

HAMEVASER

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YP, EMC Deans Interviewed Rabbi Zevulun Charlop of YP

by Menachem Adler
Rabbi Zevulun Charlop recently granted an interview with HAMEVASER in which he discussed the trials and tribulations of his years as director of YP and RIETS.

Throughout his talk, Rabbi Charlop emphasized that three new *rashai y'shivah* have been hired this year despite the financial strain on the University. This addition, he continued, at a time that the student body doesn't numerically merit additional classes, shows the commitment of Dr. Belkin to the yeshiva, and the centrality of the yeshiva in his thought.

Rabbi Charlop also stressed the point that all three *rebbeim* are graduates of RIETS, as are more than half of the YP-RIETS faculty, a proof that "we have been able to reproduce ourselves." An additional boon resulted from these hirings.

Since these *rebbeim* were placed in the lower class levels, other excellent lower class *rebbeim* were moved to higher grades. Thus one student can move from one good *shiur* to another during his entire stay in YP.

Shiur Placement System
Rabbi Charlop feels that with this solidification of the Yeshiva Program plus his system of *shiur* placement, very few boys are dissatisfied with their *shiurim*. The thrust of his *shiur* placement system was to replace "willy nilly placement" with a systematic approach. In fact, he feels that as a result, not more than fifteen boys constitute a group of "hard-core dissatisfaction," i.e., dissatisfaction that results from being in a *shiur* one does not want to be in.

Students are informed that they may request specific *shiurim* for the coming semester, and of those who respond, seventy percent are ac-

commodated without problem. Accommodating the other thirty percent is difficult, but very few are actually disgruntled in the end.

If any problems do exist with regard to *shiur* placement, it is due to the student body's new spirit. Rabbi Charlop notes that the students are very serious with regard to their religious studies and are more interested than before in attending good *shiurim*.

In response to a recent HAMEVASER article which alleged that many students find YP the easiest way to "goof off" and still fulfill the Jewish studies requirement, Rabbi Charlop said that, on the contrary, YP has had many defections from its ranks, precisely by those who found that they could not "goof off" in YP. He feels that the strong *rebbe-talmid* relationship, as well as the probation system for excessive absences lessen the probability of a lackadaisical attitude.

Question of a Mashgiach

Rabbi Charlop recounted that when he first assumed his position at RIETS, he felt that the students had no one to talk to about their Jewish studies problems. Consequently, he set up personal interviews with every student in the *y'shiva*. As to a question of a *mashgiach ruchani*, he responded that efforts in this direction have been made but that difficulties in this pursuit are inherent. Although a single *mashgiach* for all three religious divisions would be the ideal, the differences in goals makes this almost impossible. Even within YP, the heterogeneity of the student body vis-a-vis thought, attitude, and orientation, makes it unlikely to acquire a *mashgiach* of the type found in other *yeshivot*.

Rabbi Charlop would like to institute a plan by which all the *shiurim* would be held in the main building. This would enable the advanced *shiurim* to learn in the main *beit medrash* and present a formidable picture to the outside

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Kollel Activists At Work In Upper Nazareth Region

by David Gold
Lilmod u'lamed, lishmor, v'la'asot! To learn and to teach, to guard Torah values, and to act to help others to learn to do the same. This sums up the daily activities of Rabbi Avraham Saslow (Semicha '71; YC '67) of Upper Nazareth (Natzaret Illit), Israel. He, his wife Devorah (SCW '68) and his four children had returned here for a Pesach vacation and took out time

struggle to stifle religious development. World press noted his order to demolish one of the town's synagogues, but there was more: the falsified health department reports, pay-offs, and bribes all geared to force the *Kollel* to leave. In one synagogue, where they were running four daily Talmud-Torah classes, the *gabbai* was forced to close them under threat of losing his job. Local hoodlums were paid-off to inflict



Rabbi Saslow at work in Upper Nazareth.

to relate to the HAMEVASER part of his story.

The Saslows' allyah to Natzaret Illit in 1971 was under the auspices of the "New Settlement Torah Association" — known in Israel as TALAT (Tnuah L'Hafatzat Torah).

TALAT is a non-affiliated organization which sponsors numerous projects and institutions furthering observance and study of Torah, such as Neve Yerushalayim girls' seminary, Achdut national youth groups, and many others. The core of TALAT is its network of *Kollel* centers in the immigrant development cities, far from the Torah centers. In Ashkelon, Kiryat Malachi, Kiryat Ata, Metula, Safed and about twenty other areas, TALAT sponsors full programs for the spreading of Torah.

In 1971, TALAT set up in Natzaret Illit, an immigrant city of over 20,000 Jews, controlled by an anti-religious segment of the Labor Party. The mayor had an international reputation for his

bodily harm upon youngsters coming to learn Torah. Russian immigrants attending TALAT classes were threatened with job loss. Hundreds of Russians were in tears at the *Kollel's* Welcome to Israel party when they were forced to leave because the evening's entertainment of Chassidic Song and Dance was considered politically offensive.

But, despite the seemingly overwhelming pressures, Rabbi Saslow and the other nine members of the *Kollel* fought back unrelentingly. (Though seven hours

Holocaust Commemorated

see page 6

a day were devoted to learning, the afternoons and nights offered opportunity for much success.) A complex of twelve Talmud-Torahs was set up for the area serving over 200 teenagers. Two Russian and one Georgian synagogues were set up to serve the thousands of new immigrants. The *Kollel* fought for and won the establishment of a government religious school, a *yeshiva* trade school, as well as three day-care centers in the new immigrant neighborhoods. The town's *mitkhev* was found *posul* and then was *kashered*; the *eruv* was finally put up after fifteen years.

The *Kollel* also spends hours daily arranging for the needs of the wounded soldiers and those on the fronts. There are lectures in the public schools, classes for *Barmitzvah* and conversion, adult education, publications, and endless anti-missionary activities. The members of the *Kollel* provide the immigrants with *tallitot*, *r'hlin*, *m'zuzot*, *siddurim*, *matzot*, community *succot*, etc..

Rabbi Saslow's personal pride is his summer camp program and its outgrowth, the Youth Synagogue, where previously assimilated teenagers conduct their own services and programs. He invites all who come to Israel to visit at Block 752-8 in Natzaret Illit if they really want to see "Where It's At!"

Rabbi Jacob Rabinowitz of EMC

by Jay Richman

In the estimation of its dean, "students who attend EMC are educated at the best Jewish Studies institution in the country. Its top Bible and Jewish history students can compete with the best in the world." The satisfaction of being the best, however, has not stopped Dean Jacob Rabinowitz from making further changes to improve Erna Michael College. One such innovation has been the introduction of mandatory laboratory work for students in Hebrew I-2. Rabbi Rabinowitz commended Mr. Saban for his efforts in making the laboratory a reality, and further expressed a desire for the lab's expansion in the future. The Dean expressed hope that the lab will become an integral part in both the *Mechina* and advanced Hebrew courses.

BA-MA Program

As further proof of EMC's progress, the Dean took note of the newly introduced BA-MA program in conjunction with the Ferkauf and Wurzeiler Graduate Schools. Under the program, students will be able to obtain their Masters degree in either sociology or Jewish education one year after graduating from EMC. When asked about the current situation in which a student need not obtain any kind of degree at all, e.g. H.T.P., H.S.P., or B.A., to qualify for graduation, Dean Rabinowitz explained that the purpose of EMC is to provide the student with a well-rounded Jewish education. At the same time, students are urged to work towards a diploma as demonstrated by the new program's institution.

The Dean added that students who have any questions regarding any degree should contact the new registrar, Mr. Gayer.

New Grading System

A further change has been the substitution of the P-N grade system with a P-F one. Under the new terms those students who fail such a designated course receive a grade of F, which unlike the previous grade of N, is averaged in with the cumulative grade.

"On the whole," says Dean Rabinowitz, "there has been no negative reaction from the students, and the teachers find that students

who would normally not gain anything from a P-N course are now working for the pass and learning at the same time."

With the school year coming to a close, the Dean's office is making plans for the upcoming fall semester. Addressing himself to the students' request for a class in Talmud Preparation (*Chavrusa*), Rabbi Rabinowitz stated that the college is prepared to offer such a course provided that there is enough interest. The Dean mentioned that he is prepared to offer any course provided that: 1. it fits within EMC ideology; 2. it has enough student interest to warrant its addition; and 3. a suitable teacher be found.

Faculty Changes

Regarding faculty changes for the fall, the Dean announced that Rabbi Olian will be returning from a year's Sabbatical in Israel, while



Rabbi Jacob Rabinowitz

Rabbi Safran will be leaving for a position in Pittsburgh. Mr. Argov, who has graced many a Bible class with his broad knowledge and sincerity, will be returning to Israel after teaching in EMC during his Sabbatical year.

Summing up the interview, Dean Rabinowitz said that he was very happy with the student and faculty makeup of EMC. Although there have been student complaints about some teachers, Rabbi Rabinowitz responded that in any learning situation not all students will be satisfied with all pedagogical approaches. However, EMC is blessed with a capable faculty, broad enough in scope to satisfy everyone's needs.

New Board Selected; Kasdan Editor-in-Chief

At the governing board meeting held Wednesday, March 27, Yitzchak Kasdan '75 was elected Editor-in-Chief of HAMEVASER for the academic year of 1974-75. A psychology major attending YP, Mr. Kasdan served this past year as Technical Editor of HAMEVASER. A past YP *shiur* representative, Yitz is on the Dean's List in the college.

Assisting Yitz will be Shlomo Charlap '75 and Gary Eisenstock '75 as Associate Editor and Executive Editor, respectively. Last year's News Editor, Mr. Charlap is a pre-med major. Chairman of YP's library committee, Shlomo is on the Dean's List. An English major, Gary served this past year as HAMEVASER's Israeli Correspondent while attending *Beit Medrash L'torah* in Jerusalem.

Barry Snow '75, a psychology major, will function as Senior Editor. An EMC instructor who is in his third year of Semicha, Ephraim

Buchwald will continue on as Contributing Editor. An additional position of Contributing Editor will be filled at the beginning of next year.

Appointed as Managing Editor was Jay Richman '75. Jay is a psychology major from EMC. David Perkins '75, a philosophy major, will hold the position of Feature Editor. The other Feature Editor will be Ephraim Kanarfogel '76, a Jewish Studies major.

Designated as News Editor was Daniel Haberman '77, a Jewish Studies major, currently studying in Israel. Irwin Walkenfeld, '75, also a Jewish Studies major, will hold the post of Copy Editor. Majoring in philosophy, Jay Fenster '75, will be the new Technical Editor. The Projects Editor will be Menachem Schrader, this past year's Feature Editor. Filling the position of Research Editor will be Norman Wisnicki '75, an English major in the college.

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Kollel . . .

The Kollel situation remains deplorable. No clear news has come forth about the Israeli Kollel, while reports about the Kollel here remain distressing. The Administration appears adamant in dismissing third year Kollel members in spite of their impeccable qualifications. Further, it is now rumored that the number of incoming married Bachurim will be limited, again in spite of whatever capabilities they have. The underlying problem in both cases, we are told, is one of money.

The money must be found. Education must not suffer and the Kollel must be given top financial priority.

The Kollel is indeed the strength of Yeshiva and its continued growth and development can not be compromised.

