

HAMEVASER

Student Publication Of The Yeshiva University Jewish Studies Divisions

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Number 2

Soy Convenes To Discuss Future Actions & Programs

Emergency Meeting On Absent Rebbeim

by Mark Schlusberg

The shortage of rebbeim was the subject of an SOY emergency meeting called by President Maury Bach on Wednesday, November 1. At that time, Rav Lifshitz, shlitah, was still in Israel. In addition, Rav Volk, shlitah, has been hospitalized and it is not known if or when he will return. Because of the absence of these rebbeim, approximately sixty students were left without rebbi or shiur.

President Bach reported to the SOY representatives that he had spoken to several of the students involved and they had indicated to him that they would like a temporary rebbi until their regular rebbeim returned. Bach pointed out that it was highly unlikely that the administration would hire a rebbi without student pressure and therefore proposed that SOY HIRE ITS OWN REBBI FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. This action would show the administration that the students desire and need a rebbi to give shiur.

SOY, after a vote, agreed to appropriate two hundred dollars to hire Menachem Genak, a long-time student of Rav Soloveitchik shlitah, as a substitute rebbi. After the vote, President Bach stressed that the SOY proposal would only be carried out if the administration refused to hire anyone as a rebbi.

The next day Rabbi Charlop, after discussing various alternatives with Rav Volk's shiur which had been projected before the meeting, announced that Heshy Reichman, also a long-time student of the Rav, would substitute for Rav Volk. The shortage of rebbeim was further alleviated when Rav Lifshitz returned from Israel.

Bach Introduces Innovations; Old Programs To Be Continued

The first meeting of the Student Organization of Yeshiva was convened on October 23, 1972. Maury Bach, President of SOY, opened the meeting by introducing the newly elected shiur representatives. He then announced upcoming SOY events and projects. Besides Yom Iyun, SOY plans a special Shabbat for alumni of Israeli y'shivot and a Chagigat Chanukah. Several drives, such as the s'farim and iz'dakah drives,

SOY Representatives '72-'73

Phillip Rubin — Rav Ginsburg
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Norman Wisnicki — Rav Borenstein
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Israel Grossman — Semicha
Leonard Hirsh

were also announced. President Bach then informed those present at the meeting that Rabbi Soloveitchik, shlitah, had accepted an invitation to address the student body, but that no definite date had been arranged.

The next order of business was SOY publications. The president told the council that HAMEVASER would include HaMashkif, a Hebrew page prepared by EMC. SOY, besides sponsoring HAMEVASER, will sponsor several other publications, including Gezerh and Net Yehosh.

The highlight of the meeting came when SOY resolved to censure the RIETS-YP administration if they were to further delay establishing Shiurei Chumash. (The following week, the RIETS-YP administration instituted a biweekly shiur chumash taught by Rav Alpert, shlitah.) In addition, SOY resolved that these shiurim be optional, open to all students, and test-free. Also resolved, was that a shiur in practical halakha also be offered.

Maury Bach closed the meeting with an invitation to Rabbi Charlop to address the next meeting of SOY concerning the shiurei Chumash.

From The Editor:

For HAMEVASER this is an experimental year—a year of modification, innovation, and expansion. Several factors make this possible. As many have already learned, EMCSC has decided to incorporate HaMashkif into HAMEVASER (the HaMashkif section is scheduled to begin with the next issue) and, although JSSC has temporarily discontinued their funding of this publication, EMCSC's action envisioned for us a unified, religiously-oriented literary organ of RIETS and the three undergraduate Jewish studies divisions of the uptown campus, as was the case nearly a decade ago. We will continue to maintain JSS students on all levels of the staff and regard ourselves as the religiously-oriented student newspaper of Yeshiva University, on both the graduate and undergraduate levels.

At the same time, beginning with this issue, HAMEVASER is being printed with an entirely different, most advanced and efficient technique allowing for more technically stylistic flexibility, and at less cost. Other innovations are presently under study and therefore cannot, at this point, be divulged. At any rate, the aforementioned factors permit, from this issue on, unprecedented frequency of publication, not only for HaMashkif, but even for HAMEVASER. We invite all EMC students to take part in this publication, whether on the HaMashkif staff or on HAMEVASER itself. In this spirit of unification, we continue to invite all JSS students to participate in the JSS Staff or any other staff on the paper. Let us demonstrate that we can be unified by a collective effort and a common goal—a goal of a strong, unified, religiously-minded voice on campus.

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Middle East Highlights

The Chief Rabbinate in Israel recently held elections. Rav Shlomo Goren and Rav Ovadia Yosef were elected Chief Rabbi of Ashkenazic Jews and Chief Rabbi of Sephardic Jews respectively. Rav Goren gained fame as the Chief of Army Chaplains, and later Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv. He has become a controversial figure due to his outspoken and liberal views towards Halakha. Rav Yosef, a Sephardi, was also Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv.

Rav Goren, who now is the religious head of a majority of religious Jews in Israel, succeeds Rabbi Umerman who lost the election. Rav Goren's first act in office was to propose an interdenominational organization of Orthodox rabbis, headed by Rav Soloveitchik, shlitah.

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Israel And The New Water Agriculture—Is Hydroponics The Answer To Shittmah?

By CHAYM M. BRICKMAN

Hydroponics, from the Greek hydro, water, and ponos, labor, refers to the cultivation of plants

without soil sometimes called soilless culture(1).

Today, many kindergarten children grow beans, carrots, onions, and numerous other plants

in tap water, but it was only in 1859 that science became aware of this simple technique. In that year Doctors Sachs and Knop used Sir Humphrey Davey's list (inventor of the safety lamp) of nine elements essential to plant growth to develop a technique for soilless culture. By 1920, laboratory preparations for water culture had been standardized and methods of conducting controlled tests were well established.

Until 1928 the phrase "crops without soil" was virtually unknown. In that year the New Jersey Experiment Station at Rutgers University suggested that sand culture had possibilities in both research and commercial work in horticulture. The following year Professor W.F. Gerike of the University of California succeeded in growing tomato vines twenty-five feet in height in a liquid solution. Such a novel technique was bound to attract much attention. The American press hailed this new technique as the most colossal invention of our time and attributed it to extravagant claims which could not yet be justified.

Dr. Gerike has most water-proof nutrient-filled troughs. Each trough was filled with a wire grid

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B'sorot

from the News Editor

On Thursday, November 2, SOY sponsored its first YOM IYUN for the school year. The program featured five speakers who delivered lectures on a variety of subjects. HAMEVASER will devote a special section in the next issue for synopses of all five lectures.

THE PRE-RABBINIC SOCIETY held its first event for 1972-73 on Thursday, November 9. Rabbi Norman Lamm, spiritual leader of the Jewish Center, NYC, and Professor of Jewish Philosophy at Yeshiva University, spoke to a group of forty-five students on "The Rabbinate: The Joys and Tribulations." Rabbi Lamm discussed his personal experiences in the rabbinate and gave practical advice to the would-be rabbi. Shaya Wexler, President of the Pre-Rabbinic Society, told HAMEVASER that PRS is planning to sponsor several prominent speakers in the near future. Undergraduates interested in joining the Society should contact Shaya Wexler in Morgenstern 225; graduates should see Israel Benedek, honorary president and student advisor to the Pre-Rabbinic Society, in Morg. 225.

SOY has instituted its first STARLINE DRIVE. SOY has contacted a prominent s'farim merchant and will be able to assist in the acquisition of s'farim. Those who are interested in purchasing s'farim should contact their SOY shiur representative or a member of the SOY Executive Council.

ISRAEL D. BENEDIK, editor-in-chief of HAMEVASER, recently published that Eliezer Diamond has been promoted from contributing editor to associate editor. The new Editor-in-Chief, however, is Benjamin M. Bruckman, a member of the Pre-Rabbinic Society, and has been active in

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A Statement Of Purpose

Political maneuvering and unusual speculation have surrounded HAMEVASER, particularly after the JSS Student Council's decision to discontinue their share in this paper's funding. Due to recent events, HAMEVASER feels it necessary to re-iterate our main purpose. HAMEVASER is a newspaper representing the religious elements of Yeshiva University. This publication is not the news organ of a specific school or student council, but rather YU's religious newspaper. Our purpose is to explore and report on Jewish issues, primarily religious in nature, which interest the Yeshiva community. In keeping with this purpose, the Governing Board has decided that although JSSSC has taken its well-publicized action, HAMEVASER will continue to cover JSS and retain the JSS Staff and its editor's position on the Board. We can only hope that in the near future JSSSC will realize the real purpose of HAMEVASER and recognize its responsibility to re-establish its support of this paper.

