

## Yavneh On Campus: The Challenges Met Exodus Experience Emphasized In Greenberg Columbia Lecture

### Background and Hopes Listed by Current Leaders

The college campus is a place where young men and women make their first serious attempt at evaluating and eventually choosing their ideals, values, and beliefs. More than most others, the observant Jewish student finds himself beset with specific intellectual and practical challenges and decisions. To speak concretely, for the first

must worry about obtaining a kosher meal, finding a place to pray, or a teacher and class with whom he can continue his Jewish education. In short, for the first time, the student must choose to be a Jew—and this is often a most difficult choice.

To help one another meet this type of challenge, eighty students representing thirteen eastern colleges met in February, 1960, and

by Ivan Esterman

Doctor Yitzchak Greenberg, chairman of the history department of Yeshiva University and rabbi of Riverdale Jewish Center spoke to members of Yavneh at Columbia University on November 21. His announced topic, "The Meaning and Purpose of Life" was revised by him and accepted by a vote of the audience to include only "The Purpose of Life From a Jewish Perspective."

Doctor Greenberg began his lecture by questioning whether there is personal significance in life or not. He first pointed to the tragic history of man as proof that life is meaningless, but then cited *Yetzias Mitzraim* as evidence of God's concern for man and of the infinite worth of the human being.

"Man is on the same wavelength as God," said Dr. Greenberg, and therefore can relate to Him. It is because of man's *Tzelem Elakim* that he is of infinite worth and lives a purposeful existence. The Exodus, because it is proof of man's meaning and purpose in life, is the central normative experience of Judaism. Dr. Greenberg maintained that the *halacha* is primarily a guide to live by the experience of the Exodus, and

the holidays such as *Pesach*, *Succos*, and *Shavuot* are attempts to relive *Yetzias Mitzraim* in whole or in part. The Jewish people as the

—different times and circumstances require vastly different responses.

Dr. Greenberg concluded his lecture with a discussion of three great historical events which have seemingly contradicted the meaning of the Exodus. Modernization of the Jewish community through scientific and economic progress has led to the vision of a world redeemed by science, and made the *Mitzvos* and Messianic doctrine seem obsolete. The tragedy of the Nazi holocaust has shattered the Exodus at its very foundation, almost blotting out the concept of a meaningful existence. The redemption of Israel by apparently secular forces has posed grave questions to the basic tenets of Jewish Orthodox philosophy. Because these three historical developments seem to negate the Exodus, there is a tendency to deny their existence in order to go on living as before. This is not the way to meet the challenge, but rather these events must be met head on and somehow be incorporated into the Exodus experience. As Dr. Greenberg concluded: "If we do not take these three problems seriously, it shows we don't take the Exodus seriously as an interpretation of human destiny."

A question and answer period followed the lecture.



Dr. Greenberg

Chosen People must bring the message of the Exodus—the human being is of infinite worth—to the world.

A person will have more or less meaning in his life depending on his particular situation and is responsible to the mission of the Exodus only according to his ability and circumstance. Dr. Greenberg pointed out that there is no one best way to serve the Exodus



Rabbi Fabian Schonfeld speaks on Hasidism for Yavneh.

time in his life he may have to explain to a non-Jewish roommate why he has to rise early every morning and put on *tefillin*; he may have to explain to a professor why he cannot take an examination or attend a class on Saturday; he

founded YAVNEH. The participants of the founding convention agreed on several aims for the organization:

- a) To provide Jewish education on campus through weekly

(Continued on page 4)

### Mussar and Ethics Paretzky's Subject In Guidance Series

"*Mochshevet Hamussar* — Reflection on Mussar and Ethics" was the subject of a lecture presented to the student body by Rav Faivel Paretzky, *Rosh Yeshiva* in RIETS, on Monday night, No-

### Wyschogrod Vietnam Thesis Probed; Liebman's Reply Provides Guidelines

by Bruce Cohen

To most minds, the mention of the Orthodox Jewish community brings the image of a community insensitive to those moral, social, and political crises of our day, that do not directly reflect Jewish interests. It is my fervent hope that not many of these critics had the opportunity to peruse the next-to-last issue of *Tradition* (Winter, 1966), in which Professor Michael Wyschogrod of C.C.N.Y. discusses "The Jewish Interest in Vietnam." Their criticism would only be sharpened and their alienation deepened, and justifiably so.

For Wyschogrod has attempted to convince us that the Jewish community has a vital interest in Vietnam and that this interest must bring us to seek the American victory that has so far eluded us. But his distortion of issues, his twisted semantics, his transformation of a negligible point into a major point, and his own undercutting of the whole force of his argument, do a great disservice to the crucial issue of Vietnam and to the position of the Orthodox community in relation to it.

Fortunately, Dr. Charles Liebman, chairman of the political science department at Yeshiva, has replied strongly to the Wyschogrod article in the latest issue of *Tradition* (Spring-Summer, 1967), and using his outline, I would like to elaborate upon my criticism of the Wyschogrod thesis.

Dr. Wyschogrod begins by

HAMEVASER wishes to call attention to the expanding scope of its news coverage. Constructive comments, pro or con, and suggestions should be submitted to News Editor Bernie Sukewicz, Rubin 323.

couching his Vietnam argument between very valid objections to the behavior of many secular Jewish liberals. Quoting Talmudic sources, *Beis Hillel*, and citing classroom experience, he argues that it is hardly immoral to be aware of and to defend one's self-interest. What is just in the defense of legitimate interests? And who will seek to defend a particular self-interest if not those who are

(Continued on page 3)

### Rav Lessin Leads Weekly Mussar Vaad Discussions

Rabbi Israel Salanter z"l was once approached by an extremely busy businessman who asked how he should spend the next half hour, the only free time he would have that day. He had not yet put on his *t'fillin* or davened, but the great Rabbi replied that he should use the time for learning *mussar*. Amazed at their Rebbe's advice, Rabbi Salanter's students quoted their renowned teacher a *Gemora* stating that a person who misses the *mitzvah* of *t'fillin* even one day loses his share in the world to come. The Rabbi calmed his students by assuring them that if this man will sincerely learn *mussar* he will then find the time for *t'fillin* and many other *maasim tovim* as well.

Learning *mussar* can surely accomplish great things, but hearing *mussar* from one who is steeped with an intimate knowledge of the Lithuanian *mussar* movement can accomplish even more. Fortunately for Yeshiva University stu-

dents, Rabbi Lessin *shlita*, who has himself published several outstanding *mussar seforim*, has for the second consecutive year organized a *mussar vaad* every Thursday from 2:45 to 3:45 in the Main Building, room 211. At these seminars, various passages in *Tanach* and the Talmud are discussed for the great lessons in ethics that can be derived therein. The deeds of the *Avos* in light of *mussar*, the significance of the *Tzelem Elokim* and the principle "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and the spiritually elevating thoughts of King David are some of the topics that are thoroughly analyzed and expounded upon for their *mussar* content. At a recent *va'ad*, the *middah* *raah* of *Akshavus* as displayed by the Jews who left Egypt was discussed, and it was pointed out that even though the stubbornness of *B'nai Yisroel* had disastrous effects on the future of *klal Yisroel*, nevertheless *Akshavus*

(Continued on page 3)



Rabbi Paretzky

November 13th, in the Rubin Hall *Shul*. This stimulating talk was one of a series of lectures sponsored by the Religious Guidance Department.

Rabbi Paretzky commenced by (Continued on page 8)

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## Response

It is sad enough that certain elements at Yeshiva reject the relevance of *roshei hayeshiva* and their opinions on matters on the world scene. This view, however, has been possibly strengthened by the tone of last week's editorials in the *Commentator*, as it is implied that even in such matters as teaching Talmud our *roshei hayeshiva* are simply out of step with the times.

HAMEVASER, while welcoming the *Commentator's* interest in the religious divisions, must take strong exception to the tone of the critique presented by that newspaper. While recognizing that the language of the *Commentator* was sufficiently vague to leave room for several interpretations, we are concerned by a tone that runs throughout the editorial. We reject the very premise that the terms and the yardsticks used for measuring a college curriculum can be applied to the study of Torah.

We are told that the RIETS curriculum is a "hand-me-down from pre-war Lithuania." Surely the criticism could have been far more devastating had it been noted that the basic subject matter and curriculum used have not altered since the days of Sura and Pumpedisa. The resurgence of Orthodoxy in America today is indeed a tribute to the heritage of the European *yeshivos*. The success and influence of not only RIETS, but of Lakewood, Telshe, Ner Yisrael, and Torah *Vodaas* certainly indicate that Torah as taught in the traditional fashion is not "largely oblivious to the new society and student it must serve."

Without passing judgment on the merit of students dictating college curriculum changes to the administration, we must however strongly urge that in the sphere of *limud Torah* the initiative and style be formulated by those who have kept our faith

viable for three thousand years—*gedolai Torah* and *roshei hayeshiva*.

As for the "new division" proposed by the *Commentator*, it is our understanding that the projected EMC program will serve just such a purpose.

Before one indulges in such criticism of our yeshiva, we would suggest an examination of the sorry alternative that they would prefer.

## The Library Situation

The infrequent vacations at Yeshiva offer many students the opportunity to return home for a visit. But since some of the vacation periods are so short, students who live a distance from New York often remain in the dormitories, and for them these short vacations provide the optimum opportunity to read, study, and do research papers.

In view of this fact, the policy of closing the Pollack Library and the Gottesman Library on legal holidays when classes are dismissed is totally incomprehensible since this is precisely when many students have the desire to use their facilities. The policy displays a short-sightedness on the part of the library administration who apparently cannot conceive of any Yeshiva student spending his vacations in academic pursuits.

We request that the libraries remain open during vacation periods (with the obvious exception of Pesach.)

## JSS Mishmar

It is with the greatest pleasure that we note the recent institution of a JSS *mishmar* on Thursday night. Because of the JSS schedule, consisting of two 100-minute periods per class day, the student often tends despite himself to view his *gemara shiur* as just another class, the result being that it becomes easy for him to forget that he is attending a *yeshiva*. This newly-instituted experience of learning in the traditional manner is certainly an important step toward rectifying this unfortunate situation.

We were also heartened by the presence of Rabbi J. Shmidman which meets the high standards that we expect of all courses. We lament, however, the lack in numbers of these essential courses in Jewish thought and hope that more of them will be offered in the near future.

## Apologia

In the last issue of HAMEVASER, we expressed the need for high-quality Jewish Philosophy courses at Yeshiva. We regret the oversight committed in that there does exist a Jewish Philosophy course taught by Rabbi J. Shmidman which meets the high standards that we expect of all courses. We lament, however, the lack in numbers of these essential courses in Jewish thought and hope that more of them will be offered in the near future.

## Letters To The Editor

To the Editor:

I take issue with Mr. Kraut's evaluation of the reasons for the American Jewish community's stance of "positive neutrality" towards Israel prior to the recent crisis. First, I would like to call attention to an apparent contradiction which would benefit from clarification in succeeding columns.

Mr. Kraut would have us believe that psychological disillusionment stemming from disappointed dreams and from concrete religious strife is the cause of positive neutrality. A non-Messianic, secular state, he says, "could not possibly

convince us to relate positively to it." He calls this position a legitimate response to experience on the one hand, and on the other he says that he isn't justifying it.

Such a position is neither a legitimate response nor is it the result of positive neutrality.

The creation of the State of Israel in 1948 was an act of God. However, the creation was not *hovev mesayin*, out of nothingness. The early pioneers who gave character to the development of the State were primarily irreligious. If the State of Israel is a secular state today it is because the religious Jews didn't contribute enough —

and I don't mean money — during its formative mandate years. Where were all the religious Jews during the years after 1948 when the character of the State was becoming more clearly developed and defined? Where were all the religious Jews in 1967? You can't very well have a religious State if the religious Jews refuse to live in Israel.