. . . Mashgiach Revisited

One problem whose continued existence has nearly convinced us of its immortality is that of hiring a mashgiach. One of the most pressing needs of the students is a person who will provide religious hashpa'ah relevant to their daily lives. Torah study in the shiur room can become a dry intellectual exercise if it is not supplemented with the development of personal integrity and religious character.

For about a year, persistent prodding and pressuring have been applied so the administration to obtain a mashgiach. To date there has been no progress in this direction. We find this state of affairs to be quite incredible. Are years of searching and investigation necessary to fill a post which so desperately needs filling?

(Reprinted from Hamevaser, April 71.)

Pesach Provisions

Thanks to the tireless energies of the Pesach Provisions Committee here at Yeshiva, preparations for Pesach were made a bit easier. As it has been doing annually for the past fifteen years, the PPC has arranged the purchase of

Pesach wines and matzoh for sale at low prices to the YC community. This year, the PPC handled over \$40,000 worth of orders, and, despite the huge volume, filling the orders went as smoothly as ever.

A more important facet of the operation is that, although it runs on a non-profit basis, the PPC distributes free wine and matzoh to those who cannot afford these essentials for yom-tov.

Shiur representatives from the various religious divisions are to be commended for assisting by taking and relaying orders to the Committee. A special yasher ko'ach is extended to the managers of the PPC, Steven Billaver, Neal Harris, Shilam Furst, David Walk, and Andrew Klein for their diligence and devotion in running the program so efficiently and for their selflessness and sacrifice in giving up Sunday afternoons and other free time in order for us to have a chag kasher v'sameach.

National Security?

The reports emanating from Jerusalem concerning both the candidacy and the trial of the leader of the Jewish Defense League, Rabbi Meir Kahane, are distressing. While it is difficult to separate fact from fiction due to the stringent news blackout imposed on the trial proceedings by the Israeli government, for all too long, reports have been circulating about the "special" difficulties Kahane is encountering, pointing to an unfair use of government privilege for the sake of "national security."

Perhaps because of our own belief in Israel as the bastion of democracy in the Middle East, the reports of alleged undemocratic actions by the government become even more painful.

Among the allegations are charges that the Israeli government arbitrarily arrested Kahane, holding him virtually incommunicado for over 29 days without making any formal charges against him. This arrest is generally understood to have been an action to forestall any possible embarrassment to the Israeli government during the visit to the U.S. of Soviet leader Brezhnev in June 1973.

Other allegations include:

Apparent attempts on the part of state officials to confuse voters who wished to vote for the JDL in the recent elections, by mandating a change in the League's designated ballot letters midway through the campaign.

An alleged inordinate scarcity of Defense League ballots at the Israeli polling places.

The total news blackout of Kahane's trial proceedings and alleged government threats to hold in contempt any of the media who violated the blackout.

While these allegations have yet to be proven, there already exists substantial evidence sustaining the veracity of at least part of the charges.

Especially since the Yom Kippur war and the unfortunate credibility gap that resulted from the erroneous news reports emanating from the battle field and from military headquarters, the Israeli government has a special obligation to do all in its power to repair its image. It's alleged unfair treatment of Kahane, which theoretically could be extended to any public figure, underscores Israel's seeming policy of invoking arbitrary and undemocratic use of power. One need not be a Kahane sympathizer to decry acts of suppression and undemocratic policies.

Governing Board '74-'75



From the Editor's Desk

Irreverent Prayer



Yitzchak Kasdan

If there is no Torah there is no derech eretz . . .

If there is no knowledge there is no reverence (Pirkei Avot III, Mishnah 21).

Whether as participant or bystander, one finds it hard to ignore the boisterous atmosphere prevalent in many Orthodox shuls during the Shabbat t'filah. The situation is best described by the frequently heard remark that people no longer talk in the midst of davening, but rather daven in the midst of talk.

There are three main reasons why people disrupt the services: First, people view the synagogue as a center for socializing. For many, communal prayer surpasses private petition only in the opportunity it affords one to catch up on the engagements, weddings, heart breaks and heart failures since the previous Shabbat. (In all fairness there are those concerned with more pressing matters such as the Friday night Knick score. . .) Secondly, people do not understand the words they use to address G-d and instead utilize their gift of speech for other purposes. Finally, people refuse to see themselves as committing any wrongdoing by talking during the davening.

The problem cannot be taken seriously until we divorce ourselves from this last notion. Even after leaving Halachic injunctions aside we still wrongly minimize the impact of our irreverence both in terms of ourselves and others. L'hithpail literally means to judge oneself, to take an accounting of our actions before addressing G-d in prayer. From this perspective the t'filah attempts to inculcate man with certain principles of ethical behavior embodied in our approach to G-d. The lesson of community concern is reflected by the plural form used in Shemona Esrei; the attitude of respect is taught by the usage of shevach at the start of the Shemona Esrei. The individual who interrupts his davening with idle talk clearly fails in learning such lessons, for if he is disrespectful in his dealing with G-d how much more so will he be when dealing with man? Moreover, as a unit, the noisy congregation shuns a certain responsibility on the community level. Although wrong, people do generalize about Halachah based on superficial public observation of it. If praying together in an Orthodox minyan does not transcend the mundanity of a social gathering, we become somewhat hypocritical in attacking non-traditionalists who rationalize davening in a Conservative synagogue. At least there they are able to sit next to their girlfriends or wives!

One's basic understandings of tefillah must include the idea that one is standing before G-d (amidah l'fnei ha-kadosh Baruch hu) engaged in a conversation with Him, alone (see Ramban Hilchot T'filah 4:15-16). Yet, how many of us have this kavannah running through our minds—let alone feel the sensation—while we daven? How many typical baalebatim bother to look even at the literal English translation in the siddur and investigate the meanings of what they utter? How many know why we daven at all?

Though human nature dictates that a total eradication of the decorum problem is probably unattainable, positive steps should be taken to combat the underlying causes of the issue. A deeper understanding of t'filah imbued at the school level would help. An education imparted at the adult level—interspersed even within the services itself—would also be of benefit. But whatever the approach, it must be initiated from within the community. The current method of Rabbis chastising their congregations in the middle of t'filah is ineffectual and often counter-productive. Only with a concerted effort, spurred by those of us who know better, i.e. the yeshiva student, will the synagogue of today revert to its intended form of a m'ikdash m'at.

Much soul-searching went into my acceptance of this position. I was confronted by the old YU problem of split loyalties to learning, causes, schoolwork, and self. On the other hand, Joey Epstein's tireless and successful leadership has convinced me of HAMEVASER'S importance. HAMEVASER, as Joey molded it, created the unique opportunity of uniting the Jewish Studies Divisions under the umbrella of Torah. I only hope that I and the new staff are equal to the challenge of continuing this task.

Rabbi Charlop Interviewed

(Continued from Page 1) world. He is satisfied, however, that the lower shiurim prepare the shiurim in the classroom, for this allows a better control of the learning situation.

With regard to the YU kollel in Israel, Rabbi Charlop said that its opening was delayed from this coming September due to the Yom Kippur War. Although the exact nature of the kollel is in flux, he is sure that RIETS will play the dominant role since it will be attended by talmidim in the Semicha program.

Some Disappointments

In response to a question, Rabbi Charlop said that his major disappointments are few. Much has been accomplished these past few years and much more can be accomplished in the future. He feels that often student leaders call for sweeping changes but when these changes are made, the reaction is one of: "What can be done next?" He cites an example of the "revolutions" of spring 1972 when the student body demonstrated in favor of Chumash and Halachah

classes. Now that these classes are offered, attendance is not as large as was expected based on the size of the protests. Another example, he adds, is the non-appreciation on the part of the student leaders for the acquisition of new rebbeim. However, he feels that such an attitude is healthy in that it does lead to improvements in Torah learning.

Rabbi Charlop regrets that the yeshiva hasn't been able to accept all the applicants to the YU kollel. Although he feels it is necessary to maintain the standard of excellence in the kollel, he feels badly that many boys just cannot be accommodated by the kollel.

Another of his disappointments is the realization that the competitive spirit in Yeshiva College is very great. He would like to see the easing of certain rules, particularly the one barring freshmen from transferring YP credit to YC. Taken together, Rabbi Charlop feels that this competitive academic atmosphere combined with the excellence in religious studies is the miracle of Yeshiva University.

Editor Emeritus

Some Thoughts
on Signing Out

by Joseph Epstein

When I leave the YU campus, I find myself defending YU from its maligners and when I'm on the YU campus I sometimes must be one of its severest critics. It must be defended against its slanderers; against those who are jealous and against those who are zealous. But then to criticize one has to know how and why. It takes *taam*. Not all criticism is even worth the paper it is written on.

YU means a lot to many people. It means nothing to others. The concept and the ideals can be appreciated and lived up to. They can be scoffed at. Even here the paradoxes coexist. To paraphrase the well known title, the Holy and the Profane, coexist, not without friction, here in YU. Shall we be amongst the ones who seek the good and leave the chaff or will we be amongst the others who choose the secular and reject the spirit?

These forces fight in the hearts of all Yeshiva students. The desire to learn and strive after Torah knowledge fights for time with the need to succeed in our worldly affairs. The need to express our Orthodox thoughts in our modern world must find its place in our minds which are preoccupied with the necessity of excelling in the secular sphere.

The battle lines are unclear. Every YU student must make his own chesbon hanefesh and decide which discipline will enjoy his attention and time. And yet the basic commitment to both are there — maybe the synthesis will work.

If it does an input of knowledge and ideas are needed. The thoughts must be expressed. And they are. In discussions and arguments around the school they can be heard. And in the pages of HAMEVASER they can be read.

What goals did we set for ourselves this year? What did we try to do?

We have presented the Jewish approach on the issues and problems of our society. We have voiced the feelings and struggles of the Yeshiva student. We have featured articles of Jewish interest on many topics. We have published articles on Traditional ideas, thought and opinion. And most important we have tried to represent what we feel Yeshiva really is — the home of Torah Umadah.

Our goal was to publish a paper which has inherent value. For what purpose would there be for us to print a paper which does not contribute to the general intellectual growth of our readers? HAMEVASER would not be worth publishing if we didn't print articles on *halachah*. And it would not be worth the money or the effort if we didn't report upon the issues and problems of our Jewish community.

When a student saves a HAMEVASER article for future reference, then we know our efforts and pains have been worth it. Only if you have learned something from HAMEVASER should we then continue.

We began off the year with no printer, a meager budget, weak support and internal disorganization. We have emerged from the year strengthened in all areas. With our twelve year tradition behind us, we have tried to develop and refine our content and features.

Perhaps our most important accomplishment has been in receiving the united support and sponsorship of all three Jewish Studies Divisions Student Councils. For the first time in eight years the three president columns are featured on the same page. Jewish unity is often an elusive goal and it was no easy task to bring the three divisions together. HAMEVASER can represent all and it should represent all. Let us confront the issues of our society with a united student front. Whether he be a RIETS-YP, ISS or EMC student, he can find a role and place in his newspaper. Irwin Gross of SOY, Mike Bloom of JSSSC and Victor Sasson of EMCSC have been instrumental in this effort. Rabbi Israel Miller has also been of great help with his advice and guidance in this push for united sponsorship. The BRGS Student Council has also joined in to strengthen the new bond.

We have tried to serve the needs of the student body to the best of our abilities. From the suggestions of our readers and from the constructive advice of our critics, we have attempted to cover those topics which interest you — our fellow students. In our field of specialty there is none to challenge us for none exist. In the entire YU, no other publication devotes itself exclusively to our goals.

