

# THE JEWISH OBSERVER

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## למען ציון לא אחשה!

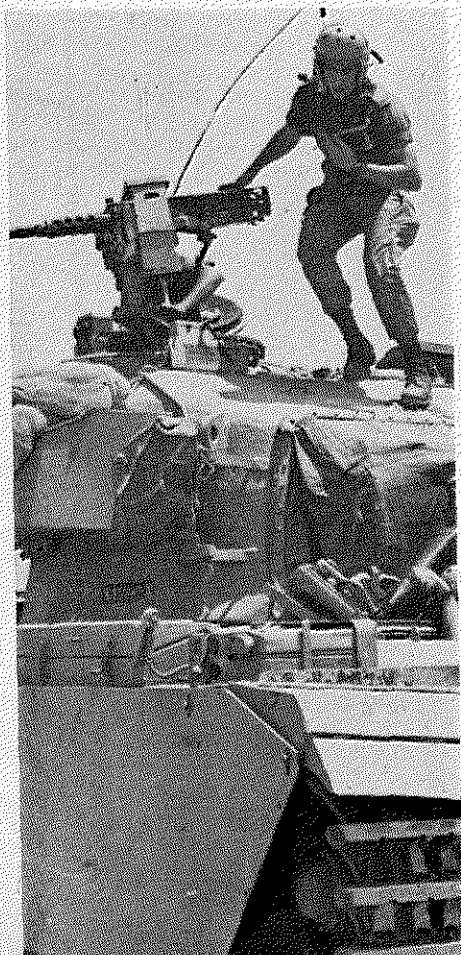
*A Statement of the Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah of America*

*"For Zion's Sake I Will Not Keep Silent"*

Our brothers in Eretz Yisroel are exposed to mortal danger. Egypt has reared its head; and surrounding hostile nations have taken counsel with her. They have allied with each other with one thought: "Come let us

wipe them out as a nation; let the name of Israel [*chas v'sholom*] be remembered no more."

A terror takes us in its grasp when we contemplate this thought, and from the depths of our souls the call comes forth: 'Can our brothers go off to war, while we  
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Psychology and Its Limitations

Training the Jewish Child

Some Thoughts on Early Marriage

The Nocturnal Slumber of Atzeres

"For Me Was the World Created"

The Loneliness of the Rabbi

COMMENTS ON:

*War in Israel*

*Dissent in Reform*

*"Improving" Tradition*

*The Bar-Mitzva Safari*

# THE JEWISH OBSERVER

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JUNE 1967 VOL. IV, No. 5



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# למען ציון לא אחשה!

## קריאה נואת נוועצת גדולי התורה בארצות הברית

(Continued from front cover)

sit in silence? We would be found sinful were we to remain silent at a time such as this—sinning against G-d and Israel.

It is for this reason that we turn with a strong and sacred call to our Jewish brothers wherever they may be.

In every House of Prayer, following *Shacharis* each day, the following chapters of *Tehilim* should be read: 20, 80, 83; followed by the tefilo "*Acheinu kol beis Yisroel, u'bifrat yoshvei Eretz Yisroel . . .*" [the traditional prayer for all Jews suffering adversity, with particular emphasis on Jews living in Eretz Yisroel.—trans.]

We also call upon the students of the yeshivos to intensify their Torah study, and to spend additional hours beyond the normal periods; to pray with intensity—in a spirit of supplication, for the peace of our brothers who live in Eretz Yisroel.

*Let Those Who Call G-d's Name Not Be Silent!*

We turn to our Jewish brothers to quickly mobilize all of their means and resources for the benefit of the inhabitants of Eretz Yisroel, and to meet their many great needs in this hour; to concern themselves with the maintenance of the many institutions of Torah, the surviving remnants of learning in our beloved land; and to provide for the *tzedaka* and *chesed* institutions which look for their support to the generosity of our Jewish brothers in America.

May the Almighty's words to the prophet soon be fulfilled: "But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend. You whom I took from the ends of the earth, and called you from its farthest corners; and I said to you *You are my servant—I have chosen you and not cast you off*—do not be afraid for I am with you; do not be dismayed for I am your G-d. I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with My victorious right hand. Behold, all who are incensed against you shall be put to shame and confounded; those who strive against you shall be as nothing and shall perish. You shall seek those who contend with you, but you shall not find them; those who make war against you shall be as nothing at all. For I, the Lord your G-d, hold your right hand, and it is I who say to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'"

By the grace of G-d, Iyar 21, 5727

(Our translation from the Hebrew)

*The Jewish Observer* / June, 1967

אחינו בארץ ישראל נתונים בצרה גדולה. מצרים נשאה ראש. ואתה הצרים מסביב נועצו יחדיו, כולם ברית יכרותון לאמר: לנו ונכחידם מגוי ולא יזכר ח"ו שם ישראל עוד.

העדה תאחזנו בהעלותנו כל זה על לבנו, ומעומק נפשנו בוקעת הקריאה: האחינו יצאו למלחמה ואנו נשב כאן ונדום? הלא אם החרש נחריש לעת כזאת ומצאנו ח"ו עוון וחטאנו לאלוקים וישראל.

אי לזאת אנו פונים בקריאת קודש ועוז לאחינו בני ישראל בכל מקומות מושבותיהם:

בכל בתי כנסיות יאמרו בציבור מדי יום ביומו, אחרי תפילת שחרית, פרקי תהלים הבאים: כ"פ—פ"ג, ולאחריהם תאמר תפילת „אחינו כל בית ישראל ובפרט יושבי ארץ ישראל הנתונים בצרה ובשבי וכו' וכו' המקום ירחם עליהם וכו'".

כן נקראים תלמידי הישיבות הק' להגביר חילם לאורייתא, להוסיף שעות על זמני הלימודים הקבועים בישיבה, ולהרבות בתפילה ובתחנונים לשלום אחינו דרי ארץ הקודש.

### המוזכרים את ה' אל דמי לכם!

פונים אנחנו לאחב"י להחליץ חושים בהונם ובאונם לטובת תושבי ארץ ישראל ולספק צרכיהם הגדולים והמרובים בשעה זו, ולדאוג לקיומם של מוסדות התורה הרבים, שארית פליטת סופרנו בארץ המדתנו, לרבות מוסדות הצדקה והחסד אשר עיניהם צופיות לנדיבות של אחב"י בארצות הברית.

ויהי רצון שיקויים דבר ה' ביד נביאו: ואתה ישראל עבדי יעקב אשר בחרתיך וכו' אל תירא וכו' עמך אני, וכו' הן ייבושו וייכלמו כל הנחרים בך, יהיו כאין ויאבדו אנשי ריבך, וכו' יהיו כאפס אנשי מלחמתך, כי אני ה' אלוקיך מחזיק ימינך האומר לך אל תירא אני עזרתך.

בע"ה, כ"א אייר תשכ"ז

### מועצת גדולי התורה בארצות הברית

- (—) יעקב קמנצקי
- (—) יעקב יצחק הלוי רודמן
- (—) יצחק הוטנר
- (—) ישראל שפירא (האדמו"ר מבלאזוב)
- (—) מרדכי שלמה פרידמאן (האדמו"ר מכא"א)
- (—) מרדכי שלום יוסף פרידמאן (האדמו"ר מסריגורא)
- (—) משה פיינשטיין
- (—) נחום מרדכי פרלוב (האדמו"ר מנובומינסק)

(השמות לפי סדר הא"ב)



Yaakov Greenwald

# Psychology and Its Limitations

## *An Orthodox Analyst Examines His Profession*

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The following article treats a most sensitive and complex area of concern. It is technical, but it has been written for the general reader. Yet the nature of the subject matter may make it heavy reading. We respectfully suggest that more than one reading will be amply rewarding. We welcome your reactions. —THE EDITOR

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A SIXTEEN-YEAR OLD yeshiva student walks into my office. From his interrupted, nervous, apprehensive talk, a story of anxiety, emotional conflict and suffering begins to unfold.

A principal sits in his office pondering whether to accept the young child before him into the first grade of his day school.

A father and mother sit late into the night discussing the difficulties they are having with the religious convictions of their teen-age daughter.

A young married couple struggle in the throes of adjusting to each other, contemplating the rabbi's decision that they seek reconciliation.

THE SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD is in the office of a psychoanalyst; the principal searches his mind for an answer in the psychology courses he took in college; the mother's thinking is saturated with articles she has read in the women's magazines on bringing up teen-age children; and the young couple are up on the latest books on psychology and marriage. For generations these problems were problems of living—today they are "psychological problems"—we are a sophisticated generation. In the lives of these people and nearly every one of us, in a subtle—and sometimes not so subtle—way—psychology and *Yiddishkeit* have made a point of contact. It is the nature of this point of contact that we will here examine.

THERE HAS BEEN MUCH discussion on the subject by rabbis and psychologists generally offering differing points of view. To some, the two disciplines are as irreconcilable as are black magic and scientific agriculture; others see no need for discussion since there is no real conflict at all; to still others a synthesis of the two, a sort of 'marriage' would be the ideal answer to man's suffering.

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DR. YAAKOV GREENWALD is a musmach of Torah Vodaath and a practicing psychoanalyst specializing in the problems of adolescents and young adults.

These opinions fall into two general approaches. The exponents of *Yiddishkeit* and psychology, respectively, who hold their teaching to be irreconcilable, rarely get a clear glimpse of each other—a provincialism that is common to specialization and expertness in one particular area. From ideological and emotional fortifications well established in advance, they fire arguments and sharp criticism at each other in a constant volley of articles, books and sermons.

Those who see no conflict at all between *Yiddishkeit* and psychology, or those who view the conflict as so minor as to justify complete collaboration, have fallen victim to a superficiality motivated by a strong wish (albeit a sincere one) to make peace with the 'new science.' In the desire to bring about such collaboration, or even a synthesis, some rabbis and psychologists have glossed over or minimized some of the salient differences and conflicts between the two. Neither of these approaches—the shaking of fists or complete collaboration—offer a satisfactory solution.

It would be well to approach our subject by clearly and responsibly delineating the areas of conflict, for there are such areas. This is necessary for the sake of truth, but in addition, a practical gain will then and *only then* follow. It is necessary to evaluate the possibility of accepting specific areas of psychology, of adapting and, where necessary, modifying these areas to fit our needs, within the framework and structure of a *Daas Torah*. In this effort, our guide must be a deep sensitivity for those who suffer and hope of betterment for all of us who live in these times that are so trying for man's soul.

Our task may be unpleasant—most of us prefer that there be no conflict between Torah and the sciences, particularly in so critical an area as our very own being. What makes the task so difficult, and adds confusion and conflict as well, is that even finding a language that will be 'understood' by both sides is a problem. Words, even with the help of the best dictionaries, mean different things to different people in different professions. For example, to a psychoanalyst so common a term as 'anxiety,' may mean: *an unpleasant affect (feeling tone) accompanied by or expressed via certain visceral, sensory, motor or ideational phenomena due to a 'damming up' of energy in the psychic apparatus because of an unconscious concern that its expression in*

thought, words, or action will result in some form of injury to the self. Not all psychologists would agree to this definition and many a rabbi or layman might find it confusing. (A good example will be the reader's own first reaction). To a rabbi 'anxiety' might be defined as a state of apprehension with physical and mental manifestations, brought about by deep feelings of guilt as an outgrowth of sin or lack of genuine *bitochon*. Certainly not all rabbis will agree with this definition, let alone all psychologists. As we go on to more complex and abstract terms such as free will, determinism, fear, guilt, love, sin, asceticism, and suppression, our difficulties multiply intensely.

WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY? What is it concerned with that could be in conflict with *Yiddishkeit*? Psychology is generally accepted as a 'positive,' not a 'normative,' discipline; that is, *its basic task is to describe, classify and—if it can—explain the facts of mental life similar to the way physics and chemistry deal with the facts of the material universe*. Like the physical sciences it should have no real concern for values as such. It need only take the facts as it finds them and not presume to pass judgment on their desirability or undesirability. Theoretically speaking, few if any psychologists would disagree with this statement. Yet in fact, psychology when compared to these other sciences is unique. Values happen to be the very substance of mental life and since psychology's task is the study of mental life it is also necessarily concerned with the examination of those values as basic aspects of mental life. In this respect it clearly differs from physics and chemistry which never directly confront values, since values do not directly appertain to material matters as such. Secondly, in all branches of knowledge we must distinguish between *pure* and *applied* science. Whereas pure science is concerned with things as they are—its only aim being knowledge for the sake of knowledge—applied science seeks to utilize this knowledge for the attainment of certain ends. These ends are assumed to be desirable, consequently implying certain values over and above the 'pure' value of truth and knowledge for its own sake. It would then follow that 'pure' psychology would have as its task the accumulation of clinical and experimental data in the hope of formulating certain general rules as to the functioning of the mental process; constructing a coherent network of propositions which would account for the psychological unfolding or development of man; and explaining his mode of behaviour. Applied psychology would then take this knowledge and translate it into living, in order to modify, improve, or change the present way of living for the betterment of the human being as an individual, and the collective individual—society.

It is obvious then, that psychological theories are bound up with specific value-judgments. Psychology,

whether pure or applied, is more than a science, it is rather "an entire climate of opinion." It is fairly evident, in the development of psychological thought, that the violently dynamic, sweeping and impulsive trend of Freud's psychoanalysis at the turn of the century (from the perspective in which we see it today) was a reaction to the barrenness and aridity that characterized the medical and psychological attitudes of the past generation toward personality, behaviour, mind and soul. It was a violent reaction against a sterile school psychology, a blast of revolutionary wind which swept away a thick layer of dust which had settled on the brain of man.

Reactions to psychoanalysis were extreme: on the one hand acceptance, enthusiasm and belief in its power of salvation; on the other hand rejection, condemnation and utter disgust. As years passed, it became more and more evident that what started simply as a therapeutic technique to alleviate the suffering of a group of illnesses which had not yielded successfully to the organic approach of medicine, was now spreading its young wings to become much more than a psychotherapeutic tool. Psychoanalysis, which had strongly influenced the entire field of psychology, was presenting a new world view—a *Weltanschauung* all its own.