Secondly, if there are aspects of modern Israel which a religious Jew doesn't like, then the mature response is to go there and change the situation. And if there were a huge *aliyah* of religious Jews, the

(Continued on page 6)

From The Editor's Desk

## The Flower Children

by Jon Bloomberg

A recent survey of the community of Haight-Asbury in San Francisco indicates that of the approximately 5,000 so-called "flower children" (or hippies) living there, about 1,000, fully twenty per cent, are Jews. What makes this situation so disturbing is not that these Jewish teenagers are leaving their homes, the traditional centers of Jewish life and values, but rather that they are forsaking Judaism, within which all that they stand for, at least philosophically, can very easily be found.

The primary thing that the flower child looks for is meaning in life; he expects to find that meaning in beauty — hence the flower as his symbol. He is very sensitive to the cruelties that man perpetrates daily against his fellow man; he sees infinitely more meaning in cooperative and respectful relations between men — hence his preference for love (not just in the particular sense) over war (national, international, and personal).

All this is fine and admirable, yet the flower child believes that he is saying something new. The quest for meaning in life is not a new one; men have sought it since the beginning of time. Above and beyond searching for it, the Jew has found and continued to find it for over 3,000 years. He has found it in God and in His Torah, i.e., His revealed will, and what, he asks, could give more meaning to life than the ability to understand and cherish it as the pursuit of the fulfillment of God's revealed will? Furthermore, he has no need to search for meaning in physical beauty—spiritual beauty is quite enough, indeed, more than enough.

The flower child, moreover, feels a strong need for an escape from reality; because man has become a machine, forever running around like the proverbial chicken without a head, he, who is tuned in to what life really should be, must get away from it all. He accomplishes this in two ways: first, he completely divorces himself from society, setting up his Haight-Asbury or East Village community, and second, he takes hallucinatory drugs. The first is a long-range measure; the flower child believes that what he stands for is ultimately more beneficial to society as a whole, and he is thus willing to sit it out until society wakes up (the inevitable result, of course, is that he becomes a social outcast). The second escape is a more immediate measure — after all, one cannot be expected to continue to be stagnated while society sits on its heels.

The Jew, by contrast, has a more constructive tandem of escapes from the everyday world. He too cuts himself off from society, but in a different manner: he has no Friday night bridge game, no Saturday afternoon football games, no Christmas celebrations, no New Year's Eve bashes. Yet though he too believes what he holds dear to be ultimately more beneficial to society, he remains active in society to the fullest extent possible without compromising what he believes, fervently hoping and praying that society will eventually come around. The Jew is a human being too, and thus he too lacks infinite patience; as a result, he is furnished with a natural immediate escape from reality — *Shabbos*. True, says he, man is rapidly becoming nothing more than a machine; but that's not so terrible as long as it is only six days a week. *Shabbos*, the seventh day, must be a day completely devoted to an escape from the cruel realities of the workaday world and an escape to the ultimate realities of the spiritual world.

The flower child, finally, seeks "identity." He feels he is rapidly losing his individual importance to and in the world; he sees himself as just a cog in an IBM computer. As a result, he wears long hair, strange clothes, unusual painted tattoos on his face and body, etc. This to him is identity.

The Jew, on the other hand, strives for identity in commitment to God; to him, this is true individuality. He knows that he means something because he has his *tzetlem Elokim*, that part of his Creator within him which gives him an aspect of His Uniqueness. In addition, the Jew feels a sense of personal mission in life — nearness to God to be fulfilled through *mitzvos*.

What remains for us to examine, then, is a most burning question: where has the failure been? Why are there so many Jewish hippies — after all they are not stupid! The answer is a familiar and tragic one: lack of Jewish education. These young people have not been inculcated with the ultimate Jewish values which can provide them with what they reach out for — indeed many, if not most, do not even know they exist; and this tragic situation must inevitably continue, unless the younger generation are shown the way to what they seek through good Jewish education. The burden of providing them with such an education is a heavy one, and it rests squarely upon the shoulders of those of us who are truly committed to Torah Judaism.

### FREEDOM OF CHOICE

Some organizations, which provide death benefits for their members, appoint a so-called "official" funeral director.

It should be understood, however, that the member-family is NOT obliged to use this "official" director in order to receive the organization's death benefits.

Under New York State law, the family may make arrangements with any funeral director of its choice. The law is quite specific: freedom of choice is always the family's prerogative.

### RIVERSIDE MEMORIAL CHAPEL, INC.

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Y'C '47

RIETS '49

# Interesting Consequences Of Six-Day War: The Question Of Binyan Bayis Hashlishi

by Harold Horowitz

Every generation that does not build the Holy Temple in its time, is considered as if it destroyed the Temple," (*Yerushalmi, Sukkah*)

Since the destruction of the Second Temple by the Babylonians, the question of rebuilding the Holy Temple has arisen many a time among Jewish thinkers and scholars. In the wake of the recent Six-Day War, the problem has once again become a focal point of attention among rabbis and Jewish leaders in Israel and the Diaspora. There is no simple solution to this vexing problem, but I would like to examine the various halachic aspects to this timely question.

Many of our sages feel that the Jewish people cannot rebuild the Temple today. Rashi is of the opinion that the building of the Temple which we are waiting for will be in a complete and perfect form, and it will come directly from heaven, as it says: "In the Sanctuary, which Thy hands have established." (*Exodus 15:17*) (*Rashi Succah 41:1*). This view

(*Deuteronomy 12:5*); when we are commanded to go up to the *Bais Hamikdash* the singular pronoun YOU is used; this implies that each and every Jew living at that time should go up to the Temple, and that if one doesn't, he is in fact preventing the building of the Temple, because the Jews are not united as one. This unity among Jews is also used to argue against building, in that only a small minority of Jews today are actually praying and hoping for the rebuilding of the Temple, while it is necessary that most Jews have a fervent desire to erect the *Bais Hamikdash*.

### Everlasting Holiness

The *Rambam* maintains that the original holiness of the Temple which began from the time of Shlomo, is everlasting on the site of the Holy Temple, since the divine presence never leaves the area. (*Laws of the Temple, Ch. 6, Law 14*) The *R'avad* feels however, that the original sanctification made by Solomon is not everlasting, and even, according to Rabbi Yosi, who feels that it is eternal, the holiness applies only to the rest of the land of Israel and not Jerusalem. He further goes on to say that Ezra knew that Jerusalem and the Temple would be reconsecrated at some time in the future. According to this theory, the place of the Holy Temple does not have its full sanctity today, and we would have to rededicate it, which would be impossible, since the consecration by Ezra was done with a

Jewish King, a Prophet, the *Urim l'Tamin*, and a full court of 71, none of which we have today (*Sh'ruos 15:1*).

The fourth reason that we can't rebuild the Temple today is that we are not sure of its exact dimensions and measurements, and other requirements necessary in the building itself. The *Yerushalmi* explains that all details in structure of the Temple were given to King David by Samuel in a written document. (*Yerushalmi Megillah Perek 1, Law 1*) We do not have these plans today. There exist many great disputations among *Rishonim* and *Achronim*, as to exact measurements, and due to the many great discrepancies among the views we cannot build the Temple until *Mashiach* lays out the exact plans.

These are a few of the many arguments against the building of the Temple, but what are some of the arguments for the rebuilding of the Temple that counteract the opposing views?

The *Rambam* in his enumeration of the Commandments lists the building of the Temple as one of the laws given to us in the Torah. Despite the fact that we constantly pray for the coming of the Messiah, and the eventual rebuilding of the Temple, we are aware of a basic tenet of Judaism, "*Ein Somchin Al Hanes*" "Don't depend on a Miracle." Especially when it comes to a commandment from the Torah we must act, and not solely

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 1) directly affected? Do not innumerable historical experiences dictate that if the Jewish community does not look after its own, then its own will not be looked after? It is a sad fact, and one we acknowledge, that many Jewish liberals tend to do their best to avoid identifying with "Jewish" causes.

However, Dr. Wyschogrod is not chauvinistic about such things, and very logically modifies the extent to which we can extend this

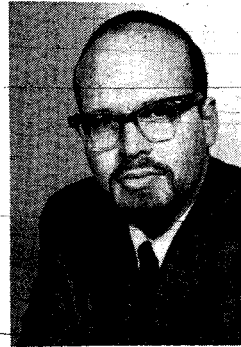
frain from stressing the selfish interest. We do not live in a vacuum but must consider the universal effects of our nationalistic behavior.

Assuming the justness of this formula, Professor Wyschogrod leaves us in the lurch in trying to relate a Jewish self-interest to Vietnam and to the antiswar position of the Jewish liberal. For it would seem that in order to make any point at all he would have to set up the case so that the Jewish interest is of greater import than any of the other consequences of this war, and that it stands opposed to other more objective judgments of the situation.

If we agree with the Administration position, to point out the Jewish interest involved would serve only to strengthen our conviction and would involve no change in our active position. We would defend the war effort even were there no Jewish interest. Therefore, the only worthwhile reason that could motivate a contributor to an Orthodox journal to emphasize the Jewish interest would be to point out to those who oppose the war that they also oppose the interests of the Jewish interest to Vietnam. He must say that it should persuade us to defend the war effort even though we oppose it on other grounds.

If we understand this then we can understand the utter lack of substance in the article. For Wyschogrod we are morally obligated to see

(Continued on page 4)



Dr. Liebman

principle of self-interest. For whenever defending that interest would hurt another group, or wherever not defending that interest would help another group, he says that we are morally obligated to see

The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board of HAMEVASER extend wishes for a happy Chanukah to all *b'nei haYeshiva* and remind them of the following schedule for *Ma'ariv*.

Dormitory Synagogues: 4:45 P.M.

Main *Beis Midrash*: Sundown and 10 P.M.

is also maintained by *Tosafos*, who feels that the Jews will never again build the Temple themselves, but will receive the Third Temple in its finished form from God directly.

The *Chinuch* (*Mitzva 95*) also feels that we cannot build the Temple today, because most Jews do not dwell in the land of Israel. The basis for this requirement for all Jews to dwell in Israel as a prerequisite for building the Temple is that it says *UVASA SHAMA*, "You Shall Come there"

## Avraham's Behavior Topic Of Mussar Vaad

(Continued from page 1)

can also be at times an asset. Thus, because of the unrelenting desire of Abraham to receive guests even during his illness, God performed two miracles on his behalf. He removed the sun from its enclosure so that an abnormal heat pervaded the atmosphere in order to prevent any travellers from coming into Abraham's vicinity and disturbing him, and secondly He made three angels appear in the form of people. The *Mashiach ruchani* elaborated on these incidents in his erudite way and explained in the name of *Chazal* that if Abraham was rewarded with two miracles for receiving the angels who physically are not in need of victuals and hospitality, how much more must be the reward for a person who provides for human wayfarers.

The *mashiach* also meets every evening in the old *Beis Midrash* at 9:35 for a *shiur* in one of the renowned *sifrei mussar*.

### Editor Emeritus

# The Perils Of Pluralism

by David Luchins

"It is our duty to reconstruct our lives so that they are in agreement with the eternal traditions, and not to secularize and reconstruct our heritage so that it may agree with every fanciful movement which appears on the Jewish horizon."

*Essays In Traditional Jewish Thought*  
Rabbi Dr. Samuel Belkin

We have witnessed in the past few years a subtle but most telling shift in the attitude that the various "trends" of Judaism entertain toward each other. The heated emotions engendered by last year's Synagogue Council dinner seem to have cooled off sufficiently to allow a cautious effort at describing this new atmosphere.

First and foremost it would seem that the events of June have seriously loosened the all-pervasive grip that the secular organizations had established on the American Jewish community. All of the "synagogue-centered groups" have found their position greatly strengthened by the tidal wave of fervor that swept Jewry in this country. The challenge, of course, is to relate this nebulous feeling of religious ecstasy at seeing *l'fillah* at the *Kosel* into a tangible program of Jewish commitment.