Much work and effort went into the preparation and publishing of HAMEVASER. It was work which to a large extent was not seen and not realized by most. I would estimate that it takes about two minutes of human labor to prepare one word for publication. That's a lot of time when it's multiplied by the total of words in a regular edition (20,000 words). I appreciate the efforts of all and the lack of glory, salary and award hopefully was made up by the satisfaction of printing something of quality and value.

Chaim Brickman was indispensable in operating the newspaper. This was our second time we worked together on school publications and his dedication and stiff standards have shown themselves on these pages.

In Benji Yagur the paper gained an able spokesman and willing handman. Shaya Wexler always came through in the crunch and helped solve the thornier problems which arose all the time.

We had the privilege of having a scholar in residence in the form of Eliezer Diamond. We always depended on and followed his wise advice. It is impossible to describe Eliezer's contributions during his four year participation in HAMEVASER. His articles can testify to his efforts.

It was Ephraim Buchwald's insights on contemporary issues which rounded out the paper. His ideas, views and suggestions were instrumental in improving the quality of HAMEVASER.

Menachem Schrader and Marc Belzberg did a fine job in the all important feature aspects of the paper. Their ideas were great and their suggestions appreciated. With true dedication Shlomo Charlop fulfilled the very difficult position of News Editor. Shlomo could be depended upon to come through in all stories and he did.

The last two Governing Board members carried the brunt of the work. Dov Kanner was superb. He and his staff had to review every single article of HAMEVASER and their many hours of work in rewriting and copy reading were given freely.

Yitz Kassin put in faithfully the many tedious hours which were demanded of him. His efforts were always seen but never realized; they were always appreciated.

The entire staff must be thanked for their devotion and their time. Of particular note are Barry Kocharowitz in Production, Jay Cohen at Art, Efraim Goldstein at Photography and Shmuel Solomon at Circulation.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Zaks' Humility And Scholarship Recalled By A Talmid

by Rabbi Aaron Kahn

In his classic presentation of the profound dialectic of *avahavus* *HaShem* and *Yiras HaShem*, the *Rambam*, z"l, states: "And when he (i.e., man) considers these very things (i.e., the majesty and grandeur of G-d's creation and the endless manifestations of His infinite wisdom) he shrinks back at once, and is afraid, in the knowledge that he is a tiny creature, humble and low, standing weak-minded before G-d who is perfect in His knowledge." This *Yirah*, then, is the ultimate result of *avahavus HaShem*. To draw near in discovery means to retreat in awe.

We are taught by Rabbi Akiva "Es HaShem Elokecha tira," *Prabos talmid chachomim*. And, after making the necessary reduction to the human level, we may, indeed, we must, draw parallel. As we approach the great *talmid chachom*, as we attempt to measure his eminence, as we are drawn near to him, we are, at the same time, stunned when we begin to perceive that vast gulf which cannot be bridged. For here we remain, humble and low and there, in the misty distance, stands the *gadol*, still the object of our reverence and of our wonder, but still untouched.

It would seem, therefore, that writing an appreciation of a *gadol*, or even penning few memories demands a matter. What gives us the right to attempt such a memoir? Yet when we consider HaGaon HaRav R. Menachem Mendel Yosef Zaks z"l, it is sufficient to remind ourselves that this great gaon was hardly known by the *talmidim* of our Yeshiva in spite of the nearly thirty years he spent here. And few of us were aware that we were privileged with such a *gadol* in our midst. He was, of course, the son-in-law of the saintly Chofetz Chaim, z"l, and this in itself reflected upon his greatness. But most *talmidim* knew only the reflection — not the *gadol* himself.

In a profound sense HaRav Zaks, made it difficult for us, to discover him. He was in fact, the personification of the *middoh* of *Anivus*. He was actually afraid of honors, of tumultuous distinctions. Moreover, his approach to learning and his method of teaching revealed his greatness in Torah only to the truly discerning. There were no pyrotechnics. The presentation was terse, almost matter-of-fact. The *chiddush* seemed to be born in spite of itself. Before I came to our Yeshiva to learn at the feet of *Moreinu HaRav, Shlita*, I was privileged to learn in the Kollel K'doshim Chofetz Chaim and hear HaRav Zaks' *shlirim*. I was rather

young then and certainly did not appreciate in full the significance of his comments which he would present, in the course of learning the *blatt*, in as simple and terse a manner as possible. He would be seated at the head of a long oval table having just extinguished a half-cigarette he had smoked to its very end. Before he began, he would invariably comment "Nu, *lommir zach durchreyden a bisel*" as if he had as much to learn as everyone



Rav Menachem Mendel Zaks z"l else. He was a master of the *he'orah*, of the concise comment which revealed more and more upon reflection. He could be very brief. Often he would stop in the middle of a sentence. The point had been made and he was afraid of speech, afraid of the extra, unnecessary word. We were never told how much effort, how much strain went into his *shlirim*, which when presented, appeared to be *d'vorim p'shutim*. After all, isn't that what *Rashi* said, isn't that the *terutz* of *Tosafos*? Indeed, after we had been told, it was all actually quite simple.

The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board of HAMEVASER wish a hearty mazel tov to Rabbi and Mrs. Hershel Schachter upon the birth of a son.

HaGaon HaRav R. Mendel Zaks was himself the essence of simplicity in habit, in speech and in manner. Perhaps it could not have been otherwise, having been for so many years in the immediate presence of the Chofetz Chaim, z"l. And here in America, so many years and so many experiences later, the Chofetz Chaim was still a living reality, still a mentor. When he would remember, the quiver of his lips and the expression of his face would tell those listening that HaRav Zaks was not remembering the past. It was not his photographic memory which had focused on the sharpest detail. The Chofetz Chaim was there, present before his very eyes. And for this reason, at least for the while that he was telling of the Chofetz Chaim, we too could see the Chofetz

Chaim with our own eyes. And even now, when I try to recall one of the most profound "memories" of HaRav Zaks, I can almost see the Chofetz Chaim crouching himself off in a room, and alone, *b'chadrei chadartim*, weeping bitterly as he makes a *din v'chesbon* with himself. What will he have to show for himself, he would demand, when the time comes and the heavenly judge asks for an account. This is almost a part of me because it was an eternal reality for HaRav Zaks.

Like true *dolim* with photographic memories, he was constantly learning. His scope was incredible. His range of knowledge was vast, reflecting a passionate thirst for all that is Torah. How can we fail to be smitten by a sense of total inferiority when we consider how, in spite of this almost superhuman command of *y'dios* *ha Torah*, HaRav Zaks, was so unassuming. How can we fail to be grieved that we did not know him better.

This unassuming quality which was so essential to his nature endeared him to those who knew him. I still remember, sentimentally, how, when as a boy of eight and davening with him in the Chofetz Chaim Yeshiva on the West Side, he asked me if I thought Sha'ul was a *tzaddik*. I still recall the patient way in which, in spite of my protestations, he explained to me that King Sha'ul was, in fact, a *tzaddik*. From that moment until the last time I met him, not very long ago, I felt a deep reverence for this great giant whose tread was so soft, and who was so simple.

We are all simple. Some *talmidim chachomim* are complex. And sometimes we become aware of *gedolim* who are simple beyond complexity. Such was the Chofetz Chaim, "and such too, HaGaon HaRav R. Mendel Yosef Zaks," z"l. *Y'hi Zichro Baruch*.

Rabbi Kahn is currently a Rosh Yeshiva in RIETS.

Nigunim

(Continued from Page 7)

thirty-two short movements. According to Modzitzer legend, Rabbi Yisroel refused anesthesia when undergoing a leg amputation, and composed this song during surgery. Rabbi Saul (1886-1947), the next Modzitzer Rebbe, was the most prolific composer of the dynasty. He wrote more than seven hundred nigunim. In a life marred by many personal tragedies, he considered music his spiritual salve. He often remarked that it was only by *n'glin* that he found the inner strength to sustain himself in his misfortunes. The present rebbe, Rabbi Samuel Eliyahu has already created over four hundred nigunim.

Chasidic nigunim have had an undeniable effect on the present day Jewish music scene too. The significant difference is that the majority of today's music is written for commercial reasons, whereas Chasidim employed the nigun for a spiritual reason. As a Chasidic saint once said, "All melodies are derived from a source of sanctity, from the Temple of Song. The access to certain temples can be achieved only through songs."

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Guide to the Pre-Med: Part III

By Chaim M. Brickman

There was a premed from YC
Whose index was zero point three,
So he registered perfect
In Stanley Kaplan's course—
And now he's a licensed M.D.

April showers bring May flowers. However, as far as the junior, premedical student is concerned these vernal meteorological and floral phenomena are inconsequential in the face of the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). Most medical schools require their applicants to take this exam which is given twice a year in May and, again, in October. Medical admission committees "strongly recommend" that applicants take the exam in the spring of their Junior year in college. Students taking the test in their Senior year have found themselves at a disadvantage since many medical schools have already mailed their first batch of acceptances by mid-October.

Members of admissions committees at three separate medical colleges told me that in the future less and less weight will be given to the MCAT scores as a result of the MCAT preparatory classes available in certain sections of the country. However, until such time as medical schools completely abolish the MCAT requirement, it would be advisable for students to prepare as well as possible for that exam. Students who do not have the time or the money to enroll in one of these prep courses would find it most worthwhile to invest in both the MCAT practice booklet published by Simon and Schuster and the box of vocabulary cards printed by the Visual Education Association, Incorporated.

The main advantages to the aforementioned MCAT prep courses seem to be: the speed students gain through drill and practice plus a familiarity with many of the questions which later appear on the actual exam. Therefore, students using the Simon and Schuster booklet, or any similar practice booklet, would find it advantageous to time themselves as directed by the authors. Since numerous questions found in the Simon and Schuster booklet appear year in and year out on the actual exam, practice can only improve exam grades. In addition, I found Dr. Wischnitzer's mimeographed sheets extremely helpful, especially in preparing for the General Information section of the exam.

Unfortunately, most medical school admissions committees still consider its applicants' MCAT scores rather heavily. In some cases, for example in Cornell, it seems as if the MCAT serves as the major criterion for acceptance. Medical schools, in general, are still looking for students with impressive performance records in college. Thus, students with high indexes and above-600 boards are still in excellent field position.

In order to facilitate the rather burdensome process of medical school application, the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS), a centralized facility which permits a candidate to submit a single, uniform application to a number of different medical schools, was recently established. Information concerning AMCAS applications is available from Dr. Wischnitzer's office. Most medical schools are not, yet, participants in this service and they, consequently, require individual applications. Immediately after finals, juniors should mail their AMCAS applications by July 15 and that all other applications be posted by the end of August. An early application will

often mean an early interview; an early interview will often mean early consideration by an admissions committee. And a word to the wise is sufficient.

The majority of medical school applications supply an entirely blank page for any additional information which the student thinks might be of interest to the admissions committee. Never leave this page blank. This is the student's golden opportunity to sell himself and to, perhaps, even subtly suggest the direction of upcoming interviews. Some topics that might be included in this section are: Yeshiva's double program, unique hobbies or experiences, research experience, and extracurricular activities that are related to the Sciences.

Although members of the faculty at most Eastern medical schools are familiar with Yeshiva's double program, my interviewers consistently expressed admiration for the long hours I spend in class and for the numerous extracurricular activities I found time to get involved in despite my schedule. The point I would like to make is that students should not hesitate to mention their double program on their applications. Modesty is commendable, but virtue alone won't get anyone into medical school. Students should, therefore, include in their application anything that might warrant favorable consideration by an admissions committee. Applicants should realize that anything included on their application is subject to question at an interview. For example, students who list summer research experience should be prepared to discuss their work and its ramifications intelligently and accurately.