Presently, scientists in disciplines outside psychology, students of the arts and literature, and theologians, found that the 'new psychology' infringed upon their spheres—and it could no longer be ignored. Physiologists were faced with the realization that not only does physiology make psychology but that psychological factors result in dramatic physiological changes, and it was this realization that gave birth to psychosomatic medicine. Sociology was awakened from its slumber and anthropology was stimulated to new and far-reaching research. Child-rearing systems evolving from new concepts of avoidance of anxiety led to radical inroads in the fields of teaching and learning, giving rise to 'progressive' education. Then followed a period when everything and everybody was analyzed: entire cultures and societies, saints and systems, mythologies, the great dramas, humor, artists, political leaders—and religion. Religion as an institutionalized system of beliefs and practices came under the sharp scrutiny of the new psychology. It saw religion, as well as other social and cultural institutions, however useful or unuseful, not as a revelation of man's Creator, but as an expression of the creativity of the unconscious. Just as it saw the monarchical form of government as a political expression of the child's view of the family with the powerful father at the head, so too was religion declared to be an expression of unconscious and primitive needs of man.

HERE IS THE FIRST and major conflict between *Yiddish-*

*keit* and psychology, from which flow two other basic differences between the Torah view and psychology: the origin of morality and the content of a moral code. In contradiction to the religious Jew who views morality as the Will of G-d and the Torah as His moral code, psychology again turns to its data, observed and first encountered in the neurotic and psychotic patients it has studied, as well as the normal people of differing cultures, the myths, the art and literature of civilizations, to find the roots and developmental history of man's morality and his codes. Thus, psychology demanded a totally revised view of 'hostility' and 'destruction,' of the nature of anxiety, of the sources of guilt and shame, of love and hate, of the ways in which attitudes develop and emotional life grows, of how conscience and character are formed and developed, of how the social and moral behavior of the individual—and the group—is motivated; in short, of what is 'good' and 'bad' in human behavior. This, of course, impinges in many ways upon *Toras Moshe*—the moral code of the Orthodox Jew.

How then must a Jew view this new psychology with its vast accumulation of clinical and theoretical data? My answer to this question will be limited since it is the thinking of one person, the outgrowth of one's own experiences and personal orientation. However, it seems clear that the three above-mentioned aspects of psychology to which Torah objects are the direct result of a limitation inherent in the approach of psychology. Though psychology has presented us with a most impressive picture of the human mind, *it is itself a product of this same human mind*. And when man's mind concentrates on an uncharted area of human existence, it almost always aggrandizes this one area to become its own universe, making it the central factor and the prime reality of all. Thus man, in developing theories in general and those related to himself in particular, will necessarily formulate his world view in such a way as to integrate what *he* knows with what *he* needs, since he must go on living even while he builds his theories.

Psychology, due to its success in plowing through the previously uncharted field of the unconscious, structured its psychic apparatus by placing the instincts, the id, and the unconscious drives at its core. The simple, yet far-reaching distortion, was to see the psyche as total man. An unfortunate result of this distortion is the deterministic outlook of psychology which led to the denial of human free will, since the psyche was envisioned as functioning in accordance with certain set psychological 'rules.'

AS A PRACTICING ANALYST, I choose to see this 'psychic apparatus' that psychology has structured so well, as a vital expression of the *neshomo* (soul)—as much an instrument (though more complex) of the *neshomo* as our neuro-muscular system or our sensory motor sys-

tems are expressions of the living *neshomo*. (I use the term *neshomo* loosely, aware that there is *nefesh*, *ruach*, *neshomo*, each expressing a higher form corresponding to action, speech, and thought; see *Braishis Raba* 14, *Derech Hashem*, Ch. II). In this perspective, the psyche is not a separate nor a complete entity (as seen by psychology, which in theory professes neutrality but in practice must deny the concept of *neshomo*), but rather a functional instrument of the *neshomo* that reacts and behaves in a certain way in response to stimuli. These stimuli come from without—from the outside world through our five senses which we are so very familiar with—and from within—from a host of forces within us, which we are less familiar with. Thus, man through his *neshomo* is master to exercise his *bechira*, his free choice, for the 'psychic apparatus' is not a self-contained entity but a tool of the *neshomo*.

This tool of the *neshomo* which we call the unconscious has a basic limitation in the manner it expresses its reactions. It expresses its bio-psychological responses by means of an unconscious imagery that is its own language, a language of symbols and images self-contradictory in nature, a battle of drives plastically and dynamically represented. It matters not to this unconscious what subject it is expressing itself on. Whether it be a social, economic or religious matter, it will always use this unique, intimate, paralogical, irrational manner of primitive representation which is 'non-realistic' in nature. This would then explain why in studies of man's unconscious as well as in Torah studies, we find aspects that are similar to primitive imagery. For what else could be found in that area where the *neshomo* expresses itself in a language of the unconscious? And does not *Yiddishkeit* fulfill all the needs of a Jew, on all levels, from the most primitive to the most sophisticated. It certainly would be illogical to deny the pervading value of a religious experience merely because our unconscious is unable to describe or designate these experiences completely in any other way except in the language of the unconscious.

IF THIS PSYCHIC APPARATUS, structured by psychology, is not the whole of man, what is? Let us turn to the Torah, *the only absolute truth known to man*. At the end of the Creation, the Torah tells us ויצר ה' אלקים את האדם עפר מן האדמה — "G-d formed man from earth, the lowest form of creation, — ויפח באפיו נשמת חיים — and He blew into his nostrils a *nishmas chayim* — ויהי האדם לנפש חי — and man became a living *nefesh*. Onkeles deviates from the usual translation to render רוח ממללא — *נפש חי* — רוח ממללא — a *ruach* that speaks, and Rashi comments, "This *nefesh* of man has more life than all other creatures for there has been added in him intelligence and speech." The Zohar on ויפח, comments that He who blows—blows from His innermost Self. This is the Torah concept of total man—his *neshomo* a חלק מאלוהים; one of its kind, highly individualistic,



unique in its oneness, endowed with life to fulfill a particular task that can be fulfilled by no other *neshomo* or creation in the cosmos, at a particular time in history which no other time can ever replace. In the long history of this *neshomo* there is a very short span of time in which it is bound to the physical. During that time man shares 'being' with the rocks, 'living growth' with the plants, 'sensing existence' with the animals, 'reasoning intelligence' with the angels, but unity of the *neshomo* . . . with G-d alone.

Since the first thought conceived by the first man, since the first word uttered by *Adom Horishon*, man—through his two remarkable gifts of intelligence and speech—has gone through infinite changes. We call these changes living. For close to six thousand years, billions of human beings have engaged and are now engaging all of their lives—every second, every hour, every day, in a process of accommodating our changing selves to changed and unchanged surroundings; the *neshomo* can never rest. When we fail in this task, we are foolish and sometimes sinners. When we fail flagrantly we are mad, when we give up the task completely, we are dead. In quiet and seemingly uneventful lives, these changes—both internal and external—are so small that there is little strain in the process of accommodation. In other lives there is great strain, but to meet that great strain there is also great strength in accommodation; in still others the strain is there but little or no accommodating power—at this point the psychic apparatus is no longer amenable to the guidance of the *neshomo*—these are the mentally ill. The lines of demarcation are not easily drawn. Those who have gained some understanding of the human mind, or those who have suffered the more painful kind of change, have more wisdom. They know that no one is immune from the variations; some are only immune from the awareness of them.

THE TOOLS TO COPE with these changes, to utilize these changes for the fulfillment of man's purpose on earth, and the source of strength to balance the great strain, are the Torah and *Mitzvos* of G-d, as explained by our Sages. If we strip psychology of its scientific aura and its sometimes cumbersome and complex terminology, and look upon it as a way to handle these changes, an art of living, then psychology is unlike other sciences in respect to the role of our Sages. It is generally accepted that they did not occupy themselves with the sciences, though they express some remarkable insights in this area. Science was viewed as a necessary useful tool for the understanding of many halochos, such as astronomical calculations for fixing the Jewish calendar. Since psychology is the study related to man's mind, his behavior, his way of life, then this is the 'science' that our Sages are specifically and essentially expert in. This is not to be understood superficially as we are

prone to do, overjoyed in finding some grain of psychological wisdom in a Midrash, or in zealously gleaning some psychoanalytically-oriented interpretation out of some Aggada, or—what is more dangerous—when we corroborate newly-developed attitudes and approaches to child-rearing or education with the wisdom of our Sages. One cannot develop theories of multi-dimensional implications such as regards education or living habits from one or two isolated Rabbinic statements, since nearly every such saying has one or many others in some other, or even contradictory, context. But more basically, there *is* a psychology of the Rabbis; *there is no Rabbinic astronomy or physics*. The psychology of the Sages is expressed as a way of life, a very complete and unique system to fulfill all the needs of a Jew, from birth to death.

AT THIS POINT, I am painfully aware of two shortcomings of what has thus far been said. I should project in more practical terms this psychology of our Sages and then discuss what practical contribution modern psychological thought can make within the framework of this Rabbinic psychology. There is no doubt in my mind that there is such a contribution, though it must necessarily be selective in order to conform to our basic Torah outlook, particularly in the sensitive area of psychotherapy.

ONCE AGAIN the sixteen-year-old yeshiva student is in my office. He challenges all of my clinical skill, observation, equanimity and initiative. But more so, he confronts me with certain philosophical and religious questions, just as the principal of the day school, the parents of the teen-age daughter, the struggling young couple, are confronted by much more than psychological problems. *There are no exclusively psychological problems, for behind psychology there is life, and life poses questions of a multi-dimensional nature.* To the patient and the practitioner this impending meeting has never happened before and nothing exactly like it can occur again. "What will this hour with this boy do to my unfolding, to my goal and purpose in life?" I ask myself. And he asks "What will talking to this man do for my suffering, for my goal and purpose on earth?" And there are answers that are not only psychological in nature. We only *treat* patients, it is G-d who *cures* them. The practitioner can certainly be—must be—persistent, industrious, conscientious, acute and devoted; but he is human. Those who have been chosen to work with those *neshomos*, groping and grappling with that intangible elusive phase of life called illness, know that as the light of psychology plays on the human mind and broadens to show the character and setting of man, at the same time the circumference of the circle of darkness grows ever larger. Therefore, we pray. There is beauty and wisdom in humility.

Joel Rosenshein

# Training the Jewish Child

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*In the following article the writer points out some areas in which, in his opinion, modern psychological thought can make "a practical contribution within the framework of Rabbinic psychology."*

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IT IS TIME that the Torah community come to grips with the issues raised by psychology; it is time we stop burying our heads in the sand. Educators and behavioral scientists in the Torah community are confronted with these questions constantly, and they are seriously handicapped by the absence of discussion which would create a reservoir of knowledge from which they could draw. We can here touch on only a few of the areas of concern, with the hope that listing them will stimulate the exchange of opinions and experiences that are so desperately needed.

The area of educational psychology is a good place to start, because the issues concern large numbers of Orthodox Jews. With the increasing enrollment in yeshivos and day schools, there has been a continuous decrease in the starting age at which children begin their formal education. Very often rivalry between schools for new students causes one school to lower the minimum age in order to attract parents anxious to get an early start for their children, and other schools will then follow suit, or even lower the age requirement, without concern for the merits of early education. I am not referring to exposing three- and four-year-olds to a kindergarten program and the use of play materials with a Torah content; but it is disturbing to note the teaching of *Aleph-bais* and even *Chumash* at these early ages. Of course, educators are proud to display the knowledge of their young charges, but they must at the same time ask the question: *Does the parroting of such knowledge provide the child with a firm foundation for love of Torah in later years?* This approach rather appears to be an example of education through pressure.

I RECENTLY VISITED a crowded classroom of three-year-olds. The only object in sight in the classroom was a stick on the rebbe's desk. This was, of course,

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an extreme example, however, it was also a graphic example of what is being done in some of our so-called 'modern yeshivos' in a more subtle manner. Parents who resist this pressure often find that their child is at a disadvantage when he is enrolled in a first-grade class where the other children have already been taught some of the basics. Psychological insights indicate that this is a dangerous trend, since the three- and four-year-old child lacks the proper development of his visual-motor co-ordination for such learning experiences. The child is forced to strain himself to acquire learning that he could grasp with ease a short while later. There is also the consideration that many children *need* a kindergarten experience with its program of singing, drawing, and games, without formal learning. In such a relaxed atmosphere the building of *yiras shomayim* and *ahavas Torah*, the instilling of religious and moral values, can be given full sway. This approach appears to be more in keeping with the Torah approach.

*When does he start to teach his son? When he starts to talk, he should teach him [to say] TORAH TZIVOH LONU MOSHE and the first sentence of the SHEMA. Then he should teach him a little at a time until he is six or seven, and then he must bring him to the teacher.*

— *Mechaber, Tur Yoreh Deah # 245*

Are not the psychologists and Torah in full agreement on this issue?—and the present-day practice appears to contradict both. Those who insist on this practice must at least be prepared to undertake an empirical study of its results in terms of knowledge gained over a long period; in terms of mental health; and in terms of a basic objective of Torah education: a developing growth of love for Torah.

ANOTHER SERIOUS shortcoming in our educational approach is the failure to relate the child's intellectual capacity to what we expect him to accomplish. We expect to achieve the same results from all of our students without regard to their specific intellectual capacity, their social background, and their relative maturity. Clearly, each of these factors will be a determinant in the progress of the child's Torah learning. While it is impossible to arrange complete homogeneous grouping, some appreciation of the differences between one child and another must be manifest in our cur-



riculum planning. Psychological studies indicate that some level of homogeneity in a class will produce the following positive results:

- the elimination of unproductive frustration for the child;
- the establishment of reasonable goals which will increase the child's motivation (*ahavas Torah*);
- more attention to the child since the instruction is a good deal closer to his level;
- easing the task of the teacher (a dire need in yeshivos with a weak teaching-staff);
- and, greater development of the child's potential.

