Or arrange:

- A personal "chavrusa" for you
- A telephone "chavrusa".

All levels of study!

Call us at (212) 964-1620, or write:

TORAH EDUCATION NETWORK

A division of Agudath Israel of America
5 Beekman Street / New York, N.Y. 10038
Absolutely no charge or fee.

Z'MAN MATAN TORAH ANNUAL DOLLAR SALE

YOUR DOLLAR IS APPRECIATED NOT DEPRECIATED

AT OTZAR HASEFARIM

A NEW selection of important Hebraica and Judaica will be reduced to ONE or TWO DOLLARS during course of sale.



SPECIAL FEATURE
every day new additions



one time opportunity
unusual values

no list available . . . books must be inspected on the premises . . . early comers are assured of the best selection! Cash and carry only.

Special discounts offered on all books in stock during course of sale.

• Hours 10:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. •

S. Goldman — Otzar Hasefarim, Inc.
33 Canal Street New York, N.Y. 10002

Directions — "F" train to East Broadway station or "B" train to Grand Street station

OR 4-1707

260-0520

FACTORY OUTLET
313 3rd Street
Jersey City, N.J.

(201) OL 9-9300
DIRECTIONS: 14 BLOCKS FROM
HOLLAND TUNNEL - 5 BLOCKS
FROM GROVE ST., PATH STATION

Modern Hatters



SPECIAL
CONSIDERATION
TO YESHIVA
STUDENTS

**We have the largest
selection of name brand
men's hats in the world
at lowest factory prices.**

CHAG SOMEACH TO OUR PATRONS AND FRIENDS
"THE SHACHNOW FAMILIES"

Ploni Almoni

Shir Shel Shavuos

Psalm XIX is the 'shir shel yom' on Shavuos according to the Vilna Gaon. This is the minhag followed by the Ashkenazim in Yerushalayim and most of the yeshivos in Eretz Yisroel. (The translation is from the Feldheim edition of Rabbi S.R. Hirsch's Commentary on the Psalms.)

To Him Who Grants Victory, A Psalm of David

*We have just finished the seudah in the yeshiva.
A walk to clear the mind for the night ahead.
In Eretz Yisroel there is no rain for half the year.
By day — blue sky and clear air.
At night — utter blackness.
I see more stars than I thought existed.
So clear. So bright. So remote.*

*The heavens recount the glory of G-d and the firmament tells the work of His hands.
Day to day utters speech and night to night speaks knowledge.
There need be no speech, nor words; their voice is heard without it.*

*The night is cool.
I cannot see the hills of Yerushalayim which I know stand guard around me.
The heavens recount, the firmament tells, day speaks, night utters knowledge.
Not to me — I cannot hear their voice.
I am like the blind man who knows light exists. What does he really know?*

*I am back at the yeshiva. Seder has started.
You would think it was a regular day.
The clothes are the giveaway, and of course, the blackness peering in at the windows.
The learning progresses wonderfully.*

*It is midnight. Everyone is standing.
The Rosh Hayeshiva has walked in. He is old and white and walks slowly.
The effort must be great to come now and say a shiur, then to rise again at 3:30 for Shacharis. But he is accustomed to hard work. It is the story of his life and the reason he is Rosh Hayeshiva.*

*3:30 — The Gemaros are reluctantly closing.
Outside — Dawn. The first hint of day.
Overhead it is still black. A horizon slowly appears.
The sun is impatiently waiting off-stage below the toops of the hills:*

Their measuring line goes forth from them all over the earth,

"PLONI ALMONI" is the nom de plume of an American studying in a Jerusalem yeshiva.

but where the world of man ends,
their words speak, "He has set a tent in them
for the orb of the sun."

*This hour was created for davening. There is nothing
like davening "kavatikin" — and nowhere like
davening it in Yerushalayim.*

The tzibbur is alive to the possibilities.

This is the way Pesukai D'zimra was meant to be said.

*The minutes march toward 4:35 — moment of Shemone
Esrei.*

"Shma Yisroel" — kabolas ol malchus shamayim.

Lighter now, but not yet time.

*Amidah — my eyes are closed. I feel peaceful and close.
I know what will greet me when I finish — I am an old
hand.*

*"Yihayu leratzon imrei phi" ... three steps back. Bow.
"Oseh Shalom" ... I open my eyes.*

The orb of the sun has risen above the hills.

Its orange fire slices through the front windows.

A clean, pure start — a new chance.

*Imagine what the light that awaits the tzaddikim will be
like!*

*As a bridegroom it steps forth from its chamber;
It rejoices as if it had sole power to run its course.*

Now I can say Hallel.

The sun is higher now.

I am caught in the glare and blinded.

It is nothing. It will pass.

*And yet, one point upon the heavens remains
Its origin, and its orbit is within their
defined bounds; and thus He is not hidden
even before His sun.*

Megillas Ruth. Great grandmother of David.

Here we read from klaf with brochos.

*Was Dovid thinking of her when he wrote his Psalm
for Shavuos?*

*But the Law of the L-rd is all-encompassing,
responds to the Soul;
the testimony of the L-rd is faithful,
making wise the inexperienced.*

Krias HaTorah — the Aseres Hadibros.

The Rosh Hayeshiva stands by the shulchan.

The sun is high now — the light whiter.

His beard glows.

He is smiling — the warmth must please him.

*The mandates of the L-rd are upright,
rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the L-rd is brilliant
enlightening the eyes.
The fear of the L-rd is pure,
enduring forever;*

*the ordinances of the L-rd are truth,
and they are universally just.*

The ba'al koray is one of the rabbeim.

*His beard is long and red. The light plays havoc among
the twisted strands.*

His voice is fine and mellow.

*They are to be desired more than gold
and fine gold.*

And sweeter than honey and fine nectar.

*From his lips issue the thunder and lightening of Har
Sinai ... "the people saw and they trembled and stood
afar off."*

Thy servant also was warned by them at first ...

*"And the people remain afar off and Moses drew
near ..."*

*But when he kept them, he recognized the rich
reward.*

*Musaf. Where are the korbanos that atoned for our
sins?*

*"Because of our transgressions we are exiled from our
land ... Because of the power that was sent upon your
sanctuary."*

Errors, who can discern them?

Cleanse me from hidden faults.

*Keep back Thy servant also from the wanton
ones,*

*so that they may not gain dominion over me
when I am weak;*

*thus shall I keep myself pure from great
transgression.*

"Yiheyu leratzon imrei phi ..."

Dovid Hamelech's ending has become mine:

May the words of my mouth

and the meditation of my heart

*find favor before Thy countenance, O L-rd,
my Rock and my Redeemer.*

This is Dovid's victory.

*It ended on Shavuos with his passing as it had begun
seventy years before.*

This Shavuos it is my victory.

The sky is blue. I can no longer see the stars.

Not because they rest above the blueness,

but because they rest quietly within me.

I cannot see them, but I can hear them whispering:

*"The heavens recount the glory of G-d
and the firmament tells the work of His hands."*

The davening ends with the shir shel yom.

This is the first time I have ever said it:

"Lamnatze'ach mizmor L'Dovid."

"To Him Who grants victory, a Psalm of David."

Cataloguing Jewish Life — the "Havura" Way

THE JEWISH CATALOGUE compiled and edited by Richard Siegel, Michael and Sharon Strassfeld.
THE SECOND JEWISH CATALOGUE with THE JEWISH YELLOW PAGES compiled and edited by Sharon Strassfeld and Michael Strassfeld.
(Jewish Publication Society).

Several years ago a totally new type of book appeared on the American Jewish scene. Entitled *The Jewish Catalogue*, it seemed to parallel *The Whole Earth Catalogue* in its "do it yourself" gingham-and-corduroy appeal, becoming a phenomenal best-seller: nine editions and 180,000 copies sold to date. Alternating between the light touch charm of squiggly illustrations and some heavy-breathing sincerity, *The Catalogue* is replete with recipes for Jewish rituals, with copious references to *halachic* requirements, peppered with gut reaction rationales — some profound, others pretentious; some of strong traditional orientation, others leaning heavily on other sources. All in all, a sort of underground *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*. Many observant Jews were excited about *Jewish Catalogue* — Part I, for it codified the "return to tradition" among younger, sincere Jewish men and women. As a result, many schools adapted *The Catalogue* as a text and it was widely heralded as a prime example of how "deviationists" were finding meaning in ageless Jewish observances. *Jewish Catalogue* typified the newfound search for roots and re-popularization of little known observances among a generation tired of the Establishment.

One wonders, however, if those who were so enthusiastic in greeting *Catalogue* ever looked beyond the gold mine of information on braiding your own challah, knitting your own kippah, and making your own shofar. Had they joined the readers in learning about the Sabbath with a moving definition of the need for the distinctive Jewish type of Sabbath observance by psychiatrist Eric Fromm, or the detailed lesson on Death and Burial in Jewish observance and belief, they would have checked the roots of this book, and found them well esconced in Camp Ramah and the Havura movement of American Conservative Judaism.

RABBI OBERSTEIN is a mechanech in Allentown, Pennsylvania. His comments on the community day school were published in the Jan. '77 JO.

The "Havura"

What is a havura? It is a reaction to the stultifying atmosphere of the 1,000 member congregation, with "an attempt to resurrect the idea of community — join together to work, learn, pray, and live." In these open communities, people could come together to rediscover genuine fellowship and meaning as Jews and make Judaism relevant to their lives.

The success of *The Jewish Catalogue* can be measured by the flow of letters to its editors, from people seeking to set up havurot within the synagogue (temple) structure. Spurred on by the groundswell of interest, the authors Sharon and Michael Strassfeld decided to issue a new *Catalogue* to include what was left out of the first, dwelling more on "concern with the proper ways to act rather than simply how to do things Jewishly," with more stress on inter-personal and communal activities. What is of interest to readers of *The Jewish Observer* is to discern how far this havura movement has travelled in just a few years and to see the direction that this popular alternative form of Judaism is taking.

The *Second Jewish Catalogue*, with *The Jewish Yellow Pages*, recently published by the Jewish Publication Society, once again deals with a myriad of topics. At first glance, it performs some very valuable services. For example, in dealing with Jewish divorce (unfortunately, a timely topic) it details the entire procedure of the *get* ceremony, followed by a personal account of someone who experienced it. It is definitely to some benefit that people understand the *get* as a virtual necessity in dissolving a marriage, and the description dispels some of the fear that stems from ignorance.

A chapter on "how to give a *devar Torah*" can guide some inexperienced young Jews in learning how to compose a *drasha*, in how to research the sources and on what a *devar Torah* should accomplish. It could be a wonderful facilitator for the type of interaction that the havura movement seeks.

There is even a chapter entitled "As the Jew Turns: A Guide to Baalei Teshuva." The chapter tells about the various options available to the searcher with names and addresses of such resources as the Bostoner Rebbe in Boston, Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Rabbi Freifeld's Yeshiva, all of the Chabad Houses, as well as nine yeshivos in Israel. Each one is described and "rated" for what it does and does not provide.

The Jewish Yellow Pages section lists addresses and information on a wide variety of Jewish needs, ranging from Adoption Services through Shtreimel Makers to Yiddish organizations.

So Far, So Good . . . But

So far, so good . . . but it is expected that the purchaser of this volume will read further, and before taking the Amtrak express to the Bostoner Rebbe, he will probably imbibe more of *The Second Jewish Catalogue's* neo-traditional *hashkafa* which draws from the tradition, but is also very much part of the contemporary world — warts, corruption and all. The need for Judaism to be “up with the times” while at the same time being highly distinctive and ethnic is a new twist on an old philosophy — of trying to have it both ways, but being faithful to neither Sinai nor Berkeley.

The authors explain the traditional *bris mila*, but then in desperation respond to the feminists' need for equality — “a brit ceremony for baby girls must be created in addition to the Orthodox low-keyed ‘naming ceremony.’” Thus Rabbi Paul Swerdlow creates a *Brit haNerot* — based on the Sinai *bris* of *Devarim* 29:9-14, which included women. Mary Gender, another innovator, has done research on the need for a surgical circumcision by a female “*mohel*” — which as a non-mitzvah surely falls under the prohibition of mutilation. The authors of *The Catalogue*, however, feel that the real “brit” should be the one that Sarah underwent when Abraham was circumcized and, citing a *Me'iri* to prove it, they recommend immersing the eight day old girl in a *mikveh*.

