

HAMEVASER

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Israeli Elections Examined

by Joel E. Salzmann

On May 17, over two million Israelis will go to the polls to vote in an election which will decide the future of the Jewish state. Of the 24 lists vying for seats in the Knesset, 5 are running on a religious platform.

The nature and purpose of religious political parties in the State of Israel has always been a topic of controversy. In the early fifties, a debate took place between Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion and Rabbi Yehuda Leib Maimon, a leader of the religious Zionist movement. Ben-Gurion urged all Jews to join the Labor Party and work together to solve the pressing economic and social problems that plagued the new state. He argued that the religious cause can only gain by operating within a framework of national unity. Rabbi Maimon's reply has been the basis for religious parties ever since. He explained that within such a universal framework, compromise on religious matters would be inevitable. Furthermore, observant Jews must not express their political aspirations within a party whose banner is socialism or civil rights. Religion itself should be the unifying factor, and its preservation the primary purpose.

Nevertheless, there have been some Orthodox Jews who played

key roles in non-religious parties such as Mordechai Hacoen, the rabbi of the *Histadrut*, who has been a labor member of *Knesset* for many years. More importantly, much of the observant population has chosen not to support religious party representatives in *Knesset*.

ANALYSIS

and have followed the road advocated by Ben-Gurion. This can be demonstrated by the fact that while Orthodox Jews constitute 35 percent of the Israeli population, they barely make up 15 percent of the 120-member *Knesset*. Commenting on this small amount of religious representation, the *mazkir* of Kibbutz Shaalvim and an influential figure within the *Poalei Agudat Yisrael* party, Yitzchak Hildesheimer said "what this means is that to many religious Jews in Israel, politics is more important than Torah." Indeed, the function of the religious parties in Israel goes beyond the mere occupation of seats in a parliament.

In order to understand the political situation as it stands today, a brief historical review of the major parties would be in place. The best known and oldest of these parties is the *Mizrachi*, founded in *Eretz Yisrael* in 1918. Through the

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Rov Analyzes the Haggadah in Annual Pre-Pesach Shiur

by Joseph C. Klausner

On Wednesday evening, March 23, 1977, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchick, the *Rov*, gave his annual pre-Pesach shiur, dedicated to the memories of his wife, Mrs. Tonya Soloveitchick, z"l, and his late brother, Dr. Samuel Soloveitchick, former Professor of Chemistry at Yeshiva College. One of the four or five public lectures presented annually by the *Rov*, this shiur is delivered in English rather than Yiddish, and is, therefore, very popular among YC students, as well as the general community. The shiur was attended by a standing-room only audience in Lampport Auditorium, and was broadcast to the filled Main Beit Midrash, as well as over WYUR. The topic of this year's pre-Pesach shiur, which lasted approximately three hours, was the *Haggadah*; the *Rov* presented an innovative approach in analyzing the *Haggadah* and defining the purpose of the Pesach festival.

The *Rov* began with some basic, but important, questions: What is the purpose of the format of the *Haggadah*? Furthermore, what experience is ideally to be attained through the *mitzvah* of *sippur yetziat Mitzraim*, the careful accounting of the Exodus from Egypt? The answer, according to the *Rov* is based upon the incorporation into the *Haggadah* of the portion of "...*Arami oved avi...*" (Deut. XXVI, 5-10), the text recited by the pilgrim when he brought *bikkurim* (first fruits) to the Temple in Jerusalem.

At first glance, we notice that this portion constitutes an abridged narrative of the *sippur yetziat Mitzraim*. Also, we discover that the text of this portion is similar to the *lashon* by which the Torah commands us to tell our children about the Exodus. These similarities lead us to attempt to comprehend the *mitzvah* of *Haggadah* on Pesach by comparing it to the *mitzvah* of *bikkurim*.

he may eat that fish flesh.

If so one may only purchase a fillet of fish, whether it is canned or fresh, if it is skinned and processed under the constant supervision of a *Shomer mitzvot* Jew. The *Mashgach* must be sufficiently knowledgeable a fisherman, so that he can definitively identify the whole fish as a *tahor* species, and testify that the fillet came from that specific *tahor* species of fish. In addition there must be two identifying, unalterable marks on or around the package or can, indicating that the fish fillet was

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The first similarity we detect is the idea of giving thanks to *HaShem*. Just as the pilgrim



Photo: N. Harpaz, Maimon

related the story of Israel's redemption from Egypt and thanked

G-d for collective and individual success in the Land of Israel, Jews at the *seder* are cognizant and appreciative of the fact that, had *HaShem* not brought our ancestors out of Egypt, "...we, our children, and our children's children would still be slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt." Hence, the *Haggadah* revolves around *Hallel*, a declaration for all the good that G-d has bestowed upon us.

Furthermore, when one says the portion of *bikkurim*, he is mindful (Continued on Page 4)

New HAMEVASER Board Selected

HAMEVASER, hoping for a productive year, has chosen its Governing Board for the academic year 1977-1978. There are many new faces on this board who will (hopefully) help rejuvenate the publication. There are some new positions while others have been discontinued.

The Editor-in-Chief is Ephraim Simper, a YP Junior. Mr. Simper served as Copy Editor on the 1976-77 Governing Board, and brings to his post a reputation for diligence and organization. He hopes to channel his energies, and those of

News Editors, Jay Gruenfeld and Philip Kaplan. Mr. Gruenfeld, a Pre-Dent major attending EMC, has written both for HAMEVASER and *The Commentator*. Phil Kaplan, a junior in JSS and also a Pre-Dent major, has written many important news and feature articles as a staff member in the last few years.

Ted Gross a first year *semicha* student has been appointed Contributing Editor. Mr. Gross has been a well known figure in Jewish Affairs both on and off campus.

A new position of Israel Editor

New Light on the Tuna Fish Kashrut Problem

by Yisroel Auerbach

One of the questions most frequently asked of the SOY Kashrus Committee is, "Which tuna is kosher?" This article was prompted by an incident one *Shabbat* afternoon when one of my roommates pointed out a can of "Starkist" Tuna with an *U* on the label marked "Product of Japan," thereby arousing my curiosity. I began to research the topic and, after sifting through available information, decided to answer the often asked question of "which tuna is Kosher?" in a public forum. I hope this article will leave no doubt in anyone's mind as to which tuna is kosher and which is not.

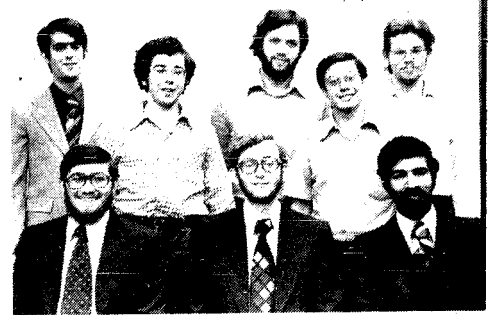
There are reportedly eleven species of the fish we call tuna. Of these eleven the five commercially significant types, Albacore, Bluefin, Yellowfin, Bigeye, and Skipjack have halakhically acceptable fins and scales. These five are Kosher (*Tahor*) species. The other types are not easily available to determine their halakhic status. The remainder of this article will deal with only those species of tuna known for a fact to be Kosher (*tahor*).

In Chapter 63 of *Yoreh Deah*, *Halakha 7*, *The Mechaber* (Rabbi Joseph Karo) discusses the purchase of fish flesh (i.e. fish fillets)

which does not have fins and scales attached so as to determine the halakhic acceptability of the fillets. According to Rabbi Karo fish flesh which does not have fins and scales may only be purchased from a *Shomer Mitzvot* Jew who is also a knowledgeable fisherman and can identify with certainty that the fillet came from a specific species of fish which is *tahor*. Fish flesh may be purchased from a Jew if the Jew insists that he processed the fish himself and that the fish was a *tahor* one which had halakhically acceptable fins and scales attached.

The *Ramah* (Rabbi Moses Isserles) adds that under certain conditions fish may be purchased from a non-Jew. Rabbi Isserles makes a similar pronouncement in Chapter 114 of *Yoreh Deah*, *Halakha 9*, that tuna¹ may be purchased from a non-Jew under certain conditions. These conditions are that the fish flesh is still attached to the head of the fish as well as to a piece of the bony spinal column so that the purchaser can tell from the head and the spine that the fish he is purchasing definitely had fins and scales.²

Therefore if one is expert enough to determine from the attached head and spine that the fish had halakhically acceptable fins and scales attached and was a *tahor* fish



Seated from left — R. Mitnick, E. Simper, J. Gross Standing: P. Kaplan, L. Ziegler, J. Gruenfeld, J. Salzmann, H. Shwarzberg Not Shown: J. Kranzler, J. Lamm, S. Fischman, T. Gross

the other board members, towards a successful and fruitful year.

Also returning from last year's board is Ronald Mitnick as Associate Editor. Mr. Mitnick, formerly Feature Editor, has displayed a wide knowledge of Jewish Affairs. The Senior Editor is Leonard Ziegler, a YP Junior majoring in English.

The Feature Editors are Josh Lamm and Jay Kranzler. Mr. Lamm was on the news staff this past year and has written extensively for the paper. Mr. Kranzler, a YP Junior and a Pre-Med major, is one of the new faces on the board.

Experience is evident from the

was established with a staff consisting of YU people living and learning in all parts of Israel. Joel Salzmann, the editor, is very involved in Israeli affairs, as co-chairman of the Israel Emergency Fund Campaign and Chairman of the Israel Affairs Committee. His closeness to Israel is obvious from his home address in Petach Tikva.

Moving up to the top position in his field is Copy Editor Stuart Fischman. Hyman Shwarzberg is the Technical Editor responsible for the layout and the general appearance of the paper. The Research Editor is Jack Gross, a YP sophomore majoring in History.

HAMEVASER

Empty Promises

Over the past few years, many Yeshiva students have taken advantage of the opportunity to learn for a year or longer in a yeshiva in Israel. For those who wished to receive a more diversified Jewish education, Beit Midrash L'Torah has always afforded them that opportunity as well.

Last year, in an effort to ease the burden of those who returned from BMT to Y.U., a new program was instituted. Through this program, freshmen, who up until now received most of their credits from Israel in the form of Jewish studies credits, would be able to fulfill some of their liberal arts requirements at BMT. The courses that were promised included Speech and Political Science.

However, despite the good intentions, this program did not fulfill expectations. Some of the courses promised were not given, and the quality of those given was at best, poor.

We feel that this situation should be corrected. If this plan, as conceived by YU, is to work, more follow-up by the administration is needed. And if this plan is not viable, promises should not be made. It is empty promises that lend credence to the constantly voiced detractive statements made about YU.

