

THE Jewish OBSERVER

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REFLECTIONS ON KEVOD SHAMAYIM

TRAVELS WITH
RABBI AARON LEIB
STEINMAN

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- Our Burgeoning Yeshivos, *Dr. Aaron Twerski*
- The Sefas Emes זצ"ל, *Simcha Leib Grossman*
- Giving and Living for Others,
Yosi Heber, Yocheved Weiss, and Yonoson Rosenblum

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Statement of Policy

The Jewish Observer has devoted a great deal of space to the perils of the Internet and to the need for everyone to be extremely vigilant in its use. We have echoed the pleas of our *gedolim* that it should not be in use, unless it is an unavoidable necessity, and then only with all suitable safeguards. While its dangers must be recognized

and controlled to every possible degree, our *gedolim* recognize that many people and businesses require its use, and therefore it has not been banned. This is why we accept advertisements listing website addresses, but in no way does this imply that the *gedolim* or The Jewish Observer condone casual use of the Internet.

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On September 1, 1923, one of the most powerful earthquakes in recorded history hit the Kanto plain in Japan and laid waste to Tokyo, Yokohama and surrounding cities and villages; well over 100,000 people perished. Although it was well before the advent of modern communications, news of the disaster reached distant places. Even Radin.

When a *talmid* informed the *Chofetz Chaim* of the mass deaths in Japan, the man who had made Radin a revered word in Jewish homes around the world was visibly shaken. He immediately undertook a partial fast and insisted that the news should spur Jews to *teshuva*.

Japan could as well have been Jupiter to any early 20th century Polish Jew. It was a place that existed only on newspapers' pages and in stories. And the inverse relationship between distance (cultural and religious, as well as geographic) and empathy is a well-recognized part of human nature. Yet the *Chofetz Chaim's* dismay and example, needless to say, were genuine. Although there may not have been any Jews directly affected by the tragedy in Japan, Rabbeinu Yona, in his commentary on *Avos* (3:2), describes how "the way of the righteous" is to "... pray for the peace of the entire world and feel the suffering of others."

But there is something more – the idea that the *tzaros* that befall the nations of the world are a way by which *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* speaks to us. The *Chofetz Chaim's* conviction that the specialness of the Jew demanded a meaningful Jewish response to the catastrophe was a real-life echo of the words of the *Ran*:

And at times things happen at a large distance, in faraway islands, in order to awaken the Jewish people to repentance, so that they will fear and feel terror lest the calamity reach them. As the *Navi* (Tzeephania) says: "I have cut down the nations, their refuges have been destroyed, I have laid waste to their open

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places, where no one now passes, their cities have been besieged, and are empty of any man or dweller. I said 'Just fear Me, take heed'..."

Derashos HaRan (Hadrush Hashishi)

The Gemora, in fact, says no less. "Disaster visits the world," explains Rabbi Elazar, "only because of Yisroel." Comments *Rashi*: "To strike fear in them, so that they will repent" (*Yevamos* 63a).

TIDAL WAVES

Rabbi Avi Shafran

The impetus for recalling that event and those thoughts, of course, is the recent horrific disaster in Southeast Asia. The death toll, astounding even in the days immediately following the tsunami's devastation of the coasts of several countries, has grown more shocking still with the passage of the days. Countries have

responded with aid, and countless hearts, including Jewish ones, have ached at the images and reports of parents seeking, or mourning, children; of children seeking, or mourning, parents; of lives altered radically and terribly; of others snuffed out in seconds, in a way that was considered unimaginable.

But, at least from a truly Jewish perspective, there is a special reaction to those events we *ma'aminim* must feel and act upon. *Andarlamusia* (a vast destruction) has visited the world, and that cannot be something we simply take note of and move on. We know what we have to do. As Rabbi Matisyahu Salomon reminded us shortly after the September 11, 2001 attacks on our country, if we don't take the message from tragedies that befall others, we court, *chas veshalom*, disasters in our own midst. And as Rabbi Aharon Leib Steinman was reported to have remarked shortly after the recent devastation in Asia: "Everyone sits in his own home and feels good – 'Where I am, everything is fine; it's over there that people are dying' – ... we have to learn [from such tragedies] the extent of what sin causes, and it is up to us to analyze and learn... [so that we will] do *teshuva*."

The broader world is busying itself, commendably, with providing the survivors with desperately needed aid. As we join them, we also resolve to strive to be better Jews.

After all, *teshuva* is the deepest way of creating a better world and vanquishing evil – the source of all tragedy – at its very roots. We might well conceive of *teshuva* as the compiling of merits – those yielded by our more refined interactions with each other; by, as the *Chofetz Chaim* taught, our resolve to more carefully use the power of speech; our improvement in the performance of mitzvos and study of Torah – to the point where the seeming tiny quanta of our collective actions will combine and swell, no less than the drops of water that make up an ocean, into a tidal wave of *chaim, tova and beracha*, ushering in the day when "*U'mal'ah ha'aretz dei'a es Hashem kamayim layam mechasim* – And the world will be filled with knowledge of G-d, like waters fill the seas." ■

Reflections on Kevod Shamayim



Rabbi Aaron Leib Steinman with the Novominsker Rebbe, Rabbi Yaakov Perlow

Travels With Rabbi Aaron Leib Steinman

Rebbe said: The reason that I am sharper than my colleagues is that I saw Rabbi Meir from behind; if I had seen him from his front, I would have been even sharper, as it is written, "And your eyes shall behold your teachers" (Eruvin 13b).

The North American Torah world was recently witness to a rare and memorable experience – an extended visit by one of the *ziknei gedolei hador* (venerable sages of our time), *Maran Hagaon Harav* Aaron Leib Steinman שליט"א. His odyssey left an indelible impression on participants and its reverberations are still being felt in many sectors of the broad Torah world.

What motivated Rabbi Steinman to undertake this arduous journey? What can be done to perpetuate the ideals and legacy of the trip? As a member of the American organizing *vaad* (committee), I was privileged to witness the trip at close quarters. As such, I will endeavor to describe several incidents and vignettes

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from a virtual kaleidoscope of memories which will assist us in shedding some light on these questions.¹

MOTIVATIONS AND PRINCIPLES

The Rosh Yeshiva had been contemplating a trip to America for some time, in response to numerous requests from prominent *gedolei Yisroel*.² His agreement to undertake the difficult journey was predicated on

¹ It is not my purpose to provide a day-by-day "travelogue" of the trip. The chareidi press, domestic and international, did an excellent verbal and visual job on that score. To grasp the overall scope of the visit, it is sufficient to peruse the *yoman* (daily schedule), drawn up by one of his *talmidim*, reproduced on a following page.