From there *The Catalogue* goes on to describe a *Pidyon Habat*, with appropriate new “brachos” — halachically, profanizations of G-d's name since they are designed to accompany non-mandated “mitzvos.”

As marriage is no longer what it used to be, with so many young people leaving home and living with others long before nuptials, *The Catalogue* proposes a new ritual: a “*havdalah*” ceremony upon leaving home at age eighteen (to separate between *kodesh* and *chol* . . . purity and profanity?).

In a chapter on sexuality, *Catalogue* reaches its zenith. The *halacha* condemns all forms of non-marital relations, but this is totally at variance with the lifestyles of so many young people today. Fidelity and celibacy are irrelevant for these people, so the neo-halachic practice of a “sliding scale” is advocated with a loving relationship at the top (a *mitzvah*) and forced violation of another at the bottom (a sin). Anything in the middle is acceptable if the individual feels comfortable about it. To quote: “This new *halacha* (sic) . . . leads to self-examination and encourages growth.”

The Dangers of Neo-halacha

The dangers of “neo-halachic Judaism” were best described in the words of the pioneer of what is sometimes (erroneously) referred to as Neo-Orthodox

Judaism, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch.

What is to happen today if in obedience to this modern teaching the Jews in all climes and all countries are to reform their Judaism in such a way as to adapt it to the views and customs of their fellow countrymen?

In heaven's name, what kind of monstrosity would it be which passed as Judaism? Can I falsify the Divine measuring rod to suit my own passing needs and then boastfully exclaim: “Look, here is Judaism . . . cut down to the measure of my own weakness”?

If Judaism has been established by G-d then it is destined to teach the age, but not let itself be taught by the age.

“Judaism Up to Date” in *Judaism Eternal*, Soncino Press 1959.

Our Sages noted that the *Mishna* in *Avos* advises us to compare the students of Bilaam with those of Avraham. Sometimes it is not so easy to discern the difference in the first generation. Only after one sees the fruits can one pass judgment on the graftings of foreign branches on the tree.

Throughout the ages attempts have been made to re-make Judaism in the spirit of the age. At first glance many of the innovations of Conservative Judaism were, in their rationalizations, “*horaot shaa*” — decisions for the hour, to deal with the mass defection of Jews from Torah observance. Yet deviationists are never satisfied with initial minor modifications; time marches on, and so do demands. As long as Judaism looks outside of itself for the key to acceptable behavior (*Vi es kristelt zich, azoi jidelt zich*), then ultimately anything can be justified in the name of Jewish survival.

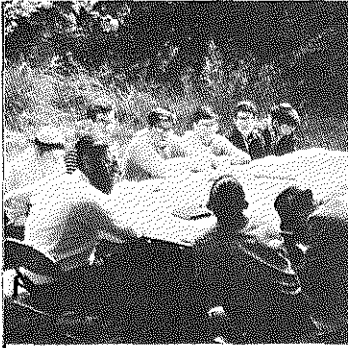
We of the Torah camp must realize that the more extreme tendencies of *The Jewish Catalogue* are not those of a small group of “hippies.” They may well be part of a wave of the future. The non-Orthodox rabbis who will sit on the boards of rabbis in the next generation may make today's look absolutely pious. The current return to tradition, then, may not symbolize a return to *emes* (truth) at all, but a new means of clothing *sheker* (the spurious) in the garments of *emes*. Let us be wary.

On the other hand, we cannot fail to see the confusion and the genuine search for meaning of many of the contributors to this volume. They are groping for ways to return to *Yiddishkeit* while caught up in the lifestyle and credos of the contemporary scene. The popularity of *The Catalogue* shows the potential for real *teshuva*. We need not write our own “catalogue” — we have many. We need not create *havurot* — we have our solid family structure still intact. All we need do is make the warmth and meaningful existence that we live known to these searching souls. It is incumbent on us to search for ways and means to involve more and more American Jews in the experience of living Torah Judaism in America. □

CAMP AGUDAH

Ferndale, New York

over 35 years of experience



where activities are planned to maximize each camper's enjoyment, featuring:

- △ indoor Gym
- △ lighted basketball & handball courts.
- △ olympic size swimming pool
- △ boating on our private lake
- △ new miniature golf course
- △ and much, much more



Special Minyan, learning groups and activities for campers from ages 6 to 8

Camp Bnos — where individualized attention gives each camper that "at-home" feeling



modern bunks with all facilities... experienced counselors with that special warmth that makes a Camp Agudah summer unforgettable

where learning groups are at each camper's level...

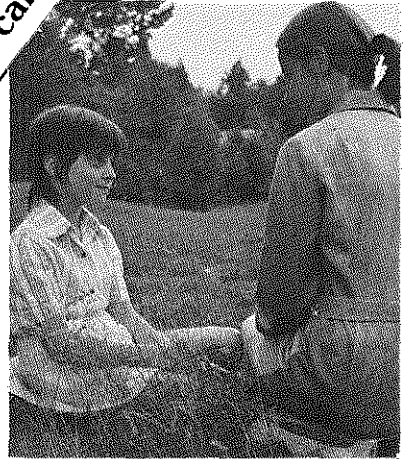
Special Shiurim for Counselors, J.C.'s, S.A.'s and Waiters

Masmidim program with a continuously active Bais Medrash

Developing a warmth for Torah that lasts all year long

plus this year: four new bunks and two completely re-modeled bunk-houses

where campers learn Gemilas Chasodim & Midos from their counselors' example



where campers rub shoulders with Gedolim at Camp Agudah Melave Malkas

plus this year: four new bunks, re-modeled main building & indoor recreation area



where daily activities are designed for the enjoyment of each camper... developing her as a true "Bas Yisroel"

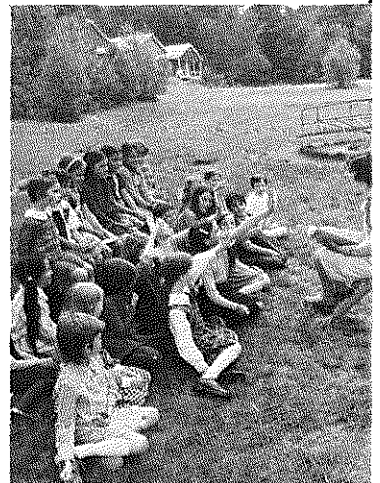
- △ unforgettable night activities
- △ boating in our private lake
- △ Dance and Music Festival
- △ arts and crafts
- △ baseball, volleyball, mach-nayim
- △ and so very much more



Special shiurim given by expert mechanchos

On-going programs in midos development

A ruach that lasts all year long



with thousands of satisfied parents

CAMP BNOS

Liberty, New York

FOR INFORMATION WRITE: CAMP AGUDAH / CAMP BNOS 5 BEEKMAN STREET, N.Y.C. 10038 or call (212) 964-1620



Rational Irrational Man, by Avrohom Amsel (1976, N.Y., P. Feldheim, \$7.95).

Even a cursory examination of the contemporary scene reveals the dominant role of psychology in modern life. Whereas man used to look for guidance to the stars of the philosophers, the quest for absolute philosophical truths has nowadays been found to be futile. Instead, the key to the understanding and molding of human destiny is sought in the study of human nature.

A few years ago, Rabbi Amsel published *Judaism and Psychology*, the first book in the English language aiming to interpret man's behavior in the light of Torah teachings, in contrast to the teachings of the secular psychologists (in Hebrew there exists a volume by Rabbi Abraham Wolf, *Torath Hanefesh*). Rabbi Amsel rendered a real service by pointing out that secular psychology takes a deterministic view of psychic phenomena, stresses the dominant role of the unconscious and, denies the concept of a divine soul, of human freedom of action and therefore, ultimately, of man's responsibility for his deeds. This approach — totally unacceptable to the Torah Jew — has significantly contributed to the erosion of moral values in modern society.

In response to some critics of his work, and to throw further light on his subject, Rabbi Amsel in the present volume clarifies and elaborates upon his ideas; he adds a wealth of additional material, and in particular seeks to put forward a theory of human nature according to Torah teachings. His book should serve as a welcome warning against the theories of human behavior put forward by Freudians and Neo-Freudians, and the therapy which is blindly based on them. At the same time it makes it clear that the Torah has its own view of human nature, and that we must turn to our sacred heritage for guidance in this field.

Very correctly, Rabbi Amsel puts the concept of free will and rational self-determination into the center of his book. He carefully analyzes to what extent man's *negiyos*, habits, and circumstances can limit his freedom of choice — and he stresses that they cannot absolve him from his responsibility for his actions. He is not governed by irrational forces that direct his actions but is a "rational irrational" being — he has the choice over whether to give in to the irrational temptations that bid him go wrong.

Rabbi Amsel underlines the "causal relationship between sin and mental illness," but points out that sin should not be understood in its usual sense. Rather, "individuals who lack faith and trust in God, and have not learnt to accept their lot, induce excessive anxiety which, in turn, can lead to emotional disturbance. If individuals sin in the realm of *midos*, not having acquired the ability to avoid excess in either directions, they will suffer emotional disturbances in proportion to their excess" (p. 15).

The author touches on a large number of topics flowing from his basic theme. It is almost inevitable, in these circumstances, that many of them are only treated cursorily and leave many questions. Thus, for instance, he discusses the relationship between the good and evil instincts and body and soul, but leaves the reader with some rather vague formulations. Are the two instincts' part of the soul or not? Do they have their roots in body and soul respectively? (See *Michtav M'Eliyahu I*, p.71, and *Alei Shur*, p.11, on these questions.)

Rabbi Amsel stresses that *mazal* to some degree "controls certain human behaviors" but does not eliminate human freedom of will (p.44). Most readers would probably benefit from a further clarification of the concept — along the lines of Rabbi Dessler's explanation that *mazal* represents those natural forces and circumstances which circumscribe man's role in the world. The way in which he discharges this role is within his free choice, and may even bring about a change in the role which he is to play.

The concepts of the four chambers of the brain and of the four fluids that affect man's temperament are referred to briefly and leave the reader with un-

ATTENTION SENIORS!

Have you considered Bais Yaakov Teachers' Seminary of Monsey, New York?

- *Excellent Educators*
- *Inspiring Atmosphere*
- *Promoting independence in learning*
- *Full day program*

For applications and information:

Rebbetzin Soloveitchik
Rebbetzin Flam

Bais Yaakov Seminary
11 Smolley Drive
Monsey, N. Y. 10952

PINCUS MANDEL

Re-knowned Expert —

Over 25 Years Experience In
INTERMENT in ALL CEMETERIES
in ERETZ YISRAEL

Expedited in shortest time possible, r'l, with all
HIDURIM — as done ONLY by SHOMREI
TORAH UMITZVOS

KAVOD HANIFTAR THROUGHOUT

Graves in all parts of Eretz Yisrael, obtained
directly from CHEVROS KADISHA of
ESTABLISHED KEHILOS, RESPONSIBLE for their
COMMUNITY-OWNED CEMETERY

Pincus Mandel

175 Lee Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11211
Day and Night Phone (212) 855-5121

Recommended by

most Prominent Orthodox Rabbis and Admorim
A PERSONALIZED, DEPENDABLE, EFFICIENT SERVICE
AT REASONABLE COST

47 Years of Dedicated Cemetery Experience

CHESED SHEL EMES — AN ULTRA ORTHODOX SERVICE

Agudah Member — 49 years.

answered questions. In the same way, the author's statement that "body chemistry is only executor and agent of man's faculty of judgment and free choice" (p. 149) requires further clarifications; the formulation here used must certainly be questioned. The author surely would not deny that man's physical nature imposes some absolute limitations and direct influence upon his ability to function freely and rationally.


It is to be hoped that the author will continue to explore these and the many other aspects of his subject, toward an ever better understanding of the Torah view of human nature and of how to deal with problems of human behavior. A new and enlarged edition of the present volume, would also benefit from an index and the correction of a few very minor errors (thus the famous divorce case quoted took place in Cleve, not in Kalif or Klieva, and Anshbach should be Ansbach).

The Book of Samuel I, a new English translation of the text, Rashi, and a Commentary Digest, by **Rabbi A.J. Rosenberg** (New York, 1976; Judaica Press, \$7.95).