The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board of HAMEVASER 1973-1974, and the Governing Board of 1974-1975, wish a hearty Bircat Mazel-Tov to Yitzchak Kasdan, Editor-in-Chief '74 upon his engagement to Marsha Wiener.

Secretaries at both undergraduate and graduate schools are only human, and they do make mistakes. It is therefore imperative upon students to make certain that the various offices at Yeshiva have processed all materials properly and that each medical school has filed their application. Mrs. Greenberg, who is in charge of mailing in the registrar's office, is generally alert and helpful, but it is each student's responsibility to double-check with her to make sure the necessary information has been mailed to the correct schools. Students who have mailed their applications by September 1 should receive a confirmation from each school by mid-October that their application is complete. Schools that fail to acknowledge receipt of a student's application by that time should be contacted, preferably by phone. One senior with a 3.9 index applied last year to Einstein but failed to receive an acknowledgment that his file was complete. Finally, in February, the student called the admissions office at Einstein only to discover that his application had accidentally been filed in a section marked "miscellaneous". By the time an interview could be arranged, there were no longer any seats available! Juniors should be certain to take home for the summer up-to-date copies of their transcripts and a recent edition of the catalogue. Medical schools require applicants to indicate on their application all courses taken, all grades received, and all courses to be taken before

graduation.

Probably the most enjoyable part of the application process is the interview. The interview not only gives the respective medical schools

an opportunity to make the acquaintance of each candidate, but it also serves the additional purpose of introducing the candidate to each medical school's facilities along with its students and faculty. Most of my interviews were low-pressure, friendly, chats. The interview is actually an applicant's last chance to sell himself, while it is often used as an opportunity for a school to sell itself, as well. It might interest the liberated female reader to know that fifty percent of my interviewers were women, and I had the pleasure of being interviewed at Einstein by a delightful, black, female biochemist.

The night before each interview I made it my business to read all my notes on the research projects I had been involved in during my undergraduate years. I also reviewed synopses I had written of articles concerning Jewish medical ethics which I had read during the previous summer. Then I usually skimmed several newspaper clippings which discussed controversial topics that might be raised at an interview e.g. socialized medicine and peer review. Of all my preparations, the most rewarding was a perusal of the catalogue of the medical school I would visit the next day. During this careful reading I would note on a small piece of paper that would easily fit into my wallet some of the unique features of that medical school along with any questions that I might have. On the day of my interview I always tried to arrive at least one hour before my appointment to permit me some time to tour the campus and to speak to several students. Why all these preparations? Interviewers are human, and they are understandably impressed by a student who shows interest in their medical school. For example, Downstate recently joined a group of medical schools and hospitals all linked to a central, storage computer. Each member of this group can telephone a request to this storage brain for a bibliography of medical books and articles written on any specific topic. While visiting Downstate's medical library before my interview, I had one of the librarians explain the system to me. Coincidentally, my interviewer was one of the founders of that computer linkage. You can be sure that my familiarity with the system's operations was flattering.

At the end of every interview it is customary for the interviewer to give the applicant an opportunity to ask his questions. From my bed-time catalogue readings and from my discussions with students, I always had at least one question prepared. At Hahnemann Medical College my interview lasted approximately fifteen minutes, but I spoke for no more than two or three minutes. After my interviewer had posed several questions, I casually asked a related question involving the two-and-a-half year basic science program Hahnemann had instituted. The answer to my question ate up the next ten minutes and we covered everything from Hahnemann's founding fathers to Philadelphia's night life! I usually concluded each interview by inquiring what specialty my interviewer was in. This usually proved to be an interesting finale as well as a pleasant exit. At Johns Hopkins, however, I was slightly stunned when my interviewer smiled and replied, "I am the first psychiatrist to sit on the admissions

SOY President

Divrei Shalom V'emet



by IRWIN GROSS

This past year, one of the most successful that SOY has ever had, was brought about by the huge amount of hard work and the tremendous amount of time spent by many RIETS students. We believed and proved that there is much that can be done to improve our Yeshiva. Among our many projects were raising money for the kollel, running a sephorim drive which had a volume of approximately thirty thousand dollars and a tzedakah drive which was able to distribute thousands of dollars to worthy institutions. We printed and distributed Halacha Bulletins on all the yomim tovim, as well as special ones on the problems caused by daylight savings time of davening too early and what to do on Erev Pesach this year. We also put out a second edition of the SOY Haggadah, produced successful chagigos on Chanuka and on Purim, and provided the necessary support for Dirshu and Tchiya. We ran a shatnes drive, and in our tephillin drive which SOY partially subsidized, more than one hundred pairs of tephillin were checked. This year we still plan to publish Be'er Yitzchak, Beis Yitzchak, and a new edition of the Guide to Kashrus and Yom Tov, as well as have a tzitzis drive.

Many people have worked hard and long on these and other projects but because a list of names would be too long, and I fear I would forget and omit someone, I ask forgiveness and list none. It is known who merits praise and the people themselves should feel justifiably proud of what we have accomplished together.

I must take this opportunity to commend Joey Epstein and his excellent staff for the superb issues of HAMEVASER they have given us this year. I can't recall any YU paper that has come even close to being as good as this past year's HAMEVASER.

Much credit is also due to Rabbi Charlop for the new excellent roshei y'shivah and for the voluntary shiurim in chumash and halachah I'maseh.

I would like to express thanks to my Rabbayim, certain teachers, Mr. Parker and to my friends for the help they have given me these past four years.

Yet, I am disturbed that Yeshiva is not administered to the fullest advantage of the students. The ultimate goal is to imbue the students with the love of Torah and the knowledge to be G-d fearing Jews and strong links in the chain of Yiddishkeit. Too often this goal is forgotten and the trivial accessories are pursued with great zeal. Specifically I refer to the semicha program and the system of shiur placement.

The semicha program should be the mainstay of the Yeshiva. Our future leaders should be prepared for facing the problems of k'fai Yisrael on all fronts, especially in problems dealing with halachah I'maseh. Is a year's requirement which includes a year of learning those sections of Yoreh Deah which specifically do not deal with real halachah I'maseh, or the hollow S.R. courses or the graduate school degree mills — all which culminates in klaf — the way to train spiritual leaders?

YU seems too concerned with building and expanding to evaluate and upgrade its already existing programs. Now there is talk of law school. Why isn't there talk about also imitating Touro's striving to attain a kollel of the highest caliber? Our kollel happens to be producing talmed chachomim. Is it being strengthened and expanded? I shudder to think that MORE money specifically donated to RIETS and the kollel (\$500,000 from the Brookdale Foundation) will be diverted to the newest of YU's fiascos.

What confronts every student in RIETS is the ordeal of shiur placement. Now Baruch Hashem during the first three years a student is able to find the derech he is looking for (if he's lucky). However after that, he is subject to an extremely arbitrary placement system. However after that, he is subject to zachut avot.

Although these two problems do indeed trouble me, they existed long before I came to YU and unfortunately will probably exist long after I leave. Perhaps there is some hope that they will be solved, but knowing how slowly the administration moves, I couldn't possibly hope for a solution during my tenure as President.

Any institution of Torah learning is charged with an arduous task. It must meet the challenge of strengthening Am Yisrael by preparing the next YU should live up to this strengthening, but if not Revach va'hatzalah ya'mod la'yahudim memakom ach'er...

Harry Fischel Summer Sessions

FIRST SESSION

begins Monday, June 24, and ends Wednesday, July 24.

SECOND SESSION

begins Monday, July 29 and ends Wednesday, August 28.

Registration for both summer sessions will be held June 24, 25, late registration June 26, 10:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 — 3:00 p.m.; and, for students attending the second session only, July 29, late registration July 31 at the same hours. Students should report for instructions to Room 108, Sol and Hilda Furst Hall, 500 West 185th Street, New York, N.Y.

All classes will be held in Furst Hall, a fully air-conditioned building. Classes usually meet two hours a day, per course, three days a week (Monday through Wednesday), and yield 3 credits each session. Students may take two courses each session. Accordingly 12 credits — a full semester's work — may be completed during the two summer sessions.

committee."

Several classmates of mine told me that at the conclusion of their interviews they would pose questions concerning the admissions process and how soon they could expect to hear from the school. Personally, I don't believe such questions are proper at an interview. Many medical schools arrange guided tours for applicants plus informal meetings with students and faculty members. Questions involving admissions, finances, and student housing are certainly more appropriate at these sessions than at the interview.

In recent months many premeds

have confronted me with questions concerning medical school applications, yet, not one student has ever asked me whether I would suggest he wear his yarmulka to an interview. I think this speaks well for Yeshiva, or perhaps no one has asked me because they know what my reply would be. The yarmulka I wore to each of my interviews, along with the religious beliefs it represents, were respected at each of the schools I visited. Au contraire, I would have immediately protested and withdrawn from any school that failed to protect my religious freedom. Realistically speaking, a

(Continued on Page 5)

JSS President

L'shanah Habaah

by MICHAEL J. BLOOM

Rather than serve up some warmed over ideas and conceptions, review some often made promises, and more frequent apologies, justify some mistakes and defend unpopular decisions, I would prefer, in this my final column in *Hamevaser*, to look to the brighter future, acknowledge those who will help make the future an optimistic time for all of us in JSS, and add my personal advice for next year's JSS Students Council officers.

The future is bright for JSS students because the JSS student body is, as a whole, so overwhelmingly conscientious and confident in itself. The future is optimistic for JSS students because, on the whole, the JSS Rebbeim are confident and concerned. What is so terribly significant in the entire James Striar School is that our faculty and administration are not cold and impersonal, but mesh together to form a solid and coherent force. In JSS we still have not lost the deeper conviction that we are in this program to learn Torah.

Next, however, this appear to be the Academy Awards for James Striar School, let me be quick to point out that JSS has' its share of problems. One is the often incessant push to send sophomore students to a summer of Kollel preparation, followed by Junior Year, followed by entrance into RIETS. This is, undoubtedly a thoroughly justifiable and important procedure, yet, these Talmidim who complete four years in JSS should not be made to feel like second class citizens. Yet, the problems of JSS are small, because the students are united in the central desire to further themselves in Yahadut in a meaningful way.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Rabbi Morris Besdin for his patience and thoughtful advice throughout the entire year. I must also thank Rabbi Meir Fulda and Rabbi Pesach Oratz whom I have come to greatly admire and deeply respect over the last two years as a JSS student.

To next years Student Council officers, who will be people with whom I have worked closely this year, I would say to "Ride with the tide and roll with the flow"; the difficulties with being representatives will eternally be that in representing the viewpoint of the majority, you will always be hassling the minority. I wish you the best of luck and more than that, peace with yourselves.

EMC President

Overt Reaction

VICTOR SASSON



The 26th Yom Ha'atzma'ut and still there are terrorist attacks on Israeli villages. The 26th Yom Ha'atzma'ut and still Israeli leadership is in a state of political turmoil. The 26th Yom Ha'atzma'ut and still Israel and Syria continue to engage in artillery battles... And Israel continues to count more heroes among its dead.