² The most recent invitation, which was accepted, was made personally on 24 Av, 5764 by Rabbi Shmuel Kaminetzky, *Rosh Yeshiva*, Yeshiva of Philadelphia, and Rabbi Aaron Feldman, *Rosh Yeshiva*, Ner Israel, in the name of the Senior American *Roshei Yeshiva*. The *Roshei Yeshiva* of Beth Medrash Govoha also included a letter inviting Rabbi Steinman to Lakewood.

³ As recorded by the author on 24 Av, and as reiterated on the flight from *Eretz Yisroel* to America on 5 Cheshvan, and recorded by Yisroel Friedman, editor of *Musaf Shabbos Kodesh*, *Yated Neeman*.

very specific intentions and principles.³ He expressed his goals in a crystal clear manner. "I am traveling," he said, "for the following specific reasons: to increase the respect of *lomdei* and *melamdei Torah* (Torah scholars and teachers) in the eyes of the *klal*; to increase the love of Torah in the eyes of its learners; and above all, I am traveling to proclaim loud and clear to all who would listen that all there is in the world is the Torah. There is nothing without the Torah and everything else is meaningless."

Rabbi Steinman outlined several principles that would guide the trip:

- The hosts would be the *olam haTorah*. The *tzinoros*, the pipelines through which his goals were to be effectuated, were the yeshivos. They are the heart of *Klal Yisroel*, and the Torah, the life blood of our nation, flows through them. These bastions of learning would be the appropriate hosts for a visit designed to enhance *kevod HaTorah*.⁴

- There would be absolutely no

⁴ As a corollary, the personal *achsanya* – the hosts in "out of town" cities – would be the *Roshei Yeshiva* and *gedolei Torah* of each respective city.

fundraising for Torah support associated with the trip. The Rosh Yeshiva, as one who carries the *achrayus* (responsibility) for numerous yeshivos and *mosdos* (Torah institutions), was painfully aware of the acute financial pressures on institutions and individuals. Numerous *mosdos* – he is intimately connected with many of them – requested the opportunity to include representatives. With a heavy heart, the Rosh Yeshiva turned down all such entreaties.⁵ He understood that any dilution whatsoever of the pure *chizuk* nature of the visit would have an inimical effect on its success.⁶

- A special effort would be made to include visits to “out-of-town” locations. The Rosh Yeshiva understood that *bnei Torah* in outlying cities have less chance to see *gedolei Yisroel* and would benefit greatly from such a visit.

- Particular attention would be given to two “special interest” groups close to his heart: *mechanchim* (educators) and children.

THE ACHRAYUS OF GEDOLEI YISROEL

As the full scope and complexity of the Rosh Yeshiva’s plan became clear, I summoned my courage to ask a difficult question. Why was it the *achrayus* of the nonagenarian Rosh Yeshiva to undertake a task that would challenge someone half a century younger? The Rosh Yeshiva is “*doch nisht a yunger man*” – not a young man.

“True,” he responded, “I’m not so young. But the *Ribbono shel Olam* has granted me *arichus yamim* – long life. I have outlived all my family and almost all of my pre-war *chaveirim*. There must be a reason. I can no longer learn or teach

Torah as well as I used to.⁷ The only *achrayus* left for me to fulfill is to be *mehazeik Torah* and *avoda* (encourage Torah study and serving *Hashem*). If America is the place that needs this, that’s where I must go.

“Perhaps others are able to do this,

incumbent on one who can contribute to the *ruchniyus* (spiritual well-being) of another? Can I be exempt?

The purpose of the trip may have been a puzzle to many at the outset, but to the Rosh Yeshiva it was clear – sanctifying *Sheim Hashem*.

It is well known that in the secular world, close proximity to leaders inevitably results in an awareness of their all-too-human failings and weaknesses, as their public persona is rarely matched by their private behavior. Not so *gedolei Yisroel*.

but this does not release me from my obligation. This I learn from *Chazal*’s insight into one of the most tragic episodes in Jewish History.” He opened a *Midrash Rabba*.⁸ “Seventy thousand people were killed at Givas Binyamin as a result of the incident of *Pilegesh Begiva*. [See *Shoftim* ch. 19-20 for the account of the maid woman who was violated in Givas Binyamin, resulting in civil war between the tribe of Binyamin and the other eleven tribes. *Chazal* explain the underlying cause:] At that time there were many *gedolei Torah* and great leaders including members of the *Sanhedrin*. Their obligation was to gird their loins and travel from one city to the next, and teach *Klal Yisroel derech erez* – proper conduct.⁹ Thus would the Name of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* be sanctified. [They did not do so.] Each retreated to his vineyard, his own field, and said ‘*shalom alai nafshi* (leave me alone, I’m fine),’ shirking the burden of the *klal*.” With a sigh, he closed the *Midrash* and concluded, “You see the *achrayus* that is

TEARS FOR KEVOD SHAMAYIM

Consistent with the aims of the visit, the first stop was the *Ir HaTorah* (America’s prime Torah city): Lakewood. There, thousands of dedicated scholars, *Torasam umanusam*, toil day and night, to ensure the *kiyum* (perpetuity) of *Klal Yisroel*. Rabbi Steinman was received by the entire community – men, women and children. Surveying the assembled crowd of thousands,¹⁰ he noted with seeming awe that only a few decades after the total devastation of European Torah Jewry, a dynamic revival had taken place, both in *Eretz Yisroel* and America. In this land, where even the stones were once *treif*, vibrant Torah communities are flourishing. With this, the Rosh Yeshiva wept. The tears were not tears of sorrow for the memory of destroyed communities, nor even tears of joy for their rebirth. Rabbi Steinman wept simply because he was overcome with emotion at the incredible display of *kevod Shamayim* unfolding in front of him. As a person whose existence is predicated on glorifying *Sheim Hashem*, the sight of multitudes turning out solely for that purpose was overwhelming. And so he wept.

Indeed, *kevod Shamayim* was visible

¹⁰ By one reliable estimate, the Rosh Yeshiva was seen, in aggregate, by more than 15,000 people in Lakewood.

