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THE Jewish OBSERVER

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STATEMENT OF POLICY

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RABBI CHAIM MOSHE STAUBER

A WOUND NOT HEALED
BY TIME

They say that time heals all wounds. Not so with the deep gash of having lost our Rebbe, a true *manhig Yisroel* who was one of a handful who were left from pre-War Europe. Passage of time only makes us realize how profound our loss really is.

Although the Rebbe lived to an advanced age of 91, and for a number of his last years he was in failing

health, the pain for us of his passing is still severe and throbbing. The loss is particularly painful for those of us who were fortunate to be close to him. The huge void created by his absence will not easily be filled.

As long as the Rebbe was alive, our youth had an authentic glimpse into the past. His *hadras panim* – a patriarchal face and demeanor that spoke volumes – reminded us of the previous Rebbe, as well as of other *tzaddikim* in previous generations. Even as *Klal*

Yisroel is *baruch Hashem* blessed with the unprecedented resurgence of Torah and Chassidus, both in the Diaspora and in *Eretz Yisroel*, we nevertheless lag sadly behind in the emergence of such figures. After all, it took more than 91 years to produce such a Rebbe. Besides all the decades of *limud haTorah* coupled with *avodas Hashem* that the Rebbe had amassed *bikedusha vetahara* (in sanctity and purity), his body had also become sanctified and elevated as a result of his life's ordeal, enduring so much

THE SATMAR REBBE

Reb Moshe Teitelbaum זצ"ל

We Lost a Manhig Yisroel!

personal tragedy and suffering that it can be said that he hardly had a good day in his life.

The Rebbe told us how he had been singled out by the Nazis in forced-labor

RABBI STAUBER IS A *TALMID* OF THE PREVIOUS REBBE, AND WAS *ZOCHE* TO BE CLOSE TO BOTH REBBES. FOR MANY YEARS HE SERVED AS THE EDITOR OF *DER YID*, AND A *KLAL* ASKAN WHO, AMONG OTHER CAUSES, HAD FOUNDED PESACH TIKVAH – A NON-PROFIT MENTAL HEALTH AGENCY IN WILLIAMSBURG.

camp for brutal treatment, beatings and punishment. They murdered his young wife and three children, and his brothers and sisters and their families, including his older brother Reb Zalman Leib הי"ד זצ"ל, Sigheter Rav, who was taken to the gas chambers together with the entire transport from Sighet – the old and the very young *Yidden* from his *kehilla*. He refused to part with them during the "selection," and was sent "to the left" *al kiddush Hashem*. Such suffering alone

had turned many ordinary survivors into holy beings – prominent among them, the Rebbe.

IN A CRADLE OF KEDUSHA

The Rebbe was born in Ratzfert, Hungary, where his maternal grandfather, *Hagaon* Reb Shulem Eliezer Halberstam הי"ד זצ"ל had lived. The Belzer Rebbe, Reb Yissachar Ber

Rokeach זצ"ל, who lived in Ratzfert due to World War I, was his *sandak*. Young Moshe was rather weak from birth, and apparently, that was one of the reasons he was named after the *Yismach Moshe*.

The Rebbe remembered his father putting him to sleep in his *sefarim shtieb* (library), where he personally kept vigil over him. There, he observed and absorbed his father's *avodas hakodesh*, leaving an indelible impression on his *neshama*.

Many years ago, the Rebbe himself told this writer of the special bonding and feeling of closeness between himself and his famed father, *Hagaon Hakadosh* Reb Chaim Tzvi זצ"ל (known in the *Chassidische* world as the *Atzei Chaim*, after his *sefer*).

The Rebbe was not yet 12 years of age when he was orphaned from both his parents; yet, he had already been recognized as being especially bright and sincere – an emerging *talmid chacham* whose exceptional *hasmada* in Torah study and total immersion in *avodas Hashem* foretold greatness.

