



# The World of Lubavitch

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## King in America

*Based on a public letter by the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

A basic theme of Rosh Hashanah is that it achieves the coronation of G-d as king of Israel and king of the universe, as expressed in our heartfelt prayer and request: "Reign over the entire world!"

Such a request implies the readiness to place oneself in a state of full conformity with the Divine sovereignty; that one is prepared to utterly submit to the Divine king, to the point that one's entire being, and all that one has, is the king's alone. This is the meaning of kabalat ol--"the acceptance of the yoke" of Divine sovereignty--an acceptance which finds expression in all areas of daily life.

In truth, every day of the year brings an acceptance of this submission, particularly when one recites the Shema in the morning and evening prayers. But there exists a most basic difference: on the daily level, kabalat ol, while being the inaugural and fundamental act of the day, is merely the basis upon which one's behavior throughout the day is predicated. Rosh Hashanah, however, is a time when submission to the sovereignty of Heaven is also the quality and content of the day, pervading the entire person and manifesting itself in everything he does.

### **Totalitarianism Today**

Every period and every locality has its special qualities and its particular challenges.

In our time, there is a prevailing trend in many circles toward increased self-sufficiency and independence, not only in regard to material matters, but in ideological matters as well; an increasing unwillingness to submit to the established order, to accept things before they are fully understood by one's own mind, and so on. This, it would seem, represents a challenge to the very concept of kabalat ol.

This is particularly the case in countries that are (relatively) young and which were established upon a foundation of self-initiative and youthful energy, and where this spirit characterizes the entire structure of personal and communal life--all of which make it more difficult to conform to the criteria of kabalat ol.

Notwithstanding the above, we have the axiom that G-d does not demand of a person something that is beyond his capacity. Since submission to the sovereignty of G-d is the essence of Rosh Hashanah (and the foundation of all our deeds throughout the year), this is obviously applicable to all times and places. Certainly, it is possible and incumbent upon us to achieve a full acceptance of the Divine kingship also in our time, and also in the above-mentioned circumstances.

Indeed, there is a special quality to our kabalat ol in our time and in this part of the world. When a person who has been conditioned to having limits placed on his independence accepts something unquestioningly, this does not constitute a thorough and unequivocal acceptance; for such a person is accustomed to being told what to do and is often compelled to yield his will and modify his opinions. On the other hand, when a person who does not, as a rule, surrender his independence and his convictions is convinced that he must recognize and submit to a higher authority, this decision is made on a much deeper and more fundamental level and yields an absolute and immutable commitment.

## 33rd Annual Dinner to Honour Jason Kenney

"MP Jason Kenney is a good friend of Chabad and a great friend of Israel," said Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum when announcing the guest of honour for the 33rd Annual Dinner of Chabad Lubavitch. As a Member of Parliament, Mr. Kenney enjoys much popularity in the broad Jewish community, speaking up for human rights, supporter of Israel, and as an outspoken critic of all forms of racism and hate. His views and opinions reflect, and are



Jason Kenney

anchored by a moral code of ethics that is in sync with traditional values. His boundless

energy, his optimism, and his principled convictions are the hallmark of his personality. Jason has been a most refreshing presence on the Hill, "who speaks what he believes, and believes what he speaks." Thus in choosing a reference that best portrays the honouree, Rabbi Grossbaum offered a quote from the Book of the Just, by Rabbi Yaakov Tam, one of the most outstanding medieval scholars who writes, "Words from the

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# The 120-Day Version of the Human Story

**Come see the doings of G-d, His fearsome plot on the children of man**

Psalms 66:5

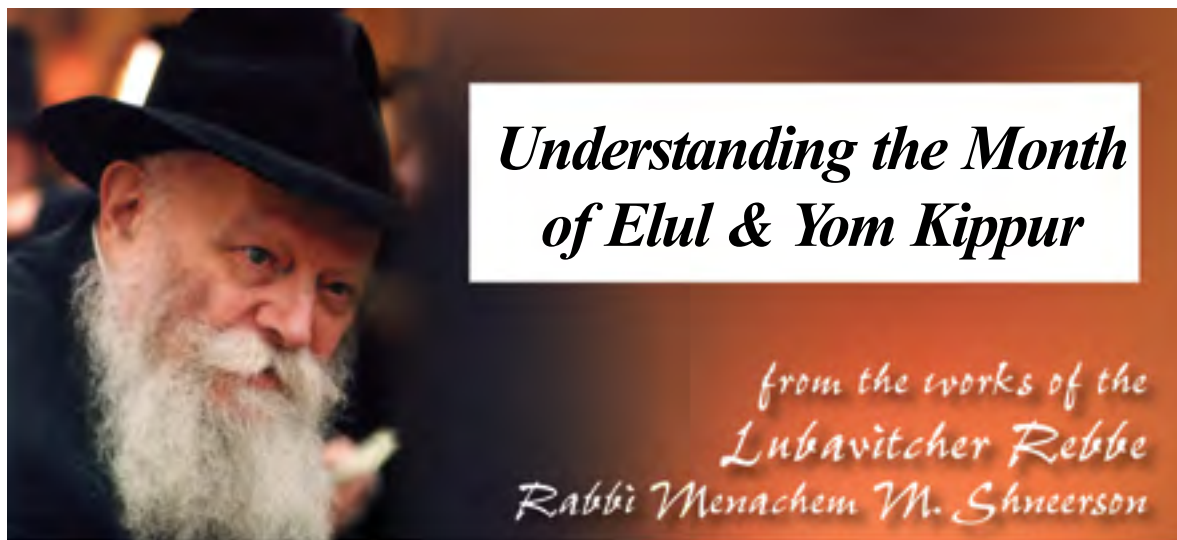
On the 7th of Sivan, Moses went up onto the mountain.... On the 17th of Tammuz the Tablets were broken. On the 18th he burned the [Golden] Calf and judged the transgressors. On the 19th he went up for forty days and pleaded for mercy. On the 1st of Elul he went up to receive the Second Tablets, and was there for forty days. On the 10th of Tishrei G-d restored His goodwill with the Jewish people gladly and wholeheartedly, saying to Moses "I have forgiven, as you ask", and gave him the Second Tablets.

Rashi, Exodus 32:1 and 33:11  
A single drop of sea-water, analyzed in the laboratory, will reveal the characteristics of billions of her sisters; indeed, it will tell you much about every drop in every ocean on earth.

The same is true of history. On the one hand, each period is unique, each year, day and moment distinct in content and character. And yet, as we often recognize, the story of an individual life may tell the story of a century, and the events of a single generation may embody those of an entire era. On the surface, time may more resemble the disparate terrain of land than it does the uniform face of the sea; but once you strip away the externalities of background and circumstance, a drop in the ocean of time will reflect vast tracts of its waters and, ultimately, its entire expanse.

We, who travel the terrestrial surface of time, know it as a succession of events and experiences. We traverse its rises and slumps, its deserts and wetlands, its smooth and rocky passes. To us, the universal nature of the moment lies buried deep beneath its more immediate significance; to us, the moment yields not the totality of life and history, only those specific elements and facets thereof which it embodies.

But there are also vistas of a more inclusive nature, landscapes of such diversity and impact that they are virtual mini-worlds of their own. There are stretches in the journey of



## Understanding the Month of Elul & Yom Kippur

from the works of the  
Lubavitcher Rebbe  
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

an individual or a people in which the all-reflectiveness of the moment rises to the surface, in which a series of events offer a condensed version of the entire universe of time.

One such potent stretch of time was a 120-day period in the years 2448-9 from Creation (1313 bce). The events of this period, experienced by the Jewish people soon after their birth as a nation, choreograph

the very essence of the human story--the basis, the process, and the end-goal of life on earth. The hundred and twenty days from Sivan 6, 2448 to Tishrei 10, 2449 contained it all: the underpinnings of creation, the saga of human struggle, and the ultimate triumph which arises from the imperfections and failings of man.

### The Events

On Sivan 6, 2448, the entire

people of Israel gathered at Mount Sinai to receive the Torah from the Almighty. There, they experienced the revelation of G-d and heard the Ten Commandments which encapsulate the entire Torah. The following morning Moses ascended the mountain, where he communed with G-d for forty days and forty nights and received the Torah proper, the more detailed rendition of G-d's

communication to humanity.

At the end of Moses' (first) forty days on Mount Sinai, G-d gave him two tablets of stone, the handiwork of G-d, upon which the Ten Commandments were engraved by the finger of G-d. But in the camp below, the Jewish people were already abandoning their newly made covenant with G-d. Reverting to the paganism of Egypt, they made a calf of gold and, amidst feasting and hedonistic disport, proclaimed it the god of Israel. G-d said to Moses: Descend, for your people, which you have brought up from the land of Egypt, have been corrupted; they have quickly turned from the path that I have commanded them...

And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, with the two Tablets of Testimony in his hand... And when Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing ... he threw the tablets from his hands and shattered them at the foot of

*Continued on pg.19*



## Sighting Moshiach

By Tzvi Freeman for *chabad.ca*

### Question:

Is it true that the Moshiach shall suddenly appear on a main street in Jerusalem, a poor old man with a wild but angelic look, spewing forth wisdom and declaring the time of redemption has arrived? If so, why will they not lock him up?

Is it true that he shall be announced on all the media worldwide at 6 pm, along with offers for free El Al tickets? If so, who will finance this?

Is there truth to that which they say, that in those enlightened days there will be only study of Torah and no more reckless fun? Is it true that the entire order of nature will change suddenly as the Anointed One appears?

### Response:

Yes, definitely a case for pity. No (aside from the media announcements)--it's not

anything like what you describe.

The arrival of Moshiach and the accompanying turnabout in the World Order, is a very pragmatic ideal. In fact, much of it has happened already.

Of course, as Maimonides puts it, nobody really knows exactly what's going to happen--The Almighty-Master-Of-All-Plans-To-Whom-All-Is-Revealed is really concerned about the suspense factor here. But allow me to let you in on a few of the key details, as I humbly understand them:

1. The first thing Moshiach does is do away with bad marketing. That's the true villain that has held us back all these years. Ask any consumer electronics or computer engineer. We could all own household robots to do our work. We could be consuming less than 10% of the natural resources we consume now--if it weren't for those nefarious busy bodies who market quantity rather than quality. Given the true needs of most people and the productivity possible with modern technology, we should all be working an average of 2.5 hours a week. What's responsible for the other 60+ hours? Bad Marketing.

Moshiach's marketing people will get people's minds back on the right track. Thinking about real quality of life. About their relationship with the earth and with their bodies and their souls and the people around them.

Once that's done, just about everything else we need to create paradise is here already.

2. The people will come up with a real wise individual and make him their mentor and leader--not the other way around like in the fairy tales. As you put it yourselves: how else can he avoid being locked up? This is stated clearly in numerous sources, for example, "They will search out David their king...", "They will make for themselves a king and rise out of the land". It just seems pretty obvious that it's the people who make the leader -- a self-declared leader is little more than just another nutcase.

Even the Kabbalists agree that Moshiach isn't planning on a sudden appearance. Rather, the people will slowly wake up to the fact that he's already here. Just not in places people generally look.

3. The arrival of Moshiach is not much more of a greater miracle than the sudden fall of the communist dictatorship. True, there will be a couple of big Signs-and-Wonders-scenarios--some that'll make the Ten Plagues and the Crossing of the Red Sea look like kid's play. Like, how about the splitting of the Euphrates, for one? But, who says glitz makes a miracle?

*Continued on pg. 19*

### ON OUR COVER

**Klezmer by Iby Kleiner.**

During the intermediate days of Sukkot, which are known as Simchat Bait Hashoeva, special celebrations are arranged with music and dancing, commemorating the celebration that took place in the holy temple during this time. Our sages tell us that "whoever did not see the joy of Simchat Bat Hashoeva has not seen true joy in his life"



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## A Birthday Tradition



Marty Teplitsky hands the key of the new van to Rabbi Grossbaum as Marty Richman looks on

On Thursday, July 7, during the first week of camp, friends and family of Chabad supporter and well known attorney, Marty Teplitsky, gathered at the Chabad Lubavitch Community Center in Thornhill to celebrate Marty's birthday. They celebrated by presenting a new 15 passenger van to the Lubavitch Day Camp. As staff and campers sang Happy Birthday, Marty handed the keys of the new van, decked out with a giant ribbon and bow, as is befitting a birthday gift, to Rabbi Zalman Aron Grossbaum. The van was donated by a group of friends and spearheaded by his good friend Marty Richman.

As the guests enjoyed delicious hors d'oeuvres, prepared by the camp caterer Shlomo Shoshan, Rabbi Grossbaum reminded everyone that this has become a tradition of sorts among these friends. Some 25 years ago when Marty Richman turned 50, his friends stymied by the dilemma "what do you buy for the guy who has everything" decided to purchase and donate a 15 passenger van to Lubavitch Day Camp. Indeed, this wonderful gesture was crowned by a letter from the Rebbe,

Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson of righteous memory, lauding Mr. Richman's support for Chabad Lubavitch of Ontario and extending best wishes for good health and long life.

Ten years later, when Morty Goldhar turned 60 a second van was gifted by the same group. Now, as Marty Teplitsky reached the 70 year milestone, the tradition continues.

Needless to say, the extensive and expensive transportation component for over 600 campers is provided by a commercial bus fleet. Some ten yellow school buses pick up the campers daily and also provide transportation for field trips. Yet, for a camp of this size, there are numerous daily contingencies that are facilitated by a 15 passenger van. The van is used to pick up campers that live in remote areas and also deliver lunch and supplies to the numerous camp divisions and locations.