Necessary Promises

Perhaps the most active committee of the Student Council this year on campus has been the Israel Affairs Committee. Headed by a small group of *bachurim*, all of them "*bogrei tochniyot ba'aretz*," it has, through its many activities, succeeded in instilling an awareness of Israel among the student body. These activities have included inviting guest lecturers to speak on a variety of relevant topics, promoting and publicizing programs in Israel, founding the *Chevrat Aliyah Tozanit* and much more.

It is all the more to their credit that this has been accomplished without any funding from the student councils of Yeshiva, but, rather, through the support of the A.Z.Y.F. and other Zionist organizations.

Lately however, the Committee has been informed that because of budget cuts, it must seek financial support elsewhere. HAMEVASER, therefore, calls upon the various YU student councils to offer the IAC help in the coming year, so that the group may continue its necessary and noble efforts.

Fulfilled Promises

Recently, there has been constant talk and criticism of the Religious Divisions of YU. Many students feel that nothing is being done to improve the schools or to raise the standards of learning and *Yiddishkeit* in Yeshiva. HAMEVASER was therefore pleased to learn of certain new programs to be instituted for next year, including the YP learning incentive program and the establishment of a *machzor*, a cycle of *s'dorim*, for the Yeshiva.

One of these new programs was the appointment of Rabbi Yosef Blau as Director of Religious Guidance for the coming school year. Rav Blau will be living in the neighborhood, and will be available to all students of YU. His position is an integral part of the Yeshiva structure, one which gives a *chizuk* both in *limud* and *hashkafa*, and thereby enhances the Yeshiva atmosphere.

It is in this spirit that we welcome Rabbi Blau, and wish him the best of luck and success in his new position.

From the Editor's Desk

Kosher Dragons



Ephraim Simpson

NCSY, Yisrael Hatzair, Hineni, JPSY, Bnei Akiva, JEP, Pirchei. Until recently, these groups, as well as all the other Jewish youth groups, were just names that I heard bandied about. I never really noticed or got involved. I was always too busy or too apathetic.

A few weeks ago, however, I helped run a *shabbaton* in the Young Israel of Astor Gardens in the Bronx. The *shabbaton* was sponsored by JPSY — Jewish Public School Youth — and it provided me with an opportunity to view a group up close. It also prompted me to think about the Jewish youth group scene in general.

There seems to be an abundance of groups around, each catering to a certain clientele. JPSY is for public school kids; Yisrael Hatzair is for Young Israel people; NCSY "makes people *frum*." Each of these groups (and all the others) seems to feel that they are all playing a necessary and proper role on the Jewish youth scene.

But do they really all accomplish something? Are they serving any purpose other than providing a social environment for students? Are they bringing youth people closer to *Yiddishkeit*, or closer to each other? Could these groups be hiding their faults behind their *ruach*, their dancing, their kosher dragons?

I am not questioning the dedication or the ability of the leaders. And even if each group is worthwhile in its own right, *why* must there be *sachl*, a lack of unity and rapport between them.

Whenever I speak to a member of one group about another (rival?) group I get a feeling of genuine animosity. It seems that each organization feels the need to badmouth the other. One group tells you that NCSY in New York is "dead." Another contends that JPSY is run by an "over-zealous radical." Is all this hostility necessary? We condemn *chassidim* for their fights, yet we continue our own. To paraphrase my *rebbei*, if *mashiach* were to come, whose *shabbaton* would he attend? So before we get together to sing *kol haolam koolo* let us widen our bridges and work together towards the common end we all seek.

This being our only issue of the term I would like to clarify a few things about HAMEVASER. We have been through a very trying year, with one problem compounding the other. Everyone involved in publishing HAMEVASER, from the financial supporters to the governing body, appeared to be in a stupor. I am not here to place blame for if so, I would have to begin with myself. Rather, I want to assure our readers that, with the help of the whole governing board, I will try to put an end to this inertial state. I hope that our literary and financial supporters will do likewise.

On the personal side, I would like to wish Joey Epstein a hearty *mazel-tov* on his engagement. Also Joey, thank you for all the help.

YESHIVA NEWS

New programs, aimed at raising the level of learning in Yeshiva, have been announced by the YP-RIETS administration. These programs include a *machzor*, a cycle of *sedarim* for the Yeshiva, and a learning incentive program.

The incentive program will consist of two parts, one for the summer, and one for the school year. Each year in May, a written test, composed and marked by a committee of *rebbeim*, will be given. The three highest scores will receive prizes. There will however be winners from each of three categories: YP levels I and II, YP levels III and IV, and RIETS. So conceivably there can be up to five winners. A similar test will be given after each summer with the highest scores getting prizes (no categories). This summer, *m'sechet Succah* will be covered and the exam will test knowledge in *Gemorah, Rashi* and *Tosafot*. Prizes will consist of two hundred dollars worth of *sefarim* for the highest scorer and one hundred dollars worth of *sefarim* for the

other two winners (The *sefarim* can be chosen by the winners). Similar programs are in use in Israeli *yeshivot* and were used in European *yeshivot* such as Mir. The first committee of *rebbeim* to prepare *bechinot* and grade them is composed of Rabbis Shachter, Schussheim and Willig.

The *machzor*, a cycle of *sedarim*, is something that will help set Yeshiva and its *talmidim* on a specific *derech*. The *rebbeim* have also set up a "schedule" of *m'sechot* to be learned in the next six years (please G-d). For next year the *yeshiva* will be learning the second *perek* of *Kiddushin*. Other tracts to be learned include the second *perek* of *Pesachim*, the first *perek* of *Baba Metzia*, the first *perek* of *Gittin*, the first *perek* in *Makot* and *Klal Gadol* in *Shabbat*.

HAMEVASER wishes Rabbi Moshe Solow the best of luck in his new position in JEC High School in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

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New Beginnings

HAMEVASER has been criticized for not publishing often this past year. This criticism has taken many forms, including continued threats by student leaders to withdraw support. Since some of the criticism is justified, an apology is obviously due. However, we are also a bit angered by these harsh, hypocritical, and baseless threats.

HAMEVASER is traditionally published monthly by the Jewish Studies divisions of Yeshiva University, as we state on our front page every issue. This past year there were many technical and financial difficulties which led to fewer issues and to the precarious position in which we now find ourselves. These problems had numerous origins, including waning financial support. For HAMEVASER to publish frequently, and for us to maintain our editorial integrity, we must have support from all Jewish Studies divisions, and from our advocates among faculty, administration and alumni. We cannot afford to receive support, financial and otherwise, from only one or two councils. And, of course, we cannot exist if withdrawal of support is threatened each time a council member is offended by a statement or view expressed in any of our issues. We cannot and will not publish with a so-called monetary axe held above our heads.

We are fortunate and happy to be able to publish this issue. As for the future, we would surely like to continue frequent publication. We can promise to do so under one condition: that the necessary funds be made available to us. With this support we can look forward to a productive year.

A special *mazel tov* to Joey Epstein, former contributing editor of Hamevaser, on his engagement to Rhona Epstein. We, this year's Governing Board, want to both express our appreciation for all Joey has done for us in the past, as well as to wish him and Rhona many years of happiness in the future.

Kosher Tuna Fish

(Continued from Page 1)

produced under such supervision.³ Some consider an occasional check by a Rabbinic supervisor of a fish company adequate supervision. They claim that since the reputation of the company is at stake and since the government is subject to possible company prosecution and fines, no more than an occasional check is necessary. We beg to differ.⁴

According to *Hagaon* Rabbi Moses Feinstein (*Shitta*) canned as well as fresh fish fillets may only be

eaten if they were skinned and processed under the constant supervision of a *Shomer Mitzvot* Jew who is also an expert in recognizing Kosher species of fish. According to Rabbi Feinstein it is an *Issur D'Oraitah* to eat fish fillets which are not skinned and processed under the constant supervision of a person who is a *Shomer Mitzvot* and an expert. The following direct quotes (translation by the author of this article) from a response written by Rabbi Feinstein dated the fifteenth day of *Iyar*,

5737 illustrate this conclusion:

"Fish which we obtain skinned require that a *Shomer Mitzvot* expert testify about the fish (fillets), that he saw them before they were skinned, and that there were attached to them halakhically valid scales; and when there is no such person; to testify on them, you may not at all rely on the recognition of the fish flesh whether they are whole, in pieces, or filleted, and they are not permissible to eat. Each and every fish requires inspection by the *Mashgiach*, since there are certainly non-kosher species of fish mingled with the kosher catch; not even one fish loses its identity in a vast number... During the skinning of the fish there must be on the premises truly constant supervision by a *Mashgiach* (*Shomer Mitzvot* and expert). And when the fish is processed under his supervision and is sent (from the factory) there must be two identifying markers on each (can or package) as the Talmud states in *Avodah Zarah*, page 39, and as the *halakhuah* is brought down in *Yoreh Deah*, Chapter 118.⁷

Since according to Rabbi Feinstein it is an *Issur D'Oraitah* to eat tuna which does not have the type of supervision described in his response, we urge all to take great care and purchase only tuna with the required constant supervision. To the best of our knowledge only two brands claim to have this kind of supervision year round, "Dagim" and "Haddar." For further clarification or questions consult your local Orthodox Rabbi or write to the SOY Kashrus Committee.

Footnotes

1. Singlejack Tuna Fish is unique in that it has only a single row of scales in its midsection. It is interesting to speculate that, within the natural variation that occurs within a species, some fish may be born without any scales. This phenomenon is well known even among pond cultivated fish such as carp where the appearance of a leather carp, i.e. carp without scales, is often noted (courtesy of Rabbi Dr. M.D. Tendler, Chairman Dept. of Biology at YU, and Roth Yeshiva in RIETS).
2. So long as he is not in any way suspect even though he is not an expert in ichthyology: *Bi'ur HaGrah*, Chapter 63, letter 24.
3. "Tunina" according to Rashi in *Tractate Avodah Zarah* 9a.
4. *Tos*, Chapter 114, *Hulkuhu 9*.
5. *Yoreh Deah*, Chapter 118, *Hulkuhu 1*. (See the *Shach*, also).
6. *Yoreh Deah*, Chapter 98; "Mirus" with a *Mashgiach*; *Yotzei P'nei HaTorah* is only sufficient in Rabbinic injunctions and perhaps in Torah injunctions which are "Mitsvah D'Avaduh L'yehoveh but not in any Torah injunction requiring testimony (*edut*). Also see *Chochmat Adam* where he discusses *K'latei Ha'yakar* in the beginning of his section on *Issur P'har*.
7. Response from *Hagaon* Rav Moshe Feinstein (sh"lita) dated 15 Iyar 5737.
8. Copies of the response are available from the SOY Kashrus Committee.

HAMEVASER has recently prepared three volumes of past publications consisting of HAMEVASER, HAMEVASER publications, Shiurei HaRav and the Index to HAMEVASER publications. These bound volumes will be presented to the Mendel Gottesman library and will be available for limited use. Microfilms of the above are also available both on the fifth floor of the library and from HAMEVASER.

