

# HAMEVASER

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## Chanukah Chagigah Here Stress Soviet Jewry

by CHARLES SNOW

The plight of Soviet Jewry was the theme of this year's chagigah, sponsored by SOY on the sixth night of Chanukah. Present for the occasion were Dr. Miller, Rabbi Alpert, Arnest, Borenstein, Charlop, Cheifetz, Ginsburg, Romas, Shatzkes, Shechter, and over 400 students. SOY president Maury Bach greeted the rabbels and student body and introduced Dr. Miller who conveyed Dr. Belkin's regrets for having to miss the Chanukah celebration.

Dr. Miller spoke about the secret miracles that occurred in Israel almost every day. He observed that the Israeli word for secret ammunition—*neshek sodi*—can be signified by its acronym, the word *nes* or miracle. Drawing on his personal experience, Dr. Miller compared existing conditions in 1934, when he was a student, to those existing now. Dr. Miller stressed that G-d's miracle had made it possible for a rebirth of Jewish life and learning to occur in American yeshivot. The miraculous emigration of several thousand Jews from the Soviet

miraculous was the fact that Jews had the faith in G-d to light the M'norah as soon as possible, without waiting for a reserve supply of oil. This faith alone was worth commemoration.

Rabbi Dov Letterman, a prominent member of the Russian Immigrant Rescue Fund, which helps immigrant Jews settle into a religious life in Israel, was next to speak. He wondered why we mention in Al HaNisim that G-d delivered our enemies into our hands, since the G'marah views Chanukah's main importance in relation to the miracle of the oil.

Rabbi Letterman answered that the G'marah wishes to emphasize that even though we should celebrate the military victory, we should realize that the source of the victory was G-d and not military prowess.

Rav Letterman then stated that contrary to popular beliefs, the majority of the recent Israeli immigrants are religious. Leaving behind their material possessions in order to come to the promised land, the Jews come usually not

## Symposium On Jews For Jesus Is Held Here Distinguished Panelists Address Capacity Crowd

by SHILOMO CHARLOP

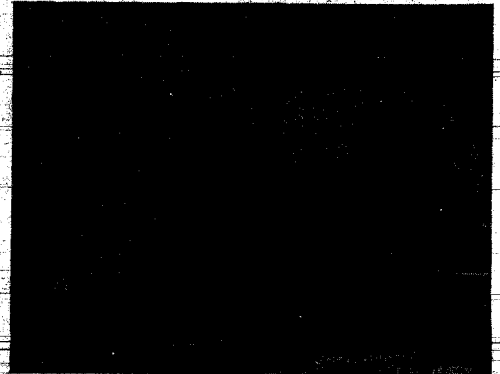
An overflow crowd-filled F501 on Tuesday, November 21 to participate in an open symposium sponsored by YC-Stern-Yavneh on the upsurge of the Jews for Jesus movement. Featuring an "all-star cast" of rabbis, the symposium was intended to inform the student bodies of Yeshiva and Stern Colleges on how to respond to the Jews for Jesus in the context of "Dab' mah l'haahiv." Aaron Reichel, president of the YC Yavneh chapter, opened the program by stressing the point that any action taken to stop the movement must be begun by Yeshiva University students.

The first speaker, Rabbi Charles Sheer, the Jewish Chaplain of Columbia University, believed the major problem we face concerns Jews wishing to be Jews and not Jews for Jesus. According to Rabbi Sheer, we lack the community to accept the Jews wishing to come closer to Judaism. Our religious groups do not respond to the needs of these people and are thus unable to retain them. As for saving the Jews for Jesus, Rabbi Sheer believed this can only be done by effective communication in our own camps. Skilled people who are able to give classes on Judaism in the free universities are essential for bringing these Jews back, he stated. He concluded that by stressing Torah, mitzvot, and *g'milut chesed* we can reaffiliate these people with Judaism.

Rabbi Melech Schachter, practical halachic legal specialist and Professor at YU who was the next speaker, characterized those

joining the movement as "lunatics who were not satisfied with one heavenly father but needed a son and a ghost also." Apikorus is too good a term for these m'chumadim who must suffer from a mental

questioned the concept of one man, Jesus, dying for other people's sins. Concluding, he stated that if only we were good Jews and the Christians, good Christians, the world would be better.



Rabbi Charliebach speaking at the Yavneh Symposium

sickness or self-hatred to join such a movement, argued Rabbi Schachter. Quoting the Talmud, he explained that these Jewish non-believers should not even be approached, for if they are, they will only deteriorate more and more and will believe in Jesus with greater vehemence. If you are forced to argue religion, he said, do it only with a Christian. If one does talk with a m'shumad, it should only be with ridicule and not with respect. Rabbi Schachter further

Disagreeing with Rabbi Schachter was Rabbi Walter Wurzbarger, editor of Tradition and professor of Philosophy at YU, who believed that those seeking other religions were not mentally retarded, but rather had a hunger for G-d. He expressed sorrow for the Jews freaks and gullit that we hadn't come through properly with our religious message. What we must do is convert Jews to Judaism before they join these

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SOY President opens 1972 Chanukah Chagigah

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## Students Attend Second Yom Iyun Program; Rebbeim Discuss Important Religious Topics

Rav Parnes Speaks On Yeshiva Identity

Was Aleppo Codex Rambam's Source?