⁵ At one point, in response to the desperate pleas of one institution, he reluctantly agreed to attend a fundraiser. He sent a message to the American *Vaad* saying, “What can I do? *Ich bin a veicher mentch*, I am a soft person. I’m in great distress. You do what you think is right.” Hearing of the Rosh Yeshiva’s discomfort, the institution withdrew its request.

⁶ He instructed the *Vaad* that all meetings with *baalei battim* should be conducted on an individual basis only, so as not to leave any impression of fundraising. Any such impression, in his mind, would be a vestige of *geneivas daas*.

⁷ This from someone whose learning *sedarim* and public *shiurim* total close to eighteen hours a day, restricted only by his need to deal with *tzarachei tzibbur* (communal needs). A *yoman* (diary) of a typical day in Rabbi Steinman’s life was recently published in the Israeli press and underscored his complete immersion in Torah.

⁸ *Eliyahu Rabba* 11.

⁹ The *Midrash* elaborates, “One day in Lachish, one day in Beis Eil, one day in Chevron and one day in Yerushalayim.”

totally at one with the Torah.”

This underscores a crucial point. Historically, *gedolei Yisroel* are neither elected nor appointed. *Klal Yisroel*, in each generation, with inherent *siyata diShmaya*, designates its leaders by acclamation. They are inevitably Torah giants and individuals of exceptional personal piety and probity. But every great leader from *Moshe Rabbeinu* on has excelled in one additional crucial attribute: the ability to bear on their shoulders the burden of the daily trials and tribulations of *Am Yisroel* collectively and individually, with total dedication. The Torah world in *Eretz Hakodesh* has long known that in Rabbi Steinman they have a leader who personally cares and worries about their health, *parnassa* (livelihood), *shalom bayis* (domestic harmony), and the *chinuch* (education) of their children. They know that he is someone who understands the ceaseless struggle of *bnei Torah* and actively works with great precision to improve their daily life.¹⁷ During this trip, the American Torah world was privileged to see brief glimpses of this greatness of stature.

THE PLEA OF A CHILD

In Lakewood, as in every venue visited, literally thousands of people struggled mightily to receive some personal time with Rabbi Steinman. As there are only twenty-four hours in a day, only a small fraction would merit an audience. (The Rosh Yeshiva's explicit instructions were that preference be given to sick people and other such individuals in need.)

It was late on the first night of the trip, and the Rosh Yeshiva had not rested for close to twenty hours. Scores of people were still gathered outside Rabbi Malkiel Kotler's house, hoping for just a glimpse. As the clock ticked towards midnight,

¹⁶ Onlookers wondered why the Rosh Yeshiva never looked up from the lectern while addressing large crowds. Many assumed he was reading his *derashos*. In fact, because of modesty, he habitually looks down while speaking.

¹⁷ For a characteristically insightful explication of this theme, see an article by Yonoson Rosenblum in *Mishpacha Magazine* (Nov. 14, '04).

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one by one, they went home. All except for one unknown little boy, about ten, who refused to leave, and stood as if chained to the metal barrier. Almost mutely, with tears in his eyes, he begged for entry. Rabbi Steinman was informed of his persistence, and despite his overwhelming fatigue, instructed that he be brought in. "Rebbi," said the child, "I just started keeping mitzvos and learning Torah. But I'm all by myself. My parents aren't religious. Please give me a *beracha* that my parents should also come back to *Yiddishkeit*, so I won't be alone anymore."

With tears in his eyes, the *gadol* blessed the young boy, and commented, "*Rabboisai*, now you see why I had to come. Just for this great *neshama* alone, the entire trip was worthwhile."¹⁸

CARRYING THE BURDEN OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Monday, the tenth of Cheshvan, was perhaps the most grueling day of the trip. It began in the darkness in Baltimore with a pre-*vasikin seder* (predawn study session) in *maseches Menachos* and ended twenty hours later in Manhattan. In between, the Rosh Yeshiva visited ten institutions in four cities and delivered a *shiur* or *shmuess* in each. Ten *derashos* in one day!¹⁹ Because of the exhausting sched-



ule, which included a plane trip, the Rosh Yeshiva, who eats practically nothing, and nothing at all in public, had not rested or eaten in more than eighteen hours.²⁰ He arrived at his host's home after ten o'clock, only to be confronted with an urgent message from Rabbi Elyashiv pertaining to an important *klal* matter. This

required his immediate attention and took a half-hour to resolve. He was then urged to eat, but demurred, saying he first had to attend to something important.

After a further half-hour, a peek into his room revealed the reason for the delay. Rabbi Steinman was laboriously opening and reading every one of the hundreds of *petakim* (*kvitlach* – notes of petition) that had accumulated. People thrust these scraps of paper at any member of his entourage, and we were thus, unfortunately, witness to the full panoply of the afflictions confronting *Klal Yisroel*, כָּלל יִשְׂרָאֵל. Included were heartfelt requests for *shidduchim* for older singles, for a livelihood from destitute *bnei Torah*, and for offspring from childless couples. Above all were the desperate pleas for *refua sheleima* from countless sick people, including scores who had identified the desperate nature of their malady: lymphoma, carcinoma, degenerative nerve disease. This litany of horrific afflictions was so depressing as to be almost unbearable. Yet, Reb Aharon Leib understood that for many sick people, their last hope was to follow the advice of *Chazal* and "go to a *chacham* and beseech him for *rachamim*."²¹ And so, before drinking his half a cup of tepid water, he laboriously pronounced the name of each petitioner and added a *tefilla*. This was, after all, the very essence of the trip. This process took close to an hour... the face of *mesiras nefesh*.²²

¹⁸ As related to the author on Nov. 10, 2004, by Rabbi Aaron Kotler, who was present

¹⁹ "One day in Beis Eil, one day in Lachish..." *Eliyahu Rabba*, *ibid*. See the *yoman* of the trip reproduced in these pages, which totals more than sixty *derashos*.

²⁰ The nature of his meager daily food intake is well-known in *Eretz Yisroel*: several spoons of gruel, one boiled carrot or boiled potato. When urged to drink water on a plane because of the risk of dehydration, he declined, saying he was not thirsty. He simply saw no reason to derive pleasure from *Olam Hazei*, and thereby create a *sefeik beracha rishona*. Several *Admorim*, who traditionally offer visitors some fruit, were visibly surprised to see the Rosh Yeshiva, after great prodding, agree to eat one-half a grape! Any more would constitute a question of a *beracha achrona*, not to mention unnecessary partaking of pleasure in *Olam Hazei*.