With three major movements striving to provide the basis for this commitment, a view of their attitudes toward each other is in order. The Reform and more especially Conservative postulate of several decades past that Orthodoxy had fossilized to a degree that rendered it irrelevant to present day problems is, of course, still very much with us. This approach feels that Judaism was meant to evolve and that in its human evolution has lain its very viability and durability.

On the other hand stood a confused and weakened Orthodoxy, its leaders faced with a choice between cooperating with movements whose very existence was premised on Orthodoxy's ineffectiveness in this day and age. Such a premise, needless to add, assumed automatically that the *halacha* — the methodology of the Orthodox Jew — was out of kilter with reality. The feeble efforts at "cooperation" at that time amounted to little more than "we're happy to have you along as long as you realize that you're senile."

The reaction of Orthodoxy to this challenge is, by now, history. Day Schools and *yeshivos*, Orthodox Youth Groups and farsighted lay leaders, all predicated in that very Orthodoxy, all drinking deeply from the waters that the critics had condemned as stagnant, built up a fol-

lowing that none had thought feasible in secular, mid-twentieth century America. It is in response to this new found strength of Torah Judaism that the shift referred to earlier appears in the thinking of the other groups. Inspired to no small degree by the "success" of Ecumenism in the Christian camp, Conservative and Reform Judaism have begun to place great emphasis on the concept of "pluralism" — three great vibrant trends flowing at peace with each other within the historical context of present-day Judaism.

As the proponents of this plan see it, Reform Judaism shall grow more traditional, Orthodoxy a bit less "sectarian" and then (obviously the Ramah-breed of aggressive young Conservative Rabbis take to this argument) guided by the principle of "live and let live" we shall all march off to meet the millennium.

This is all, admittedly, very attractive. Yet the vital premise of pluralism is that of a basic accepted point of departure. To the Reform and Conservative the Jewish experience as such may well suffice to fill this need; to the Orthodox however, this factor must be coupled with the acceptance of the halachic system and its *ipso facto* claim of Divine Revelation at Sinai.

"But," a young conservative Rabbi once objected to me, "Hillel and Shammai played in the same league — why can't the Orthodox and non-Orthodox?" Yes, the answer must be, but they had the same rules, one was not (*l'haedut*) playing soccer, the other basketball. —

As long as we feel Torah is relevant to our era then there can be little excuse for our advocating the pluralistic approach — we must relate to our individual fellow Jews with *ahavas Yisrael* without complicating their delusion that we can evolve towards their position.

In this light the words and actions of certain self-appointed Orthodox Jewish leaders becomes open to honest examination. A small yet vocal group seems intent on presenting themselves to the Jewish World (by definition this group includes only those who read the *New York Times*) as the brave pioneers who will bring Orthodoxy in line with its "brother movements."

If only these people would consider the alternative to their advocated policy of complacent "peaceful co-existence": that the very *halacha* which restrains us from joining the grand experiment of pluralism compels us to, at the same time, be *m'karev*, to "rebuke with love," those led astray by false shepherds.

# Wyschogrod Sees Analogy Between Vietnam And Israel

(Continued from page 3) chogrod himself the particular Jewish interest is not instrumental in the formulation of his attitude towards the war. He accepts the Administration line and what he calls the "universal" arguments to seek American victory in Vietnam. But surely, following our previous logic, he must say that the Jewish interest should become central to the Jews in the peace movement, for their position might wreak great damage for the Jewish community?

ASTOUNDINGLY enough, we find him outrightly admitting that "if the war in Vietnam were inherently immoral, it would be proper for American Jews to condemn that war, whatever the consequences of such a condemnation for the Israeli national interest may be." Considering that most of the peace movement is concerned with the immorality of the war, according to Professor Wyschogrod's guidelines even the Jewish secularists should not allow themselves to be gayed by the selfish national interest.

Having undercut the force of

his argument to sensitize us to the Jewish stakes involved (since this issue makes no practical difference to either the pro or anti side), what purpose is there in even analyzing what the so-called Jewish interest is according to Wyschogrod? It is only of benefit if we assume that there are people who would, if the Jewish cause did oppose their universalist reaction to the war, tend to support their people's interest and thus support the war. For these people it is valuable to reveal the weakness and invalidity of those arguments pointing towards an essential Jewish interest.

And let us remember what we have already said about our personal interests (or what Wyschogrod said and we agreed with): These must always be weighed against the other consequences of the situation. This means that the Jewish interest must outweigh the lives that are being lost and the families caused to suffer, the maimed limbs, the drain of manpower, the economic burden, the near halt in our anti-poverty and ghetto programs, and the total involvement that prevents our giving massive constructive aid to other nations badly in need of it. In this light let us then see it. (Continued on page 10)

# Yavneh Aims Presented

(Continued from page 1)

classes, Talmud shiurim, monthly lectures, and to encourage a sincere and deeper understanding of the intellectual and spiritual bases of Judaism.

b) To facilitate observance of mitzvos by establishing minyanim in dormitories, providing kosher food, and dealing with the problem of exams on the Sabbath and holy days.

c) To become a force of the dissemination of Torah knowledge in the American Jewish community.

d) To unite Jewish students by holding conclaves or weekends and observing Jewish holidays together.

e) To fully integrate the insights gained in college studies with the values and knowledge of Judaism and to work towards solving the intellectual difficulties of its members concerning Judaism.

To fulfill these aims, Yavneh organized chapters at colleges throughout North America. Each chapter functions independently in meeting its specific Jewish program needs on campus. At present, there are thirty-six functioning Yavneh chapters in the U.S. and Canada, with chapters in the process of being organized both in England and Australia. (As well, Yavneh has communicated with religious student organizations in both Israel and France in an effort to create international ties among religious students.)

Besides individual chapter programming Yavneh schedules a regional lecture series and regional Shabbatons. In so doing, Yavneh (Continued on page 7)

# Thoughts Of Rambam And Halevi On Future Of Korbanos Explored

(Continued from page 6)

His will to do it, and it never will be," asserts the Rambam. For if God were to tamper with the will of any one individual, then the giving of a Law for man to follow according to his own will would have been superfluous.

The Rambam goes on to say that prayers are nearer to the main object of the commandments of sacrifices than are sacrifices. The primary purpose of those commandments is that Israel should know God and serve Him. Since prayer is closer to this object, it is permitted everywhere and for everyone, while sacrifices are limited to a particular place (Temple), with the officiating limited to a particular people (priests).

Later on, says the Rambam, the Prophets found it necessary to constantly rebuke the people for disregarding the primary object (serving God properly) and being over-zealous instead with the sacrifices, which, as they maintained, were not very essential and not really required by God in themselves, but which were rather a means to reach the primary object.

An evaluation of the former view, that of Judah Halevi, leads

to the conclusion that the commandments regarding sacrifice are Divine Law, beyond human comprehension, and therefore to be followed faithfully, and never to be abrogated or changed. In the time of a third Bais Mikdash, therefore, sacrifices are to be re-instituted. Even accepting his proposed theories on the purpose of sacrifice (theories which he himself refuses to accept) the same conclusion is reached, for sacrifices would then play a specific, positive role in Jewish life.

The problem lies with the theory of the Rambam. It might be inferred from his reasoning that sacrifices would be unnecessary in a new Bais Mikdash, since

The Governing Board notes with the greatest pleasure the engagement of Larry Langer, RIETS '68 to Lucy Langenthal

prayer is closer to the primary object of the commandment of sacrifice. However, although this is a logically valid conclusion, it is also a rejection of one of the basic fundamentals of Judaism, a principle expounded by the Rambam himself. According to this prin-

ciple (the ninth principle of faith) we believe with perfect faith that this Law will not be changed and that there will never be any other law from the Creator, blessed be His name."

How do we explain, then, the Rambam's theory in the Guide for the Perplexed? This theory, like most of the ta'ame ha-mitzvos, remains difficult to understand. However, it should be understood that the purpose of the ta'ame ha-mitzvos is only to perceive that wisdom within the mitzvos that may be comprehended by man's finite mind, not to determine which mitzvos are more important than others or which should exist and which should not. The Divine plan is obviously much deeper and more perfectly designed than can be imagined by man. In short, reason, especially when it is dictated by the mores of a certain age, must bow to that which is above reason and eternal, namely Divine Law.

The foremost consideration, therefore, in regard to sacrifices, is the authority of Divine commandments. There is, however, another factor involved that merits consideration. That is the kedushah, the sanctity that is an integral part of the sacrificial service, and which leads to a personal feeling of purity, as well as to a general solidarity of the nation. This aspect of sacrifice is eloquently expressed by Judah Halevi and Rav Kook, among others. The prophets who rebuked the people were re-

Contributing Editor

# "And Ye Shalt Serve The Lord"

by Bezalel Safran

Three times each day, in response to the divine imperative, "And ye shalt serve the Lord," the Jew offers prayers to God. Prefacing his prayers with praise and terminating them with thanksgiving, the worshipper petitions God to grant his, and the community's, spiritual and material needs.

Prima facie, prayer seems to be incompatible with our belief in an immutable God. If a certain course of events has been determined by Providence, how can prayer, even if it be the purest and sincerest, move God to change His plans?

Some philosophers, such as Immanuel Kant in his Lectures on Ethics, have succumbed to these philosophical considerations (and others which will be discussed shortly) and reduced prayer to a mere devotional exercise, the sole object of which is to induce in man a moral disposition. Kant maintained, furthermore, that to converse with God is absurd; hence, prayer's purpose can never be pragmatic seeking of the satisfaction of our wants.

Various Jewish thinkers have confronted the philosophical problems inherent in prayer and, through their complementary interpretations, have paved the way to a more profound appreciation of Avodah shebelev.

It must be pointed out at the outset that the "moral disposition" referred to before is an essential ingredient of the Jewish prayer as well. The Ramban, to cite just one example, expresses himself

quite strongly regarding the immoral person's prayer: "He offers prayers, but is not answered, as it is written, 'Even if ye make many prayers, I will not hear.'" However, whereas Kant had been content to look upon prayer merely as a moral exercise, Jewish thinkers, in dealing with the problem, sought to retain prayer as efficacious and as a self-validating service of God.

The Ramban is wrestling with the logical problems of prayer when he remarks: (Genesis 46:15): "And all our prayers are miracles, except that they do not directly contravene natural law." The context of this statement is a discussion of the nature of "concealed" miracles. The Ramban believes that the fulfillment of God's conditional promises mentioned in the Bible (e.g. rainfall as a reward for Torah observance) constitutes a miracle; for logically, there exists no causal relation between rainfall and religious behavior. By linking the efficacy of prayer to his general scheme of "concealed" miracles, the Ramban implies that fulfillment of our prayers is a miracle, for we cannot grasp the cause-effect relationship between our prayer and God's response.

Rav Yosef Albo addresses himself directly to this question in Sefer Ha-Ikharim. God's immutability, he maintains, is not affected by prayer. Divine decrees, favorable or detrimental to individuals or a community, are conditioned upon the recipients' being in a cer-

tain religious state. If that state changes, the decree changes also.

In this way, prayer and repentance benefit a wicked man, for through repentance he becomes another person, as it were, concerning whom no decree was made. Hence, it is inappropriate to object that God's will is changed by prayer, for God's will has always been that the decree should be realized if the person in question continues in the same state and changed if the person's state changes.

Rav Kook in his siddur Olas Reiyah stresses the religious experiential theme in the realm of prayer. Prayer, he says, has no intention of changing or affecting the unchangeable Divine; therefore it is necessary that prayer be cleansed of any desire to affect God's will.

Rather, a person immersed in prayer aims to transcend his environment in order that he may "stand before God" and give vent to his religious yearning. Thus, prayer has intrinsic value; the soul's prayerful intimacy with God and its purification through the encounter.