JSS President

A Rude Awakening



Harry Wruble

This article being my last as student council president, I feel the urge to look back in sentimental retrospect. Generally, human nature causes us to remember the positive over the negative; the good times stick out in our minds over the bad. I find myself compelled not to write on those events, but to look back, to search, and find out if my presence in the student government has changed anything. If so, why? And if not, what were the pitfalls that hampered me, so that the next student leaders can overcome those obstacles?

The greatest fault and hindrance in student activity programming besides our Y.U. apathy, is lack of coordination. Not coordination in student participation, but in their student councils. Many articles have been written, and discussions have turned into heated arguments over the proposals of creating one student council in lieu of the current four. Each side has its pros and cons; each with its own advocates. The issue I wish to bring up does not deal with this. I want to make it clear that this article is not speaking out in favor of or against the single student council issue. I merely wish to give warning, well in advance, to allow for better student programming and participation.

The main problem I faced was frustration. As a rule, student leadership creates a lot of this. It can be brought on by many different things; mine was brought on by people. I found out very early, that my philosophy of the role of a student government did not match the philosophy of others. I was amazed to find politicking, corruption, selfishness, and business mentality, all of them being manifested in our student councils.

When I was elected President of JSSSC, I had the goal of providing maximum student services. I felt that this was the obligation of a student council; providing activities and services to its constituents on a broad basis. This, being my philosophy, I tried to live up to it and not give in to outside pressures.

As will be by all good things, I found the evil. I knew it was not all a bed of roses, yet I never anticipated individuals interested in self-acclaim, and interested in making money from students for dishonest reasons. A student council should spend its allotment for the students, not make a profit on them. Some try to rationalize their deeds and hide behind a blanket of religion, but their insincerity shows them out. This is one point I wish to make clear to the new student councils; make your directions and goals clear in your minds. Find the philosophy you feel should be upheld and do not fall or allow a stain to appear under a white blanket.

Another obstacle I faced was from Y.U. itself—the system. Most secretaries, faculty members, and directors did participate and did show a general interest in student council affairs. Yet, there were the few that ignored our requests, and told us that they were doing their part, but lacked the concern and willingness to help.

This leads us to still another problem—the lack of unique in student government at Y.U. There is student representation on the Undergraduate Council, but its influence is even less than a student council's. The aborted APRAC was even more of a farce, all looking fine and official on paper, but meaning less than nothing in fact.

Even with the advent of the new administration, matters have not really changed, at least so far. The impressive Presidential Planning Committee was established to examine and make recommendations, in order to better our schools. Yet, the student body was insulted and ignored by the Committee's pompous and pretentious chairman. At a recent meeting of the Graduate and the Undergraduate Councils, where results of the first phase of the P.P.C. report were open for discussion, our specific questions were ignored and remained unanswered. But what can a student do about this? Nothing is the very sad answer. The student leaderships must be aware that things will have to be done by themselves; they'll have to push and push hard; they cannot depend on help because they will receive very little of it. Their influence will be very limited, but they must use whatever they can to its fullest.

I have presented a very gloomy picture, but there are good sides to every story. Looking at the successes of my year, I feel I can turn to the events of our first Director's Honor List Luncheon, Volunteer Program, and the reinstatement of the Lecture Series and JSS *Shabbatonim* all of which can be built up much more. I take personal pride in these events and hope that they continue successfully.

The Undergraduate Inter-Council Committee was formed this year in the hope of creating an open forum for discussions between student councils. There had been activities planned by I.C.C. and it has met with a general amount of success. I hope it grows above and beyond what has been projected for it.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to work with the Director of JSS, Rabbi Morris Besdin, his Administrative Secretary, Mrs. Francis Strich, Mrs. Vivian Owgang, and my Rebbe, Rabbi Meir Fulda. They were always a source of inspiration to me. Their guidance helped me adjust to the problems at hand. Their experience and wisdom let me remain steadfast in my philosophy. My Vice-President, Larry Adatto, and my roommate, Arthur Atlas, were both a great help, giving recommendations and criticism, when necessary. I especially want to thank them both.

Another recommendation to the new officers is, that they find someone to turn to for advice and support as I have, and they will find great comfort.

EMC President

Act Two



Benjy Goldstein

Despite the recent commemoration of "Yom Hashoa," many Jews do not grasp the full meaning and importance of the event which we label "The Holocaust." They believe that the history of the Jewish people will continue unchanged, and that no qualitative difference exists between this recent destruction and the many other destructions which unfortunately, have been visited upon our people throughout history. Some even venture to claim, quite unbelievably, that the non-Jewish world has learned a lesson from this moral outrage and that the suffering of the Jew will undoubtedly be ameliorated. They are blind to the numerous contradictions warning them of the consequences of this way of thinking.

I believe that we have reached a turning point in the history of the Jewish people and in the history of the world; indeed, the two histories have always been interrelated, for the Lord has always spoken to the world through the voice of history. The "Holocaust Story" is not over; it has just begun, and we are its main protagonists. The mind-shattering destruction and killing which occurred only 35 years ago has set the backdrop, and the story is about to unfold. *Hashem* chose, that despite their many acts of heroism, our fathers should not triumph over the accused Nazis (*Y'sv*). The burning continued unabated until the great majority of European Jewry was reduced to ashes.

Medinat Yisrael emerged out of these cold ashes and sparked the Jewish people once more to life. I, who had not been through the Holocaust, cannot possibly comprehend the suffering which occurred, no matter how hard I try. I would therefore not dare to suggest that our loss and resulting emptiness could possibly be compensated for by the rebirth of our land. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the return to our homeland, after a 2,000 year exile was the only positive thing which took shape out of the events surrounding the Second World War.

As the *Sh'airit Haplaita*, is our duty to our fathers who have suffered, to our children who depend on us, and to ourselves, to cherish and protect *Eretz Yisrael*. We must fan this glimmer of hope into a raging fire which will give us hope and a national identity. For much too long we have suffered from divisiveness. We must now recognize that our differences stem from our exile and dispersion to the four corners of the earth. For the first time in two millennia, we have all three ingredients of the perfect whole: *Eretz Yisrael*, *Torat Yisrael*, and *Am Yisrael*. We have the opportunity to strengthen ourselves and to bind ourselves together once more, and we are now standing trial whether or not we will squander this opportunity.

In recent years, certain events have taken place throughout the world which have made our time a historic one. Today, mankind's destructive capacity is far greater than ever before, and it is also true that the potential for doing good is also at its summit. I believe that the actions of the Jewish people will determine the course of history. If the Jewish people learn from the Holocaust tragedy, bind together, and govern themselves according to the laws of the *Torah*, they will surely hasten the coming of the *Mashiach*. If, on the other hand, we demonstrate that the hardships of our long history have not educated us as to the folly of divisiveness and imitation of the ways and customs of the nations, surely *Israel* will fall. The world, by allowing this terrible thing to happen, would once again demonstrate its total moral bankruptcy; its destruction, which has loomed above us since the dawning of the Atomic Age would be realized. The world is more accountable now than ever before for outrages against the Jews because the advances in communications have knit the world together and made all men aware of what befalls their fellows. This was not true during the past.

I hope and believe that truly religious Jews, who believe in *Hashem* and Divine Intervention in the ways of the world, will not cast off my words as a doomsday proclamation. They will realize that just as the Almighty set before our forefathers at Mount Gerizim and Mount Aival, the choice between the ways of good and evil, life and death, so too do we face a choice. Only if we accept the fact that the Holocaust was merely the prologue to the story in which we all must now play important roles, the death of our holy Martyrs will not have been in vain.

This is my last article as President of EMCSC and I thank HAMEVASER for affording me the opportunity to contribute.

Kavannah: Inner Depths of the Torah

by Steven Klitsner

The Kotzker Rebbe is reported to have been in a great state of agitation one day, regarding the issue of Kavannah. "What's all this talk about Kavannah in prayer?" complained the Kotzker. "Is there anything in the world a man should do without Kavannah?"

Whenever one thinks of *tshuva* or engages in occasional *cheshbon hanefesh*, religious introspection, there is a tendency to analyze one's spiritual status in quantitative terms. One might even make a checklist of the most popular pitfalls to compare his score on *minyan* attendance or *lashon harah*, to last month's record. If that Jew is particularly broad-minded, and has a view of piety that includes this notion of ethics, he might reexamine his personal relationships and take note of possible deficiencies in his personality. But another important dimension of religious being is inevitably obscured by the inventory and ultimately suffers neglect. It is relatively easy to maintain a numerical count; but we have not, as yet, devised a method of measuring intensity.

There were two mandates given to the Jew at Sinai: the external Torah as a lifestyle; and the inner depths of the Torah that bid man to experience that lifestyle in a special way. The minimal expectations of the Divine command is that lifestyle itself, but constrained and deprived is the man who is unaware of its maximum potential. Bound within four cubits of lifestyle, he misses the true dimensionability of

the Torah and the richness of its experiential promise.

Three children are riding home from *shul* on a *Shabbat* afternoon, singing the holiest of *zemirot* at the top of their lungs. They roll down the car windows to let their song free — "let the whole neighborhood know that it's *Shabbat*, let them share in our pride and delight." Of course, the scene is ludicrous, an innocent if tragic sacrifice. But when was the last time I felt the *ruach* of *Shabbat* with the same unabashed intensity of these children?

Firstly, they are children, gifted with the power of sensation, of genuine feeling, and uninhibited enthusiasm. Also, it is new for them, the Sabbath — a recent discovery; whereas, I am a man, mature and cynical. The experience is routine, the performance — a ritual.

But here I am at the Wailing Wall, and these old stones that amaze and enchant the tender eyes of my child, mean so much more to me. Here, before my eyes is the binding of Isaac, the massive pilgrimage bearing the first fruit of the year's labor, the *Avodah* of the *Kohen Gadol* on *Yom Kippur*. Each morsel of knowledge and year of maturity endows the moment with further significance and greater impact.

Yet I am the child and also the man,

They both reside within me.

For I can see the child in man. Old and wrinkled though he be.

Long ago I felt these things
Before the walls enclosed me.
In my soul the child still sings
But, oh my Lord, so softly.

Too softly speaks the child in man, but the murmur confirms his presence.

Our Rabbis have said that after the destruction of the Temple, prophecy was given to children and madmen. A strange proclamation by men whose intellectual prominence has become legendary. Why would G-d cease to speak to man, and why choose these exceptions to the rule? One theory posits that G-d still speaks, rather it is man who fails to listen. Only the children and the mad are free of obstacles in the path of communication that block the reception.

"Only the child or the madman, who can walk naked with lack of inhibition, are open enough to expose themselves to the experience of the holy."