Welcome Programs

SOY merits commendation for sponsoring the recent, successful Yom Iyun program. The speakers were diverse and informative. HAMEVASER, too, commends SOY for its S'farim Drive which began last Wednesday. These two projects demonstrate SOY's capacity for responsible leadership and constructive service to the Yeshiva community. We urge all students to benefit from the S'farim Drive, which offers many basic volumes and sets at reduced prices to Yeshiva students. Likewise, HAMEVASER lauds JSSSC for subsidizing Part of the cost of required S'farim for JSS courses.

HaMashkif

HAMEVASER enthusiastically welcomes back sponsorship by the Erna Michael College Student Council by integrating their Hebrew newspaper, HaMashkif, into these pages. Yeshiva University needs both a religious and a Hebrew language newspaper and HAMEVASER will henceforth fill this need. In addition, we invite all students to involve themselves on HAMEVASER's staffs, in order to best serve the student body, we welcome the unique contributions of all students irrespective of their Jewish studies divisions.



From the Editor's Desk

Board Of Contributors

By Israel David Benedek

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In our general quest for individuality as a newspaper with a specific orientation and, specifically, in line with HAMEVASER's experimental year at the start of its second decade of continual publication, we are inaugurating the following program. Applications will now be accepted for membership on the HAMEVASER Board of Contributors. For this position we are seeking students from all segments of the university, graduate and undergraduate, with some degree of literary experience and public standing—students whose opinions on major issues would be respected and considered. Contributors would be asked to submit one or two articles per year and to be available for brief statements concerning various major issues on which all the Contributors would be asked to comment. If successful, this may become a regular feature in HAMEVASER, along with other recently instituted features such as the B'sorot column and "Mid-East Highlights." Applications, which should include name, address, phone number, school, class, and qualifications, may be submitted to me in Morgenstern 225 or to Contributing Editor Joseph Telushkin, who will coordinate this project, in Morgenstern 213, or call HAMEVASER at 781-0428.

Rabbi A. Besdin Discusses The Holy And The Secular Expresses The Two As "Inescapable Dichotomy"

by RABBI ABRAHAM I. BESSIN, YC '45, SEMICHA '46, JSS FACULTY



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Letters To The Editor

To the Editor:

Several weeks ago I was asked to join The Neighborhood, Youth Corps, designed to offer tutoring to public school children with difficulties in their studies. However, reflecting upon the condition of the Jewish Community in New York, I realized my efforts must be geared in that direction.

Today, there are thousands of Jewish children in orphanages and

homes begging for someone to show them affection, even as a big brother. Deteriorating in an old age home in Washington Heights, the elderly Jew sits, waiting for some merciful spirit to spend a few spare moments with him. Why then, do so many feel compelled to join instead causes like the Youth Corps, not for its proximity, but out of principle—that Jews cannot live an insulated existence but must get

involved in community affairs? We have so directed our energies as gom'el chasadim for other minorities, that we seem to have forgotten our own in the process. The time has come for a reevaluation of priorities by Jewry. Paraphrasing Hillel, "מחיה את האדם, מילאנו!" If we don't take responsibility for fellow Jews, no one else will.

Moshe Flaum

Book Review

O Jerusalem!

Reviewed By Mitchell Weiss

O Jerusalem! by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre

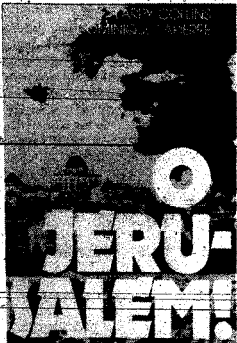
Y'rushalayim—City of Peace. An unending stream of prophets had proclaimed her the peace of G-d to man; and David, who had made the city his capital, had celebrated it with the words "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

City of Peace—an ironic name for a city embittered by war, a city which served as a battleground of nations, heavens, and religions; where strife was no stranger and struggle was the password. Whether in the sacrifice of animals on the altar of her ancient Jewish Temple, the Roman sacrifice of Jesus upon a cross, or the constantly renewed sacrifice of men upon her walls, Jerusalem had lived as no other city in the world, under the curse of bloodshed.

Sacred to three great religions, Jerusalem's stones bore the stigma of her sanctity, and her walls, the memory of the blood spill within them. David and Pharaoh, Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar, Ptolemy and Herod, Titus and the Crusaders of Godefroy de Bouillon, Tamerlane and the Saracens of Saladin—all had fought and burned and killed here.

Now, in the midnight blue of a November sky, Jerusalem once again offered a deceptively

peaceful appearance. Behind the clouds of serenity however, a sea of turmoil surged. And even as the stars above shined with in-



The cover of O JERUSALEM! by Larry Collins & Dominique Lapierre. Published by Simon & Schuster.

difference to the fateful morrow, the tumultuous crescendo of events promised a day not to be forgotten in the annals of history.

By direct order of the President, the United States exerted every pressure imaginable on those nations in the UN opposed to partition. Governments were

subjected to a deluge of diplomatic pressures and menaces. Senators, Congressmen, and Supreme Court Justices, acting on the instigation of the White House, threw the full impact of their tremendous prestige behind the Jewish cause.

Even as the political scene was preparing for a showdown, so too both Jews and Arabs had been girding themselves for months. Arms from clandestine sources quietly made their way across the shores of Israel into every kibbutz and moshav and every available haystack. Agents were sent halfway around the world to replace painted brooms with guns, and whistling seltzer bottles with real bombs. Kites were discarded for planes and armies were trained to kill.

And finally, when the vote to partition came, the people of Israel cried tears 2000 years old, each tear the souls of a thousand people massacred by the Crusaders, burned alive in the crematoria of Germany. Bloody milestones on the road to Hitler's gas chambers, those slaughters succeeding one another through the centuries were reflected in the tears of Chaim Weizmann, the weeping of Ben-Gurion, the emotionalism of Golda

(Continued on Page 7, Col. 1)

Shmitah May Even Prohibit Cultivation By Hydroponics

(Continued from Page 1, Col. 5) which supported the growing plants whose roots descended through the mesh into the solution below. A layer of wood wool, peat, or wood shavings served to exclude light from the solution and consequently lent additional support and protection to the delicate roots(2).

To date, the technique remains virtually unchanged except for a few variations in the practical operation—so as to adapt soilless culture to the requirements of different countries and modernized methods of planting and aeration.

Practical Uses

In 1935 Pan-American Airways inaugurated transpacific service with flying boats using a chain of islands as refueling and maintenance stops enroute. Personnel on distant and barren Wake Island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean were supported by fresh vegetables grown in a hydroponicum.

The utilization of hydroponics by the U.S. Army (on Iwo Jima) and by the British Air Ministry to feed isolated personnel are only two examples of growing government interest in hydroponics. Western press representatives in Kashmir have reported seeing light frameworks of branches covered with growing vegetables floating on numerous lakes.

As international interest in this new technique spread, the Government of Bengal's experimental station at Kalimpong, in India, announced in 1946 the development of the Bengal system of hydroponics which incorporated substantial modification of all previous practice. According to this new technique, plants are grown in five parts gravel or broken bricks and two parts sand. The appropriate nutrients are applied at regular intervals and the salts are sprayed lightly with water. Hydroponics of this type are becoming increasingly popular on account of their comparative simplicity, economy, conservation of water, and ease of installation(2).

Hydroponics in Israel

In 1951, a mere three years after the creation of the Jewish state, Israel was faced with a crisis of frightening proportions: The biblical law requiring cessation of all agricultural work during the sabbatical year would have placed a tremendous burden upon that young, agrarian country. The observant kibbutzim, in particular, would have sustained the greatest monetary losses.

Rabbi Ben-Zion Uziel (1880-1954), chief Sephardic rabbi of Israel at the time, writes in his collection of responsa, *Mishp'tei Uziel*, that he was asked whether one may sow during the sabbatical year in hydroponics without violation of the biblical law. The following responsum (*Mishp'tei Uziel*, Yoreh Deah, no. 103) is addressed to Rabbi A. M. Hirschberg of Chicago:

"At first glance it would seem that we may permit this (type of crop culture) right off. For, behold, all the commandments of the sabbatical year depend upon the earth itself, as it is written, 'The earth shall rest as a Sabbath of the L-rd' (Lev. 25:4). Then the commandment is for the earth to rest; and in hydroponics there is no working of the earth and the tanks cannot be called 'your field and vineyard'."

But after a little meditation it

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From The Management

A Bit Of Realism

By Shaya Wexler



The student body of YU is suffering from a terrible malaise. Some students are so disillusioned that they have left YU for other universities, while those who remain, feeling their stay here to be pointless, are unhappy and depressed. Only circumstances keep them from leaving Yeshiva.