²¹ *Babba Basra* 116a

²² As witnessed by the author

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**"FOR MECHANCHIM
I'M NOT MEVATER*!"**

The following day, 11 Cheshvan, included several intensive sessions, including six *sichos* and *shiurim* in yeshivos, and meetings with *rabbanim* and the *Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah* of Agudath Israel. Each such event was very draining, as it involved, in addition to the actual lecture, the strain of entering and exiting vehicles and institutions amid a huge crush of people.

That night, the Rosh Yeshiva collapsed. (The fact that he did not hurt himself in the fall, as so many elderly people do, was miraculous.) *Klal Yisroel* held its collective breath and fervently recited *Tehillim* as Rabbi Steinman was rushed to Maimonides Hospital. A staff of senior medical personnel, headed by Dr. Josh Kerstein, Chief of Cardiology, conducted a battery of tests and concluded that, understandably enough, the Rosh Yeshiva was suffering from exhaustion. Unstated, but obvious, was their recommendation that the balance of the trip be cancelled, or, at the very least, sharply curtailed. Indeed any "prudent" person would have complied and returned home. The next morning, Rabbi Steinman, in fact, was strongly urged to do so by his *talmidim* and many *gedolei Yisroel*. The Rosh Yeshiva refused. "I am not sick," he said. "On the contrary, we are obviously having *hatzlacha* (success). We must have annoyed the *Sitra Achra* (evil force), who unleashed an *ayin hara*. We are not going to let him win. As long as the *Ribbono shel Olam* allows me, I will continue what I came to do."

A major gathering of New York area *mechanchim* had been scheduled for that afternoon in Mesivta Torah Vodaas. It was universally assumed, not the least by his entourage, that the program would be cancelled, or at least postponed. Nevertheless, with great *bitachon*, hoping against hope, the *mechanchim* gathered.

After being released from the hospital, the Rosh Yeshiva rested for about an hour. Upon arising, it was evident that

he was still pale and weak. He *davened Mincha*, and without any discussion, began marching out the door. The assembled looked on in astonishment. Several scrambled to phone the doctors while others tried to beseech him to return to rest. He refused, saying, "*Die mechanchim varten oif mir. Far zey, bin ich nisht mevater, beshum oifen.*" (The teachers of our children are waiting for me and, for their sake, I will not give up this opportunity under any circumstances.)" He purposefully strode to the waiting car, whose driver, unaware of the

tumult, simply drove off, leaving behind a group of very nervous *talmidim*.

At the gathering, Rabbi Steinman faced a packed crowd of well over 500 *mechanchim* and spoke and answered questions for an hour with great insight and passion. All as if it were just another routine day!... The face of *mesiras nefesh*.

This incident highlights another important point. At every stop, the Rosh Yeshiva insisted that priority be given in his schedule to two specific groups – *mechanchim* and children –... *tinokos*

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shel beis rabban. If the world exists in the merit of Torah, these two special groups, *rabbanim vetalmideihem*, are the vital links in its transmission. Over and over he stressed that the *kiyum* of Klal Yisroel is only in the *zechus* of the *mesiras nefesh* of our *mechanchim* and the pure *neshamos*, clean of sin, of our chil-

stood that it was being offered by someone who personified these *middos*: An individual for whom “*havlei Olam Hazeh*,” the follies of this world, have no meaning – one whose *nefesh* is at one with the Torah.

As a result, they were inspired to strive to rise to his challenge.

“If you are our leader,” a *bachur* wrote, “then we are a very special nation. We are truly *bnei melachim* (royal princes), and it’s our obligation to live up to the responsibilities of this exalted position.”

dren. At each gathering of *mechanchim*, heartfelt words of *chizuk* were offered. If *mechanchim* struggle to make ends meet, this is only so that they can acquire the requisite merits to be successful in their holy work. He stated repeatedly what he had heard personally from the *Chazon Ish*: a *mechanech*’s *hatzlacha* (success) is directly proportionate to – and in fact, a result of – his struggles. The harder the *nisayon* (challenge), the more *hatzlacha*. While undoubtedly a difficult concept to accept, the audience under-

... AND THE CHILDREN

So, too, was the message he issued to his youngest charges one of Suppermost priority to him. Thousand upon thousands of children, dressed in *Shabbos* clothes, adorned with crowns, waving flags, were *zocheh* to a once-in-a-lifetime experience. “You were the *areivim*, the guarantors at Sinai,” he proclaimed, “and so the world stands in your *zechus*. You may not understand this now, but one day you will!”

“One day,” explained Rabbi Shmuel

Dishon to five thousand children, “you will be able to say you saw a great *tzaddik*, as some of your grandparents saw the *Chofetz Chaim*. Who knows how many future *gedolei Yisroel* are present today and for how many of them the path to greatness will be aided by the *beracha* of a *gadol*!”

Indeed, many onlookers remarked that the only time that the Rosh Yeshiva seemed fully at ease was in the presence of his beloved children. The older ones recognized the rare opportunity they had been afforded. The *bachurim* of the Mesivta of Boston were *zocheh* to spend *Shabbos* with Rabbi Steinman. One of them sent the Rosh Yeshiva a letter thanking him. “If you are our leader,” he wrote, “then we are a very special nation. We are a nation of *kedusha* and a nation of greatness. We are truly *bnei melachim* (royal princes), and it’s our obligation to live up to the responsibilities of this exalted position.”

Even the youngest ones understood and responded. A father in the midst of a huge crowd in Lakewood watched in surprise as his four-year-old son began flinging his small toy car in the direction of Rabbi Steinman. “What are you doing?” he asked.

“I want to give the big *tzaddik* my favorite thing,” responded the little boy.²³

KAVOD FOR TALMIDEI CHACHAMIM

As a result of the Rosh Yeshiva’s hospital stay, he was forced to cancel several events, including a visit to Rabbi Yitzchak Feigelstock, Rosh Yeshiva of Mesivta of Long Beach. Most people would have regarded this as an unavoidable consequence of an unfortunate event. Not so the Rosh Yeshiva. He queried his *talmidim* numerous times as to the possibility of rearranging the schedule to include a visit to Long Beach and the other omitted yeshivos. At one point, he agreed to travel for six hours just to fulfill *kevod talmid chacham*! Ultimately, the schedule was

²³Related to the author’s daughter by the father of the child

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rearranged to include *tefillas vasikin* in Long Beach, an event that would be long remembered by all participants.