This volume is the second in a new series of commentaries on the *Books of the Prophets* under the imprint of Judaica Press (the *Book of Joshua* appeared previously). It represents yet another, and most valuable, addition to the growing number of works available to the student of Torah who is limited in his use of the Hebrew text and the commentaries.

Rabbi Rosenberg offers us a new translation, based on the traditional understanding of the text; a translation of every comment by Rashi; and a digest of the comments by the other classical commentators. At the same time each page of translation is faced not only by the Hebrew text of the Bible, but by the text of the standard commentaries contained in the *Mikraos Gedolos* edition of the Bible. This means that the student can actually try himself to delve into these commentaries, aided by the translation of the Rashi and by the commentary digest.

The digest is an excellent and workmanlike job and contains many valuable references which the reader can try to follow up and which contribute to the value of this work even for the learned. For instance, the main references are given for the question of whether King Saul was permitted to commit suicide. Abbreviations are used for the names of the commentators (e.g. R for Rashi). This practice is in the interests of conciseness, and is followed by many works; but it may be found by some readers to be burdensome.

A number of features have been added to this volume to give it maximum usefulness — such as a Biblical map, an outline of the main events in the *Book of Samuel*, and an introduction to its salient personalities. It is to be hoped that further volumes in this series will soon become available. 

SCHECHTER'S

KOSHER
GLATT

CARIBBEAN

HOTEL

ENTIRE OCEANFRONT BLOCK — 37th to 38th St. MIAMI BEACH

... is a **GREAT Kosher Hotel** — you'll love it!

• **DIAL
MIAMI
BEACH
FREE!**

Write for FREE brochure
and booklet or call
800-327-8165
FLORIDA AREA CODE
(305) 531-0061

• Private Pool and
Sandy Beach
• Oceanfront
Synagogue
FREE Parking

ARTSCROLL / MESORAH SERIES

announces a new publication, ideal for
organizational fundraising, to be ready in
time for Rosh Hashana mailings. Initial dis-
tribution to be limited to organizations, at
low, quantity-prices.

For information write:

MESORAH PUBLICATIONS
212 FIFTH AVENUE, N.Y.C. 10010
(212) 689-9832

On Participation in the Israeli Elections

As we go to press we view the approaching May election in Israel as affording the religious community an unusual opportunity to enlarge its representation in the Knesset and assert a stronger influence on the complexion of the general society of the Medina. The Torah community has displayed an unusual unity in backing the Agudath Israel slate, and its leadership has assumed an unprecedented degree of involvement in calling out the vote. Among others, the Gerer Rebbe, Rabbi Bunim Alter שליט"א, addressed an assembly of 5,000 of his followers urging them to vote for Agudath Israel and involve others similarly. Rabbi Eliezer Shach, שליט"א, Rosh Yeshiva of Ponvezh in Bnei Brak, also addressed several large gatherings of heads of yeshivos and kolelim in Israel on the same theme. The Rosh Yeshiva's observations touch on several points that have been discussed in previous issues of The Jewish Observer, regarding the advisability of active participation in partisan politics in Israel. The following is a free translation of excerpts from his speech at the gathering:

The Obligation for Involvement

AS PART of the broad Jewish community, we must be actively involved in its affairs. We must do our utmost to increase our representation in the Knesset — to abolish anti-religious legislation, where possible, — and if not, at least to raise their voices in protest. Is it conceivable that laws such as those granting legitimacy to common-law marriage or permitting abortion be passed without some public outcry of protest? ... To sit by idly in the face of such trends is tantamount to being neutral in a war for survival. Remember the Prophetess Devora's denunciation of those who did not join in the Israelites' fight against Canaan: "A curse on the people of

Meroz for not joining in battle in defense of G-d's warriors!" (*Shoftim* 5, 23) The same could well be applied to those who abstain from involvement in our times.

The Prevailing Spirit

The prevailing atmosphere is such that national honor is measured in the most demeaning terms: A basketball team went off to Belgrade for a game, and thousands of people followed in their wake. The Israeli team was victorious, and all pandemonium broke out, people shouting with boundless joy: "The Jewish nation won!" It is possible that amidst these cries of joy, not a sound of protest should be heard to set the record straight? Not a word to declare once and for all that Jewish honor is totally of other factors?

Stop for a moment and weigh the matter: Tel Aviv is a thriving Jewish city with more than 700 synagogues. There is surely a *minyan* of Jews in each of these houses of worship every *Shabbos*, yet in Tel Aviv's *Irya* (Municipal Council) there is only *one* religious representative! Apathy and carping criticism have taken their toll, and as a result, people figure "I'll vote for this or the other party. What difference could it make?" With this type of thinking, Shulamit Aloni and her virulent anti-religious party could even outpoll Agudath Israel! When the opportunity for *Kiddush Hashem* is so obvious, when the circumstances beg for a show of strength, a counting of hands of those who identify with Torah, is a greater *Chillul Hashem* conceivable?

Not My Opinion Alone


This is not simply my own opinion. The Brisker Rav זצ"ל and the Chazon Ish זצ"ל also believed in going to the polls. And I know that זצ"ל the Steipler, Rabbi Yisroel

Yaakov Kaniefsky שליט"א, is also of the firm opinion that one must participate in elections: The more people that vote with us, the more can be accomplished. And even if the net result is only the sounding of protest, that too makes the entire process worthwhile.

One is obligated to assert his influence on his family, friends and associates to join him in voting. I would say that this obligation is so strong that one might well say in this regard: הנוני מוכן ומזומן לקיים את מצות קדוש השם "I am hereby prepared to fulfill the mitzva of *Kiddush Hashem* (sanctification of G-d's name)!"

Thank G-d we are represented by Knesset members who follow the instructions of the Torah leadership. When matters are remiss, they often are capable of correcting them. Other times they cannot do more than register a voice of protest. Whichever it may be, they are much more effective as Knesset members than as lobbyists trying to influence events from outside the Knesset.

True, we are suffering a decline in generations and we do not in any way measure up to our predecessors — not in Torah knowledge, nor in fear of G-d. To be sure, when the Chofetz Chaim founded Agudath Israel seventy five years ago, the leaders were greater than those at the helm today. Nonetheless, we must take heart and encourage one another, as a part of the Agudath Israel Movement.

I am not a political expert, but in the current situation every single vote can make a difference. And every Knesset member will wield decisive power, forcing others to reckon with his demands. It is thus an obligation and a mitzva for everyone to become involved and to do whatever is possible to enlarge the representation of Agudath Israel in the forthcoming Knesset. 

**Announcing
Graduates of
PROJECT COPE'S
Vocational Education Program**

have completed their training
and are available
to fill the following positions:

**Dental Ceramists
Clerk Typists
Computer Programmers
Dental Assistants
Medical Assistants**

* * *

Prospective employers are invited to call

PROJECT COPE

Vocational Education Division,
to avail themselves of
these qualified employees.

Telephone 964-1300

Project COPE

A Division of Agudath Israel of America

Suite 814 / 5 BEEKMAN ST. / NYC 10038

Funded by a CETA Grant Administered by the New York State

Education Department

First there was

The Magic World of Dov Dov

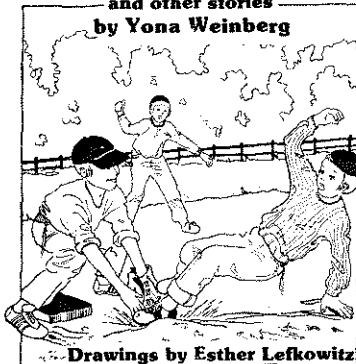
Then came **Dov Dov on the Moon**

and now
for your children's
reading enjoyment

A Homerun for Dov Dov

and other stories

by Yona Weinberg



Drawings by Esther Lefkowitz

with a foreword
by Olomeinu editor
Rabbi Nosson Scherman

- ... very much impressed me ... a superlative and most praiseworthy effort ...
Rabbi Joseph Elias
- your volumes have captured the imagination of mothers everywhere ... your books are written with charm, and are creative ...
Dr. Joseph Kaminetsky
- I was impressed with the high quality and excellence ... delightful and refreshing ... authentic and real ...
Rabbi Pinchas Stolper
- I thoroughly enjoyed ... stories touch the heart ... very realistic ...
Rabbi Joel Kramer

Send \$2.00 to:

**Dov Dov Publications
6111 Biltmore Avenue Baltimore, Md. 21215**

Satisfied with your child's learning this past year?

Concerned about his summer?

Looking for a Day Camp that combines excellent learning programs with superb physical activities?

Then inquire about the . . .

**CAMP MORRIS
CHEDER-DAY CAMP**

Woodridge, New York

(affiliate of Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin)

— where we offer a FULL DAY program geared to meet your child's "Ruchniesdik" and physical needs.

A.M. — Learning under the guidance of dynamic, experienced Rebbeyim, in 'pressure-free' programs . . .

P.M. — Sports activities, including — swimming, trips, hikes, arts & crafts, etc. — with experienced counselors and instructors.

For boys, grades PRE-1A — 8th.

* * * *

ALSO . . . on SEPARATE FACILITIES . . .

CAMP MORRIS DAY CAMP for GIRLS

— the dynamic girls division providing a FULL DAY program of activities for ages 4-13.

* Davening and appropriate learning program; followed by . . .

* A full range of activities, including — sports, swimming, trips, arts & crafts, etc. — with experienced counselors and instructors.

We're not just another Day Camp — we're the summer yeshiva experience you're looking for.

SO . . . give your children a most memorable summer — they will benefit from it an entire year.

* Transportation Provided *

for Information and/or Registration

Call (evenings only)

(914) 434-8258 or (212) 495-9148

(10% discount on registrations before June 1st)

Letters to the Editor



Gershom Mendes Seixas: Typical or Unique?

To the Editor:

In his eagerness to extol the accomplishments of Chazan Seixas (Jan./77), Rabbi Singer overlooked certain facts that should be mentioned. Though popular, Seixas was not the "sole *mohel* of the North-east." To set the record straight: there were others who performed this *mitzvah* with equal dedication, such as Barnard Jacobs, who traveled throughout the colonies for over 40 years. Yet distance sometimes compelled parents to wait until they could take their son to the nearest Jewish community themselves. This practice often resulted in a delay of months, even years, before the *milah* was accomplished.

It was further stated that the colonial period was one "typified by ... *mesiras nefesh* and devotion to Torah." At best, this is only partially true. While dedication to some *mitzvos* is evident in Colonial Jewish life, the same cannot be said of their quality of leadership. Learning was sparse, and the clergy prior to Seixas consisted of such men as Abraham Haim De Lucena, who saw no contradiction in serving Congregation Shearith Israel while contributing to the erection of the steeple on Trinity Church in 1711. With him, six other Jewish merchants added their funds — a fine example of his leadership.

It is a tribute to Chazan Seixas that he did not "typify" Jewish life around him. His education, thanks to Amsterdam-bred Chazan Pinto, was unique in the Colonies. It provided him with basic knowledge

and the fervor to impede the process of assimilation which had already gripped his brethren prior to the Revolution.

It would be absurd to compare Seixas to the European scholars of his day. He differed with them greatly in both learning and attitude. But in the Colonies, he was a phenomenon: a self-taught religious authority for the many settlers who had little to guide them but their traditions. I suggest that we preserve historical accuracy by regarding Chazan Seixas in the context of the people he served, as one of whom it must be said, "*ish tzaddik tamim haya b'dorosav* — a pure and righteous man in his generation."

CHARLOTTE FRIEDLAND
Monsey, N. Y.

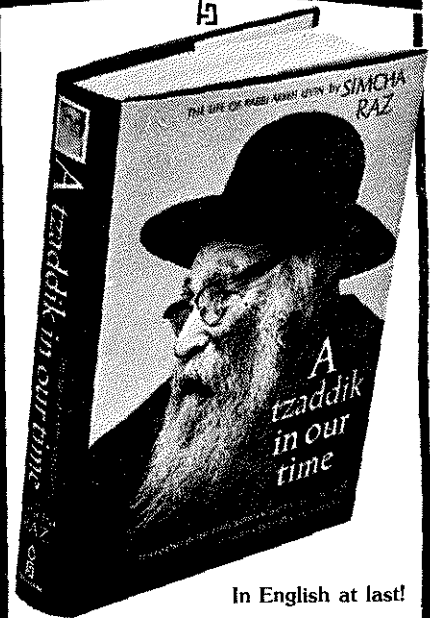
Misquote on Newspaper Reading

To the Editor:

I would like to call your attention to a gross misquote in "The Day Schools, Another View," by Rabbi Meir Belsky (JO Jan. '77). He writes that it is instructive to recall Reb Itzel Peterburger's comment when told that his *talmidim* read newspapers: "If they learn, then it will be no problem, etc." This is not what happened nor what he said.