IN THE VIEW OF OLDER CHASSIDIM

My father, Reb Yechezkel Menachem ben Reb Shlomo Tzvi זצ"ל, who passed away a little over a year ago at age 92, was a *shochet* and *mohel* in Antwerp for close to 30 years. During the last 20 years of his life, he lived in Williamsburg, where he was an ardent Chassid of the Rebbe, although he was the Rebbe's senior. He described how many older Rebbe'im, like the Nasuder Rav זצ"ל (who had been a staunch Chassid of the Sanzer

1 His father was the eldest son and successor to the *Kedushas Yomtov* (Rabbi Chanaya Yomtov Lipa, Rav in Sighet, Romania). He, in turn, was the son of the *Yeiteiv Leiv* (Rabbi Yekusiel Yehuda), who was the son of Reb Eluzor Nissan זצ"ל, Rav of Drohbitch, only son of the *Yismach Moshe*. The *Yismach Moshe* himself had attested to the special *kedusha* they had inherited, saying that his forebears for ten generations back were all great *talmidei chachamim* and meticulously holy *tzaddikim*.

Rav זצ"ל) and the Biksader Rebbe זצ"ל, had stood in awe before the Rebbe even before he was bar mitzva.

The Rebbe recalled how he had immersed himself in learning Torah,

Rebbe and had many tens of thousands of *Yidden* (*bli ayin hara*) as his Chassidim in the Satmar *Kehillos* worldwide, he continued to conduct himself with modesty and incredible humility.

In addition to being a gadol baTorah vehora'a, and one of the most prominent rabbanim of the she'eiris happleita, with a vast knowledge and experience in kashrus, shechita, mikvaos, dinei Torah, etc., he was outstanding in his ahavas Yisroel.

blessed with a unique capacity for memorizing, while striving to plumb the depths of every *inyan* (topic) he learned. It was for his erudition in Torah and exceptionally refined *middos* that his family was resolved to keep him in the fold, and thus arranged that he marry his first cousin, the daughter of his uncle, the Sassover Rebbe, *Hagaon* Reb Henech Mayer זצ"ל (son-in-law of the *Kedushas Yomtov*, Reb Lipa Teitelbaum זצ"ל). Thus, the previous Rebbe, Reb Yoel Teitelbaum זצ"ל, was his uncle from two sides. He also was his spiritual mentor, and related to him like a father.

As the Rebbe himself had said at his *hesped* for the previous Rebbe, calling out: "Avi! Avi! – I can justifiably cry out from the bottom of my aching and sorrowful heart: My father! My father! – Twice! When my father passed away, I was still a young child, and I grew up under the guidance and influence of my holy uncle, who was like a loving father to me all through the years. Now I am orphaned from both...."

In addition to being a *gadol baTorah vehora'a*, and one of the most prominent *rabbanim* of the *she'eiris happleita*, with a vast knowledge and experience in *kashrus*, *shechita*, *mikvaos*, *dinei Torah*, etc., he was outstanding in his *ahavas Yisroel*. Even when he was the Satmar

When someone had pointed out to the Rebbe that it was not in keeping with his *kavod* that the Rebbe's *gabbai* – Reb Moshe Friedman – be called at the *tisch* by the same name as the Rebbe ("Moshe"), his answer was: "This way I am reminded what my real name is...."

Boruch S., a nephew of mine in the hosiery import business, had an entire shipment of merchandise from Europe impounded by U.S. Customs. The customs agent told him that due to tighter scrutiny in this post-Sept. 11, '01 era, it would take considerably more time than before until they released the goods. This was a terrible blow to him and his business, and he was facing a substantial loss. He went to the Rebbe and told him his predicament. The Rebbe responded: "What do you think I can do more than you? All I can do is be *mispalleil* and say a little *Tehillim*. But that you, too, can do. So let us both *daven*, and may *Hashem* help you."

The next day, his broker called Boruch to inform him that of all the impounded containers, only his was released.

When the previous Rebbe was taken from us on that dark day of 26 Av, 5739/1979, we were all devastated. A gnawing feeling of a bitter spiritual void prevailed, and deprived us of the security that we would lead our lives in accordance with Torah and *Yiddishkeit*. Many of us felt like survivors felt after Auschwitz, terribly shaken, and contemplating how we might manage to go on. Where does one experiencing difficulty having children go for a *yeshua*, and to whom does one turn to ensure a *parnassa*? There are many stories about how the Rebbe served as the good *shaliach* to bring *Yidden* their needed salvation. Let us cite one of numerous stories whose authenticity this writer can vouch for:

They were married for close to 10 years and the doctors were unable to help them. Then, Reb Eliezer A. and his wife came to the Rebbe with a *kvittel* telling him how desperate they both are. It had been quite a number of years since they were married and had no children. They both cried so hard that the Rebbe himself was also moved to tears. "You will shortly be blessed with *zera shel kayama* (lasting offspring). You can begin in earnest shopping for a baby carriage."