How many times have geniuses been so close to a breakthrough, and on the threshold of discovery have smashed the test tube or closed the volume? How often have we ourselves been on the verge of solving a mystery, only to feel a faint shiver and have our train of thought mysteriously derailed? Contact with the Divine, even with its earthly image, is a frightening prospect and so we withdraw from it to hide behind our smallness. Only the child and madman, who can walk naked with lack of inhibition, are open enough to

expose themselves to the experience of the holy.

But Judaism does not preach Peter Pan or the noble savage. Sophistication, while often opposed to openness, is also a *sine qua non* to the religious experience, and to the *halachic* experience in particular. Pristine outlook and uncorrupted sensitivity must be disciplined and organized. The desire to inhale and breathe freshly must be focused and selective. A rush of unfiltered air will simply etherize, the failure to discriminate will only confound one's sensitivity to that which is healthy and good.

We remain with the dilemma of man's paradoxical nature. The child and the adult struggle, yet both must emerge victorious. Rav Soloveitchik, in commenting on the first *Rashi* in the chapter of *Chayai Sara* has developed this typology in explicating the unique character of Sarah and the cryptic eulogy of the verse. She was one hundred, she was twenty, and she was seven. Only Sara the child could achieve the ultimate heights in prayer, while only Sarah the woman could appreciate and assimilate the teachings of Abraham and the message of G-d.

Significantly, it is only after having eaten from the tree of sophistication that Adam both recognized his nakedness and simultaneously shrinks from the Divine presence. "And they heard the voice of the Lord G-d walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of G-d amongst the trees of the garden."

How then, are we to restore what has been lost, and gain what was never achieved? We sometimes stand before the task as a child before a piece of pie. His mouth wide-open, he wishes to swallow it whole, and is too excited to take small bites. For the time being, he remains not only hungry, but frustrated.

For the mature and skeptical, transcendence seems to me absurd, gravity — a law of nature. Creative experience is an intimidating possibility, for it seems like a spark of the Divine. Yet we are invited to steal thunder from the gods, to accept the challenge of *Imitatio Dei: K'doshim Tihyu Ki Kadosh Ani*.

Kazantzakis once wrote that "all roads lead to the earth; only the abyss leads to G-d." Are we unable to make the existential leap or are we simply afraid of the consequences? And if we are afraid, are we more afraid of success than of failure?

Kavannah, an untranslatable term used to denote full consciousness of one's being, is thus essential to the appreciation of the *halachic* lifestyle as a religious experience. But even more, if considered in consonance with the Kotzker's demand, *Kavannah* can be the vehicle with which to transport every human act to the level of religious meaning.

The Editor-in-Chief and the Governing Board wish a hearty *mazel tov* to former Associate Editor Ephraim Kanarfogel on his forthcoming marriage to Devorah Carmel.

Rov Defines the Purpose of Pesach

(Continued from Page 1)

that all of his successes must be attributed to *HaShem*. Likewise, the *Haggadah* is a tribute and testimonial to G-d, thanking Him for our physical and spiritual liberations throughout the ages.

The *Rov* continued by enumerating the nine essential aspects of the *Haggadah* which embody the essence of the *seder* night—that night which is "...different from all other nights..." and which capture the spirit of the entire festival as a whole.

The first of these, according to the *Rov*, is *amirah*, recital of a text in the form of passages from the Torah. We are not originating a new text, but instead we repeat the given portion dealing with *sippur yetziat Mitzraim*. It is interesting to note that the parallel between the *seder* and *bikkurim* still holds.

Yet, this is not sufficient. We also need *limud*, learning by means of a Torah *sheb'alpeh* analysis of the Torah *shebichtav* text. This Oral Law approach, as mentioned in *B'rachot*, consists of three parts: *Midrash* (Biblical exegesis according to the 13 *middot* for derivation of *halacha*), *Mishnah* (codified law), and *Gemara* (Talmudic method of speculation and investigation). A careful study of the *Haggadah* text reveals that all three types are indeed present. This affirmation of faith, both explicitly through *amirah* and implicitly through *limud*, is central to Judaism.

The third aspect is that of *kabbalah u'masoret*, receiving the Tradition and passing it on. The *Rambam* writes that it is a particular *mitzvah* to teach the *Haggadah* to our children and to thereby transmit it to future generations. Hence, at the *seder* table, each and every Jew has a task-to be a link in the Tradition. It is precisely for this reason, suggests the *Rov*, that we concern ourselves with the diversified "four sons", which ones will remain faithful Jews? Thus, we say "Baruch Ha Makom..." which contains an abbreviated form of *Birchat Hatorah*, before dealing with the "four sons." Only when it is clear that, through the Torah, we can teach our heritage and transmit our traditions can we begin to deal with the continuity of the Conventional Community.

Investigators

A major part of the *Haggadah* is constructed in the format of a dialogue, a sort of investigation—the children ask the "Four Questions" and the elders offer the answers. The *Talmud*, in advocating certain customs of the *seder*, notes that one should amuse and amaze the youngsters so that they do not fall asleep. The *Rov* points out that this illustrates a concept of paramount significance in the act of transmitting Torah-d'risa (searching). Man must be a "G-d searcher." G-d reveals Himself to those who try to find Him, but remains hidden from those who hide from Him. In fact,

the Jew is particularly commanded to search for *HaShem*...seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul..." for "...from where thou shall seek *HaShem*, thou shall find Him..." (Deut. IV, 29).

This is especially true during the holiday of *Pesach*. At the *seder*, we are investigators. We want our children to become part of the learning process. We intrigue them so that they may join in the dialogue and, in turn, become part of *Knesset Yisrael* seeking and searching for the Divine Presence.

The fifth aspect, according to the *Rov*, is that of *kedushah*, sanctification of all of our actions. The Jew is required to strive for the sanctification of G-d's name. Towards this end, one inevitably has to elevate that which is mundane, infusing the material and spirit. Indeed, there are two planes on which we conduct the *seder*. *Rabban Gamliel's* statement that "...whoever has not said these three things has not fulfilled his obligation..." points to the fact that the *seder* must not only be observed on an intellectual plane, but includes bodily activities as well. First, we discuss *sippur yetziat Mitzraim* but afterwards, we eat the *korban Pesach, matzo, and maror*. Thus, we interpose the Torah's teachings, as applied in the *Haggadah*, with the partaking of food, combining the spoken word and the physiological function.

The *Rov* emphasizes that by acting as normal human beings, we accomplish that which is great and

unique. "Man eats and his eating constitutes the fulfillment of a holy *mitzvah*!" However, we must remember that when we eat, it is for the purpose of worshipping *HaShem*. It is precisely for this reason that we take wine and say *kiddush* over it. Wine, which often rules men, is to be controlled by the Jew. We say, *b'rachot*, surrounding our meals to remind ourselves that we are the masters of our bodily functions, and it is our duty to act with a sense of dignity before G-d.

"Man must be a 'G-d searcher.' G-d... remains hidden from those who hide from Him."

This approach, the Jewish mode of religious worship, is in contradistinction to prevailing philosophies in the non-Jewish world, where bodily activities are not considered as holy performances. In Judaism, on the other hand, we carry on our normal activities before G-d, for in all of our acts, we encounter Him.

As seen earlier, both the *seder* and the *bikkurim* ceremony have *shevach*, praise to G-d, in common. Nevertheless, there is a difference in contents, as well as style. *Shevach* is achieved in the portion of *bikkurim* by a description of facts; the narrative itself, pointing to G-d as the Prime Mover, constitutes praise to *HaShem*. The *Haggadah*, however, does not limit praise to *shevach* of fixed text, but incorporates it in *shirah*, an evolving rhapsody of song. We sing

a new song, a *shirah chadashah*, during the *seder*—a spontaneous expression of faith, praise, and love towards *HaShem*.

Destiny

The seventh essential aspect of the *Haggadah* is the concept of *netzach*, eternity in Jewish History. The *Rov* describes three phases of historical retrospection, all of which are reflected in the *Haggadah*. The first is that the past has meaning to us ("And if *HaShem* would not have redeemed our ancestors from Egypt..."). Secondly, we feel part of our past in the present ("In every generation..."). Thirdly, the past and present are harbingers of the future ("And it is (the promise)...")! The uniqueness of Jewish History is the intimacy of the various tenses—the encounter with Eternity. The motif of Jewish History is to remember, re-experience, and live the drama of the destiny of *Am Yisrael*.

In the *Haggadah*, we delve into the *ye'ud* (destiny) of the Jewish People. We celebrate *Pesach* because we believe it conveys the vision of our mission. But what is this mission? The *Rov* points out that it is a two-fold: receiving the Torah at Sinai, and, consequently, living in the Holy Land according to the Torah.

The *Rov* notes that, as far as *Pesach* is concerned, *Eretz Yisrael* is not the destiny of *B'nei Yisrael*, but their destination. *Yetziat Mitzraim* brought in its wake (Continued on Page 5)

Medicine From a Torah Point of View

by Rabbi Perez Posen

There are many references to the physician in the *Tanach* and Talmud. One of the best known is found in the last *Mishna* in *Kiddushin*, "The best of physicians to *Gehinom*."

In clarifying this literal translation, the *Tiferet Yisrael* points out that the *Mishna* does not say "the most righteous of the physicians", as it says in the very next phrase: "the most righteous (kosher) of the slaughterers." Also he notes that the *Mishna* does not say that he *must* go to *Gehinom*, but only "to *Gehinom*". This implies that a strong potential exists for the physician to go there, but it is up to him to serve in such a manner as to avoid this end. In other words, the physician by virtue of his unique responsibilities involving human life, is constantly in danger of being consigned there — he is playing with fire all of his life. In this context the Mishnaic statement can be translated as "Even the best of physicians may be destined to *Gehinom*."

Clarifications

There are a few interpretations that can be offered to clarify this statement. The *Tiferet Yisrael* also comments that the word "best" does not mean the best of physicians, but rather one who considers himself best. One who is conceited about his abilities commits a cardinal sin in Jewish life. Thus the *Rabbainu Yonah* in *Shaar T'shuva* (3.34) commenting on this topic, starts by quoting the statement in Proverbs (16.5): "It is an abomination to the Lord, if anyone has this kind of arrogance." *Rabbainu Yonah* says this is one of the cardinal sins that corrupts and destroys the soul. Owing to its special skills, conceit is a danger that is inherent in the medical profession. Beware physician! Arrogance means playing with fire.

Another interpretation is given in the name of the *Chatam Sofer*. He

notes that the *g'matria* of the word *rov* is seventeen. The physician while saying the *shemona esrai* (18 blessings of the amida) may deep in his heart recite only seventeen blessings. For him the prayer *refa'anu* does not exist. He believes himself, rather than G-d, to be the healer. This type of physician is certainly in danger of *Gehinom*. There is another type of arrogance, which is reflected by the physician who refuses to consult with other physicians. Even an outstanding physician, being human, can err. In questions dealing with life or death even being 99 per cent certain is not enough, so why hesitate to get another opinion?