In closing, Mrs. Esti Steinmetz, director of Lubavitch Day Camp shared her heartfelt blessings and wished the donors long, healthy and blessed life, with the ability to maintain this tradition for many years to come.

## Haliburton Camp Site in the Throes of Completion

Finally after three construction seasons, Chabad's 207 acre camp site in Haliburton is nearing completion. No doubt this arduous task has been quite costly and time consuming. Yet consistent with the Talmudic adage "L'phum Tzara Agra," loosely translated, the gain is proportionate to the pain, we can now begin to look forward to a new venue and vista. An oasis in the country where children will enjoy the great outdoors, strengthen the body and nurture the soul.

Overnight camping has always been high on the priority list at Chabad. In fact, our beloved Rebbe o.b.m. extolled the virtues of this venture some 50 years ago when Chabad in North America was still in its infancy. He recognized the value of imbuing our youth with a 'high octane' 24/7 energy boost that will stay with them for a lifetime. The facility will be called; The Sidney & Naomi Spiegel Camp Gan Israel, in recognition of their most generous gift and continued support to make this most ambitious project a reality. Indeed, it was the Rebbe who suggested the name Gan Israel, Gan meaning garden and Israel the name of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the universal Chassidic movement. From an early age the Baal Shem Tov would spend extended periods of time in the forest serving G-d where tranquility reigned supreme.

Finally after a lengthy process and great expense we installed a septic system that meets the most stringent requirements of the Ministry of the Environment. Upon receiving their approval we had the go ahead to proceed with construction of the infrastructure of the camp facilities.

Strategically situated along the entrance roadway is the custom built administration building, which also includes an infirmary. "We felt that the combined use would ascertain that if a camper is sequestered for a day or two in the infirmary, there would always be some activity in the adjoining area," said Rabbi Itchy Grossbaum, Camp Director. The structure includes offices and a reception area. The infirmary component has an examination room to be outfitted with First Aid equipment, two bedrooms, three washrooms, and a resident suite for a doctor or nurse etc.

Further down the roadway facing east and flanked by a full length porch is the Shul / Assembly Hall. Perched on a



Two of the bunk houses at Camp Gan Israel in Haliburton

slope, the building offers a magnificent view of Basshaunt Lake which will be enjoyed from the wide, north side porch. The central room with a high ceiling is equipped with a stage and auxiliary rooms for dressing, makeup and stage props. The Ahron Hakodesh is strategically positioned and constructed so that it is concealed when the facility is transformed for performances and night activities.

Currently under construction is the spacious dining room and commercial kitchen. Being cognizant of the demands of a facility that is almost constantly in motion either preparing meals, baking, or serving, etc. every consideration for efficiency and convenience is being incorporated. The kitchen, decked out in stainless steel, will have two complete parallel facilities for dairy and meat. The entire dining room will be flanked by a wraparound porch. Naturally the expanse between these two prominent structures will by osmosis become the central promenade.

On the periphery of a spacious expanse and flanked by mature trees are a pod of three bunk houses. Each is designed to

accommodate two units and includes washrooms and showers. In the second phase a similar pod will be constructed on the other side of the central square. This will help organize the camp in divisions by age.

But, let's not forget about the natural beauty, some two hundred acres of foliage, mature trees, nature trails, and 6000 feet of frontage along Basshaunt Lake. To enjoy conventional sports, three distinct areas have been cleared and are being nurtured accordingly.

In addition to hosting girls in July and the boys in August we hope to maximise use of the facility by making it available for other community groups before and after the summer months. Plans are underway to open registration with G-d's help in the spring for the inaugural 2012 season.

A project of this magnitude is a testament of faith and bears witness to the resolve and generosity of numerous benefactors who have graciously come to our aid. No doubt very soon their efforts and support will be rewarded with much satisfaction as we extend the horizon of Jewish life, both literally and figuratively.



Construction of the kitchen / dining room. Shul / Auditorium can be seen in the background.



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## Enhanced Training Session Offered to Friendship Circle Volunteers



Mrs. Yehudis Bernstein flanked by the volunteers who received their certificate of achievement for completing an indepth training course.

One of the most challenging aspects for the Friendship Circle volunteers is communicating with their special friends. When interacting with children with special needs one must always be cognizant of the circumstances, limitations and frustrations that is often hidden behind a curtain of silence.

In addition to the annual mandatory training session some ten volunteers completed 10 hours of additional training at the end of last season. Mrs. Yehudis Bernstein, of Spark Learning Centre presented the four workshop sessions, titled "Allow Me", offered to caregivers of individuals with special needs.

The interactive series was informative and beneficial, yet engaging and enjoyable. The course material was a guide to promote communication skills between the volunteers and their

"special friend" teaching them how to greatly enrich their interaction. "I learned so much from these sessions," said Suzy, "it taught me to remember that each person is different and responds to different means of communication. It helped me discover what my special friend responds to and what he turns away from, what helps him learn and what does not."

At the conclusion of the classes, Mrs. Esther Grossbaum thanked Yehudis for her informative and practical sessions. Yehudis noted, "Honestly, I wasn't aware of how much Friendship Circle accomplishes. I am so impressed by the variety of programs and the dedication of the volunteers and all the coordination that you and Goldy accomplish! I also look forward to continuing to work together."

## Toronto Friendship Circle Volunteer Wins North American Essay Contest

Today there are some 65 branches of the Friendship Circle throughout North America which cater to children with special needs. Since its inception, some 15 years ago, this initiative has become the paradigm for inclusiveness in a most rewarding manner. The primary objective is to assign teenage volunteers to visit and interact on a weekly basis with a special needs youngster. Today there are over 4,000 beneficiaries and their families, who are serviced by a brigade of 8,000 teenagers. During the course of time the Friendship Circle has evolved and extended its scope with many creative programs. Here in Toronto the Friendship Circle was started some eight years ago and accommodates some eighty special needs children by a volunteer force of one hundred and thirty teenagers.

Being exceptionally impressed by the devotion of the teenage volunteers, a supporter from the Stamford, CT chapter wanted to show his appreciation and commitment towards this noble cause and offered an essay contest with cash prizes for the winners. The winners receive an \$1,800 scholarship stipend towards university or teacher's college. More than one hundred and twenty, grade 12 students put pen to paper and described their Friendship Circle experience in the North American essay competition. Amongst the three winners was Meira Shields from the Toronto branch. Below is her essay describing what the Friendship Circle means to her.

### Meira Shields, Toronto

I don't remember when I first met David. It was a long time ago. I have always known his family - his sisters used to babysit me, his mother taught me. The first time I actually noticed David was when I was about eleven years old and he was three. I saw this cute kid running around the playground of the camp his parents directed and I was a little scared. I had never met anyone like him before. I kept my distance. I wasn't that outgoing girl who could befriend just anyone. For the next few summers, whenever I saw him there - whenever my friends would talk about how amazing he was - I would smile and nod my agreement, even though I did not really believe this to be true.

When I was thirteen years old, my older sister, who was in

grade eleven at the time, started the Friendship Circle program. I thought she was crazy. Who would want to spend an hour a week with someone like that? I thought to myself. But every week she came home from Friendship Circle with a huge smile on her face and an amazing story to tell about some new thing David had done that day. When she graduated high school she



Meira Shields


told me that Friendship Circle is something from which I, too, would greatly benefit and enjoy and that I should consider participating. I took her advice and called up David's mother. She was really excited for me to come. Still somewhat sceptical, I asked one of my friends to come along with me.

It took me a couple of weeks to get used to David, but by the second month, I was hooked. For three years now, every Thursday at 5:15 sharp we pull into his driveway, and there he is, waiting for us by the window. As we walk up the stairs to the door, we can see him running to greet us calling out, "Good job! Good job!" We are the "Good-Job" girls because we were the ones who taught him those words. His being non-verbal doesn't matter to me because we can communicate

in ways that I never thought we could. Sometimes I will look at him and think things like, Wow! Look how much he has grown! He wasn't always able to reach that cupboard! I notice the extent of his vocabulary, as compared to three years ago. When he used to only say "apple" when he wanted to eat, he can now say things like, "Please, cookie" and "I want play puzzle." He even knows his Brachot (blessings) better than I do! He can sing any song, knows the words to all his favorite books, and can do puzzles without us showing him where the pieces go. Being with him makes my heart melt with happiness - when he smiles at me, I can't not smile back. He knows that flashing his huge grin at me is all it takes to make my day.

I have learned a lot of lessons from David. I learned that you can get pleasure and excitement from even the smallest things in life. It is important to appreciate everything we have and try our best to learn and grow to our maximum potential. He taught me that with patience, love, and understanding, we can all accomplish things we thought were too far out of our reach.


I don't know if David will ever know my name. I don't know if he will even remember me when I get back from Israel next year. I do know, however, that every week when we spend time together there is an extraordinary feeling that is reciprocated between the two of us. David is truly the most special friend I have and I know that everything he has taught me over the past three years has been an integral part of my growth. David will stay with me forever.



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## Dinner to Honour Jason Kenney *Cont. from page 1*

heart penetrate the heart of the listener.”

Today, Chabad Lubavitch has a presence in seven of the ten Provinces. And in tandem with the Jewish presence in numerous cities across the country, some two hundred Shluchim stand on the vanguard to bolster traditional values and heighten participation in Jewish life. And in order to promote our message and mandate Chabad Lubavitch has gone numerous times to the “Hill.” Mr. Kenney, the Minister of Immigration and Culture has always offered his help with alacrity and enthusiasm. So too, Jason has always been there to act as the liaison to the office of the Prime Minister and the government of Canada.

In recognition of Mr. Kenney’s commitment to human rights, traditional values, and our beloved Land of Israel, Chabad Lubavitch of Southern Ontario is most pleased to bestow and confer upon him, the Distinguished Public Service Award.

The campaign moniker is, “Please Mind the Gap,” the catch phrase introduced by the London Tube reminding commuters to be mindful when disembarking of the gap between the train and the platform. We too, at Chabad Lubavitch find ourselves travelling at high speeds in our quest to be of service to the entire growing Jewish community of Southern Ontario. Our flagship centre in Thornhill, serves as the hub for a myriad of initiatives that

continues to enhance the landscape of Jewish life across the GTA and beyond. In addition to our base, we have established 15 satellite centres strategically positioned from Niagara Falls, to Aurora. So too, Chabad House student centres have been established at almost all universities along the southern rim of Ontario.

But now we must “Close the Gap.” Programs of this magnitude are quite costly. In fact as a result of our ever growing cornucopia of programs and in light of our enormous capital projects our expenditures are racing far ahead of our support stream. In order for Chabad Lubavitch to remain solvent it is imperative that we take precaution to close the Gap. This year our battle cry of places emphasis on bridging this schism; “Please Mind the Gap.”

At the helm of the campaign are Mrs. Georganne Burke and community activist Mr. Larry Zeifman. They are being ably assisted by a long standing committee that is headed by Joey Tanenbaum, Special Gifts Chair. “Chabad Lubavitch enjoys the admiration of the entire community and has a loyal support base which makes our work a labour of love,” said Joey Tanenbaum. The dinner will be held Sunday, December 4, 2011 at the Beth Abraham Yoseph Synagogue. Tickets for the gala celebration are \$540 and available at Chabad. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

## Kabalat Panim for Rabbi Korobkin

Most recently the Thornhill Shluchim of Chabad Lubavitch hosted a reception to welcome Rabbi Daniel Korobkin, the newly appointed Spiritual Leader of the neighbourhood Shul, the BAYT. Introductory remarks were offered by Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum, A D’var

Torah by Rabbi Dovid Schochet followed by an acknowledgement of appreciation for the warm welcome by Rabbi Korobkin.

During the reception, each of the participating Rabbis introduced themselves and their respective area of Shlichus.



Rabbi Korobkin, 3rd from left meets with Chabad rabbis of Thornhill

## Chabad Hosts Group of I.D.F. Combat Soldiers

Walking into the Chabad Lubavitch Community Centre at the end of May left some visitors puzzled. They walked into scenes of Hebrew speaking young men re-enacting house to house searches and other highly charged situations in the rooms of the centre. It was all part of a program arranged by the “Peace of Mind” organization, together with Chabad Israeli Centre under the leadership of Rabbi Yisroel Landa and hosted at the Chabad Lubavitch Community Centre, in Thornhill.

During the week of May 22 – 29th, twenty discharged Combat Servicemen who had been in some of the most difficult situation in Gaza and the like, spent a week together with their therapists, relieving some of the stress of intense battle situations. In this program, where half the day is dedicated to therapy and the afternoon to seeing the sights, the soldiers have a chance to process their combat experiences and make the transition to civilian life smoother and healthier. The main-stay of the three month transition is groups of twenty and two or three therapists being hosted in a Jewish community abroad.

“The hospitality the group received in the community was beyond expectation” said Linoy Hazan, of the Peace of Mind organization. “The warmth and support the participants received from the hosting families changed the entire perspective these young men had on Jews in the Diaspora and even about their views of their combat experiences. These brave young men now realized that in the war they were also defending Jews all over the world. This had a very important impact on their view of their IDF experiences

and made the heavy burden they were carrying regarding these experiences a little lighter.”