Exactly nine months from that day, a daughter was born to them.

anav me'od – And the man Moshe was very modest" (*Bamidbar* 12,3).

In 1938, he was selected as rav of Zenta, Yugoslavia.... Eight years later, having barely survived Auschwitz, he was drafted to be the rav of Sighet by the surviving remnants and agreed to help rebuild the city of his forefathers from the ruins of the war. A skeleton figure, he had been ravaged by the Nazis, who had mercilessly starved him and beaten him so savagely that he was many times very close to the end. Miraculously, he survived, and *Hashem* helped him regain enough physical strength and will power to ensure that the several scores of saved *Yidden* who had returned to Sighet would survive spiritually, as well. After two years, due to the advent of Communism, the Rebbe immigrated to the U.S.

While still in Europe, he had married a Teitelbaum cousin, the current Rebbetzin, Pessel Leah, daughter of the

Volover Rav זצ"ל הי"ד, who bore him three daughters and four sons.

For close to forty years, the Rebbe was known as the Sigheter Rav, successor to the Sighet dynasty. Throughout the four decades following World War II (when he had lost his first family) the Rebbe was perfectly satisfied with a limited income to support his second family. From his modest-sized *beis midrash*, small yeshiva, and old-fashioned, simple residence in Brooklyn – first on Hewes Street in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, and later in Boro Park – he continued to be a *marbitz Torah ve'yiras Shamayim*, just as he had in pre-war Europe. And he continued giving *shiuirim* (lectures) and *farhern* (examinations) as long as his health permitted. He *davened* with *hishtafchus hanefesh* (pouring out his soul), his voice often resembling that of the previous Rebbe זצ"ל. Who can forget his heart-rending *tefillos* as a *sheliach tzibbur* on



Besides, my father זצ"ל also had a *gabbai* who was named Reb Nachum Hersh, like him...."

IN THE PATHWAYS OF HUMILITY

When the Torah extolls *Moshe Rabbeinu*, it does not cite his traits of holiness, knowledge or extreme devotion to his flock. Rather, the Torah praises him: "*Veha'ish Moshe*

an ordinary Shabbos, not to mention *Yamim Tovim* and, most particularly, on the *Yamim Nora'im*? Or his ethereal dance during *hakafos*, very much like the previous Rebbe. The depth of his *drashos* and *divrei Torah* when conducting a *tisch* can readily be seen in his *Sefer Beirach Moshe*.

As Sigheter Rav, he was content to live in the shadow of his illustrious uncle and mentor, *Rabbeinu* Yoel Teitelbaum. They maintained a very close relationship, and it became quite apparent that the previous Rebbe, having had no surviving children of his own, wanted his nephew to succeed him.

While the previous Rebbe was still alive, the Sigheter Rav sought to preserve a vibrant *Yiddishkeit* for posterity. This writer was present at a meeting in the offices of the *Hisachdus Harabbonim* (Central Rabbinical Congress), of which the old Rebbe was *nasi* (president) and the *Beirach Moshe* the *segan nasi* (vice-president). Even though his awe for his uncle was remarkable, and he hardly said one word without being called upon, at this meeting discussing *kashrus*, the Rebbe was adamant about the need to train *rabbanim*, *dayanim*, *shochtim*, and other *klei kodesh* for the next generation. In fact, he demanded that the Satmar *Kehilla* set the example by hiring a *dayan*. Soon after that, the current *rosh beis din* of the main Satmar *Kehilla*, Rabbi Yisroel Chaim Menashe Friedman שליט"א, who until then was the *rosh yeshiva* of the Sighet Yeshiva in Boro Park, became the Satmar *Dayan* in Williamsburg, and Rabbi Getzel Berkowitz שליט"א was engaged as *Dayan* in Kiryas Yoel-Monroe.

FOLLOWING HIS UNCLE'S LEADERSHIP

At gatherings of the *Hisachdus Harabbonim*, he would be seated next to his uncle, and in most cases, was also one of the first speakers. When he became Satmar Rebbe, he ascended to the presidency of that rabbinic body, as well as of the *Eida Hachareidis* in *Yerushalayim*;

Kollel Shomrei Hachomos – Reb Meir Baal Hanes; Keren Hatzola; Rav Tov International Rescue Organization; Yeshivas Yetev Lev in *Yerushalayim*; Yeshivas Maharit in Bnei Brak; and scores of Satmar institutions in the U.S., London, Belgium, and Canada, with untold numbers of *Yiddische kinderlach* – boys and girls – receiving an exemplary *chinuch al taharas hakodesh*.