SHALOM BAYIS

As a manifestation of the Rosh Yeshiva's emphasis on *bein adam le'chaveiro* (interpersonal dealings), he frequently stressed the need to overlook petty annoyances by raising oneself to higher levels. In several sessions with *Rabbanim*, it became clear that *shalom bayis* problems were taking an inordinate toll on their time and energy. "Please," he begged, "tell couples to be *mevater*, to subjugate their egos. Ninety-nine percent of *shalom bayis* issues are questions of false *kavod*, petty disputes over ultimately meaningless issues. Tell them to follow *Chazal's* admonitions that one should honor one's spouse more than oneself. Ultimately, both partners want exactly the same things in those issues that are truly meaningful – the spiritual values of their family and children. Nothing else really matters."

Thus, when Rabbi Steinman arrived home in Bnei Brak from the exhausting journey, the first thing he did before turning to weighty *klal* issues was endeavor to improve *shalom bayis*. He correctly surmised that the extended absence of his accompanying *talmidim*, some of whom had many small children at home, was bound to have caused familial strains as the full burden had fallen on the *nashim tzidkanios* (righteous wives). He immediately drafted a letter (reproduced below) which explained to the women the great *zechus* their *mesiras nefesh* had engendered for them and their families, and the merit that awaited them for their sacrifices.

THE POWER OF KIDDUSH HASHEM

So, what indeed was accomplished during the fortnight? First and foremost, and certainly most visibly, the trip engendered enormous manifestations of *kiddush Hashem*. The sights of massive crowds of every age and background, all across North America, that

came to render *kevod haTorah* were truly breathtaking. Many people went to inordinate lengths to participate, including long rides of many hours.²⁴ These individuals understood viscerally that their lives and souls would be uplifted by their efforts. With this, they adhered to the words of *Rabbeinu Yona* regarding the crucial necessity to honor *talmidei chachamim*: "Thereby many 'sleeping hearts' will awaken when they see the splendor of *kevod haTorah* and recognize its grandeur. This will cause a great thirst for Torah and the desire to serve *Hashem* wholeheartedly."²⁵

On a more sublime level – that of *kivshei d'Rachamana*, the pathways of the *Ribbono shel Olam* – the impact is, of course, inscrutable to us. It is, however, clear that we live in an age of rampant *chillul Sheim Shamayim*. Standards of total moral degradation, of the type most reviled by *Chazal*, are held out as the norm. So-called Jewish leaders, both in *Eretz Hakodesh* and the *Gola*, battle to uphold these decadent standards, causing massive *chillul Hashem* and its attendant *gezeiros* (unfavorable Heavenly decrees). *Kadmonim* (early authorities) tell us that there is only one *tikkun* for these awful sins – being *moseir nefesh* for *kiddush Hashem*.²⁶ These selfless acts can have very positive effects in ways never apparent to us. For example, the cruel murder of Rabbi Chananya Ben Teradyon was one of the darkest incidents in our history. Yet, *Chazal* tell us that his *mesiras nefesh* was the direct cause for the ultimate fall of the evil Roman Empire.²⁷ Who among us can know how many terrible *gezeiros* were forestalled, or at least weakened, by

the Rosh Yeshiva's *mesiras nefesh* and the concomitant manifestations of *kevod Shamayim*. We can't know, but we can be *mispallel* and hope.

Moreover, by concentrating on *mekomos haTorah* as his base, Rabbi Steinman did wonders for our own understanding of the massive sweep and reach of the Torah World in America. Most of us are associated and familiar with only a small fraction of the brilliant infrastructure built by American *gedolei Yisroel*. The yeshiva visits, which displayed this unique world in its full glory, were viewed by many as a "coming of age" of the American Torah world. To hear, see and read about the multitudes, the *revavos*, (tens of thousands), of *bnei Torah* who, with great fervor, were *mekabeil* a *Sar HaTorah* was an eye opener and great source of pride for many.²⁸

The impact on *baalei battim* and *machzikei Torah* (supporters of Torah) was equally profound. One incident says it all. The *talmidim* of Yeshivas Telz-Riverdale listened raptly to Rabbi

²⁸ Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky was asked about the propriety of scheduling a *kabbalas panim* (reception) during times scheduled for learning. He replied with his characteristic forcefulness and brevity, "Kevod HaTorah takes precedence" (*Megilla* 3b); and "Bitulo zo yesodo (The lapse is its very foundation)" (*Menachos* 99b), as related to the author by the petitioner.

²⁴ I particularly remember *Tefillas Shacharis Kevasikin* on *Shabbos* in Monsey, when more than five hundred people trudged through a predawn rain storm just to *daven* with the Rosh Yeshiva. Many confided to me that they had walked in that rain for well over an hour!

²⁵ *Shaarei Teshuva*, *Shaar* III, 147. This source was cited by Rabbi Aryeh Malkiel Kotler at the first event in Lakewood, and was subsequently underscored by many prominent *gedolei Torah*.

²⁶ *Rabbeinu Yona* in *Shaarei Teshuva*, *Shaar* I, 47

²⁷ As explained in *Tosafos*, *Avoda Zara* 2b. This point was emphasized by Rabbi Asher Weiss in Chicago

I wish someone would have told me...

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Steinman's *shmuess*. After the speech, a local *baal habayis* approached the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Avrohom Ausband, and said, "I have never seen anything like this in my life. When I looked in the eyes of the *bachurim*, drinking in every word with awe, I realized with finality that the Torah is the ultimate and only truth, and everything else in the world is *shekker* (false)."²⁹

THE LEGACY

Ultimately, the value of the trip can only be perceived by charting any lasting effects. If achievement is determined by measuring the difference between what a man finds and what he leaves, we know what

²⁹ As related to the author *Erev Shabbos*, by Rabbi Ausband



Rabbi Steinman with Rabbi Aharon Schechter, Rosh Hayeshiva Mesifra R' Chaim Berlin

the Rosh Yeshiva found. What he left is dependent on us. Any lasting impact can only be measured by the degree we inculcate into our lives, in a concrete and tangible fashion, the lessons we learned. Thus, the *talmidim* of a world famous yeshiva approached Rabbi Steinman and told him that they had been *mekabeil* (assumed) an extra hour of learning a day as a result of his inspiration. The *talmidim* of the Mesivta of Boston wrote, "Our *hakaras hatov* (gratitude) to you will be to learn with added *cheishek* (love of learning), and to strive for the great heights you have shown us." One distinguished *Rav* resolved to redouble his efforts in improving his congregants' *shalom bayis*. The women of a certain community formed a "*mesir-*

as nefesh group" to undertake those *chessed* projects which heretofore had been considered too hard or time-consuming. "If Rabbi Steinman can do it," they reasoned, "so can we." The list can and should go on and on, and is simply dependent on our will to emulate, to the best of our ability, the role model we were privileged to see.