(It must not be supposed that Rav Kook has stripped prayer of its efficacy through his emphasis on the experiential value of prayer. How prayer is efficacious, according to him, without changing God's will, will be explained shortly.)

Emphasis of the experiential (Continued on page 10)

HAMEVASER wishes to salute SOY on last night's most successful Chanukah Chagiga. We look forward to similar functions in the future.

ferring to those who sinned constantly and without remorse, and then brought sacrifices to atone for their sins and to praise God. Those people never achieved the primary purpose of sacrifices, nor did they achieve the kedushah that comes from the service. We today, have also never experienced the kedushah of a proper sacrificial service. Perhaps such an experience of holiness in the surroundings of a rebuilt Bais Hamikdash and in the atmosphere of the period of messianic times, might lead to a significant change in nature, one which would enable sacrifices to achieve primary importance as a means of knowing and serving God.

The answer, then, to our delicate problem of re-institution of sacrifices, is that there is no problem. The Divine commandments will never be abrogated by either man or God. Rather than concern ourselves overly with this subject, we should rather look forward to the day anticipated by the Midrash, when there will be no sins in Israel, and every heart will be filled with gratitude to God. In that day, there will be no need for expiatory sacrifices, and "all offerings will cease, except the Thanksgiving offering, which will continue forever."

# The Creature: Evolution To The Ultimate

by Benny Kraut



Howard Katz



Howard Katz

The cycle begins: Air, light, sound, and touch mark the existence of the newly created. Without mind, the object whines, kicks, and struggles. No control does it have; it squeals like a piglet mired in quicksand. Life so begins; neither philosophy nor all contrivances of the imagination necessitate comment on this reality.

The object senses and grows, its life spent in gleeful play and unbounded from routine. Daily does it play, daily does it cry, daily does it discover; yet, is it living? Learning is rapid, reactions violent. It likes, it dislikes; everything is sense producible, to a degree unthought of previously.

Control it has none; in the hands of others does it exist, for what need it manipulate? In total oblivion of that which is external to the self, in this state, what needs it of control? Is it happy? Is it free? Is it meaningful? Is it? Perhaps, but is this the creature who becomes God?



Howard Katz

## Satmar Rebbe On Israel

by Jeffrey Roth

In the early portion of his book *The Chosen*, Chaim Potok portrays, rather monotonously, the rivalry of two yeshiva baseball teams on the playing field. The heckling from one side has a peculiar flavor uncommon to sports (but perhaps not to *yeshivos*)—their opponents are called *apikorsim* (apostates or religious heretics), and this is automatically taken to justify not only their eventual defeat, but even the methods used to achieve this defeat.

Potok's book is not a treatise on *halacha*, of course, nor are his youthful characters supposed to represent the great arbiters of Jewish law. But such a portrayal might prompt one to consider (if he has not thought of it before) the prevalence of the word (*apikorsim*—and what it signifies—in some yeshiva circles, and what its use means for those who employ it as an epithet as well as for those at whom it is directed.

Precisely such thoughts are prompted by another book recently published, that of the Satmar Rebbe (*Kunteres di haGeulah ve'al haTemurah*, Brooklyn, 5727). The following article is neither a comprehensive review of that book nor an attempt to essay the *sefer's* halachic merit. It is rather a description of a number of personal impressions that occurred to me as I read the book, offered here for further discussion and clarification.

At the outset one must recognize that the Satmar Rebbe's book is a treatise on *halacha*. Potok's novel may go the way of so much current fiction and be forgotten once the popularity of Anglo-Jewish writing is dissipated. But the Rebbe's book takes its place in the realm of halachic literature and, while its currency may never be great, the *Kunteres* will always be available for reference, study, and reflection by students of *halacha*.

Without citing any of the innumerable Biblical and Talmudic sources he quotes, the Rebbe's line of reasoning might read as follows: The secular State of Israel as it exists today is run by *apikorsim* who actively struggle to destroy Torah and its observance. Anyone, no matter how sincere, who supports them in any way is himself an *apikores*. Since the State has no validity in halachic terms, it is not permitted to sacrifice even one Jewish life in order to maintain it.

The recent war was consciously provoked by the Zionist leaders who stubbornly insisted on their presumed right of free passage through international waterways. Rather than cause Israel's blood to be shed like water, they should have appeased the Arabs and renounced their water rights; had they done this, the war would have been prevented. Further, since the very existence of the State is the cause of continued enmity in the Middle East, the Zionists should relinquish the State rather than endanger the lives of Jews; in such a case, the United Nations would be able to provide for Jewish welfare and no Jew's life would be in danger. Finally, with the threat of war imminent and irrevocable, the Jewish population of Israel should have fled rather than wage war and cause suffering and death by their actions.

The victory of the Six Day War has been proclaimed a Divine miracle. This contention is manifestly false, since it is clear that such miracles are never performed for *apikorsim*. At best, the victory can be traced to purely natural occurrences (the Zionists themselves claim that the Arabs are not fighters). Further, the prayers of the righteous during the war might have received a merciful hearing from *Hashem* and thus influenced the outcome.

But the most tenable explanation is to attribute the victory to Satan and his minions. They have been given the power by God to test Israel's faith, not only through

trials, but through seemingly divine miracles and wonders as well. To succumb to Satan by supporting the Zionists and falsely proclaiming the miraculous nature of their victory is a denial of the Torah which only retards the final Redemption and the coming of the Messiah.

In capturing the Old City of Jerusalem the Zionists have defamed the holy site of the Temple by their improper behavior at the Western Wall and on the Temple Mount. Had God wanted Jews to pray at the Western Wall, He would have provided access without forcing them to rely on the grace of *apikorsim*. In any event, the rebuilding of Jerusalem before the Messiah comes to reestablish the Davidic dynasty is presumptuous.

Further, the Zionists have added the sin of idolatry to their misdeeds by failing to destroy the shrines of the gentiles in Israel and even promising to strengthen and repair them. Whoever maintains the sites of *avodah zarah* transgresses a positive commandment and is himself an idolater.

No God fearing Jew who observes the *halacha* and hopes for true Redemption will support the State, nor will he be fooled or bribed into taking any part whatsoever in its victory.

Intuitively, we think that the Satmar Rebbe cannot be right; we rebel against the possibility of having to accept his analysis of the situation as normative for Orthodox Jewry. On an empirical basis, we know that his absolute categorizations are contradicted by those *gedolim* who support Israel from abroad as well as those who live and work in Israel, and by those great *rabbanim* who are actually employed in capacities related to the State. Are they *apikorsim*?

We know too that Israel has taken in hundreds of thousands of homeless Jews and has supported Jewish causes in world forums. *Yeshivos* and Torah scholarship flourish there and are achieving results that compare most favorably with previous periods. Is this the work of Satan?

Yet we cannot lightly dismiss this view since the Satmar Rebbe is the recognized head of an halachic community. Even a cursory reading of his book will demonstrate that he is not philosophizing at random nor speculating on theoretical issues, but applying the precise formulations of Jewish law. The work's logical presentation and eminently reasoned methodology preclude the option of ascribing it, as some have suggested, to a person whose

(Continued on page 7)

Stern Speaks

## "Mr. Know" And Synthesis

by Ginny Haberkorn

In addition to rockets, missiles, and destroyers, the Space Age has produced the unique phenomenon of "Mr. Know." Modern Man has come to see himself as an authority on virtually everything. Even Yeshiva University has not escaped this notion: Yeshiva has become infected with the prevalent presumptuousness of the times, assimilating modern science and philosophy into Orthodox Judaism has become one of our most noble preoccupations. Our success, moreover, is seen as one of the prime determinants of the "Rise or Fall of Yeshiva University." Most of us are by now thoroughly convinced that we must somehow collectively become the "Mr. Know" who will produce an absolute solution to the synthesis problem.

In the meantime, however, we are still "*Telusin l'Omdin*," despite our unflinching determination. We haven't as yet found a satisfactory answer. What should be our *Halakata* between the present and the dawn of a new "Enlightened Era"? (Assuming it will eventually dawn.) Are we all to remain skeptics? Must we all hold our *Emunah* in abeyance until we can synthesize all of what there is to modern thought and technology with Orthodox Judaism? Is it logical, moreover, even to presume ourselves capable of ever performing an absolute synthesis? New ideas and discoveries are now being "mass-produced" at a rate much faster than they can be assimilated. Certainly we cannot expect computers to accomplish synthesis!

Clearly, *Emunah* cannot be founded in such uncertainty. Despite modern notions, man is still and always will be an intellectually finite being. This does not disparage him nor deny his ultimate worth. It merely realizes that he cannot be the absolute "Mr. Know" he presumes to be. We at YU must take heed not to be swept along with others into such an endless cycle of delusions.

Deep-rooted, unwavering *Emunah* is something a Jew cannot, evidently, attain without an emotional experience, all the rational and intellectual gymnastics notwithstanding. The *Emunah* of a Jew must, moreover, be unconditional: it can't be made dependent on instabilities and evolutions in science and philosophy. We must each strive to make true for our inner selves the existence of *Hashem*; our *Emunah* should be grounded primarily in our own personal experience. The word *Lha-amin*, when translated literally, means, in effect, to make true. If something is already an undisputed fact, we need not add anything to make it so. *Emunah*, however, involves, as we have seen, more than objective fact. We cannot, moreover, allow our inability to synthesize certain facts cause a break in the entire process.

If by synthesis we mean the humble attempt at facing up to science, seeking to assimilate it into *Yahadus*, and furthermore, employing it to enhance our understanding of Torah—*Ashratnu*—then and only then can it be a worthwhile pursuit.

Culture and technology are an almost assured by-product of progress and development; recognition of understanding of the Divine is not quite such a direct result. The experience of *Hashem* must demand a world more; it must demand the whole of the individual, not only his intellect, and sometimes, despite his intellect. The fusion of our intellectual conclusions with our total experience is thus perhaps a mightier and more pressing *Synthesis* toward which to direct our energies.

### Sacrifices Based On Nature of Man

(Continued from page 8)  
 wisdom of the mitzvos in the Guide for the Perplexed. The implementation of sacrifices, he reasoned, was a concession to the nature of man in that age. The custom was to worship through sacrifice, and in order not to confuse the people who were accustomed to that particular mode of worship and who would have found it impossible to discontinue it, God effected the sacrificial service in the Temple. Through this service, similar to the general mode of worship but directed to one true God according to His laws, the principle of the Existence and Unity of God was firmly established, and the traces of idolatry were blotted out.

The Rambam anticipates the obvious questions: is it possible that an entire system of laws pertaining to sacrifices should be instituted

The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board extend heartfelt wishes of birchas mazel to  
 Abram Kinslinger, JSS '69  
 and Anita Siegel  
 on the occasion of their engagement.

because of a situation that existed only in a specific age? Could not God simply change the nature of the people so that they could serve God in the primary manner intended for all generations?

The Rambam answers with an example. Why did God lead the Israelites on a roundabout route via the wilderness of the Red Sea, rather than on a direct path to Canaan? The answer is that people who were slaves yesterday cannot suddenly begin conquering other nations. The necessary courage and fortitude is not within them. In order to build up this courage, God led Israel through the hardships of the wilderness. One may wonder why God did not immediately endow the people with the necessary strength and courage. The reason that He did not answers our previous questions. God could, of course, change the nature of anyone, or everyone, if necessary. However, "it has never been

(Continued on page 4)

Contributing Editor

## Reflections: Israel — Part 2

by Benny Kraut

In the last column I discussed my 'positively neutral' relationship to Israel before the June war, indicating certain attitudes that I had maintained. This article will evaluate my present relationship to the state and conclude my formal reflections on the issue. In addition I will comment on issues related to the war, but unrelated to each other, which merit attention.