It should be noted that a homogeneous class will not eliminate the stimulation of higher achievement by others, since no group can be so homogeneous as to have eliminated competition. The success of another child can only be a stimulus when the weaker child stands some chance of reaching the higher level. The success of a child far above his level, will not stimulate the weaker child, it will frustrate him. Surely when the Sages said that competitiveness among scholars increases wisdom (*Kinas sofrim tarbe chochmah*), they were referring to scholars who are capable of interacting with each other.

Psychological problems do not end in the classroom. A book was recently published called "How to Raise Children at Home in Your Spare Time"—raising children must be more than a "spare-time" activity. Parents tend to scoff when psychologists speak of such things as sibling-rivalry, and the need for meeting each child's specific needs. The following words of the *Sepurno* in commenting on the relationship of Yoseph to his brothers, are revealing. "And with this Yaakov erred [in making the coat] to favor one son over the other, since the brothers recognized this love which he felt in his heart." His words are based on the *Gem-morah* (Shabbos 10:):

*Rav said, a man should never differentiate between his children; because of the two shekalim with which Yaakov favored Yoseph over his other sons, the brothers became jealous and as a result our forefathers went down to Egypt.*

The Rambam incorporates this concept into law.

*The Rabbis decreed that a man shall not favor one son over another, in his lifetime, even in a small way, so as not to give rise to competition and jealousy, as was the case with Yoseph and his brothers.*

The *Torah T'mima* extends this concept further by noting the Rambam's qualifying clause "in his lifetime," and explains that it is the Rambam's position that the law would not apply after death since it is a *mitzvah* to carry out his wish. The *Tur Choshen Mishpat* (# 282) in stating this same law, indicates that it

applies even after death, since he omits the qualifying clause, "in his lifetime."

From this discussion, the complexities of raising children clearly emerges. Behavioral scientists go beyond the need for vigilance by the parents in their relationship with their children. They point up the need for the parent to understand his own prejudices before he approaches sibling-rivalry among his children, so that he can deal with his children with a greater measure of objectivity.

IT IS AXIOMATIC in psychology that man has the capacity to improve his own environment, and that of his children, in order to achieve the goals he seeks. A classic case is that of the contrasting relationships of Hogor and Soroh to Yishmael. Rashi notes that when Hogor was informed that she would bear a son, she showed no concern for what manner of person he was to be. In the end, she chose a wife for him from among the Egyptians. In contrast, Soroh would not permit Yishmael to live in her home for fear of his affect on Yitzchok. She thereby manifested an obvious effort to control the environment in which her son would grow up.

Most parents are deeply concerned about where a child spends his time *away* from home; they are often less concerned about the environment they create for their child *in his own home*. The parents' conscious and sub-conscious drives are a constant influence on the child. Bringing our motives into the conscious mind, and maintaining an awareness of them, can be a major contribution to achieving our goals in raising our children.

Many of the problems that arise in the training of our children, in the yeshiva and at home, derive from the conflict of the two worlds in which all of us live. No one can escape the pressures of the secular society which surrounds us and acts upon us in ways we are often totally unaware of. Considering the environmental structure forced upon our children, and the need to compartmentalize the Torah world and the secular world, it is little wonder that they become confused, and are often drawn to the secular world with all of its glitter and magnetism. Parents and teachers alike must somehow help the child to learn to live in both worlds without being torn by their cross-purposes.

At this stage in the development of the Torah community in this society, we must learn to make better use of the insights provided by psychology—subject at all times to the scrutiny of Torah. Psychologists who are in the Torah community, or whose work brings them into contact with Torah Jews, must recognize that the Torah in its broadest sense, makes available to us the deepest psychological insights, and in any clash between the two, Torah must prevail.

A GLIMPSE AT THE *American Jewish Yearbook* or any index of organization of American Jews, richly confirms the impression described in the MacIver Report of 1951 on 'Jewish Community Relation Agencies' that a "state of uncoordinated complexity" exists on the American Jewish scene. Since that time, the competition of the various defense agencies, such as the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith, has become further complicated by the JAC (Joint Advisory Commission) of Synagogue Council, NCRAC and a host of *ad hoc* alphabet-soup committees, that weave in and out of the crazy-quilt pattern of organized Jewish life. To the *shomer mitzvos* the problem becomes less amusing and more painful when the Orthodox Jewish community is brought into sharp focus. Competing rabbinic organizations, each claiming the right to act as clerical spokesman for the Orthodox Jewish community, competing synagogue organizations and *chinuch* organizations becloud the Orthodox scene with jurisdictional disputes that serve no constructive purpose. Nevertheless, while fierce competition is waged over ancient, worked-out fields, rich resources are left untapped. Many vineyards in Jewish life, waiting for cultivation by some organized effort, promising rich returns, are left unattended.

A number of articles have recently appeared reviewing progress in Orthodox Jewish life in the last quarter of a century. That we have reached the point of pausing and 'viewing with pride' is in itself a mark of maturity. Our most notable success unquestionably has been in the day school movement. However, in viewing our progress 'with pride' the full potential of Orthodox Jewish life has been overlooked. For example, of a total Jewish population in the United States of five and a half million, hardly more than one per cent—about sixty thousand children—attend day schools. Cath-

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## Our Under-Organized Jewish Community

Reuben E. Gross

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olics, however, are ten times as effective in building and in populating their parochial schools. Out of a total population of fifty million Catholics in the United States, more than five million, better than ten per cent, are attending parochial schools. Jews have an ancient and continuing tradition of communal support for religious education. They are known as the People of the Book. Their economic power and capacity to support such schools does not appear to be below average. On a point-for-point comparison, one would expect the Jewish community to have taken greater advantage of the post-World-War-II trend toward religious day schools than the Catholics or the Lutherans. Yet the exciting period of growth of Hebrew day schools which began after the war seems to have tapered off to a crawl in the last seven years. Questions should be asked of those leaders responsible for the development of day schools. Have they truly acted as leaders or have they seized and frozen the helm of an important movement, only to coast with the tide?

In the movement to suburbia, Orthodox synagogue movements have been in almost total default. Wherever new Orthodox synagogues have been established, the credit must go to a grass-roots effort. National leadership has been virtually non-existent.

In the area of representation of the Orthodox Jewish community before legal and legislative bodies, the Orthodox community is now beginning to liberate itself from

servitude to the 'defense' groups and their psychology. A good deal of the credit for this achievement belongs to a new and independent organization on the national Jewish horizon.

This new association, known as the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA), is an example of what a group of dedicated young men can do when they move into unoccupied territory. Aside from Agudath Israel, and the sporadic interest of some of the other national organizations, COLPA entered into a field with no significant competition. Agudath Israel wholeheartedly supported this group from the outset.

Measured by the usual organizational standards—budget, executive staff, public relations—COLPA is a non-entity. But, in terms of getting things done, COLPA is one of the most powerful agencies on the present-day American Jewish scene. In its short existence, it has drafted and shepherded through the New York State legislature bills which protect *Shomer Shabbos* in colleges, in civil service employment and on civil service examinations. It has successfully opposed the American Jewish Congress before the courts of Pennsylvania on free transportation for all school children, and before the New York courts on text-books. It has carefully prepared and tried a landmark case for a *Shomer Shabbos* employee before a local civil rights commission. It has aided in drafting favorable guidelines for the federal Civil Rights Commission and it has presented a Torah-oriented point of view before legislative committees of several states on a wide range of topics. It has established the right of a *Shomer Shabbos* to protection as a settled principle. The only question now is, 'How shall it be done?'

These accomplishments demonstrate the rich rewards that await our latter-day Nachshons who are willing to get their feet wet in seas of endeavor that may be only col-

lateral to Torah. Even greater rewards await our efforts if they would be devoted to filling a gaping vacuum which is wholly unorganized and is occupied by the most potent elements in Orthodox Jewish life today—the *mesivtas* and *yeshivos gedolos*. A union of yeshivos comparable to the UOJCA in the Synagogue area, or to Torah Umesorah in the day school field, would be a most constructive effort. It goes without saying that such an organization would, *ipso facto*, be a vehicle for the projection of the views of the Roshei Hayeshivos. A union of yeshivos could supply the burgeoning world of *mesivtos* with the know-how for becoming established, the forms and procedures for acquisition of the growing number of governmental benefits, and enlightenment about their duties and requirements under the laws of the places of their establishment. The gathering together of faculties, of students, and of lay yeshiva leaders—sometimes in separate con-

ventions, and sometimes in joint conventions—can bring about a warmth and *chizuk* that is inestimable. There are numerous, solid individuals scattered here and there throughout the country, unwilling to attach themselves to existing organizations, who would gladly come forward for this kind of work. Through these people, the inspiration of a union of yeshivos would become magnified and amplified. The enhanced image of the American *yeshiva bochur* that could emerge from this program would in turn serve to attract many more young men to the study of Torah. This in turn would broaden the base of material support in the general community and could lead to broader drives for support of Torah in all its ramifications.

One of the most idle, foolish and wasteful practices in Jewish life today is the ranting and raving against the heterodox community, for not supporting Torah and demanding of funds from the federations and call-

ing upon them for assistance. The evil of these practices lies basically in implying that, somehow or other, they know how to get things done and that we do not; that they have resources and we do not. Sober analysis demonstrates that this simply is not so. Hardly more than two years ago, an acknowledged leader in Orthodoxy stood up at a national convention and pleaded for time for Orthodox disengagement from the secular agencies because of the irreplaceability of their know-how in communal relations. Today we readily see how ill-founded that plea then was. It is high time that Orthodox leaders recognize that the total heterodox establishment is but an impressive shell whose inner strength will soon rot away, and though they are substantial in form, they are of little substance. We, however, are rich in substantive elements that await leadership to form and organize it for greater accomplishments.

## A Letter to a Friend

Some thoughts  
on early  
marriage

Alphonse  
Podrizki

Dear David:

*Thank you for your letter, received yesterday. I acknowledge and appreciate your apology, which was hardly necessary. I was not the least bit angry after that discussion a few evenings ago. After all, you only said I was 'old-fashioned.' I, and some of my friends who share my ideas, have been called 'unrealistic,' 'dreamer,' 'fossil,' 'fanatic,' ignorant of sociological and economical truths and . . . the perennial favorite . . . 'hypocrite.' A sure way to become rapidly unpopular at a social gathering these days is to talk in favor of early marriage. And so, the debate petered out when I suggested that you allow your son Michael to marry, although he is only 19.*

*I repeat: More than at any time—in the present circumstances, given the prevailing attitudes and currents of opinion in our country, and in the western world at large, early marriage among Jews is an imperative, as urgent and feasible now as it was in the past—if not more so.*

*Strange epoch, indeed, we live in! Cruelty and arrogance have marked the first half of this twentieth century. Old beliefs crumble; traditional concepts of morality, at least respected, if not always applied, are giving way to pseudo-modernistic ideas as old as the Canaanites. They call it the 'New Morality': Is not the million or more provoked abortions each year—in the U.S. alone—reminiscent of the gruesome child sacrifices to Moloch or Baal? Don't the homosexual associations remind you of Sodom and Gomorrah?*

*The altar of 'free love,' upon which too many youngsters are throwing away their innocence and moral values, and the happiness they could have enjoyed later, is*



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*it not tantamount to the pagan temples of antiquity, with their sacred courtesans? Only twenty years ago, no physician would have dared to propose the abolition of all restrictions against provoked abortions (provided they be performed by an M.D.)—as a Chicago physician recently did.*

*As in all periods of moral relaxation in history, the role, the significance of sex is being completely distorted, with the further aggravation of the wide and rapid dissemination of 'new' ideas by the modern news media. No wonder, therefore, that venereal diseases are, once more, at a peak. Recent reports indicate that there must be about 1,200,000 new cases of gonorrhea, and 22,000 new cases of syphilis, yearly, and in this country alone. The apparent dryness of medical statistics is itself indicative of the moral decay of our time.*

*Cars and drive-in theaters have certainly contributed their share to that sad situation. Many movies, even some of some artistic value, are truly based on dubious themes, if not outrightly licentious. Adultery itself, until recently the core and substance of many stage and screen dramas, or comedies (?) has lost some of its appeal, and must frequently be spiced with homosexuality or incest.*

*So loose have become the ideas of some 'authorities' on marriage, that an internationally known anthropologist could recently recommend an occasional 'affair' as a tranquillizer for harassed parents!*

*You know very well, my dear David, what a different and exalted meaning marriage has for the Jew: it's KIDDUSHIN, sanctification. And to keep it that way in the midst of a particularly turbulent and perturbed culture, is there any better way than to encourage our children to marry young; and to help make it possible.*

*This is certainly as desirable and possible today as it was in the past. "Boys will be boys" is a concept completely alien to Judaism. We don't want our sons to know the blemish of places of ill-repute and we are not afraid of being called 'puritans.' We know the effect of the complex psycho-physiological changes which characterize puberty, and if you tell me, as many do: "Er is zu yung, er darf sich nicht fardreyen dem kop" I would say: "A mensch is nicht kein malach—don't wantonly expose your children to temptation." Angels live in another world, and in this world tzaddikim are few . . .*

*Why do people consider a boy or a girl old enough for dating, but not for marrying? A frequent argument of opponents to early marriage is that times have changed and since today so many of our children are in college, that would interfere with their studies. Did early marriage prevent the Alter Rebbe, the founder of Lubavitch, from becoming a luminary? Were perchance, Rabbi Shimon Shkopp of Telshe fame, and any of the Gedolei Torah stunted in their intellectual growth because they married young?*

*You may say now: "Very good, nice, 'kosher' ideas, but what will the young couple live on?—love and fresh air?" The solution would be simple if each side (I mean the respective parents of the boy and the girl) would simply consent to continue their financial support until their married children are able to stand on their own feet financially. This does not usually entail any sacrifice, it's only a question of good will and common sense. But it does require the shedding of a popular myth:*