When asked by many when he would return, the Rosh Yeshiva would smile and say, "Maybe in a few years." But he confided to us, "When *Moshiach* comes, and the *batei midrash* of America are transported to *Eretz Yisroel*, I will be among those who greet them because I saw so much Torah in the *Gola*."

May we be *zocheh* to that day, speedily. ■

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HOW MENTORING CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Parenting has never been easy. Today, parents must combat society's pervasive egocentric attitude and ever-changing forms of destructive entertainment, making child raising an almost superhuman feat. Many of the influences to which children are inevitably exposed are in opposition to Torah values, sparking confusing questions in the mind of an innocent child. The negative influences and their effect on many children have been discussed in these pages, as well as different programs and efforts that have been initiated to deal with them (see issues on "Children on the Fringe... and Beyond," Nov. '99 and Mar. '00).

Many of our children have natural mentors with whom these conflicts can be discussed – a parent, a rebbi, or another adult to whom they feel close, who can guide them in the proper direction. Some children, however, are not able to discuss their questions with a parent, and perhaps they are fearful to talk to their teach-

ers. Children who do not have natural mentors in whom they can confide desperately crave a listening ear, a friend who will support them. For these children, a mentor can be crucial.¹

Dina

By the time Dina was thirteen, her mother was acutely aware of the rumors circulating about her daughter. One neighbor reported that she was seen with a boy, and another claimed that she had been skipping school. Teachers, too, were reporting that Dina's behavior was unacceptable, and that she refused to comply with the school's dress code. Whenever Mrs. S. tried to talk to her daughter, she found her unresponsive. Dina spent much of her time at home in her room.

Mrs. S. saw the invisible wall that Dina had erected around herself. Figuring that an outsider to whom she could relate might be able to get through to her daughter, Mrs. S. considered getting a teen mentor for Dina.

She called Project Y.E.S., begging for help. She understood that her daughter, although cold and indifferent, was in obvious pain, feeling ostracized by the community and different from her family.

Mrs. S. was surprised and grateful when Dina readily accepted the program and said, "Ima, thank you for caring about me." A renewed relationship had begun for Dina and her mother.

Being different is never easy. Adolescence is a time in which teens begin to develop their own sense of self, independent of their parents and community. When a teen is rejected by parents or community for failing to conform to societal standards, he or she feels alone and misunderstood. Such a child, when offered a mentor by her parents, may be comforted by the knowledge that her parents see her pain, believe in her and want to help her. During this difficult period, teens need to feel valued and connected despite inappropriate behavior. Oftentimes, a non-judgmental friend can break through the seemingly impenetrable surface and provide much needed support and acceptance.

Yocheved Weiss, Clinical Mentoring Assistant at Project Y.E.S., has a B.A. degree in psychology from Stern College and is currently enrolled as a doctoral student of psychology at Pace University.

¹ While I am writing from the perspective of my experiences as a Clinical Mentoring Assistant at Agudath Israel's Project Y.E.S., my observations and comments relate to mentoring in general.

When to Begin

Some programs working with at-risk teenagers and their families assist in times of emergency, while mentoring programs usually target the period before the crisis. Mentoring by trained laymen is not for children who have fallen prey to drugs and promiscuity. The children in these programs are typically in yeshiva and still living at home, coming from backgrounds all across the religious spectrum, and facing a plethora of different problems.

By providing a positive role model and friend for an adolescent or preadolescent who is beginning to show signs of rebellion, we are often able to catch the problem before it even happens, and to prevent the teen from becoming "at risk." Although the designs of various mentoring programs differ, the goal is the same: the mentor and child slowly build a relationship by having a good time together. In fact, the word "mentor" originates from Homer's work, *The Odyssey*, in which a servant named "Mentor" was given the task of guiding and directing a child in the absence of his father. Mentors are often volunteers, many of them motivated by memories of their own adolescence. Potential mentors should be trained by professionals, and be thoroughly supervised after they begin meeting with their teens. The mentors are not therapists or counselors; they are typical people, with typical jobs, and typical families. As one grateful mother explained, they are "real people who do nice things. That's what makes them special."

Dovid & Yonason

Dovid had been meeting with his mentor, Yoni, every Wednesday night for over a year. One Wednesday evening in February, as Dovid and Yoni were walking down Ocean Parkway, Yoni got a call on his cell phone. From Yoni's end of the conversation, Dovid understood that his mentor was being offered two free, very expensive tickets to a basketball game that night. Yoni, however,

would have to leave that very minute. When Yoni thanked the caller profusely and declined the offer, saying that he was with a friend, Dovid (who understood basketball better than his mentor) looked up in amazement. He told him that he should take advantage of the opportunity, and that they could get together again on a different night.

Yoni hung up the cell phone, looked Dovid in the eye, and said, "Tonight I am with you. My time with you is special, and I don't want

tration, in which the child receives uninterrupted focus and interest. Mentoring programs provide children with caring adults who are able to provide them with exclusive attention.

In order to provide these teens with consistency, many mentoring programs request that meetings should be at the same time each week, for the same amount of time. The stability and dependability of the mentoring rela-

The Talmud in *Sanhedrin* teaches that a person who saves the life of another, in effect, saves an entire world. ... The effects of mentoring are immeasurable. A teen mentor truly builds a world.

to be anywhere else but here."

Imagine Dovid's surprise and intense satisfaction! Yoni, whom he respected and admired, thought that he was so important and special that he was worth turning down free tickets! The message that Yoni conveyed to Dovid – of his worth as a person – in just one moment was not a lifesaver. It was a life giver!

Hillel Hazakein is quoted as saying, "Im ani kan hakol kan." While typically explained according to its literal meaning, "If I am here, everything is here," Rabbi Nissan Alpert זצ"ל, interpreted it differently. Hillel said that the situation in which he was involved held his undivided attention. If I am here, all of me – my complete focus and emotional attention – is here as well. This lesson, that of the importance of attending completely to the situation at hand, is vital in the parenting and mentoring of a child. Children need focused, undivided attention in order to grow and thrive. Attention given while doing other tasks, or given to more than one child at a time, does not have the same effect as individualized concen-

tionship is a powerful force in the child's life, allowing him to trust his mentor and boosting his own self-esteem.