The central theme of this paper deals with the concept that the physician believes himself to be the healer of the sick. This is contrary to the most fundamental concepts of Judaism. It is assumed that idolatry is dead. Unfortunately it is still very much alive. It says in the Torah (Deut. 31, 18) "I will hide my face on that day because of all the evil which they (the Jewish people) did, for they turned to strange gods." One would obviously interpret the last phrase as meaning they became idol worshippers. The Sifroni clarifies this statement. The Jews turned to natural sources for their salvation instead of repenting and praying and faith that G-d should help them. The successful physician reinforced by the hero worship of his patients, is in danger of falling into this trap of idolatry. This transgression of the first commandment may result in *Gehinom*.

Faith vs. Medicine

The *Ramban*, in *Parshat Bichukotay* (Lev. 26, 11), says that people who have a great deal of faith should not go to a physician, instead they should only do *Teshuva* and *tephila* The Torah (Ex. 21, 19) says: *V'rapo Yerapai*, from which the Talmud (*Baba Kama* 85a) derived: that a physician has permission to heal.

Without the explicit permission of the Torah it would be forbidden to seek healing from a physician, because logically the physician has no place in Jewish life. For it says (Ex. 15, 26) "If you listen to My commandments etc., then none of the diseases which I have brought upon the Egyptians will I put upon you because, I the Lord, am your healer." This implies that if we have a minimum of faith a physician is not needed, for the Lord metes out the punishment and He provides the healing.

Yet there is a second side to this issue. There is a whole set of regulations for the physician. There are three pages in the seventh chapter of the Talmud *Gittin* dealing with healing (which are not completely understood in our time). There are many laws dealing with the duties and obligations of the physician (*Hilchos Rejuah, Yore Daya 336 and Tax*). Thus it

the problem not only as it applies to the physician but also in its wider scope including all our daily activities. There appear to be general contradictions in the daily life of a Jew. Thus, the Talmud (*Berza* 16a) states that on the New Year each person's total income and loss is determined by G-d and is inscribed in the Book of Earnings, up to the last penny (*Baba Batra* 10a). If this is so, why do we bother to work? Because it says in the Torah (Gen. 2, 3). "What G-d created man to do" and "From the sweat of thy brow..." (Gen. 3, 10) and "... in all your endeavours" (Deut. 14, 29). Thus we are permitted, even required to work and not rely on the fact that the amount we will earn is predetermined. The same type of contradiction noted before in the case of the physician exists here.

To resolve this issue we must realize that there are two types of

alone and only He does it all. He causes the illness and He provides the cure. He just asks that we add a minute contribution such as insert the plug or plant the seed. We take life for granted as operating automatically or naturally. No, the smooth functioning of events is itself miraculous; in fact, it is the greatest miracle of all!

The *Mislat Y'sharim* (end of ch. 1) says that the function of man in this world is to perform *Mitzvah*, to pray and to withstand temptation. The greatest temptation is assigning success to our own powers. The Torah (Deut. 8, 17) states: "Do not declare in your heart my own might did all this for me." You should always know that "He is the one who gives you the power to make money" or as the *Targum* explains, "He gives you the power means he gives you the ideas to make money." We should realize that we work at our own tasks because this is G-d's will, but we earn our living because G-d gives it to us. Our work is nothing but the insertion of the plug.

All this applies to the physician; he sees miracles happening frequently. He, above all men should realize that every cure is a miracle. His ideas for healing come from G-d (see *Targum*, *ibid*) and his contribution is minute. Unfortunately the situation is reversed. With every success, his arrogance grows and his temptations to believe in his own power increases. If he does not withstand these pressures, he is destined to have a dire end.

Thus, a Jewish physician is challenged to believe, on one hand that the Almighty causes both the sickness and the cures all by

"We take life for granted...No, the smooth functioning of events is itself miraculous; in fact it is the greatest miracle of all."

Himself, and that no one can alter the destiny of man irrespective of the physicians actions. On the other hand, the physician must act — not believe — as if his actions alone bring about the cure, because this is the *mitzvah*, the Divine imperative of saving life, of emulating the Almighty. "For just as He is merciful and kind so thou too should be merciful and kind" (Deut. 28, 9 and commentaries). Visiting and helping the sick should be done because it is the Almighty's wish that it be done. One is not obligated to become a physician, but upon entering this profession one has the responsibility to heal according to the very best of one's ability, otherwise his obligation is not fulfilled. This *mitzvah* has to be carried out in the same manner as any other *mitzvah* and it has to be performed subject to the same constraints as any other commandment. Thus, just like one would not consider blessing an *Eirog* on *Chanuka* because this is not the manner in which G-d ordained this percept to be executed, so too the laws applying to healing must be carried out in accordance with the divinely ordained manner. G-d says He is the healer, but you must act as if you were the healer. This was the manner in which this *mitzvah* was ordained and this is the way the physician must meet his responsibilities.

(Continued on Page 7)



seems that the practice of medicine does play a very large part in Jewish life. There is, therefore, an apparent contradiction between the two aspects of the role the physician has in Judaism. On the one hand, we see that the physician has no place at all, for G-d is the universal healer and on the other hand we find there is a requirement to do all that is possible to save a life. For he that saves one soul is considered to have saved an entire world. How does one reconcile this seeming paradox? To understand this conflict, we should consider

events, the ones occurring as a result of the laws of nature and those outside of these laws, which we call miracles. Water does not withstand a shearing stress, it does not have its own definite shape, therefore it flows, and a wall could not be built from a liquid. This is a law of nature. On the other hand, at the splitting of the Red Sea the waters stood still in opposition to natural law. This is a miracle. The difference between these two categories is, however, not sharply defined. What we call nature is actually also miraculous, and the latter is an extension of the former. The difference between nature and miracle is a hair's breadth in width. Some time ago a cartoon was published in a scientific journal which depicted a bank of computers that did not function. All kinds of scientists were shown looking for the source of the trouble. In the lower right hand corner there was the plug which had not been inserted into the electric outlet. The plugging in even a child could do. It is imperative that the plug be inserted, that the switch be closed, otherwise the whole complicated network will not operate. But does this mean that the child is the creator of the computer bank? No rational person would believe that.

"The difference between nature and miracle is a hair's breadth in width."

We have an exact analogous situation in nature. All man really does is close the switch and thus carry out the last step. In the making of bread the design and 'programming' of the wheat grain has been created by the Almighty. Man simply puts it into the ground. What we call natural is also to a very large extent miraculous. This is the manner in which the Almighty created his world. He

Aspects of the Haggadah

(Continued from Page 4) physical freedom, but its goal was not exodus alone, but redemption. *Pesach* ushers in *Shavuot*, *Z'man Matan Torateinu*, because the aim of G-d was the education of Israel in the Torah and the transformation of slaves of Pharaoh to servants of the L-rd.

Just as *Pesach* and *Shavuot* express the link between the People of Israel and the Torah of Israel, *Succot*, adds the *Rov*, is the festival of *Eretz Yisrael* and our loyalty to the Holy Land.

At this point, we can understand why the *Haggadah* omits part of the *parashah* of "Arami oved avi..." as the omitted words deal with the Jews' entrance into the Land of Israel. There remains, however, the problem that it is considered improper to split up *parshiot* of the Torah. The *Rov* proposes two solutions to this problem: First of all, this passage was recited completely in ancient times, when Israel dwelled on its land. Evidence for this is found in the *Mishnah*, which records that "... one recites the entire portion fully." The fragmented form that we possess is thus an attempt to

dismiss the impression that our land is restored. This is also why we only drink "Four Cups" and maintain the "Fifth Cup" for Elijah.

The second proposed reason is, that while the early stages of redemption are derived from the Covenant of the Mosaic period, the promise of entering *Eretz Yisrael* relates all the way back to G-d's Covenant with the Patriarchs. As *Pesach* recalls the Covenant of Sinai, the Patriarchal Covenant is not central to this festival.

The final essential aspect enumerated by the *Rov* is *tikvah*, hope. Our vision for the future is not a speculation. It is expectation and, more than that, anticipation. *Tikvah* evokes a special message for the Jewish People. When we hope for the Redemption of Israel, we are, in the words of the *Haggadah*, like the nightwatchmen who watch for signs of the coming dawn. We assume that a new day is coming, and we eagerly await the dawning of the Redemption.

As seen earlier, the *Haggadah* is a tractate of thanks and praise. Somewhat similar is *Birkat HaMazon*, in which we thank G-d

for Israel, for mankind, for Creation—in fact, for the entire Universe. The uniqueness of our thanksgiving is that while we are appreciative for favors that G-d did for us in the past, and praise Him for His support and sustenance in the present we are also grateful for the benefits that we shall receive from G-d in the future. This expression of thanks is a result of our unflinching faith. The Jew who hopes has no doubt that the next day in Jewish History, be it near or far, shall come.

Tikvah as a feeling is no less a responsibility. The Jew knows that the faster he paves the way for the Messiah, the more speedily he will come. The Jew, filled with hope, is anxious, but he is careful that an opportunity is not lost due to trivial matters. He feels a sense of urgency, but does not lose control of his senses. Thus, moving towards a better appreciation of G-d's role in history and in creation, the Jew's soul is engaged in the resounding prayer of praise for the future—"*Nishmat kol chai v'vocheh...*" "The breath of every living thing shall bless Thy Name, Our L-rd!"

SOY President

Last Chance



Neil Maron

The philosophy upon which Yeshiva University was predicated was the synthesis of *Torah-Umada*. Dr. Revel z'l and Dr. Belkin z'l assembled the finest *roshei yeshiva* to implement the yeshiva's goal.

The students have the very best *Rebbeim* at their disposal. It is therefore very disheartening that many *talmidim* do not take full advantage of this opportunity. Granted, there are many who learn and who fill the "B.M. in the P.M." but my message is devoted to those who don't even come to the "B.M. in the A.M."

The years spent at Yeshiva are the last chance for formalized learning. These are the years when one decides how to spend the rest of his life. There is more to be learned about Judaism from the Talmud than from a Jewish History course.

Now, I would like to end my last column with a personal note. When I first entered this office I did so with certain *pachad*. One of which, was the fear of "closed doors and passed bucks" on the administrative level. My experience helped me open many of these "closed" doors. Still there were several I could not budge.

In this light, I would like to give deserved recognition to the many people who have devoted their lives to an ideal called Yeshiva University. These are the people who work behind the scenes and usually don't get deserved credit. refer to Rabbi Charlop, Rabbi Solow and Rabbi Paretzky who have served S.O.Y. as advisors, Rabbi Miller and Mrs. Oswang who have continually assisted S.O.Y., Mr. Blazer of Building and Grounds who was always ready to help S.O.Y. in every endeavor, and finally Rabbi Groff, Paul Glasser, and Miss Paiken who have been a continuous source of inspiration to S.O.Y.