Rabbi S. Riskin-Who Is A Jew?

by BARRY SNOW

by BARRY SNOW

by SHILOMO CHARLOP

Yom Iyun began with Rav Parnes addressing an overflow Rubin Shul crowd on "The Search by Yeshiva Students for Their Identity." Rav Parnes observes that as its title implies, Yom Iyun is a day for serious introspection by every person. He noted that one must place greater importance on his identity as a person rather than on his identification with a certain trade. Yom Iyun, a day when one can consider his goals and re-evaluate his commitments, is thus of ultimate importance to the Yeshiva student who is confronted daily by both the Judaic and secular traditions.

Rav Parnes quoted Masekhet (Continued on Page 4)

Much attention is being given by Israeli scholars, to new and developing aspects of Judaic studies. On Yom Iyun, Rabbi J. Penkower, a doctoral student at Hebrew University, lectured on the scientific approach to the study of the Masorah. His lecture, entitled "Maimonides' Masoretic Text and the Aleppo Codex," dealt with his attempt to identify the newly discovered Aleppo Codex, a listing of all 24 books of the Tanakh, as the source for Maimonides' decisions in *Hilkhot Sefer Torah* on the number of Parshiot P'tachot and Stamot (open and closed portions) in the Torah.

Maimonides himself mentions (Continued on Page 3)

At the evening program, Rabbi Riskin spoke at 6:30 in room F501 on "the basic issue confronting Judaism" viz. the question "Who is a Jew?" Believing the problem to have been thrust upon the Orthodox camp, Rabbi Riskin blamed the Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist elements of Judaism which have sanctioned conversions and divorces not based upon *Halakha*. These people, Rabbi Riskin explained, have declared individuals to be Jews who weren't halachically Jewish. Their argument, Rabbi Riskin elaborated, is this: how can a rabbi tell a Soviet Jew coming from the tortures of Russia, that because his

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# Editorial: Tay-Sachs

"A child inflicted with Tay-Sachs dies three deaths: the first when normal development stops, the second when the child begins to regress, and the third which puts an end to the child's torment." This is how Mrs. Bernstein, a young Philadelphia mother described the three hells she and her husband witnessed.

While Tay-Sachs is, as yet, incurable, simple testing and counselling are society's best weapons against this genetic killer which has often been called "the Jewish disease." A committee of four has recently been formed on campus under the leadership of Mark Breslau to bring testing facilities to Yeshiva sometime next semester. Rabbi Bleich has accepted the responsibility of being the faculty advisor to the committee.

HAMEVASER realizes the urgent need for such a testing and counselling program at YU and pledges its full support in this campaign. HAMEVASER's feature editor is an active member of the committee. We urge the administration, faculty, and entire student body to support the efforts of this committee. In addition, we hope that the various student councils on campus will give this worthwhile project top priority in the Spring semester.

# HAMEVASER

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## Rabbi S. Riskin - Who Is A Jew?

(Continued from Page 1)

wife is gentle, his son is not Jewish? Moreover, how can you tell those who fought in the Israeli Wars that they aren't Jewish because of their mother's non-Jewish status?

Rabbi Riskin answered this, saying that one wishing to become a Jew must show the commitment which Jewish law demands. If the sanctity of our people is to be upheld, these people must become Jews according to Halakha.



Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

Rabbi Riskin added that he believes the stand taken by Lubavitch (to simply add the work "kallatakhah" to the present Israeli law which states that one born to a Jewish mother or who underwent conversion is considered Jewish) oversimplifies the problem. The question that would still remain is: "What is the halakha concerning a ger wishing to convert?" He cited conflicting views as to whether observance of the mitzvot is a necessity for conversion. After all, some argue, shouldn't "conversion by fire", i.e., fighting in a war, be as good as "conversion by water," i.e., t'villah?

Bringing a halakha p'tukah from Yeroh Deah, Rabbi Riskin explained that for conversion one needs three judges and the acceptance of all the mitzvot. A proselyte who rejects even one mitzvah is himself rejected. He elaborated that a ger must make a mental acceptance of all the mitzvot before he can make the physical acceptance of brit milah and t'villah. Such acceptance of commandments is the definition of the sanctity of Israel.

## Jew Freaks, Or, Whose Messiah Is Around The Corner?

by RABBI ZEVLUN CHARLOP

"Jews for J." is the latest and possibly most aberrant religious phenomenon in the history of the Jewish community in the U.S. Estimates of Jews converting to Christianity run as high as 6-7000 for the last year. In California a Jewish Christian evangelist says he has noted more converts in one month than in the 23 years previous combined.

Newsweek Magazine (6.12.72) tells about "...a group of 13 Levi's clad preachers who picketed a (San Francisco flesh) club and passed out leaflets which read 'Topless! Bottomless! Nothingness!' The pickets looked like typical J. Freaks except that four of them were Jews wearing skull caps and one carried a placard proclaiming 'J, the Messiah has come.'"

For the life of me I can't understand why

if any faith has proven itself through the crazy quilt experience of our time, it has been Judaism. While the predictions and analyses of human history projected by other religions have gone askew, it is Judaism alone that can point to every day events as ancient prophecy literally fulfilled.

It was an unusual juxtaposition of statements relating to the Messiah, both reported coincidentally in the same issue of the N.Y. Times (3.27.72), which brought into focus, for me anyway, the awful perplexity occasioned by this indescribably painful development.

The front page carried an account of a homily by Pope Paul VI delivered at a special service for young people. Speaking about the emptiness of affluent, hedonistic, modern life which he believed was the reason for the rebellion of today's youth, he said: "We have trust in you. You need a messiah. A true messiah." On the other hand, page 39 featured a long and unusual tribute to the Rebbe of Lubavitch who had just celebrated his 79th birthday. The Lubavitcher

Rebbe and his wife are childless. To the question who will succeed him, the Rebbe responded: "The Messiah will come and He will take all these troubles and doubts. He can come while I am here. Why postpone His coming? My intention is to live many years more and the Messiah can come tomorrow or the day after tomorrow."