“Having the sessions in the shul also brought these young men to realize that they are a part of something much bigger than just the state of Israel” She continued. “They realized that they are part of the Jewish

participant received his own chance to share personal experience from his military service. This was the most intense part of the entire program. Many difficult experiences were brought up. Many strong emotions were processed, leaving the participants much more free and



The group relaxes with Rabbi Landa (centre)

people and that there is a true and strong connection between Jews in the Diaspora and Jews in Israel. “

The acknowledgment the participants received, for their three year military and combat service, by the hosting community, had extremely important therapeutic value. In Israel, such recognition is less common as many have served in the military and have experienced combat. The warm welcome the participants receive from the community helps them acknowledge they have been through something traumatic. This is the first and most important step to processing their experiences and moving forward in life.

During the sessions the participants learned about the reactions to normal combat experiences. But then, every

flexible regarding these experiences, regarding the war and themselves as individuals. Following this they discussed, career choices, separating from the parents, interpersonal relationships etc.

According to one of the soldiers, the most memorable experience, was during the Friday night service, held at a private home of one of the hosting families. The T’filla was held after an intense week of sessions where very difficult experiences were shared and strong emotions were brought up and processed. All that energy found its way out during the T’filla. In the middle of Kabalat Shabat we simply started singing and dancing together in one of the most exciting and moving moments of the week. It really is a memory for a life time.”

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*Plan for the Future*

When planning for the future or writing a Will please consider the Chabad Lubavitch Organization of Southern Ontario. For further information and to arrange for special bequests.

Please call:  
Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum at  
905-731-7000.  
All information will be kept strictly confidential.



## Toronto Television Series Finds Home at Jewish.TV

The Toronto-based television program "Messages" has found a new home at Jewish.TV, the multimedia portal of Judaism website Chabad.org, where it can be found under the heading "Wisdom From the Rebbe: Learning From the Rebbe's Talks."

The long-running show, which produced 182 episodes during its seven years of production, brought the teachings of the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, of righteous memory, to a late-night audience in Ontario.

From the Jewish.TV platform, producers say, the show will continue its mission of looking at key teachings of the Rebbe from a scholarly point of view.

"The Rebbe's syntax is very much a Torah one," explains Rabbi Mendel Kaplan, director of Chabad@Flamingo and a scholar-in-residence for many of the television series' episodes.

"To understand what the Rebbe says, a person needs a significant amount of Torah background. This program gives the average layperson the ability to understand the message of what the Rebbe is

translate it into our own ideas and thoughts, and bring it into our own lives. Watching the show will encourage people to engage in their own type of thoughtful discussion to put the Rebbe's message into their own words."

According to Rabbi Moshe Spalter of Chabad of Toronto, the show's executive producer, as well as a panelist, "Messages" was professionally produced with a polished three-camera shoot, 26-person crew and high-quality lighting and audio.

Guest experts included well-known rabbis and lecturers, including Chabad at Binghamton University director Rivkah Slonim; educator, writer and Chabad.org editor Chana Weisberg; and Rabbi Manis Friedman, director of Bais Chana Women's International.

For Spalter, the series filled a void in productions about the Rebbe.

"This is really the only video series that exists that studies the teachings of the Rebbe rather than the life of the Rebbe himself," says Spalter. "It's more than actual footage of the Rebbe. It studies his ideas."

During the show's time on television, Kigel witnessed its profound effects firsthand.

"I am absolutely convinced that everyone who had any contact with the show – the participants,

the studio crews, the audience, myself – were spiritually enriched by it," says Kigel, who, since the show ended, moved from Toronto to Vienna.

"While the show aired on TV, people often came up to me to thank me for certain episodes and to discuss their content with me. It was most significant that many Jews who were altogether ignorant regarding [Chassidic thought] could open themselves, in the comfort zone of their living room, to these influences."

For all those involved in the production of "Messages," the continuation of the program will only increase its impact.

"This show is enormously beneficial, especially for those who have little Jewish background or familiarity with the Rebbe," says Kaplan. "Broadcasting it on Jewish.TV is a significant step forward in bringing the Rebbe's teachings to audiences who might have missed it previously."



On the set of "Messages" Season 4

saying."

During its run, episodes of "Messages," which reached more than 50,000 people, weekly, on Canadian television, brought together three student panelists, a guest expert and host Michael Kigel, of three Rabbis and Kigel, to discuss an issue about which the Rebbe spoke. The group would watch a short Jewish Educational Media clip of one of the Rebbe's talks, after which the students or host would take turns asking relevant questions for the scholar to clarify. The group would discuss the topic – Jewish motherhood, for example – until they collectively felt that the issue was understood.

"What's really special about this program is that it brings out the intellectual power of the Rebbe's videos," says Rabbi Shais Taub, creative director of Jewish.TV.

"This show helps us to take what the Rebbe said and

## Hot Air Balloon Rides at Toronto Lag B'Omer Parade and Celebration

Children and adults at the Chabad Lubavitch Lag B'Omer parade and celebration in Toronto's Earl Bales Park were amazed to be offered the opportunity to get a ride up in a real, full size, hot air balloon



and see the landscape below from a bird's eye view. "Never, in my wildest dreams, did my children ever imagine that they would get to do something like this," said Donny, the parent of two excited children as they were being lifted out of the balloon basket at the end of their ride. "Chabad once again has shown itself to be ahead of the pack." The hot air balloon was donated by the Remax Real Estate Company due to the efforts and lobbying of one of their greatest salesmen: Randy Cohen, a member of Chabad of Thornhill.

It was all part of the full day celebration in honor of Lag B'Omer. This multifaceted extravaganza was sponsored and arranged by Chabad Lubavitch of Ontario and Tzivos Hashem Canada together with all the Chabad institutions of the G.T.A.

Preparations began many months before the event. In fact, they began the day after last year's phenomenal success, when we all agreed that it will be a real challenge to exceed the previous year."

The day began at 12:00 with a rally and amazing trampoline show at the parks amphitheater. Though it was cloudy and misty, nearly all of the 1200 seats were full of eager, joyful children and their parents. Rabbi Meyer Gitlin served as the M.C. while Rabbi Yossi Hecht – continuing the family tradition of his grandfather, the unforgettable Rabbi JJ Hecht – led the children as they recited the 12 Pesukim. Dovid Altein on keyboard along with the students of Mesivta and Yeshiva Chabad – kept the spirits on a high. Many were decked out in clown suits and embracing the moniker "TRC"; The Rebbe's Clowns, a reflection of their commitment

to further the Rebbe's wish that Lag B'Omer be a day of great joy, especially for children. This component was well planned and organized by Rabbi Yossi Gansburg. On the heels of the spirited rally the children

waiting time. At the center of the park a large canopy was erected and under the able administration of Howard Rosenberg, proprietor of Howie T's the service was second to none. In tandem with the carnival atmosphere there was cotton candy and popcorn. So too, there was face painting and caricature drawings. Keeping the buzz alive and to entertain some three thousand participants Bounce Entertainment blasted forth Jewish music.

The day's celebration concluded with a traditional Medurah Bonfire with music by the SimanTov Band. Though the day started with clouds and was interrupted by rain, it quickly changed to a bright day, allowing the many participants to fully enjoy the day.

In no small measure the success was due to Yerucham Ibraimov, Chabad's maintenance director who puts his heart and soul in everything he undertakes. But an event of this nature would not be possible without the brigade of hundreds



Up, Up and Away!

marched along Bathurst St. accompanied by theme floats built by Yeshivas Lubavitch and the 8th grade of the Cheder Chabad. The parade was led by a contingent of "Yids on Wheels" motorcycle brigade and the Tzivos Hashem Marching Band. The children carried signs and banners of every shape and color promoting Mitzvot and Jewish education as they proudly marched down Bathurst Street.

The numerous contingencies i.e. permits, police supervision, street closing were arranged by Rabbi Mendel Zaltzman. Coordinating the floats, and Yeshiva volunteers were left in the able hands of Rabbi Itchy Grossbaum.

Returning to the park the marchers were ready to indulge, picnic, and enjoy a slew of exciting activities, but were first tested by a brief downpour. Spirits never dropped as they recalled last year when the skies turned dark and prior to the designated hour there was a light shower, still when the clock struck 12 P.M. the sky suddenly cleared. So too, this year, the skies cleared and the celebration continued. There were 10 fairway rides for children of all ages. There was an entire array of carnival booths and of course thousands of prizes.

Anticipating a large crowd, much effort was invested to provide the BBQ menu in an orderly fashion with little

of volunteers from the entire community all decked out in knitted shirts embossed with the Lag B'Omer logo. Special thanks to Esti Steinmetz of Lubavitch Day Camp, Rabbi Yonah Vilenkin of Tzivos Hashem Canada and Rabbi Moshe Spalter of Chabad Lubavitch for this amazing event.



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## Chabad Lubavitch Receives Ontario Trillium Grant



Picture above is Peter Shurman, M.P.P. of Thornhill, Gary Gladstone, Ontario Trillium Foundation, & Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum

Earlier this summer Mr. Peter Shurman, MPP for Thornhill, visited Chabad's flagship centre on Chabad Gate to offer his congratulations for our worthy submission and subsequent approval for funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The seed money is to further our objective to engage teenagers in a work/ fun environment where they can experience physical skill training and also enjoy the great outdoors. This initiative has been made possible by our 207 acre camp parcel in Haliburton. The site provides an opportunity to engage teenagers in a novel and beneficial manner. A number of the existing structures need to be repaired and upgraded. These existing facilities create an opportunity to host a teenager program similar to "Habitat for Humanity." The project will begin next spring by inviting young adults to engage in a training program. Under the

tutelage and guidance of licensed and certified tradesmen, teenagers will have the opportunity to engage in carpentry, electrical, and plumbing projects. Naturally, ample time will remain each day for recreation and to enjoy the great outdoors. The grant provides initial funding for a two year period. "I'm convinced that this project holds much promise and will be beneficial for numerous teenagers," said Rabbi Zalman Grossbaum, director of Chabad Lubavitch. "There is nothing like a hands on experience," he intoned.

This novel idea, coined, L'avda U'lshamra, literally translated "to work and protect," is a biblical reference: "And G-d placed Adam in the Garden of Eden to serve and protect." Our initiative was well received by the Ontario Trillium Foundation that graciously agreed to provide some of the seed money needed to launch this program.

## Lubavitch Day Camp Completes Another Successful Season

Six hundred children and one hundred and fifty teen staff members enjoyed another successful season at Lubavitch Day Camp.

"In our constant search for improvement, we introduced some new innovative programs this year," said Camp Director, Mrs. Esti Steinmetz.

The CIT program in Lubavitch Day camp has been gaining city-wide recognition. Boasting fifty young teens this unique camp experience allows teenagers to enjoy the summer months while acquiring the necessary skills needed to become a staff member in day camp in the future. CIT's, an acronym for Counsellor In Training, have a double track program. The program includes activities for the campers own enjoyment, such as field trips, art projects, and stimulating activities. It also includes training sessions, guidance as counsellor assistants, and opportunity for growth in responsibility and maturity. The field trips, such as Paintball shooting, strawberry picking, Laser Tag, Rock climbing and Zip Line, are offered exclusively for the CIT group. Activities that are

planned by their dynamic leaders ensure their maximum enjoyment of what might be their last experience as campers. Once a week the CIT members spend a full day with experienced counsellors to learn, hands – on, what being a responsible and caring counsellor entails.

To further advance their training, the CIT group plans a grand activity for the entire camp. This year the chosen project was a carnival! Booths were planned, signs created, and the palpable excitement of the campers attested to the CIT's success. Due to the large success of the program, plans are presently in place to extend this program to up to 80 campers next summer!



campers, parents, and counsellors joined together to spend the Friday evening service and Shabbat meal, in an atmosphere that can only be found at Lubavitch Day Camp! It's hard to say what the highlight of the evening was. It

might have been the beautiful choir performed by our very own girls division. Maybe it was the humorous skit that the boys division presented. Was it possibly the delicious food prepared by camp caterer, Shlomo Shoshan or beautiful décor. Was it the



Another new program this year was the "Shabbat for the Family" at Lubavitch Day Camp. Friday night, the unmistakable sound of children's voices filled the hallways at Lubavitch Day Camp. Two hundred and fifty

welcoming staff members, or the undeniably beautiful and uplifting atmosphere? Whatever may have been the best part for all those families who joined together in song and spirit, we are sure to see them back next year!

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## Chabad on Ontario Campuses Begin a New Year

Chabad Houses on university campuses across the country welcomed the Jewish students back for another year at their home away from home, as they've come to be affectionately known. With welcome BBQs and tabling, the dedicated rabbis and rebbetzins are reaching out to identify the Jewish students and invite them to participate in the varied offerings at Chabad.

The renowned Chabad House at Western, for example, offers a weekly lunch and learn on campus featuring deli sandwiches and a class on the weekly Torah portion which is very popular, and the Chabad Student Network in Ottawa invites students to volunteer to assist seniors and the homeless, among their many other



At the welcome BBQ at the Rohr Chabad Centre for Jewish Life in Waterloo

programs.

The diamond in the crown is certainly the Shabbat dinners, where "home away from home" is not a slogan but a simple fact of life. These homemade dinners, served with love and free of charge to all Jewish students, create a sense of community and support that is vital for those away from home. In an

atmosphere of spirituality, charged with spirited singing and words of Torah from the rabbi or a student leader, every single Jewish student feels cared for and connected.

The Chabad Houses on campus are a shining example of what Chabad is really all about - tender loving care for every single Jew.