Now it is time to turn to my friends who helped me accomplish what I think is the most ever by S.O.Y. To my roomates, I thank you for putting up with all my calls, messages and idiosyncracies. To Judah, thanks for being there when I needed someone. To Michael, Robert, Phil, George, Sol, Manny, Marv, Moishe, Etz, and the rest of the fellas. Thanks for all your help.

To my co-worker Henry, who perhaps can best share with me the great sense of pride which this year's S.O.Y. has brought us.

I wish my successor best of luck and hope that he encourages the growth of Torah at Yeshiva.

In Defense

by Abe Rosenberg

A short time ago, one Reform rabbi from Cleveland, Ohio, delivered a rather unique sermon to his congregants. His topic was the Lubavitch chassidic movement, and did he have a field day! He hurled charges and accusations left and right, condemned, slandered, and generally attempted to tear apart that most impressive group of Orthodox Jews. He spoke of the so-called "irrationality and medievalism of the Lubavitch stance," saying that it was outside the mainstream of society. He criticized the Lubavitcher Rebbe and his followers for allegedly coming between parents and their children. He even tried to say that Lubavitch was just another fanatic "cult," and he put the movement in the same category — get this — as the followers of Rev. Sun Myung Moon!

The man who said all of these things is the spiritual leader of a congregation containing literally thousands of members. He must be at least a fairly educated person to be able to hold that position. It is therefore absolutely mind-boggling that such a man can come up with such erroneous and totally false ideas about Lubavitch. Who has he been talking to? From where does he get his information? Shouldn't a rabbi with so large a congregation give his members the common courtesy of researching a topic before letting loose with accusations and criticism? Has he ever read, or even seen the Shulchan Aruch HaRav? What does he think Tanya is, something you use to prevent sunburn? Doesn't he have even the slightest idea of all the worthy projects initiated and carried out by Lubavitch?

How can this rabbi call Lubavitch "irrational" and "medieval"? Is the Lubavitch Mitzvah Campaign "irrational"? Is it medieval to encourage Jews to study Torah every day and night? Is it old-fashioned to urge them to put on Tephillin, to give charity, to have Mezuzot, and to light Shabbat candles? Anyone who thinks so is anti-Jewish, not just anti-Lubavitch. The widespread observance of these and other basic commandments is what the Lubavitch Mitzvah Campaign is all about. Even a Reform rabbi should know that these Mitzvot, plus the commandments of family purity and *kashrut*, must be kept by each and every Jewish man and woman if Judaism is to survive the turbulent 20th century. Why, then, would he attack, and label as "irrational," those who would seek to ensure that survival?

So many Jewish leaders lament the lack of *kashrut* observance in today's society, without offering any solutions. But Lubavitch has come up with a modern, practical way of helping to alleviate this problem. Besides printing and distributing the *Halachic* information on the subject, Lubavitch has a standing offer to pay 50 percent of all costs incurred when a family decides to make its home kosher. This positive approach is anything but "irrational" or "medieval."

Walk into the Lubavitcher yeshiva in New York, or into any *Chabad* house around the country — including Cleveland — and you will see young people learning *Gemara*, *Chumash*, or *Dinim*. There is nothing strange or old-fashioned about that; it's the same Torah that's learned in Yeshiva

(Continued on Page 7)

Religious Parties in Israel

(Continued from Page 1)

initiative and support of Rabbis Abraham Isaac Kook, Ben-Zion Uziel and Meir Berlin (Bar-Ilan) of blessed memory, *Mizrachi* succeeded in establishing the Chief Rabbinate in *Eretz Yisrael* in 1921, which the movement recognizes to this day as the highest authority on *halachic* matters for world Jewry.

The vision of early *Mizrachi* pioneers was expressed in their motto "*Torah Va-Avodah*," which became the basis for the religious labor movement and the establishment of *Ha-Poel Ha-Mizrachi*. This group was responsible for the founding of numerous religious settlements throughout the country. After the movement was granted autonomy of religious education in 1920, a vast network of its schools was set up which today includes kindergartens, elementary schools, high schools, *yeshivot*, vocational schools, and teachers' seminaries.

The political organ of *Mizrachi* in the *Knesset* is the National Religious Party *Mafdal*, formed in 1956 after *Mizrachi* and *Ha-Poel Ha-Mizrachi* united throughout the world. The N.R.P. has traditionally been a member in the ruling coalition. As a partner in the government, it has achieved observance of *Shabbat* and *kashrut* on all official levels in the State, including the Israel Defense Forces. It has also been responsible for the formation of the Ministry of Religions (to cover the religious needs of the population), and the maintenance of *dinei ishut* (laws of marriage and divorce) in the hands of the Chief Rabbinate.

Achalata D'geulah

The party views the establishment of the Jewish state as the *achalata d'geulah*. This positive attitude is expressed in terms of viewing *Yom Ha'atzmaut* as a festival no less important than *Chanukah* or *Purim*, as well as seeing army service as the fulfillment of a religious duty. The *hesder* program offers a unique arrangement whereby the regular tour of duty in the I.D.F. is included with the study of Torah in a *yeshiva g'vohah*.

The second largest religious party in Israel is *Agudat Yisrael*. Originally founded by *gedolai Torah* in Europe, it became active in *Eretz Yisrael* in 1919 when it was refounded in Jerusalem by members of the extreme Orthodox faction who were fanatically opposed to Zionism. They established a separate Rabbinical institution under the leadership of Rav Chaim Yosef Sonnenfeld which operated alongside the Chief Rabbinate headed by Rav Kook.

With immigration of many members of the organization from Poland and Germany in the thirties, *Agudah* adopted a more liberal attitude towards social and economic integration into the *yishuv*. A new Orthodox workers' organization, *Poalei Agudat Yisrael*, was formed. When the leader of *Agudat Yisrael* in Poland, the *Gerer rebbe*, arrived in *Eretz Yisrael* in 1940 a new drive was launched for active participation in the *yishuv*.

Agudat Yisrael became a political party with establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, and has been represented in all national and municipal bodies. Although it has been actively represented in

every *Knesset*, *Agudah* has been traditionally opposed to joining the government coalition. Its highest halachic authority is the *Mo'etzet Gedolai ha-Torah* (Council of the Sages of Israel), which includes representatives of the various religious traditions. Among the council's most noted members have been Rav Aharon Kotler z'l, Rav Moshe Feinstein and Rav David Lfshitz of the United States; and the *Gerer rebbe*, Rav Yechezke Abromsky, and Rav Eliezer Shach (*Rosh Yeshivat Ponevezh*) in Israel.

Poalei Agudat Yisrael, the smallest of the major religious parties in Israel, was established in Tel-Aviv in 1935. It considered the building of the country as its central idea. Despite the opposition of *Agudat Yisrael*, PAI settled on Jewish National Fund land in 1944 and established the *kibbutz* Chafetz Chaim.

After 1948, although PAI joined the *Histadrut*, it did not disassociate itself completely from *Agudat Yisrael*. It continued to accept the authority of the *Mo'etzet Gedolai ha-Torah* and in the elections to the third, fourth and fifth *Knessets*, the two parties appeared on joint lists. PAI left the government coalition in 1952 over the issue of the drafting of girls to national service.

Despite its size, *Poalei Agudat Yisrael* is significant for the uniqueness of its proposals and its clarity of message.

Analysis

The *Mafdal* recently survived an internal crisis that threatened to split the party before the upcoming elections. The Youth and *Lamifnech* factions, which together received 48 percent of the votes in the elections to the Party Conference (held over four and a half years ago), thwarted an attempt by the Conference to hold these internal elections this year. It is believed that these factions feared a rise in strength of a third faction, *Likud Utemurah*, and succeeded in putting off the internal elections.

However, the N.R.P. has been relatively successful in consolidating its forces. Among its leading figures are former Minister of the Interior, Dr. Yosef Burg and Rav Chaim Drukman, *Rosh* "The perplexity and moral corruption that has plagued Israeli society... brought to light the need for a renewal of traditional Jewish values..."

Yeshivat Or Etzion. Rav Drukman's last-minute inclusion as the number-two man on the *Mafdal* list, prompted the support of Rav Zvi Yehuda Kook, an influential, guiding force in religious Zionism in Israel. The "Young Guard" of the *Mafdal*, noted for its ardent support of *Gush Emunim*, is headed by the dynamic Zevulun Hammer, former Minister of Social Welfare, and Dr. Yehuda Ben-Meir, an alumnus of Yeshiva University.

The N.R.P. recently gained much popularity as a result of their vote against the Rabin government on the issue of *chilul Shabbat*. This led to their ouster from the coalition and the serious parliamentary crisis in which Israel finds itself at this time. Running on a platform of maintaining the religious "status quo" and working towards *shlainut ha'an ve-ha'aretz*, (the completeness of the

people and the land), the *Mafdal* is expected to retain its ten *Knesset* seats. Whatever the results are on May 17, *Mizrachi* will continue to be a key political and cultural force in the country.

Agudat Yisrael and *Poalei Agudat Yisrael*, which in the past two *Knessets* appeared under one "Torah Front," have announced their appearance on two separate lists. This split occurred as a result of a threat by the extremist faction headed by Rav Shlomo Lorincz that they would leave the party if it once again ran together with PAI.

Agudah's list is headed by Rav Abramovich, Rav Menachem Porush and Rav Shlomo Lorincz. It has always fought for such religious issues as *halachic* conversion, anti-abortion laws, and the exemption of religious girls and *yeshiva* students from Army service. The party is expected to win 3 to 4 seats in the May 17 elections, as it works to reunite its many forces and factions.

Poalei Agudat Yisrael, despite its split with *Agudah*, has been given the support of the *Gerer rebbe*. Their *Knesset* list is headed by Rav Kalman Kahane, who has served in Israel's parliament longer than any other member. Other PAI leaders include MK Avraham Verdiger and Chaim Cohen. They are expected to retain the two seats they already have in the *Knesset*, and possibly gain a third.

Aside from the three major religious parties, two smaller movements will be vying for seats in the upcoming elections. The larger of the two, *Kach* is headed by Rav Meir Kahane, and has a strong following of *kipah serugah* youth. Advocating a strict policy of maintaining *Eretz Yisrael Ha-Shleimah*, much of *Kach's* campaign rhetoric has centered around harsh criticism of the "two-faced" attitude of the *Mafdal* on basic religious principles. For example, much criticism has been mounted on the N.R.P. for joining the Rabin government three years ago despite the fact that no acceptable solution had been found to the "who is a Jew" question.