What is the cause of this malaise with which so many students are infected? The answer is that these students came to YU with the wrong attitude. They came to Yeshiva expecting to find a utopia, and discovered that the school was not the Nirvana of their dreams. Unfortunately, they have not adjusted. These students don't realize that an institution cannot satisfy everyone completely. Instead of getting all that they can from YU, they resign themselves to four years of misery and get nothing from the school. Of course, such students need a scapegoat for their failure to cope with Yeshiva and so they blame everyone and everything from the administration to requirements.

After all, it is always easier to blame someone else for one's own shortcomings.

The student body should realize that resigning themselves to misery and depression is wrong. It's time to change our orientation to YU. Yeshiva is a far cry from Paradise, but it is also a far cry from Hell. As much as we can condemn YU, we can praise it. Yet, we have a more important task to do than merely be critics. Our main goal should be to get as much out of YU as we can. During our brief stay here, we can enrich our lives socially, academically, and religiously. However, we can only do this if we don't let our bitterness and frustrations get the better of us, and completely negate any possible gain we could get from YU. In sum, Yeshiva is what we make of it, and we should make the most of it.

I do not mean to say that we must accept YU as it is. On the contrary, we should try our utmost to make Yeshiva a better place. We must understand that though there are

many problems with our school, they are not irremediable and it is our responsibility to find solutions for our difficulties. However, problems cannot be solved by just griping about them. We should work together with the administration and faculty, instead of fighting with them, to improve the school. We should realize that the administration and the faculty are dedicated to the school and only want what is best for the school. Sometimes their opinion is dif-

ferent from ours because of differing perspectives and considerations. However, by having meaningful dialogues, we might be able to discern the proper path to take in improving Yeshiva University.

In conclusion, let's stop knocking Yeshiva. Complaining won't help because, as the saying goes, "out of nothing, nothing comes." Instead let us work together to make YU the school we want it to be.

(Continued from Page 2, Col. 5) finished product coincide with the other, since both realities are truly the same, both emanating from the same unerring Author.

Not a synthesis into a unitary intellectual system but, rather, a regardful coexistence, a dialogue

and mutually respectful intercommunication are, in my view, the objectives of Yeshiva University. Tensions in such a relationship are not necessarily obviated and, indeed, the very differences in their starting points and orientation may be a stimulant for more sophisticated scholarship and self-understanding. The teachers of secular knowledge under the aegis of Yeshiva are inevitably humbled in recognition that man is not to be enthroned as the final arbiter of all truths. The arrogance and flamboyance of free inquiry are considerably muted. Instead, secular studies are regarded as legitimate pursuits in extension of our religious commitments which also prod us to cater to our insatiable quest to

know. Many phases of our Torah may more readily be implemented and understood primarily because we are equipped with the practical wherewithal provided by humanly-acquired knowledge.

When conflicts between the two seem irreconcilable, we perforce echo the words of the sainted Rabbi Isaac Herzog who was once asked by Professor Albert Einstein how he would resolve a basic incompatibility. He replied, "In that case, I have every confidence in the integrity of these scientists that they will assiduously review their conclusions and rectify their errors." The provisions must bow before the eternal; the unfinished product before the eternal truth. Yeshiva University is, therefore, (Continued from Page 6, Col. 4)

BOARD OF CONTRIBUTORS Applications are now being accepted.

See Editor's column for details.

STAFF OPENINGS

There are still several positions open on the Associate Board and General Staff. Apply in Morgenstern 225 or call 781-0428.

Mizrachi vs. Agudah - Majority Rule Or Minority Rights

Maintaining The Coalition

by SHAYA WEXLER

The current Israeli political imbroglio over "Who is a Jew" is disheartening and tragic. It is unfortunate that religious Jews must fight among themselves. However, as in every issue, one must choose a side that he feels is logically correct, and not base his decision on emotions.

The National Religious Party (Mizrachi) invoked heavy criticism when it abstained from voting on M.K. Lorenz's (Agudah) proposal. The proposed bill asked for an emendation of the Law of Return to include the words "Giyur KaHalakha." These two words would have set Halakha as the criterion for who is to be considered a Jew. On the surface,

Mizrachi could be condemned for abstaining, but a deeper look reveals that NRP had no choice but to take the course of action that it did.

To understand NRP's position better, we must divide the question of "Who is a Jew" into several different categories. The first question to ask is what is Mizrachi's attitude towards "Giyur KaHalakha" as a purely religious issue. The answer is that they are wholeheartedly for proper religious conversion and their past actions prove it. In 1958 (twelve years before Agudah woke up to the problem of "Who is a Jew"), the NRP withdrew from the coalition until the government

irreligious Knesset members to vote for M.K. Hausner's proposal that would have allowed civil marriages in Israel, a law that would remove marriages completely from the purview of the Israeli Rabbinate. Both actions of the government were based on the original agreement between Mizrachi and the rest of the coalition. According to this

agreement, the religious status of Israel would be maintained at status quo. Therefore neither "Giyur KaHalakha" or civil marriages could be instituted. The best Mizrachi could do was to get permission from Golda Meir to abstain which in itself was a great concession on the part of the government.

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A Matter Of Principle

by TZVI ROGIN

Six million Jews died at the hands of the Nazis (may their memory be erased). If the Mi Hu Y'hudi law in Israel (which refuses to require that conversions be kaHalakha) is not changed, we will have to write off another two and a half million. Rav Moshe Feinstein, shlitah, has declared that if the Mi Hu Y'hudi law is not changed, "in the future it

will be necessary to demand proof of Jewish descent from somebody who comes from Israel and claims to be Jewish, but is not known to us." Since it is very doubtful that the average non-religious person can proffer any such proof, the natural result of the present Mi Hu Y'hudi law will be a ban on intermarriage with the vast majority of Israelis.

Why is the situation in Eretz Yisrael different and worse than that in the United States with its preponderance of non-halakhic conversions? In the U.S., while the official situation is helter, each rav and each person seeking a mate knows that he must look out for such things. In Israel there is a governmental definition of a Jew and even the rabanim through the chisaron y'diah caused by this definition will come to officiate at weddings between Jews and Gentiles.

At this point, a review of some well-known but sometimes overlooked history is in order. In all countries, from the time of Matan Torah until most modern times, matters of Jewish personal status, e.g. marriage, divorce, and conversion, were entirely in the hands of the rabbinat. When certain countries adopted secular marriage and divorce laws, they never presumed to tell the rabbinat who might and might not be married under Jewish law, and no country ever dared to involve itself in geirut (except possibly to forbid it). In Palestine, under the Turkish rule, these matters were likewise

Executive Editor

Torah U'Madah - Then And Now

By Elezer Diamond

The things most familiar to us are often the things we understand the least. Yeshiva's famous motto of Torah u'Madah is a case in point. Few YU graduates are unfamiliar with this almost sacred phrase, yet fewer understand it. One sometimes suspects that Torah u'Madah is simply one of PR's more successful creations. Presumably, though, the phrase once embodied—and perhaps it still does—a comprehensive religious philosophy. A study of the origins of the Torah u'Madah philosophy will give us a clearer picture of what Torah u'Madah meant originally, and what it has come to mean.

One could identify any of a number of points in the intellectual history of Judaism as the beginnings of Torah u'Madah. This concept has been traced back to Tannaitic(1) and Amoraic(2) statements as well as to many Jewish sages in subsequent eras(3). Nonetheless, the major value of an idea as broad in scope as this, is its particular application to a contemporary socio-religious framework. By founding Yeshiva College and by developing Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary into a center for contemporary Jewish scholarship, Dr. Bernard Revel applied Torah u'Madah in a striking and unprecedented way. Therefore, one could justifiably call Dr. Revel the father of Torah u'Madah in America(4). To appreciate Dr. Revel's view of Torah u'Madah, we must understand his views of Jewish learning and secular education. When Dr. Revel came to America as a young y'shivah student he did not find a large organized Jewish community totally committed to Torah and its scholars. In fact, the only American institution that bore a resemblance to the traditional European y'shivot was the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary. The student body of the seminary consisted mainly of immigrant y'shivah students, some of whom spent many years within the "four cubits" of the Yeshiva, continuing undisturbed the intensive Talmud study they had begun in Europe. Others used "The Yeshiva," as it was called, as a way-station between the y'shivah of the Old World and the colleges of the New World. For them, the Yeshiva was a cultural decompression chamber, a place where they could get used to American

life while still remaining comfortably within a basically European milieu. After having adjusted to American life, these students sought either to enter business or to study at a college or university.