The June war came as a shock. [It is precisely this 'shock experience' which functions as a sufficient condition to arouse one from a state of mental lethargy, a state in which the individual emerges with a measure of self realization. Unfortunately, it is often times only cataclysmic events in one's personal or public life which generate this feeling of self awareness.] I experienced the Arab-Israeli war as a cataclysmic event, not only in terms of my understanding of conceptual history, but also in terms of my total personality, i.e. both emotionally and intellectually. My emotional response to the war thrust me into a state of intellectual ferment and growth. I was compelled to consciously examine the obligations of my Jewish identity, obligations which resulted in the drafting of long term commitments, which, God willing, will materialize.

The war altered my attitudes in two essential ways: First, it served as a rude awakening, i.e., it formed a sense of immediacy in my relationship to the state, a viable and substantive feeling of identification which had previously been lacking. To me, it seemed philosophically untenable to feel this sense of immediacy at one time (i.e. in the state of war) and not at another. This, therefore, was my awakening: Israel no longer placed 'theoretical demands' on me (e.g. demands such as living in Israel as part of a religious duty), demands which operated as mental gymnastics, but rather presented immediate demands which must be grappled with.

Second, the war unequivocally demonstrated that practical reality does not permit the possibility of psychological disillusionment. Admittedly, there exists a disparity between the visionary Messianic ideal and the extant conditions of the state, yet the Jew has neither the time nor the right feel disillusioned. He must actively cooperate to establish the best possible State of Israel—at the present—despite the effects of the country's unfulfilled religious goals, bearing in mind that his conceptual projection of the 'best possible state' will be materially perfected, at one time or other, to meet visionary expectations.

In summary, then, the war aroused me from a state of relative unconcern to an immediate preoccupation with Israel and the idea of *aliyah*. Furthermore, it nullified the psychological disillusionment that I had experienced, instilling me with the awareness of meeting the mundane exigencies of dire reality. My relationship to Israel, therefore, was fundamentally affected by the war and its implications.

—o—o—

This section proposes to raise certain questions of interest and importance. First, allow me to ask the following: Did the war affect your religious observance, either quantitatively (i.e. observing more commandments) or qualitatively (i.e. feeling more the commandments already practiced)? Did it heighten your desire to fulfill your religious dimension? This is not a light matter, for it concerns the very nature of miracles. Did God intercede in the war or did He not? If He did, then we Jews—all of us—have unbelievable audacity and unmitigated gall in view of our lack of response; how dare events proceed so routinely! However, if He did not intercede, why does everyone claim that He did? The incident of the Golden Calf appears to be inextricably bound to this question. The construction of the Golden Calf by the Israelites disturbed quite a number of commentators, and, in view of

their responses has disturbed me even more so. How could a people who had witnessed and experienced the glory and might of a personal God sin so blatantly and so defiantly? One answer given is that it is the nature of man to forget the vividness of his experiences and to revert to his former modes of behavior. But this answer when applied to Biblical man has always been unacceptable to me, for it is inconceivable that man could have lost his experiential impressions of events so fantastic such as God's revelation at the Red Sea, at Mount Sinai, and the like. However, the June war may have taught me otherwise. What is the status of the past event, the Israeli victory in June? If it was an open miracle, comparable to the miracle at the Red Sea, then I can understand how the Israelites at Mount Sinai forgot their prior, personal encounters with God. Just as people today, incredible as it seems, forget the overt entry of the Divine Presence into human affairs and consider the war to be past history, so too did the ancient Jews. I don't like this analysis, but I would have no alternative but to concur, for it is empirically verifiable: if the Jews today can forget an overt miracle, then the ancient Jews could do so as well. If, however, the past war is a miracle of lesser dimensions, such as a hidden miracle, the initial question concerning the Israelites and the Golden Calf remains; we may, perhaps, attribute the absolute neglect of world Jewry (seen through its unchanged living habits) of the entry of the Divine Presence into human affairs to the decreased stature of the past miracle. Nevertheless, it is quite ironic. We worry about *heter panim*; Yavneh devotes a national convention to the topic. Yet if He did enter the world, to any degree, how do we remain so blasé, so unmoved, and so totally unaffected? How can we at Yeshiva quibble futilely over the hackneyed ifs and hang-ups? How is it that no sense of God's revelation—whatever its dimension—permeates the religious communities? Is it because, psychologically, man so easily forgets such 'minor' revelations? Or perhaps, is it because no miracle actually took place in June?

Second, it is intriguing to note the interpretation of events of the two opposing religious camps—Judaism and Christianity (the Moslems are losers all around, so we will ignore Islam). On the one hand, religious Jews impute the victory to the intervention of God; consequently, the Six-Day war is a manifestation of His miraculous nature plus the fortitude and military prowess of the Israeli armed forces. The Christians, on the other hand, generally refused to acknowledge this intervention of God on behalf of the Jews. This is readily apparent in that before, during, and after the war most of the top ranking Christian church officials refused to identify with the Israeli cause; even the so called liberal Protestants followed the conservative line. No political reasons would have restrained their identification with Israel had they felt that "God was on our side" (an assumption we do not wish to discuss.) This indicates an obvious interpretation of events without the incorporation of the supernatural to explain them. Interestingly enough, when was the last time Christian and Jews differed on historical events of such major proportions? Would you believe approximately two thousand years ago?

Third, because of the June war, we hear much talk of the coming of the Messiah and the Messianic era. A few months ago, I questioned a friend as to his thoughts on this issue. He replied, "I don't think about it; I just listen." Somehow, I tend to agree, for that is about all that we can honestly declare (unless we choose not to listen either). Obviously, the Messianic age draws nearer with each passing day, irrespective of one's approach to Messianism; but, who is to judge how close we are to it now?

## Letters To The Editor

(Continued from page 2)  
 situation would improve. Israel is not like the U.S. where 200,000 are scarcely noticeable among 200,000,000.

The reason for positive neutrality lies deep within the reasons for the condition of Judaism in the U.S. today.

**Cultural Pluralism**  
 Assimilation is a tremendous problem in America. Yeshiva University is the symbol of modern Orthodox Jewry. I do not think it is a projection of my own failings when I surmise that not a majority of YU boys from religious homes can claim to be as religious as their fathers and grandfathers. The group of Orthodox Jews who have stepped out into the world have suffered in general

from exposure to American cultural pluralism. The reason for this, I believe, lies in the past and/or present inadequacy of religious education to meet the challenges of American cultural pluralism. The reasons for this inadequacy and what can be done about it, is the subject for much discussion, and can't be dealt with here.

So positive neutrality towards the State of Israel doesn't stem from psychological disillusionment, but it is rather a manifestation of the dilution of Jewish commitment. A red-blooded Orthodox Jew who had a concept of and feeling for Jewish history would want to live in Israel. Sadly, there aren't that many around who want to live in Israel for any reason.

Apathy. Isn't that a familiar

word around Yeshiva?  
 Sincerely yours,  
 Sim Goldman '67

While the tenor of this letter is certainly most acceptable, the interpretation of Mr. Kraut's column by its author is not.

Mr. Goldman takes issue with what he interprets as an implied causal relationship between "psychological disillusionment" with the present-day State of Israel and "positive neutrality." Yet the intent of the presentation would seem to relate these two ideas only incidentally, i.e., "psychological disillusionment" is merely a projection, so to speak, of "positive neutrality," in the sense that it provides some with alleged justification of their "positive neutrality."

Mr. Goldman further points out a so-called contradiction between calling something a legitimate response to experience and at the same time not justifying it. It would seem quite obvious that a response can be objectively legitimate, i.e., understandable, and yet not justifiable.

Finally, it would appear that Mr. Goldman has unfortunately misinterpreted the use of the editorial "we" as applying to the whole American Jewish community. The feelings expressed in Mr. Kraut's column are purely personal.

The Editor  
 Torah Center  
 To the Editor:  
 Students in RIETS do not want and do not need a twenty million

dollar Torah Center. However, certain minor additions would mean much to students in the third floor *Beis Medrash* in Furst Hall. If more space were allotted to coat hooks and/or hangers and if sound proofing material would be installed in the ceiling, the atmosphere would be more comfortable than it is now and perhaps it would facilitate the learning process.

Mr. Blazer's men have finally adjusted the thermostat. Perhaps *Hamevaser* can exert editorial pressure for these changes, too.

Wally Green '66.

(The HAMEVASER Governing Board endorses the ideas expressed in this letter and hopes it will serve the purpose of an editorial.)

(Continued on page 7)

## Views Of Various Poskim On Binyam Habais Discussed In Light Of Recent Israeli War

## Officers Declare Need For Y.U. Participation

(Continued from page 3)  
depend on the coming of the Messiah. We must take the initiative and proceed to build the Temple.

### JSS Mishmar Program Begins Successfully

A main principle of the obligation to learn Torah is the setting of a fixed study period. In this spirit, the first JSS Mishmar took place Thursday evening, November 30th, in the New Beis Midrash under the guidance of Rabbi Morris Besdin and Rabbi Shlomo Riskin. The aim of this program, said Rabbi Riskin, "is to give the individual student an opportunity to talk to his rebbe in an informal atmosphere which is not often possible in the classroom situation."

Approximately 65 boys representing a cross-section of JSS attended the inauguration of the Mishmar program. Rabbi Besdin and Riskin answered questions and learned with individuals and groups. A wide range of subjects were studied, including Talmud, Bible and Mishnah.

Faculty members of JSS, on a rotational basis, will direct the future weekly Thursday evening sessions. It is hoped that this program will enhance the spirit of learning in the Yeshiva as a whole. Rabbi Riskin aptly described the successful Mishmar when he remarked: "The bringing together of students at the end of the week for limud Torah is in order to clearly demonstrate the fact that the week must begin and end with Torah."

in the land of Israel. Further, since today we are not divided up into twelve tribes, a part of the Jewish people living in Israel constitute "Kal Yosheva Ateha"—"All live in Israel." Most Jews may not be actually living in Israel; however, the thoughts and emotions of Jews throughout the world are tied up with those of the Jews in Israel.

Since the theory of eternal Holiness of the Temple is based on the fact that the divine presence always rests on the place of the Holy Temple, it certainly has not gone away and is still present. Even if the Temple doesn't exist, God's presence is still resting on the Har Habayis.

The Third Temple will be built according to the prophecies of Ezekiel, which we still have in written form. Further, the Rambam explains that each and every Jew should know and understand the laws in *Masechet Middos*, so that he will know the looks, forms, and measurements of the Temple when it will be built. Certain *Gedolim* feel that we have enough

information and measurements to go ahead and build the Temple. We already have many scale models to the minutest detail, of how the Temple would actually look and this would suffice.

Our generation is one of great religious and moral decay. If we were to build the *Bais Hamikdash* it would serve as a source of holiness, and help to bring many people back to the folds of traditional Judaism. The Yerushalmi says that the Holy Temple was called a "*Bais Hashoveh*," "place of drawing," because the holy spirit was drawn from the Temple. (*Yerushalmi Sukkah Perek 5*).

No clear *Psak*, or law, can be drawn from the various halachic evidences I have brought. At present the consensus of opinion among our *Gedolim* is that the *Bais Hamikdash* cannot be rebuilt. Let us hope and pray that we witness the coming of the Messiah, *binjerah b'yameynu*, quickly in our day, to see the complete redemption of the Jewish people and the rebuilding of the Holy Temple.