When the previous Rebbe was *niftar*, the entire Torah world was shaken. Many did not believe that Satmar would survive. It took a full year until the

Rebbe was officially named Satmar Rebbe. There were times when his very authority faced challenges from within and without, but the same *siyatta diShmaya* that had accompanied his uncle assisted this Rebbe, as well. He, too, was *rach kekoneh vekasheh ke'erez* (flexible as a reed, strong as a cedar tree) and was *na'im halichos*, sweet and pleasant with people.

Despite his subdued style and gentle manner, he did not shy away from leading battles against *meharsei hadas* (violators of sacred tradition) and her-

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etics, wherever they may have been. The
 Rebbe felt it his responsibility to wage
milchama LaShem baAmaleik midor
 dor with the same vigor and fire as the
 previous Rebbe. Whenever he deemed
 a response or a public demonstration
 imperative, the Rebbe sent out his
 troops.

Soon after he became Satmar Rebbe,
 a serious threat to the very existence of
 the Eida Hachareidis arose. The Rebbe
 took on the source of this challenge
 with a fury and an all-out response
 that was unlike anything expected from
 him, since he had not engaged in such
 fierce battles in the past. Many had been
 stunned, including this writer. When I
 said to the Rebbe that people are sur-
 prised at his vehemence, he answered, "I
 had no choice, for two reasons: Number
 one, that was the only way to save the
 Eida Hachareidis. Number two, I am
 now the Satmar Rebbe, and no longer
 the Sigheter Rav..."

During the Rebbe's last trip to
Eretz Yisroel in 5754, I was part of
 his entourage. While in Bnei Brak,
 he visited prominent *gedolei Torah*;
 I was present when *Hagaon Harav*
 Shach זצ"ל paid him a return visit. It
 was quite moving to see Rabbi Shach,
 a frail old man, continually sighing
 deeply and saying to the Rebbe:
 "Satmar Rebbe, *ich hob moireh az*
s'vet kumen a tzeit ven Yidden shom-

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rei Torah vellen do nit kennen voinen!
– I am afraid there may come a time when Torah-observant Jews will no longer be able to live here!”

The *Rebbe* put his hand on that of Rabbi Shach with affection to reassure him, that he need not be so concerned because *Hashem* had vowed to us that He will not forsake us.... That was an exchange one does not easily forget.

Rabbi Moshe Sherer זצ"ל told me the following: He had visited the *Rebbe*, as *Sighter Rav*, and invited him to grace the dais at an upcoming National Convention of Agudath Israel of America. Rabbi Sherer was accompanied by a handful of people, one of whom *davened* regularly in the *Sigheter Beis Midrash* in Boro Park. After Rabbi Sherer made his request, the *Rebbe* pointed to this *mispalleil*, saying with a broad smile: “Even if I am not at the convention myself, I do have a *shaliach* (personal emissary) there....”

Rabbi Sherer retorted: “If it’s a question of having the *Rebbe’s shaliach* present at the convention, then I can fill that role.”

AN IRREPLACEABLE LOSS

Our loss with the passing of this *Rebbe* זצ"ל is profound and devastating. During the 26 years-plus since the *petira* of the *VaYoel Moshe* זצ"ל (the name of his *sefer*) – when the *Beirach Moshe* succeeded him as the Satmar *Rebbe* – it miraculously seemed to a large degree that the old *Rebbe* were still alive. Not only did he resemble and sound very much like his uncle, it was as if he had also inherited a great measure of his spiritual prowess as a *po’eil yeshuos*. (The *Rebbe*, of course, ascribed everything to the *ko’ach hashpa’a* [influence] of the previous *Rebbe*, saying: “It’s all the *ko’ach* of my holy uncle. I do not delude myself. I know it’s so!”)