Reb Itzel asked if it might be acceptable to have the *talmidim* sleep in the Beis HaMidrash rather than dorming out. "Because when they dorm out they might read newspapers." To which he replied: "It is well (for them to sleep in the Beis HaMidrash). However the main thing is to see they learn *Mussar* for without *Mussar*, even if you lock

FELDHEIM BOOKS



In English at last!

The fascinating story of a learned Talmudic scholar who dedicated his life to helping others, especially downtrodden, suffering people — till, under the British Mandate, he became an unsung hero of the imprisoned underground fighters in Israel. Beloved by cabinet ministers and laborers, pious Talmudists and army generals, he became a legend in his lifetime. In Hebrew the book has been a consistent Israeli best-seller. Long awaited in English, here is the heart-warming panorama of a unique, inspiring life (with much added material, profusely illustrated) that will long be remembered. As one reviewer wrote, it is one of the "rare books that cast a purifying influence on the reader, leaving him with the simple, humble resolve to try to be a better person."

472 pages \$12.50

THE KABBALAH: Law and Mysticism in the Jewish Tradition by Alexandre Safran: a thorough presentation by a foremost rabbinic personage of our time. This work unveils the actual meaning of *Kabbalah* for those who live it today. With an original approach, he examines the interaction between the body of hallowed law and the stream of mystic thought in Judaism.

Rabbi Safran's book is now something of a classic. Published originally in French, it was later translated into German, and now it appears in English. 344 pages \$10.95

FELDHEIM PUBLISHERS LTD. | PHILIPP FELDHEIM INC.
39 TACHKEMONI ST., JERUSALEM | 96 EAST BROADWAY, N.Y., 10002

American Life: Shtetl Style
 Stories and Sketches
 by Elkanah Schwartz
 \$2.50 includes shipping
 and postage
 350 Empire Boulevard,
 Brooklyn, N.Y. 11225

Enjoy...

Eat in
 good health!



KOSHER
Empire
 POULTRY

The Most Trusted Name
 in Kosher Poultry
 PREFERRED WORLD-WIDE

This ad was prepared by one of our younger talented counselors. His words echo his true feelings, and are shared by the many enthusiastic campers who spent their summers with us.

WHEN A SUMMER CAMP DOUBLES ITS REGISTRATION ITS SECOND YEAR, REDOUBLES IT AGAIN ITS THIRD YEAR, AND IS SUCCESSFULLY UNDERGOING ITS FOURTH SPECTACULAR YEAR - THAT'S NOT ONLY PROGRESS... IT'S

YESHIVAS HAKAYITZ

Rock Hill, N. Y.

For the best of both worlds - a new pace setter in Torah camping

Pressure-free learning where hand picked professional rebbeim can kindle in your son the flame of Torah (learning - 9:30 - 1)

Where an older bochur takes an active interest in the development of your son.

Where the Ruach is superb in every way

Plus Safrus, Mishnayos Ba'al Peh, Mitzvos Contest, Sheurim in Tanach.

And much much more, all under the guidance of Horav Gershon Weiss.

Overnight Camp from Grade 7 and up (10% discount before May 28)

Shabbos which is truly an Oneg, and the zeal

Plus a Day Camp program (Grade 1 and up) supervised by our experienced staff. Transportation provided from all parts of the mountains by a professional mini-bus fleet.

Many parents feel that Yeshivas Hakayitz greatly contributed to their son's learning the following year. Why not find out for yourself?

For information, call or write:

**YESHIVAS HAKAYITZ / 9108 AVE. B. / BROOKLYN, N.Y.
 (212) 485-2211**



LETTERS CONTINUED

them into the Aron Hakodesh, they will light lights there and read what they desire." This is quoted from Reb Itzel's *Sefer Kochvei Ohr* (page 162).

However, never did he say it is O.K. to read newspapers if you learn. "Let them forget me, but devote themselves to Torah study" was not meant as a *hetter* (dispensation).

JACOB HIRSCHMAN
 Toronto, Canada

Rabbi Belsky replies:

Nowhere do I indicate that Reb Itzel said it "is O.K. to read newspapers." The point I was making was that it doesn't matter whether

the yeshiva *bachurim* sleep at home or in a dormitory - similar to Reb Itzel, to whom it also didn't matter whether they slept in the Beis Midrash or in a home. (His main point was the importance of *Mussar* study, while in my article I stress Torah study, but this is not germane to this discussion).

Nor did I anywhere suggest that: "Let them forget Me, but devote themselves to Torah study, for the light of Torah learning will bring them back" is a *hetter* for anything. But it does suggest a yardstick for priorities.

RABBI MEIR BELSKY
 Rosh HaYeshiva
 Yeshiva of the South
 Memphis, Tennessee

No Flight From Confrontation

To the Editor:

Dr. Twerski's article "In Flight from Confrontation" had a special meaning for me. The observations he made regarding the drain of *kochos hanefesh* as a result of careerism seemed to be appropriately directed towards me. As an ex-yeshiva bachur and present medical student (hopefully still a ben Torah), I have been wrestling with these issues for a number of years.

Dr. Twerski's statement that "a highly successful business or professional career demands an all encompassing devotion and a sense of singlemindedness" need not be the entire story. My devoted parents and faithful Rabbeim always emphasized that medicine was not a goal in and of itself. Together with them, I always envisioned my involvement in the field of medicine as a means of performing *Gemilus Chassodim*, which according to our sages is one of the pillars upon which the universe stands. *Gemilus Chassodim* is not limited, though, to the medical profession. Undoubtedly there are many accountants, lawyers and other professionals who donate of

their time and talents to yeshivos and kehillas where their professional abilities are needed and appreciated. Thus, as in every other endeavor in life, one's professional career may be used in the service of Hashem.

The *chizuk* and *mussar* that I received from my parents and Rabbeim has convinced me of how crucial such guidance may be in one's professional life. In this respect I was fortunate since my yeshiva had a uniquely personal setup. Perhaps other yeshivos would do well to foster such long-term relationship between Rabbeim and their students — not only for those remaining within the yeshiva walls, but also for those venturing without. I have personally witnessed a number of instances where individuals would have benefited immensely from such personal Torah guidance. One may hope that with proper preparation and Torah inspiration many young professionals would begin to view their careers as more than just a profession, but as a "calling" in *Avodas Hashem*.

NAME WITHHELD BY REQUEST

A Challenge to "Flight From Confrontation"

To the Editor:

I would like to take issue with Aaron Twerski's article "In Flight from Confrontation," (March '77). Is there such a creature as a "secular Jew"? A Jew by definition is a Torah Jew — whether or not he falls short of the ideal — or else he is not a Jew. Achieving *kedusha* is a lifetime endeavor, and in most cases, it is not determined by the degree of confrontation or synthesis with the modern world or technology, but by one's sincerity and honesty.

The Jew always lived within his worldly surroundings. The synthesis of Torah with Derech Eretz, not only for the sake of earning a livelihood, is a goal worth pursuing,

and deserves encouragement and stimulation, instead of the biting remarks in the article.

As for the "failure of the synthesis syndrome," is it a failure of Jewish society or of the individual? If a person feels that he failed, I do not understand why he should shout it from the rooftops.

When speaking of the Torah Im Derech Eretz, I mean neither a "Mitzva culture Jew" nor a "Jew that learns, too," but the non-apostrophied Jew, who endeavors to live up, more or less, to what is expected of him. If he fulfills the *mitzvos* and gains steadily in Torah knowledge, *kedusha* will come *eo ipso* to his life. But his life is enriched if his Derech Eretz activities are the outgrowth of his personal interests and inclinations. If the question *What do you want to be?* is answered — a lawyer, — a doctor, this answer is correct: that is what he wants to *be*, not what he wants to *do*. I did not want to *be* a lawyer, I wanted to *be* a teacher. A teacher has a different personal outlook and make-up than a lawyer or a doctor. Others became good doctors, because of inclination and interest. Whether they will become "secular" Jews or Torah Jews depends on the depth of involvement during their basic education at home and at school, and the example that we as companion instructors are able to provide for them. True, if we equate Derech Eretz with careerism, the dangers are obvious. But do we have to assimilate all defects of the secular world in our Torah Im Derech Eretz pursuit?

As we are commanded to study Torah *lishma*, so *l'havdil*, Derech Eretz must be pursued *lishma*. Is it a crime if a doctor wakes up with a first thought of one of his critically ill patients, before *Negelvasser* and *Modeh Ani*? Should he not endeavor to become a master in his field for the sake of his patients, without a sideglance toward professional recognition? Similarly, if one's life essence is to be a Jewish teacher, he should be a good

FELDHEIM BOOKS

Time for some fine Summer learning

Spring and summer, we traditionally return to *Pirkey Avoth* (Ethics of the Fathers), rereading every Sabbath afternoon a chapter of this important Mishnah tractate. Filled with moral sense and wisdom, *Avoth* has always been popular in authentic Jewry, leaving its effect on heart and mind.

For the English reader, Feldheim Publishers offer a stimulating variety of works of commentary and interpretation, that provide everything from inspiring mind-expanding perceptions to entertaining turns of thought, to serious philosophical analysis. Choose some of these titles today, and plan for some fine learning on a Sabbath afternoon:

CHAPTERS OF THE FATHERS by Samson Raphael Hirsch; the master's inimitable translation and commentary, incisive and inspiring (with vocalized Hebrew text). 117 pages \$3.95

ETHICS FROM SINAI by Irving M. Bunim; an eclectic, wide-ranging commentary by a past master of homiletic thought and wit (with vocalized Hebrew text). 3 volumes. Soft cover, \$12.50 / Hard cover, \$25.00

THE HAFETZ HAYYIM ON PIRKEY AVOTH: his distinctive interpretations and explanations, gathered from the full range of his writings; translated by Charles Wengrov. 148 pages \$6.75

THE BAAL SHEM TOV ON PIRKEY AVOTH: the radically profound, mystic approach of the founder of *hasiduth*, culled from the writings of disciples and descendants; translated by Charles Wengrov. 176 pages \$7.50

LIVING JUDAISM by Paul Forchheimer; Maimonides' commentary on *Avoth*, and his Introduction to *Chelek* (*Sanhedrin*, Chap. X), form the basis for a systematic outline of a modern Jewish Philosophy. 240 pages \$7.95

FELDHEIM PUBLISHERS LTD. | PHILIPP FELDHEIM INC.
39 TACHKEMONI ST., JERUSALEM | 96 EAST BROADWAY, N.Y., 10002

**18 AVENUE
SEFORIM & GIFT CENTER**

5001 — 18 Avenue
Brooklyn, N. Y. 11204
(212) 633-9225

- Large selection of ספרים and English Books
- We sell exclusively all lecture tapes of Rabbi Avigdor Miller שליט"א (now available over 250 tapes)

ATTENTION

Brooklyn Apartment House Owners
Experienced management firm will manage your house: all aspects, including rent control stabilization, senior citizen exemptions and many other required forms. Low rates.

For more information call:
Newport Management — 372-2227



LETTERS CONTINUED

teacher. If a teacher does not give his best, he is a criminal.

I did "pay a high price for that," as Twerski phrases it, but I need not apologize. That is what I was created for. Should there be no Jewish teachers, no Jewish doctors, no Jewish businessmen because they have to be tops? — because they do not want to betray the trust put in them?

A Jewish carpenter I knew in Detroit would tell people who talked to him at work: I'm not getting paid for talking to you. With each hammer blow onto his wood chisel this man performed a *mitzva*, adding one rank more to his *kedusha*.

I do not feel inferior waking up

every morning without a *D'var Torah*; nor do I feel guilty that I maintain my interest in geo-physics even in retirement from my "career," and that I read up on recent discoveries in this field to which I owe a good part of my mental make-up. I do not feel the need to reinforce this ideology by a "noise that is deafening, shouting from the rooftops."