After Rav Zvi Yehuda Kook's announced support of *Mafdal*, Kahane will find it difficult to attract the large *Gush Emunim* crowd on whom he had relied for votes. Nevertheless, despite its unsuccessful attempts in the previous two elections, *Kach* has a good chance of winning one seat in the *Knesset*.

A smaller list, *Reshimat Mamlechet Yehuda ve-Yisrael*, will be running for the seventh time on a platform of national unity, and for the seventh time is not expected to gain one seat.

The perplexity and moral corruption that has plagued Israeli society in recent months has brought to light once again the need for a renewal of the traditional Jewish values and principles that have guided our people through their many crises for millennia. It is regrettable, therefore, that the differences within the religious camp are such that the establishment of a United Religious List at this time would be impossible.

The author would like to thank Yossi Klausner for his invaluable assistance and encyclopedic knowledge of the topic.

Dean Evaluates Revel Grad School Jewish Painters Exhibited

by Barry Reiner

Approximately one and one half years ago, Dr. Haym Soloveitchik assumed the position of dean of Bernard Revel Graduate School, which was established to further research in Jewish Studies. In a recent interview, Dr. Soloveitchik spoke of the changes which Revel has undergone since his appointment as dean and the direction in which it is headed.

In the past two years there has been a large faculty changeover. Between 20 and 30 courses have new instructors. The bulk of the distinguished faculty was above the retirement age. The new members of the faculty come highly qualified and, so far, have been the subjects of positive feedback from the students. Furthermore, next year there will be two more additions to the faculty. Dr. Yeshayahu Maori from the University of Haifa will teach *Tanach*, and Dr. Tamir-Ghez, who in the past taught at N.Y.U., and Tel-Aviv University, will teach Hebrew Literature.

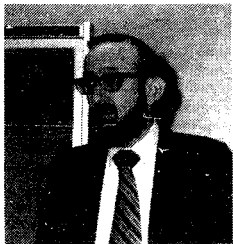
Diversity

Until now, the Revel faculty has been relatively inbred, many members having received their education at Y.U. and Dropsie. While both of the above institutions are distinguished, Dr. Soloveitchik hopes to achieve heterogeneity in his faculty by obtaining people with diverse backgrounds.

In the past, Revel was satelized to RIETS, serving the primary purpose of providing academic degrees to Rabbis and Jewish educators. The school fulfilled an important function in giving rabbis a good measure of knowledge in Jewish studies. Over the past two years, steps have been taken to transform Revel into a professional graduate school, with the purpose of serving as a training center for research in Jewish studies. Ad-

mission to Revel is more closely controlled; no longer does admission to RIETS guarantee admission to Revel. The course load is now comparable to that of other graduate schools. There has been an increase in seminars, colloquia, term papers, etc. More emphasis has been put on independent study and research. In the past, the workload was much lighter, possibly in consideration of the mornings spent in Talmud study.

As a natural result of these changes, the drop-out rate from Revel has increased, although not as much as was anticipated. On the other hand, the student base has begun to widen, with more applicants from other schools and more women applicants. Hopefully, more students will apply as the changes take root and become more widely known.



—B.H.

There are certain areas of study in which Revel is lacking. There is insufficient emphasis on the Eastern European and Gaonic period. The problem in these areas is getting qualified teachers. A teacher would have to be knowledgeable in *halakha*, and a *lamdon*, in addition to having the tools necessary for historical research. For Eastern Europe, one would, needless to say, have to know Russian and Polish, as well as being versed in the history of the area. Revel students are probably the only ones who possess the first set of characteristics. The problem is acquiring the other.

The administration is taking steps in conjunction with YIVO which will broaden its Eastern European courses, and hopefully, in the course of time, will produce people qualified to teach those areas.

Exegesis

Perhaps Revel's most pressing need is for *Parshanut Hamiqrah*, Biblical exegesis. Unquestioningly, a teacher of *Parshanut* must be a *yirai shamayim*. A rigorous training in *Tanach* and *parshanut*, obviously a prerequisite for teaching, has been sorely lacking in America where *chumash* with *Rashi* taught by rote is the rule. Revel must turn to Israel, where there are several qualified people. Most prominent among them is Nechama Leibowitz. An invitation was extended to her the first day that Dr. Soloveitchik assumed the deanship, but she declined to leave Israel for any cause or purpose. Dr.

The Editor-in-Chief and the Governing Board express heartfelt condolences to Associate Editor Ronald Mitnick on the passing of his father. *Hamakom yanachem oicha b'choch sh'ar aveiltei tzion viyrushalayim.*

Soloveitchik is optimistic that, with the incoming of Dr. Maori for two years, Revel will begin the development of a solid department in *parshanut*. At present, Dr. Sokolow teaches courses in *parshanut*, and several of Dr. Steiner's linguistic courses are being given as much of a biblical slant as possible.

Regarding Jewish philosophy, the question must be raised what is or is not central to the subject. For instance, Dr. Soloveitchik doubts whether Buber and Rosenzweig constitute what can properly be called Modern Jewish Philosophy. Their philosophy is probably not indigenously Jewish. In order to give these philosophers meaning, they would have to be taught in the context of 19th century German philosophical tradition and in comparison with other theological thinkers of their day. Moreover the degree of their impact on the Jewish community, barring small intellectual circles, is questionable. What should be substituted for Modern Jewish philosophy is Jewish thought. After the 15th century, Jewish thought reverted from formal philosophy to *Machshavah Yehudit* taking the discursive form of *drashot*, commentaries, and ethical works. The writings of *Hassidut*, *Mitnagdut*, and *Mussar*, are more authentic repositories of modern Jewish thought. In this area, there are few people available and Revel will have to become more competitive before it can attract them.

Revel is unique in the character of the student body. The 16 years of Talmud background that many of the students have created a potentially great reservoir of talent. *Bnei Torah* can apply their backgrounds to become commanding forces in other areas of Jewish studies.

When asked why these students would attend Revel as opposed to different Jewish studies programs, Dr. Soloveitchik responded by pointing to his personal distaste for "selling" tactics. A school must stand on its intellectual excellence. "We are trying to offer you a school where we can say: Here you can come to study and to know."

JOEY

(Continued from Page 8) written for HAMEVASER during the past five years in the various capacities I have held on the newspaper. Certainly I have gained much from the experience, as I hope others have benefited from my efforts. Now as always, I feel that only HAMEVASER serves the important function in YU as the spokesman for the thinking student, but because of the larger identity crisis in YU, HAMEVASER is suffering from the fallout effects of a less than knowledgeable and sensitive student body. Nevertheless, I hope for a strong future for HAMEVASER and I am confident that the new governing board will continue to contribute to the religious life in YU. As I bid farewell to my career in HAMEVASER, I thank all those in YU who have guided and influenced my education. I shall always be indebted to them for their concern and for their warmth, but above all, for the knowledge they have given me to live a life of Torah, *avodah*, *ug'milut chasadim*.

by David Seidman

The works of Moritz Daniel Oppenheim and Isidor Kaufmann, 19th century Jewish painters, are representative of Jewish life at that time as well as the dominant styles of art of the period. An exhibit devoted to the works of these two artists, "Families and Feasts," is on exhibit at the Yeshiva University Museum from April 24 to June 17.

Both painters depict the Jews of their age in portraits and genre paintings. Oppenheim (c.1800-1882), working in Frankfurt, captures the opulent character of the German Jewish community in accurate individual portraiture and group scenes of Jews at *shul* and home. Individuals, families, and communities are depicted celebrating the *Yamim Tovim*, *Purim*, and *Bur Mirzot*. Of the ten Oppenheim offering on display, half are monochromatic oils. His paintings represent an impressive historical record of the life of the Jews in the early enlightenment, and their appeal to the Jews of Frankfurt was based on this

nostalgic value.

Kaufmann (1853-1921), a Viennese painter, focused on the community in the *beit medrash* as well as in the synagogue. The six original oils as well as the numerous reproductions chosen for the exhibit are strikingly accurate, and real. Kaufmann may well be thought of as the Jewish "Norman Rockwell." His sincere portraits of simple Jews in their natural surroundings reveal a great depth of emotion both in the painter and in his subjects.

The museum has recreated a room from the period to accompany the paintings along with ritual objects, furniture, and textiles of the 19th century Jewish home. In addition assorted Judaica from the time are exhibited alongside the paintings.

"The strength of every artist is derived from his nation," was Isidor Kaufmann's motto. His paintings, and those of Moritz Oppenheim bear this out and make "Families and Feasts" an exhibit worth seeing.

Chassidut Defended

(Continued from Page 6)

University, *Torah Vodaath*, *Chaim Berlin*, or *JTS*. Styles and methods may differ, perhaps, but the ultimate source is the same everywhere. Does the Cleveland rabbi consider the other *yeshivot* to be "removed from the mainstream of society?" Yet, he levels that charge against Lubavitch. He hasn't a leg to stand on. If anything, the Lubavitch movement is in the mainstream more so than any other group. It is the Lubavitchers who bring their "Mitzvah tanks" to the "mainstream" areas, such as 34th street, Fifth Ave, or the downtown business centers of so many major cities. It is they who speak with the "mainstream" Jews running down the streets, and actively get involved in helping these people return to "mainstream" Judaism — to the study of *Torah* and the performance of *Mitzvot*.

If a doctor heals a child's wound inflicted by the child's parents, has the doctor caused a rebellion between parent and child? Certainly not. Many of the young people who come to Lubavitch are suffering from the deep, spiritual wound of having to grow up without a Jewish education. The wounds are inflicted by the parents, either because having been brought up the same way, they know no better, or deliberately, because they who tried to "escape" Judaism would have their children do the same. Lubavitch knows the wounds are not fatal; the patients can be restored to complete spiritual health, by means of *Torah* education. Does that mean Lubavitch drives a wedge between parents and their children? How we all wish, hope and yearn for the day when the parents will follow their kids back to *Yiddishkeit!* Lubavitch incessantly works toward that end, urging mothers to teach daughters how to keep a kosher household, how to usher in *Shabbat*. Fathers are told to teach parts of the *Torah* to even their youngest toddlers. The *Torah* can bring families back together, and Lubavitch wants to see it happen.

Lubavitch is not a "cult." The "Moonies" are a cult, run by an evil dictator who brainwashes his victims, forbids all questioning and prevents members from thinking for themselves. The Moon cult is highly selective about its recruits. Those considered too "streetwise" are not sought, because they are not easily susceptible to the brainwashing. The leader of the cult is a fraud who seeks wealth and power. He and his people share absolutely nothing — I repeat, nothing — in common with Lubavitch. The Lubavitch appeal is worldwide. It is based on *Torah* — true principles and ideals. Young people coming to Lubavitch are encouraged to ask, to learn, and to understand their religion. No Jew is ever turned away.