The recurring theme at every gathering was the need for every *Chassid* to remember: “*Ein lanu shiyur rak haTorah hazois* – We have nothing left except this *Torah*,” and only through learning and keeping *mitzvos* in the authentic fashion we have inherited from our forefathers will we survive in this land.... On many occasions, the *Rebbe* intoned, “We each must always remember and think: What would the *Rebbe* זצ"ל have said regarding

Amidst all his suffering in the Nazi forced-labor camps, it was astounding how he clung to *emuna sheleima* in *Hashem*, and constantly encouraged other inmates to recite the Thirteen *Ikarei Emuna* (Principles of Faith). He *davened* and learned with his fellow inmates by heart at every opportunity. It was amazing to what degree he constantly reminded his listeners, even during his final days, that *bi’as Hamashiach* was imminent. Whenever the classic “*Ani Ma’amin Be’emuna Sheleima Bevi’as Hamashiach*” was sung, his face changed colors as he shed tears. Perhaps his profound *emuna* was his greatest *mofeis* (miracle).

my conduct? We must weigh everything we contemplate and do against what the *Rebbe* זצ"ל would have wanted us to do in a situation like this.”

His legacy to us is the manner in which he kept this sacred charge alive, demanding, and teaching us by his inspiring example, how to respond to this challenge. □

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CHANA NESTLEBAUM

The Kiruv Puzzle

THE FORTY YEARS' DIFFERENCE

We live in a unique period of history. Never before have there been masses of Jews who have grown up completely severed from any meaningful connection to Judaism. Not only are the fundamental skills and education missing, but even the simple emotional bonds that endow a person with a sense of belonging to the Jewish people have been effectively dissolved in the melting pot.

Fifty years ago, when I was growing up, most of the older generation had some connection to authentic *Yiddishkeit*. I remember my mother lighting three brass candlesticks on Friday night, just as her mother did. I recall driving with my parents to the city from our suburban home to buy meat at the kosher butcher shop. The sawdust on the floor and the big roll of white paper on the counter remain snapshots in my mind.

My grandparents still lived in the city, off of Blue Hill Avenue, which for decades was the throbbing center of Jewish life in Boston. When we visited on Sundays, my grandfather, whom we called "Papa," would take us to the Franklin Park Zoo. On the way, we'd be immersed in Jewish life as we passed the kosher shops and observed the elderly Jews strolling the avenue.

Because it was Sunday, there was always some challah left over from Shabbos. Even though we didn't have challah on our own table, it was there – a vestige of Shabbos – in our lives.

On the way home, we would sometimes run into Mr. Lakin, the sherbet vendor. He was my vision of an Old World Jew. With his long, grizzly white beard and gentle smile, he would scoop out some creamy, pastel-colored ices into a pleated paper cup and hand it to me carefully, as if it might break.



MRS. NESTLEBAUM IS THE EDITORIAL DIRECTOR FOR OORAH KIRUV RECHOKIM, LAKEWOOD, NJ. SHE WAS MOST RECENTLY REPRESENTED IN THIS PAGES WITH "LOST AND FOUND," OCT. '04.

PAPA'S SPECIAL WORLD

Papa always wore a baseball cap. I didn't realize it at the time, but that was his yarmulke for the public arena. He had other secrets as well. There was a pile of envelopes on a desk in an unused back bedroom. They were printed with bold-faced Hebrew letters and photos of bearded old men in rabbinical garb. Who were all these rabbis, and why were they contacting Papa? It was his world, and even though we didn't know much about it, we knew it existed.

When Pesach came around, we'd drive to Bubbi's and Papa's house for the Sedarim. My sister, brother and I would race up the stairs to their second-story apartment, bursting to display our new haircuts, clothes and shoes to our faithfully admiring grandparents. We were surely, in their eyes, the most beautiful children that G-d ever placed on earth. Somehow, the excitement carried us through Papa's hurried but complete rendition of the Hagadda, pronounced in a Livtish accent that was foreign to our ears. He would beam as we, with our elementary Hebrew school education, would correct him. "Tow-rah, Papa. Not Tei-reh." As we walked out to our car in the silence of the night, the air seemed spookily saturated with angels and prophets and all the supernatural beings we had spent the night imagining.

GENERATIONS REMOVED

Fast forward fifty years. Today's American Jewish families are two or even three generations removed from those Kodachrome memories. Not

only have the children growing up today never heard a word of Yiddish, their parents have never heard one, either. They are two or three generations removed from the last Shabbos candles to grace the family's dining room table. If they eat something kosher, it's almost surely by accident. If they have a Jewish education, it's just enough to get through a bar or bat mitzvah, and then get on with life.