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## Rare Canadian Jewish Military Wedding Takes Place in Mexico

By Joshua Runyan

The Canadian Armed Forces celebrated its first traditional

Mexico's Yucatan peninsula.

Capt. Lazer Danzinger, a rabbi and member of the Chabad-



Canadian Capt. Rabbi Lazer Danzinger officiates at the wedding of Maj. Alain Cohen and Alexi Haligua-Cohen in full military dress uniform.

Jewish military wedding in recent memory with the nuptials of Maj. Alain Cohen and Alexi Haligua-Cohen at a resort on

service, so to speak, when the major found out that the armed forces did indeed have a rabbi on staff.

## Hundreds Don Tefillin at March of the Living

Thousands of participants in the March of the Living marched in May from the gate of Auschwitz to Birkenau, where a memorial ceremony was held at a monument to the camp's victims.

During the ceremony, Chabad rabbinical students wrapped Tefillin with more than 500 people. The opportunity to practice a mitzvah at these sites where so much of Jewish life was destroyed, was well received.

"Many people who put on

Tefillin with us told us that they felt this was the most fitting thing to do, that the best way to respond to the Holocaust is to do another mitzvah," says twenty year-old Yehuda Glaser, from Chicago, IL.

A Californian man who visited the Tefillin booth told Glaser that he has a pair of Tefillin back at home, but hadn't been using them recently.

After donning Tefilin at the ceremony, "he told me that he will begin wrapping Tefilin every day when he gets back home," Glaser said.



Two rabbinical students at the March of the Living

## Site of Holy Ark Uncovered Vilnius

The site of the Aron Kodesh, or Holy Ark of The Great Synagogue of Vilnius dating back to the end of the 16th century, was recently uncovered in the excavations of this historically significant synagogue. Lithuania's Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius visited the site to view the synagogue's excavated fragments and attend as 25 Jewish Lithuanian students of the local Beis Menachem school prayed there.

"For us it is very important to bring back an authentic part of Lithuanian history which included the history of the Jewish community," the Prime Minister told Lubavitch.com in a phone interview after the modest ceremony. The findings so far, he said, "are important not only for Lithuania, but for the global Jewish community. It is a powerful symbol of both a great Jewish heritage, a great tragedy when the entire Jewish community was destroyed, and it is a very powerful symbol for the Jewish future."

Also uncovered was a part of the original floor, and the top of one of the four pillars surrounding the bima of the Great Synagogue--a magnificent renaissance structure in this once great Jewish center of Torah study, widely known as "Jerusalem of Lithuania."

Partly destroyed by the Germans during WWII, and fully demolished by the Soviet authorities in 1955-1957, these findings are some of the first after efforts to unearth and restore the Synagogue began earlier this summer, under archeologist Zenonas Baubonis. Out of respect for regulations that forbade a synagogue building to stand taller than a church, the synagogue was constructed on a deep foundation with its floor well below street level, to allow for an interior height of five stories. The synagogue was of such magnificent architecture,



Lithuanian Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius (left) looks on as a student from Chabad's Beis Menachem recites a prayer. At his right is Chabad-Lubavitch representative to Lithuania, Rabbi Sholom Ber Krinsky

Napoleon is said to have stood at the door of the structure in 1812 in stunned admiration. Chabad-Lubavitch representative to Lithuania, Rabbi Sholom Ber Krinsky, who led the students in prayer, said: "Holiness transcends time. To pray on this place today 60-70 years after this great shul was destroyed by the

Soviets, is a triumph for every Jew."

The excavations are part of a broad effort sponsored by the government, initiated during this year to restore the old Jewish quarter of Vilnius, and includes digs to uncover some of the eight smaller synagogues in the area.

### SIMCHAT TORAH HAKAFOT



All are welcome to come & join the Celebration

### SHMINI ATZERET

Wednesday, October 19		Thursday, October 20	
Candlelighting	6:09 p.m.	Shacharis	10:00 a.m.
Mincha	6:15 p.m.	Yizkor approx.	11:30 a.m.
Maariv	7:00 p.m.	Mincha	6:10 p.m.
Kiddush	7:30 p.m.	Hakafot	8:45 p.m.

### SIMCHAT TORAH

Thursday, October 20		Friday, October 21	
Maariv	7:05 p.m.	Shacharis	10:00 a.m.
Kiddush	7:30 p.m.	Kiddush	11:00 a.m.
Hakafot	8:15 p.m.	Hakafot	12:30 p.m.
		Torah Reading	1:30 p.m.



### HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES

<b>R</b>	<b>Wednesday, September 28</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Friday, October 7</b>		
	Candlelighting		6:46 p.m.	Kapparot	3:30-6:00 a.m.
	Mincha		6:50 p.m.	Mincha	3:15 & 4:15 p.m.
<b>S</b>	Maariv	7:40 p.m.	Candlelighting	6:30 p.m.	
	<b>H</b>	<b>Thursday, September 29</b>	Kol Nidre	6:45 p.m.	
Shacharis			9:00 a.m.	<b>K</b>	<b>Saturday, October 8</b>
Shofar approx.	11:30 a.m.	Shachris	9:00 a.m.		
<b>A</b>	Mincha	5:45 p.m.	Yizkor	12:00 p.m.	
	Tashlich	6:15 p.m.	Mincha	5:00 p.m.	
<b>S</b>	Maariv	7:40 p.m.	Neilah	6:15 p.m.	
	Light Candles after	7:44 p.m.	Maariv	7:30 p.m.	
<b>H</b>	<b>Friday, September 30</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Yom Tov &amp; Shabbos Services</b>	
					Shachris
<b>A</b>	Shofar approx	11:30 a.m.	<b>H</b>	<b>Yom Tov &amp; Shabbos Services</b>	
	Light Candles at	6:42 p.m.			
<b>N</b>	Mincha	6:40 p.m.	<b>A</b>	<b>H</b>	
	Kabbalat Shabbat	7:30 p.m.			





## Construction of New Visitor Center to Begin at Jerusalem's Western Wall



Ample outdoor space for events and breathtaking views will put the center on the itinerary of any visitor to the Western Wall (architecture drawings)

by Baila Olidort

Guma Aguiar takes his blessings seriously.

The biggest of them all, insists the 33 year-old energy magnate, was learning about the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

“The Rebbe is the most inspiring and unifying force that we’ve had in a very long time,” and his inspiration is the impetus for a visitor center now under construction at Jerusalem’s Western Wall.

Perched on a bluff facing the Wall with a view of the Temple Mount, the center will provide guests a quiet space to reflect on their visit to Israel’s holiest site. Inside, permanent and changing exhibits on high-definition monitors will explore the Rebbe’s ideas about Jerusalem, Israel and related themes, helping visitors anchor the spiritual experience at the wall.

“We are working together with J.E.M. (Jewish Educational Media) to produce outstanding footage and content that will offer visitors substantive food for thought,” Guma said in an interview. “People walk away from the Kotel and are not sure how to translate the spiritual high they feel into something concrete. This “home” dedicated to the Rebbe’s legacy, will allow them to direct all that energy in a sustaining way.”

Born Jewish, Guma, who was raised as an Evangelical Christian, has traveled a long distance since that Friday night several years ago when he walked into Chabad of Ft. Lauderdale, and met Rabbi Moishe Meir Lipszyc. Knowing very little about his own Jewish

roots, Guma, who had yet to build Leor, his multi-billion dollar energy company, was greeted by the Chabad rabbi with spontaneous warmth that took him by surprise.

With his inimitable generosity and acceptance, Lipszyc helped the young man uncover his Jewish roots and discover yiddishkeit. Today, the trim and toned father of three dedicates time to building his spiritual profile, studying with Chabad rabbis and realizing the day-to-day applications of Chabad teachings in his own life.

The Rebbe’s focus on translating spiritual inspiration into bricks-and-mortar, down-to-earth achievements, resonates well with the Brazilian-born businessman. So when Rabbi Sholom Lipskar of Bal Harbor, Florida, suggested that he do something “for the Rebbe” with a number of properties that he’d bought at the Western Wall, Guma’s imagination was fired.

“Over the years, I had different ideas and different architectural plans drawn up for these properties, but there was never any real direction.” This idea had tremendous appeal for Guma.

“It would allow me to finally gift to others what I have been so fortunate myself to have—a life enriched by the inspiration and impact of the Rebbe. I’m thrilled to do this now.”

Ample outdoor space for events and breathtaking views will put the center on the itinerary of any visitor to the Western Wall, says Rabbi Lipszyc. He expects it will quickly become “one of the most visited Chabad addresses in the world.”

## World's Largest Jewish Community Center Nears Completion

by R. C. Berman -  
Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine

Straddling two blocks, a \$60 million, 400,000 square foot Jewish Community Center and Holocaust Museum now under construction in Dnepropetrovsk will be a city within a city, a showcase for a Ukrainian industrial backwater waking up to boom times in Jewish and civic contexts.

The seven-tower, twenty-story museum and center multiplex will stretch around the existing Golden Rose synagogue is sweeping in its scope of programs.

“Any Jewish person, any age and every time of the day will have a reason to spend quality time at the center,” said Dnepropetrovsk’s Chief Rabbi and Chabad-Lubavitch representative, Shmuel Kaminezki. At maximum capacity, the center will hold over 10,000 people, a chunk of Dnepropetrovsk’s 50,000 Jews. Funded by Gennady Bogolubov, president of the Jewish Community of Dnepropetrovsk and partner in the international industrial firm Privat Group, the center will cement the city’s Jewish renaissance.

A Jewish mall in the center will offer easy access to kosher food and lifestyle necessities on a level unfathomable in the lean days of the communist and immediate post-glasnost era. Kosher restaurants, coffee shops, fast food joints, an Internet café, a bookstore, Judaica store, supermarket and pharmacy will line the first two floors of the center. Currently, ten tons of kosher meat products are produced in Ukraine, including ten different kinds of deli meats, per month. When the center is completed, demand is expected to grow further.

Above the mall, floors of auditoria and suites will become home to programs for children, children with special needs, women’s groups, adult education and seniors. A wing is reserved for Jewish courses offered to the community’s college students and for its on-site business school. Teachers at the school and community workers will live in the 30 apartments within the complex. Weddings will be held under the stars near a permanent rooftop tent. Festive receptions and banquet will take place in the plush catering halls a short elevator ride away. A massive commercial kitchen will provide all the kosher catering.

In an adjacent space, the museum, planned with direction of Yad Vashem in Israel, will be



The new Menorah Centre

more than Ukraine’s largest Holocaust memorial. It will also house one of the world’s finest collections of contemporary Jewish art and a museum of modern Jewish life. Igor Kolomoysky, Privat Group partner, is funding the museum complex and collecting the art that will form the nucleus of the museum’s collection.

Plans for the center received enthusiastic reception from local officials. Mayor Ivan Kulichenko brought the plans along with him when he attended a conference of mayors in Belgium. He shared architectural drawing of the center with Jerusalem Mayor Uri Lupolianski to promote positive ties between the two cities.

For its aesthetic appeal, the center drew approval from the city’s architectural planning board. The outermost of seven towers stand five stories high and climb to ten, fifteen and finally twenty stories at the center. Atop each building is a large spotlight fixture that will give the complex the look of a free form menorah. Dnepropetrovsk’s municipal chief architect Julia Saenko

saluted the building as “good for the image of the city,” a step forward for democracy, freedom of religion and revitalization.

Now experiencing a boom, as evidenced by the number of cranes perched atop the steel skeletons of growing high rises, Dnepropetrovsk is faced with a widening gap between rich and poor. Menorah center stores will offer help to financially struggling families and seniors. A discount card will allow them to purchase groceries and prepared food at near or below wholesale costs. Medical clinic services will be provided on a sliding scale, and prescriptions for low-income residents will be subsidized.

To get a sense of how huge the Menorah Community Center and Museum is, it helps to hear that its seven lights will be viewable by airplane passengers on their way to the international airport. “The largest menorah in the world,” according to Rabbi Kaminezki. Inside the hulking structure, will be programs that keep the spiritual and physical needs of those in need at the forefront.



Join us for  
**KAPOROS**  
In conjunction with CHAI  
Kosher Poultry, we will  
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Friday morning, October 7  
3:30 am - 6:00 am

Chabad Lubavitch Community Centre  
Cost: \$15.00 Per Chicken Pre-Reserved  
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These chickens will be donated to charitable organizations, to be distributed to needy families and other charitable purposes.

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## Young Abraham Animated Film Wins Audiences



by Mendy Rimler

The last scene in *Young Abraham* is a showdown between Nimrod, king of Ur Kasdim and biblical Abraham, ending as Abraham emerges from a furnace before a nation of converted idolaters and a repentant King Nimrod.

That is the climax and message of the CGI (computer generated imagery) animated motion picture, a vivid and compelling retelling of the biblical and Midrashic story of Abraham's discovery of G-d. At last, entertainment with Jewish and visual depth for young audiences. Released in June to a hugely enthusiastic response, *Young Abraham* lays out an authentic narrative in a brilliantly animated world and redefines the future of Jewish films.

To research and write the script, the producers of the \$1.8 million project Saadyah El Haddad and Eliyhau Cohen approached two Montreal-based Chabad rabbis, Yisroel Bernath and Zvi Herschovich.

"The goal was to bridge traditional Judaism and Hollywood," says Rabbi Bernath, Director of Chabad NDG and Loyola Campus. After an exhaustive study of numerous Midrashic sources and commentaries, the pair submitted the first draft in March of 2006, but they were "involved throughout the following years to monitor the project to ensure that the film stayed true to the text."