The Pope talks about Messiah and L'havdil the Lubavitcher Rebbe talks about Messiah. But I ask: Whose Messiah is closer at hand?

There was a time, perhaps, not so long ago, and very possibly through most of our history, certainly since the destruction of the Temple, when it seemed that theirs was coming and ours was nowhere around. How else interpret the startling statement of Rabbi Hillel (Sanhedrin 98): "Israel has no Messiah. For they have already consumed him in the days of King Hezekiah." (The rabbi referred to the tradition that Al-mighty G-d was prepared to designate the pious Hezekiah as the Messiah, but that the good king lost his chance at being savior because he didn't respond adequately to the challenge of the wondrous times in which he lived. G-d had wrought in Israel's behalf the greatest military triumphs. Enemy armies were routed and not a single drop of Jewish blood was spilled. Jerusalem was secured, yet in the face of all this Hezekiah was mute.) Upon hearing this, Rabbi Joseph exclaimed: "Oh, L-rd, forgive Rabbi Hillel for his indiscretion."

Rabbi Hillel's remark not unexpectedly has been a source of great consternation and many have been the explanations attempting to rationalize his statement within the framework of Judaism's incontrovertible belief in the Messiah.

Possibly the most sensible interpretation is that the one that has

Hillel speaking out of the dark context of his age. It was a time when messiahs, were running rampant Jewish fortunes had reached their nadir. The Holy City, and the Temple were in ashes. Jewish life in their national home

anyone turn to a Messiah whose own church is in disarray and whose most precious tenets are being rejected by erstwhile devotees? Their certainty seems further away today than ever before - just at a time when ours is around the corner - when literally "He can come tomorrow or the day after tomorrow." One, wonders, then, how precisely at this juncture in our experience, this pernicious movement among Jews has sprouted.

We think the answer essentially is two-fold. The bulk of our people - young and old - are Jewishly illiterate and see things only through the prism of western civilization, which is synonymous with Christianity. Unavoidable peer pressure nurturing in the barren wasteland of ignorance is part of the explanation. If Christians become J. Freaks then Jews who don't know the difference between Judaism and Christianity become J. Freaks, too. And finally, as Newsweek itself discerned, "they are predominantly young spiritual refugees from secularized Jewish homes, liberal synagogues..." They rebel against vulgar and distorted expressions of Judaism. For they are reflections of all that is gross, ugly and objectionable to them.

Thank heaven, counterbalancing this insidious development in Jewish life is the growing number of young Jewish men and women who are indeed driven by Messianic vision - albeit an authentically Jewish one. They have identified themselves with the faith of their fathers more unabashedly than even their predecessors. Even as there are J. Freaks, there are Jew freaks, although, for obvious reasons they haven't been getting the same measure of publicity.

I've had occasion in the past to write about some of them and I'd like to add another one to the (Continued on Page 3)



YUPR

Rabbi Zevulun Charlop

almost ceased to exist. The future never looked bleaker and Jews understandably were grasping at straws. The frailest reed became the stoutest support... They became prey to all manner of charlatans of the spirit. It was better, Rabbi Hillel believed, at that perilous moment to deny the doctrine of Messiah, altogether than to let them be had by false ones. Therefore, Rabbi Hillel's declaration, blasphemous on the surface, as it may have seemed, warranted in return only the kindest slap on the wrist!

I could understand if "Jews for J." would have gotten off the ground three or four decades ago, when Hitler was very nearly successful in his diabolical ambition to rid the world of 'G-d's people', and G-d didn't seem to care at all. But when things have never been so well with Jews as now, and when the faith and martyrdom of thousands of years have been vindicated, how can

Associate Editor

Israel - The Y'shivah Scene

by Joseph Epstein



Israel in November is a beautiful place. The pleasant days and mild nights make a stay enjoyable although the following month begins the cold miserable winter. I've just returned from a short stay in Israel and what interested and impressed me was not only the weather but the various y'shivot in Israel. I've written below some of the latest news for the bogrim of the various y'shivot and at the same time I hope to clue in those students who are now thinking about spending a year in an Israeli y'shiva.

The biggest sensation is Har Etzion. Its rise to fame has been sudden and "to the man" everyone learning there is more than satisfied. Rav Lichtenstein, to be sure, has much to do with its success. He gives only two shiurim a week but preparing for them takes up the rest of the week. The dynamic, warm, rosy y'shivah, Rav Amital, has given the place a unique charisma. Along with the good shiurim, there are regular chugim in Chumash, Nakh and hashkafah. Then, of course, there are those new dormitories—nicer than the Morg, with two to a room, heating, etc. If that doesn't make one comfortable then the food certainly will. I heard they spend six lira a day per student for food as compared to one and a half lira at Kerem B'Yavneh. Etzion is giving BMT a race for its money as far as gashtivus is concerned.

Rav Chaim Soloveitchik is very popular. His two shiurim a week in Hebrew U. are attended by more y'shivah students than people registered in those classes.

Some Americans are very active in the organization Geshur. During their free time, these y'shivah students volunteer their time to help bridge the gap between the religious and the non-religious. To various degrees they are successful and this gap is lessened. In a similar project, other y'shivah bachurim go out to help the Russian olim. It's a challenge to help meet the religious needs of these new immigrants.

Kerem B'Yavneh has begun finally the renovation of its bet midrash. In splendor it looks like it will equal all our dreams. Meanwhile they have moved into Bet Breinan and they are continuing to "shteiq" in that cozy atmosphere. The Americans there are largely just out of high school and they are all satisfied. The rosh y'shivah has tried to set up Israeli chavrutot for all, along with Israeli roommates in the dormitory.