How, the Torah-observant world wonders, can such assimilated people ever come back to Judaism? An authentic Jewish identity is like a puzzle, composed of many interlocking pieces. There is the emotional piece that connects to home and family life, the intellectual piece that is forged in yeshiva and Bais Yaakov, the social piece developed with peers in school, at shul and in the community, and most importantly, the spiritual piece of the puzzle – the joy felt by a person's *neshama* when he learns *Hashem's* Torah or speaks to *Hashem* in *tefilla*.

Fifty years ago, there were enough pieces left to make a picture, although the allegiance to Torah and halacha – the glue that holds it all together – was missing. But a Jew growing up in the secular world today has just one of these pieces – a *neshama* that yearns to connect to *Hashem*. It is often buried so deeply that he doesn't even know it's there. If it were a puzzle piece, it would be the one that had been kicked under the rug. It's there, but where?

THE PUZZLE'S MISSING PIECES

This metaphor – a puzzle missing almost all its pieces – describes the challenge facing those working in

kiruv today. In order to foster a complete Jewish identity, the person involved in *kiruv* must supply more than one part of the picture. Learning alone won't do it. Emotions alone won't carry the person all the way. Neither will Torah-observant friends and neighbors, nor a particular rabbi or shul. For Torah observance to become someone's life, it must provide him with everything life requires.

But *kiruv* has to start somewhere. Many *kiruv* organizations work at finding those dusty, neglected puzzle pieces hidden under the rug. Once the *neshama* is unearthed and touched by the loving concern of a fellow Jew, the picture can begin to take shape. Something needs to draw out the *neshama*, to help the person feel its presence and understand what it is. That "something" might be a taste of Torah learning through Partners in Torah, an inspiring Shabbaton with Discovery or Gateways, a thought-provoking article on Aish.com, a visit to the campus Chabad House, or a Birthright trip to Israel. It might be a Shabbos meal at the next-door neighbor's house.

Kiruv has to start somewhere. The question is, where does it go from there?

SEALING THE CRACKS

According to a Rabbi Tzvi Aryeh Yoffe, *Kiruv* Director of Oorah, a Lakewood-based organization, founded by Rabbi Chaim Mintz, many people who set out to seek their Jewish identity eventually abandon the journey. While they may be enriched by what they've experienced, and may even be

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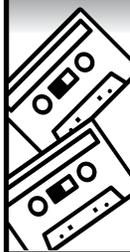
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saved from intermarriage because of it, they do not ultimately adopt a life of Torah and mitzvos.

“People fall through the cracks,” he explained. “The most successful cases are those in which someone is working closely with the family, dealing with the entire *kiruv* process.”

A *kiruv*-oriented school, such as the Sholom Torah Academies in New Jersey, understands clearly the need to provide more than a classroom seat.

Rabbi Eli Lapa, principal of the Western

Monmouth branch of the school, located in Manalapan, NJ, says that much of this extra dimension is provided by teachers, who are chosen for both their teaching talents and their commitment to nurturing their students’ growing commitment to Torah.

“The most important component of *kiruv* is nothing that’s done overtly,” says Rabbi Lapa. “It’s the relationships, the interactions. When teachers are genuine and sincerely care about the children, the parents sense it immediately. They

know this is something they won’t find in public school.”

Working with the parents is also paramount in fostering success with the children. One way in which Sholom does this is by giving due consideration to the priorities with which the secular parents enter the system.

“We have to provide excellent secular studies,” says Rabbi Lapa. “That is what a family is looking for – the greatest opportunity for their child to be successful in the ‘real world.’ And since they recognize financial and social status as success, we have to provide a program that gives them confidence that their children will be able to attend Harvard and Yale.”

On the other end of the balance, efforts must be made to help the parents adopt more Torah-oriented priorities. Sholom at one time offered its own adult education classes, but now refers its parents to classes given by Torah Links, part of Beis Medrash Govoha’s Geshet outreach program.

Oorah understands that those parents who have taken the giant step of enrolling their children in yeshiva or day school often find themselves in the difficult situation of being unable to help their children with the simplest of assignments. Therefore, it offers the option of at-home learning by phone or in person.