Set in ancient Mesopotamia, the film opens with King Nimrod's demand of his general Terach to hand over his newborn son, Abraham, who had been marked by Nimrod's stargazer a rebel of the kingdom. As young Abraham grows up on the run from Nimrod's men, he ruminates on the idolatrous ways

of the polytheistic culture of his time and eventually arrives at his own recognition of a one and only G-d. During Abraham's brief stint in his father's idol shop and throughout the film, the comically broad dialogue provides a healthy dose of laughter while conveying real Jewish values.

The dazzling visuals work in tandem with the Midrash and various commentaries to enhance and bring the story to life. According to Ibn Ezra, an eleventh century commentator, Abraham traveled to Noah and studied Torah under his wing. Then, after years of preparation and study, Noah urged Abraham to return to Ur Kasdim and put an end to the idol worship.

"Many people have called us just to ask if that really happened; people don't know a lot of these details," says Bernath.

Jennifer Slifkin brought her five children to a screening of *Young Abraham* and watched the film together with them.

In a movie-saturated society, "this film competes for kids' attention," says Slifkin, an attorney. "The animation was top notch and definitely comparable with anything else out there."

In an age where form is always a factor, *Young Abraham* has Pixar appeal while still remaining historically accurate and retaining the true meaning of the story of Abraham's triumph of faith and tradition. The possibility for making this an outstanding educational experience, says Rabbi Herschovich, is what inspired them to work on this film.

"This film sets a new bar for producers who can teach more people by getting the information out there in a film, while keeping their feet on the ground and sticking to the sources."

## Miami Yeshiva Gives College Grads Taste of Something New

By Karen Schwartz

Ezra Rosen, 23, went to Miami last winter to study at a brand-new yeshiva for 10 days. With his boss' and parents' blessing, he left New Jersey at the end of December with a round trip ticket.

He's still there.

After studying for 10 days at Yeshiva Torah Ohr, a Chabad-Lubavitch run institution in North Miami Beach that caters to young men who never had a chance to study classic Jewish texts, Rosen realized he wasn't ready to go home. Instead of returning after his week off work with, as he says, a "little bit of Torah," he decided to stay and acquire much more.

He's spent the last several months learning with a group of diverse individuals with similar ambitions for Jewish growth. Rosen had previously studied in different Jewish environments, gone to college and worked in commercial mortgaging. This time around, he was teaching himself to translate Hebrew and diving headfirst into the text.

The yeshiva is led by a man who himself comes from a non-observant upbringing and started studying Torah relatively late in life.

Rabbi Immanuel Storfer, 30, went to New York University and studied psychology before deciding to make Torah study a larger part of his life. He first met a Lubavitcher on a mobile "Mitzvah Tank," around Chanukah time in 1998, he recalls, when he was stopped on the street and asked to take a menorah to light.

"I wasn't so interested at first," says Storfer. "I was a typical NYU student walking around Manhattan and a guy started speaking a lot about Judaism, a lot about the Rebbe."

"Eventually I took the menorah," he continues, "and eventually, I did light the menorah."

He transferred out of NYU after his sophomore year, and after attending the Mayanot Institute for Jewish Studies in Jerusalem and receiving his ordination from the central Lubavitch yeshiva in New York, Storfer dedicated his efforts to teaching others.

Early this year, Storfer moved to Florida with his wife Rochie and their two children to open the yeshiva, basing the project on the Miami Torah Experience he ran for two winters under the direction of Lubavitch of Florida and in conjunction with the Chabad on Campus International Foundation.

The current group, which includes a Los Angeles film



Rabbi Sholom B. Lipskar of The Shul of Bal Harbour gives a lecture for students from the Miami Torah Experience and Yeshiva Torah Ohr.

student, a prospective lawyer, and a University of California, Berkeley student, studies for 14 hours each day and spends some of their remaining time getting others involved.

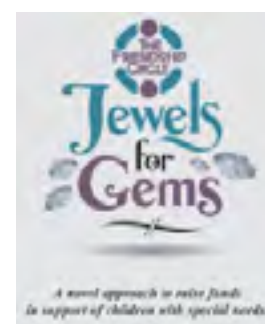
Looking back on the journey that has brought him to Miami, Storfer says his parents were caught off guard at first, but that they are proud of his and his family's work in Florida.

"Many people, especially in the last generation or two, never had the chance to do what Jews have been doing for thousands of years," he says. "And it's never too late."

Levi Stewart, 23, an Emory University graduate, first met

Storfer early this year while Stewart was working at Merrill Lynch. When he was let go from his job a short time later, he started studying in the morning and looking for work in the afternoons. What started as just mornings turned into staying the whole day, and six months ago he moved into the dorm.

"I realized it was what I really wanted to do," says Stewart, who plans to stay on this trajectory for the next six months, further developing his skill sets and enhancing his spiritual growth. "Both physically and spiritually, he really looks after his students. 'It's the best thing that could have happened to me.'"



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## Chabad Rocks Scout Jamboree

“Excuse me, are you Jewish?” asked Rabbi Shmuly Gutnick, a Chabad emissary to the World Scouting Jamboree in Rinkaby, Sweden.

“Yes I am, how can I help you?” answered the scout in his fully emblazoned scout uniform behind the Jamboree registration desk. “Would you

Loewenthal of Chabad of Denmark, along with the invaluable aid and experience of Rabbi Michoel Albuquerk of 'Tzivos Hashem', to assist him in providing Jewish programs for the Jamboree This was all done in coordination with the local Shliach in Malmo, Rabbi Shneur and Raizel Kesselman, and



Kipa Making Craft at the Jamboree

like to put on tefillin?” within a few minutes a loud ‘Mazal Tov’ is heard, as a crowd of bystanders join in to celebrate this young man’s Bar Mitzva.

The World Scouting Jamboree takes place every four years and brings together tens of thousands of scouts from every country in the world - among them hundreds of Jews.

Chabad Shluchim are not new to Scouting. The Scouting movement identifies with many of the core values which Judaism holds dear. It is no coincidence therefore, that for the last 23 years, Chabad shluchim have successfully participated in these venues, bringing excitement and inspiration to Jews and non-Jews alike. Furthermore, this year, many of the Jewish European scouts who journeyed to the world Jamboree received welcome and accommodation at Chabad houses en route - in Amsterdam, Berlin, Hanover, Brussels, and Copenhagen.

Rabbis Shmuly Gutnick and Rabbi Menachem Nagar were requisitioned by Rabbi Yitzi

Rabbi Alexander Namdar, Director of Chabad Sweden.

Rabbi Shmuly is better known as the 'Rockin' Rabbi' by both Jewish and non-Jewish scouts for his affable manner, cheerful smile and inextinguishable enthusiasm - all hallmarks of Scouting spirit. He is the



Getting ready for Shabbat dinner

director of the Chabad Youth Network of Florida where he conducts year-round programs

that reach thousands of Jewish boys and girls in South Florida and beyond. His colleague, Rabbi Menachem Nagar is the creative director of Chabad.org and a medical student. Like Rabbi Shmuly, he has been a certified Scout chaplain for nearly a decade.

Rabbis Shmuly and Menachem hiked indefatigably through the 40,000 strong Jamboree site - which featured scouts from 168 countries - looking for Jewish scouts to invite for Shabbat. En route they had occasion to offer many Jewish scouts a great Jewish scouting experience by offering candies for a blessing, candle sticks, Tefillin, etc. The official Jamboree Bulletin amplified the Rabbis' call by publishing a formal invitation to Jewish scouts to attend the Friday night Shabbat program at the Jamboree Synagogue tent.

On Friday, Rabbi Yitzy Lowenthal and a team from Chabad Copenhagen arrived with Shabbat meals for the Jewish Scouts. A massive tent was used to accommodate the anticipated large crowd.

Rabbi Loewenthal recounts: "As my car pulled into camp and I was getting out, a young boy of 14 approached me and asked if I could teach him how to put on Tefillin, as he had never done it before. We put Tefillin on him and celebrated his Bar Mitzvah. Afterwards, he said that being at the Jamboree, and especially meeting us, made him want to get a pair of Tefillin. However, he was concerned that his parents would not like it. He thought they would worry that 'laying Tefillin' was 'not modern'. I suggested that he explain, that 'being modern' could mean 'being able to do your thing' - and Tefillin has become 'his thing'."

The evening got off to a flying start with a large number of scouts enthusiastically singing and dancing throughout the 'Maariv' prayer. For many it was their very first experience of Shabbat. Rabbi Loewenthal

distributed specially prepared Jewish songbooks to the hundreds of international scouts



One hundred girls lit Shabbat candles

who assembled for the Friday night Kiddush. A delicious meal ensued, replete with inspiring discussions, singing, dancing, and above all an uplifting spirit of joy and Jewish fellowship. This was followed by a songfest which lasted deep into the night.

The Shabbat program was the highlight of Jewish programming at the Jamboree and inspired the hearts of those present. Jewish Scouts hailing from France, England, Germany, Sweden, Greece, America, Israel, Brazil,

of the Israeli delegation in gratitude for bringing the Jewish and Shabbat experience to the Jamboree.

One Jewish scout from Brazil stated this was the most meaningful and beautiful Shabbat of her life! One hundred other girls lit candles with her, and she was sure they must all feel the same way!

Scouts who attended the Shabbat program and participated in other Jewish activities earned a specially



Rabbi Shmuly with two of his scouts

Australia, Mexico and Italy, found they had one place on Earth where they were all home - the Shabbat table! During the evening, a special presentation was made to Chabad by the head

designed achievement award in the form of a beautiful embroidered 'JamboJew' patch, and everyone could participate in the dedicated 'JamboJew' Facebook page.







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**AS. What is the Jewish Senior Circle (JSC) and when was it created?**

**DBM.** Jewish Senior Circle is a senior support organization which serves the needs of Jewish seniors in the GTA. It began in 2008.

**AS. How were you chosen to organize this new venture?**

**DBM.** Beginning as a student in Yeshiva, I would visit elderly people in senior homes or their private residences every Friday afternoon. I continued this activity for over eight years and developed a special feeling for the elderly and always received pleasure from each visit. When Rabbi Yossi Yarmush of Tzivos Hashem told me that he was working on funding to help seniors, I embraced the opportunity. His guidance, assistance and leadership have been invaluable from the very beginning.

**AS. What were your goals when you began JSC?**

**DBM.** From my past experiences I knew that this kind of work was something that could add value and substance to many lives. There are many seniors out there who live in complete isolation. Even for those who are well off, days can be long and lonely: they are unable to get around, meet people or engage in enjoyable activities. Most of all it is depressing for many who had always been productive members of their community and now find themselves unable to continue their established lifestyle.

**AS. How have your objectives changed?**

**DBM.** While working to bring volunteers to visit one on one with lonely isolated seniors, we are simultaneously working on group programs to bring seniors together for social events. In many buildings there are seniors who don't meet their own neighbours and don't seek companionship. Our programs help seniors meet new friends and stay socially active. For example, many residents in nursing homes are delighted to share past experiences with other residents who share their common Jewish heritage.

**AS. How is JSC funded?**

**DBM.** We received our seed funding from the Trillium Foundation. The needs of the program have quickly exceeded the amount funded and we are working hard to discover other venues as well as publicizing the fine work we do to encourage the community to demonstrate its generosity.

**AS. Tell us about the various programs. Who are the volunteers?**

**DBM.** Programs include volunteer visitations, educational classes, children/teen produced plays, Judaic-art-workshops, pre-Shabbos services, Challah



*In this Issue we interview Rabbi Dov Ber Marshall of Chabad Jewish Senior Circle*

by Ahava Spillman

baking and deliveries, Holiday services, Holiday home package deliveries and much more.

Volunteers range from high school and university students to capable seniors and all ages in between. There are many children who tag along with family members and mothers who bring their infants along to cheer up the seniors.

**AS. How can a senior obtain your services?**

**DBM.** By calling our office 905-882-9227 or through our website JewishSeniorCircle.com click on "seniors".

**AS. What centres does JSC visit?**

**DBM.** Are you sure you want the whole list it's a bit long.

Leisureworld Richmond Hill, Leisureworld Cheltenham, Leisureworld Norfinch, Terrace Gardens, Forest Hill Pl, Pine Villa, Kensington Pl, Lchaim Retirement, Ahavas Achim, Lansing Retirement, Four Elms, Amica on Steeles, Thorn Mills, Bayview Extendacare, Baycrest Terrace, Cummer Lodge, Valley View, Carefree Lodge, Brookside Court and Hilltop PL. This does not include condominium buildings and homes where we run programs.

**AS. That's quite an impressive list. If a seniors' centre wants to be on your roster, what should it do?**

**DBM.** They can contact the office number mentioned above or email:

rabbi@jewishseniorcircle.com

**AS. Who gives classes and on what topics?**

**DBM.** We have several extremely dedicated volunteers who teach classes. Rabbi Aron Kamman, Rabbi Yosef Rappaport, Rebetzen Sara Rabiski and other families who join together to make programs lively. We also have an art teacher who runs our Judaic-art-workshops.

The topics are based on the weekly parsha, current events and important dates on the Jewish calendar. Sometimes we engage guest lecturers who speak on various topics. Didn't you speak at The Terrace a couple of times last year?