(Continued from page 4)  
hopes to create a vibrant intellectual national organization. Its publications, for instance, are instrumental in achieving this aim. The *Yavneh Review* is an annual journal of Jewish studies focusing on relevant intellectual issues. The *Jewish Collegiate Observer*, the national newspaper of Yavneh, presents stimulating articles and chapter information. The *Yavneh Newsletter* enables all chapters to inform each other of their programs. This year, a new publication series has been prepared on *parashas hashavua*. Each week, one article treating a philosophical problem in the *parsha* will be mailed to the membership. These articles, written by some of the most prominent scholars of the Jewish religious world, will hopefully provide an impetus for further study of Torah.

has always been Y.U. students who comprised the Yavneh leadership; it has always been members of the Y.U. faculty who served on the advisory board to national Yavneh. Even now, Y.U. students lecture at Yavneh functions at other campuses. And we must ensure that we continue to provide guidance for the questioning orthodox students at other colleges. To this end, we are embarking on a revitalization of the Yeshiva chapter of Yavneh. By having an active chapter we will be able to participate with other young men and women in the national Yavneh movement for the benefit of the whole Jewish community. For details concerning membership see:

Chaim Feller, MD 204  
Simon Posner, MD 809  
Joseph Kaplan, MD 713

### Letters to the Editor

(Continued from page 6)

#### The Chaplaincy

To the Editor:  
The big box on the top of your first page was most appropriately bordered in a black box. Your editorial comments on the news that the administration has made the chaplaincy program voluntary is an unadulterated notice of its demise.

It is difficult to believe that even the writer of the article sincerely believes that a voluntary program will succeed where a draft failed. At this date, not a single member of the current class has indicated to join our military forces. I would humbly suggest that the lottery be restored immediately for it should be apparent even to people totally (Continued on page 8)

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## Roth Defends Prerogative Of Satmar Rebbe To Publish Kunteres, Yet Feels Book Shows His Lack Of Understanding Of Politics

(Continued from page 5)

rational faculties have been impaired. How, then, did he achieve such unsatisfactory results?

We are almost unavoidably led to conclude that the Rebbe's evaluation must have been, at least in part, subjective. We are reasonably certain that his attitude toward the State of Israel was formed long before the Six Day War. It follows that he approached that event within a ready-made matrix of biases and predispositions. His manner of presentation—in halachic terms of *aveirah*, *issur*, and ultimately *apikorvus* and *kefirah*—only beclouds the fact that his own beliefs are being expressed through the *halacha*.

The significant question that remains at this point is whether (assuming that his analysis was subjective) the Rebbe's conclusions are to be rejected as halachically non-valid for this reason. This depends on the role one generally assigns subjectivity in the development of *halacha*.

Those who completely deny it a role assume that the *posek* is a computer. During his formative years he is programmed in *gemara* until he internalizes the principle concepts of *halacha*. Then, whenever he is faced with the particulars of any given situation, the result is an automatic *psak* in which the *posek*—as an individual—has taken no part. People who agree with this characterization will have no difficulty in facing the Satmar's challenge: since he departed from the standard canons of halachic practice by being subjective, his conclusions may be rejected as not binding halachically. In general, how does one determine whether a *psak* is to be disqualified due to the subjective nature of its formulation?—By checking the *posek's* predispositions against one's own and rejecting the former when the two conflict.

The *Kunteres* represents a more serious challenge to

those who believe that all *psak* contains some element of subjectivity. Their view is based on two assumptions:

(1) that the realm of halachic literature, having developed during many different periods under widely varying conditions, is so vast that a number of valid halachic alternatives can be deduced to cover even slightly ambiguous situations; (2) that the process of *psak* consists of choosing between these alternatives, and the *posek's* choice is often influenced, at least in part, by his personal biases. These biases result from the total, cumulative effect of the *posek's* environment which has sensitized him to certain factors while rendering him less responsive to others.

In one sense, this second view helps to explain a great deal of what the Satmar Rebbe says. We can attribute it, in some degree, to the influence of his background which must have played a significant role in shaping his attitudes and beliefs. But since we have admitted that all *psak*, including the most clearly valid decisions, may contain some element of subjectivity, we cannot use this criterion to categorically reject the Rebbe's opinions. If this be the case, how are we to divest ourselves of this particular *psak* of the Satmar Rebbe?

I believe that since we, as individuals, cannot lightly dismiss the *psak* or invalidate it on halachic grounds, we must reject it on faith. We are reasonably certain that the Rebbe has enunciated only one possible alternative. We are confident that other possibilities exist, and we must have patience to wait until men of halachic stature equal to that of the Satmar Rebbe have refuted him point by point, forcefully and directly demonstrating the viability of alternative halachic approaches to the problems he has raised. Fortunately, in this case, perhaps because of its extreme nature, the refutation began almost immediately in many circles. But our dilemma would have been a most

difficult one had the other *gedolim* remained silent and we would have had only our intuition as the basis for rejecting the Satmar's well-reasoned arguments.

There has been some debate whether the *Kunteres* should have been written at all. To me it appears that the Satmar Rebbe not only had the right to publish it, but the duty—the duty of any halachist to evaluate significant events in the light of the *halacha* and to draw what he believes are the appropriate conclusions. This duty is a three-fold responsibility: first, to himself, to unburden what must be a terrible vision of a people gone astray, preventing the Messianic era and paying for blindness with tragedies counted out in Jewish lives; second, to his immediate group of followers for practical instruction in their daily lives; and third, for the edification of the general halachic community of world Jewry.

But the book points to a tremendous impasse for those who have been suggesting that the *gedolim* speak out on topics of momentous issue (such as civil rights and the war in Vietnam on the American scene). Here a *qadol* has done just that, and the results were disastrous. At best, he would have consigned the Jewish population of Israel to the safe keeping of the United Nations; at worst, he would have counseled a policy of appeasement to satisfy Arab demands. With a total lack of understanding of the political problems he is attempting to analyze in either case, the Satmar Rebbe would have unwittingly assigned two millions of his brethren to the possibility of frightful slaughter. It is apparent that more careful consideration will have to be given to the process of applying halachic categories to the complex issues of modern politics, if the *halacha* is to be applied to this area at all.

# The Question Of Reinstitution Of Sacrifices As Approached Through The Theories Of Maimonides And Judah Halevi

by Michael Shmidman

The re-uniting of old and new Jerusalem through the Six-Day War has been interpreted by many as a prelude to the coming of the Messiah. It has also stirred up debate concerning the rebuilding of the *Bais Hamikdash*. One of the more delicate problems raised by the possibility of a third *Bais Hamikdash* is the question of reinstitution of sacrifices. Is our system of prayer a permanent, or only temporary replacement for sacrifice? This article will attempt to discuss the problem through the views of two great Jewish thinkers: Maimonides and Judah Halevi.

The Rambam, educated early in both Talmud and philosophy, reached an exceptionally high level in both theological and philosophical studies, as he capitalized on the environment of Mohammedan Spain for the advancement of his secular knowledge. In his *Guide for the Perplexed*, written for those "who have studied philosophy and have acquired sound knowledge; and who, while firm in religious matters, are perplexed and bewildered on account of the ambiguous and figurative expressions employed in the holy writings," the Rambam attempts to prove that the religious principles expounded by him in his *Mishnah Torah* are confirmed by philosophy.

The philosophy of Halevi, on the other hand, is essentially anti-rationalist. He reacted against what he viewed as the decaying Jewish life and culture of Spain in the early twelfth century. Rather than attempt to reconcile

Judaism with rational ideas, Halevi defends Judaism as a religion beyond the realm of reason, yet true because of the historical truth of the revelation at Sinai. The dissimilarity of their philosophies is evident in their treatment of the subject of sacrifices.

In Judah Halevi's treatise on Judaism, the *Kuzari*, the rabbi is asked by the Khazar king for an explanation of sacrifices. "Reason," maintains the king, "cannot accept such expressions as: My offering, My bread for My sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet savour unto Me (Num. 28:2), employed in connection with the sacrifices, describing them as being God's offering, bread, and incense." The rabbi explains that there exists, within the body, a reasoning soul. This soul, however, does not dwell in the sense of occupying space, but is rather independent of the body, as is stated in Daniel (2:2), "Its dwelling is not with the flesh," and is only existent in a soul which is susceptible to it. Just as God is too exalted to receive any benefit or pleasure from our offerings of food and drink, so is the Divine Intellect emanating from Him (in the form of the reasoning soul), too exalted to partake of this food. In order for man to be guided by this reasoning soul, he must first prepare his faculties for its guidance. Sacrifices play an important role in this preparation, putting the mind and spirit in the proper mood for receiving the guidance of the reasoning soul. "The nobler ingredients of the food," maintains Halevi, "go to strengthen the heart; the best of all, the spirit." Halevi compares this process to that of maintaining the health of the body. Just as a man must be well-fed for complete physical

health, so must the mind be properly fed with the food of sacrifice and with the purity and holiness of the order of the sacrificial service for man to be spiritually healthy enough for the guidance of the Divine Influence and for purity of the soul.

Halevi then hastens to add that his reasons are, by no means,

the true reasons for the sacrificial service. The service is based on something much deeper, and that is Divine law, instituted by God. The author of the *Kuzari* then expounds a basic principle of his regarding philosophy. One who accepts commandments of God with complete *emunah*, asserts Halevi, and without investigating

the reasons behind them, is on the highest level of *emunah*. Anyone who does, however, step down to the level of investigation, should search for the wisdom inherent in the commandments, rather than for "evil opinions and doubts which lead to corruption."

The Rambam, searched for the (Continued on page 6)

## Feature Series

# Maimonides On Natural Evil

To help arouse the Yeshiva student from his mental torpor, we introduce the following series presenting thought-provoking essays, stories, and excerpts from philosophical texts. Each selection will be succeeded by penetrating questions which, we hope, will evoke response from both students and faculty. The first selection is taken from Friedlander's translation (Part III, Ch. XII), of *The Guide for the Perplexed* by Maimonides. In this passage, Maimonides discusses and attempts to justify the existence of natural evil in the world.

The evils that befall man are of three kinds:

(1) The first kind of evil is that which is caused to man by the circumstance that he is subject to genesis and destruction, or that he possesses a body. It is on account of the body that some persons happen to have great deformities or paralysis of some of the organs. This evil may be part of the natural constitution of these persons; or may have developed subsequently in consequence of changes in the elements, e.g., through bad air, or thunderstorms, or landslides. We have already shown that, in accordance with the divine wisdom, genesis can only take place through destruction, and without the destruction of the individual members of the species the species themselves

would not exist permanently. Thus the true kindness, and beneficence, and goodness of God is clear. He who thinks that he can have flesh and bones without being subject to any external influence, or any of the accidents of matter, unconsciously wishes to reconcile two opposites, viz., to be at the same time subject and not subject to change. If man were never subject to change here could be no generation; there would be one single being, but no individuals forming a species. Galen, in the third section of his book, *The Use of the Limbs*, says correctly that it would be in vain to expect to see living beings formed of the blood of menstruous women and the semen of virile men, who will not die, will never feel pain, or will move perpetually, or will shine like the sun. This dictum of Galen is part of the following more general proposition—Whatever is formed of any matter receives the most perfect form possible in that species of matter; in each individual case the defects are in accordance with the defects of that individual matter. The best and most perfect being that can be formed of the blood and the semen is the species of man, for as far as man's nature is known, he is living, reasonable, and mortal. It is therefore impossible that man should be free from this species of evil. You will, never-

theless, find that the evils of the above kind which befall man are very few and rare; for you find countries that have not been flooded or burned for thousands of years; there are thousands of men in perfect health, deformed individuals are a strange and exceptional oc-

The SOY invites all students to attend Rabbi Hershel Schacter's Shiur in Hilchos Brachos every Thursday evening at 8:30 in F-308.

currence, or say few in number if you object to the term exception—they are not one-thousandth, not even one-thousandth part of those that are perfectly normal.

Questions: 1. What is Maimonides' conception of evil? Does it have moral overtones? Why?

2. Does he grapple with the reasons for the existence of these destructive 'changes in the elements'? Ultimately, God would seem responsible for them, yet Maimonides does not discuss this.

3. Why must men die in order that man should live?

4. When Maimonides states that 'evils of the above kind are very rare,' is he not, ultimately, avoiding the issue for natural evil does exist?

Please address all comments to "HAMEVASER SERIES," in care of The Editor.