Torah Im Derech Eretz is an ideal. If not all reach its highest goals, it does not speak against its value. It is still worth pursuing for the sake of the individual's personality as well as the sake of *Klal Yisroel*.

And now a word regarding editorial hypocrisy. In the same edition that Twerski attacks the endeavor of synthesis with the accusation that we missed up our priorities, a book review praises ArtScroll publications. Isn't there also a shift in priorities? But let me ask, where would we find people who in "soaring prose achieve new heights in inspired eloquence, bringing together *hashkofa* from a number of sources" if not through *Torah Im Derech Eretz*? If the ArtScroll publications are a praiseworthy undertaking, let us stop pulling the rug from underneath their feet, by declaring that that achievement was reached by a "mistake."

At a *Siyum* we give thanks to Hashem for not putting our portion with those that hang out (the modern "*yoshvei*") on street corners. Geophysics, *Boruch Hashem*, is not under that label. I am grateful to Him that gave me the opportunity of this sythesis as a Jewish geophysicist and to be among *Yoshvei Beth Hamidrash*. I regret that a lifetime is not enough to imbibe all the "fresh waters of Torah"; and so do I regret that I am restricted in my knowledge to little bits out of mathematics and physics. I am grateful for the fact that I have the opportunity to learn *Seder Zerayim* in *Chavrusa* with a

TRADITION PERSONNEL — HCUC

"At Your Service With All Your Employment Needs"

Need A Shomer Shabbos Job?

Looking For A Shomer Shabbos Person?

For Fast, Efficient and Courteous Service

18 W. 45th St., New York, N. Y. 10036 • 563-3994



ATTENTION MECHANCHIM

Hebrew Academy of Cleveland
Publication Department offers
50 educational items for
Hebrew Day Schools

- * Curricular manuals, guides,
- * Workbooks (reduced sample at left)
- * Visual aids, maps, and many others

Catalogue sent upon request

Send .50 for handling to:

**HEBREW ACADEMY
PUBLICATIONS DEPT.**

1860 South Taylor Rd.
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118



חוברת עזר לפרשיות
תרומה - תצורה
עובדה ופנייה
ע"י
יוסף גיזלס

שם המלא (ה')

כתר

בית הספר

Hebrew Academy of Cleveland — בית חינוך עברי

medical doctor and a physicist, and attend a *shiyur* in *Daf Yomi*. I am also grateful for having been associated during my Hamburg period of life with an outstanding "Jewish art teacher" who inspired me to dream about creative art projects. Confusing? Have I the right order of priorities? Nevertheless, I give thanks for being amongst those who pursue the ideal of Torah Im Derech Eretz without apologies.

Dr. HUGO MANDELBAUM
formerly, Principal Yeshivath Beth
Yehudah, Detroit, Mich.
Prof. of Geology, Emeritus in re-
tirement from Wayne State Univ.
Detroit, Mich.
currently in Jerusalem

Dr. Twerski replies:

Not a Question of Torah Im Derech Eretz

In his sharp critique of my article, Dr. Mandelbaum assumes that I attack Torah Im Derech Eretz as an ideology, which I do not. I am only concerned with the tendency of Derech Eretz — if you wish to call it thus — to become the all-pervasive and dominant force in our lives. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch valued Derech Eretz as the handmaiden of Torah, not as its equal as Dr. Mandelbaum seems to suggest. Hirsch would never have equated scientific pursuit with dwelling in the Bais Hamidrash. To fully answer Dr. Mandelbaum's contention, however, would call for a comprehensive analysis of the Torah Im Derech Eretz ideology and its meaning in our time. This must wait for another day.

In my article, I contended that the circumstances in America are such that Derech Eretz, in the form of careerism, emerges as a senior partner to Torah — a condition no one should welcome. And I fear that my observations of the Jewish scene in America are quite accurate, for since the appearance of the article, I have been approached by hundreds of *bnai Torah* who share my dilem-

ma and who view the national Torah picture as seriously in trouble. Yes, Dr. Mandelbaum, there are tens of thousands of hyphenated American Jews whose future Yiddishkeit is in peril. Lack of Torah consciousness has permitted them and their children to slip away from the image of a Torah Jew so that it is hard to differentiate much of their behavior from that of their non-religious brethren. And if we are not careful, that fate can befall us, too, for this country is, in a sense, an *eretz ocheles yoshve'ha* — a land that consumes its inhabitants. Its cultures and values, its morals and mores can and will devour us if we do not place our priorities in order. In the context of this *nisayon*, ideological debate regarding the fine points of Torah Im Derech Eretz is not on the agenda. My discussion was simply an attempt to deal with the realities of the battle for survival. The test of the piece, then, is only that it describe the conflict honestly.

AARON TWERSKY

Who Was the Real Novardoker?

To the Editor:

Chaim Shapiro has once again brought alive the past generation ("The World of Novardok" Mar. '77). Let his articles keep on coming! There is one point, though, that may need some clarification:

How does the life that has "poverty, tattered clothing, and general negation of this world" as the "in" style concur with the "three decent suits which hung in the yeshiva closet for a young man to wear when going on a *r'eya* — to meet a prospective wife"?

Who was the *real* Novardoker? — The one who dressed in the "in" style or the one who wore the "false" *levush*? Was he trying to deceive his future *eishes chayil* regarding his real self, hiding the truth from the one with whom he was to build his *bayis ne'emon*?

FELDHEIM BOOKS



CHALLENGE: Torah Views on Science and its Problems Edited by Aryeh Carmell and Cyril Domb: thirty four essays on aspects of "Science and Judaism" by outstanding Torah-true writers, including many scientists.

The theme that runs through the book is that there is no conflict between Torah and science. On the contrary, Torah and science are good working partners. If there is a challenge, it is from Torah to the hasty assumptions and unwarranted conclusions of some scientists. Pinpointing these mistakes is the task many of these authors have set themselves. 536 pages \$10.00

PENTATEUCH: With Targum Onkelos, Haphtaroth and Rashi's Commentary translated into English Translated and Annotated by A.M. Silbermann and Associates: if you really want to learn the Torah with Rashi, this is the ideal edition for layman, and especially for all beginners.

It features: Hebrew text of the Torah in large print, with English translation; Rashi in Hebrew (*menukad*), with full vowel marks; and most important, the Rashi rendered into English by A.M. Silbermann and Associates, amplified by their invaluable explanatory remarks, footnotes, and appendix.

5 volumes. 2,544 pages \$29.95

RATIONAL IRRATIONAL MAN: Torah Psychology by Aurohom Amsel: an original book with a comprehensive theory of human behavior within the framework of Judaism: A blueprint of a Torah Psychology, methods of treating mental and emotional disturbances, and coping with everyday problems: raising children, marital problems, etc. The author points out how secular Freudian psychology clashes with Torah Psychology and the true definition of the "unconscious."

This work of urgent importance is endorsed by foremost Rabbinical and psychological authorities. 336 pages \$9.95

MY SOUL THIRSTS by Zalman Aryeh Hilsenrad: the noted columnist and author has written, in his appealing style, interesting stories of pious men, parables and penetrating insights into the significance of our Torah heritage. 370 pages \$8.95

FELDHEIM PUBLISHERS LTD. PHILIPP FELDHEIM INC.
39 TACHKEMONI ST., JERUSALEM 1 96 EAST BROADWAY, N.Y., 10002

"GRUNWALD" SHAS

Attention All Chasanim!
A Shas You Buy Once in a Lifetime

This is your opportunity to acquaint yourself with the most beautiful edition of a full size shas. The paper and binding are the finest and strongest in the perfect dimensions 16¼ x 11¼.

AT THE MOST REASONABLE PRICE EVER OFFERED

ASK YOUR DEALER FOR THE "GRUNWALD" SHAS

Also just arrived the 15 volume encyclopedia Talmudic price \$8.25 per volume.

M. S. SPIEGEL
90 Eldridge Street, N.Y.C. 226-4331

Notice of Non-discrimination Policy as to Students

Young men of the Jewish faith are admitted as students with all rights and privileges to

**YESHIVA TORAS CHAIM
TALMUDICAL
SEMINARY/DENVER**

1400 Quitman Street
Denver, Colorado 80204
without regard to race, color,
national or ethnic origin.



LETTERS CONTINUED

If the "in" style was good enough for "שויתי ד' לגנדי תמיד" — to serve G-d, should it be cast aside just to make an impression on someone who is influenced by "arrogance, pride and stupid *ga'avo*"?

Didn't Novardok devote some effort in training its own daughters, too?

YAAKOV PRESSMAN
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Chaim Shapiro replies:

Inside Novardok

Nothing can hurt a poet more than a misprinted word, and nothing can hurt an article more than "shortening." And my editor, *zol zein gezunt*, like a baker of pies, believes the more "shortening" the better!

Do you think for a moment that Novardok would *cholilo* transgress a *Chazal* (a rabbinical dictum)? How then could they ignore the *Chazal*: "It is shameful for a *talmid chacham* to go out to the market place in tattered shoes... A *talmid chacham* with a stain on his clothing merits the death penalty" (*Shabbos* 114a). Did the Roshei Yeshiva in Novardok wear tattered clothes? What about *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*?

The Novardok Yeshiva was not only a house of Torah study, but also, quite literally a workshop for constructing a person, polishing his *midos* (— a word impossible to translate properly; "character" is a poor attempt), breaking his habits and entirely changing his outlook on the world. As the Alter used to say, one who learns *Mussar b'kol rom* (in a loud voice), but fails to change his *midos* is like the thief who sees the crowd screaming "*chap dem ganev* (catch the thief!)"

For a BETTER job, you need BETTER training



Register NOW for the 6 month course in
Executive Secretarial Training

Tuition subsidies for eligible applicants
stipends for participants over 40

at **COPE VOCATIONAL INSTITUTE**
A DIVISION OF AGUDATH ISRAEL OF AMERICA
LICENSED BY THE NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
5 Beekman Street, New York City 10038
FOR INFORMATION, PHONE IMMEDIATELY **964-1300**

RABBI JOZEF KATZ
83 Division Avenue

AND

MARK LOVINGER
Brooklyn, N. Y. 11211

OF

Parkside Garden Caterers

ALL LEADING HOTELS BANQUET HALLS
AND JEWISH CENTERS AVAILABLE

ג ל א ט כ ש ר

388-4204

388-3590

863-8892

• Caterer for Agudath Israel Conventions and Dinners •

and joins them in shouting while hiding, entrenched, among the people.

For this purpose of *midos* modification, a methodology was devised, and prescribed to each individual according to his own weaknesses: Boys from rich or comfortable families would every so often receive a package from home with cookies, cake, and fruits. You would expect the boy to eat it — all by himself, or at most with his

friends. Instead, in an act of real *shviras haratzon* (breaking one's will), he would place it on the table declaring it *hefker* — renouncing ownership. He was certainly not told to do so. This resulted from an interior struggle which climaxed in the pronouncement "*hefker*."

Tattered clothes was a method of overcoming *ga'avo* (arrogance), of *bitul* (nullifying, negating) the world. But for *Shabbos Kodesh* each one did have a suit — true, not

The Sefer "Geder Olom"
by the
Chofetz Chaim,
now available in
English translation
only \$.35 per copy
10 for \$2.50
write to:
Zichron Shlomo Publ.
5 Beekman St., N.Y.C. 10038

MOVING?
Be sure to notify us in advance so that your copies will continue to reach you. The U.S. Postal Service will not forward magazines to your new address.

One of
**WORLD'S LARGEST
CAMERA STORES**
שומר שבת



**Wall Street
Camera Exchange**
Complete Line of Cameras
and Photo Supplies
82 WALL STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y.
Telephone: (212)344-0011
— Wholesale — Mail Order — Retail
Special Reductions to all
Readers of
THE JEWISH OBSERVER

ISRAEL
Burials and American Disinterments
שְׁמֵת שְׂאוֹלוֹתַי

announces that RIVERSIDE continues to be the only licensed funeral director in the U.S. able to effect

Transfer to Israel within the same day
Har Hazeitim Har Hamenuchoth

And all Cemeteries in Israel
RIVERSIDE also is available as the

Sole agent for Sanhadrea Cemetery
RIVERSIDE only can offer this service

Enroute to Israel within the same day

- Strict adherence to Halacha and Minhagim.
- Arrangements made during lifetime with no obligation
- Chapel secured in any community

RIVERSIDE
Memorial Chapel, Inc. / Funeral Directors

MANHATTAN:
180 West 76th St. (at Amsterdam Ave.) N.Y., N.Y. / EN 2-6600
BROOKLYN: 310 Coney Island Ave. (Ocean Parkway at Prospect Park)
Brooklyn, N.Y. / UL 4-2000
BRONX: 1963 Grand Concourse (at 179th St.) Bronx, N.Y. / LU 3-6300
FAR ROCKAWAY: 12-50 Central Ave., Far Rockaway, N.Y. / FA 7-7100
And The Westchester Riverside Memorial Chapel, Inc.
21 West Broad Street, Mt. Vernon, N.Y. / (914) MO 4-6800

Chapels in Miami, Miami Beach, Hollywood, Sunrise, Florida
Carl Grossberg / Andrew Fier / Solomon Shoulson



For generations a symbol of Jewish Tradition.