**AS. I did and must tell you I**

**enjoyed it immensely. Many more people attended than I had anticipated. They were attentive, interested, and asked excellent questions. The second time I spoke, it felt like I was visiting old friends. The atmosphere was cordial and relaxed and some residents brought their friends along to participate. Tell us about your most successful programs and why you think they work.**

**DBM.** The programs in which family members bring along children and have the children take an active part in the presentations, are very effective in making the seniors feel part of the community. We all know that kids are the future but seniors feel that reality much more passionately, wanting to see evidence that "tomorrow" is in good hands.

**AS. Describe an unexpected reaction you have had from a first time participant?**

**DBM.** Before setting up any volunteer to visit a senior I always meet both people.

Several months ago I was visiting a very lonely and bitter man. He had lost his wife some thirty years earlier and has been all alone since. His adopted son never comes to visit. This was my first time meeting him in person. When I called him to let him know I would be coming, he asked if I would stop by the store and buy some pens as he didn't have any. We talked for a while, he told me some jokes and we had a nice time. As I got up to go, he showered me with blessings and gave me a kiss on my hand and told me very affectionately that I had made his day the happiest in decades.

**AS. What was your first event; how many attended? Does attendance increase as your courses become familiar to the community?**

**DBM.** Our first event was a Chanukah menorah lighting in a rented room of Bernard Betel Centre. We had over 45 attendees. Our list of locations is steadily increasing as well as the amount of people who attend each program.

**AS. How do you promote Jewish ideas to secular seniors**

**living in a modern world?**

**DBM.** One way is through our art workshop which attracts anyone interested in a social event with art. Another thing is to bring them holiday programs which even secular people relate to. Many seniors spend time reminiscing about their childhood and are very proud of their grandparent's devotion to yiddishkiet. This is an ideal time, when life slows down a bit, to reflect and learn more about their heritage and family tree.

**AS. In the world of geriatric complacency, how does Judaism offer a promise of something better for seniors?**

**DBM.** The Torah viewpoint on this is totally opposite to that of modern society. Longevity and old age are considered in Torah to be one of the greatest possible blessings. "Many years bring wisdom", says the Biblical verse. "The older elderly scholars get, the more settled their minds become," says the Talmud. Members of the Sanhedrin (Jewish Supreme Court and governing body during the Biblical and Mishnaic eras) would normally have to be over seventy. The Torah tells us to rise before people the age seventy or older, even if they are not Torah-scholars, out of respect "for the trials and tribulations they have undergone".

**AS. What's in store for Rosh**

**Hashana and the High Holidays?**

**DBM.** We have services for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur in several retirement homes, shofar blowing in many more locations. There will also be a distribution of apple and honey before Rosh Hashanah to hundreds of seniors.

**AS. How are you marketing your programs?**

**DBM.** We have recently put out several news articles in various news papers. My wife posts group emails and we are currently putting out a promotional video as well.

**AS. How has the Rebbe influenced your work?**

**DBM.** In 1980 The Rebbe initiated "Colel Tiferes Zekeinim Levi Yitzchok" to encourage the elderly, who are retired and thus have moretime, to dedicate time to the study of Torah. It is a very great zchus to be involved in bringing this initiative to the Greater Toronto Area.

Also through the connections that have been built with the staff of the senior facilities we are looking at a bright future of bringing more yiddishkiet to many more deserving seniors.

**AS. What's your vision for the future?**

**DBM.** There is no limit to how much can be accomplished for this often neglected part of society. The warmth of yiddishkiet and the attention of a caring volunteer can absolutely alter a person's life. We would like to see to it that every senior, wherever they are, has the opportunity to live with the parsha and enjoy Torah life to the fullest.

**AS. We wish you hatzlacha in your fine endeavours and a happy and successful Rosh Hashana. How do people get involved either financially or through volunteering?**

**DBM.** Tax deductible donations should be made out to Jewish Senior Circle and mailed to 37 Troyer Court Thornhill ON L4J 2M6. To volunteer please visit : jewishseniorcircle.com and click on "volunteer".

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# Dear Rebbby

By Rabbi Aron Moss



## Is It Really Rosh Hashana Again?

**With the new year upon us, I wonder what is the Jewish view of time? Some cultures see time as a cycle - what was will be again in an endless pattern. Others see time as a line, starting at the beginning and marching ever onwards. Which view of time does Judaism adopt?**

**Answer:**

Neither, and both. In Judaism, time is neither cyclic nor linear. It is a blend of the two. Time is a spiral.

On the surface, Jewish time seems to have a cyclic pattern. Every year we celebrate the same festivals in the same way. We blow the same Shofar every Rosh Hashana, and we recite the same prayers. There is a sense of having come full circle. Having travelled through the rhythms of time during the year gone by, we seem to be back where we started.

But we are not. We do not arrive at Rosh Hashana as the same people we were a year ago. Every year teaches us new lessons and exposes us to new realities. We can't help being transformed by the dramas and disappointments, tests and triumphs that each of us face in any given year. We have grown older, hopefully wiser, and advanced ourselves and our world further along the path of destiny.

We are spiralling upwards. As we reach a new year, we are at the same side of the spiral as we were last new year, but this time a level higher. The world as a whole, and the world in miniature that is everyone of us, have been furthered in their long trek upwards toward their holy goal.

And what if you're no higher than you were last year? If you come to Rosh Hashana with nothing to show for the year that went by; if you haven't developed your character and deepened your sensitivity to others; if you haven't matured in your perspective or broadened your understanding of life; if the year passed by without impacting on your inner self, then you've got some catching up to do. It's time to wake up and come alive. Your soul is waiting to start spiralling upwards.

I know just what you need to get you started. You need to hear the blowing of a ram's horn. It

has the power to break down the walls of inertia surrounding the soul, and kick start your climb up the spiral.

You need to hear the Shofar. We all do.

Wishing you a sweet new year, may you be written and sealed in the book of life,

## Why Are all the Good Guys Taken?

**Here is the dating paradox: Why are all the good guys taken already? Why are my friends' husbands all such wonderful people, and the guys I meet all seem to be missing something?**

**Answer:**

It is not that the good guys are taken, it is that a taken guy is more desirable. Loving and being loved brings out the best in us. So a guy in a relationship does have something that the available guys are missing - someone to love.

A painting will always look better once it is framed and hung on the wall. A couch is far more attractive in a home than in a showroom. And people are more beautiful when they have found love. The human soul is only truly itself when it has opened up to someone else.

When we love someone, we are more alive. Our feelings are more vivid, our sensitivity is heightened and our personalities flourish. When we are loved by someone, we feel more confident and free, content and complete.

We can share love with our family and friends, but until we find our soul mate we are only half a person. It is when man and woman come together that they are the image of G-d, they are complete.

You can't go furniture shopping in someone else's living room. And you can't compare the guys you date to your friends' husbands. A complete person doesn't need you. A half, seeking their missing half, does.

Feel your halfness, and recognize the halfness in another. Then you'll find there are plenty of wonderful guys out there. One is waiting for you. Without you, he's only half the guy he could be.

## Why is Jewishness Passed Down by the Mother?

**Why is Judaism passed down through the mother? I**

**understand in olden times it was easy to know who your mother was and there was no way of proving fatherhood. But these days we have DNA testing, so why can't someone be Jewish even if only their father is Jewish?**

**Answer:**

Jewishness is not in our DNA. It is in our soul. The reason it is passed through the maternal line is not just because it is easier to identify who your mother is. It is because the soul identity is more directly shaped by the mother than the father.

From a purely physical perspective, a child is more directly connected to their mother. The father's contribution to the production of a child is instantaneous, remote and short-lived. The mother on the other hand gives her very self. The child is conceived inside the mother, develops inside the mother, is sustained and nourished by the mother, and is

born from the mother.

This is not to say that a father and child are not intimately attached. Of course they are. But as deep and essential as the bond between father and child may be, the child's actual body was never a part of her father's body. But she was a part of her mother. Every child begins as an extension of their mother's body.

This is a simple fact. It doesn't mean she will be closer to her mother, or more similar to her mother, or follow her mother's ways. We are not discussing the emotional bond between parent and child, but rather the natural physical bond. There is a more direct physical link between mother and child, because a child starts off as a part of her mother.

The body and its workings are a mirror image of the workings of the soul. The physical world is a parallel of the spiritual

world. And so, the direct physical link between mother and child is a reflection of a soul link between them. While the father's soul contributes to the identity of the child's soul, it is the mother's soul that actually defines it. If the mother has a Jewish soul, the child does too.

If the mother is not Jewish but the father is, his Jewish soul will not be extended to the child. There may be a spark of Jewishness there, but if it was not gestated in a Jewish mother, the child will have to go through conversion for their Jewishness to be activated.

Other religions are passed down by the father. Jewishness is passed down by the mother, because being Jewish is a spiritual identity, it defines our very being. And our very being we get from our mother, both in body and in soul

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# Dear Rebbby

By Rabbi Aron Moss



## Why a Bris?

**A friend asked the other day why we have a Bris (circumcision). I rambled on about health, tradition, old people, 8 days, pain and a whole lot of other nonsense before leaving this one to you. Answer:**

The Bris is a physical symbol of the relationship between G-d and the Jewish people. It is a constant reminder of what the Jewish mission entails (a reminder which men need more than women). Let's look at its details:

If circumcision is what G-d wants, why aren't we born circumcised?

G-d created the world imperfect, and gave us the mission to perfect it. G-d created wheat, humans make bread. G-d created a jungle, humans create civilisation. The raw materials are given to us, and we are to use our ingenuity to improve on the world that we were born into.

This is symbolised by the Bris - we are born uncircumcised, and it is up to us to "finish the job". This is also true metaphorically. We each have instincts and natural tendencies that are inborn, but need to be refined. "I was born that way" does not excuse immoral behaviour - we are to cut away any negative traits, no matter how innate they may seem.

Why on earth would G-d choose circumcision to represent something sacred?!

Jewish spirituality is about making the physical world holy. The way we eat, sleep, work and procreate should be imbued with the same holiness as the way we pray; our homes should be as sanctified as our synagogues. We find G-d on earth just as much (and perhaps more) than in the heavens. So we put a sign on the most physical and potentially

lowly organ, to say that it can and should be used in a holy way. In fact, it is in sexuality that we can touch the deepest part of our soul, when we approach it with holiness.

Why circumcise a baby? Wouldn't the statement be more powerful if it were made by a mature adult?

The circumcision is performed when a child is still not aware of what is happening. This is because the Jewish connection to G-d is intrinsic - whether our minds believe in G-d or not, whether our hearts love G-d or not, our souls know G-d. We can join the covenant with G-d even without being consciously aware of Him, because subconsciously we already know Him.

Why specifically on the eighth day?

The number seven represents nature - seven days of the week, seven colours of the rainbow, seven musical notes (doh re mi etc); the number eight is the number that surpasses seven, and thus represents the miraculous, what is beyond nature. We do the Bris on the eighth day because the Jewish people survive on miracles. Our history defies the laws of nature. We welcome a new Jewish child into this miraculous existence on the eighth day of his life, as if to say, "Expect miracles!"

## Who Cares for the Homeless?

**I am a strong believer in the value of charity. But I can't see how it is important to give money to a shule. There are homeless people and starving children, so why should I give money so people can just gather together to pray and hear a rabbi's speech? Isn't that a luxury in comparison?**

**Answer:** Why do you care that there are homeless people? What's it your business? Are they members of your own family that you should be concerned about them? And who's children are starving? Yours? If not, why is it your problem? Why should you feel responsible for someone else's child? What is it that makes you care for the needs of others?

It is certainly not logic that drives you to help others. If anything it is illogical to just give away hard earned money to someone who you don't even know. Neither is it human nature that demands we care for a stranger. And there is no legal obligation to share your wealth with others. So what pushes you to do it?

The answer: values. You have values, principles of right and wrong, good and bad that direct your life and demand that you behave a certain way. You don't give charity because it makes sense, or because you instinctively feel the urge to give, or because the law demands you to. You give charity because it is moral, it is right, it is good to help those who are in need.

But where do your morals come from? What is the source of the value of charity? The Torah. It was the Hebrew Bible that proclaimed that our income is only partly ours. A tenth of it doesn't belong to us at all, but is given us on loan, to distribute to worthy causes. The Hebrew word for charity is Tzedakah, meaning justice. The Jewish tradition saw charity not as a noble act of generosity, but as a moral act of justice. To give is

simply the right thing to do.

You have a wonderful sense of values. But values do not live in a vacuum. To survive and spread, values need institutions in which they can be fostered and taught. That is the function of a shule. A shule is where values are taught and lived. By joining a community we become sensitised to the needs of others, as we come into contact with people outside of our immediate circle of family and friends. By hearing the Torah reading and studying its messages, values are shared and passed down.

You need to give Tzedakah to feed the poor and shelter the homeless. But you also need to ensure that the very value of Tzedakah itself is not homeless, and that your children should never suffer from moral poverty. That's why we need shules. Because values need a home too.

## Did You Get the Message Yet?

**Rabbi, do you think we are too flooded with information these days? No matter where we are, we are online, contactable, and never alone. You used to have to go and check your mail in your letterbox once a day. Now you can check your email on your phone every two minutes. Is this a good thing? Sent from my iPhone™**

**Answer:** That's a great question. I will have to think about it. I will get back to you with an answer soon. All the best,  
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# Telling it Like it Wasn't:

## A Former Times Reporter Looks Back at Crown Heights Riot

By Ari L. Goldman

Twenty years ago, on the night of Aug. 19, 1991 – the night that Gavin Cato and Yankel Rosenbaum were killed – my editor called me at home to tell me that riots had broken out on the streets of Crown Heights. “We’re covered for tonight but I want you to start your day there tomorrow,” he said.