Last year, Israel celebrated its 25th anniversary. That day, the tanks paraded through the streets of Jerusalem, the planes streaked overhead in perfect formation to the cheers of thousands. They were a nation filled with pride, confidence, and surrounded by myth of their invincibility. But this year the national mood has changed. Israel is probing for answers to its new questions and searching for new direction. Golda Meir's caretaking government is faced with immediate problems — the senseless barbaric massacre of defenseless women and children in the border town of Qiryat Sh'moneh, the difficulties over disengagement with Syria. Though these recent events have brought tragedies, Israel is depressed but far from despair.

This year, the 26th Yom Ha'atzma'ut celebration being observed by the students of Yeshiva will help us remember the strengths of the first 25 years of independence, giving us renewed hope that peace and security will finally come to this historical battlefield. We need those memories of 1948, 1956, and 1967 to overcome our present seemingly impossible hardships.

Students are still confused about the newly installed P-F system adopted in EMC. Students are allowed to take one course each term on a pass - fail basis and must designate this course on a request form. A grade of 60 or above is recorded as P and below as the recorded failing grade (minimum grade going 50). However, this grade will be omitted while computing a composite for YC. This grade will be used to determine the student's Hebrew average. In order to avoid being placed on probation, a minimum average of 70 must be attained. A student placed on probation is limited to 12% credits in YC and forfeits his P-F option in EMC for the following term.

Pre-Med Guide

(Continued from Page 4)

yarmulka-had medical student is no longer the rarity he might have been several years ago. Most Eastern medical schools are by now aware of the type of student that attends Yeshiva College. Consequently, a medical school which shows interest in a Yeshiva student is less likely to harbor any grudges against his religious beliefs. I would even go so far to suggest that in this era of Watergate and permissiveness, medical schools might look more favorably upon a religious candidate. Last year the University of Pennsylvania accepted a Yeshiva graduate who had taken a two-year leave of absence from college in order to receive his ordination in Israel. While one Yeshiva student who went to an interview last year sans a yarmulka was questioned about his liberal view toward his religion. Students who do wear yarmulkahs must realize, however, that they bear an added responsibility.

Maimonides in concluding his *Guide To The Perplexed* wrote: "I hope that by the help of God, you will, after due reflection, comprehend all the things that I have treated here. May He grant us, and all Israel with us, to attain what He promised us. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped" (Isaiah 35:5). "The medical profession is generally one of the most respected professions in the modern, Jewish community. Thus, a religious physician carries the double responsibility of leader as well as healer. My intent in preparing this guide has been to better prepare future religious physicians for this vital, dual role. Perhaps in our days we shall see the eyes of the blind opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped."

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Saul Wischnitzer for the invaluable premedical advice he has given me during the past four years. May God grant his mother, Mrs. Wischnitzer, a very speedy recovery.

The Editor-in-Chief and Governing Board of HAMEVASER note with sorrow the untimely passing of Rabbi Norman Novosseller, YC '66, Semicha '69.

May his family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Yerushalayim.

decided to wait before circumcising himself, one can say that the Kuzari never neglected the category of *elno m'tzuvch v'osch*. Rav Yehudah Halevi merely states that prior to G-d's commandment, *mitzvot* did not exist. Once, however, they are commanded, the two categories of *m'tzuvch* and *elno m'tzuvch v'osch* can exist.

A religious community of *goyim* who are not obligated to convert and keep all the *mitzvot*, yet must keep the *zayin mitzvot B'nei No'ach* and are free to keep any more they want, may exist. Following the Chazon Ish's dictum, rabbinic authorities would declare that this community is not to be accepted as complete Jews. Rav Bleich closed his remarks by noting that since the underlying reason for these groups claiming to be Jews is their desire to obtain grants from the Federation, one should apply the instruction of the Midrash which states that just as G-d is an *Ohev ger*, for he has left his idols, so should one practice the command to be an *ohav ger* and provide them with food and clothing.

Rav Bleich: Black Jews in Halakhah

by Barry Snow

The second in the series of Memorial lectures for Rav Zaks was delivered by Rav Bleich on the status of Black Jews in Halakhah. Rav Bleich also dealt with more general issue of Jewish identity and its preservation throughout the centuries despite our lack of an independent country.

Rav Bleich preceded his remarks by noting that the Midrash compares the Jews to olive oil, which unlike other liquids that can be mixed together, retains its separate identity. Similarly, the Jews cannot be mixed with other nations of the world. Yet, no xenophobia exists, for the Midrash states that converts are beloved before G-d for they accept the Torah even though they were not present at the frightening Revelation at Sinai. The Black Jews, however, in their claim to being authentic Jews, present a peculiar problem.

Historically speaking, the earliest reference to a Black Jewish community occurs in the *Tshuvot HaRadbaz* where he mentions that the Falasha (Black Jews of Ethiopia) are undoubtedly descendants of the tribe of Dan — but are Karaites, who don't observe the Oral Law since they are probably disciples of Tzodok U'Baytus. They are, therefore, prohibited from marrying Jews because of their status as Karaites. Noting the historical inaccuracy identifying the students of "Tzodok U'Baytus" as Karaites, Rav Bleich remarked that if the Falasha are indeed Jews, then they are at a disadvantage, because the normal conversion process used for *goyim* would not help, since their ancestors might not have been experts *B'iv g'lin v'kidushin*, thus rendering their children *safek mamzerim*. This difficulty, however, is not definite since, just as their *g'lin* were probably *pomul* for lack of valid witnesses, so also would their *kidushin* be *pomul*. In another *t'shuvah*, the Radbaz gives additional information by stating that the Falasha are like "Amokot shenishbu B'kein haAkum" and are to be regarded as Jews who received an inadequate education. Rav

Chaim, however, complicates the issue, for he states that not withstanding the dispute among the *Rishonim* on the status of the *g'lin* of the Karaites, all must agree now that all Karaites are a *Saphek Akum* because the Karaites did not preserve their ethnic identity and accepted converts from the surrounding communities without proper conversion. If the Falasha are indeed Karaites, this problem applies to them too.

There are three main groups of Black Jews. One group claims that they are the original Jewish descendants and that all other Jews are really Edomites. Rav Bleich dismissed this group as presenting no problem, for even they view themselves as a separate ethnic group. Their claim to the title "Jew" is, therefore, merely a matter of semantics and since we cannot prevent them from doing so, we should disregard them. A second group of Blacks recognize the need for conversion and did indeed convert and now uphold all the *Mitzvot*. (Rav Bleich noted that Rav Ovacya Yosef, the chief Sephardic Rav, recently ruled that the Ethiopian Black Jews should be regarded as Jews but should undergo *t'vilah* as part of a halachik stringency. For purposes of the *Chok HaShavut*, the Law of Return, however, the government has amazingly ruled that they are not Jews). Rav Bleich noted that the main problem lies with that group who claim to be Jews but insist that another conversion process is not necessary, for they claim to be authentic Jews already. They, however, do not wish to adhere to all the *mitzvot*.

Rav Bleich explained that one is recognized as a Jew if he either was born from a Jewish mother or has a *chezkat Yahadut*. Drawing upon the *Gemara* that states that a parent-child relationship is established if they act in a manner identifying themselves as parent and child, Rav Bleich similarly maintained that a "chezkat gerut" exists among those who act like converts. The Rambam, clearly states that a convert who claims that

he has been converted in another place is not believed. If he, however, acts as a Jew and observes all the *mitzvot*, he has a *chezkat ger tzodok* and is to be considered Jewish for everything except for the purposes



Rabbi J. David Bleich

of marriage, since he previously had a *chezkat goy*. A new act of conversion, or witnesses who saw the first conversion, would be necessary to permit his marrying. Rav Bleich differentiated between the Falasha who kept their Jewish identity and do not have a *chezkat Akum*, for no one can remember them as anything other than Jews and the other Black Jews who have a *chezkat Akum*. The latter admit that they never converted and few observe all the *Mitzvot*, thus not fulfilling the Rambam's requirements of claiming conversion and acting as Jews. Commenting on the Rambam, the Chazon Ish adds two further requirements to the *chezkat gerut*. During the thirty day period necessary to establish a *chazakah*, the inhabitants of the city must realize that they actually are Jews and are not acting that way for ulterior motives. These communities do not have a *chezkat gerut* for we may suspect various ulterior motives regarding their claim as Jews. The Chazon Ish also states that *Belt Din* would not allow the *chazakah* to occur, were it untrue. Since there is no present evidence that they converted, it would seem that present Rabbinic authorities should issue a rejection of their claim. Rav

Bleich, however, noted that a third alternative might exist.

Since every *goy* must keep the *zayin mitzvot B'nei No'ach*, Rav Bleich suggested that this group of Black Jews should specifically be urged to keep them, even though they would not be recognized as Jews, should they observe the other *Mitzvot* and would, rather, be considered as an *elno m'tzuvch v'osch*. Rav Bleich developed this theme by quoting the Kuzari's answer to the problem posed by the apparent contradiction caused by an omniscient G-d who gives *mitzvot*, when he already knows who will observe them. The Kuzari resolves the problem by stating that *mitzvot* must be given in order for reward to be given for their observance. Yet, a problem remains, for the Kuzari seems to neglect the category of *elno m'tzuvch v'osch*. The recent volume of *Igrot Moshe* seems to agree with Rav Yehudah Halevi, for it states that a *goy* who keeps the *mitzvot* gets no reward. Rav Feinstein dismisses the M'ri and the Radbaz's interpretation of the Rambam, who both state that a *goy* gets rewarded for observing *mitzvot*, as being based on unreliable, newly found manuscripts. Rav Bleich, however, stated that a reading of the Rambam would support the Radbaz's conclusion that a *goy* is rewarded for doing a *mitzvah*. Support for this position may, furthermore, be inferred from the Sifsei Chachonim's suggestion that Avraham requested advice from Mamreh whether he should circumcise himself later when he would be a *m'tzuvch v'osch* or perform it immediately. According to the Parashat D'Rachim, who states that prior to Avraham's act of *milah*, the Jews had the status of *B'nei No'ach*, there should be no question according to the *Igrot Moshe*, for if a *Ben No'ach* is not rewarded for performing a *mitzvah*, Avraham should not have wondered whether he should wait for a Divine commandment. Rav Bleich also noted that using the interpretation of Rav Chaim that prior to G-d's commandment, the *olah* did not exist and therefore Avraham

The Holocaust: In Remembrance, 1939-1974

American Jewry and the Legacy of the Holocaust

Why We Must Remember

By Mr. Steven Bayme

Recently, an acquaintance questioned me as to the propriety of teaching a course on the Holocaust. "What is there to say about the Nazis save that they were animals?" he queried. The question itself epitomizes the need for American Jews to comprehend the awesome legacy of the Nazi experience. American Jewish life has been radically transformed by the Holocaust tragedy, and we, the generation of American Jews living in the immediate aftermath of the war, must attempt to comprehend our own institutions against the background of the Holocaust legacy.