ITHI reports a great increase in attendance, especially from Americans especially from Kerem B'Yavneh. They are also building new dormitories and planning a new bet midrash. Along with its

successful Chaderah branch, they are considering adding a new third branch in T'vriya.

Bet Midrash L'Torah is still strong and growing. In Shaalbm they're complaining about the food but learning anyhow. Jerusalem School of Technology (Bet Sefer L'Tekhnologiah) is becoming more popular. This YU type school specializes in the sciences and has a shiur in the morning and bet midrash in the evening.

The YU presence is really felt I don't know the statistics, but close

to half the junior class must be studying in Israel. More and more a year in an Israeli y'shivah is becoming an accepted and important move. For all students its something to look into and consider.

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I would like to gratefully acknowledge all the kind and warm expressions of sympathy sent to me after the loss of my father, z"l. You have all been most comforting.

evergrowing list. We have a young girl in our community. I don't believe she is more than 20, who received an appointment to the Biology department of the Bronx High School of Science. Part of her duties, however, was to include a class in home economics or cooking. Being an observant Jew, she didn't know if she could accept the job under these conditions: First of all, the food she would be cooking wouldn't be kosher and the nature of the class demonstration itself would be strong encouragement to her students, including the Jews among them, to eat. Secondly, Jewish law not only forbids the consuming of non-kosher food but also the cooking of meat and dairy together, which under normal circumstances is commonplace in such classes.

She was fully prepared to give up this excellent opportunity if her teaching this class would violate the tenets of her faith. She was willing to do this, knowing full well that the teaching market is tight

today, and that the Bronx High School of Science is probably the finest and most congenial school of its kind in the city.

In the end, thank G-d, she didn't have to take this drastic course. After presenting her problem to her department head, she was allowed to work out an arrangement whereby she would use her own utensils and be allowed to cook in conformity with the Jewish dietary laws. Probably this is the first time in the history of the New York High School system. It is no mean accomplishment and urges our profoundest admiration. She too has earned the incalculable honor of being called "Jew freak."

The infamous gentile prophet Balaam, tradition tells us, abided to the coming of the Messiah when he prophesied (Numbers 21:17) "I see him but not now. I behold him but he is not near."

With the Rebbe of Lubavitch we say, "He is now and He is near."

Rabbi J. Penkower Relates Aleppo Codex To Rambam

(Continued from Page 1)

the use of a manuscript by Ben Asher. In determining whether Maimonides had actually used the Aleppo Codex, Rabbi Penkower compared both texts for uniqueness of spacing (e.g. only Maimonides and the Aleppo Codex both list Shirat HaAzhar in 67 lines) and uniqueness in section agreement. A main portion of the lecture dealt with the resolution of an apparent section listing contradictions between Maimonides and the Aleppo Codex in regard to the spacing of the Tenth Commandment. Although our edition of Maimonides does not have a section in the middle of the last commandment, Rabbi Penkower quoted from medieval responsa which showed editions of the Aleppo Codex containing a section break in the middle of the commandment. He resolved the apparent contradiction by quoting various sources and commentaries who say that they possessed manuscripts of Maimonides containing breaks in the 10th commandment. Through further

scientific analysis, Rabbi Penkower established a basis for concluding that the Aleppo Codex may indeed be the source for Maimonides' Hilchot Seter Torah.

Contributing Editor

Federation Convention At Toronto

by Joseph Telushkin



For four days last month the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds (CJFWF) held their annual convention in Toronto. There were more than two thousand delegates, there representing over five hundred cities in North America. These people have the responsibility of allocating over six hundred million dollars annually. In other words, if one wants to promote any Jewish project that will need significant funding, then the Federation

convention is the place to go. I went to Toronto representing a number of interests, including HAMEVASER. Officially, I was there for the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry (SSSJ). Unofficially, I wished to work in conjunction with Rabbi Robert S. Hirt (from YU's Community Service Division) of the National Committee on Torah Education to get more funding for day schools. And almost accidentally, while there, I became involved in the fight to get

Federation aid for the fight against groups such as Jews for Jesus. By explaining what happened on these three fronts, it will perhaps become evident why I left Toronto with an ambiguous feeling, an assurance that essentially the Jewish establishment is populated by men of good will, but an equally strong, in fact stronger, realization that good will is an insufficient weapon for the threats confronting world Jewry.

Soviet Jewry has by now become a staple item on the Federation resolution agenda. This in itself is a remarkable thing. Two years ago a close friend of mine who had recently returned from Russia went to speak at the Federation convention in Kansas City. He explained to the woman at the desk

Rabbis S. Carlebach and W. Wurzburger Wind Up Symposium On Jews For Jesus

(Continued from Page 1)

movements. Rabbi Wurzburger explained. He believes that "the climate is ripe for Jewishness because there is a bankruptcy in terms of values." We must make Jewish existence meaningful by reaching out into the university. Rabbi Wurzburger also proposed that Yavneh could be the Jewish presence on the campuses needed to bring these Jews back. The last of the scheduled speakers, Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, spiritual leader of Cong. Kehilath Jacob, criticized



P. Millman

Rabbi Melech Schachter

Jewry for talking and discussing but yet not crying when our brothers are dying. Rabbi Carlebach explained that all Jews are, but one body yet the religious Jews are the ones who are breaking away from the non-religious. The non-religious Jews are "knocking at our doors for religion," yet we are not answering. We are the ones that are sick, not them: Those that are not hungry anymore for Judaism are not even Jews. "We're not davening" We're not learning" We

are the ones that are in bad shape. True, we measure the m'chitzah in a shul to see if it's high enough, but meanwhile we don't think about what we are davening. We have to become real Jews again. We are not like Abraham who pleaded with G-d that he could make the world a place as G-d wanted." Summarizing, Rabbi Carlebach pointed out the Jews freaks are successful because of the love which we lack. If only these Jews freaks would know that there is one Jew who cares, waiting for them, they will come back.