**TORAH SCHOOLS FOR ISRAEL
CHINUCH ATZMAI**

40,000 students in 200 Talmud Torah & Beth Jacob elem. schools 140 Kindergartens, 24 Jr.H.S.-Mesivtos, 2 Teachers Institutes.

Facts You Should Know About Torah Schools

3,000 employees' salaries through Chinuch Atzmai: teachers, supervisors, secretaries, maintenance men.

\$1,300,000 needed to cover costs of educational programs for the rest of the school year.

CHINUCH ATZMAI TORAH SCHOOLS
world Jewry's greatest united effort for Torah Education the very base of religious life in the Holy Land.

Join in making Torah in Israel secure

Torah Schools for Israel — Chinuch Atzmai
167 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016
Tel. (212) 889-0606

Gentlemen:

I hereby pledge the sum of of \$..... as my contribution in answer to the current emergency appeal.

() Amount enclosed () Kindly mail statement

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Contributions are tax exempt — Tax ref. BK-EO-60-46



Adopt A Special Child
 Jewish children with handicaps need warm, loving Orthodox homes to give them a fair chance in life. Can you provide a permanent home for such a child?

For further information call:
 (212) 851-6300

CHILDREN'S HOME
OHHEL

4907-16th Ave.
 Brooklyn, N.Y. 11204
 (212) 851-6300

"The only professional child care agency under Orthodox Jewish Auspices in the U.S.A."

Canadian readers are advised either to subscribe at the overseas rate of \$1 additional per year, or to indicate on their checks that the \$7.50 payment is to be made in U.S. funds.

Come To

Kosher Country
 Ⓢ glatt Supervised

Formerly Kosher King
 1501 Surf Ave., Coney Island
 Whitehead Hall Brooklyn College



LETTERS CONTINUED

the best or the fanciest, but good enough by their standard. And once a Novardoker married and became a *Rav*, *Rosh Yeshiva*, or *baal-habayis*, did he *cholilo* wear tattered clothes? Certainly not. But inside, his *neshama* was polished and he looked down on the world, as if all its glittering attractions and luxuries were nothing but wrappings of "tattered clothes" — the world full of *nisyosnos*, and *ta'avos* (temptations and desires), full of *hashchoso* and bad *midos* (destructive drives).

If one went for a *r'eya* (date), he could surely explain the Novardok outlook on the world, but how can

one make a "sale" in tattered clothes? And what is a date for, if not to present one's self well, to "sell" one's self?

Incidentally, judging by several personal queries, two other points in the article seemed to have suffered from brevity: Menashe's silence in the face of his younger brother's precedence (spoken of in the exchange at the *birze*) was so valued because many another man had fallen from very high — like *Korach*, the *Meraglim*, *Yerovom*, *Shaul*, *Yoav*, (see *Mesilas Yeshorim*, Chapter 11) — because of arrogance, but not Menashe. Also, in *Bereishes* (36,7) "And he (Eisav) went to a land away from Jacob his brother"; explains Rashi: "Because of shame, for he had sold his birthright." Eisav was then over one hundred years old, yet he could not forget nor forgive something he had done as a teenager. — But not Menashe!

Also, my speculation as to how "the Alter's call to abandon material benefits would affect the inflated *nadan* market in some circles" was also misinterpreted. There is surely nothing wrong with a young man accepting a *nadan* to enable him to continue his Torah study during married life.

But what does an inflated demand refer to — the value of his Torah? The Torah is priceless. Then the price is an assessment of the size of his *ga'avo* (arrogance), *chemdas hamomon* (avarice), and *katnus emuno* (lack of faith).

CHAIM SHAPIRO
 Baltimore, Md.

David Did Not "Sin"

To the Editor:

I read your article "Judging in Daily Life" (JO, Feb-Mar 77) with great interest.

As much as I enjoyed the article and the relevant examples cited, I couldn't help but be taken aback by one sentence on page 24. It was either a mistake, or that depth in

that topic was being taken for granted on the part of the readers: "When David sinned with Bathsheva, the Prophet Nossan told him . . ." Since when did David sin with Bathsheva?

I believe that a blunt statement like that, with no further explanation following it, is a direct offense to Chazal who stress ... "Kol ha'omer David chatta, ein ella to'eh" (It is a mistake to say that David sinned).

It was not for nothing that Nos-

קיבוץ דיני שבת כולל דיני ערב שבת (הכנת שבת), הדלקת נרות, קידוש וכו', סעודות שבת, ל"ט מלאכות, דיני מוקצה, דיני חולה ורופאה בשבת וכו'.

כתוב בלשון צח וקל להבין וכמעט בלי ראשי תיבות, ובסוף הספר מובא המקורות של הלכות וגם תרגום מלים קשות, כולל בערך 170 עמודים.



A clear presentation of important dinim relating to Shabbos, with the 39 Melachos explained in sequence. Lucid, easy to understand Hebrew, with few abbreviations and a glossary.

A practical guide to knowing and observing *Dinei Shabbos*. Sequence of material and arrangement on the page make it an invaluable teaching tool for Yeshivos and Seminaries.

First Edition	Elul 5734
Second Edition	Teves 5735
Second Edition Hard Cover	Adar 5736
Third Edition — Reset	Elul 5736
Fourth Edition	Adar 5737

Available At Hebrew Bookstores.

Distributors:
 J. Biegeleisen / 83 Division St. / N.Y.C. 10002
 R. Scharf / Brooklyn, N.Y. / (212) 633-0573
 Feldheim Books / Jerusalem
 Lehmann Books / Gateshead, England
 Or:
 Rabbi J. Posen / 700 W. 178th St. / N.Y.C. 10003

PRICE: \$3.95 (Postage etc. 35¢
 FREE OFFER: (Limited amount left over from second hard cover edition) available to anyone interested to join the many baalei batim who learn from the *Sefer*, at the Shabbos table. (Send 35¢ for postage to author).

son Hanavi rebuked him — no doubt; but I remember learning that the sin of David was something of a different nature. Was it not? I can still hear my *mechanchim* stating and emphasizing over and over again, "David did not sin with Bathsheva."

I believe that if a statement like that is to be made, an explanation

should follow. Or is it perhaps that the topic is just brought as a note of reference and that you take it for granted that the reading public sees it in the right light? I hope so.

DRAIZEL WAXMAN
 Montreal, Quebec

The sentence should have read:
 "When David sinned in regard to Bathsheva . . ."
 N.W.

BAIS KAILA

Torah Preparatory High School For Girls
 Lakewood, New Jersey 08701

**Learn Where
 Torah Is A Way Of Life
 Here...BAIS KAILA feels it
 possible to provide the Ultimate
 In Education For Young Women**

Utilizing the unusual educational resources of our community, we select the most experienced and dedicated educators. A challenging, well-rounded learning experience results, assuring excellence in both Jewish and secular studies.

HEBREW STUDIES

- Extensive enrichment; in-depth research
- Relevance to daily life

Teachers are selected, licensed graduates of leading seminaries in Israel, England and the United States.

SECULAR STUDIES

- Licensed secular staff
- Oriented in Torah spheres

An intensive secular education that does not conflict with basic Jewish heritage.

LEARNING PLUS!

Health & Physical Education

- Life Saving Instruction leading to acquisition of Red Cross certificate
- First Aid Techniques
- Driver Education Theory
- Team & Individual Sports

Interpersonal Experience

Training in LEADERSHIP and DEVELOPMENT of INNATE TALENTS are of utmost importance for the adolescent. A qualified counselor guides and supervises the student council, clubs, committees and presentations.

Home Economics

- Sewing
- Music Appreciation
- Needlecraft & Embroidery
- Cooking
- Art & Design
- Consumer Education

Business Education

- facilitating greater vocational opportunity
- Typing
- Bookkeeping
- Stenography
- Speedwriting

Ethics & Moral Values

direct inspiration of the lofty moral and ethical teachings of our tradition; the very areas which contemporary society tends to eliminate.

Algebra • English • Journalism • Literature • World History • Parshas Hashovva • Pirkei Avos • Beur Tefilla • Dinim • Trigonometry • Biology • General Science • Geometry • Composition • Hebrew • Jewish History • Chumash • Calculus • Chemistry • Physics • Public Speaking • Jewish Literature • Hebrew Conversation & Grammar • Jewish Philosophy • Jewish History • Chumash

Bais Kaila Educational Philosophy

With SMALL CLASSES, INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION and WARM TEACHER-PUPIL RELATIONSHIPS, an atmosphere of UNDERSTANDING, DEVOTION and MUTUAL RESPECT prevails. Each girl is motivated to reach her greatest potential, spiritually, intellectually, socially and emotionally, so that upon graduation she epitomizes a Bas Yisroel of the highest calibre in every sense of the word.

Rabbi Shmuel Mayer
Menahel

Rabbi Yisroel Schenkolewski
Dean

Mrs. Esther Geattel Krishevsky
Principal

For further information and registration, apply to Bais Kaila Torah Preparatory High School for Girls, P.O. Box 952, Lakewood, N.J. 08701 or call (201) 364-3002.



LETTERS CONTINUED

JO Readership

To the Editor:

You are to be commended for the extraordinary quality of your readership. This is indicated by

their overwhelming response to our ad in the Jan. and March issues of *The Jewish Observer*, wherein we appealed for assistance for a most heart-rending case involving a family of nine, who, within seven years, lost both their father and mother. As an example of the type of response we received, a businessman from the Monticello, N.Y. area, not only felt the need to participate in this mitzva, but was compelled to contact his friends and business associates, and sent a substantial amount in \$18 and \$36

checks. . . . A U.S. Army chaplain in Georgia sent us the money he collected on base for *Machatzis Hashekel*. . . . Bachurim from various yeshivos, here and in Canada, collected funds from among themselves, and sent in checks for odd amounts.

It is clear that your readers understand the true meaning of *tzed-daka vachessed*.

YONOSON ISRAEL
Mifal Tzeddaka VaChessed
Brooklyn, New York

If you read Yiddish--you will find a rich treasure of Hashkovo and inspiration in the two special Publications of the popular yiddish magazine *DOS YIDDISHE VORT*.

**גערער רבי זצוק"ל
Memorial Issue**

Featuring a treasury of biographical material on the late Gerrer Rebbe זצ"ל, as well as topical essays on Chassidus, personal recollections and a collection of striking photographs. A momentous issue that no Jewish home should be without. Single copy, while they last: only \$2.00.



שבועות אלמאנאך

This popular anthology contains articles and essays on the significance of Shavuos written by Gedolei Torah and Orthodox writers and thinkers. Many of the essays are out-of-print or not readily available. Only \$2.00 per copy

- ESSAYS BY:
- הגי"ר שמשון רמאל הויז
 - הגי"ר עקיבא אליי ראבינשוויץ
 - הגי"ר אהרן קאטלער
 - הגי"ר אהרן מאיר בלאך
 - הגי"ר יחזקאל ליב צירלסאן
 - הגי"ר חיים עזר גראדעווסקי
 - הגי"ר מאיר שפירא
 - הגי"ר אהרן קאטלער
 - הגי"ר אהרן מאיר בלאך
 - ד"ר נתן בירנבוים
 - ד"ר יצחק ברויער

The SHAVUOS ANTHOLOGY is ideal for every Jewish reader. There is within its pages a mine of source material for rabbis, public speakers, and educators. It will be enjoyed by every member of your family: man, woman, and child. The Shavuos Anthology is published by the Orthodox Library of DOS YIDDISHE VORT.