One important effect of the Holocaust lay in the nearly immediate conversion of American Jewry to Zionism. Before the war American Zionism was concentrated primarily within the Conservative movement. Reform Jews had shunned Zionism as an anachronistic expression of Jewish particularism in an age of universalism. Orthodox similarly (with the noted exception of Mizrahi-Poale Mizrahi) tended to avoid the "secularists" engaged in building a state devoid of the Mosaic law. Nazi persecution united American Jewry behind the Zionist movement. The non-Zionist Jews of the 1930s became the protagonists of the Biltmore programme. Opposition to Zionism remained viable only among the fringe elements of American Jewry; the ultra-universalists of the American Council for Judaism, a Reform splinter group (and, their contemporary allies among the Jewish New Left) and a few extremist elements among Orthodox, who believed that only they were the true "guardians of the City" in an age in which the sins of the Zionists had culminated in the punishment of Auschwitz. The mainstream of American Jewry committed itself to utilizing the Zionist programme in order to rescue "the remnant that remained." In this respect the creation of the State of Israel may not be separated historically from the legacy of the Holocaust. Zionist efforts to create a state intensified enormously in the aftermath of Auschwitz, and these efforts culminated in the birth of Israel.

Zionism seemed the answer for the surviving Jews of Europe. American Jewry itself had never internalized the Zionist ideology of Pinsker and Ben-Gurion. To most American Jews the intuition that somehow "America was different" prevailed. The rationale for this confidence in American institutions lay in the American tradition of pluralism. Whereas Germany had been a monolithic society in which the Jews had failed to fulfill the "bargain" of emancipation, i.e. surrender their corporate identity and assimilate into the mainstream of German society, America was the land of plural expressions of culture, identity, and ethnicity. Yet, after the shock of Nazism, American Jews were forced to reevaluate their own ideology of pluralism. To some the physical threat of annihilation was clear. Such elements responded either by emigration to Israel or by increased militancy in defending the physical safety of American Jews. For most, however, the ideology of pluralism continued to prevail. Rather the threats to American Jewry seemed to originate within the very context of pluralism, a pluralism that encouraged a rapidly rising rate of intermarriage. Pinsker seemed proven incorrect. Assimilation was a viable alternative to the status of "perpetual alien".

The new threat of complete assimilation could be countered in two ways. First occurred the legal battles to preserve pluralism in all sectors of American society. The rationale for joining civil rights marches was based on the convergence of Jewish-Negro interests. Both groups desired protection for their ethnic identities, and by helping one group to preserve and develop its ethnicity, the other group might have a stronger case in areas wherein its own ethnicity was threatened. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, a fundamental cultural and intellectual change occurred within American Jewry. American Jews, particularly younger ones, intuitively sensed that not only lives were forfeited at Auschwitz. Rather an entire Jewish culture, the world of Jewish learning and Jewish custom, dissolved as well. The physical loss could of course not be restored. The cultural world could however be recaptured through a return to Jewish learning and traditional Jewish life-styles. In this respect the drive for Jewish studies courses and departments on so many American university campuses and the proliferation of adult Jewish education programs are indications of the Jews' efforts to regain the lost "Golden Tradition." In particular these programs themselves have stressed the study of the Holocaust on an academic level. Similarly the resurgence of Orthodox Judaism since the war has been an amazing phenomenon. Before the war most Jews assumed that Orthodoxy was the stronghold of a dying older generation. The continued proliferation of Orthodoxy since the war, a subject demanding further analysis, can perhaps partially be attributed to the desire to recapture the Orthodoxy of Hasidism, Mussar, and learning

that prevailed among the lost Jewries of eastern Europe.

Let me conclude with some purely personal reflections. The responses noted above constitute generally positive directions for the American Jewish community. Pluralism, increased Jewish self-consciousness, and the creation of inextinguishable bonds between America, Israel, and world Jewry are by no means undesirable results. That does not imply that there are no drawbacks to those directions. Perhaps most ominous is the impression one often receives that Jewish-studies courses are somewhat "watered down" or lacking in academic quality because the students are more interested in "raising their consciousness" than in serious academic endeavor. Should Jewish-studies departments maintain standards less rigorous than those of their academic correlates in the humanities and social sciences, Jewish studies programs will fade as quickly as the black-studies programs that were lacking in academic rigor and quality in the late 60's. Despite some successes American Jewry seems to have failed to internalize the most basic legacy of the Holocaust, the need for Jewish unity. Political infighting continues to prevail among the various institutions, both religious and secular, of the American Jewish community. Vindictive, petty criticism of one group against another, fill the pages of Jewish media. Students themselves have often indicated to me an increased polarization between religious and non-religious elements on campuses with large Jewish student bodies. This polarization operates on many levels of the Jewish community. The legacy of the Holocaust demands Jewish unity and "ahavat yisroel", but we as American Jews have yet to fulfill that legacy.

by Yaakov Koenigsberg

On Yom Hashoah, many Jewish communities were actively involved in ceremonies. Conscious of their responsibility to perpetuate a fitting remembrance for the millions of Jews slaughtered at the hands of the Nazis, some communities showed documentaries of films portraying the atrocities of the Holocaust. Others might call upon prominent historians and survivors of the concentration camps to retell the dismal story of the churban in Europe during World War II. Memorial lamps were lit. T'hilim were recited. And then came sunset. Yom Hashoah V'haGevurah 5734 was over.



After participating in Yom Hashoah observances, many people will undoubtedly come to realize what the Jewish people underwent during the tortuous years of Nazi oppression. They will probably believe that they fulfilled the commandment of "Zochor es asher oser lecha Amalek... al tishach" ("Remember that which Amalek has done unto thee... never forget"). But, in reality, with this mere empathy they not only fail to fulfill the commandment, but commit sacrilege towards the six million who died and the many

others who suffered during World War II al Kiddush Ha'Shem.

For, what purpose does recalling the German atrocities, in and of itself, serve? Is the Holocaust to be merely relegated to the role of another historic event? Does the Yad Vashem building in Jerusalem serve merely as another gloomy museum that bears witness to the potential insanity of mankind? Are we to remember Auschwitz solely for the sake of shedding a tear for those who were exterminated there? Indeed, just as the orphan is forbidden by Jewish law to continue mourning for his parents after the twelve month availut period has elapsed, we cannot allow ourselves to live in perpetual gloom after the Holocaust. Yet we do have a duty, to force ourselves to remember what G-d unleashed on European Jewry approximately thirty-five years ago.

The Holocaust was a major tragedy. Not reacting to the Holocaust, however, may be by far a worse tragedy. As Jews who believe that G-d actively dictates the course of human events, we would commit a great sin should we not acknowledge that He brought the Holocaust upon us for a purpose. Should religious Jews merely continue to don their tallit and t'hilla every morning as they had customarily done before the Holocaust, although they are to be admired for retaining their faith in Torah and Mitzvot after living through such a dreadful event, they would serve to show that the Holocaust has not changed them. For them, six million Jews died for no purpose, chas v'shalom. Post-Holocaust Judaism, however, cannot permit such an attitude. It must evoke in the heart of every Jew a different outlook on his relationship to and his mission in the world.

Every Jew must decide for himself how to mold his life in light of the Holocaust. Perhaps it would be advisable after one becomes reasonably familiar with the events of the Holocaust to consider the views and reactions of religious scholars. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, in his most recent yahrzeit shiur, for example, claimed that irrational and absurd acts of anti-Semitism led the Holocaust serve to point up the vulnerability of man in the world and should force him into a closer relationship with his Maker to provide for his security. Or one might consider the view of Professor Irving Greenberg, chairman of the Jewish Studies Department at CCNY, who said at last year's Yom Hashoah observance that "the Holocaust ought to motivate the Jew to organize collective campaigns for the furtherance of Jewish and humanitarian causes and institutions as a living testimony to G-d and the world that he still believes G-d loves man, and the Jew in particular. Ultimately, however, each individual must decide for himself what the Holocaust means for him. But he must confront the Holocaust and make a decision, not run away or hide from it merely shedding tears for those who died."

Although there is value to ceremonies and intellectual discussions of the historical aspects of the Holocaust, that should not be our major concern at this point. We must devote the bulk of our energies to bring about an awakening amongst religious Jewry, to force a confrontation between the Jew and the Holocaust. Only then can the religious Jew say truly the Holocaust has some meaning for him.

Reconstruction of the Survival of Danish Jewry

by Norman Wisnicksi

The reaction of the Danish people to German oppression of its Jews during WWII stands as a courageous and selfless act during an era filled with tragedies—tragedies due to apathy and betrayal on the part of the world community. While powerful nations looked away and disregarded the slaughter of six million people, the population of tiny Denmark, occupied by an overwhelming and powerful army, risked its life to save the Danish



Jews. Jui. Margolinsky wrote in his introduction to Aage Bertelsen's Danish book October '43. "The Bible, in the Book of Esther tells that two-thousand five-hundred years ago the wicked Haman plotted the annihilation of the Jews of Persia. Had the compilation of the Bible not been concluded so many years ago, one could well imagine that the story of the events of October '43 would have been included in the Holy Scriptures to be

commemorated for generations to come."

Before Hitler came to power, Danish Jews enjoyed cordial relations with the Danish people and nobility. On April 12, 1933, King Christian X took part in the service held in the Copenhagen Synagogue to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of its existence, despite a boycott on Jews declared in Germany. In 1936 a new Danish edition of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion resulted in a public declaration by a number of theologians denouncing all anti-Semitic literature.

When the country was invaded in 1940, the people of Denmark reacted in a manner unique to the general world reaction in WWII; the Danes united nationally to preserve their free democracy and protect their Jewish citizens. That the government and people of Denmark were united in their stand against oppression of the Jews was made clear to the Nazis at the outset. Consequently, the German minister, Renthe Fink, sent the following report on the Jewish situation to his foreign ministry, only six days after the occupation began. "The Danish authorities are apprehensive as to whether we will... show too much in the internal situation and take steps against Jews, refugees, and extreme leftist groups... If we do anything more in this respect than is strictly necessary, this will cause paralysis or serious disturbances in political and economic life. The importance of the problem should

therefore not be underestimated."

The support of the Jews was taken up by every segment of the Danish people. In 1942, when Himmler put pressure on the German foreign office to have the Nuremberg Laws applied to the occupied Western European countries, it was reported in the American press that King Christian threatened to abdicate if the laws were imposed on Denmark.

Although the famous story of the king and his family wearing the Jewish-signifying yellow star in support of the Jews is more fiction than fact, it is an indication of the noble support the Jews found in the head of the Danish government.

In September 1942, Himmler ordered Heinrich Muller, head of the Gestapo, to insert names of Jews in a list of Danish communists and resistance leaders whom he intended to arrest. However, Karl Warner Best, the Reich Minister in Denmark, aware that this would cause dissension, wrote that would create a constitutional crisis in Denmark and expressed his view that the number of Jews in Denmark was insignificant, and it was better not to stir up trouble for the time being.

As the German occupation continued, Scandinavian opposition grew. The Swedish Government canceled its 1940 agreements which permitted German troops stationed in Norway to use Swedish railways. It was Denmark, however, which rallied full force against the Nazis. Riots broke out in Danish

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Survival of Danish Jewry

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shipyards, and Danish workers and soldiers were arrested. Danish dock workers refused to repair German ships and went on strike. Danish support of the Jews was made increasingly clear during this unrest. At a student festival in January 1943, Danish students announced the performing of "two national anthems dear to the hearts of the Danes." After the expected Danish National Anthem, the students played, not "Deutschland über Alles," but the Jewish National Anthem, the "Hatikvah." Professor Hal Koch, leader of the United Danish Youth movement, in an article in "Lederbladet" wrote, "This is a question of right and justice for the Jews... In addition... justice and freedom in Danish life are at stake."

Just before the Wannsee Conference in January 1942, Professor Koch stated that all suggestions to the effect that Danish Jewry be molested should be rejected because the issue was one of both justice and respect for the Jews and the preservation of Danish freedom and law.