A surprise speaker was Rabbi Sholom Hecht, head of Jews for Judaism, who said that the Lubavitch offer a community, Crown Heights, where the last t'shuvah can come and feel at home. In Crown Heights they look up to these Jews, not down. He concluded his brief words by saying that the most important thing is our having personal contact with these Jews.

Refreshments were offered at the conclusion of the program, thus ending an enjoyable and informative evening.

that he was there to speak on Soviet Jewry. "Soviet Jewry?" she asked, as if my friend possessed great knowledge of the potential of the diamond industry in Siberia. By now, however, the situation has changed. That Soviet Jewry is a basic problem is a truism no one will deny. Nor will anyone deny the efficacy of public protest. Whether people will act on the basis of this knowledge is another matter. If Federation's resolutions were truly representative of American Jewish will, and American Jewish will were truly identical with American Jewish action, then the Soviets would be constantly bombarded by protests more gigantic than any that have ever been held in America. So for Federation to protest the treatment of the Russian Jews is, by now, no longer an accomplishment. This year, however, there was an attempt to push Federation into a more activist position. The Youth Caucus (which is generally composed of people with no delegate status,

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FROM THE EDITOR:

Several letters have been received by us in reference to our issue dated November 21. Since those letters arrived after our publication deadline, they could no longer be added to the present issue. The letters submitted for print will, however, appear in our coming issue.

The Sephardic Students Club presents Rabbi Haim Donik, former chief rabbi of Cairo, on Thursday, Dec. 21 at Club Hour. His topic: "History of the Recent Community in Cairo and Problems of Jewish Survival in Arab Lands."

Chief Israel Correspondent

# On The Rabbinical Elections

by Menachem Schrader

About one month ago, one hundred fifty people sitting in Heichal Shlomo, the seat of the Israeli Chief Rabbinate, elected new chief rabbis for both the Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jewish communities, while literally dumping the former supreme religious leaders of Israel, Rabbi Ovadyah Yoseph, formerly Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, replaced Rabbi Y'udah Nissim as Sephardic chief rabbi, while Rabbi Shlomo Goren, formerly chief chaplain of Tzahal and, most recently, Ashkenazic chief rabbi of Tel Aviv, replaced Rabbi Isser Y'udah Unterman as Ashkenazic chief rabbi. Neither election was close. Both of the successful candidates won decisive victories, making clear that the assembly was not in doubt as to their choice. What's more, it could almost be felt in the air that this, indeed, was not only the choice of the one hundred fifty rabbis and laymen voting, but the choice of all Israel, young and old, rich and poor, franks and boozboim.

What political party can claim victory? Which groups can claim

success in having put their men through? Who, in the diseased world of Israeli religious politics really won the election? No one.

This is the great irony of the election. No one's influence seemed to matter. Mizrahi came out strongly for Rabbis Goren and Nissim, as was evidenced by the election coverage in the Mizrahi daily newspaper, HaTzafeh. If Rav Goren won because of their support, what happened to Rav Nissim? The Agudah, as well as some right wing Mizrahi-ists, supported Rabbis Yosef and Unterman to their utmost. If they won it for Rav Yosef, why couldn't they do the same for Rav Unterman?

Perhaps the most eye-opening story of this election is what happened to Rav Tzvi Y'udah Kook, son of the first chief rabbi of Israel, Rav Avraham Yitzhak HaKohen Kook, z"l. Supposedly, one of the most influential people amongst religious Israeli Jewry, his support for his old friends, the two incumbents, made no difference at all.

What has finally come to surface in the rabbinical elections is a desperate plea for change. Israel is sick of old rabbis (Rav Nissim is 71, Rav Unterman 86, and both new chief rabbis are in their fifties), who, try as they may, can not get completely out of Iraq and Lithuania. The Israelis wanted a Sephardic chief rabbi without a turban, an Ashkenazic chief rabbi without a top hat. That Rav Goren is liberal, while Rav Yosef is conservative, was secondary. What made the difference is that these two comparatively young scholars (indeed, probably more scholarly than their predecessors) are ready to deal with modern Israeli questions on all levels, and to reach their decisions independent of outside pressures, from wherever they stem.

If these two men can only unite to form a single leadership, another step towards a religious Israel will have been taken: the creation of a strong, independent, dignified, and most important, popular Chief Rabbinate—indeed, the fulfillment of Rav Kook's dream.

# Yeshiva Identity Demands A Full Torah Commitment

(Continued from Page 1)

B'rakhot which quotes Moses as saying, "And now Israel, what does G-d require of thee, but to fear Him, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him and to serve Him..." The G'marah gives a puzzling answer and says that for Moses it was. The

lack of time for learning posed by the competition for grades, especially in the medical field. He cautioned that one must not let his professional goal to deprive him of achieving his religious goal. Rav Parnes related a story about a person who asked the Chatham



Rabbi Parnes speaking on Yom Iyun

Rav N wonders what the G'marah has accomplished by telling us that for Moses fear of G-d was a simple thing. This G'marah, however, is teaching us a profound lesson. For if Moses, a normal human being, could become a G-d-fearing person, then any other human being can overcome his surroundings and develop the capacity to become a G-d-fearing person. Rav Parnes quoted Rav Yisrael Salanter who noted that the main impediment to attaining this "simple matter" of fear of G-d is the despair of many students who abandon hope and fail to see themselves as diligent observers of the Torah. Rav Parnes then offered five causes of frustration among students and his cure for them.