There can be no doubt that the *Rebbe* is one of the greatest *Torah* scholars of our day. Many hundreds of thousands of people around the globe, from Australia to Israel and all across the United States, hear him speak at the periodic *farbrengens*, where he uses no notes or aids, but recites and discusses many *Torah* topics, for up to six hours. World leaders respect and admire him. Zalman Shazar, the late President of Israel, always visited two important people whenever he came to this country. One was the President of the United States. Guess who the other was.

The *Rebbe* is the seventh in a line of extraordinary leaders of this extraordinary movement. The heritage, which goes back some two centuries, is impressive in its tradition and its total devotion to *Torah*.

Perhaps there's a twinge of envy in the Cleveland rabbi's scornful remarks, for, can he ever hope to achieve even a small measure of the tremendous admiration given to the one he has chosen to attack? If he really believes everything he has said, then we should feel sorry for him. But, we should feel even more sorry for the members of his Fairmount Temple, who look to him as their link to Judaism. What a shame. What a rotten shame!

Contributing Farewell

Whither Goes YU? Joseph Epstein

One can only be impressed by the hustle and bustle of activity around YU caused by the activities of the Presidential Planning Commission (PPC). For nearly the entire academic year, numerous task forces and subcommittees involving hundreds of participants have been seeking to discover the new approaches needed to improve "the quality and vitality of our academic environment" in the upcoming years.

The efforts are indeed laudatory. Nobody doubts the need for some long overdue changes in YU. The formation of the PPC shows the commitment of the new administration to these changes. It has been challenged whether the PPC is the correct forum to evolve these changes, but only time will tell the validity of this assertion.

I am more concerned with a different aspect of this search. With all the activity, one gets the impression that even more fundamental issues are being overlooked. These basic problems should be the areas of chief concern in any evaluation of the structure of YU. What exactly should be the character of YU? For what reason should YU exist at all? In what areas do its primary contributions and responsibilities lie?

No Presidential commission is being formed to discuss these crucial issues although I believe they underlie much of the uneasiness which is felt around the

school. The issues involve a confusion of priorities and a conflict of emphases. At stake, is the entire existence and direction of a school. YU is at a crossroads and it must choose its future course.

This fundamental issue boils down to what I believe, to be two divergent directions. There are those who believe that YU must forcibly reassert itself as the leader of the Torah community, and as the institutional embodiment of Modern Orthodoxy. It must educate not only through the classroom but through community action. On the other hand, there are those who believe that YU must be first and foremost (if not exclusively) an educational institution whose responsibility is to educate and not be placed in the compromising situation of having to support or advocate a certain philosophy or ideology.

In question is the exact meaning of *Torah Umadah*, although no one disagrees with the motto. Is Torah to permeate and direct every aspect of the institution or is to be departmentalized to the confines of the Jewish studies divisions? Is this confusion which must be cleared up in order for YU to break out of the listlessness which has enveloped it for several years.

The realities of our contemporary Jewish community dictate that YU must define its purpose. The needs of the Jewish community are great and con-

stantly expanding. The great expansion of other *yeshivot*, institutions, and programs attest to these changes. YU was once the leader in these changes but during the past few years it has failed to keep up. Other institutions have outflanked it and the leadership it once solely claimed is being challenged on all sides.

If YU is having difficulty attracting quality students, then perhaps the reason for this problem is that others schools are better serving their needs. And I don't think the problem lies in the realm of secular studies. Based on the upsurge in Torah education, I would think the problem would lie in the religious education area, both formal and informal.

The Empire building days of YU must come to an end. One cannot solve the problems of YU with building more buildings and programs. The issue that confronts YU is one which cuts to the very heart of what YU is and should be. For too long the problem has been ignored, or explained away. Now is the time of reckoning and direction must be given.

The turning point of this confusion was the secularization issue of 1969-1970. Few students are still around who remember the issue of that day but all are affected by its aftermath. I was here at the time and I remember clearly the bitterness, charges and countercharges which accompanied the amending of the YU charter to

exclude RIETS. I remember the student protests and the administration assurances. I believe history has vindicated the students' concern even though by outward appearances nothing has changed. But internally much has changed. From that day onward, YU retreated into a religious cocoon and out of necessity and by PR directive started to apologize for and to cover up its religious character. One gets the impression from certain administrators that YU is suffering from religious schizophrenia. "Religious studies" have become Jewish studies, "Torah and *hata'cha*" have been dropped from all YU publications. Saturday replaced "Shabbat" and RIETS became an affiliate. One wonders what keeps the entire structure together.

Institutions such as JTS and HUC along with their affiliated rabbinical and congregational arms are the clear leaders of their movements. No one can have any doubt of their commitment to educational leadership through action. But YU is different. Somehow the academic call has obfuscated its primary responsibility of Orthodox leadership. As an institution, YU has lost the lead and it is being outflanked by numerous institutions which are serving the growing need for religious leadership in the Jewish community.

Such decisions go to the heart of what *Torah Umadah* is all about.

Let us not delude ourselves that a secular body such as the PPC can possibly define the religious nature of YU. The PPC itself is an illustration of this confusion. If YU is fundamentally a religious institution then what help would an outside University consultant service have in reordering the religious priorities of YU? And if YU is not a fundamentally religious institution, then what is the *raison d'être* of YU and for what purpose does it exist?

Perhaps in the high levels of the administration a conflict does not exist. Perhaps in their minds a harmonious picture of YU emerges. But on the lower levels, and specifically on the student level, this confusion of direction has caused a breakdown in confidence in the policies of an administration which itself is unsure of where it is going.

It is my feeling that the unique contribution of YU lies in the Torah realm. True it must synthesize Torah and *Mada* but it never must lose sight of its primary purpose and responsibility to the Orthodox Jewish community. If it will, I feel that the needed leadership will come from elsewhere and YU will pass into history with a glorious past but no viable future.

This is the last of the approximately thirty articles I have (Continued on Page 7)

Contributing Views

Causality (Among Other Things) Danny Landes

Danny Landes, former Contributing editor, was asked to take a look around and present an evaluation. He filed this report:

Once I told them that I graduated from RIETS they left me alone. I was too *frum* to need immediate help, and too *krum* to be changed in one *shabbos*. Besides I was *mishpacha* to their hosts, who gave them strict instructions to keep off my back. A *modus vivendi* was found and the Sabbath passed quite pleasantly.

Saturday night I planned to hit some of the sights of this West Coast city that I had just landed in. But in honor of the *Bar-Mitzvah* that we were attending, my fellow guests held a festive *Melaveh Malkeh*. These fellows, members of a chassidic sect, noted among other things for their celebrations, were pretty good at it. We just sort of hung out, sang songs and I could dig it. The vodka helped. They also told stories, and the themes for the night were the amazing events that befall the Jewish people dependent upon the perfectability of their religious appliances. Thus a number of souls in an Israeli village met their doom in a terrorist attack because of missing letters in their *mezuzot*. Then again a South American man with a damaged right ventricle escaped heart surgery (the doctors were amazed!) when his *mezuzah* with a missing *bet* in *al l'vov'cho* was replaced. (One had to wonder whether if they had fixed his heart would the word have sprouted a letter).

It was all quite inspirational but after a while they began to run out

of incidents to report and began to get a bit glum. I felt that I had to do my share.

"I also know of a *ma'aseh*..." I began hesitantly. Encouraged by the nods of my bearded brethren, I continued: "There was a man who was an incurable alcoholic. He was a *frummer yid* but he couldn't stop drinking. His family tried many *aiyos* but nothing seemed to work. Then..."

All eyes were upon me. This story was obviously hard for an outsider to confess.

"Somebody suggested that they check his *tephillin*. They looked and found that instead of a *zayin* in *l'maan tisk'ru* there was a *shin*."

Silently exchanging the letter, the group soon realized that the drunk was binding to his arm every day an injunction to get drunk. As one man we all burst into a fervent *niggun*. While we scaled the heights of a wordless song, a voice suddenly, incredulously, cried out from the back: "That *parsha* isn't in *tephillin*."

"Well," I mumbled while beating a retreat from the room, "that's why he was incurable."

Rational discourse has always had a precarious existence within the Orthodox Jewish community. Complex issues often are "solved" through recourse to simplistic formulas. It's not the *chassidim* that bother me — people who settle their disputes out of the streets are too easy of a target. What I'm afraid of is that the same sort of, what Hirsch called "magical mechanism" has taken root in the thinking of our sector. For

example, if you question one group of dedicated students about certain problems you essentially get answers in syllables, not words:

The future of American Jewry! "*Aliyah!*" Israel's social problems! "*Chinuch!*" Israel's economic problems! "*Pashtut!*" Its foreign policy? "*Hitnachlut!*" Isn't all that naive? "*Eminah!*"

Each answer is accompanied by a fierce *Maharat* — induced look, and the solid thud of a fist striking the table.

The specific issues are not the point. The attitude is. Part of the problem seems to be the assumption that all of the answers already have been formulated and one merely has to look it up. Recently I bumped into a bright *semicha* student who, invited to speak on a certain topic, was rummaging through back issues of *Tradition* in the library. I mentioned that since the problem was quite new he probably wouldn't find anything of much use. He probably would have to go back to the *gemara* and then think out the implications. My friend's reaction was one of surprise. He pointed to his copy of the *Conspectus* and Yaron's book on Rav Kook as if to say the answer must be there and said "Worse comes to worst, I'll give them a chassidic story." This, of course, is where we came in.

Synthesis is in trouble. The truth is that the synthesis of Torah and of wisdom has always been a limited affair, confined to certain areas and addressed to certain problems. That, of course, hurts.

We may well expect that a *Ben Torah* who is an anthropologist could have something to contribute to a discussion of the responsible claims of feminism or that structuralist account of *mitzvot* would be valuable. A *frum* Orientalist might even have something better to offer than Shmulkie Bernstein's (as improbable as that might seem). But we are a small community and we shall always be limited in our resources. The real problem is that the synthesis with those disciplines that we encounter has been misunderstood. Synthesis is an ongoing process, constantly confronting a new antithesis which requires still another resolution. More importantly, as Maimonides instructs us, this process must be taken up anew by anyone who chooses to understand and to believe.

I fear that the healthy skepticism

which marks the Orthodox response to the claims of Western civilization has led to an uncritical rejection which cannot even differentiate between the dangerous and the trivial, much less accept that which is valuable and necessary. The answer is not added courses in *machshavah* and "modern problems." The answer starts with an excellent Talmudic education and an excellent college education. The former, while always in need of constant strengthening, is to be found at Yeshiva. The latter stands in need of a re-evaluation. A new dean is to be appointed by the administration. This is a crucial decision for the Yeshiva and for the venture of synthesis. We have not travelled this long road to be a religious cult famous for lunatic fringes that hang from "every corner. The future can be a bright one.

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