The Germans decided, in the face of this growing unrest, that the time for the "final solution" regarding Danish Jewry had to be pushed up. The deportations had been scheduled for the night of October 1st. A few days earlier, Georg Dickwitz, a shipping expert in Copenhagen employed as attaché of the German merchant marine, revealed the plan to a prominent Dane, Hans Hedtoft. Hedtoft spread the news to friends in the Jewish community. Rabbi Marcus Melchior, Rabbi of the Copenhagen Synagogue, on Erev Rosh Hashanah warned his congregation of the impending danger. He said there would be no holiday services, and appealed to them to go into hiding.

There was very little organized warning of the impending arrests. The message was spread mostly by individual Jews and Danes. An ambulance driver who could not think of a Jewish acquaintance spent the rest of the night roaming the streets in his taxi, spreading the news to Jews on the streets. He took those Jews who had no place to hide, into his ambulance and drove them to the Bispebjerg Hospital.

The next day, Rosh Hashanah, Gestapo squads roamed the street, breaking into shuls and making on-the-spot arrests. "The anger in Denmark over what had happened," wrote a Danish author, "was without bounds. Nothing the Germans had perpetrated in Denmark has aroused the population to such an extent." The following day, Sweden offered refuge to all Danish Jews. Protests poured in from all levels of Danish society; students, clergy, workers and officials, all voiced their opposition to the German move. Street fights broke out. Danes sabotaged German vessels, power stations and war factories. Copenhagen University closed on October 3rd for a week "in view of the disasters which have overtaken our fellow citizens." Einar Møllerup, Copenhagen's police chief, was arrested on October 10th for declaring the police disassociate themselves from the brutal treatment of the Jews. Upon being informed that interned Danish soldiers would be released when all Danish Jews would be arrested, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces replied, "The personnel of the Danish army will not accept favors at the expense of other citizens."

Resistance cells and groups were

Chasidim and the Nigun

by Norman Wisnicki

"Yidu es haShem b'simchah, ba'u lefanav shirana" is to the Chasid, a formula for living. One of the most important means in obtaining the vital ingredient of **Simchah** is through music. Jewish music reflects the life of the Jewish people. The period preceding 1730 was a sad one for the Jews. Anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe was widespread. Shabbat Zvi, once considered the Messiah of the Jewish people, had been proven nothing more than a false dream. The morale and faith of the Jews was at a low point, and there seemed to be little reason for song and music.

It was at this critical juncture that Chasidism sprang forth as a vibrant force, and with it, Jewish music developed into an important element in the life of the Jew. It was the **Ba'al Shem Tov** who founded the movement of Chasidism, bringing forth a "religion of joy and music." Chasidic music can actually be traced back to the Kabbalists in Safed, under Rabbi Isaac Luria. In **Shivchei Ari** it is written that "once on the eve of a Sabbath, Rabbi Luria went out of the city of Safed followed by his disciples... to receive the Sabbath and started singing special songs in sweet tones." However, it was under the **Ba'al Shem Tov** and his Chasidim that the nigun reached the masses and spread through the people as a medium for achieving religious heights. The **Beshit** propounded the belief that the common man who serves G-d simply, with joyous fervor and song, was as close to G-d as the scholar who spends his life studying Torah. The **Ba'al Shem Tov** himself spent days in fields with the shepherds, where he learnt many songs. He is accredited with writing many nigunim, which characteristically contain happy and joyous melodies. The **Ba'al Shem Tov** wrote that "prayer performed with joy is more acceptable to G-d than the prayer which is accompanied by sadness and tears."

This type of melody, known as the **Beshitan nigun**, is in contrast with the "devilous" nigun, the staple of the **Chabad Chasidim**. **Chabad** philosophy states that one cannot rush directly from one's present low spiritual standing to the greatest of spiritual heights. The individual must rise slowly through each progressive stage of spiritual

formed. The Danish Freedom Council united the leaders of the underground movement and its independent groups. It issued a proclamation stating "The council calls on the Danish population to help in every way possible those fellow Jews who have not yet succeeded in escaping abroad."

The most immediate problem in the transferring of Jews to Sweden was in finding hiding places for the Jews. There are many cases on record of complete strangers going up to Jews in the street and offering them the keys to their houses. Schools, hospitals, and many other institutions opened their doors to the Jews. It is estimated that about two thousand persons passed through the Bispebjerg Hospital alone.

The most crucial part of this "Little Dunkirk" operation was the transfer of Jews to Sweden. Niels Bohr, the Nobel-prize winning Danish scientist, refused to escape to London before the Swedish Government promised the Danish Jews refuge. Mogens Staffeldt's bookshop in Copenhagen, directly across from Gestapo headquarters, served as the central operation

emotion. According to **Chabad** there are six levels of elevation: 1. the outpouring of the soul and its effort to rise out of its state of evil and sin 2. spiritual awakening 3. the stage in which the individual is possessed by his thoughts 4. communion with G-d 5. flaming ecstasy 6. the highest state, the one in which the soul is free from the body. A major portion of **Chabad nigunim** were written with these levels in mind. **Dvelling** means union with G-d, and the **Chabad Chasidim** attempted to realize this union with an introspective, pensive and subdued type of melody.

The majority of nigunim were wordless tunes. This type of song, created on the premise that a song without words is holier than a song with words, was considered an essential element of Chasidic nigunim. Instead of words, syllables were repeated continuously, with no specific order or pattern. Various Chasidic sects usually adopted specific groups of vocalized syllables. It was easy for the trained musicologist to discern from where a song originated and what its authorship was, according to the syllables used. The importance of song without words was stressed, by the first Lubavitcher Rebbe in **Kontrat HaHitpa'lut**. "Melody is the outpouring of the soul; words interrupt the stream of emotions." According to him, a melody with text is limited in time, for when the words end, the melody does too, whereas a wordless tune can be repeated endlessly.

Chasidic nigunim were spread basically by an oral tradition. Chasidic leaders prohibited the writing down in musical form of nigunim. They felt that the musical notation could not even attempt to express the true feeling inherent in a nigun. Nigunim were spread by the Chasidim of each rebbe. Every **Shabbat** and **Yom Tov**, each rebbe held a "dsh", where all his Chasidim flocked to hear him speak. It was at these gatherings that new melodies were introduced by the rebbe himself. Those rebbes who were not musically talented had special singers and composers, whose task it was to compose and introduce these nigunim. Every Chasid, upon hearing the new nigun, would go home and repeat it to his family. In this manner, nigunim were spread through Europe.

point. After passing through the bookstore, refugees were taken to Bispebjerg Hospital. From there they were taken to rendezvous points along the coast. The boats used in the escape route by sea were fishing craft provided by Danish fishermen.

The methods of escape proved to be extremely successful. Arrests during the first few days were under 500, most of whom were elderly people who could not escape. These were sent to Theresienstadt, where most survived the war, thanks mainly to the intervention of the Danish King and Government. Count Bernadotte, head of the Swedish Red Cross was also instrumental in insuring their safety.

The bravery of the Danish people seemed to affect even members of the German forces in Denmark. In a lecture meeting of the Board of Directors of the Claims Conference in Copenhagen in 1962, Levi Yahl, an Israeli, stated that the head of the Gestapo in Copenhagen, previously associated with Auschwitz "tried in vain to prevent the actions against the Jews and, not succeeding, he sabotaged it as much



The sources for these nigunim were not always original. Chasidim of every region and country were influenced by their environment. Many Chasidic leaders felt that converting a secular tune for sacred purposes was a greater virtue than creating an original melody. An example of the borrowed motif in Chasidic music is the **Chasidic March**. It originated in Galicia, where Chasidim came into contact with the military, and absorbed the march melody and style. A Slavic strain is apparent in many Chasidic nigunim. The Chasidim of Ger and Kotsk attempted to adapt the melodies of Schubert, Chopin, and Verdi, although with little success. It should be noted that since Chasidic nigunim were written in Galut, foreign elements and influences were inevitable in all the nigunim.

There were many famous rebbes who composed their own nigunim. Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev (1740-1810) composed many nigunim and originated the liturgical recitative into Chasidic song. Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav was one of the greatest poets of the Chasidic movement. He loved music and stressed it repeatedly to his followers. He envisioned a source of music in every aspect of nature. In his **Likutei Moharan** he stated, "Every science, every religion, every

as he could and that was quite a lot." Elliot Arnold, author of **A Night of Watching**, a novel based on "operation Little Dunkirk" writes in the introduction to his book, "In speaking with Danes on this subject, most of them state it would not have been possible to carry through the rescue work had the Germans not, to a certain degree, looked the other way."

The rescue operation of the Danish people helped 7,000 Jews escape in less than three weeks. The entire cost of the Danish operation amounted to twelve million Danish crowns. Danish individuals and organizations contributed heavily to the running of the organization. One of the rescue organizers, Aage Bertelsen, stated, "assistance to the Jews could be based on nothing but a personal relationship of trust. Most was paid and received without the giving of any receipts at all, to say nothing of any kind of account keeping."

The country of Denmark, from its working class to its ruling government, displayed a singular and unmatched resolve to help the Jews in their flight from the German forces. That they succeeded can be

philosophy, has its own pattern of song. The higher the religion or science, the more exalted the music." Rabbi Nachman used the nigun as the foundation for his lectures, and he devoted an inordinate amount of his Torah discourse to music and nigun. He once stated that music "transports the soul from where it is to where it wants to be." He did not compose nigunim personally, but hired others to write them. These songs are not as famous as other dynastic nigunim, and many of them were gradually incorporated into the Lubavitcher and Karliner tradition of Chasidim. There were many other rebbes who lacked musical talent, who appointed or hired other Chasidim to compose nigunim. The **Gerrer Tzadik** once said regretfully to his followers, "Were I blessed with a sweet and beautiful voice, I could sing for you new hymns everyday, for with the daily rejuvenation of the world news songs are being created."

Many consider the Moditz dynasty as the most musically talented of all the Chasidic dynasties. It was founded by Rabbi Yisroel Taub (1848-1920) in Lublin, Poland. Approximately two hundred of his nigunim still survive. His greatest nigun is **Eik'no Ha'Gadol**, a musical composition containing

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seen from the statement by Eichmann that "For various reasons the action against the Jews in Denmark has been a failure." The sacrifices of Denmark, both then and now, should be held up, in sharp contrast to the crimes of the "United Nations," both past and present, against the Jews and the nation of Israel.

Fuchs . . .

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Howie was but one of thousands of children raised by parents who bore the psychological scars of the Nazi experience. Some of these children managed to lead relatively normal lives. Others manifested deep psychological symptoms of their own—depression, schizophrenia and worse. Howard Fuchs bore his own legacy from the Nazis. This legacy was acted out in the halls and classrooms of Yeshiva University, and later on in the streets of New York.

Does all this validly reflect in an attempt to understand how Howie came to do what he did? I think so. Does it justify what he did? I'm not sure. Perhaps you should ask Adolf Hitler.

Contributing Editor

I Remember Howie

Ephraim Buchwald

What can you write about a fellow with whom you went to high school and college, and now faces a ten year sentence in Federal prison?

I remember Howie. It's hard not to remember Howie. He was a flashy, happy-go-lucky redhead. Never took things too seriously. People rarely took Howie seriously. Maybe that's part of the problem — he wanted desperately to be taken seriously.