The first major obstacle is a person's past, whether his educational deficiency of his uneasy psychological state. Many students, frustrated by their lack of knowledge and disturbed by the complexity of modern society, leave the Yeshiva experience. Rav Parnes quoted Rav Shmshon Rafael Hirsch that one must overcome all obstacles with a strong will to succeed. Such heroism, similar to a cripple who refuses to give up, is destined to be rewarded. Psychological counseling can often help one forget his anxieties and let him concentrate on being a better Jew.

The major difficulty facing a Yeshiva student is the communication gap between the rebbe and the talmid. Concentrating on his personal experience, Rav Parnes urged all students to try to approach their rebbe with an open mind. Torah She-b'Al Peh is not a cold experience, but rather a living experience whereby a rebbe can help his student discover his ideological identity as an observant Jew. Only when the pasuk in Mal'akhi ("And He shall turn back the heart of fathers to the children...") comes true can the redemption come.

Rav Parnes then dealt with a major source of frustration at YU,

Sofer why he prayed for such a long time and thus lost valuable time for learning. The Chatham Sofer replied that the Talmud states that whoever lengthens his prayers will have his years also lengthened. Similarly, Rav Parnes observed one must have faith in G-d that if one takes out time to learn now either by entering the five-year program or numerous other ways, he will be granted extra time.

The conflict between the liberal arts tradition, which teaches the value of adventures and speculation as the means of discovering one's personality, and the y'shivah tradition, which tries to inculcate a Torah-observant personality, was discussed as the next major obstacle. Rav Parnes suggested taking secular courses purely for their informational rather than inspirational content. If one is really interested in pursuing a field of studies, he suggested a corresponding increase in his Torah education to balance his pursuits in the secular field.

The last obstacle mentioned by Rav Parnes was the constant bombardment by the media of ideas antithetical to Jewish cultural values. Since one cannot completely shut himself out from his environment, Rav Parnes recommended viewing all things in a highly critical fashion. He quoted the Rambam in Hilchot K'riat Sh'mah who said that the first portion of the Sh'mah was very important for it contained an acknowledgement of the omnipresence of G-d, the love of Him by all Jews, and the learning of the Torah, "which is a basic principle on which everything else depends." Rav Moshe Soloveitchik interpreted the latter passage to mean that everything depends on learning. Rav Parnes thus summed up by saying that one can resolve the conflicts that one is faced with daily only by making a determined approach to discover his Jewish identity and making a commitment to learn.

# Middle East Highlights

(BRIEF) The Daily Express of London quoted British security sources on November 11 as saying that the Libyan Government was using its diplomatic mission in Britain to smuggle arms and other equipment into that country for use by Palestinian terrorist groups. The Libyans, said the report, used sealed diplomatic pouches to bring in the arms.

(BRIEF) The West German news agency DPA said on November 5 that Hans Hellmann, the general prosecutor of Duesseldorf, appeared in court to waive the posting of a cash bond against a defendant accused of theft. "I cannot demand a cash guarantee," Hellmann was quoted as saying, "when I see the behaviour of the West German authorities and of the Bavarian police towards the Arab terrorist murderers."

(BRIEF) "Arab League Defence Tax" Reuters reported from Damascus on October 30 that Dr. Mohammad Ahmad Mahjoub, director of the Arab League Boycott Office, said a boycott convention meeting in Cairo on November 14 will consider imposing a "defence tax" on foreign companies who operate in the Arab states while their governments extend economic or military aid to Israel.

(BRIEF) American retired General Lucius D. Clay, chairman of the Committee of Concern for Minorities in Arab Countries, said in Washington on November 3 that information recently obtained from Syrian Jews now in Western Europe indicated continued persecution of the Jewish community of 4,500 in that country.

Gen. Clay said that relatives of Jews who managed to flee Syria were beaten to get information about their means of escape. Police at a post in Aleppo, he added, were known to beat Jews who try to enter the city from Damascus. Jews holding foreign citizenship are also prevented from legally leaving Syria, he said.

Albert Elia, the 69 year-old secretary of the Jewish community in Lebanon, is still kept under detention by the Syrian Army following his abduction from Beirut in September, 1971, according to the committee report. He is believed to be suspected of aiding Syrian Jews who fled to Lebanon.

The Damascus government also restricts the Jewish community, said Gen. Clay, by forbidding the resale of their properties and confiscating possessions left by the deceased; and by prohibiting army personnel and civil servants from buying from Jewish-owned businesses.

(BRIEF) West German Transport Minister Laurenz Lauritzen, said in Bonn on November 1 that his government received reports that "something was

going to happen" within a period of ten days before two Black September terrorists hijacked a Lufthansa jet from Damascus via Beirut, and successfully effected the release and transfer October 29 of the three surviving members of the group which killed 11 Israeli sportsmen at the Munich Olympics.

Bavarian opposition leader Franz Josef Strauss said the same day that federal security authorities were warned in advance that a second Black September operation would take place by October 30. The Arabs aboard the German plane, he said, received a specially broadcast code signal from an unspecified Arab country, similar to one which the Black September terrorists at Munich received during their kidnapping of the Israelis.

The Frankfurter Allgemeine newspaper reported on November 6 that even before the two Black September hijackers boarded the Lufthansa plane in Beirut they were suspected. One of them bore a passport issued by the Persian Gulf principality of Oman, the newspaper said, "and it is well known that one can buy an Omani passport in Beirut for 120 marks."