Dr. Revel himself was in the latter category. After studying for a brief time at the Yeshiva he took courses at Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania. Subsequently, he received an M.A. in Semitics from NYU and a doctorate as the first graduate of Dropsie College. Thus, while Dr. Revel was undoubtedly a lamdan steeped in the learning traditions of Europe, he was also well-versed in modern Jewish scholarship. He felt, moreover, that a knowledge of this scholarship was indispensable to proper Torah study.

When Dr. Revel assumed the presidency of Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary in

the fall of 1915, therefore, he incorporated courses in Bible, Hebrew, and Jewish History into the Yeshiva curriculum. He did not engage traditional rebbeim to teach these courses, but rather maskilim trained in Europe's best universities. It was here, in the area of scientific Jewish scholarship, that Revel hoped to make a major contribution to American Jewish learning. Thus for him, madah was valuable only in conjunction with Talmudic and halakhic study. Its value was contextual, not intrinsic. Establishment of a liberal arts college devoted to general secular studies was never truly consonant with Dr. Revel's ideology. Ironically his ideal of scientific Jewish scholarship has not been widely accepted in Orthodox circles to this day, while "his"

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(Continued on Page 5)

The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board of HAMEVASER extend a hearty mazal tov to Rabbi and Mrs. Israel Miller upon the engagement of two of their children, Rabbi David Miller to Miss Miriam Blumenthal and Deborah Miller to Mr. Norman Kram.

KOLSASON V KOLSIMCHAH

Engaged: Steven Billauer to Barbara Pfeffer; Marvin Itzkowitz to Sara Rimler;

guaranteed that giyur would be in accordance with Halakha. The NRP also gained control of the Interior Ministry which among other things is in charge of immigration and registration. The minister of the interior, C.M. Shapiro, made sure that giyur was according to Halakha even in the absence of an official law. However, Mizrachi is still not satisfied and has continued to petition the government and Golda Meir to change the law officially. Clearly, no one can accuse the NRP for being against "Giyur KaHalakha."

So why did the NRP abstain? The answer lies in the makeup of the Israeli political structure. NRP, according to the rules of the coalition, had to abstain from voting and maintain coalition discipline or withdraw from the government. The Israeli government refused to let NRP vote on Lorenz's proposal for the same reason that it did not allow

(Continued from Page 3) a unique institution in its aspiration to combine within its students a commitment to a multilevel pursuit of knowledge. The fact is that it has succeeded with many thousands of students, producing for the American and Israeli scene a Yeshiva University type of committed Jew. There are, however, inevitable failures with those who psychologically or intellectually cannot live comfortably within the shifting tensions of two disciplines which are continually challenging one another. They eventually either withdraw entirely into the secular world or they retreat into the "four ells of the Halakha." The tensions, the apologetics and the unsettledness of amicable coexistence and relative compatibility are not for them. They crave for a unified weltanschauung.

Perhaps, in our essay above, we have conceded too much. One can, without difficulty, question the supposed objectivity of secular scholars who envelope themselves in a halo of "pure searchers for truth." The assumption denying a transcendent deity and the possibility of revelation is, in actuality, purely a prejudice. It is a

hypothesis which flies in face of a fabulously constructed natural world, a unique moral sense and consciousness in man, the ineliminable historical experience of the Jewish people and the irrepressible affirmation of men

me they stand as unproved and dubious extrapolations of the legitimate conclusions of science. I remain skeptical of the possibility of explaining mind in terms of matter, or energy, or any purely physical conception. The faith of the materialistic biologist... is understandable as a professional bias but to me the case is as yet unproved." ("Science Ponders Religion" ed. Harlow Shapley).

This is, in my opinion, Yeshiva University. Any and all courses can be offered within its confines, including Biblical Criticism and anthropology, if a suitable instructor can be engaged who will uphold our particular hash-kafah. It would be foolhardy to expect anything but a secular bias from a noncommitted instructor. We have our starting points and they have theirs and self-subversion under the guise of "free inquiry" is the height of naivete. One cannot, therefore, fault Yeshiva University for not being what it never pretended to be. The grand design it has projected for itself, under the inspired leadership of Dr. Belkin, it has achieved very impressively. Indeed, American Orthodoxy, in its more wholesome manifestations, is essentially a reflection of the success of our alma mater.

Rabbi A. Besdin Discusses The Holy And The Secular

(Continued from Page 3)



Rabbi Abraham Besdin YUPR that life has both purpose and meaning. Regarding the materialistic claims of many scientists, E. C. Kemble writes: To

Agudah's Religious Principles Are Not To Be Compromised

(Continued from Page 4, Col. 5)

under the complete control of the rabbinite, and under the British mandate this policy was continued. Before the founding of the State, Mr. Ben-Gurion posed a query to the rabbinic authorities then in Eretz Yisrael as to the result of a non-halakhic definition of Jewish identity to be used in reference to the Law of Return and identity cards. They answered unequivocally: Unless the halakhic definition of a Jew be adopted as the sole criterion in the application of these laws, then the united observant community would be compelled to establish separate registry lists, thus severing the bond that has united K'hal Yisrael in a state of spiritual purity for over 5,000 years.

Ben Gurion felt that this irreversible chasm dividing the Jewish people would abnegate the historic mission of Jewish existence; thus the halakhic norms became the law of the land. (The regulations of the Ministry of the Interior stated that a convert, to be registered as Jewish, had to be converted, "in accordance with the Halakha.") Except for a few cases of government meddling such as the Zeidmann case, this situation continued until January of 1970. At that time, the Israeli Supreme Court upheld Lt. Commander Shalit's demand that his two children by a non-Jewish wife be registered as Jews. The whole world was up in arms. By February 9, the first reading in Knesset of the present law was presented and approved. This law states that someone is Jewish who is born of a Jewish mother or is converted. What this law does not say is "converted kallahakha".

One day after final passage, the Supreme Court ordered the Interior Minister to "show cause" why an American woman "converted" by a reform rabbi in Israel should not be registered as Jewish. The Israeli Government is currently registering as Jews hundred of non-Jewish wives of Russian immigrants, sometimes forcing them to undergo phony conversions. The number mounts daily at an alarming rate. This policy actually encourages intermarriage both in Russia and in America, and dilutes the very essence of the Jewish people.

Some people, even nominally orthodox ones, have tried to justify this law and to claim that the opposition to this law is political in nature. The justification is of course impossible. No orthodox rav in the history of the world has ever said that a person who is born a non-Jew can become a Jew except through halakhic gerut. And yet, that was the immediate effect of the law that people "converted" by reform rabbis were registered as Jews. Weddings of such people have been registered as Jewish weddings and children as Jewish children.

As for the second claim, that the opposition is political in nature, that is pure sheker. The Chief Rabbinate and the very rabbanim of the Mizrahi Party told the Mifdat (political arm of Mizrahi)

Knesset members that they must vote against the law. When the law passed, the Chief Rabbinate ordered them to leave the government coalition, which they refused to do. When an amendment was introduced to add the term, "kallahakha," Mifdat abstained (except one M.K. who was im-

(Continued on Page 7, Col. 2)

The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board of HAMEVASER extend their sincerest condolences to Joseph Epstein, Associate Editor, on the passing of his father, Rabbi Jacob Epstein. May he and his family be spared from further loss and be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Political Expediency Determines Mizrahi's Decision To Abstain

(Continued from Page 4, Col. 3)

The next question is whether NRP should have withdrawn from the government especially after the exhortation of many G'dolim to do so. On this issue, Mizrahi found itself in a quandary. To vote against the bill or abstain would mean to disobey several great G'dolim. However, voting for Lorenz's proposal would result in

dire consequences. Mizrahi would be forced to resign from the government for a proposal that would never pass because a majority of irreligious Knesset members opposed it. They would also lose control of the Interior Ministry, the only safeguard insuring that proper religious conversion takes place. Besides, once NRP was out of the coalition, the government would become completely irreligious and nothing would prevent them from adopting civil marriages since most of the irreligious Knesset members favor such a law. Hence, Mizrahi by abstaining was really upholding Halakha, not denigrating it as Agudah would have them do.

Many people have the mistaken impression that Mizrahi completely ignored the advice of G'dolim. This is not true. NRP before abstaining consulted several G'dolim including Rav Zvi Yehuda Kook, Shittah, who advised Mizrahi to stay in the government. Rav Kook told the NRP to work within the "framework of the coalition to offer changes in the Law of Return." He also felt that "Agudah aims at division and deterioration in the state of Judaism, and Mizrahi directs its eyes to the Jewish community as a whole." When asked whether he was pressured into supporting Mizrahi, Rav Kook responded that, "I determine my views according to the Torah and not through pressure."