While parent education is an essential piece of the puzzle, some *kiruv* experts point out that referrals to various community resources are effective only when there is follow-up. “For instance, what if the parents don’t like the program you send them to?” says Oorah spokesman Rabbi Yoffe. “Do they come to you and tell you, or do they just quit, and you find out about it months later?”

“The problem can also evolve the other way around. Say the parents get inspired and try to become religious, and they decide to send their child to yeshiva. But what if that yeshiva doesn’t work out for the child? Is there anyone the parents can turn to for advice, or will they just put the child back into public school?”

There are hundreds of other scenarios, as well, that can cause the *kiruv* process to fizzle. A person may want to become observant, but fears telling his employer that he has to leave early on Friday. He

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may be stalled by the resistance he expects from parents or friends. He may live in a neighborhood that has no shul in walking distance and no kosher shopping. One spouse might want to adopt more religious observances while the other is disinterested or outright opposed. In all these instances, a caring, sensitive mentor can be the difference between overcoming the problem and moving forward, or slipping back into the "default mode" of non-observance.

"There are so many things that happen to a person between the first 'oohs and aahs' and a real commitment to Torah," says an experienced *kiruv* volunteer. "People think of *kiruv* as the dramatic transformation, the guy who cuts off his pony tail and puts on a yarmulke. But there are many people walking around in black hats or *sheitels*, who are not quite there yet. They need a lot of support, for a long time, and that is the real, unglamorous, day-to-day work of *kiruv*."

REPLICATING GROWING UP FRUM

.....

What goes into this type of long-term *kiruv*? "Think about growing up religious," says Rabbi Yoffe. "Think about everything that goes into raising a Jewish child. You have *rebbe'im* and teachers. You have grandparents, aunts and uncles that might take the children for a Shabbos or bring them on a *Chol Hamoed* trip. You have *rabbanim* and relatives you might ask for advice. You can't even begin to take into account the network that a religious person has at his or her disposal. This is what we try to supply to our *kiruv* families."

For instance, although children are in yeshiva, there is no Shabbos at home for many of them. At Shalom Torah Academy, two yearly Shabbatons, one sponsored by the school and another done in conjunction with Gateways, provides a taste of a rich Shabbos experience. In addition, teachers frequently invite children to their own homes for Shabbos. Oorah periodically runs a Shabbat With Oorah retreat, which helps families create warm, emotional ties to their Jewish identity and

to religious families who come to be part of the experience.

It is equally vital that *Yom Tov* be made meaningful, especially to children who are enrolled in yeshiva and learning about the laws and rituals as each season approaches. For this reason, Oorah builds *sukkos* for its families and runs *Chol Hamoed* trips for the children. Shalom keeps school open for *Chol Hamoed Sukkos*.

"We stay open for two reasons," says Rabbi Lapa. "One is that our parents are going by a secular calendar. If the

children didn't have school, it would present them with a major problem. But more importantly, if we didn't bring the children to school, most of them would have no chance to sit in a *sukka* or shake a *lulav* and *esrog*."

SUMMER BACKSLIDE

.....

Most children coming from secular homes live in non-religious neighborhoods, making it difficult for them to develop appropriate social ties outside school. Their parents may not worry at all about the backsliding the old friends and neighborhood can cause. In fact, they may be happy to see the child "balance" between his old life and his new one. Once again, therefore, the *kiruv* organization or mentor must act *in loco parentis* and provide what any caring Jewish parent would provide, given the necessary level of awareness.

Oorah answered this problem by opening up its own summer camp. The girls' camp is now in its third season, and a boys' division was launched this summer. In recruiting for the camp, Oorah found that it was filling a wide-open niche. "Most kids from non-religious homes were going to specialty camps like baseball or ballet

camp. Or they were going to camps that were Jewish but not Orthodox. There were no *frum* camps set up especially to deal with kids from non-*frum* homes."

As vital as all these aspects of *kiruv* are, the most vital piece of the puzzle, especially when working with children, is their success in Torah learning. It is there, as well, that great potential for difficulty arises, especially if a child starts school later in his career. For children from religious homes, there would very seldom, if ever, be a thought of removing the child

Kiruv must help Jews find comfort, warmth and friendship among their own people

from the yeshiva system if he were not succeeding. But for children who have already been in public school and whose parents do not yet understand the value of what their children are receiving in yeshiva, that idea can seem like a much more realistic alternative.