Shlomo

When Yehuda started meeting with his mentee, Shlomo, he never expected what the future would bring. They began meeting when Shlomo was sixteen, and was having difficulty getting along with his parents and friends. Unexpectedly, Yehuda and Shlomo became fast friends, and often discussed Shlomo's turbulent relationship with his father, who was critical and overbearing. By using their relationship as a model, Yehuda helped Shlomo learn social skills and make friends with the boys in his class. Today, Shlomo is married, has a baby, and holds a steady job. Yehuda and Shlomo talk often, with Shlomo still turning to Yehuda for guidance and support.

When a mentor successfully helps a child navigate the turbulent time of adolescence and sees him grow into a competent, stable adult, the purpose of the mentoring relationship is realized. The friendship that a mentor provides when a teenager is 16

years old is about more than pizza and baseball. It is about teaching a child to form relationships, to trust, to give. It is about helping a child develop vital skills for an enriched and happy life.

Shnei Olamos, *Two Worlds*

The Talmud in *Sanhedrin* teaches that a person who saves the life of another, in effect, saves an entire world. Most every mentored child eventually becomes a husband or a wife, a father or a mother. A mentor who provides friend-

ship and direction to a teenager not only affects that child, but also plants seeds for the child's future relationship with his spouse and their children. The effects of mentoring are immeasurable. A teen mentor truly builds a world.

Another "world" is built – the mentor's world. Mentors tell us that being a teen mentor has significantly improved the way they parent their own children, and their relationships in general. While initially expecting that they will be the "helpers," mentors find that they are helped as well.

Rena Levy, a teen mentor, observes, "When I began mentoring, I was so excited – dreaming of all the changes I would see in the teen and what an impact I would be able to have on someone. Little did I know then that being a mentor would help me, too!"

WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF THE FAMILY?

A teen mentor is usually not enough. Parents of rebellious children almost always feel that

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they can no longer direct their child's future. This is just not true. Parents are the most influential force in a child's life when they are willing to relearn how to regain that role under prevailing circumstances. Empowering parents to again form communicative relationships with their children strengthens the whole family. An effective Parent Mentoring Program should match parents with a trained, supervised volunteer who meets with the parents for a series of hour-long weekly sessions, and discusses with them new parenting skills and issues of communication directly related to their situation. Like teen mentors, parent mentors report the remarkable changes that the experience has had on their lives.

Yechiel Wagner, a Parent Mentor, notes, "A number of times parents have told me I am a 'Shaliach from Shamayim,' to which I answer, 'I am just a shaliach from Boro Park.'... Nobody has the answers to all problems; however, everyone can offer a little time to improve someone's home. This could be you. By joining as a volun-

teer, you will give a smile and hope for a family who otherwise, without your help, would not be able to."

Chaya Ruchie Mayer, a Parent Mentor, writes,

"The call came in... and boy, was I scared. I felt like I was masquerading and that I'd definitely be found out... I listened, and followed the criteria that I was taught. Was I ever surprised when it worked!

"I learned a great deal from this experience, and the crux of it is this: Parents really try their best, but circumstance and ignorance often intervene to muddy the waters of common sense. An unrelated 'professional volunteer' – like you or me – can get these parents to step back and take an objective view of what's really happening between them and the children they love.... The feeling of satisfaction for helping them is indescribable."

EDITORIAL POSTSCRIPT WHAT YOU CAN DO

Over the past five years, Project Y.E.S

has provided over 300 teen mentors and 160 parent mentors. While there are almost 100 teens currently being mentored every week in the New York area, there are also over 60 boys and girls who are waiting to be matched. Male mentors are particularly hard to recruit. Most potential volunteers fear that they don't have all the answers, and are not qualified to help. But this is incorrect! Most adults already have the skills necessary to be a mentor: the ability to listen, smile, and be a friend. By donating just one hour a week, using the skills that you already possess, you can make a tremendous difference in the life of a child. As Rabbi Yakov Horowitz, Founding Director of Project Y.E.S. says, "Be part of the solution." Experience the feeling of saving a world.

Project Y.E.S is located at 1404 Coney Island Avenue, in Brooklyn, NY. For further information or to volunteer, please contact us at 718-758-3131 or projectyes@pyes.org. ■

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A FRUITFUL ENCOUNTER

There's a long line in the grocery store. So what else is new? Ah, but today is busier than usual. It's the Fifteenth of Shevat, the day that the soil of the Holy Land is rejuvenated for bearing its new fruit. It's a day of happiness for all Jews – to whom the land was bequeathed – who adore and yearn for their beloved home. Everyone celebrates this day with an appealing array of fruits. So, of course, the number of shoppers is greater than usual; I'm not the only one preparing my fruit party.

Pomegranates, figs, dates, and grapes ... my basket is slowly filling up. The seven fruits that *Eretz Yisroel* is particularly blessed with are the main items on the day's agenda. The party, though, usually expands into a wider variety of assorted fruits including some unusual and exotic ones that I tend to overlook all year round. Like the apple-pear, the star fruit, the guava and the sabra.

The colorful, luscious pile evokes memories of *Eretz Yisroel*.

Perhaps it's because I have a direct flow

Mrs. Horowitz lives in Brooklyn. This is her first appearance in these pages.

of Israeli blood running through my veins. Therefore, I had many occasions, while I was growing up, to hear loving talk about *Eretz Yisroel* from close relatives. So the fruits, especially those belonging to the category of the *shiv'as haminim*, do remind me of *Eretz Yisroel* in a most meaningful way.

DRIFTING BACK TO JERUSALEM

Some twenty five people are ahead of me in line, and my mind drifts away instinctively. I recall my visit to my grandmother's apartment in *Eretz Yisroel* but a few years ago. The tiny apartment on *Rechov Adani* in the Beis Yisroel section of Jerusalem is not much more than a piece of history by now, but how precious a remnant of an age gone by. It is a strikingly narrow, bungalow-like, two bedroom apartment. It is being used today – but not by a family. It serves now as a dormitory room for Mirrer Yeshiva boys.

When we knocked on the door on *Chol Hamo'eid Sukkos* several years ago, a jolly group of *bachurim* fell out and greeted us warmly. They were most agreeable about allowing us to have a look

at our grandparents' apartment, although they seemed a bit uneasy about all the stuff they had lying around. In truth, we were so stunned by the looks of the apartment itself that their paraphernalia was, really, hardly of any interest to us. Two small bedrooms, a small dinette area, and a small semblance of a cooking area and sink. That was all the apartment consisted of. We were horrified, to say the least.