Lorenz's proposal meant nothing even if it would have passed since the words "Giyur KaHalakha" can be interpreted in many ways. Even MK Avner Sciacky (Mizrahi), "the only member to vote for the proposal, admitted that the government could construe the word "Halakha" to mean any type of religious conversion, even reform and conservative. This makes it even more ludicrous for the Mizrahi to leave the government and let a completely irreligious coalition control immigration and registration.

While on the subject of legal interpretation, the Israeli courts, according to Judge Silberg, a justice of the Jerusalem Supreme Court, defines a Jew according to religious Halakha. This definition has been accepted by most of the Israeli Courts and is now a well established precedent.

To reiterate my major points: A. Mizrahi with its Interior Ministry has enforced "Giyur KaHalakha." B. The Israeli Court, for the most part, has defined "giyur" in terms of the orthodox conception of conversion.

C. Agudah's proposal had no chance of passing, and Mizrahi's voting for it would have meant the loss of the Interior Ministry and the probable advent of civil marriages.

D. Even if Agudah's proposal had passed, an irreligious government could construe Halakha to mean any form of religious conversion, even reform.

For all these reasons, Mizrahi (Continued on Page 6, Col. 3)

Middle East Highlights

(Continued from Page 1, Col. 5)

The Tel Aviv daily Ha'aretz reported that this year's estimated 200,000 summer visitors from Arab countries to Israel and the administered areas pay a daily average of about IL 70,000 in customs duties on goods that they bring over the Jordan River bridges. The report added that in 1971 the 106,000 Arab visitors brought into Israel an income of IL 1 million.

Zaiden Atashe, a Druze from the Carmel village of Ussifiyeh, has arrived in New York to serve as consul in charge of information. The 32 year old Druze is the first of his ethnic group to be given a Foreign Ministry posting.

Israeli newspapers cited statistics from official sources on August 3 showing a 74 per cent decline in sabotage incidents in the Gaza Strip from the past August to July as compared to the same period 12 months prior.

The survey listed 105 incidents in the 1971-72 period, in contrast to 398 incidents in 1970-71. The sources reported 24 incidents in August 1971, nine in February 1972 and one in July 1972. No local Arabs residents have been killed in the Strip since March 1972.

A unit of the Israeli Border Police, posted in the Gaza Strip, for the past 20 months, pulled out of the area on August 16, and was reassigned to Tel Aviv to help combat a rising incidence of crime there. The Tel-Aviv daily Ma'ariv reported that the Border Police departed in a short parade ceremony outside a Gaza casino which had served as its barracks. It will now be returned to its owners for conversion into a tourist attraction.

In an interview published by the Cairo weekly Al Mussawar, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia said, "Two years ago, when I was in Paris, the police discovered the bodies of five children who had been murdered and drained of blood. Afterwards it turned out that Jews had killed the children to mix their blood into their bread."

JSS Attracts Young Man Away From HUC

by BARRY LIST

A defector to Orthodoxy now sits in the Sophomore A class of JSS. Chaim Cohen, formerly of the Hebrew Union College of Cincinnati, Reform Judaism's primary institution of higher learning in America, has come to JSS in search of what he calls a "spiritual and community-minded way of life."

Why did he leave Reform Judaism's most venerable institution? "Reform Judaism knows what it doesn't want to be," he explained, "but it has very little idea about what it wants to be."

Chaim elaborated, giving a picture of a fragmented movement without a central philosophy.

"Twenty-five per cent of Reform rabbis are aesthetists or agnostics," he revealed. "They feel you don't have to believe in G-d to be Jewish." Many a reform rabbi considers his role to be that of a community leader. His spiritual task is a metaphysical one which

does not necessarily require belief in G-d, although that belief may vary strongly from rabbi to rabbi.

Chaim found this type of environment alien to the one he began searching for in his junior year of college, at Cornell University, where he became interested in being Jewish. At a time when college youth began experimenting with new life styles, Chaim, who was raised in a Reform home, sought to return to his faith, but found his efforts hampered by a mediocre Jewish movement on campus. "Cornell didn't have much of a Hillel," told Chaim. "I wandered around, read books, but was on my own for about a year."

Seeking to augment his Jewish education while searching for a possible profession as a Reform Rabbi, Chaim enrolled in Hebrew Union College. While there, Chaim remarks, "I decided to become more traditionally observant."

Three years after coming to Hebrew Union Chaim emerged disenchanted, his quest still unfilled.

"I wanted to leave the lack of spiritual feeling in America," Chaim explains, as he tells of his twin objectives to lead a spiritual life and live in a strong community. "Reform Judaism isn't a true way of life—it is very American."

Turning to Orthodoxy as a possible answer, Chaim came under the influence of Rabbi Steven Riskin of Yeshiva University, who suggested that he attend JSS.

Chaim now learns G'marah in Rabbi Riskin's shiur, something which he did not do during three years at Hebrew Union College. Chaim's search is not ended yet, but he hopes strongly that JSS will provide the answers he is looking for.

The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board of HAMEVASER extend a hearty mazal tov to Simon Rubin YU '71, former Rubin Hall counselor, on his engagement to Lisa Pollack.

Mazal tov to Gary Brick YC '69, brother of Technical Associate Elliot Brick, upon the birth of a daughter.

News From

Yavneh Religious Jewish Students Association יהודים

184 Fifth Avenue • New York, N. Y. 10011 • WAH 9-5434

Yavneh, the National Religious Jewish Students Association, is holding its Fifth Annual Baltimore Convention November 10-12, 1972. The major theme of the conclave will be "The Messiah," an enigmatic, yet current topic in light of the recent burgeoning of the Jews for Jesus movement. No more crucial point than the notion of the Messiah and redemption within history divides Judaism and Christianity. As a clarification of the Jewish view of redemption within history, this discussion should bear important fruit.

In an effort to affect Jewish awareness and an experiential involvement with Judaism, Yavneh has

formed a group, the core of which is from Yeshiva University and Stern College, to go on campuses where little Jewish life exists and bring them in contact with Judaism. This group will go to the various campuses and spend Shabbat there in an ongoing effort to evoke a response among the marginal, non-committed Jewish community at these New York regional colleges. Hoping to attract these Jews to Judaism, this group will deal on a very personal, one-to-one level. In this way, Yavneh-hopes to reach out to those Jews who might easily be totally acculturated and assimilated in the melting pot of Christian America.

YC And SCW Witness Yavneh Revival

Had anyone mentioned the word "Yavneh" around YU during these past few years, images may have been conjured up of a year or two spent studying at the Yeshiva or maybe a weekend at the kibbutz, or perhaps even a fleeting instant in a Jewish History course or in the Talmud (Gittin 56b). But Yavneh the student organization? No way.

This year, however, the way is being pursued as it may never have been before. Thanks to the cooperation of Director of Admissions Rabbi Abner Groff, all freshmen received membership forms with an original sales pitch in their registration kits, and by the time the first day of school came around, the saturation campaign of Yavneh's first full-scale Join Week in recent memory was well under way.

Actually been staring us all in the face so fixedly that many of us have become hypnotized to ignore it. If we are "to become a force for the dissemination of Torah knowledge in the American Jewish community," we cannot merely aim to squeeze the Talmud, as it were, for all its inspirational juices and squeeze the Biblical commentaries of all their ingenious literary and homiletical gems and midrashim. We have to do more. We have to delve into the issues that our intellectual peers consider relevant, and, to quote outgoing Yavneh President Henry Horwitz, analyze them from a "halakhic perspective." Many rabbis within the YU community that we have consulted spoke of some of the topics we are planning to deal with as out of their province. Precisely in these areas does Yavneh have a place on our campus, and the time is long overdue for this place to be filled.

school student Abey Moshell, it was decided to give the Yeshiva and Stern College branches a quasi-united status, to work on one of the better known most obvious goals of Yavneh that somehow never gets expressed in so many words. If past experience in YC-Stern events is to serve as a guide, however, we will need volunteers willing to drive their own cars with human "cargo" between schools on occasion. If you have a car and will - or even might - travel for this purpose, please leave a note stating your willingness and whereabouts in the Yavneh mailbox in the Morgenstern Dorm. While you're at it - or whether or not you're at it - it is never too late to join by merely submitting your name, local address, and the minuscule membership giveaway fee of \$5. (The latter of which can be recouped in reductions on just 2 1/2 weekend shabbatons.) which entitles you to the frequent Yavneh mailing, gratis, with enough intellectual, spiritual, and, in case you didn't know, social activities to make you wish you could drop out of college to have time for them all, despite the fact that this would make you ineligible to continue as a Yavneh member. Whether you join out of idealism or self-interest, your token investment, dollar for dollar, will probably be the best you'll ever make in whatever remaining tenure you have as a student.