Those who hung around Howie were usually in for good laughs and a good time. He liked to shoot off his mouth and tell of his exploits. Most people shrugged off the wild tales of his extravagant poker winnings, but, deep down, everyone wondered how much of it was really true. No one believed Howie when he said that the Puerto Ricans from the 181st street pool parlor were after his hide, "cause he had just won \$250 from them in a game of pool. But everyone knew he was capable of doing just that.

Howie was certainly capable. He had a good head. If he wanted, he could show remarkable analytic ability on a *blatt Gemora*. But that wasn't one of the things he wanted too often.

I remember when Howie ran for President of the G.O. of MTA. His speech to the student body left the students rolling with laughter. He didn't win, but his memorable "hari-kari" fantasy gained for him the recognition he so desperately sought.

Howard Fuchs grew up in the East Bronx, where his father owned laundramats. He went to Yeshiva Salanter during the heyday of that school. He then went on to YUHSMB where I first met him. He was very bright, there was no doubt about that, but he didn't care much for school work. He liked to play basketball, but he didn't have the height or the speed to make the team. Instead, he became the team's manager. During a game, everyone felt a little more secure when Howie handled the clock. With Howie there we knew that no one was going to short change us on the time. He could do anything, and get away with it... usually. That was Howie!

I didn't have much to do with Howie in college, but there were always stories floating around about his latest exploits. He had his own group of guys with whom he would usually hang out. After graduation I occasionally heard about Howie's flashy cars and some rumors about his business dealings, but that's about all. I always wondered about Howie.

Then came the front page article of the *New York Times* of July 26, 1973. The headlines read: "61 Seized in a Drug Ring with Middle-Class Ties." I looked at the picture, "Howard Z. Fuchs, reported leader of the narcotics ring at the Bronx County Courthouse." It was Howie! He had shackles on his hands. He was accused of being the mastermind of an international narcotics ring that has smuggled and distributed six hundred pounds of cocaine a year, with a street value of ten million dollars, and four thousand pounds of hashish, valued at five million dollars.

The Bronx prosecutor said the ring's drugs were normally flown by private plane from Colombia to Mexico. From Mexico, women called "mules" would smuggle the drugs across the California border where they then would be transported by automobile for distribution along the East Coast.

Bail for Howie was set at eight hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

The D.A. had asked for five million, claiming that Howie could easily raise anything lower, and would flee the country.

The papers reported that after graduation Howie had worked as a ten-thousand-dollar-a-year city welfare investigator, but went on to become a multi-millionaire by investing his drug profits into legitimate businesses. According to the D.A., Fuchs, at the time of his arrest, lived in "a luxury apartment", and owned a seventy thousand dollar contemporary redwood house, complete with swimming pool, in Hartsdale, in Westchester County. He drove around in a fourteen thousand dollar Citroen-Maserati.

Dun and Bradstreet reported that Howard Fuchs had set up, or invested in, two clothing stores in Monticello, one in Athens, Ohio, two shoe stores in Los Angeles, had a small interest in a San Francisco footwear outlet, and was a partner in a real-estate enterprise. The Yiddish papers said he was worth between one quarter and one half billion dollars.

According to the *Times*, even when Howie found out two weeks before his arrest that he was to be indicted, he calmly announced, to those with him at the time, that he'd been "busted", walked over to a mirror, checked his appearance, and asked "How do I look?"

On January 14, 1974, in Brooklyn Federal Court, after a week-long trial in which Fuchs was defended by the famous criminal lawyer Henry Rothblatt, a jury returned a verdict of guilty, of conspiracy to possess and distribute narcotics. On February 1, 1974, Judge Jacob Mischler sentenced Fuchs to imprisonment for a period of 10 years and a special parole term of five years. The conviction is now on appeal in Federal Court. Fuchs also faces a possible fifteen year sentence after pleading guilty in State Supreme Court.

After this, what more can be written about Howie? After all, what could possibly be said to the benefit of a Yeshiva boy who is now a convicted drug pusher? Wouldn't it be better and easier to just ignore him and let the embarrassment pass?

Perhaps, but something inside me compels me not to dismiss Howie, and makes me think of what happened to him.

In the Federal trial, six people were indicted: two South Americans, who were the purported importers of the cocaine; a part-time actor, who was charged with being the distributor; a Pan Am airlines mechanic, who allegedly introduced the distributor to the importers; and Howie Fuchs who was accused of being the wholesaler. The importers jumped bail, and were never brought to trial. The Pan Am mechanic was acquitted. The distributor, who by his own admission, transported the cocaine from the importers to Fuchs, and was responsible for Fuchs' involvement in the ring, turned state's evidence and was promised by the state government a sentence of not more than three years. This man, whose testimony was decisive in Fuchs' conviction, had a long record of drug convictions, and was particularly adept in avoiding imprisonment. Fuchs had no previous criminal record. During the trial, Howie was never accused of being the mastermind of the drug ring, yet all the newspapers, and the Bronx D.A., chose to characterize him as such. All the others indicted or implicated in the case were given

assurances of reduced charges if they would testify against Fuchs. And they did, and Howie was convicted. To me at least, it seems strange that these convicted felons, who admittedly played a more significant role in the hierarchy of the drug ring, were allowed to gain reduced sentences, in order to convict one who played a less significant role, and had no previous criminal record. The question therefore surfaces: Why were they after Fuchs? Perhaps there was a more legitimate reason, but it wasn't brought out during the trial.



Howie

A second thought that bears consideration, is the response of Howie's former acquaintances, and the response of Yeshiva University, in the face of this unfortunate scandal. Apparently, by November of 1972, Fuchs had lost contact with all of his former classmates, even those with whom he used to hang around. Only two former classmates came forth at his trial to offer character references, but neither

could offer any insight into his dealings during the period of his alleged criminal activity. His synagogue rabbi refused to get involved. Only one local rabbi wrote a letter in Fuchs' behalf pleading with the judge to give Howie a chance; that he would personally assume responsibility. The rabbi himself was unable to appear in court due to recent surgery.

According to the *New York Times*, Yeshiva "university officials" stated that Mr. Fuchs was "a below-average student" who took a half-year more than the usual four years to earn his undergraduate degree." Dean Bacon told the *Times* that Howie graduated "by the skin of his teeth."

Now, I imagine that our esteemed "university officials" believe in trial by law, and in the "hallowed" doctrine of "innocent until proven guilty." At the time of his arrest, Howie was indicted of a crime, not convicted. Obviously, because of our Jewish values, we were all quite embarrassed by the report of a crime committed by one of our own, especially a crime that has ramifications upon the lives of hundreds, possibly thousands, of young people. But must we take part in the defamation of the character of a Yeshiva student — even before he is brought to trial — who now has the burden of defending himself against the charges of the Federal and State Governments? Would it have been so difficult to say "I have no comment to make in the matter"? Those who knew Fuchs, not from grades, or academic records, know that he was far from a mediocre student. Instead of assuming an attitude of pristine piety, it would do the schools well to do a little of their own soul-searching into whether they did

everything they could to help Howie when he was a student, and to determine whether they share in the fault of failing to motivate Howie, so they can possibly prevent the tragedies of, G-d forbid, other "Howies".

A final irony surfaces. We are living in the most unusual of times. The President of the United States justifies his erratic behavior ascribing it of the pressures of the office of the President. Homicides committed by prisoners of Attica State Prison, are attributed to the inhuman living conditions at the institution. Muggings and robberies are explained as being acts of the socially depressed, giving vent to their pent-up anxieties. Atrocities of Arab "guerrillas" are defended as the expressions of desperate men who see no alternative to violence.

What about Howie? Have we no expressions of compassion for Howie? Where have our great social rationalizers suddenly vanished? If we cannot justify his actions, can we at least try to understand what became of him, and why? Must we condemn and disown Howie, in order to ease our own consciences, lest we be tainted? Is all we can say: "He was a 'below-average student'?"

Howie was more than that. Howie was a victim — if growing up in Harlem, or living in Attica makes one a victim, then Howie was a far greater victim. Howie's father was an inmate not in Attica, but in Auschwitz. Howie himself was born in Poland. His parents lost all their children by the hands of the Nazis. While his desperate mother and father may have been capable of summoning forth the strength to give Howie emotional love, they lacked the energy to discipline him.

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Jewish Education On My Mind

by Jay Orlinsky

A little over two months from now another group of YU seniors will be graduated from Yeshiva College. Some will take with them memories of sixteen years of Jewish learning; others as little as four years. But it does not matter how many years they attended an institution of Jewish learning. What does matter is how many of them will retain the instruction they received. Or rather, how many have received instruction they can retain?

Laying aside the calibre of Jewish education meted out in Yeshiva College, what of the schooling received on the elementary and secondary level? Was that schooling basic and strong enough to instill within each one of its recipients a desire to further his education, and moreover, to formulate a lifestyle based on Judaism? Or was it just enough to satisfy the responsibility a Jewish parent feels he is obligated to give to his child?

Primarily, a definition of Jewish education is needed. In a basic sense, it is the instilling of Jewish thought and fundamentals within the individual so that it kindles a desire for further learning. But most of all, education exists to further the practice of Judaism. Secondly, what is needed is a course of study during the pupil's formative years of the basics of Judaism, supplemented by a view of its course throughout history. Following this, there should be a period of study within the framework of explaining the flows and whys.

learning of Gemarah would be delayed until seventh grade. Then the earlier years could be filled with a more basic knowledge of the Chumash and Nevi'im. Also a much stronger emphasis should be placed on the language of the subject matter. By the time a student enters high school, he should at least know the basic grammatical principles of the Hebrew language. If this isn't taught then the student will be continuously taught the basics of Hebrew Grammar, even as far off as Hebrew 1, 2 in Yeshiva College, which inevitably produces a negative attitude towards any teaching of grammar at so late a stage.

The learning of Gemarah, although basic in the Jewish educational system, should not be taught until a student has a basic knowledge of what he is getting into. He must be taught *Mishnayot* beforehand and at least must have a basic background of how the Gemarah came into being. This is not to say that Gemarah is of secondary importance, but rather, since it is of primary importance, it must be approached properly.

In addition to a proper course of study, a proper attitude must be taken towards Jewish education with relation to a general education. Maybe because of today's advanced technological world, a moral and ethical education is left by the wayside. In truth, it seems to have been left in the wake of the ever-steady advancement of general education. Over one hundred years ago, Samson Raphael Hirsch faced the task of combining a Jewish with a general education in such a way so as not to downplay the importance of either one. That is not to

say Hirsch considered both of equal importance. Though Jewish Education is the more vital of the two, he integrated them into one system — a system by which both could flourish into an asset for any citizen of any culture. But in order for an education to become such an advantage, an understanding of what is a good Jewish education must first be realized. In today's day and age where materialism seems to be humanity's goal, economic chaos and sporadic war is commonplace. Perhaps if the world would concentrate more on attaining a goal of ethical value, life would be more pleasant. Through a good Jewish education a distinct Jewish morality is brought to fruition. Its literature and philosophy contain an invaluable guideline for a model moral and ethical life. In practice it could only raise a man's standard in a culture foreign to the Jewish religion.

All this is fine in theory but practically it needs a tool with which to implement this tremendous task. The tool is teachers. Teachers that not only know their subject matter but also sense an obligation to impart onto the student a feeling for the subject matter. Only then will the students acquire a desire to further this education through formal study and even privately. But most of all, it would instill within students the ability to transform this learning into a way of life. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the whole Jewish community to demand teachers of this sort so that the students may grow to be an asset not only to the world at large but especially to the Jewish religion.