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*"They have to graduate first, then they can get married." Do they graduate first, and breathe and eat later?*

*A time comes, in the life of the average boy or girl, when marriage and love are strongly desired; it's the parents' duty to do the utmost, including financial aid, to help them attain this desirable goal. This parental effort will be easier, of course, if one of the children, or both, are not at school, but are to some extent self-sustaining. Could any Jewish parent, living in this time of affluence, refuse financial assistance to his married son or daughter, when our forebears, generally eking out a difficult parnosoh in economically-harsh times, did it without hesitation?*

*I have sometimes been told: "Why do you want people to marry younger? Why aggravate the population explosion?"*

*The problem of 'population explosion' could be seen from a perspective quite different from the usual one, and is, indeed, a fascinating theme in itself. Let me simply tell you here, my dear David, that as far as we Jews are concerned, it surely would not hurt us to raise our birth rate, whose present weakness, coming after the horrible destruction of the Nazi era, is of great concern to quite a few of our leaders, and not only in Israel.*

*Times have changed. While in the days of yore, men like Rabbi Jacob Levi of Mayence did not hesitate to live upon fees as a shadchan, it's evident that this profession, at one time so useful, has lost much of its luster today. "It's not romantic," say most youngsters. Part of its role has been taken over by the youth, by organizations and meetings, by community centers, and the college campus. We read, here and there, that some psychology departments at universities are getting good results from matching individuals by computers! "PLUS CA CHANGE, ET PLUS C'EST LA MEME CHOSE"—the traditional schadchan was a human computer, after all!*

*Sam Levenson, the popular Jewish folk-lorist, is wrong when he says "true love can wait—for a better time, for a job, and for the sheer satisfaction of marrying without sacrifices on the part of one's mate or parents" (Everything But Money, Simon and Schuster, 1966, p. 257). There can be no Judaism without TAHARAS HAMISCHPOCHAH, and to attain such a noble goal, one may well accept a few superficial lacerations to his pride.*

*For the average Jewish young man, the alternative to early marriage could very often mean being thrown into unwanted adventures which will always adversely affect his spirit, and, at times, even have a tragic conclusion. Frequently, this may lead to mixed-marriage.*

*In the last few years, the question of mixed-marriage has been debated in hundreds of scholarly articles, in dozens of symposia and study sessions, but David, did you ever see any practical result? I have known, over the years, many Jewish boys and girls who inter-married, and in a quite impressive number of cases, a former projected union WITHIN OUR FAITH had been shattered by one or another of the parents. I am confident that the revival of our venerable tradition of early marriage will do more to prevent inter-marriage than the high-level discussing of psychologists, sociologists, social workers and other specialists debating for months or years. Without it, can we be an AM SEGULOH?*

*Very cordially yours,  
Eliahu*

# The Nocturnal Slumber of Atzeres

## *A Shevuos Message from the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

**T**HE Midrash relates that the Jewish people slept the entire night prior to the receiving of the Torah "for the slumber of *Atzeres* is pleasant and the night is short," and even a *putana* (a biting insect) did not disturb them. When the Almighty was ready in the early morning to give the Torah and found Israel asleep, it was necessary for Him to arouse them, and this is the meaning of what the Almighty declares:

*Wherefore, when I came was there no man?*

*When I called, was there none to answer?*

(Isaiah 50:2)

For this reason it is customary to stay awake the entire night of *Shevuos* engaged in the study of Torah—to undo the slumber of the Jewish nation on

the night prior to the giving of the Torah.

Every Torah narrative provides guidance for us in our own spiritual endeavors. Particularly one such as this—the Torah normally goes to great lengths to avoid disparaging or derogatory comment—must assuredly include an inherently significant moral precept, which made it necessary to record these events.

Though there is an obvious implication—the need to undo Israel's having slept on that momentous night—the account of their sleeping would have been sufficient. The enumeration of the various details—that "The slumber of *Atzeres* is pleasant, and the night is short," and that the insects did not bite them—indicates that even these matters have applications to man's spiritual conduct.

**I**T IS KNOWN that when the Jewish people heard that after their departure from Egypt they would be given the Torah, a great longing to receive the Torah was evoked, and they began to count the days till the anticipated time. For this reason we count the days of the Omer. If at the onset of the seven weeks they were impatient to receive the Torah, it is self-evident how great the degree of their yearning was at the time immediately prior to the event. How then was it possible that they slept the night before the giving of the Torah?

It should also be borne in mind that their counting was also a means of preparation for the receiving of the Torah. During these forty-nine days, the Jewish People underwent progressive spiritual purification till they were worthy of being the recipients of the Torah. Every day they evoked within themselves the revelation of another gate of the *Shaarei Bina*, the Gates of Understanding; when they had concluded the evocation of all the Forty Nine Gates (the maximum degree achievable by human effort) then the Almighty, at the time of giving the Torah, endowed them with the Fiftieth Gate.

If immediately after the departure from Egypt—

delivered from the Forty Nine Gates of Impurity—they longed to receive the Torah, how infinitely greater was their yearning for the Torah after having achieved the lofty degree of the "forty-ninth Gate of Understanding," after the great spiritual ascent of the forty-nine days, as they became progressively more worthy of receiving the Torah. *How then, did they permit themselves to slumber?*

We must consequently assume that their sleep is not to be understood in a normal manner, but was rather in itself a manner of preparation for the receiving of the Torah. Further proof that their sleep was a form of preparation is that the insects did not bite them. If their sleep was but a lapse of consciousness and a distraction from their preoccupation with receiving the Torah, then the Almighty would not have caused a *miracle*—that they should not be disturbed during their tranquil slumber.

The *Alter Rebbe*\* notes that the loftiest degree of comprehension and closeness to G-dliness achieved during human existence (when the soul is garbed in human form) is still incomparable to the exalted level of closeness achieved by the soul *prior* to its descent into the human body. This is so because the physical body cannot cope with so high a degree of closeness.

During sleep, the soul divests itself from the body and ascends to its source; there remains within the body "but a small measure of life" from the soul. Therefore, at the time of slumber, the soul can some-

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THE NOCTURNAL SLUMBER OF ATZERES *originally appeared in a slightly different form in* DI YIDDISHE HEIM, *published by the Neshei Ubnos Chabad. The translation is by* RABBI ALTER METZGER, *an instructor in Jewish Studies at the Stern College for Women.* □

\* *Likutei Amorim (Tanya)* Ch. 37.



times achieve loftier conceptions than during the time of wakefulness while vested in the physical garb of its body.

It is known that those who preoccupy themselves with Torah with great dedication and zeal during their waking hours achieve in the course of their sleep even further revelation in matters of Torah—to such a degree, at times, that problems they struggled to clarify while awake which remained unanswered, are resolved upon their awakening from a period of sleep, because of the soul's apprehension Above.

Therefore, after the Jewish people had achieved all that is possible for the soul in bodily garb to achieve, i.e.—the Forty Nine Gates of Understanding—they wished to slumber prior to receiving the Torah, for they desired that the soul divest itself from its bodily garb and ascend Above to apprehend lofty conceptions. They felt that the exalted concepts they would achieve would be the most appropriate—the culmination of their preparation for the revelation from Above

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**N**EVERTHELESS, the Almighty was not content with Israel's slumber prior to the receiving the Torah, for this was not the appropriate preparation. The preparation for receiving the Torah must be of an entirely different nature.

The purpose of all ascent is essentially spiritual endeavor using the physical human body. It is by this means that the relationship with the essence of G-dliness can be truly achieved. So significant is the importance of laboring *with* the physical body, that the *Heavenly Court Above* recognizes the judicial decisions rendered

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**H**ow does this apply to our spiritual endeavor? There are those who argue: Why should I contend with the darkness of the world, why concern myself with physical matters? Far better to shut myself off from the world, to labor in Torah and prayer in seclusion. I have expended great effort in the learning of Torah and the fulfillment of mitzvohs; I have already achieved the level of *Atzerets* and—"the night is short"—the darkness within me is greatly diminished; by isolating myself from the world, I will achieve even loftier spirituality.

We are therefore told that even prior to the receiving of the Torah (but on the very day that it was given), such conduct was not in accordance with the will of G-d, and there remains constantly the necessity to undo the slumber of the past. Most assuredly, subsequent

at the time of the giving of the Torah.

Therefore the Midrash states—"The slumber of *Atzerets* is pleasant and the night is short,"—the more a person strives and refines himself while awake, when the soul is in its bodily garb, to that extent does the soul ascend and achieve loftier conceptions during the period of sleep. At the conclusion of the spiritual labor of counting *sefirah* for forty-nine days, they had already achieved the spiritual preparation for *Atzerets*. And, "The Night" [the spiritual darkness and 'concealment' of the world] is short; there remained but a small degree of concealment, for the entire labor had been completed and in a very short while there would occur the revelation of *Matan Torah*—at such a time, the slumber is "pleasant," for by means of sleep, one can achieve the loftiest spirituality.

The great ascent of the Jewish People at the time of their sleep affected even the surrounding world and nature to the extent that not even an insect disturbed them from their slumber.

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by the Torah scholars on *earth*. Though their opinion be at variance with the Heavenly decision, the Almighty declares "My sons have triumphed," for the Torah is "not in Heaven."

Since the singular importance of the giving of the Torah was the endowment of exalted significance to the soul's labor *within* the body, the preparation for the giving of the Torah had to be in a similar manner. Not to recline in slumber—not the soul's separation from the physical body, but to labor and serve *with* the body.

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to the giving of the Torah, our spiritual labor must be in a manner of "descent below"—the spiritual descending—concerning itself with the physical; preoccupying ourselves with a fellow Jew of lesser degree. Specifically by such means will the scholar succeed in achieving ascent—"and from my students have I derived more than from the others" (*Taanis* 7a).

This is the reason for our custom of not sleeping during the night of *Shevuos*. The preparation for receiving the Torah is not in slumber, but in the soul's ascent and departure from the physical, to achieve the apprehension of lofty conceptions. The primary endeavor for each individual is to labor with the human body, with his baser nature and his share in the material world, and thus to prepare for the receiving of the Torah with inward joy—for the entire year. □

## “For Me Was the World Created”

THE BEN-TORAH WHO in the course of time leaves the walls of the yeshiva and moves out into “the world,” finds himself in an alien environment. He has moved from the warm, protected serenity of the *Beis Medrash* out into the harsh, cacophonous frenzy of the marketplace; from the sheltered private domain to the exposed public domain.

The forces and influences which impinge on him from all sides are foreign to his soul. Their onslaught strikes at his very being, they attack the fundamentals which serve as the core of his world-perspective, the basic principles that nourish his code of values, of thought, and of behavior. The stronger the imprint left upon him by his yeshiva years, the less likely is it, of course, that these alien influences should affect the essence of his personality; the less likely that his independence of outlook should succumb to adopt the distorted lenses of his neighbors; the less likely that he become disturbed and bewildered by the arrays of shrilly competing pseudo-ideologies that have captured the headlines of the moment. And yet the very effort which the *Ben-Torah* is able to make, each on his own level, to steel himself against the buffets of these storms, to maintain intact his *emunah*, his *hashkofo*, and his obligation in his world, must inject into his personality elements that were not active in his yeshiva years. He is made acutely conscious of his individual *uniqueness*—and of the *loneliness* that threatens him.

IT IS UNDER SUCH circumstances that the *Ben-Torah* finds solace by reminding himself of the paramountcy of the individual. He reminds himself that *Odom nivra y'chidi*, “man was created alone”; that *Bi'shvili nivra ha'olom*, “For me was the world created.” He remembers that “Before whom will you one day give judgement and reckoning . . .” is addressed to each single soul in *Klal Yisroel*. This helps him in the self-concentration required to maintain his identity as a *Ben-Torah*. He remembers further that the uniqueness-loneliness that is the lot of the individual *Ben-Torah* in the world today, is the lot also of *Klal Yisroel*. He is reminded that *Klal Yisroel* is a *Goy Echad*, a singular nation deriving its uniqueness from the unique-

In the yeshiva, to be sure, he was aware of the *collective* uniqueness of the Torah world, of the chasm in beliefs, values and norms that separates the world of Torah from the secular world. But being part of a collective tended to prevent the development of any strong sense of *individual* uniqueness—and certainly of individual loneliness. Now, outside the shelter of the *Beis Medrash*, he becomes more and more conscious of himself as an individual, of the unique aspects of his beliefs and his behavior which set him apart from his neighbors, and of his loneliness amidst the bustling streets and crowded buses and subways. His is not the loneliness engendered by the impersonality of the mass urban society, that of the small-town youngster lost among the faceless throngs of the great city; his loneliness is that of the foreigner, of the stranger observing alien scenes and hearing alien sounds. His uniqueness is reinforced by an instinctive recoil from the influences that pour in upon him from all sides. His determination not to lose his identity erects an invisible fence insulating and isolating him from the surrounding environment. The private domain that is made up of the individual's inner thoughts and goals—a domain that in the yeshiva years found itself congenially side by side with many similar enclosures—now becomes a fortress bristling with arms to repel the invading forces of expansionist neighboring value-systems and cultures.

ness of Torah, and, *kav'yochol*, from the oneness of G-d. These reflections go far to assuage any of the sensations of desolate loneliness that might threaten the solitary defender of the besieged fortress.

Not only does his awareness of the embracing unity of *Klal Yisroel* make him feel less alone—it reminds him that to be alone is not yet to be lonely. The uniqueness of leadership provides, at all levels, its own antidote for loneliness. The *k'dusha* of *Klal Yisroel* is the powerful locomotive that carries with it a train made up of the entire cosmos. By the same token each individual *Ben-Torah* is thrust, each in his own way, by the concept of “For me was the world created” into the role of leader. As such he senses his responsibility to be at some level the spearhead of *K'dusha* for all creation—unique indeed, alone of course—but one for whom loneliness is banished by the assurance of our Sages that “the entire universe was created only to provide companionship for such as him.” □

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RABBI ISRAEL M. KIRZNER wrote *THE JEW AND THE CULT OF SUPERFICIALITY* (March, 1965). The following appeared in the *Alumni Bulletin of the Telshe Yeshiva*, and it has been slightly revised by the writer.