What It's All About

For those who still think of Yavneh in terms of a point of historical interest in Israel, permit us to hereby introduce you to the National Religious Jewish Students Association.

Yavneh was founded in 1960 with four basic goals:

- (1) To provide Jewish education on campus through weekly classes, Talmud shiurim and monthly lectures.
- (2) To facilitate observance of mitzvot by establishing minyanim in dormitories, providing kosher food, and dealing with the problem of exams on the Sabbath and holidays.
- (3) To become a force for the dissemination of Torah knowledge in the American Jewish community.
- (4) To unite Jewish students by holding conclaves or weekends, and observing Jewish holidays together.

Over the years it has become axiomatic that there is virtually no need for a functioning local branch at YU since all the goals have allegedly been adequately achieved by our unique university. A student running for class office once said "I realize the office is not exactly a challenging one, but, if elected, I'll make it one." Such may have been the unstated mandate of our new Yavneh president of the YU "non-branch", with one notable difference. The challenge at Yeshiva does not have to be created. In fact, one might say that the challenge - different, though no less pressing - has

A New Direction

Although this approach reflects the trend in today's Yavneh leadership, it hasn't always been like this on the national scene at Yavneh. For years the attitude had been that Yavneh's most pressing function was just to keep the committed committed. It was felt that our essential aim was to worry about working ourselves into top religious shape in an ideally insulated, traditional atmosphere before going on holy missions of winning back lost "souls."

The recent Thirteenth National Convention's resolution session produced a resolution that has changed Yavneh, and may change the entire American Jewish college scene if it gets the overwhelming support it demands:

Yavneh is now moving to the forefront of Jews for Judaism, a group which has been formed to combat Hebrew Christians and the Jews for Jesus movement in the New York region... reaching out to the general Jewish community on campus. This is much more than a written policy statement, as Yavneh, in its programming, is making all efforts to attract the non-committed unaffiliated Jews on campus to Judaism...

Back to YU

Now that you have the history of Yavneh, its ideals and its trends in a nutshell, you are ready for a piece of the action. At a meeting chaired by the New York Regional Vice President, the popular YU Semicha and Hunter graduate

Shmitah May Even Prohibit Cultivation By Hydroponics

(Continued from Page 3)

appears that this is not so, i.e. we cannot permit hydroponics... We learned in the Mishnah (Challah II:2) that if the earth from outside Palestine is brought by a ship to Palestine this earth comes under the laws of tilth and the sabbatical year. Said Rabbi Judah, "When does this apply? When the ship touches (the shores)." Maimonides explains as follows: "When foreign earth comes to Palestine in a ship and they sow in that earth on the ship, the crops come under the Palestinian agricultural laws, that is, provided the ship touches (the Palestinian) earth." In his book of laws Maimonides says: "Earth from outside of Palestine that comes to the Land and touches the earth, he who sows in it must give heave-offerings, lites, and follow the

Palestine proper and the water is applied into the vessels surely the one who sows is not excused from the laws of the seventh year."

The 1971 edition of Encyclopaedia Judaica reports that hydroponics has been utilized on Kibbutz Chafetz Chaim during the sabbatical year. Apparently, more recent Rabbinical authorities have sanctioned their use.(4)

It is unlikely that nutriculture crop production will supplant conventional methods on a large scale. Where it is feasible and economically advantageous it could supplement present means of plant culture in soil. For example, hydroponics has proven useful in locations isolated from required food supplies and where usual methods of crop culture is ham-

Crop	Best Yield	Hydroponic Yield	Location
Tomato	12 lb. plant	27.4 lb. plant	California
Rice	900 lb. acre	9000 lb. acre	India
Potatoes	20 tons acre	65 tons acre	California
Beetroot	9000 lb. acre	20,000 lb. acre	Calcutta

Place	Reason for Use
Iwo Jima, Wake Islands, and Carribean Islands	Lack of good soil, water limitation, and economics of shipping.
Iraq, Bengal, and Bahrein	Water limitation, lack of good soil, local population density.
U.S.A.	For season specialty for high market value.

sabbatical year as if he were sowing in Palestine."(3)

"Now," continues Rabbi Uziel, "any ship is either wood or metal and is not pierced at all, and even though the dirt it carries is not from Palestine, yet anyone who sows in that dirt is obligated to give heave-offerings and follow the laws of the sabbatical year, a fortiori in our case where the land is from

pered by unfavorable climate (tables 1 and 2.5)

Advantages and Disadvantages

While reading this article, the reader might have been wondering what advantages hydroponics has over conventional methods of crop culture. Soilless culture requires virtually no digging or plowing. Weeding is practically absent, no elaborate composts are required, plants are free from soil-borne disease in Professor Gerike's method, and due to better nourishment, plants are more resistant to molds and mildews. In addition, bacterial action is not required in formation of available plant foods (i.e. nitrogenous products) since all nutrients are supplied. Because there is less competition for nutrients, plants can be planted closer together and leaf-area can be reduced without detriment to fruit quality and quantity. Labor costs are reduced on account of some eliminated expensive operations: Less water is lost to evaporation, especially in the Bengal method, while water runoff and crop growth are easily controlled.

Of course, there are several disadvantages, as well, to hydroponic crop production. Concrete beds are usually permanent fixtures and are very expensive. The margin of error in soil culture in regard to salt concentrations which may become toxic at high levels is greater in soilless culture since soil a good buffer, is absent. The Bengal (Continued on Page 7)

Political Expediency Determines

Mizrachi's Decision To Abstain

(Continued from Page 5)

had no choice but to abstain if it wanted to uphold Halakha and not abrogate it as Agudah would have Mizrahi do.

The last thing we should consider is Agudah's actions concerning the issue of "Who is a Jew." Agudah is to be strongly condemned for its tactics and political maneuverings. Agudah, being outside the government, feels that it must embarrass the government and specifically the Mizrahi. Problems such as "Who is a Jew?" and "Voluntary Service" have been long standing problems, but Agudah has a knack of remembering them only during elections when they can make "political hay" out of them. They have also exploited sincere individuals and organizations to advance their own ends. If Agudah was really interested in improving the religious environment of Israel, they would unite with the Mizrahi to present a unified religious front. In this way,

laws such as "Giyur Kattalakhah" could be instituted much more easily.

I cannot understand why so many American religious organizations are so vocal about problems in Israel and are strangely quiet about religious issues here in America. In America there are terrible problems of intermarriage and improper conversions, yet Agudah and other groups have done nothing to ameliorate these problems. It is like the bank robber complaining about being mugged. American organizations should clean their own houses before they try to clean others.

We must remember that Ahdut HaAm is more important than any other single issue - especially after the Holocaust. We must keep in mind, no matter what religious party we belong to, that the survival of Israel is tantamount. Only through Ahdut HaAm will Israel remain secure.

O Jerusalem!

(Continued from Page 3)

Meir, and the mixed joy of the people of Israel. A joy mixed with sorrow of the past, fear and apprehension of the future. O Jerusalem—your time had come.

Hundreds of books have been written about Jerusalem, and countless more will be written. Yet there is something timeless in this account of the battle for Jerusalem in 1948, a day by day, minute by minute human record of the Arab-Israeli confrontation involving military commanders, political and religious leaders, soldiers, and citizens from all walks of life—all caught up in the cruel tide of history.

Collins and Lapiere manage to carefully blend together hundreds of vignettes, ranging from the story of Ben-Gurion, who while feverishly writing his historic declaration of the State of Israel ran out of paper and finished his text on toilet-tissue, to the tragic death of Colonel David Marcus, mistaken for an Arab because he had wandered out to urinate in the fields wrapped in a bedsheet.

The pace is so swift and the drama so heightened by alternative flashes of comedy and tragedy that I had to stop frequently just to catch my breath. Although it is history and everyone knows how the story ended, O Jerusalem! reads like a "who-done-it," and you will find yourself turning page after page to see what happens next as the characters come alive, with heartbreak and joy in rapid succession.

Weaving together one of the most

tragic and harrowing true life episodes of recent history, O Jerusalem! is a rich tapestry of the hopes and fears and events that touched and changed the lives of all those involved in the struggle for the City of Peace.

Jerusalem, at the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and Europe, will



Co-author Larry Collins

Agudah's Religious Principles Are Not To Be Compromised

(Continued from Page 5)

mediately stripped of his cabinet duties).