Over the next three days, working 12 hours shifts and only going home to sleep, I saw and heard many terrible things. I saw police cars set on fire, stores being looted and people bloodied by Billy clubs, rocks and bottles. One woman told me that she barricaded herself into her apartment and put the mattresses on the windows so her children would not be hurt by flying glass.

Over those three days I also saw journalism go terribly wrong. The city’s newspapers, so dedicated to telling both sides of the story in the name of objectivity and balance, often missed what was really going on. Journalists initially framed the story as a “racial” conflict and failed to see the anti-Semitism inherent in the riots. As the 20th anniversary of the riots approaches, I find myself re-examining my own role in the coverage and trying to extract some lessons for myself and my profession.

At the time, I was a religion writer at The New York Times and was well connected in the Lubavitch community, the predominant Jewish group in Crown Heights. I was one of probably a dozen Times reporters and photographers on the streets over the course of the riots. We were a diverse group, representing many religions and racial backgrounds.

My job was to file memos to the main “rewrite” reporters back in the Times office in Manhattan about what I saw and heard. We had no laptops or cellphones in those days so the other reporters and I went to payphones and dictated our memos to a waiting band of stenographers in the home office. The photographers handed their film off to couriers on motorcycles who took the film to the Times.

Yet, when I picked up the paper, the article I read was not the story I had reported. I saw headlines that described the riots in terms solely of race. “Two Deaths Ignite Racial Clash in Tense Brooklyn Neighborhood,” the Times headline said. And, worse, I read an opening paragraph, what journalists call a “lead,” that was simply untrue:

“Hasidim and blacks clashed in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn through the day and into the night yesterday.”

In all my reporting during the riots I never saw – or heard of – any violence by Jews against blacks. But the Times was dedicated to this version of events: blacks and Jews clashing amid racial tensions. To show Jewish culpability in the riots, the paper even ran a picture – laughable even at the time – of a Chasidic man brandishing an open umbrella before a police officer in riot gear. The caption



*A boy weeps beside his fallen father, who was beaten unconscious by a marauding gang of Caribbean foreign nationals during the Crown Heights anti-Jew hatefest*

read: “A police officer scuffling with a Hasidic man yesterday on President Street.”

I was outraged but I held my tongue. I was a loyal Times employee and deferred to my editors. I figured that other reporters on the streets were witnessing parts of the story I was not seeing.

But then I reached my breaking point. On Aug. 21, as I stood in a group of Chasidic men in front of the Chabad-Lubavitch headquarters, a group of demonstrators were coming down Eastern Parkway. “Heil Hitler,” they chanted. “Death to the Jews.” Police in riot gear stood nearby but did nothing.

Suddenly rocks and bottles started to fly toward us and a Chasidic man just a few feet away from me was hit in the throat and fell to the ground. Some ran to help the injured man but most of us ran for cover. I ran for a payphone and, my hands shaking with rage, dialed my editor. I spoke in a way that I never had before or since when talking to a boss.

“You don’t know what’s happening here!” I yelled. “I am on the streets getting attacked. Someone next to me just got hit. I am writing memos and what comes out in the paper? ‘Hasidim and blacks clashed’? That’s not what is happening here. Jews are being attacked!

You’ve got this story all wrong. All wrong.”

I didn’t blame the “rewrite” reporter. I blamed the editors. It was clear that they had settled on a “frame” for the story. The way they saw it, there were two narratives here: the white narrative and the black narrative. And both had equal weight.

After my outburst things got a little better. The next day’s report began like this: “Black youths hurling rocks and bottles scuffled with the police in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn last night, even as

Mayor David N. Dinkins tried to personally calm the racially troubled neighborhood after two nights of violence.”

But the Times still had trouble changing its frame. Perhaps most troubling was an article written in the midst of the rioting under this headline: “Amid Distrust in Brooklyn: Boy and Scholar Fall Victim.” The article compared the life of Gavin Cato, the 7-year-old boy killed in the car accident that spurred the riots, and the life of Yankel Rosenbaum, 29, who was stabbed to death later that night. It recycled every newspaper cliché and was an insult to the memory of both victims, but, again, it fit the frame.

“They did not know each other,” the article said. “They had no reason to know... They died unaware....” In the eyes of the Times, the deaths were morally equivalent and had equal weight.

The Times editorial page followed suit. “The violence following an auto accident in Crown Heights reminds all New Yorkers that the city’s race relations remains dangerously strained,” the editorial said. It concluded by praising Mayor Dinkins, giving him credit “for a hard night’s work” and doing “the job that New Yorkers elected him to do.”

The one who first broke the

frame and spoke the truth was the fearless poet of the New York newspaper business in those days, Jimmy Breslin, then a columnist for Newsday. He was one of numerous reporters, photographers and television journalists who were beaten or otherwise injured during the riots. In Breslin’s case, he was dragged from a taxi by a group of rampaging young men, pummeled and stripped of his clothes. That night, he vowed to tell the truth of his humiliation, although he anticipated the resistance. “And someone up in the higher echelons of journalism, some moron starts talking about balanced coverage,” he said.

The other person who spoke the truth was the brilliant former executive editor of the Times, A.M. Rosenthal, who by 1991 had become a columnist for the paper. Rosenthal was one of the first journalists at the Times to call the riots what they were. “Pogrom in Brooklyn,” was the headline of his column on Sept. 3, 1991, just two weeks after the riots ended.

“The press,” Rosenthal wrote, “treats it all as some kind of cultural clash between a poverty-ridden people fed up with life and a powerful, prosperous and unfortunately peculiar bunch of stuck-up neighbors — very sad of course, but certainly understandable. No — it is an anti-Semitic pogrom and the words should not be left unsaid.” It pains me to recall that not many people at the Times took Rosenthal seriously at the time. He had gone from being the editor of a great “liberal” newspaper to being a “conservative” columnist who seemed to return to the same issues over and over again: the security of Israel, anti-Semitism, the persecution of Christians in China and the war on drugs.

But Rosenthal was right about Crown Heights. In 1993, two years after the Crown Heights riots, an exhaustive state investigation sharply criticized Mayor Dinkins for not understanding the severity of the crisis. It also faulted his police commissioner, Lee Brown, for mismanaging the police during the riots.

The critical state report was widely covered in the press. “For the Mayor,” the Times headline said, “A Harsh Light.” But another report, this one on how the press covered Crown Heights, got little publicity. It was written in 1999 by Carol B. Conaway, then an assistant professor at the College of Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass., and



*Ari Goldman*

published in an academic journal called *Polity*. Her article is called “Crown Heights: Politics and Press Coverage of the Race War That Wasn’t.”

“Journalists and their audience alike rely on ‘frames’ when writing about and understanding newsworthy events because they provide cues for understanding others’ experiences,” Conaway wrote. But, she added, sometimes the frames are wrong. She continued: “The New York Post, a tabloid, shifted away from the race frame to focus on black anti-Semitism within a few days of the initial rampages, while The New York Times persisted with the racial frame for at least two years.

“Yet,” she added, “one cannot understand the events [that unfolded in Crown Heights] without getting beyond the binaries of black versus white encouraged by the use of the race frame, and understanding the more complex dynamics of the conflict.”

As someone who saw the conflict unfold I can attest to this first-hand. I am telling my story in print for the first time because it is important that we journalists examine our mistakes and learn from them. Fitting stories into frames – whether about blacks and Jews, liberals or conservatives, Arabs and Israelis, Catholics and Protestants or Muslims and Jews — is wrong and even dangerous. Life is more complicated than that. And so is journalism.

*This article originally appeared in the Aug. 12 issue of The Jewish Week.*



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Sunday	10:00 a.m.	Parshat Hashavua		Rabbi Schochet
Sunday	11:00 a.m.	Talmud Perek Hamafkid		Rabbi Schochet
Sunday	11:00 a.m.	Talmud (Yoma)		Rabbi Spalter
Sunday	7:30 p.m.		Tanya	Rabbi Gansburg
Sunday	8:30 p.m.	Shulchan Aruch		Rabbi Chaikin
Sun. - Thurs.	9:00 p.m.		Rambam	Alternating
Monday	11:00 a.m.	The Joy of Judaism		Rabbi Spalter
Monday	After Mincha	Talmud Perek Hamafkid		Rabbi Schochet
Monday	7:45 p.m.	A Timely Lesson From The Torah Portion		Rabbi Gansburg
Monday	8:30 p.m.	Hilchos Shabbos		Mrs. C. Zaltzman
Monday	9:00 p.m.	Chassidic Insights in Tefillah		Mrs. N. Freeman
Mon. - Fri.	5:30 a.m.	Chassidic Thought		Rabbi Yarmush
Mon. - Fri.	7:10 a.m.	Chassidic Thought		Rabbi Gansburg
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Wednesday	7:30 a.m.	JLI Fascinating Facts		Rabbi Gansburg
Wednesday	After Mincha	Talmud Perek Hamafkid		Rabbi Schochet
Thursday	11:30 a.m.	Tanya (In Hebrew)		Rabbi Gansburg
Shabbos	9:00 a.m.		Chassidus	Rabbi Freeman
Shabbos	9:00 a.m.		Chassidus	Rabbi Gansburg
Shabbos	1 h. before Mincha		Chassidus	Rabbi Gansburg





## What a Married Woman Needs to be Happy

by Family Therapist Abe Kass

If you are a woman, you need the following feelings that come from your relationship with your husband to feel emotional fulfilled. As the body needs particular nutrients, so too, your emotional side needs particular feelings to feel fully happy and content. You get these feelings when you feel your husband: Cares about you, chooses you, understands you and protects you.

Here is how to increase the likelihood you will receive these emotional gifts from your husband:

Cares for you. Encourage your husband to show he "cares" about you by expressing your appreciation for the help and attention he does give you. Tell him what you like, not what you don't like. Let him know you need his help and involvement in your wellbeing to feel good about yourself and your relationship with him.

Chooses you. Your husband will choose to be with you when he feels good around you. Be interested in him. Ask him questions. Don't give advice unless he asks. Let him know you value his opinions and decisions. Don't push him away with anger expressions, criticism, irritation or meanness. Make yourself pleasant and attractive and you will make it easy for him to choose to be with you. Always remember, marriage is a voluntary arrangement. Marriage is a choice. Reward the choice by being positive and pleasant to be around.

Understands you. When you talk with your husband, check to see if he understands what you are saying. You may discover you need to talk slower, express simpler ideas, or choose a better time to talk. Guide him by telling him that you just want him to understand, not react, comment or advise. As well, your husband will be more willing to listen to you when you take the time to also understand him.

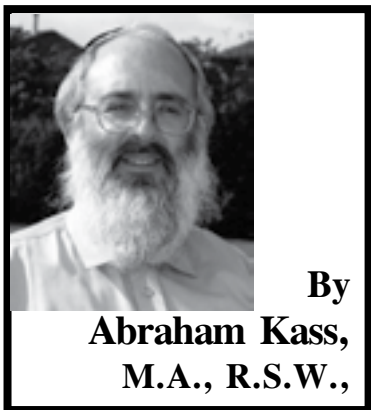
Protects you. You are competent and you can take care of yourself. Still, you want your husband to "protect you." You want a man that is strong. This means he can deal with emotional problems, provide materially for the family and take responsibility to fix both material and emotional problems. But even a strong person can be broken. If you criticize and shame your husband with harsh words, it's possible he will become weak. Treat him with respect and acknowledge his strength and when you seek his protection, you increase the likelihood he will be there.

In total, when you consistently experience the feeling generated from the above behaviors, you will feel "treasured" by your husband. This is the feeling you

need to be fully happy and content. I know this because many women, in my work as a family therapist, have told me.

Here is what to do if you are a man:

Treat your wife in such a way that she feels she is your priceless "treasure." Learn from the words above and or from your wife's guidance and enthusiastically embrace these relationship ideals. When you do, your payoff will be that she will devote herself to your wellbeing. You will feel



By  
**Abraham Kass,**  
M.A., R.S.W.,

"respected" and "valued"—emotional nutrients that, as a man, you need.

As well, acknowledge all your wife's good efforts and thoughts on your behalf. Express your appreciation with a gift, kind words, and a helping hand. When your wife feels "treasured" by you, she will give you her admiration and love and together you will create peace and harmony in your home.

The formula is simple: When you treat your wife as a queen, she will treat you as a king.

=====

*Abe Kass, M.A., R.S.W., R.M.F.T., a is a registered Social Worker, registered Marriage and Family Therapist, certified Hypnotherapist and award winning educator.*

*He has a clinical practice working with individuals, couples, and families in Toronto, Canada.*

*For more information or to arrange an appointment he can be reached at, (905) 771-1087 or visit his web at: [www.AbeKass.com](http://www.AbeKass.com).*

## The 120-Day Version of the Human Story

Continued from page 2

the mountain.

It was the 17th of Tammuz.

Moses destroyed the idol and rehabilitated the errant nation. He then returned to Sinai for a second forty days, to plead before G-d for the forgiveness of Israel. G-d acquiesced, and agreed to provide a second set of tablets to replace those which had been broken in the wake of Israel's sin. These tablets, however, were not to be the handiwork of G-d, but of human construction:

And G-d said to Moses: Carve yourself two tablets of stone, like the first; and I shall inscribe upon them the words that were on the first tablets which you have broken... Come up in the morning to Mt. Sinai, and present yourself there to Me on the top of the mountain.