THE COMING OF SUMMER means many things to many people. To the American rabbi it means a forthcoming rabbinical convention. Particularly for those in America's hinterland, the prospect of meeting with colleagues, seeing old yeshiva friends, talking in person (as opposed to the telephone) to the Rosh Yeshiva, visiting parents and in-laws—only one who has lived in the vast area known by New Yorkers as "out-of-town," can appreciate the joy of anticipation and the greater joy of realization of the annual renewal. To many, it means a recharging of the spiritual reserves that flicker between the plus and minus sign after months of bucking Jewish indifference, and the frustrating demands of the Sisterhood and the Men's Club, the lectures, the invocations, the membership drives, and . . . toughest of all . . . the building fund drive.

The American rabbinical convention, with its convention kits, plenary sessions, and resolutions, appears to be a unique creation of our time, but it is not. Perhaps we have added some new touches, but European Jewry also had its rabbinical conventions. I vividly recall, as a youngster, my grandfather's return

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## Samuel Horowitz

# THE LONELINESS OF THE RABBI

*Some thoughts on the eve of the rabbinical conventions*

from a rabbinical convention. Every Jew in town waited anxiously to hear what message the rabbi had brought home with him from his meeting with his fellow-rabbonim. There was a receptive ear; a willingness reminiscent of Sinai: *to hear, and to obey.*

Today, rabbis travel for thousands of miles for the same sacred purpose: to strengthen *Yiddishkeit* in our own communities; to take counsel and *chizuk* from each other. But the problems are radically different; the *shaylos* are different from those put to our *zaides*—*shaylos* they never dreamed of, which to modern-day rabbis are often nightmares.

At the convention we listen to scholarly papers—those who aren't too tired and sneak away to the

pool, or for a game of tennis. Everyone shows up for the election session, especially if there is a contest for high office, and every vote will count. We listen to the chairman of the resolutions committee drolly read what has been hammered out in a few hasty sessions. We rise to question the language of a resolution; we question its intent; we question its wisdom—but at a lower level of our consciousness we question: Will this mean anything to the president of our schul? Will the president of the Men's Club understand it? And the president of the sisterhood—will she even care?

THE YOUNG—and not so young—American rabbi leads a lonely existence. All too often he and his wife can have no real friends; they can't eat in the homes of their members—"Rabbi, we keep a kosher home, but what we do on the outside is our own business." There is always a faction on the board that doesn't like the rabbi—because he's too *frum*, or not *frum* enough . . . or both. The story of the committee that visited their rabbi in the hospital and told him that the board had voted him a *refuah sh'laima* 14 to 7, is very funny—but not to the rabbi who knows it's no joke.

Very often the rabbi finds himself sitting alone, and he lets fall the tears that he must otherwise



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choke on. Many are harsh on the American rabbi. Perhaps the historian of the future will be equally harsh as he studies the record of communities drying-up, dying, before the very eyes of the rabbi. But the record will not reveal the rabbi's sufferings, his frustrations, his efforts in confronting a situation that was too big for him; a situation that bigger men than he had been unable to confront.

FOR A FEW DAYS, these thoughts recede into the background as the rabbi is surrounded by Jews who think as he does. The town or city where he serves as spiritual leader—it isn't really his home—is a thousand miles away, but sitting at the Shabbos table with his chaverim, it seems like the distance is measured in light-years.

At the convention there are some squabbles—some minor, some major—but everyone speaks the same language: Torah is Torah (not the Bible); Halacha is Halacha, not something the rabbi 'dreamed up'; Shabbos is Shabbos, not a day when he must hide from his congregants for fear of the cigarette dangling from a board member's lips; kashrus, a daily source of anxiety back 'home,' is here taken for granted.

The rabbi can *daven* like a Jew for a few precious days—no need to call out the page numbers, or try to make the 'services' impressive for the Temple members or Presbyterians who are in Schul for a Bar Mitzvah. No need to rack his brain for a catchy sermon-topic to be listed in the local daily or the Jewish weekly.

But too quickly, it's all over; bags are packed, hurried 'good-byes' are said. There is a scurrying around for the waiter and the bus-boy; and then the long drive back which serves as a decompression chamber to ease the 'bends' that is an inevitable result of the return to the pulpit.

Packed in his bag, the rabbi takes back with him a copy of the resolutions finally passed at the convention; some *seforim* he bought which will inspire him until the next convention, and may even offer him some sermon material.

As soon as he gets back, there is the convention sermon, the enthusiastic report to his congregants, but just as quickly come the meetings with the Ritual Committee, the Publicity Committee, the Membership Committee, the Program Commit-

tee, and the Sisterhood officers. For a while, the resolve to tighten things up at the schul burns strongly—but the dickering of the board is a heavy damper. For a while the resolve to 'learn' more, to steal away time for his own *neshomo*, seems to take root. But then the incessant pastoral demands, the invitations to luncheons and dinners with their invocations and opening prayers, the counselling sessions—they all begin anew to eat away at the one soul he still has hopes for; his own.

Is this what it's like for every rabbi? *chas v'sholom*—but it is for too many.

IT IS AN OLD rabbinic custom to close with words of hope. In the midst of the rabbi's frustrations, there is the joy of sending a boy to the yeshiva; the rewarding experience of the family that comes to announce "*Rabbi, we'd like to make our house kosher*"; the inquiring college student who asks for some reading material because "*I want to know more about Judaism.*" Like all Jewish suffering, there are moments when joy breaks through. It is the rabbi's constant hope that such moments will increase in number and in magnitude. It is this hope that makes it all worthwhile. □

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# Israel Digest

Menachem Greenberg

## Two Front Mobilization — Military and Spiritual

FACED WITH serious threats of physical annihilation, over two million Israeli Jews—many of them remnants of a previous annihilation—mobilized their defenses in the hope of obviating or, if necessary, responding to, aggression by Egypt and other surrounding hostile Arab states.

Side by side with the military alert affecting all citizens of Israel, religious Jewry mounted a huge spiritual mobilization. Religious leaders called Israelis to *teshuvoh* and prayer for the deliverance of Israel from destruction.

The struggle for an end to forced-autopsies came to

a halt as the Orthodox Jews applied all their energies to thwarting President Nasser's aims and restoring peace to the land. Days of prayer and fast were proclaimed throughout the country, as well as in Orthodox communities all over the world. Round-the-clock *minyomin* of *Tehilim* reading were organized in scores of synagogues.

Orders for military activation came on Friday night . . . Chassidim, dressed in their Shabbos *kapotes* and *shtraimels* could be seen reporting to the B'nai Brak post office for reserve duty . . . In Tel Aviv a youth ordered to report for duty in the trouble-area of the Negev had misgivings about traveling on Shabbos and he was accompanied to the bus station by a well-known rabbi . . . In Petach Tikva a Yemenite man distributed *tzitzis* to departing soldiers, assuring them that the *z'chus* of this mitzvah would insure their safe return to their homes . . . In B'nai Brak, a man about to circumcize his son asked his father-in-law to take charge and left to join his regiment . . . In the Negev, a group of *daf yomi* students organized a daily *shiur* in the military camp . . . A cadre of Jerusalem Kabbalist scholars undertook to chant the entire *Sefer Tehilim* 376 times—the numerical value of the word *shalom*—as a *seguloh* for the maintenance of peace . . . Principals of Chinuch Atzmai schools throughout Israel received instructions from the school system's headquarters to begin each

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day with the reading of *Tehilim*, and to add extra hours of Torah studies to the daily schedule.

Speakers in the Knesset displayed unified concern for the security of Israel. Only the Mapam and Communist parties avoided joining the otherwise unanimous Knesset castigation of the Soviet Union for its part in exacerbating tensions in the Middle East. Most party leaders placed their confidence in the initial commitment of the United States to defend Israel's territorial integrity and rights of navigation in the Strait of Tiran.

In an emotion-laden speech, Rabbi Yitzchok Meir Lewin cautioned Israelis against relying on foreign nations to fight Israel's battles and called for reliance on Israel's 'Eternal Protector.' The elder statesman of the Agudath Israel delegation, who once represented Jewry in the Polish Parliament, asked the Knesset:

"If it were possible for us to acquire a specific weapon that would be able to save us with total certainty, or if we heard of a method to end the crisis in which we have been living continuously for twenty years, there is no doubt that we would do all in our power to adopt them. The weapon and method are within our reach, and we are convinced that all of us have the opportunity to assure our emergence from this crisis—our existence, our peace, and our complete respite. The means is—bringing ourselves closer to G-d and His Torah."

Noting the abyss which separates most Israelis from the Jewish faith, Rabbi Lewin pointed out that many of G-d's ways are mysterious to us and that the Jewish people have often enjoyed His protection even when their deeds did not merit it. The survival of Jews in Eretz Yisroel since the war, he said, has involved daily miracles of which we have been unworthy. Expressing confidence in the future, Rabbi Lewin declared, "Judging by the normal course of events, our situation is extremely dangerous. But here in Eretz Yisroel we always live only by miracles."

ISRAELIS TRAVELING abroad returned to the Holy Land. As for American youngsters studying in Israeli Yeshivos—several Chassidic *rebbe*s ordered their followers to remain in Israel. However, many rabbis advised the youngsters to heed their parents in cases when they had been asked to return home.

One tragic result of the crisis is the interruption of Torah study among army-age boys in Eretz Yisroel. All yeshiva students who served in the Army at any time have been called to active duty, and most others are assisting hospitals, welfare institutions, or replacing agricultural workers in kibbutzim and moshavim. One American Rosh Yeshiva who moved his Yeshiva to Israel two years ago is seeing his group disintegrate before his eyes. The economic paralysis and the call-up of fund-raising and administrative personnel has left the independent religious welfare and educational institutions in a state of financial disaster.



## BOOK REVIEWS

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### CHAPTERS OF THE FATHERS

by Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch  
with English translation by G. Hirschler  
New York, 1967; P. Feldheim, \$2.95

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Another new volume in the Torah Classics Library, and a new addition to the growing bookshelf of English translations of the works of Rabbi S. R. Hirsch, this little volume contains the text of *Pirkei Ovos*, with translation and commentary by Rabbi S. R. Hirsch, composed as part of his commentary on the Siddur—his last literary work.

As Rabbi Dr. Breuer points out in his introduction, the brevity of the work is due to its being originally only part of a major work. Yet, as one turns the pages, he cannot help but be ever anew impressed by the many insights and profound principles expressed by the author. From the very first comment on the *two-fold* future in store for man (p. 2) to his fervent plea for a Torah curriculum in accordance with the Mishna (p. 95) Rabbi S. R. Hirsch forces the reader to think, to ponder, to grow in understanding.

Like a red thread, there runs through his words the constant emphasis on the study of Torah, "the one source of all truth for individual and community alike" (p. 25), which "determines the extent to which we will understand and fulfill our life's duties" (p. 17). And with this there goes the emphasis on action—full observance of the Torah's teachings in practice.

Many other points deserve to be singled out. It can only be hoped that many readers will turn to the book itself, to benefit from all it has to give. The excellence of the English translation makes this an easy task.

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### GATES OF REPENTANCE

by Rabenu Jonah of Gerona  
in punctuated Hebrew text and English translation  
by Shraga Silverstein, Jerusalem, 1967;  
distributed by P. Feldheim, \$6.50

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This new volume in the Torah Classics Library is a worthy sequel to its predecessors. Dedicated to the memory of Rabbi Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz who opened so many new vistas to American Torah Jewry, this edition of the *Sha'arei Teshuvah* makes this great classic of Jewish ethical philosophy accessible to many for whom it would otherwise have remained a closed book forever.

In four 'gates' the author discusses the meaning of repentance—not as a vague and ineffective feeling of



regret over past failings, but as a concrete and dynamic force for remoulding man; twenty principles are laid down by the author as guides to proper repentance. He proceeds to show how a man can bring himself to repent, and how he constantly has to search his ways and seek to do right and avoid wrong; particular attention is drawn by the author to those areas in which human weaknesses are especially pronounced, such as slander and falsehood. Finally, the author discusses the way in which atonement can be found for sins committed.

The wealth of ideas cannot, of course, be reflected in a review; but Rabbi Chayim Dovid Azulai wrote of this work that it "*serves to break hearts of stone*," and it has always been one of the basic texts for the immersion in *Mussar*. Without doubt, in its new form it will have an impact on an ever-wider circle. It should be added that its value lies not only in the fine English translation, but in the addition of punctuation, and identification of the many biblical and talmudic references in the text, and the clear and inviting type face in which it is set.

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**JEWISH TRAVELLERS**

by Elkan N. Adler

New York, 1966; Hermon Press, \$5.75

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In the age of the jet-plane it is hard to visualize how world travel was possible before modern means of transportation became available. Yet there were world-travellers—and a good many of them were Jews engaged in commerce or on diplomatic missions, on charitable enterprises or solely motivated by a desire to visit their brethren in all the corners of the diaspora. Some decades ago, J. D. Eisenstein published a collection of the surviving writings of some of these travellers, in Hebrew; a selection, in English, has now been published in this country by the Hermon Press, giving us a most fascinating insight into Jewish life in distant times and places.

The first traveller to appear in this volume is Isaac, Charlemagne's ambassador to the Persian court (801 C.E.), and the last is Rabbi Chayim Dovid Azulai, the great scholar, who lived barely 200 years ago. In between we read of such mysterious figures as Eldad the Danite and David Reubeni, scholars such as Rabbi Judah Halevi and Rabbi Obadiah deBertinoro; statesmen like Rabbi Chisdai and his correspondent, Joseph, king of the Khazars.

The main interest of the volume lies, of course, in the light it throws on the condition of the Jews as reported by the travellers, as well as the spirit of piety and devotion to Torah that, as a matter of course, pervaded their entire outlook. They were keen observers and not infrequently very wise commentators.