Before the original law was passed, Rav Feinstein and Rav Soleveitchik, shlitah, sent a joint telegram to Mifdal urging them to insist upon clear provision in the law that only gerim at pi din be registered as Jews. The Lubavitcher Rebbe, shlitah, has continued to plead that the Mifdal must leave the government until the law is changed. Rabbinical organizations in Europe have made similar demands.

Nor should people make the mistake of thinking that this is an attack on Mizrahi. In fact, all of the Mizrahi rabbanim have made their positions perfectly clear that they, too, are opposed to the law. It is only the political leadership which remains in coalition with the non-religious elements and refuses to be moved by questions of halakhah.

What would happen if Mizrahi would quit the government coalition over this issue and refuse to recognize the law? You might think that the government would be glad and "good riddance." But

continue to attract world concern and interest. An attachment that lasts for 2500 years and has so much power to move men after all these centuries, suggests a quality as miraculous as any occurrence in the Bible. How tragic that Jerusalem was condemned to pay in blood for the passions stirred by her very stones.

when the same question of the Rabbinate refusing recognition of the government definition of "Jew" faced Ben-Gurion (who is anything but an ohev Torah), despite much opposition from his own camp, he insisted on an halakhic definition. Both Menachem Begin and Moshe Dayan consider these phony converts as a strategic danger—a fifth column in the nation. Furthermore, if the Mizrahi withdraws from the government over this issue of "who is a Jew" the government must give in, for in the eyes of the world, they will lose their claim to Eretz Yisrael, because they are no longer the people to whom G-d said: Lekh l'kha ha'artz'kha....

Once before, the Jews faced a similar situation—in the time of Ezzah HaSopher. Many of the Jews who had not gone into galut had taken non-Jewish wives. Ezzah threatened them with confiscation of all their property if they did not get rid of all the gentile women. The people complied and the purity of our nation was maintained.

Dah Mah L'hashiv

Know how to respond to the Jews for Jesus and Hebrew Christian movements.

SPEAKERS:

- Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach
- Rabbi Melech Schachter
- Rabbi Charles Sheer
- Rabbi Walter Wurzbarger

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The Editor-in-Chief of HAMEVASER extends sincerest condolences to Dr. Moshe Carmilly on the loss of his beloved wife. May he be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Torah U'Madah Then And Now

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college has become part of the Orthodox Establishment. We must remember, however, that in Dr. Revel's day the idea of a "Yeshiva college" was unheard of. He was moved to establish YC only as a result of strong social and educational pressures.

Dr. Revel became Yeshiva's president at a time when it was losing many of its better students to public high schools and colleges. Students found that without diplomas and degrees, they could not compete successfully on the American job market. Forced to choose between either a life of study and poverty, or a secure, if religiously mediocre, existence, many opted for the latter. To Dr. Revel, this situation was unconscionable. At the same time Dr. Revel knew that he could not demand unquestioning "strut and nestle" of his students. He therefore determined to establish a program which would allow students to obtain a high school diploma while still devoting most of their time to Torah study. Later, he realized that the high school program alone would not keep many of the students in the Yeshiva. Dr. Revel resolved to find a way to satisfy student needs for high secular education within the Yeshiva framework.

It is important to note that Dr. Revel did not originally envision a four-year college. He first planned to establish a freshman college program alone. He then tried to establish a teachers' training school. Only after these two efforts proved unfeasible did Dr. Revel decide upon a four-year program. Perhaps Dr. Revel best summed up the purpose, as he saw it, of

work within its premises. Many of these premises implicitly or explicitly clash with traditional Jewish values. Western culture's deification of man and its readiness to question the bases of all major institutions—including organized religion—are among the most disturbing of its aspects.

In response to this conflict, Yeshiva has formulated the contemporary version of Torah U'Madah, often called synthesis. "Synthesis" states that neither Torah nor modern culture provides a complete world outlook. Only by combining the two—how this is to be done is left remarkably unclear—can one achieve a perfect hashkafat olam. This ideal goes far beyond Rav Hirsch's Torah im Derekh Eretz. Rav Hirsch spoke of the application of Torah values to modern knowledge and culture. He never maintained, however, that the values of Western culture could somehow complement those of Judaism.

This form of Torah U'Madah is quite radical, no doubt; it is also, however, quite meaningless. The synthesis of values is a far more subtle and complex process than the synthesis of chemicals, and to even attempt it one must have much more than a bare chemical equation. Yeshiva students are told Torah + Madah = Perfection, and no more.

Where synthesis has failed, spiritual schizophrenia has succeeded. As Rabbi Charlop has noted, modern Orthodox Jewry has compartmentalized itself, living part of its day in secular city, and the other part in shmitta-like security. Similarly, YU students have learned to play the game of being y'shivah bachurim in the morning, and modern intellectuals in the afternoon.

Such is Torah U'Madah in its present disarray. Is there any hope of defining and applying Torah U'Madah more cogently? We must begin by coming to one of two conclusions. We may decide that Torah and western cultural ideals are totally incompatible. In that case we must either disband Yeshiva College or reduce it to training school status. Many of the humanities and social sciences which embody philosophies foreign to Judaism would have to be eliminated from the curriculum.

In the other hand, we may conclude that secular culture can be related to Judaism. In that case we need more serious discussions of the specific merits of Western culture, and a more concentrated effort by professors and rabbanim, through course offerings and informal discussions, to define the place of Western culture within a Torah framework.

FOOTNOTES

1) Avot 1:2, see Rav Hirsch's commentary on this Mishnah.

2) Shabbat 75a: "Rabbi Yochanan said: From where may we derive that it is a mitzvah for one to calculate the seasons and the signs? Scripture says (Devarim 4:6): 'And you shall watch and do (the mitzvah) for this is your knowledge and your wisdom before the nations: (which) wisdom is 'before the eyes' (revels) of the nations.' One would say that this is the computation of seasons and signs." See, however, the comments of Rashi and the Nitzul on the verse.

3) For a fuller discussion of the history of Torah U'Madah from the Middle Ages to the present, see the series of excellent articles written by Dr. Aaron Kamin. Their titles are: Issues 491-502 of RAAMAT EL. PARISH and are also available in pamphlet form from Public Relations of Y.U. The pamphlet is entitled "Torah U'Madah".

4) Much of the material dealing with Dr. Revel is taken from Rabbi Aaron Kamin's book: BIOGRAPHICAL REVEAL REVEL: A HISTORY OF AMERICAN ORTHODOX JEWRY. Jewish Publication Society, New York, 1970.

5) Quoted by Rabbi Rothkopf, op. cit. pp. 266, 267.

Much thanks to Sid Slivko for designing HAMEVASER's new masthead.

Hydroponics

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technique, however, eliminates the last problem to some extent.

Meanwhile, research continues around the world—at Bar-Ilan University and the University of the Negev in Israel, in India, in Russia, and in numerous institutions in the U.S.—in the hope that, through the knowledge gained, children starving today will be satiated perhaps by the hydroponics of tomorrow.

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- (3) Rabbi Ben-Zion Uziel, Mishpat Uziel, Yoreh Deah, trans. and ed. Solomon B. Freshold (Philadelphia: J.P.S., 1963), Pp. 306-309.
- (4) For further readings see: T.B. Challah, Perek II, Mishnah 2; Maimonides, Hilkhot T'rumah, Perek I, Halakha 23; T.B. Gittin, 7b; and Tosaphot, T.H. M'nachot, 84b.
- (5) McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology, New York: McGraw Hill, vol. 6, 1971.
- (6) T. Saunby, Solesis Culture (London, W.H. and L. Collingridge Limited and Transatlantic Arts Incorporated, 1969).

The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board of HAMEVASER extend best wishes for a Tuat sh'leimah to HaRav Shmuel Volk, a rosh y'shivah in the Semicha Program.

Yeshiva College when he said that it would "enable young men of

Jewish training and love for Jewish ideals, and who wish to dedicate themselves to the service of Judaism, to continue their complete training in one institution imbued with the spirit and ideas of Judaism." (5) In other words, Yeshiva College was to provide college training, and not a new or even supplementary weltanschauung, for Yeshiva students within a Torah atmosphere.