You may get both these publications free if you enter an annual subscription to *DOS YIDDISHE VORT*. Subscription fee, usually \$8.00 per year, only \$6 for new subscribers. (Use the following coupon for your convenience.)

- Dos Yiddishe Vort / 5 Beekman St. / New York City 10038
- Enclosed is \$2. Please send me a copy of the *Gerrer Rebbe Memorial Issue*.
 - Enclosed is \$2. Please send me a copy of the *Shavuos Anthology*.
 - Please send me the *Gerrer Rebbe Issue* and *Shavuos Anthology* FREE. Enclosed is \$6 for my annual subscription to your magazine, *Dos Yiddishe Vort*.

Name

Address

City, State Zip

Yeshiva Yarchei Kallah

Announcing the 7th Annual Yeshivas Yarchei Kallah in Beth Medrash Gevoha, Lakewood, N.J.

A unique opportunity to recapture the intensive Torah study experience of Yeshiva days!

From: Sunday 16 Av / July 31

To: Thursday Eve, 27 Av / August 11

מסכת דכלה מסי' מכות, פרק א'

מגידי שיעור:

שליטי"א Horav Simcha Schustal

שליטי"א Horav Leib Taub

Also: Guest Roshei Yeshiva will deliver דברי חיווק

Complete Learning Program, featuring:

פילפול חברים שיעורי עיון daily סדרים 3

Participants are invited to bring their families.

All Beth Medrash Gevoha Facilities (fully air-conditioned) are available for Yarchei Kallah participants.

■ The following optional activities are scheduled for the families' interest:

- A day camp program for children
- Shiurim for women
- Swimming

Applications only accepted for the entire eleven-day period.

For application and additional information please call:

N.Y.C.: Rabbi Aaron Pam (212) 441-6399

Lakewood: Rabbi Yisroel Kellner (201) 363-1761

Rabbi Ezriel Sonnenschein (201) 367-7259

or Rabbi J. Perilstein (201) 367-4526

Or write: Yeshiva Yarchei Kallah

128-18 Hillside Avenue / Richmond Hill, N.Y. 11418

Six years of rejuvenated and inspired Yarchei Kallah participants are our most effective endorsement.

TORAH SCHOLARS CALL FOR VOTE FOR AGUDATH ISRAEL KNESSET SLATE

Jerusalem — A powerful call to religious Jews to support the Agudath Israel slate in the forthcoming Knesset elections was issued this week by a group of the foremost Torah authorities in Israel, headed by the Rosh Yeshiva of Ponovezh Rabbi Eliezer Schach, the Gerer Rebbe Rabbi Simcha Bunim Alter, the Rosh Yeshiva of Mir Rabbi Chaim Schmulevitz, and the Vishnitzer Rebbe Rabbi Moshe Yehoshua Hager. These universally respected Torah leaders stated that the "representatives of Agudath Israel through their representation in the Knesset have glorified G-d's name."

In their proclamation, the members of the Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah (Council of Torah Sages) stated:

"With their penetrating vision and out of their concern for the Torah nation, the Gedolei Yisroel of the previous generation

established a movement to preserve our heritage from Sinai: Agudath Israel, which perpetuates the chain of generations and carries the Torah banner with pride. This has special significance in our current era of deteriorating values and the pervasion of harmful ideologies that has affected so many of our people.

As we approach the Knesset elections, we are called upon to evaluate the virtual life threat that Torah Jewry is now facing. For now more than ever, the viability of an independent Jewry in the Holy Land is at stake. The Torah giants of the previous generation had already articulated the obligations for mass participation in the elections. Whoever refrains from doing so, weakens the effectiveness for those who fight on behalf of Torah, and, on the other hand, further enhances the power of the secularist camp.

We are fulfilling the charge of those that preceded us and call to all who bear the name of Jew with pride to strengthen the effectiveness of the representatives of Agudath Israel who, throughout their representation in the Knesset, have glorified G-d's name; and to vote for this column, which is faithful to the Torah counsel and responds without compromise to the decision of the Torah leadership of our generation. It is also incumbent upon each and every Jew to also involve himself in the success of Agudath Israel in the forthcoming elections so as to enhance *Kavod Shomayim* and *Kavod Torah*.

Numerous rallies have been taking place in Israel in the recent weeks addressed by distinguished Roshei Yeshivos and Chassidic leaders. Among them, the news media focused upon a huge mass meeting on Sunday April 24, attended by 5,000 Chassidim of the Gerer Rebbe, who mobilized their forces to work intensively for the success of the Agudath Israel slate in the Knesset elections. The Gerer Rebbe, Rabbi Simcha Bunim Alter, personally participated in the Agudath Israel election rally, expressing his greetings to the gathered.

10,000 TORAH HOURS STUDIED IN PIRCHEI LEARN-A-THON

More than 500 youngsters from yeshivos and Talmud Torahs from coast to coast studied 10,000 extra-curricular hours of Torah in the seventh semi-annual National Hasmodah Contest this past *Pesach* in a program sponsored by Pirchei Agudath Israel of America. This unique project of the Agudist youth movement is held twice a year, over the holiday seasons of *Succos* and *Pesach*, to encourage youngsters to spend their vacation time in Torah study, and as a means of preparing them to assume self-responsibility in Torah without supervision.

Cities with an appreciable number of participants included St. Louis, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Wilkes-Barre, Lakewood, Clifton, Trenton, Passaic, Elizabeth, Plainfield, Brunswick, West Orange, Hillside, Monsey, and all section of New York City. The youngsters, ranging in age from 8 and 16, studied between 10 and 125 hours each, with 10 boys topping the list with over 100 hours.

The contest winners will officially receive their prizes in a festive celebration on May 29, in which close to 500 members of Pirchei Agudath Israel are expected to participate. Similar gatherings in the past encouraged many youngsters to become involved in the various Torah contests sponsored by Pirchei Agudath Israel of America. Rabbi Eliyohu Steger served as chairman of the Hasmodah Contest and Avrohom Portowitz served as co-chairman.

**קריאת קודש מטעם גדולי ישראל
למען רשימת יהדות התורה - אגודת ישראל
מי לה' אלינו!**

מנחת יוסף תשי"ז

גדולי ישראל ברוך עבר, בראיית החודרת ומתוך דאגתם לעם התורה, יסדו את המגזר המון על מורשת סיני. היא תנועת אגודת ישראל, הממשיכה את שרשרת הדורות, נושאת בנאון ובעוז את זלג התורה, במיוחד בתקופה זו של התנוססות ערכים והשקפות עולם, כאשר האידיאות הפסולות שהיו נחלת רבים כרונו ונכלו.

בימים אלו — לקראת הבחירות לכנסת — קוראים אנו לערוך את חשבון נפש של היהדות האמפית המתייבשת למערכת מחדשת נדב תקמים על תורת משה, והפעם — יותר מתמיד — מוטל על כך המאונים עתיד קיומה העממי של היהדות החרדית בארץ הקודש. כבר הורו נאני וקדושי קמאי זוק"ל על חובת ההשתתפות בבחירות בחמונים וכל הנוגע מכך גורם ריבון כוחם של יראי ה' מתד ומחזק בזה ידי החילוניים למיניהם מאדן.

אי לואת שליחותא דקמאי קעבדין והננו קוראים לכל אשר בשם ישראל יכונה לחזק את ידיהם של נעניי אגודת ישראל רשימה ג', אשר מאז ומעולם קידשו שם שמים בהופעותיהם בכלנסת, ולהצביע עבור רשימה זו שהיא נאמנה לדעת תורה והנשמעת ללא סיג להוראות רבותינו גדולי הדור רועי ישראל האמיתיים. יחד עם זה מוטלת החובה על כל אחד ואחד לערוך ולהשפיע גם על אחרים שיתנו ידם להצלחת אגודת ישראל, למען ותקדש ויתרום כבוד שמים וכבודו של תורה.

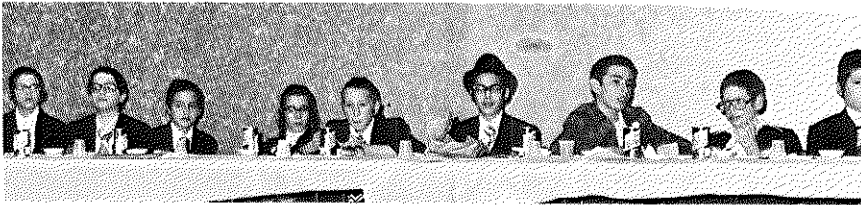
לבו שמוך ובוטח כי ככל שידל ליוניו של מלך ויתרבו המצביעים עבור רשימה ג' יתחזק כוחה של יהדות התורה וברוך אשר יקים את דברי התורה הזאת!

בתקווה ותפלה כי בזכות העמדת הדת על תלה נזכה בקרוב ממש להיטאל מגלותנו ולקבל פני משיח צדקנו בבי"א

אלעזר מנחם מן שך (ראש ישיבת פוניב'ז) (האדמו"ר מגור)	שמחה בונם אלטר (האדמו"ר מגור)	חיים שמואלבך (ראש ישיבת מיר)	מרדכי שלום יוסף (במה"ר אחרן משיגורא) (האדמו"ר משיגורא)	הק' משה יהושע (במה"ר מוהר"מ זלל"ה) (האדמו"ר מיוניץ)
אברהם וינגרג (האדמו"ר מסלונס)	אברהם ברה"ק (האדמו"ר ממנובוקה)	שלום נח ברזובסקי (ראש ישיבת בית אברהם)	פנחס מנחם אלטר (ראש ישיבת שפת אמת)	משה שמואל שפירא (ראש ישיבת באר יעקב)
הק' יעקב יוסף (הרה"צ חיים זוב זלל"ה) (האדמו"ר מווסלוא)	יעקב נימין (ראש ישיבת אור ישראל)	חיים זיינצק (ראש ישיבת אור חדש)	בן ציון ברוק (ראש ישיבת בית יוסף ונובהרדוק)	נסים קרליץ (ראש כולל חזון איש)
יעקב פלקסר (חבר נדע הרבנים של אגודת ישראל)	אהרן בנישטיין (חבר נדע הרבנים של אגודת ישראל)	שלמה וולבה (מנהל רוחני דושיבת באר יעקב)	בנימין יהושע זילבר (בני ברק)	תנחום בקר (האדמו"ר מאורוב"המניו)
		רפאל וסרמן (ראש ישיבת אהל יעקב)	אליעזר פלצינסקי (ראש ישיבת בית אריה)	שמעון בעדני (ראש כולל שדה יחיאל)

ג.ת.ת.ת.ת.ת. לוי טדי חתומים

100,000 Mishnayos Studied By Pirchei Agudath Israel



Nine who topped 1,000 Mishnayos B'al Peh. The grand winner, Yaakov Rosengarten, with 2,237 Mishnayos.

In an atmosphere of festive excitement, a record crowd of 1,200 boys joined in the 14th *Siyum Mishnayos* of Pirchei Agudath Israel of America, which was held on Motzoei Shabbos, March 12 at the Yeshiva Toras Emes Kaminetz. The event was dedicated to the memory of the late Novominsker Rebbe, Rabbi Nochum Perlow, ז"ל, who was a member of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah of Agudath Israel.

All of the participants met the only entrance requirement: knowledge of at least one *perek* of *Mishnayos b'al peh* by heart. Busloads of youngsters from Montreal, Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Baltimore, Washington, Philadelphia, Providence and

Monsey, joined other youngsters from the metropolitan area in spending the preceding Shabbos in Boro Park in an interbranch gathering.

The New York celebration was part of the National *Siyum Mishnayos* campaign in which 100,000 *Mishnayos* were studied. Other *Siyum* celebrations took place in Cleveland on February 26, Los Angeles on March 5, and Savannah on March 12. The fifth *Siyum* is scheduled to take place in Denver in the spring.

The New York *Siyum* was chaired by Rabbi Yehudah Oelbaum, *Menahel* of Yeshiva Toras Chaim of South Shore. The *Hadran* was recited by twelve-year-old



Yaakov Rosengarten of Monsey; the top finalist, who knew 2,287 *Mishnayos* by heart. The first *Mishna* of *Mesechtas Berachos* was recited by thirteen-year-old Aaron Hartstein of Boro Park, who scored 1,560 *Mishnayos*. Seven other youngsters memorized more than 1,000 *Mishnayos* each. All received valuable prizes.