## Letters to the Editor

(Continued from page 7)

bind that the voluntary program is a failure — doomed to failure before it started. I would respectfully suggest to the administration imposition of strong reactions as in the Korean War. The shortage of Orthodox Jewish chaplains is now acute and conspicuous and will become increasingly so. The "chilul ha shem" that must necessarily result from this will do neither Yeshiva, Orthodoxy, and American Jewry little good.

Rabbi Louis Bernstein

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## Paretsky Presents Plan To Overcome Yetzer Horah

(Continued from page 1)

reiterating the theory advanced by Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzatto in his preface to his famous work of *mesaar*, *Mesilas Yesharim*. Rav Luzzatto claimed that his work is merely a reminder of things that we already know, but which we constantly forget. This has always been true in the past, and remains true in our time. Our age, maintained Rav Paretsky, is characterized by an over-estimation of man's knowledge, a delusion created by the great technological advances of the age. In reality, however, we are not radically different from the people of previous ages, and we have at least the same need for *mesaar*. At the same time, we are not as bad, in comparison with past eras, as some may think.

To further substantiate this last claim, Rav Paretsky compared the faults of many modern rabbis to the drawbacks of rabbis in the

of the *Nodah B'Yehudah*, almost two centuries ago. A disciple of the *Nodah B'Yehudah* criticized those rabbis of his day who decided halachic problems without adequate knowledge of the *halacha*. He compared them to musicians who play by ear without ever having learned the musical notes.

Throughout the ages, then, we have fallen prey to the machinations of the constantly active *yetzer horah*. What exactly is the *yetzer horah*?

Rabbi Israel Salanter, in his *Iggeret Hamussar*, mentions two prevailing opinions. One assumes the *yetzer horah* to be the *koach hatumah*. The other sees the rational part of man that promotes spiritually unhealthy desires as the *yetzer horah*. Rav Salanter, however, calls *yetzer horah* the combination of both, a reminder that we must fight it both rationally

and mysteriously (with Divine help).

How do we proceed in this age-old struggle against our evil tendencies and desires?

The proper method, asserted Rav Paretsky, is first to adopt all means possible to bring Torah closer to our grasp and reach. This must be accomplished without cutting or shrinking the Torah, as advocates of a mini-Judaism — a religion which stops at a certain length—would have it. A person must then seek to emulate the ways of God ("Just as He is merciful, so must you be merciful") as much as is possible within his limited boundaries, and to make a sincere attempt to give his learning an underlining of Divinity. Through this method, man becomes attached to God, thus fulfilling "and to cleave unto Him" (Deut. 11:22), the essence of the goal for which we strive.

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# Rapidly Growing Suburban Community Composed Of Youthful Professionals

(Continued from page 10)  
 bers. There is a plaque above the entrance in his tribute which reads *zichron Daniel David.*)

The community slowly began to change in appearance. Instead of families with children of the age of nine or ten whose primary purpose was to synthesize a Torah background for their children in a suburban environment, the new influx of members consisted of families of young professionals whose primary purpose was not the *Yeshiva* for their children (it may have been a later goal), but it was an orthodox *schul* which could provide the needs of a traditional Jew in a suburban community. Many signs of this fact could be seen. The little children about two or three who were romping around the *schul*, the young president who could be no older than thirty, and the relatively young age of the people, who so kindly put me up at their home for *Shabbos* and who attested, although they had a daughter of college age, that they were among the older members of the community.

At present there are over a hundred families enrolled as members, with 90% *Shomer Shabbos*, and an equally large number taking an active part in extra-curricular activities. The personality of the community does not consist of the "suburban, indifferent minded conservative business man" but of the rising young professional who's totally involved in the well-

fare of the synagogue. An unusual fact is that among a good number of the families one or the other spouse did not become an observant Jew until they were married.

However, what you may ask, will insure the survival and growth of Orthodoxy here? Will not the children of these young marrieds assimilate?

The answer to these problems may be found in the workings of the *schul* itself. Not only is there an active participating membership but they are also under the leadership of Rav Kanatopsky (one of our *Roshi Yeshivos*) a brilliant and sincere *Rab* who is dedicated to fostering the true principles of Torah Judaism in this modern orthodox community. Perhaps the two most important programs that the lay leadership and the Rabbi have developed together are the extensive youth programs and the educational program.

The youth programs are mainly sponsored by the synagogue itself which institutes programs that include youth from ages of 2½ to college age. Starting at the age of five there is a junior congregation service but the youth soon outgrow this because, according to Larry Odess, the President of the *schul*, the young people do not want a play service but want to really know how to *daven* and, therefore, the best way to teach them is through actual experience in the adult service. In this way the

father and son relationships are kept strong and the children become accustomed to the warmth and meaning of a service.

Also for the ages of 5 to 11, youth groups are managed by the older boys of the community who act as leaders. They perform a variety of activities and one *Shabbos* afternoon when I was there they put on dramatic skits with great enthusiasm and excitement for the grandparents who visited the community. Included in the youth program are afternoon programs, trips, and weekends sponsored by the synagogue for young children and teenagers. There is also a Leaders Training program for teenagers; which has recently acquired a youth director. There is also a specially appointed committee whose sole purpose is to evaluate the progress of the program and to offer any constructive criticism that will aid in making the Youth program a better one. At present there is no need for a *Talmud Torah* because most parents send their children to the *yeshiva* in the neighborhood.

All the classes both for college youth and adults are conducted by the rabbi. After listening to his Friday night *chumash* class I can see why the adults and young adults find his classes both intellectual stimulating and inspirational. There is also a cultural committee in the synagogue which sponsors a monthly book series and a Hebrew speaking group. The Sisterhood is one of the main vehicles through which the women's voice is heard in the *schul*. There is also a planning and development committee which analyzes the future goals of the community.

Young Israel of West Hempstead is not a utopian society; however, but has its own unique problems. When the *schul* was just being formed there was a warm family atmosphere which pervaded the community and a feeling of unity in all the activities. However, with more people, the community will become more diversified in its needs and therefore more heterogeneous activities will have to be provided for these different groups. One of the biggest problems that the synagogue is facing are expansion facilities that are desperately needed for special occasions, where there is no seating room in the *schul*. Although West Hempstead is a growing community, it is still relatively small and therefore has only one Kosher butcher (under the *hashgachah* of the rabbi); it desperately needs a Kosher bakery and a *mikveh*.

Only time will tell if the expansion problems that West Hempstead is facing can be coped with. For this community to flourish, young and creative thinking will have to be produced of the same style that molded the community. It will not be easy but if West Hempstead can accomplish this goal to include a large population Orthodox Judaism in-suburbia will be able to add a great plus to its credit, and the vanishing Jew will factually be a myth.

# The Challenge Of Modern Society

by Andy Solomon

The startling assertion by the Midtown Manhattan Study, completed in 1962, that 23.4% of Midtown Manhattan's in-residents are mentally "impaired" shocked, and angered, many social scientists. Only 18.5% of the sample taken by Strole, Langner, Michael, Opler, and Rennie was adjudged "well," the remaining 81.5% distributed along a symptomatic scale. Furthermore, state the authors, there is no reason to doubt the study's applicability to all of New York City, nay urban America. Valid criticisms can, perhaps, be made of the study; but even these cannot hide its cogent indication that American urban society is sick.

### Search for "Kicks"

Amidst an efficient technology and sterile amorality, the young American orthodox Jew attempts to navigate through a neurotic society that searches for "kicks." This precarious position of the lifeblood of American Jewry must be ameliorated if the community is to survive.

In the face of this challenge, the American orthodox rabbi has failed miserably. Looming above him is the mating fear to opine in the face of possible criticism by the community, liberal rabbis, and his learned colleagues; while below him yawns the mouth of a whale somewhat of his own making; society come to consume him, conceal him, and ultimately to destroy him. And while *Nineveh* wallows in self-indulgence, he shrinks from his mission to impress upon the community the "delicate" minutiae which, in fact, lie at the very foundation of Torah Judaism. This disconcerting lack of dynamism has defaulted Jewish leadership in general and orthodox leadership in particular to great orators who speak the emptiness of a perfidious sell-out to subtle, creeping compromise. But the tragedy itself becomes manifest in the pathetic stumblings of the young, for a haunting search persists beneath the most complacent facade of any adolescent on the spectrum of Jewish youth.

The distinctive singleness of purpose necessary to reject society, whether from fear or courage, characterizes the ghetto Jew. Inter-marriage and divorce are not his problems. Ideally, an undisturbed ascent to piety, his life is, in fact, affected by a society that creeps in through the crevices in his confidently constructed shelter. But it is more than a shelter that he has built, for he may find that he cannot hope to step out of it and survive; refusal to deal with the greater environment often renders his sanctuary a prison.

A similar inability to operate in

both Jewish and non-Jewish worlds plagues the assimilationist. An overpowering desire to conform, coupled with a lack of Jewish education, motivate him to reject Judaism for such reasons as its inconsideration of the female sex, and assume the philosophy of a society in which women beg to be treated as animals. But he too must wrestle with his soul, for the as-

The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board extend their wishes of *birchas kol tur* to Mitchell Korman RIETS '69 and Susan Katz on the occasion of their engagement.

similationist seems; incapable of totally eradicating his Jewishness. He is all too often the victim of ignorance and self-hate.

Somewhere between these two extremes lies the main-stream of American orthodoxy—the contemporary young orthodox Jew. His is perhaps the most pronounced of difficulties; for he desires to remain a steadfast Jew and, at the same time, participate in the society-at-large. He thus exposes himself to the vituperative pressures of a modern America beset with secular anomie. His resulting moral and social confusion betray an adolescence ruthlessly set upon by society's bewildering temptations. In this worldly, if somewhat naive, striving to enjoy the best of two worlds, he often falls victim to a perilous disease. For the treacherous path he chooses is fraught with the pitfalls of a most disgusting phenomenon come to be known as "modern orthodoxy." His unknowing, and often unearring, transgressions evidence rabbinic rigidity and moral decay.

To be sure, the American Jew will survive, but in what form? It is highly unlikely that social pressures will lessen in the near future, and only a fool would expect society's assistance in preserving Torah. The survival of Judaism, as always, lies with student and teacher. Clearly, a pride in heritage on the part of both is a necessary change for American Jewry, a desirable influence in American society.

# Wyschogrod Defense On Narrow Grounds

(Continued from page 10)

timely exactly. "Wyschogrod is as sensitive as we are to the charges against Orthodoxy which are current among non-Orthodox Jews as well as non-Jews. We are accused of being concerned only with the letter of the law and not its spirit, with ignoring moral issues of a universal nature, and of being entirely self-serving. Doesn't Wyschogrod's article give substance to these charges? Bad enough that the first article that *Tradition* publishes is a defense of American policy, but even worse, this defense is based on the narrowest grounds of group self-interest rather than on any moral, halachic, or philosophical position.

# The Importance of Kavanah in Prayer

(Continued from page 10)

form of *bakashah*—petitioning God to comply with our requests? Furthermore, petitioning God seems unnecessary. Take, for example, the case of a man in distress. The Omniscent God sees his distress, so that it is objectively unnecessary for him to pray; and he himself stands in no need of any lively representation of his distress, so that it is subjectively unnecessary for him to pray.

Rabbi Bachye may be preoccupied with these questions when he observes that our conventional concept of prayer is fallacious. We are accustomed to think that prayer is a means to attain a certain end, e.g., fulfillment of our needs. This is not so. Rather, God in His desire to bring us closer to Him in order that we may experience His immanence, created situations of trouble and need which induces us to turn in prayer to Him. Thus, our needs are just a means; prayer is the end. Rabbi Bachye bases his observation on *Midrash Tanchuma (Toledos 9)*: "Why were the patriarchs sterile? Because God desired their prayers. Said He: the patriarchs are rich and beautiful; if I grant them children, they would not pray to Me."

Rav Kook in *Olas Reiyah* seems to pursue this thought further. He comments on the statement in *Berachos (32)*, "If a person sees that his prayer was not answered, let him pray again."