Such were Dr. Revel's thoughts about Yeshiva College. Since his demise, however, Yeshiva College has become Yeshiva University. The establishment of graduate schools has been accompanied by a gradual upgrading and broadening of the undergraduate program, making it less of a vocational school and more of a bonafide liberal arts college. While this shift may have been desirable academically, it has created thorny problems for the school's administrators and, in a more immediate sense, its students. A liberal arts institution demands, by way of its very nature, that the student take seriously the great bulk of Western culture and that he

Rav Bleich On Tay-Sachs Disease

Blood-testing of Jewish high school youth as a method of screening for the identification of carriers of Tay-Sachs disease is being advocated by a Talmudic scholar who believes current preventive methods are not permissible according to Jewish law. Tay-Sachs disease is a fatal, inherited condition caused by a genetic mutation. The disease is prevalent among the off-spring of Ashkenazic (Eastern and Central European) Jews and statistically affects one in 3,600 infants. A baby born with the disease develops normally until about the fifth or sixth month, at which point the nervous system begins to break

down. The child generally succumbs before his fifth year. Rabbi J. David Bleich, a member of the Talmudic faculty of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary and an assistant professor of philosophy at Yeshiva University's Stern College for Women, writing in the current issues of *Or ha-Mizrach* and *Tradition*, states that medical research has discovered that the disease is caused by the absence of an enzyme which normally assists in the breakdown of fatty substances known as gangliosides. The missing enzyme is known as hexosaminidase A (Hex A). "Since the requisite enzyme is absent,

these gangliosides accumulate in the cells and tissue of the affected child and ultimately lead to the destruction of brain cells," Rabbi Bleich writes.

Rabbi Bleich said diseases resulting from genetic mutation, such as sickle-cell anemia among blacks and phenylketonuria among white gentiles, are often limited to specific ethnic groups. He said that although there is no medical explanation as to why Tay-Sachs strikes Eastern and Central European Jewry, "it may be statistically assumed that one in 900 Jewish couples may have a Tay-Sachs child. Both the mother and father must be carriers of the gene in order to produce an affected child. Should two carriers of Tay-Sachs marry, the risk that they will bear a child afflicted with the disease is one in four at each pregnancy."

He said that carriers of the disease are themselves "perfectly normal both physically and mentally," and that each normal parent may possess two genes, one of which is defective. If the child inherits a defective gene from one parent and a normal gene from the other, the child will develop normally.

Rabbi Bleich states that carriers of the disease can now be identified by a simple blood test, and that a diagnosis of the fetus can be made by amniocentesis, the tapping of the amniotic fluid in the uterus.

Currently, he said, results of blood tests among prospective parents produce the following recommendations by doctors:

1) If only one parent is found to be a carrier, no danger exists, but parents are cautioned to have the offspring checked for future reference and counseling. 2) If both prospective parents are carriers, they are warned of the high risk of producing a Tay-Sachs child; are counseled as to alternatives to having their own children; are urged to utilize fetal monitoring if they do proceed to have children; and abortion is suggested should the fetus be determined as diseased.

Rabbi Bleich writes that according to Jewish law, "the obligation with regard to procreation is not suspended simply because of the statistical probability that some children of the union may be deformed or abnormal." While the couple may quite properly be counseled with regard to the risks of having a Tay-Sachs child, it should be stressed that failure to bear natural children is not an halakhically viable alternative.

As far as fetal monitoring may be performed with the view towards abortion, Rabbi Bleich writes that "the fear that a child may be born physically malformed or mentally deficient does not in itself justify recourse to abortion." At present amniocentesis cannot be performed prior to the fourth or fifth month of pregnancy. All authorities are in agreement that at so late a stage in pregnancy abortion is permissible only if the continuation of pregnancy constitutes a threat to the life of the mother. In situations where amniocentesis is performed for purposes of diagnosing a condition for which a remedy is available, such as blood group incompatibility which can be treated by exchange transfusion, the physician is not only permitted but is obligated to perform amniocentesis, even repeatedly. However, amniocentesis carried

Senior Editor Knocking Down The Barriers

By David Weiss

In the light of various events which have occurred within the past few years, it has become increasingly evident that there exist major forces in the three undergraduate Jewish Studies divisions that are polarizing much of the student body. Each division fulfills a particular role and serves a unique purpose within the school. However, the differences between the divisions should not also serve as barriers impeding further learning.

One of the primary effects of this polarization has been the growing disenchantment among students with the existing system and curriculum. The root of this dissatisfaction lies with the inflexibility of the framework of these Jewish studies divisions.

A possible alternative to rectify this situation would be to allow students to choose their courses from the wide gamut offered by all three divisions, thereby enabling the student to avail himself the opportunity of a well-rounded Judaic education, unconstrained by the barriers between the three Jewish studies divisions. While each division would remain uniquely constituted, students who opted to do so could take advantage of courses which are not offered

within their own division. This plan could be implemented through the establishment of a committee which would serve as a liaison between the three divisions. Such a committee would oversee student programs in such a way as to enable the student to choose courses from the different divisions and yet, preserve the uniqueness of each individual division.

It is imperative that HAMEVASER become the representative voice of all three Jewish studies divisions. A step in the right direction has already been taken by the EMC Student Council which has opted to join HAMEVASER. Unfortunately, this has been counteracted by the withdrawal of the JSS Student Council from the paper. As a result, HAMEVASER still represents less than one hundred percent of the student body and the problems alluded to above, problems in which JSS has a vested interest, remain with us. Upon total commitment to HAMEVASER and its policies by all three Jewish studies divisions; the polarization and divisiveness that characterize our problems would be that much closer to a resolution favorable to all concerned.



Rambam: Astrology Is Idolatry

At a time when belief in astrology was irresistible and wide-spread, Maimonides (1135-1204) sought to "eradicate its root, branch and all," according to Dr. Leon D. Stitskin, professor of Jewish philosophy at Yeshiva University.

Dr. Stitskin develops this view in his commentary and translation of a letter to the Jews of Marseilles in 1194, translated for the first in English and presented in the current issue of *Tradition*, a journal of Jewish thought.

"Moses Maimonides was one of the very few outstanding Jewish scholars who resisted the belief in the hypnotic witchery of astrology which was so generally widespread during the middle ages," Dr. Stitskin writes. "In fact, the daring Biblical exegete, Abraham Ibn Ezra yielded to this hypnotic lure, and became its foremost expounder. In communication with authentic intellectuals he dared to articulate an unbending rationalism in Halakha and philosophy which he applied with equal vigor to this pseudo-science."

According to Dr. Stitskin, Maimonides arrived at his belief after having studied every extant astrological treatise. He felt that "the subject of astrology was not science at all but an irrational illusion adhered to by simpletons who believe anything, or by people who wish to deceive others." On the ethical level, he added, if the fate of man depended on the constellations and everything was preordained, "then the formulation of the precepts of the Torah was superfluous and observance of the Commandments unnecessary." Maimonides' greatest objection

was on the basis of Halakha. To him, belief in the pseudo-science was tantamount to a belief in idolatry. In the face of several utterances by the rabbis who implied a belief in the potency of the stars at a person's birth, Maimonides declared that "if it is forbidden to be an 'observer of times', and whoever is influenced in his actions by astrology and arranges his work or journeys to take place at the time fixed by astrologers, is punished with stripes (flogging), as it is said, 'ye shall not observe times'..." (Leviticus 19:26, *Hilkhot Avodat Kohanim*, 11:9).

In the final years of his life Maimonides often corresponded with Jews of Provence. In his letter to the Marseilles Jews, Maimonides is most scathing in denouncing the believers of astrology: "This kind of involvement in false astrological fanks whose notions are essentially pagan led to the loss of our kingdom, the destruction of our Holy Temple and extended the duration of our exile to the present day."

In his closing remarks, Maimonides said, "We can only affirm the principle validated by men of science that all the assumptions of the astrologers are false."

Dr. Stitskin joined Yeshiva University in 1953 after a distinguished 19-year career as spiritual leader of congregations in New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio. As director of the University's special publications, he supervises the preparation of studies and scholarly volumes on Biblical, philosophical and Judaic topics.

solely for the purpose of diagnosing severe genetic defects, such as Tay-Sachs disease, serves no therapeutic purpose and should not be undertaken since the sole available medical remedy is abortion which is not sanctioned by Halakha in such instances." Additionally, he says, initiation of this procedure in the absence of therapeutic good "is a pointless medical risk to both mother and fetus and also constitutes an act of *chavalah*—an unwarranted assault upon the mother."

Since abortion and sterile union are halakhically unacceptable, Rabbi Bleich contends that "the most propitious time for screening

of the disease is early adolescence, on the high school level. Early awareness of a 'carrier state,' particularly when determination can be made on a mass scale and is accompanied by a public information campaign, would contribute greatly towards alleviating the gravity of the situation."

Early identification of Tay-Sachs carriers will minimize marriages between two carriers and contribute greatly to the eradication of Tay-Sachs disease without violation of Jewish law. Accordingly, Rabbi Bleich urges Yeshiva High Schools to implement and encourage testing programs among their students.



Scene from recent Yeshiva University exhibit, "Synagogue from Damascus to Newport," shown at the Metropolitan Museum.