(UPI) LONDON—The United Press International reported from London on October 31 that "Soviet advisors are understood to be returning to Egypt to handle radar and complicated missiles. Their numbers are relatively small compared with the 15,000 to 20,000 who were there before their expulsion."

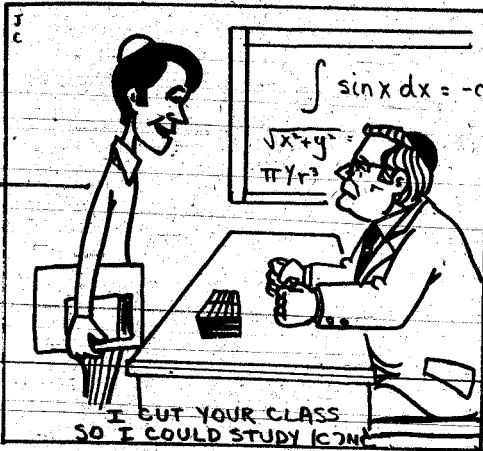
Pentagon sources were quoted by the New York Times to say the advisor total was 500-1,000. Reports from Cairo reveal that a Russian club which was closed three months ago has now reopened.

(JTA) Tel Aviv—Premier Golda Meir, Foreign Minister Abba Eban, and David Ben-Gurion were among the Israeli officials at a reception for U.S. Ambassador Watworth Barbour whose 11-year ambassadorship is ending. The 63-year old envoy was praised by Israeli officials for his help in developing U.S.-Israel ties. Barbour responded by observing that relations between the two nations are friendly and strong.

Los Angeles (JTA)—Frank Sinatra has been awarded the annual "Medallion of Valor" by the State of Israel for his "unprecedented humanitarian efforts." The award was presented here at a dinner in his honor sponsored by the Los Angeles Committee for Israel Bonds.

A Frank Sinatra Youth Center has been established in Nazareth, Israel, under the sponsorship of the Histadrut. Sinatra has endowed annual scholarships for many of the center's children. He also has been active in the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board of HAMEVASER extend best wishes to Menachem Stamer, Editor-in-Chief of HaMaabak, upon his engagement to Marsha Frolow and to Mendel Shapiro, Editor-in-Chief of HAMEVASER, 1970-71, to Betsy Klitsner.



Projects Editor

# A Matter Of High Priority

by Leonard Hirsh

"You must have these two Bibles with you when you leave the country," the Soviet customs inspector told me as he thoroughly searched my suitcase for other objectionable material. Not wanting to cause any trouble over such matters, I attempted to bring into the Soviet Union only one religious article as a gift, a siddur which I carried in my t'fillin bag together with the siddur which I use every morning. Since the soldier did not discover my small "minchah-maariv" while he was examining my wallet, I decided to substitute the "minchah-maariv" for the siddur and leave the latter as a gift. I began to have second thoughts when my uncle, whom I was visiting informed me as I was preparing to depart that he noticed the words "two Bibles" written in Russian on the top of my visa. I immediately placed my "minchah-maariv" in my t'fillin bag. Sure enough, before boarding the train to leave, the Soviet officials asked me to produce the two siddurim and I showed them the contents of my t'fillin bag. The scheme worked and I left the Soviet Union with a small personal victory.

that there still exists knowledge of any mitzvot—although very few are observed. When conversing with me, my relatives and their friends would many times quote a Yiddish folk-saying that included p'sukim that began with "Why does it say..." or "It is written..." and other similar beginnings. Although delighted at first, I was sad to learn that this was, to a great extent, their only familiarity with the Tanakh or any Jewish learning. Yes, the siddur was an invaluable gift, but it was like placing an ice cube in an ocean full of boiling water.

I visited mostly contained recent emigrants from Russia. After listening to how the new Russian olim are provided with new apartments, given tax exemptions for a number of years, and provided with employment, I asked what action was being taken to re-acquaint (or acquaint) the olim with Yiddishkeit. An official answered that a lecture on Parshat HaShavua had been given on Friday mornings but because of the poor attendance had been discontinued. Yes, the olim must attend an urban, but little if anything is taught regarding religious observance. True, this is a government-run facility and religion should not be forced upon anyone—but shouldn't the olim be exposed to certain aspects of Yiddishkeit in a more significant way than a weekly lecture? Shouldn't they be reminded of what they have forgotten or be acquainted with what they have never known? Shouldn't they be taught what Judaism and Israel are really all about? Once they leave the absorption centers and enter society, they may choose whether to be dati or not—they should at least be given a choice, and not left to assume that the only alternative is to aspire to be a member of a materialistic, pleasureistic society. A religious guidance counselor should be provided at each center to help acquaint the new olim with ~~avestry, kashrut, t'fillin, Shabbat, and limudei kodesh.~~ The counselor would serve a function similar to that of an Israeli army chaplain, providing a religious outlet when one is desired or where one is lacking. We should persuade the M'dinah, in conjunction with the Rabbanut, to facilitate the implementation of such a plan. Without this or any other similar plan, how then could an oleh make a fair choice when he does not know anything about one of his choices? With the prospect of thousands of new olim from the Soviet Union coming to settle in Israel, this is a matter that must be given utmost priority.