*The Jewish Observer* / June, 1967

Of particular interest are their accounts of some of the customs developed in different Jewish communities. There are many references to the dangers met by the traveller of those times, as well as by the Jews in general—but also a very clear reflection of the faith in G-d and Torah which gave them the strength to carry on. For this alone this fine volume deserves our attention.

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# second looks at the jewish scene

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## *War in Israel*

THE AGGRESSIVE WAR of the Arab states finds world Jewry united in support of Israel. This is as it must be. If there is any difference in reaction on the part of the Orthodox Jew, it is his intense belief that times of crisis only intensify our awareness of that which we believe at all times: The Jewish people, more so than others, lives by the eternal grace of G-d, and it is in His hands that we place our trust. It is the Almighty that we look to when the hostility of the nations is directed at us.

In such times, when our utter dependence upon Hakodosh Baruch Hu, is so blatantly clear, it becomes our task to search the depths of our souls, and to bring ourselves ever closer to the Divine, in the hope that we shall be deserving of redemption.

We stand prepared with all other Jews to accept whatever burdens we may be asked to bear; to make whatever sacrifices the hour will dictate.

There is no need for us to refute the infamy of the Arab position or to react to their expressions of

hatred, which sound anachronistic in our time and in our society. The nations of the world recognize the Arab belligerence and the falsehood of their claims. Those who choose to support them do so not from belief in the Arab cause, but for other considerations.

IT IS OUR PRAYER that when these words are read, the fighting shall have ended, and men on both sides shall have left the battlefields and returned to their homes, to labor in the fields which offer G-d's bountiful blessings—that we shall be looking back with relief, and turning our attention to what it has taught us.

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## *The Bar Mitzvah Safari*

THE SACRED CONCEPT of Bar Mitzvah, designating the status of a Jewish male who is bound by the laws of the Torah when he passes his thirteenth birthday, has become a joke in American life. The desire of parents to outdo each other in the lavishness of the Bar Mitzvah 'party' is illustrated in a story that recently made the rounds. A father who wanted to do something 'different,' was advised to have a Bar Mitzvah safari. His guests were flown to Africa aboard a chartered jet, mounted on the backs of elephants where they were wined and dined as they proceeded into the jungle. When the procession was suddenly brought to a halt and the father asked why they had stopped, he was told, "We have to let another Bar Mitzvah pass."

To a great extent, Orthodox Jewry has been free of the vulgarity which is so commonplace in Bar Mitzvah celebrations today that *Newsweek* magazine (April 17, 1967) devoted part of its Religion section to: ESCALATING BAR MITZVAHS. The listing, in gory detail, of some of the outstanding celebrations, with their figures carved in ice and chopped liver, makes the sensitive Jew blush with shame. The article reports that a number of rabbis — apparently non-Orthodox — are deeply concerned about the loss of religious significance which reflects in the boy's failure to continue his Jewish education and the matter is being studied by a commission of the United Synagogue (Conservative). Plans have been proposed for extending the

Bar Mitzvah age to 18, or to make Bar Mitzvah at 13 conditional on continuation of the boy's Jewish education. But as usual, the problem is being attacked at the above-ground level.

WHAT NO ONE APPEARS to be asking is what is the source of the symptoms; how have Jews with a long tradition of dignity and reserve, fallen victim to the pursuit of ostentation and vulgarity?

The answer—it seems to us—is simple: Vulgarity is an outgrowth of the erosion of traditional values. So long as Jews saw the boy's thirteenth birthday as a milestone in his religious development, it was celebrated in keeping with its religious connotations. It was axiomatic that no aspect of the celebration could violate religious law, for it would then contradict the very cause for celebration.

Somewhere along the line — a careful study would reveal the historical chronology — Bar Mitzvah broke loose in America from its religious moorings. Driving to a Bar Mitzvah on Shabbos, an absurdity — desecrating the Shabbos in order to celebrate the fact that a Jewish boy had reached the age where he is bound to observe the Shabbos short of giving his life for it — was no longer viewed as a contradiction. One could easily catalogue great numbers of such absurdities, all of which have been countenanced by the present “viewers with alarm.” Certainly the Bar Mitzvah himself — often the ‘forgotten man’ at the party — becomes aware of the emptiness of the whole affair, and it is naïve to expect him to continue his ‘religious education’ after the band has stopped playing and the presents are all in. Very simply: If fundamental beliefs and practices are allowed to be trampled, then what resistance can be expected against the onslaughts of vulgarity. If Shabbos and Kashrus become the victims of ‘Bar Mitzvah,’ what chance is there for good taste.

SADLY, Orthodoxy has not entirely been spared either the desecration of Shabbos or the resultant vulgarity associated with Bar Mitzvah today. Except where the rabbi and the congregation take a firm stand, the same charade can be acted out in an Orthodox shul. (It is disturbing to note that Israelis in growing numbers have been going in for Bar Mitzvah — “American-style.”)

Such unwholesome developments in American Orthodox life call for boldness and imagination, and a pioneering spirit. One such pioneer is Rabbi Menachem Perr of Queens, New York. Eighteen years ago, he introduced in his congregation the week-day Bar Mitzvah, scheduled for a Monday or Thursday (when there is *Krias Hatorah*) which coincides with a legal holiday when most people are free of work, or Rosh Chodesh, Chanukah or Purim which fall on a Sunday. The Bar Mitzvah is called to the Torah and

the celebration follows without any danger of Chilul Shabbos.

As the plan caught on — some parents were at first reluctant to have a week-day Bar Mitzvah — the need arose for additional days, and Bar Mitzvah celebrations were arranged on legal holidays, even when there was no *Krias Hatorah*. There are problems, and we certainly do not propose that no one celebrate a Bar Mitzvah on Shabbos; but where the price of a Shabbos Bar

Mitzvah is *chilul Shabbos* the Orthodox rabbi, congregation, and the Orthodox Jew, must opt for the week-day celebration.

Whenever there is concern for traditional Jewish values, there is assurance of dignity, and good reason to believe that the boy will prolong his Jewish education past his thirteenth birthday, without resort to gimmicks. Vulgarity and illiteracy are weeds which grow in the rich soil of indifference. □



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## "Improving" Tradition

REUBEN E. GROSS, who frequently contributes to these pages, recently sent us a clipping dated June 29, 1946, from the pages of *The New Palestine*, then published by the Zionist Organization of America.

In 1945, Mordecai Kaplan, the Reconstructionist leader, published a "new" Sabbath Prayer Book, and the Agudas Harrabonim pronounced a *cherem* (ban) on the book. The late Ludwig Lewisohn, one of the greatest literary personalities of this century, was at that

time writing a column for *The New Palestine* called *Reflections*.

Lewisohn was a Jew who was raised in an assimilated Jewish home, and for most of his life bore the scars of such upbringing. Late in life, he discovered his Jewishness and managed, amazingly, to recoup a phenomenal grasp of Yiddishkeit. The precise extent of his *teshuvah* has no doubt already been evaluated in the *Beis Din Shel Ma'alah*, but he left us a rich heritage in his later works concerning the American Jew, particularly in his book of that name. His influence on many young people, through his writings, was such as to have gained him significant merit when he pleaded his case on High.

His reaction to the *cherem* is most relevant today—perhaps more so than when it was written, and it is worthy of note that his editors chose to disclaim responsibility for his views. We offer his *Reflections* as a contribution to the discussion of our attitudes to our non-Orthodox brothers, particularly those who have dedicated themselves to uprooting Jewish ideals, rather than merely ignoring them.

The *cherem*, the ban of excommunication, pronounced by the Union of Orthodox Rabbis, against Dr. Mordecai M. Kaplan and his new Sabbath Prayer Book, doubtless seemed archaic to many people and smacked to others of an unpleasant ecclesiastical authoritarianism. On these points I myself am willing to suspend judgment in view of the undeniable antiquity and venerable tradition behind the practice; at this particular moment the use of the *cherem* was quite pragmatically the following: It called public attention to exceedingly grave questions that were in danger of seeming merely academic; it lit the torch whose light brought these matters into necessary relief. It forced—or at least I hope it forced—many men to reflect on issues

that are central to Judaism and to the survival of Jewry.

For it is undeniable that Dr. Kaplan, who knows that I have always respected and admired many of his efforts and ideals, seems now to lay an axe at the root of both. It is this fact which the Union of Orthodox Rabbis perceived and declared.

Dr. Kaplan mangles the liturgy and denies the destiny of Israel as it works itself out visibly in history by making "modernity" the criterion of belief. This is the recurrent theme of the introduction to the Sabbath Prayer Book. "Modern Jews can no longer believe" . . . "In the modern world all this has been changed," . . . "The atmosphere of modern science." . . . "Analysis of the text by modern scholars," etc., etc.

The word *modernity* can be used either with reference to an era or to an hour in history. If Dr. Kaplan means contemporaneity—this hour in history—I think we have a clear right to deny his arguments. Contemporaneity, for instance, in biblical criticism means no longer the exertations of the high German anti-Semitism; it means the archaeological findings of Leonard Wooley and others, the linguistic evidence adduced by A. S. Yehuda, the magnificent reasoning and research of Martin Buber's *Das Koenigtum Gottes* and such a summing up of the historicity of the Torah as we find in Dr. Garrow Duncan's *Hastie Memorial Lectures* at Glasgow University: "New Light on Hebrew Origins."

"Modern science?" Again, if Dr. Kaplan means the science of today, what is there in Eddington's epistemology — "a purely objective world is not to be reached by observation"—or in the latest almost metaphysical flights of the geneticists to forbid us to adhere to the central ideas of catholic Israel?

Scientific theories come and scientific theories go. Man's fundamental sins and sorrows and so, too, his spiritual aspirations and

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needs "are from eternity and will not fail." This age, of all ages, has illustrated that — has it not? Has not man in this precise modern age fallen to moral depths unheard of? Has "science" shown the possession of any organon that makes for moral betterment or for the allaying of any of "the troubles of our proud and angry dust." To the eye of spiritual discernment the type of "science" which led to the events of this age is discredited by that very fact."

THERE IS AN intriguing post-script to Kaplan's search for modernity. Together with his "new" *siddur* Kaplan had published a "New Haggadah." In a recent issue of Kaplan's own *Reconstructionist* magazine (April 14) a writer recalls that the "New Haggadah" was "a thumping success. And so it was for a number of years." But . . . he continues, "After years of repetition . . . this too lost some of its freshness, especially on the second night" — what price modernity? and he urges a "New Haggadah."

Attempts to "improve" the *siddur*, apart from being an attack on Jewish tradition, also have an element of the absurd, reminiscent of the apocryphal story of the Yiddish writer who translated Shakespeare's *Hamlet* — the title page read:

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HAMLET

*Fargresert und Farbesert*

Jun P. M. MARGOLIS

(Shakespeare's *Hamlet* / Enlarged and Improved / by P. Mapik Margolis.)

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**A week-day Bar Mitzvah,  
either with or without Krias  
Hatorah, can be an inspir-  
ing experience and will  
avoid Chilul Shabbos.**

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*The Jewish Observer* / June, 1967

## Dissent in Reform

ALFRED R. BACHRACH is an accountant by profession. He also serves as president of the Reform congregation, Temple Emanuel of Fifth Avenue, New York. Although he does not appear to claim a reputation as an 'expert' on the Vietnam conflict, he is presumably as well-informed on that subject as any other reasonably intelligent person of his station and position. At any rate, he has a very firm opinion on the propriety of United States intervention in that conflict. His opinion, moreover, does not coincide with that of the Rev. Maurice Eisendrath, titular head of the Union of American Hebrew [Reform] Congregations, and Mr. Bachrach is sufficiently informed to know that in this area the assumed role of Rev. Eisendrath as spokesman for the Reform movement is "unauthorized and impossible."

The interesting thing is how little in the way of knowledge was necessary to liberate this follower of Reform Judaism from lamb-like dependence on the leadership of Dr. Eisendrath on this particular subject. If a similar quantum of knowledge could be leaked through to Mr. Bachrach, his colleagues, their children and their grandchildren, on such subjects as the *Shulchan Aruch*, *Chumash* and Halachah, the results might be revolutionary: They might then see how truly "unauthorized and impossible" are Dr. Eisendrath's positions in specifically Jewish matters. Mr. Bachrach and company would then have the unpleasant task of facing up to the choice of accepting or rejecting their Jewishness instead of muddling through with their present adulterated version.

DISSENT IS A novelty in deviationist Jewish circles. At their inception, Reform and Conservatism were put forth as liberal, intellectual protests against the alleged narrow author-

itarianism of traditional Judaism. In point of fact they have been utterly sterile, intellectually speaking. For the last quarter of a century they have produced nothing but air-conditioned buildings and a religion predicated upon three principles of faith:

- (1) Fight antisemitism
- (2) Support Israel
- (3) Give to the UJA.

On the other hand, Orthodoxy is now undergoing a stimulating and soul-searching self-evaluation, and a re-evaluation of its position in regard to political and social issues. No longer will Orthodox Jews passively accept the directives of the quondam leadership of the defense agencies in this area. New policies, and a different emphasis to old policies, worked out with a Torah orientation, are being more clearly articulated with each passing day. We are not so sanguine as to believe that there is a direct connection between this trend and Mr. Bachrach's dissent. However, Rev. Eisendrath's continued mouthing about his "great humanitarian, ethical and religious fellowship" will sound ever more hollow as he continues to catch it from two sides. Perhaps, as the breed of young Orthodox leadership gains the intellectual ascendancy they must ultimately achieve, they will leak through enough information about true Torah values to congregants of Temple Emanuel and their presidents to stir up even more meaningful dissents.

REUBEN G. GROSS

Mr. Gross, a frequent contributor to THE JEWISH OBSERVER (see his: *Our Under-organized Jewish Community* on page 10 of this issue), is active in many areas of Jewish life. He was recently elected president of the American Veterans of Israel, composed of volunteers who fought in 1948.