How did our grandparents raise seven lively boys in this little nook? One of the bedrooms, my father explained, was graciously given to the widowed grandmother who was living with them! And the tiny bathroom we were seeing was a luxury that had been added in the latter years of their *Yerushalmi* childhood. Prior to that, they used an outhouse that was located out the back door and down a flight of steps!

But you should see the glow on my grandmother's face whenever she reminisces about *Yerushalayim*. What pride she exhibits when she mentions the names of her grandchildren who returned to settle there. You would think she had a mansion there. But it was not the living conditions that made the dif-

ference to her. It was the soil, the sky, and the atmosphere of *Eretz Yisroel*. It was living within reach of the *Kosel* and other holy places. It was living among saintly, righteous people whose agenda was purely of a spiritual nature, far removed from material pursuits.

She often comments, in a surge of emotion, how the stones of *Eretz Yisroel* are diamonds. "But," she adds with a nostalgic sigh, "you need the right kind of eyes to be able to see those diamonds."

WHEN IT ALL BEGAN

She often relates, with stars in her eyes, the fascinating tale of how her grandparents had come to settle there. Their first home was Poland, where they had hardly entertained any notion of moving away. That was, until her *zeide* had an incredible dream.

A distinguished, white bearded old man appeared to him and told him to pack his bags and travel to *Eretz Yisroel*. *Zeide* politely explained the hardships entailed in the journey and his frank reluctance to undertake the endeavor. But the old man continued pressing the issue and even demanded from *Zeide* a *tekias kaf*, a handshake, which would be an expression of commitment. *Zeide* shook the old man's hand and then awoke, shuddering.

Zeide, of course, went to discuss the occurrence with his Rebbe. He wanted to know if there was any real significance to the dream he had. The Rebbe nodded and gently advised *Zeide* to make the necessary arrangements and indeed resettle his family in *Eretz Yisroel*.

But when *Zeide* came home and discussed it with his wife, she was shocked and naturally overwhelmed by the idea. She was in no way ready for a metamorphosis of this kind. *Zeide* did not discuss the issue further, and subsequently, and perhaps inevitably, as a result of grandmother's strong hesitation, the matter was completely forgotten for the next ten years. But, then *Zeide* had another dream.

The distinguished old man appeared in his dream again. He reminded *Zeide* about his *tekias kaf*. "You must set out

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for the Holy Land,” the old man urged. And again, *Zeide* awoke, trembling.

Zeide had an additional surprise at that time when his son informed him that he, too, had dreamed that an old man came to inform him that *Tatteh* has agreed to move to *Eretz Yisroel*!

Zeide brought up the subject with the *Babbe* once again. This time, grandmother said that she would join *Zeide* on his trip to the Rebbe. She wanted to express to the Rebbe her reservations about uprooting the family and the various complications she foresaw.

Still, the Rebbe nodded decisively. His eyes expressed kindness and understanding, but a superior, far-reaching vision as well. He gently advised them to go, in spite of the hardships.

But grandmother was not yet ready. And then, grandmother became seriously, dangerously ill. *Zeide* sent the Rebbe a *kvittel*, a note that described grandmother's illness, and requested that the Rebbe pray for her recovery. The Rebbe sent a messenger to inform her that if she would firmly resolve to make the journey to *Eretz Yisroel*, she would recover immediately.

When the Rebbe's messenger arrived, grandmother was hardly able to speak in her weakened condition. But she nodded deliberately and enthusiastically in response to the messenger's question about *Eretz Yisroel*. Slowly but surely she recovered and, finally – as the Master of the Universe had preordained – *Zeide*, *Babbe*, and their family of small children had indeed set out upon an unforgettable voyage.

The trip, in spite of its extraordinary hardships, was a successful one. They arrived safely at the border of the Holy Land. However, the Turkish officials, who controlled Palestine at the time, refused to permit the family to enter. This was a most unexpected greeting and a major disappointment for the weary group at the site of their long awaited destination. Some of the little ones began to cry and the adults, of course, felt helpless.

Suddenly, a kind gentleman appeared, discussed and investigated the relevant issues, and led them through a different entrance. Weary and happy, the privileged group of pioneers set their tired feet upon the beloved, holy soil that is *Eretz Yisroel's*.

TAKING THE INSPIRATION HOME

“Next!” the cashier calls out, interrupting my thoughts. “Next!” she calls again impatiently and much louder.

“Me?” I ask in a feeble voice as if I had just arrived from a tedious trip.


“Yes, you!” the lady snaps without even looking my way, her fingers furiously tapping at the register. I am surprised that it is already my turn, and surprised, as well, how far my thoughts had taken me. To grandmother's house on *Rechov Adani* in Beis Yisroel, all the way back to *her* grandparents' home in Poland, and back to *Eretz Yisroel* again! Was the line that long?

One by one, as I pull them out of the basket, my shiny fruits are being tossed gently and swiftly into the bags. With the chime of the register, my fruitful dream has come to an abrupt end, and in a snap, I am again outdoors, rushing along with

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the stream of reality.

Only later, when the fruit party is all over and the children are sauntering off to do homework, as I'm mumbling the blessing of "Al ha'eitz," I pause to think again. I stop at the words *Uveni Yerushalayim... vahaaleinu lesocha, venochal mipirya*, where we beseech Hashem to rebuild *Yerushalayim*, to bring us up there again, and we will enjoy her fruit once more. Do these words not depict the thoughts that crossed my mind earlier this day? Would these words, perhaps with a little more emotion, *better* express my nostalgia?

I try to say it more slowly. I try to recall how my great-great-grandparents had been divinely, powerfully, and lovingly guided towards this special place in their

“*Venochal mipirya*, and we will then eat her fruits,” but the party will be where it was really intended to be – upon her holy soil.

personal way. How inspiring that they were chosen to be part of the valiant pioneer group of Orthodox Jews who began reviving the wasteland that *Eretz Yisroel* was at the time.

“*Vahaaleinu lesocha*. Indeed, Hashem, bring us *all* there, for always.” Let Your

mighty arm extricate us from exile and elevate us to the place where we really all belong forevermore.

“*Venochal mipirya*, and we will then eat her fruits,” but the party will be where it was really intended to be – upon her holy soil.

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