Moses ascended Sinai for his third and final forty days atop the mountain on the 1st of Elul. G-d had already forgiven Israel's sin, and now a new and invigorated relationship between Him and His people was to be rebuilt on the ruins of the old. On Tishrei 10, we received our second set of the Ten Commandments, inscribed by G-d upon the tablets carved by Moses hand.

Thus, we have three forty-day periods, and three corresponding states of Torah: the First Tablets, the Broken Tablets, and the Second Tablets. These embody the foundation of our existence, the challenge of life, and the ultimate achievement of man.

### The Plot

Our sages point out that the opening verse of the Torah's account of creation, Bereishit bara Elokim... ("In the beginning G-d created the heavens and earth...") begins with the letter bet, the second letter of the Hebrew alef-bet. This is to teach us that there is an alef that comes before the bet of the created existence; that creation is not an end in itself, but comes to serve a principle which precedes it in sequence and substance.

The pre-Genesis alef is the alef of Anochi Hashem Elokecha...

("I Am the L-rd your G-d...")--the first letter of the Ten Commandments. Torah is G-d's preconception of what life on earth should be like; the basis and raison detre of creation is that we develop ourselves and our environment to this ideal. But G-d wanted more. More than the realization of His original blueprint for existence, more than the falling into place of a pre-programmed perfection. More than a "First Tablets" world that is wholly the handiwork of G-d.

A created entity, by definition, has nothing that is truly its own: all the tools, potentials and possibilities it possesses have been given to it by its Creator. But G-d desired that the human experience should yield a profit beyond what is projected--or even warranted--by His initial investment in us. So He created us with the vulnerabilities of the human condition.

He created us with the freedom to choose, and thus with the potential for failure. When we act rightly and constructively, we are behaving according to plan and realizing the potential invested within us by our Creator. But when we choose to act wrongly and destructively, we enter into a state of being that is not part of the plan of Torah--indeed, it is the antithesis of what Torah prescribes. Yet this state of being is the springboard for teshuvah (return)--the power to rise from the ruins of our fall to a new dimension of perfection, a perfection unenvisionable by our untarnished past.

This is how Chassidic teaching explains G-d's creation of the possibility of evil. This is "His fearsome plot upon the children of man." The soul of man is a spark of G-dliness, inherently and utterly good; in and of itself, it is in no way susceptible to corruption. Its human frailties are nothing less than a contrived plot, imposed upon it in total contrast to its essential nature.

If the First Tablets are the Divine vision of creation, the Broken Tablets are our all-too-familiar world--a world that tolerates imperfection, failure,

even outright evil. It is a world whose First Tablets have been shattered--a world gone awry of its foundation and its true self, a world wrenched out of sync with its inherent goodness.

The Broken Tablets are a plot contrived by the Author of existence to allow the possibility for a Second Tablets. Every failing, every decline, can be exploited and redirected as a positive force. Every breakdown of the soul's First Tablets perfection is an opportunity for man to carve for yourself a second set, in which the Divine script is chiselled upon the tablets of human initiative and creation. A second set which includes an entire vista of potentials that were beyond the scope of the first, wholly Divine set.

G-d said to Moses: Do not be distressed over the First Tablets, which contained only the Ten Commandments. In the Second Tablets I am giving you also Halachah, Midrash and Agadah. Had Israel not sinned with the Golden Calf, our sages conclude, they would have received only the Five Books of Moses and the book of Joshua. For as the verse says, "Much wisdom comes through much grief."

### Remembered & Enacted

These hundred and twenty days have left a lasting imprint on our experience of time. For the Jewish calendar does far more than measure and mark time; in the words of the Book of Esther, "These days are remembered and enacted." The festivals and commemorative dates that mark our annual journey through time are opportunities to re-enact the events and achievements which they remember.

Every Shavuot, we once again experience the revelation at Sinai and our acquisition of the blueprint and foundation of our lives. Every year on the 17th of Tammuz we once again deal with the setbacks and breakdowns epitomized by the events of the day. The month of Elul and the first ten days Tishrei, corresponding to Moses' third 40-day stay on Mount Sinai, are, as they were then, days of goodwill between G-d and man--days in which the Almighty is that much more accessible to all who seek Him. And Yom Kippur, the holiest and most potent day of the year, marks the climax of the 120-day saga.

Ever since the day that G-d gave the Second Tablets to the people of Israel, this day is a fountainhead of teshuvah: the source of our capacity to reclaim the deficiencies of the past as fuel and momentum for the attainment of new, unprecedented heights; the source of our capacity to exact a profit from G-d's volatile and risky investment in human life.

Personally, I think Moses would have been pretty impressed by the kind of miracles that happened in Eastern Europe and on the Internet over the last few years.

Fact is, nature itself is supernatural. Just that we're too busy to notice. After a bit of time studying with Moshiach, we'll be able to see clearly without the wool pulled over our eyes.

4. You appear concerned that the World to Come may be a rather boring affair. Actually, Moshiach is when the real fun starts. There will still be the same sports, entertainment, and

good, clean shopping sprees. But kicking a ball or buying clothes will be a form of meditation on the Oneness of Creation. Come to think of it, so will all human activities.

5. Hi-tech is only here now as a preparation for the technological applications of the times of Moshiach. M.I.T., IBM, Xerox-Parc--you guys ain't seen nothin' yet! When finally we become masters over our own tools--rather than the other way around--we shall start to utilize them to discover the G-dliness within Creation and within ourselves.

Wake up! There has never been

a time in the history of the Jewish people like this before! In 2000 years of Exile, the last few years have been the only time that Jews in every part of the globe are free to follow the Judaism of their ancestors. Sure, there are still those who cannot leave their place of exile, but compare this to the horrible oppression of past times! As our sages put it, "There is no difference between our world now and the times of Moshiach, except for the oppression by the nations." The greatest oppression remaining is that of the materialistic (un)consciousness of the modern world.

So who, pray tell, is stopping us?

## Sighting Moshiach *Cont. from pg. 2*





## The Monk in the Minyan

By SAM SER

If only the abbot could see Justo Jorge Calderon now. With curling peyot dangling below his chin and the long black cloak of his small hassidic sect hanging off his broad shoulders, Calderon sure doesn't look like a Benedictine monk anymore. Besides, he goes by Aharon now, and he's the proud father of three little children.

Calderon's story is one of those stranger-than-fiction tales that grows more intriguing the longer it goes on. Fortunately, it's also one he doesn't mind sharing. It begins in a small town outside Buenos Aires, Argentina, where Justo Jorge was born into a family of Roman Catholics.

"Today I am a very kosher Jew," the 40-year-old says with a smile, "but once I was a very kosher goy."

When Calderon was 12, he says, his parents sent him to a private religious school to get a better education than the public schools provided. Before long he was spending extra time studying with the monks. At 14, he joined the pre-mission seminar.

"I was young and idealistic," he explains with a shrug.

After high school, with his religious zeal increasing, Calderon went looking for the "ancient, original teachings" of Catholicism. The local Benedictine monastery offered the oldest, "purest" form of Christian life around. Based on a 1,400-year-old order and centered around a largely self-sustaining "holy village," it

meant spending most of the day in silence, reflecting on the divine.

"The word 'monastery' is derived from the Greek 'monos,' meaning one, or alone. We monks were each one seeking the One," explains Calderon, revealing his divinity student's mind-set.

Although Calderon's parents weren't happy about his commitment to the monastic life - he's their



Justo Jorge Calderon

only son, and they hoped for grandchildren - the young man felt at home in the Benedictine monastery. At home, that is, until he experienced what he calls "my two surprises." The first came in the monastery's library. One of the largest around, it helped make the monastery famous, Calderon says. Of the thousands of volumes it held,

though, one particular book would change his life.

"One day," he says, "I chanced upon a Haggada, in Spanish and Hebrew. I was drawn to it, and read it from beginning to end, in amazement." At the end of the Seder service, Calderon read the prayer looking forward to celebrating the Pesach holiday "next year in Jerusalem - Jerusalem rebuilt" and stared at a drawing of the Third Temple. Calderon sat in silence - not his usual contemplative silence, but a stunned silence.

"Christianity," he explains, "looks at Judaism as something of an archeological concept, not as something that is still alive, relevant and flourishing... Looking at this prayer at the end of the Haggada, I was shocked that modern Jews still nurtured hopes for the future of their religion."

The discovery rocked Calderon, but he was still unsure what to make of it. Shortly thereafter, though, he experienced his second "surprise," which sent his spiritual quest in an entirely unforeseen direction.

It came on one of his weekly visits to the abbot of the monastery. Upon entering the abbot's study, Calderon found him poring over a Hebrew Bible. (The abbot, Calderon learned, had once studied in Jerusalem, and was comparing ancient texts.) "I was fascinated by the language," he recalls. "I wanted to know, what secrets are in those letters?" By that point Calderon had spent several years in the monastery and, although he was

well on his way to a permanent stay there, he returned to his home for a planned one- or two-year break. Once at home he began attending classes at the Catholic-run university in town and working as a nurse for the Red Cross. But, with his "surprises" spurring him on, Calderon also sought out Jews who would be willing to teach

him Hebrew.

At the time, conversion was not on his mind. "I just wanted to know how Jesus prayed," he says.

On Friday nights, Calderon attended services at a local synagogue ("it was kind of like a Protestant church") where the rabbi agreed to let him join the weekly Hebrew class. He also discovered a Messianic Jewish congregation, and prayed there as well.

Thus began a period when, Calderon recalls, he would pray to Jesus while in synagogue on Friday night, and wear a kippa to church on Sunday morning. To Calderon, these interreligious prayer sessions didn't seem like a contradiction.

"It sounds strange," he admits, "but at the time, it made sense to me. Judaism was not 'outside' Christianity, but part of it... like an ancestor."

Soon, however, something in the Shabbat prayers struck Calderon, and shook the foundations of his faith. It was part of the Saturday morning kiddush, specifically, the passage from Exodus that says: "And the Children of Israel observed the Sabbath, to make the Sabbath for their generations an eternal covenant. Between Me and the Children of Israel it is a sign forever..."

"This expression stuck in my mind," Calderon says, repeating the words. "It is a sign forever." "That meant," he says, "that there is an eternal bond, established by God. And since God does not change, then that bond" - the sign observed by Jews, marking Saturday as the Sabbath - "must still be in effect!" Why, Calderon asked himself, would the Church move the Sabbath day to Sunday, if it wasn't really a day sanctified by God?

The question was more than a little troubling to Calderon. After all, if Sunday was not really the holy Sabbath, and if God's covenant with the Jews had not been abrogated and superseded by Christianity, then maybe other tenets of the Christian religion were also not true. Maybe, he allowed himself to think, Jesus was not actually the son of God? Calderon stopped going to church.

"Everything I believed," he says, "just fell apart."

He started a conversion class at the local Reform synagogue. When the synagogue closed down due to financial difficulties, Calderon sought out more Jews and discovered the local Chabad rabbi.

Rather than eagerly welcome a new convert, the rabbi at first tried to dissuade Calderon.

"He would say, 'Why would you want to be Jewish? We have so many commandments, while non-Jews need only to observe the Noahide laws. Besides, you are already a good person in God's eyes!'" This, however, only made Calderon's desire to

convert even greater.

"Until then, I had thought that Judaism was a religion of strictness and law, whereas Christianity was a religion of love. But suddenly I realized that it was really the opposite." "You see," he explains, "in Christianity, if you don't believe in Jesus, you can't go to heaven. But in Judaism, there is a place in heaven for everyone; you don't have to be Jewish. So really, Christianity is the religion of strictness, and Judaism is the religion of love!"

After a period of "trying it out," Calderon knew that he wanted to convert, and that he wanted to move to Israel to do so. There was just one problem: finances.

"A ticket to Israel cost \$1,200. As a nurse, I was only making \$200 a month. How could I ever afford to go to Israel?" he says.

The situation was bleak. But then something happened that would be right at home in a hassidic story, the kind that circulates in the little Stropkover shul in Jerusalem where Calderon is now a gabbai: There was a raffle in Calderon's town, with a grand prize of a new ambulance; he entered. Just before Rosh Hashana, Calderon was informed that he had won the grand prize. He sold the ambulance and, suddenly able to afford the airfare, flew to Israel.

At first, Calderon, in his new identity as Aharon, studied at a yeshiva for potential converts. But within a few months the yeshiva had closed. In early 1999, Calderon met Rabbi Eliahu Birnbaum and joined the Spanish speakers' ulpan his wife had just started. Around Rosh Hashana that year, Calderon underwent a brit mila. Before Succot, he entered a mikve and completed his conversion.

Back home in Argentina, there was little celebrating going on. Although Calderon's mother was happy that he would, having given up the monastic life, provide her with grandchildren, several family members told Calderon, "If you're Jewish, don't come back here."

"A few years earlier, I had realized that love, hate and jealousy were separated only by a fine line," Calderon says. "I made a choice to love the Jewish people. Later, I began to see the hatred that some people in my town had for Jews."

Back in Israel, Calderon met and married a Jewish woman who had emigrated from Russia with her family. In yet another strange turn, Calderon's mother-in-law met Russian Orthodox missionaries in Jerusalem and converted to Christianity.

"Family gatherings," Calderon says with a knowing shrug, "can get pretty weird."



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