## "A Separate Religious Denomination"

WE HAVE ON SEVERAL occasions noted in these columns our belief that those 'branches' of Judaism which have rejected the authority of Halacha have in essence created a new faith. In almost every instance we have received letters from angered readers calling us to task for reading out of *Klal Yisroel* large numbers of Jews. We have, in turn, distinguished between the leadership of non-Orthodox Jewries, and the masses of their followers who have not been exposed to the authentic teachings of Judaism—but to no avail.

We were, therefore, intrigued to learn that others—less vulnerable than THE JEWISH OBSERVER to charges of 'negativism,' 'fundamentalism,' etc., etc.—arrived at a similar conclusion.

In the Winter 1966 issue of *Tradition*, published by the Rabbinical Council of America, Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits in his regular *Survey of Recent Halakhic Periodical Literature*, reports on an article, REALISM ABOUT MIXED MARRIAGE, which appeared in the journal of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (Reform), October, 1966. As Rabbi Jakobovits puts it, the author of the article, Dr. Jacob Petuchowski "castigates the Reform Rabbinate for its ambivalent attitude to mixed marriages in a plea which could scarcely be improved upon by any Orthodox writer." Rabbi Jakobovits continues (words in italics are Petuchowski's):

"The article is based on a recent survey which revealed that 28% of the Conference members will 'officiate' at a 'Jewish' marriage with a non-Jewish partner, at least under certain conditions (15% without prior conversion, provided the children will be raised as Jews; 10% without conversion 'in certain conditions'; and 3% with no conditions). The ostensible objective of such marriages is 'to save the Jewish partner for Judaism,' the children

for Sunday Schools, and the 'rabbi' for 'an important pastoral function by calming the conscience of the Jewish partner and [his] parents.'

"But overlooked in these arguments 'is the very nature of KIDDUSHIN, and the clericalist rabbi which Reform rabbis are giving themselves by agreeing to 'officiate' at a mixed marriage. When it suits our purpose, we never tire of proclaiming that Judaism is a non-priestly religion. . . . But when it comes to concrete cases, we become more priestly and ecclesiastical than the most rigorous Orthodox fundamentalists' by establishing 'the validity' or 'Jewishness' of marriages which technically do not need a rabbi at all. The only justification for a rabbi's presence 'is his role as representative of the HALAKHAH accepted by KELAL YISRAEL.' Otherwise "he is guilty of GENEVAT DA'AT—unless he specifically states in his wedding address, that the validity of this marriage is recognized only by the State and by some sections of Reform Jewry, though not by Judaism as a whole, and unless he omits the words KEDAT MOSHEH VEYISRAEL from the KIDDUSHIN formula." He would have to make it clear 'that he is 'officiating' at a 'sacrament' of his own invention [which] has no connection with what is recognized by the rest of Jewry as a 'Jewish marriage.'"

"Dr. Petuchowski adds courageously: 'As long as more than one quarter of our members . . . will 'officiate' at mixed marriages, the Orthodox have the better of the argument where, as in England and in Israel, they deny the Jewish validity of Reform marriages. At any rate, they would be justified in instigating rigorous investigations whenever they are confronted by a Reform marriage. After all, as our own statistics indicate, 28 out of every 100 Reform rabbis are willing to 'officiate' at marriages which have

no standing whatsoever in Jewish law.'

"To the question 'Why should we be bound by the halachic understanding of KIDDUSHIN, [and not have] our own Reform understanding of what a 'Jewish' marriage is?' the writer replies bluntly that such a marriage is, at best, a 'Reform Jewish' marriage. Should we be willing to settle for that, we could save ourselves a great deal of trouble in the State of Israel. Some years ago, Israel's Minister for Religious Affairs assured the Reform Jews that they would obtain complete religious freedom (including the area of marriage and divorce law), if they were to consent to registering as a separate religious denomination. . . . The Reform Jews of Israel rejected the suggestion as preposterous.' But judged by the admitted practices of the Reform Rabbinate, and particularly the claim, never officially repudiated, of many younger Reform leaders that 'Reform Judaism is a new religion . . . which—more or less by historical accident—shares part of its name with the historical religion of Judaism,' the Ministers' suggestion 'may not have been so preposterous, after all.' In fact, Dr. Petuchowski believes that about 25% of the CCAR members would be ready to assert that Reform Judaism is a new religion in its own right—a percentage liable to increase as time goes on.

"The author therefore calls on his colleagues to surrender their present ambivalence and inconsistency in favor of one of two mutually exclusive positions: Either mixed marriages, involving an unconverted non-Jewish partner, are possible in all cases, because the prohibition of them no longer applies in modern times. In that event, we 'have radically broken with the law of marriage as understood by historical Judaism; [this] should, logically, make us amenable to the sug-



gestion of Israel's Minister of Religious Affairs that Reform Jewry register as a sect in its own right.' Or else, the Conference 'will have to take a stand against those of its own members who regard Reform Judaism as a new religion . . . , and it will also have to bear in mind

the meaning which the concept of KIDDUSHIN has for KELAL YISRAEL.'

SHOULD REFORM be willing to identify itself as a "sect in its own right"—"as a new religion," they would thereby eliminate the useless polemics that have revolved around

the question: Who is today the rightful heir to the Jewish tradition? Reform could then more easily attract the non-Jewish converts they have talked about over the years. But their capacity for winning Jewish adherents to their faith would certainly be weakened. □

## Weak Point... Scream Like Hell!

DR. LEO PFEFFER is chairman of the department of political science at Long Island University; he is considered by some as one of the foremost authorities on the doctrine of separation of church and state. For many years he has served as counsel and spokesman for the American Jewish Congress. In that capacity he has appeared before legislative bodies and public forums arguing that the allocation of government funds for religious schools breaches the constitutional wall between church and state.

For many years Dr. Pfeffer found himself pitted against the Catholic Church. In more recent years he has found himself confronted with the opposition of an Orthodoxy which had in part torn itself away from the 'traditional' Jewish position opposing government aid. Today Dr. Pfeffer and the American Jewish Congress stand against a united Orthodoxy. In the April, 1966 issue of *Hadassah* magazine, Rabbi Joseph Lookstein, in a debate on the use of public funds for private schools, writes "*A confession is in order*," and goes on to explain why he now shares the position of the rest of Orthodoxy. Even in Conservatism there is a growing trend in support of federal aid.


Dr. Pfeffer's credentials as an authority on constitutional law have never been disputed; he has argued *his* case, and equally competent legal authorities have argued the opposing case—in the public forum, in the pages of *THE JEWISH OBSERVER* and other journals. But until recently, Pfeffer's case has

been based on legal issues. Since the question is one of constitutional law, it would follow that the arguments would be the same if Pfeffer was debating Catholic opponents . . . or Jewish opponents—it is an issue which divides Americans, as Americans.

In recent months, however, Dr. Pfeffer has adjusted his tactical approach to aim his fire at the Jewish—the Orthodox exponents of federal aid. He has behaved like the freshman senator who had prepared his notes for his maiden address, and in the margin alongside one paragraph wrote: "WEAK POINT . . . SCREAM LIKE HELL."

LAST APRIL, a committee of the New Jersey state legislature held a public hearing on a bill which would provide for students in religious schools, the same free bus transportation which is available to public school students. (The bill has since been passed and signed into law by Governor Hughes.) Several witnesses testified on behalf of the Orthodox community in favor of the bill. Dr. Pfeffer, identifying himself as a spokesman for the American Jewish Congress, told the committee that "the Jewish community is not united on this issue" and that AJC opposes the bill since the parochial school has "an exclusionary policy of admission." At this point he shifted his argumentation from constitutional considerations, and we cite his words from that point on—together with the chairman's remarks—from the official transcript.

MR. PFEFFER: . . . A child who becomes a discipline problem in the parochial school is dumped out on the public school and the public school can't say, "We don't want you, you're trouble here,"—a child whose achievements are not such as to keep up the reputation of that school is dumped. I can testify



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from personal experience. I received my education in a parochial school, an elementary and secondary school; I was not dumped for a very good reason, although I was a very bad discipline problem—my father happened to be a Rabbi who was rather influential, and so they had to keep me, much as they wanted to expel me. Unfortunately, some of my colleagues who didn't have the good fortune of being born to an influential Rabbi, they were dumped and went back into the public schools.

*"Tragically, that is true . . ."*

Now there is another point I would like to make, again referring to something Rabbi Tietz said which bothers me deeply as a Jew and a religious Jew. Rabbi Tietz pointed out something which we know. He says he speaks for the Association or Society of Jewish Religious Schools and Jewish day schools and he says that while they are maintained by the Orthodox, there are many parents of children who are non-Orthodox whose children attend those schools. Tragically, that is true, an increasing number, but it's true. They go there not because they love God but because they are afraid of the Negro. The exodus from the schools in the central city in the effort on the part of the Negro community to achieve integration has been a disgraceful incident in the history of religion. It is something that we all ought to be sorry for. And it is something which hurts the children. I find it most difficult to understand that those who maintain these schools don't realize what they are doing to children—Jewish children who go to the Jewish day school where they are taught to maintain the Sabbath, to eat only kosher foods, to keep their heads covered, to observe a high Jewish Orthodox life, and then go home and find in their home a completely different life, a life where they eat ham and pork and shellfish and where the Sabbath is not observed. This raises a dual standard and a feeling of hypocrisy on the part of children. If you ask college boys and girls why they are going away from religion, and I speak only of the Jewish religion. That's all I know about. I would not be surprised if the same thing were true of other religions, but I know it is true of the Jewish religion. And many of them say that there is a hypocrisy on the part of their parents in the dual standards which they employ.

The public schools of this country are facing today a crisis. I cannot impress upon you gentlemen today how valuable and tremendous the public schools of America are. There is nothing which you should be more proud of than the establishment of a system of education open to every child without regard of

race, creed, color, or economic standards. The private schools are becoming a haven for the middle and upper classes. The poor don't go to private schools. The lower economic class, the lower 25 or 30 per cent you will find in the slums of Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant and the Appalachian miners. They don't go to private school. They go to the public school; they go to the lowest denominator, and to take public funds in time of such desperate need from those schools for the poor which the public schools are rapidly becoming because of this exodus for the purpose of subsidizing transportation for the wealthy student to meet is something which I, as a religious person, cannot accept.

*"What is right and proper . . ."*

I don't want to go into controversial issues, I do not wish to go into cases—I think you have had plenty of them, I have written on it, and the material is available, and I am speaking to you only on the broader issue of what is right and proper and what is just. I plead with you do not sit on the liquidation of American public education. Thank you. SENATOR FELDMAN: You stated that the majority of Jews are opposed to public funds for private schools.

MR. PFEFFER: Yes, sir.

SENATOR FELDMAN: I share with you a common heritage. I share with you, Mr. Pfeffer, a noble faith. I am also a member of many years standing of the American Jewish Congress and I have received from the Congress testimonials and plaques for my dedication to civil rights of all people, yet I have never been told [asked—ed.] how I feel about public funds to private schools. I would like to know what your sources are. How can one make a general statement how a member of any religious or ethnic group feels about public funds for private schools. I do agree with you that most Americans are for the separation of church and state. This was one of the fundamental principles of our democracy. But to make such a—and I use the word advisedly—devisive statement, I would like to know what your facts are.

Also about Jewish students leaving public school for day school because much has been said today and I didn't want to comment on Holland, about 85 or 90 per cent of the children of Holland going to state-supported religious schools. And I personally admire the Dutch people. I think they have a moral calibre and fibre that we of the free world would love to have in ourselves. The allies—they saved other people during the Nazi occupation. Now this is the type of moral fibre that religious oriented schools build into people. I would like to have my children and all Americans

to have that type of moral fibre. So I would like to know what your sources are and if anyone did leave a public school—and I don't deny that people have left public schools—if they did leave a public school for a Catholic parochial, or a Protestant or a Jewish day school, perhaps they will become better Americans than their parents. Perhaps they will be instilled with the philosophy of brotherhood of mankind on the American scene.

There is much that we could say in reaction to Dr. Pfeffer's statements. They betray a deep-rooted bias against Orthodoxy and intensive, authentic Jewish education. But we will borrow the words of a letter to the editor which appeared in *The Jewish News of New Jersey*, on April 28, 1967, commenting on Pfeffer's statement that some Jews send their children to day schools to avoid having them attend public schools with negro students.

*. . . such a viewpoint expresses the personal orientation of Dr. Pfeffer and is certainly not indicative of the ideology of the leadership or rank and file of the membership of the American Jewish Congress. Indeed, the day school movement which preceded all problems of integration is a pride to the pluralistic concept of American democracy.*

The letter is signed, "Joseph Butterman, Chairman, Israel and Jewish Affairs, Essex County Chapter / American Jewish Congress." Mr. Butterman declares that his chapter of AJC "wishes to publicly record its deep dismay over this [Pfeffer's] unsolicited, non-factual statement."

No Jew has ever questioned the negro's motives in seeking freedom—freedom needs no justification. What sort of twisted Americanism does Dr. Pfeffer espouse when he questions the motives of Jews who send their children to a religious school? Does he—the defender of civil liberty—want the government to investigate the personal religious convictions of citizens, and seek out those who are guilty of 'hypocrisy'?

The American Jewish Congress

is ever sensitive to any slur against the Jewish people. They recently prevailed upon a brewery to discontinue the use of a TV beer commercial which utilized a stereotyped Jewish dialect. We can ask no less than that they repudiate the self-hated slurs of their authorized spokesmen, against Orthodox Jewry; and that he and the entire leadership make a public apology. □

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# Letters to the Editor

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## Issues of the Day

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To the Editor:

I found Reuben Gross' article in Nissan's OBSERVER to be a most refreshing change and, perhaps, the heralding of a new journalistic code on the traditional horizon. In the past a great gap existed as a result of the pronounced effort to avoid the underlying, truly controversial, albeit delicate, issues of the day. The OBSERVER's readiness to tap such a field as the sexual mores of contemporary society is certainly to be commended.