## Federation Lacks Decisiveness On Resolution On Soviet Jews

(Continued from Page 3)

such as myself, who are there as observers) drafted a resolution to deny Federation office and honors to anyone of its members who holds a high position in a company engaged in trade with the Soviet Union, unless they simultaneously apply all pressure to help ameliorate the situation of Russian Jews, and to get the ransom tax revoked. Obviously the resolution couldn't specify the degree of pressure that was considered to be minimally required. But the resolution faltered on another score. The word was soon passed around in hushed whispers that a man in about as high a position as one can get at Federation was on the Board of Directors of a company engaged in oil exploration in Russia. This news had the effect of splitting the Youth Caucus in two. The original sponsors felt that the moral position was unchanged by this news—that, all the more, it underscored the fact that no positions of honor in the Jewish community should be granted to people engaged in trade with the Russians. Another group (towards which I leaned) felt sure that such a resolution would fail, and would only succeed in embittering and alienating those people whose economic power we must utilize if we wish to help the Russian Jews. As a friend of mine said in reference to this man, "At his age, his eyes are more on the history books than the check books. We must convince him that he has the potential to be another Joseph, a savior of the Jewish people." As was expected, the Resolution Committee rejected this proposal. Instead, it certified a rather standard resolution deploring the condition of Soviet Jewry, and urging people to use whatever influence they had in applying pressure on Russia. A precise

definition of what this pressure was, and how it could be most effectively applied was not made. This is more or less where the issue ended. The formal resolution meeting of the Federation's General Assembly was not held on the last day of the convention. Unfortunately, the preceding evening Louis Stern, former CJFVW president, had collapsed and died at the banquet. The following morning a memorial meeting was held in his honor. As a result, the convention ended with no public discussion of the resolutions being held. The problem is now the extent to which these resolutions will be implemented. Unfortunately, resolutions are not binding, but are only suggestions. But the struggle for Soviet Jewry must be ongoing and constant. For example, an odd opportunity to get some publicity for the cause presented itself while we were at the convention. A Russian boat delivering salt to Canada was docked at the Toronto port. About forty of us strolled over there with a politely phrased letter to the captain. Two of our people who spoke Russian were invited aboard and spent an hour and a half speaking with the crew. The Russians obviously anticipate the Jewish problem being discussed wherever they go, because one of the men on the ship spoke knowingly of Biro-Bidjan, and defended the ransom tax before it had been mentioned or our letter delivered. But it is just these sorts of actions that are crucial. The Russians must know that this mark of Cain will be recognized wherever they go.

In my next article I will relate what happened with the problem of aid for day schools, and my disappointment with eliciting the aid of Federation in the fight against the Jews for Jesus.

From my three-day stay in Uzghorod and Mukatchevo, which are located in the Zakarpazska section of the Ukraine, I learned of many things I did and did not expect. In these two cities, where Jews and Yiddishkeit flourished before World War II, only traces of the past remain. The shuls in Mukatchevo and Uzghorod presently house a department store and the local philharmonic orchestra, respectively. The only minyan in Uzghorod is a two-by-two shtetl that schedules early services for such days as Rosh HaShanah so that the congregants can finish in time for work or classes. Kashrut is observed with great difficulty in some homes; there is one shechit in the area, but in general kashrut is negligible. With Jewish schools, or cheders, no longer in existence, it is surprising

Leaving Russia for Israel via Budapest and Zurich, I travelled the route many a Russian immigrant has taken, and which many more, with the help of HaShem, will take. Within a week after my arrival in Israel, I met a number of new Russian olim. Because of my late arrival on a Friday, I was forced to spend Shabbat in the small town of Savyon which is close to Lod. I took a walk to a nearby neighborhood which I was told had been built for new olim from Bulgaria, Rumania, and the Soviet Union. Though I somewhat expected what I saw, I was a bit shocked at the magnitude of the chitai Shabbat. Some of the new immigrants were in their bathing suits, coming from or going to the beach. Many were tampering with their cars, while others were engaged in a number of other non-Shabbat activities. Were these the same type of people that I saw the previous week? Was it this kind of materialistic life they aspired to attain when they risked their lives to go to Israel? If they sought more meaningful things, why then did they behave on Shabbat as though Shabbat was no more than a day off from work?

The following week I took a tour that included a visit to an absorption center, a facility that housed and prepared new olim to adapt to Israeli society. The center

## Chanukah Chagigah Here Stresses Soviet Jewry

(Continued from Page 1)

religious education in the Soviet Union. Hoping to receive Orthodox training in Israel, these people are

Rescue Fund partly alleviated this problem by building a portable Sukkah which visited many of the immigrant absorption centers. Rav Letterman asked for the help



soresly disappointed when they are housed in projects that lack shuls, basic religious articles, and the facilities to teach them Yiddishkeit. The Russian Immigrant

of the American Jews so that these immigrants, who are yearning for religious training, can fulfill not only the divine promise of Exodus, but of becoming the nation of G-d.

The Cantorial Training Institute presents the film, "The Traditional Chironomy of the Hebrew Scriptures," in Riets Hall, Room 470, this Wednesday evening at 9:50 P.M. The film records an ancient technique of the Oriental Jewish communities, moving the hands to regulate the chanted reading of the Torah. Rashi on B'rakhot 62a makes mention of this ancient technique utilized in Biblical cantillation. All are welcome.

Yavneh presents a meeting, lecture, and post-Chanukah m'sibah this Thursday, December 14, during Club Hour (2:45-3:45 P.M.) in Rubin Shul. Fred Mehl will discuss legal sources on "Looking into the Future." A Yavneh policy-deciding meeting will follow; a m'sibah with refreshments will conclude the hour. All are welcome.

# To R. S.

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The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board of HAMEVASER extend best wishes to Jerry Lauterbach '72 upon his engagement to Sherry Ginsburg.

Contribute to the SOY Chan. Dr. Drive. Volume in SOY Starlin Drive is already over \$15,000.