The vicissitudes which a person undergoes during his lifetime are God's way of eliciting a moral response from him. This means that a certain trouble which torments a person is "calculated" by God to correct a specific moral defect. Different troubles affect different moral defects.

A person's attempt to alleviate his problems through prayer will evoke the attitude necessary to cope with the specific moral defect. Therefore, a person who prayed but was not answered must continue to pray. The fact that his prayer was not answered is an indication that the moral integrity which God sought was not yet attained. He must continue to pray in order to attain higher moral and religious stature.

It thus becomes evident that fulfillment of man's prayers does not entail a change in God's will. Rather, it indicates the worshipper's religious regeneration: One the worshipper has achieved his religious goal, the need for God's decree is obviated.

- 1) Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Ethics*, pp. 98-103.
- 2) *Milchos Tesuvah*, Chapter 7, Paragraph 7.
- 3) Rabbi Issachar Yaakovson, *Nesiv Binah*, p. 28.
- 4) Volume 4, Part 1, chapter 18.
- 5) P. 14.
- 6) *Hilchos Tefillah*, chapter 5, paragraph 4.
- 7) *Tradition*, Summer 1965, pp. 36-37.
- 8) In the section on *Tefillah*.
- 9) See Rabbi E. Bar Shaul's "Mitzvah Valev," first section on *Tefillah*.
- 10) P. 25.

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## Wyschogrod Sees Analogy Between Vietnam And Israel

(Continued from page 4)

depth of Professor Wyschogrod's alleged Jewish interest.

Here we find ourselves confronted by arguments that go unproven and which are modified so much by the author himself that they become meaningless. It is roundaboutly implied in the article that a Vietcong victory would be a Soviet victory which would shake the stability of—the United States and Europe, which in turn would place "Jewish existence" . . . in jeopardy." Calling this "not at all unreasonable to assume," Wyschogrod does not bother to offer any proof for this only faintly logical deduction. Instead he plays upon the usual sentiments and says that " . . . Jews ought to be aware of the Communist threat to Jewish existence and draw the proper conclusion from the fact." And in a side comment it is important to note that he hastens to admit that "genuine (positive) changes" have taken place in Moscow of late, and that direct Jewish concern in the Far East is of course minimal (it being that there are not many flourishing Jewish communities in either North or South Vietnam).

He emphasizes, however, that the analogy between the Vietnamese and Israeli situations is a far more important argument. Though here we could agree were there substantial proof of a direct relationship, none is forthcoming from Dr. Wyschogrod. Instead he quotes a New York *Time's* article in which Ahmed Shukairy, Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, is quoted as claiming that his leaders have been studying the guerilla tactics of the National Liberation Front. Wyschogrod follows the quote with the comment that "the parallel between the fate of the Vietcong and the P.L.O. is thus very clear to Mr. Shukairy." It is not very clear at all. Do we need a N.L.F. victory to tell us that guerilla tactics are military maneuvers worthy of emulation? Why would the eventual fate of the N.L.F. matter at all here?

Then Wyschogrod has the only valid point of this whole section obviated by the lessons of the June war in the Middle East. He says that an American defeat by the N.L.F. would give the Arabs confidence in their own national "war of liberation" because they would know that the verbal commitment to small, democratic states does not go beyond the verbal. But we can see, as a result of our official reaction in June, that such a commitment is not of any great substance and it is doubtful that in the future the Arabs will wage war contingent upon it. However even if such a commitment should exist, is it not more plausible to expect its fulfillment when we are disengaged economically and militarily from Vietnam? Furthermore, Wyschogrod ignores the possibility that a cessation of the war might result from our desire for peace and will not be misconstrued as a major military defeat for a mighty democratic power.

We are now prepared for a concluding paragraph that is a relief to all those who might have thought that the article would be taken seriously in its Vietnam context. Who are these Jewish liberals that we've been speaking to? And when is it that Wyschogrod would think of applying the arguments of Jewish interest? He says that "it is only withdrawal under conditions of the surrender of South Vietnam to Communist rule . . . that would be catastrophic to Jewish interests." If Professor Wyschogrod is implying that the bulk of anti-war sentiment among Jewish intellectuals calls for total withdrawal and is therefore asking for a catastrophe to befall the Jewish nation, I think it is a serious misunderstanding of the nature of the anti-war sentiment. When Wyschogrod himself calls for negotiation of a reasonable settlement "even well short of total victory" he is not separated by any great distance from most of the opposition.

What is it that Professor Wyschogrod is trying to tell us? I acknowledge and appreciate the criticism directed at the weak receptiveness to Jewish interests on the part of many Jewish secularists. But Vietnam is not a case in point and it is serious that an Orthodox scholar has attempted to prove the opposite. In a situation where the Jewish interest is at best highly conjectural, it is placed in opposition to a powerful array of moral objections.

Dr. Lieberman expresses my sen-

(Continued on page 9)

## Dr. Havazelet Investigates Influence Of Geonim On Rambam In New Book

by Jack Wallfish

A new book dealing with the *Geonim* and their influence on the *Rambam* and written by a member of the EMC faculty was recently published. The work, entitled *Ha Rambam V'HaGeonim* by Dr. Meir Havazelet, is of interest for both its historic and halachic value.

In his book, for which he began research fifteen years ago, Dr. Havazelet brings to light the importance of the Geonic era as reflected in the works of the *Rambam*. Consisting of a number of the author's previously written essays, the book



Dr. Havazelet

concentrates on the immediate influence which the *Geonim* had on the *Rambam's* writings especially his monumental *Mishnah Torah*. The age of the *Geonim* which spans the four and one half centuries (589-1038) between the

*Amora'im* and the *Rishonim* represents one of the greatest gaps in our knowledge of halachic development. Yet it was the *Geonim* who, directly succeeding the *Amora'im* at such centers as Sura and Pumbeditha, were responsible for spreading the teaching of the *Mishnah* and *Gemora* among the scattered Jewish communities during that period and were relied upon to apply the recently completed Talmud to daily Jewish living. In their most important role as *Poskim*, the *Geonim* published responsa and compiled specialized codes on various aspects of *halacha*, some of which have relatively recently come under intensive research. Having explored many of these monographs, Dr. Havazelet demonstrates that the *Rambam* no doubt had access to a great many of these previously compiled *Piskei Dinim* and relied upon them extensively in compiling his *Yad Hachazakah*.

In the introductory chapter of his book the author describes the historical relationship between the *Rambam* and the *Geonim* and relates the fundamental differences in teaching which ultimately led to the decline of the authority of the Babylonian *Geonim* and the rise of the new center of learning in Spain. Despite his rejection of the absolute legislative authority of the *Geonim* and his belief that the times demanded various changes in the state of Jewish affairs, the *Rambam* nonetheless used the writings of the *Geonim* for much of his *Yad Hachazakah*, albeit without mentioning his

sources. Using this as his thesis the author goes on in subsequent chapters to cite numerous parallels in text between the *Mishnah Torah* and such *Geonic* codes as the *Halachos Gedolos*.

The book reveals striking similarities in style, organization and classification between the *Rambam* and the *Geonic* works. One chapter is devoted to disclosing the influence which the *Siddur* of Saadya Gaon had on *Hilchos Tephilah* of the *Rambam*. Even the *Rambam's* composition of his *Sefer Ha Mizvos* seems to be carried over from the style of the *Halachos Gedolos*. Of still greater importance is Dr. Havazelet's proposition that many of the *Rambam's* statements which have bewildered other *Rishonim* and *Acharonim* who could find no apparent source for what the *Rambam* says can be traced to some previous *Geonic* work. It is especially in view of this possibility which could open many vistas in halachic research that Dr. Havazelet's work may be regarded as important for us today.

Dr. Havazelet, who is an associate professor of Babylonian and Modern Hebrew history in EMC, hopes to write a similar volume serving exclusively as a comparative analysis of certain monographs of the *Geonim* and the corresponding *halachos* in the *Rambam*. He has recently taken the place of Dr. Samuel Mirsky *Z"l* as editor of *Talpiot*. His book may be purchased by students at a reduced price in the *Talpiot* office in Furst Hall.

## The Importance Of Kavanah In Prayer

(Continued from page 4)

theme of prayer was not force upon Judaism by certain philosophical considerations. This theme has traditionally been an integral part of the laws of prayer. The Talmudic controversy regarding the necessity for *kavanah* (intention) for the fulfillment of *mitzvos* is irrelevant

The concept of prayer as a religious experience consisting of the ongoing dialogue between the Jew and his Maker is portrayed most cogently by the image of prayer as a perpetuation of the prophecy of old: *Hava'ah* Joseph Soloveitchik in "The Lonely Man of Faith" makes this point in describing the historically crucial decision which lay behind the Great Assembly's (*Anshei Knesses Hagedolah*) decision to standardize prayer. With the death of the last prophets (Haggai, Zacharia and Malachi), the ancient dialogue between God and man seemed to come to an abrupt end. The Great Assembly refused, however, to permit the cessation of the God-man dialogue, for they knew that with its cessation the Jewish community would lose the intimate companionship of God. They therefore reversed the order in which the dialogue was conducted: "While within the prophetic community God takes the initiative—He speaks and man listens—in the prayer community the initiative belongs to man: he does the speaking and God, the listening . . . If God has stopped calling man, they (the Great Assembly) urged, let man call God."

*Rabeynu Bachye ben Asher* (a student of the *Rashba*, in *Kad HaKemach*), in his attempt to expound the function of prayer, discerns an insight capable of eliciting sincere appreciation of the privilege granted us to engage in *Avodah shebetiv*.

Before this insight is discussed, however, another question should be raised: If prayer aims to attain proximity with God and to articulate our religious feelings, why must a great portion of prayer take the

(Continued on page 9)

as far as prayer. All authorities concur that *kavanah* is indispensable to *avodah shebetiv*. Furthermore, the *kavanah* required for prayer is not merely an intention of compliance with God's will; *kavanah* for prayer involves, as the *Rambam* prescribes, an awareness of "standing in heaven."

Suburbia

## West Hempstead

by Jay Jacobs

In the Orthodox Jewish community of West Hempstead, one of the many fast growing sections in Nassau County, one finds the antithesis of what one would expect in a typical suburban Jewish community. Instead of finding widespread assimilation in which Jewish identity is being lost on the golf courses, one finds in West Hempstead a community which can boast that 90% of its members are *Shomrei Shabbos*. The membership of the Young Israel of West Hempstead has doubled in the past three or four years and the enrollment will probably continue to grow at the same rate or keep ahead of its pace in the near future. The following observations will perhaps shed some light in explaining why a vibrant growing orthodoxy exists in one community surrounded by a massive suburbia of vanishing Jews.

Orthodoxy had its beginnings in West Hempstead when the Hebrew Academy or Yeshiva of West Hempstead approximately twelve to thirteen years ago. At that time the extent of Judaism in West Hempstead consisted of a Conservative Temple in the area, which had six or seven hundred member families. The *Yeshiva* was the nucleus of the Orthodoxy that

emerged. A few families began to move in the area of the *Yeshiva*, because, as rising middle class families, they wanted the advantages of a centrally located suburban community, but even more crucial was the fact that they desired to send their children to the *Yeshiva*. Thus the *Kehillah* of orthodoxy in West Hempstead centered in the confines of the *Yeshiva* itself. To obtain a *minyana* for *Shabbos* the people needed help from the *Yeshiva* of *Torah U'Mesorah*, to send young men who would lodge at the homes of the congregants.

As recently as five years ago the fledgling but close-knit community of thirty or forty families began considering a building of their own, and although there were financial and land difficulties within a year the umbilical ties to the *Yeshiva* were cut and the infant Young Israel began to grow in wisdom as well as in size in its own building. (Mr. Odess, the president of the *schul* related to me the story of Daniel Shachter who was instrumental in the developing of the community because with a heart condition he did the work of ten people. When he died suddenly it came as a shock to many mem-

(Continued on page 9)