I would, however, like to take issue on a number of points which I feel require correcting as well as amplification.

Initially I believe it was a bit flippant on the part of the writer to criticize *The Times* for the publicity which it accorded a Jewish issue which under similar circumstances could never warrant such coverage in a case concerning Hindus. The American Jewish community constitutes far too potent a minority to allow such incidents to go by unnoticed.

A more significant point which I feel demands considerable attention is the writer's remarks concerning the assimilated Jew. Mr. Gross has relegated the assimilated American Jew to the same position as the assimilationist of perhaps a century ago—if he did not actually confound the two. Hardly so, however. The American middle-class, irreligious Jew is hardly intellectual enough or suffi-

ciently oriented in the humanities to have an even sub-conscious desire to de-Christianize his neighbor. On a basis of personal experiences I would contend that we are confronted by a rather opposite syndrome. Jews in communities such as Wayne (who although educated are not, as such, intellectuals) are bending over backwards to Aryanize themselves whilst their Christian neighbors seem to be awakening to the realities of their own heritage and slowly but surely becoming Judaized.

And the fallacy with the middle-class Jew is not secular humanism by a long shot. It is ignorance coupled by an intense desire for security and acceptance; a disease long channeled into the American Jew's mind by his *Am Ha'aretz* parents at the turn of the century. . . .

Looking forward to increasingly more interesting articles . . .

YAKOV YOCHANAN GROSS  
Brooklyn, New York

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## Commends Mission Documentary

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To the Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to commend you for your documentary on the missionary activities of the church as they relate to affairs in the United States. I participated recently in a serious public debate in Rochester, New York on the topic of Christian-Jewish Dialogue and I was able to use your material to very good advantage.

May I suggest that at some future date you publish more of the same material.

RABBI FABIAN SCHONFELD  
Kew Gardens Hills, N. Y.

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## Science and Yeshivos

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To the Editor:

In the article *Time for a Change* by Dr. Seymour Glick in the January '67 issue of THE OBSERVER, Dr. Glick tells us that many major yeshivos are guilty of belittling and ridiculing science and scientists and of considering secular studies as "*shtus*."

I was deeply disappointed by this statement maligning the yeshivos and subsequently their Roshei Hayeshiva, coming from . . . the president of the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists.

I have had much contact with staff and student body of many yeshivos . . . and I have yet to discover where science as such (unconditionally) is thought of as "*silly*" and scientists "*foolish*."

The yeshivos have always recognized the true value of scientific study. One cannot truly understand the Halacha without understanding the sciences; thus

the *Chazon Ish* was adept in astronomy, the *Rambam*—a medical doctor to name but two. . . .

There is however an area where secular education has been scoffed at. . . . One [book] written by an eminent Torah scholar ridicules the scientists having overstepped their areas of authority. Dr. Sylvan Shane . . . admits to this in an article in the December '66 OBSERVER, *The Credo of A Scientist*, when he writes, "Some scientists extend scientific concepts beyond their range of validity." Dr. Leo Levi in the article *Science—Slave or Master* (OBSERVER, January '67) also must clarify for us the areas where scientific laws and observations are valid. He writes "The obvious success of science in its proper field of competence has so blinded men to its limitations that any doctrine proposed in the name of science is uncritically accepted by large segments of the public"

It is "*silly*" for adults to probe into realms outside their knowledgeability and scope in the name of truth. (One such instance—the theory of evolution—see, *Evolution—Fact or Theory?—a scientist finds the fact weak and the theory wanting*, by Dr. Lee M. Spetner (OBSERVER, January '66). It is "*foolish*" to promulgate theories on the basis of this probing. It is "*silly*" for scientists in any field to formulate the ethics and moral codes of man. It is "*foolish*" for them to speak authoritatively on this subject. This too is being done by the scientists—this too is being scoffed at by the Torah Scholars.

No intelligent person, particularly a Torah Scholar would negate the verities of science. It is this smoke screen of unauthoritative opinion, philosophy, free thinking and theorizing, which is in question.

To the contrary it is Dr. Glick who is in error, and the yeshivas who have viewed the sciences and secular study in their true prospective. To ignore the issue and to allow this flagrant breach of truth by the secularists to go unanswered is to undermine the pursuit of truth and the Noachian code of ethics for all mankind. . . .

Finally, the fact that his views have "considerable support" is irrelevant and not scientific thinking. The masses have believed many things [even] . . . that the earth is flat! "What is right or wrong in Jewish life is not determined in such a fashion" (popular majority)—(see, *A Statement by Harav Mordecai Gifter*—OBSERVER, January '67).

If Dr. Glick is indeed criticizing a Torah scholar, it would behoove him to have a little more humility in their realm of authority, which includes Torah attitudes to secular education. Would Dr. Glick like my advice in the field of endocrinology? Let him at least try to



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understand their statements by discussing the issue through the mails or otherwise with the scholars involved before formulating his opinions.

At this point allow me to take issue with the editors of THE JEWISH OBSERVER for—1) Airing in the press areas of jurisdiction in which the layman has no authority to voice an opinion. This area of Hashkofa and guidance in Jewish life has always been the sacred domain of the *Gedolim*. 2) To allow laymen or even rabbis, (who have not yet attained great heights in Torah) to publicly suggest or state that the Roshei Hayeshiva are neglecting or overlooking obvious areas in their jurisdiction . . . is presumptuous, in bad taste, and out of line for a publication speaking in the name of the *Gedolim* i.e., Torah.

I have often wondered if THE JEWISH OBSERVER is subject to review before publication by a *Godol* or a group of *Gedolim*. Without such direct scrutiny the public has no assurance that the views expressed . . . especially when written by layman are indeed those of the *Gedolim* . . .

St. Louis, Missouri  
(Name withheld by request)

### The Editors Reply:

This letter, while most eloquent, appears to be the result of the reader's complete misunderstanding of Dr. Glick's article, which deserved a more careful perusal. Dr. Glick did not say that "many major yeshivos are guilty of belittling and ridiculing science" or "malign the yeshivos and subsequently (sic) their Roshei Yeshiva"; nor did his remarks call for a lecture on the distinction between valid areas of scientific inquiry and unwarranted pseudo-scientific theorizing. The fact is that Dr. Glick himself emphasized the need to point out to youngsters "that secular knowledge takes second place behind Torah knowledge; that scientific training, unlike Torah training, does not bring with it *Hishtalmus Ho'odom*; that scientific theories, unlike Torah, are hypothetical, ethically neutral, and limited in scope.

Dr. Glick was not arguing that there is nothing in science that merits ridicule—his point was a pedagogical one: that it is "unwise and self-defeating" to use ridicule as a way to resolve conflicts between Torah and science, "as is sometimes done" (Dr Glick's words, our emphasis). What Dr. Glick was calling for was a need to react to the challenge of science in a factual, intelligent manner rather than by mere *bitul* or name-calling, albeit deserved. That there are some yeshiva teachers who use this weapon, and sometimes in rather unfortunate ways, can hardly be denied; that this does not involve a maligning of the

Yeshivos or, G-d forbid, their Roshei Hayeshivos, is obvious.

The importance of Dr. Glick's point emerges from the above letter itself—is it not obvious that the reader newly approaching the subject will be much more impressed by the quotes from say, Dr. Levi, Dr. Shain, or Dr. Spetner, than by the exclamatory labels such as "shitus," "silly," "foolish?" The fact is that at no point does Dr. Glick suggest ignoring the "smoke screen of unauthoritative opinion . . ."; he merely points out a better way of dealing with it—and in this connection the fact that his views have "considerable support" among yeshiva circles is indeed most relevant.

Reluctantly, the letter-writer's criticism of Dr. Glick's lack of humility, and failure to try to understand the statements he criticizes must be laid at his

own doorstep, serious and responsible efforts to come to grips with very real current problems deserve a more serious and responsible treatment—"more light and less heart."

AS FOR THE criticism of the editors of OBSERVER, it is quite true that the reader has no guarantee that the views expressed are indeed those of the *Gedolim*; but it is also true that a policy of pre-publication review by *Gedolim* has never existed in Orthodox journalism and would indeed never be undertaken by the *Gedolim*—for the simple reason that the publication in question would then be a platform for *Psak* rather than a forum for the discussion of current problems in the spirit of Torah, including many problems on which *Gedolim* may not want to issue a formal *Psak*.

The words "in the spirit of Torah" are

of course crucial, and the editors try most conscientiously to live up to this very difficult demand. Their judgment on what is or is not "in the spirit of the Torah" undoubtedly can be questioned by a reader; but that is inevitable. Certainly the editors do not agree with the view that they aired areas of jurisdiction which they should not have touched, or that they countenanced the suggestion that the Roshei Yeshiva are overlooking or neglecting areas in their jurisdiction. Beyond the judgment of the editors, however, the public has this safeguard: THE JEWISH OBSERVER is a project of the Agudath Israel movement and, like all its other projects, is responsible and subject to the correction and guidance of the *Gedolim* who are its highest authority.

## News of Agudath Israel

### AGUDATH ISRAEL FACES ISRAEL'S EMERGENCY

• **MOETZES GEDOLEI HATORAH DISCUSSES ISRAEL CRISIS.** The critical security situation of Eretz Yisroel was on the top of the agenda of a meeting of the *Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah*, which took place on May 23rd in the national headquarters of Agudath Israel of America at 5 Beekman Street, in New York City. The meeting, which was chaired by Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, chairman of the *Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah*, considered various means of mobilizing the concern of American Jewry in reaction to the emergency situation facing the Holy Land. The *Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah* consists of the foremost Roshei Yeshivos and Chassidic *Rebbeim* in the country. (The full text of the statement subsequently issued by the *Moetzes* appears on the cover and page three of this issue.)

• **AGUDATH ISRAEL RALLIES SUPPORT.** When the crisis erupted on May 22, a special meeting of Agudath Israel's inner executive immediately wired President Johnson urging his taking "immediate steps to reaffirm American commitment to the 1950 Tripartite Declaration guaranteeing the territorial integrity of Israel." Key Agudah activists throughout the nation were quickly mobilized to launch a nation-wide telegram campaign to the White House and legislators to win American support of Israel's sovereignty, imperilled by Arab aggressors. When the fighting began, the top policy-making bodies of Agudath Israel met in lengthy sessions on June 5th at the national headquarters to chart the

organization's course of action to help our embattled Yishuv. It was decided to participate in the National Emergency Leaders Conference called for Washington on June 7th and June 8th by the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, to impress upon American legislators on Capitol Hill the importance of effective backing of Israel's demands for peace and tranquility. Although Agudath Israel, because of ideological reasons, is not a member of the Presidents Conference, the invitation extended by the Presidents Conference to the Washington gathering was accepted in order to demonstrate a united front when Jewish lives are at stake.

It was also decided to help the special "Israel Emergency Fund," launched by the Israel government through the United Jewish Appeal, to finance its defense effort. Simultaneously, an "Emergency Torah Fund for Israel," under the control of the *Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah*, was established by Agudath Israel to enable Torah-Jews to fulfill their special obligation to care for the particular needs of the Torah institutions in the Holy Land, whose very existence has now been gravely imperilled.

### AGUDATH ISRAEL AT WHITE HOUSE RECEPTION FOR EDUCATORS

AT THE invitation of President Johnson, Rabbi Moshe Sherer, executive Vice-president of Agudath Israel, participated in a reception at the White House on May 17th, tendered by the President to the top educators from every part of the United States. The reception, which

ended a two-day conference of the heads of various public and private school systems, had as special invited guests a number of national leaders active in educational legislation.

### GROSS TESTIFIES AT N. Y. CONSTITUTION HEARING

REUBEN E. GROSS, chairman of Agudath Israel's Commission on Law and Civic Affairs, testified on June 7th at the New York City hearing of the New York State Constitutional Convention's Committee on Bill of Rights and Suffrage. Mr. Gross, a distinguished legal expert on problems of church-state separation, presented an impressive array of facts to the members of the committee about the importance of repealing the restrictive "Blaine Amendment" which discriminates against non-public school children.

### AGUDIST CAMPS TO OPEN JUNE 29

CHILDREN FROM every part of the United States will be at Camp Agudah and Camp Bnos, when the new season opens on June 29. The two Agudist-sponsored camps, which are situated in Ferndale and Liberty, New York, have for over two decades conducted unique programs during the summer vacation period, which have had a strong impact on the lives of thousands of youngsters.

### NATIONAL CONVENTION SET FOR NOVEMBER 23-26

PREPARATIONS are already under way for the 46th National Convention of Agudath Israel, which will take place from Thursday (Thanksgiving Day), November 23rd through Sunday, November 26th (Cheshvan 20-23).

MEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOME!

MEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOMEMOME!

**MEMO:** To myself

**REF:** Printing and mailing Shonoh Tovah cards

1. See the printer — have him do something different this year — last year's cards were too dull.
2. Check the addresses on the list — last year 26 came back marked "incorrect address." Six cousins and three sets of uncles and aunts still don't talk to us.
3. Add to list people who sent us cards last year.
4. Drop those who didn't.
5. Address envelopes
6. Pick up roll of stamps at Post Office.

**SILLY . . . ? SURE IT IS . . .**

*to spend so much time AND MONEY to print, address and mail dozens of greeting cards . . . when you can reach your mishpochoh and friends with an attractive greeting in the Rosh Hashonoh edition of*

**THE JEWISH OBSERVER**

*What about Uncle Max who doesn't read THE JEWISH OBSERVER? send him a gift subscription and you'll still save money . . . and you will be helping to support*

**THE JEWISH OBSERVER**

**But please . . . don't wait till you get back from your vacation . . . do it now. You can forget about your list, cancel the trip to the Post Office (they're losing money on your mail anyhow) and buy yourself something new for Yom Tov with all the money you save.**

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**Print your own text clearly — each line should not exceed 25 letters.**

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Name..... Address.....

City..... State..... Zip Code.....