The keynote address was delivered by Rabbi Yaakov Perlow, Rosh Yeshiva of Beis Midrash Yeshurun, son of the late Novominsker Rebbe. Rabbi Joshua Silbermintz, the national director of Pirchei Agudath Israel, also addressed the assemblage. Co-chairmen of the New York *Siyum Mishnayos* were Gershon Nathan and Shaya Yeraslowitz.

Siyum Hashas at Agudath Israel's Headquarters

The Daf Yomi group which meets at the national headquarters of Agudath Israel of America at 5 Beekman Street, marked a *Siyum Hashas* on Tuesday, March 29. The group, which consists of businessmen and professionals who work in the financial district, has been meeting every day for more than seven years during their lunch hours in the conference room of the central office of Agudath Israel of America.

The *Hadran* for the *Siyum Hashas* was said by Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky, Rosh Yeshiva of Torah Vodaath and a member of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah. A festive celebration to mark the event followed.



At the siyum: Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky, with Shimon Polatchek, who has led the Daf Yomi group at 5 Beekman St.

Agudath Israel Agency Opens COPE Vocational Institute

A major new addition to the comprehensive career guidance and job training programs of Agudath Israel of America's Project COPE (Career Opportunities and Preparation for Employment) will get underway on April 18th with the inauguration of a new vocational school: COPE Vocational Institute (CVI). The new school will continue to meet the high standards of Project COPE's vocational educational division, which has earned the praise of government experts and the program's beneficiaries.

According to Rabbi Shmuel Bloom, director of vocational education at Project COPE, "CVI is an extension of our own successful vocational education programs where 250 people have since 1975 graduated New York State licensed vocational schools and were successfully placed. Our new school will incorporate our vast experience in skill training and job placement into a highly sophisticated program," he stated.

COPE Vocational Institute, which is licensed by the New York State Education Department, began on April 18 with comprehensive secretarial training in its new fully-equipped modern classrooms on the fifth floor of Agudath Israel's national headquarters at 5 Beekman Street, New York City. The six-month course will prepare students as executive secretaries.

Agudath Israel Opens Sunday Community Service Center

Brooklyn residents will now have the opportunity to take advantage of the broad range of services offered by Agudath Israel of America's sixteen divisions on Sundays through a new community office which is opened to the public that day in the Boro Park section, it was announced by Rabbi Boruch Borchardt, executive director of the organization. Seasoned counselors and leaders of the various departments of Agudath Israel will man desks and phones on Sundays to enable people to use the services of Agudath Israel's programs on a day convenient for many persons.

Rabbi Borchardt said that the opening of the special Sunday office in Brooklyn was in response to "the growing vibrancy of the Brooklyn Jewish community."

The range of services that will be provided includes job training information, camping, reach-out programs, senior citizens, adult Torah study groups, Daf Yomi, publications and Orthodox reading material, membership, youth groups, assistance on such matters as Medicaid, Medicare, housing, Social Security and all items of concern to the Jewish individual and the community.

The new Sunday program is open every week at the Boro Park location at 5218 16th Avenue from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., when the public can visit or phone (851-0333). The director of the program is Zvi Kahane.

Agudath Israel Branch Helps Defeat ERA in Florida

Miami — The drive to pass the women's equal rights amendment lost momentum in mid April, when the Florida legislature defeated the bill by a vote of 21-19. The newly-founded branch of Agudath Israel of Miami played a key role in this closely contested battle, which the entire nation watched.

Orthodox Jewish groups have fought the women's rights amendment because of its dangers to the actual place of women in society and the entire family structure. The local defeat has disheartened the ERA forces nationally, which had counted upon Florida as its springboard for ultimate victory.

The Miami *Herald* reported that a factor in the defeat of ERA was the "banding together" of Orthodox Jews in Dade County to oppose its ratification. This new coalition was the first legislative campaign launched by the Commission on Legislation of Agudath Israel of Miami, headed by Daniel Retter, with the aid of Rabbi Phineas Weberman and other local leaders.

An important tool utilized by Agudath Israel, whose membership represents diverse elements within the local community, was the distribution of a hundred thousand copies of printed material clarifying the

harmful aspects of ERA.

Rabbi Eliezer Rokach is the temporary chairman of Agudath Israel of Miami, whose Legislative Commission, deeply encouraged by its first victory, is now tackling other areas to protect the interests of the Jewish faith through the local legislative body.

Springfield, Illinois — Rabbi Chaim Dov Keller, Rosh Yeshiva of Telshe-Chicago, who is the Illinois coordinator of Agudath Israel's Commission on Legislation and Civic Action, testified on April 21 against passage of the Equal Rights Amendment before a special Assembly committee of the Illinois State Legislature. Rabbi Keller articulated the Jewish attitude regarding differences between the sexes as well as longstanding moral values that would come under attack if the Equal Rights Amendment is passed.

The matter is scheduled to go for a vote before both Houses of the Illinois State Legislature in the near future. The Chicago branch of Agudath Israel of America is mounting an educational campaign to acquaint the Jewish populace of the dangers inherent in ERA and is urging its members to convey their opposition to their legislative representatives.

Agudath Israel Camps Get Face-Lifting

With summer right around the corner, both camps of Agudath Israel of America, Camp Agudah (for boys) and Camp Bnos (for girls) are already in the midst of their annual registration drive. According to the camps' director, Meir Fryshman, the camp facilities are undergoing major renovations for the summer of 1977, the 35th season of Agudath Israel's camping experience. Camp Agudah will add a miniature golf course to its premises, several new bunks, and the clubhouse will be remodeled. Camp Bnos will also receive several new bunks and the main building will undergo major renovations. In addition, a new playground for younger children is planned.

CLEVELAND BOY WINS TOP HONORS

The Fourth Annual Midwest Siyum Hamishnayos of Pirchei Agudath Israel recently took place in Cleveland, Ohio, and was hosted by the Telshe Yeshiva. The Siyum was dedicated to the memory of the late Gerer Rebbe, Rabbi Yisroel Alter, זצ"ל. Over two hundred Pirchim from Chicago, Detroit, Toronto, Columbus, and Akron, as well as from Cleveland spent the three day weekend together at the Yeshiva Campus. The weekend was highlighted by a Melave Malkah at the Taylor Road Synagogue with close to six hundred people attending. Guest

Agudath Israel of Miami Founded: Sets Activities

An impressive gathering of prominent community leaders joined with some of the foremost rabbis of Greater Miami in the Founders' Meeting of a local Agudath Israel branch on March 20. The meeting, which was held at the Saxony Hotel in Miami Beach, was opened by Rabbi Avrohom Groner, who is serving as temporary chairman of Agudath Israel of Miami. The keynote address was delivered by Rabbi Moshe Sherer, executive president of Agudath Israel of America, who emphasized the broad national appeal of Agudath Israel and its enormous achievements in the past few years.

One of the early projects of the Agudath Israel of Miami is expansion of its youth activities under the direction of Rabbi Shmuel State. Another activity already arranged is a legislative Commission under the chairmanship of Daniel Retter.

speaker was the Telshe Rosh Hayeshiva, Rabbi Mordecai Gifter, שליט"א.

Ten boys knew a minimum of 500 mishnayos. The top winner Zalmen Fishman, of Cleveland, a 13-year old student at Telshe Yeshiva, memorized and explained a record amount of 3,033 mishnayos and received a Vilna Shas (Talmud Bavli) as a prize.

"People Against Crime"

Petition Drive

Launched By A United Group

A united effort has been launched by a coalition of four Orthodox Jewish organizations to obtain mass signatures on petitions to the New York legislative leaders to change the criminal justice system and enact stronger laws against criminals. People Against Crime (PAC) is a united effort to make the city streets more secure through tougher laws, formed by Agudath Israel of America, National Council of Young Israel, Torah Umesorah, and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations.

During the next three weeks, volunteers will fan out throughout New York with petitions requesting that laws be enacted to: (1) change the criminal justice system to ensure that juvenile criminals convicted of designated violent crimes be punished with the same penalties previously reserved for adults; (2) ensure that penalties reflect the seriousness of the crime; (3) totally reevaluate the practices and procedures of the criminal justice system of New York State. The activists in this petition drive are determined to impress upon the lawmakers and judges the united will of a citizenry which puts much of the blame on the current crisis of security on the prevailing criminal justice system.

Petitions can be obtained by writing to any of the offices of the organizations that formed the People Against Crime coalition: Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, 116 E. 27th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016; Torah Umesorah, 229 Park Avenue S., New York, N.Y. 10003; National Council of Young Israel, 3 W. 16th Street, New York, N.Y. 10011; Agudath Israel of America, 5 Beekman Street, New York, N.Y. 10038.

KARKA IN ISRAEL

Take advantage of the opportunity to purchase cemetery plots in Eretz Yisroel in Mifgash Shimshon near Yerushalayim through our newly established

CHEVRA OSEH CHESED OF AGUDATH ISRAEL

Membership in the Chevra entitles one to all benefits which accompany the services of a Chevra Kadisha and interment. When you purchase a plot from the Chevra Oseh Chesed of Agudath Israel, you are supporting the many Agudist activities especially the Pirchei and Bnos activities as well as a Free Loan Fund in Israel.

For an application and information call: (212) 964-1620

בית יעקב שרה שנירר - תיכון לבנות וממנו למורות



Beth Jacob Sara Schenirer High School & Teachers Seminary

in Boro Park Announces the continuation of our
One Year Intensive Seminary Course
 in September, 1977

This full-day program will be conducted concurrently with our regular 2-year half-day program and graduates will receive a full teachers license duly recognized by Torah Umesorah.

The complete range of courses will be offered using the same recognized teachers of our staff. Residence in the dormitory is open to all applicants, and they will be woven into the fabric of our entire Seminary program including the existing 2-year program.

Applicants to all programs

- High School • Evening Courses • 2-year Day Seminary • 1-year Intensive Seminary
- may apply by letter or by phone to:

Sara Schenirer High School & Seminary
 4622 14th Avenue Brooklyn, N. Y. 11219 (212) 633-8557



CAMP KOL TORAH

A UNIQUE TORAH CAMP OFFERING A COMPLETE LEARNING AND RECREATIONAL PROGRAM FOR YESHIVAH STUDENTS AGES 10-16

- * Intensive Torah Atmosphere
- * Shiurim conducted by experienced teachers on Chumosh, Halacha, Gemorah and Meforshim
- * Swimming and water sports
- * Boating
- * All organized sports activities
- * Trips and excursions to places of interest in the Mid-West.

LOCATION: Scenic grounds of the Telshe Yeshiva campus in Northeast Ohio

SEASON: Tamuz 25 – Av 24 (July 11 – August 8)

RATES: \$290 for the entire season

For further information contact the representative in your area:

Baltimore:	Rabbi V. Rosen	(301) 358-4577	Minneapolis:	Rabbi H. Dachs	(612) 922-0524
Chicago:	Rabbi Avrohom Weil	(312) 973-6715		Rabbi H. Roberts	(612) 920-1247
	Rabbi R. Levinson	(312) 267-9151	Monsey:	Rabbi E. Goldfischer	(914) 356-7964
	Rabbi E. Appelbaum	(312) 539-1730	Montreal:	Rabbi I. Zryl	(514) 739-6028
Cincinnati:	Rabbi M. Deutsch	(513) 351-8876		Rabbi T. Schwartz	(514) 733-2615
Columbus:	Dr. I. Fried	(614) 237-5780	New York:	Rabbi Y. Barash	(212) 871-9165
Denver:	Rabbi Y. Richter	(303) 825-1222		Joseph Wilhelm	(212) 387-4275
Detroit:	Rabbi S. Kaufman	(313) 543-9442	Pittsburgh:	Rabbi A. Brodie	(412) 521-4975
	Avrohom Borenstein	(313) 545-6327		Rabbi G. Brea	(412) 421-7752
Miami:	Rabbi Z. Leff	(305) 651-5507	Toronto:	Rabbi S. Moddel	(416) 783-2557
				Rabbi S.N. Mandel	(416) 781-1468

or write to the registration office for further information:

CAMP KOL TORAH – 3599 HARVEY ROAD – CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO 44118
 Tel. (216) 321-9282