Therefore, another key aspect of *kiruv* is to conduct regular, systematic follow-up, visiting families, calling parents and making sure that problems are resolved, lest the child or his parents be soured on Jewish education.

THE LAST WORD

.....

Beyond teaching the fundamentals of Judaism, and the skills and *halachos* involved in Torah observance, *kiruv* has another task to perform. It must help Jews find comfort, warmth and friendship among their own people. For children who have no memory of Bubbi and Papa's seder, of the kosher butcher and the old neighborhood, new memories must be made. And that is not the job of a *kiruv* organization. It is the job of every religious Jew. When our brethren find serenity, enthusiasm and joy in our world, they want what we have. Then, the pieces fall into place. □

PLONIS ALMONIS

About three years ago, I signed up with Project Y.E.S. as a volunteer. At the time, I had numerous reservations about being a mentor – but the years have proven that for me, and I believe for her, the rewards have been immeasurable. I have often suggested to friends that they become a mentor, and they’ve mentioned many of the same concerns I had. Among them: Too busy. Lack professional skills. Inexperienced with kids at risk. Not hip or cool. Kids wouldn’t relate to me. Unwilling to neglect my own children. My family will suffer....

Recently, I was *zocheh* to chat with my “mentee,” Nechama, about her work with at-risk children and her recent engagement. It’s a time for me to reflect on how much the mentoring has done for me and for my family. Hopefully, it will inspire some others who currently share my own initial concerns to jump in and forge a connection with a Jewish child.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE AN HOUR MAKES
.....

My overwhelming concern was: *When will I find the time without neglecting my family?*

Even though the program only required one hour a week, as a working mother with, *baruch Hashem*, a large

family, ranging in age from newborn to twelve, one hour seemed like a lot. It turned out that Nechama, like many kids in trouble, was keeping pretty late hours, and for my own family, leaving the house one night a week from 9 to 10 was least invasive. Even then, the two-year-old, a napper, was occasionally up, and he actually came along with us sometimes. I was pretty exact about

guess that’s called “time management for mothers.” It was amazing to see that the hour could be found, and moreover, that one hour a week could really make a difference. Very rarely did I speak on the phone with or see Nechama outside of our weekly hour, yet, over time, we developed a strong bond.

Rather than being neglected, my children benefited from my mentoring.

Most importantly, it was an invaluable role model for them in two areas: *ahavas Yisroel* and keeping a commitment. There were a few times over the years that I was literally too exhausted to go out, and considered canceling, but my husband and daughter brought Nechama to my house, propped me up on pillows, and set up our hour. This was a strong example for them on the importance of a commitment.

THE POWER OF LISTENING
.....

Another major concern, beyond time, was: *How would a teen at risk relate to me?*

I’m a middle-aged mother, not particularly cool or street smart. Old car, plain house. Nechama was a trendy teenager who loved shopping and talking about bargains. She was also very intuitive and street smart. But I soon learned that simply being myself, an imperfect adult, somewhat more mature than her, who cared enough to meet with her for a short time on a consistent basis, was enough. And in our relationship, I

Saying “Yes” to Y.E.S.

Opening My Eyes and My Heart to a Teenager at Risk

my one-hour allotment, which actually suited Nechama fine. I think it made the relationship more appealing to her.

The benefits for me were several. First, I learned something about squeezing time from seemingly nowhere. I

PROJECT Y.E.S. (YOUTH ENRICHMENT SERVICES), A PROJECT OF AGUDATH ISRAEL OF AMERICA, IS AN ORGANIZATION OF PROFESSIONALLY TRAINED VOLUNTEERS WHO FOCUS ON THE CHALLENGES FACING AT-RISK TEENS. SERVICES - CURRENTLY AVAILABLE IN NEW YORK, CHICAGO, DETROIT, AND MINNEAPOLIS - INCLUDE A HOT-LINE, MENTORING PROGRAM, ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PLACEMENT, PROFESSIONAL REFERRALS, VOCATIONAL COUNSELING AND JOB PLACEMENT.

learned the power of a lot of skills that I use (or should, anyway) with my own children.

Probably, the most invaluable lesson I learned was the power of listening. Fortunately, Nechama loved to talk – and I’m a decent listener. I’d ask her about her week, and for much of the time she’d talk. At first, she’d tell me all about her shopping (I’d try to facilitate minimally so that she wouldn’t realize the depths of my ignorance), and then, as time went on, she’d bring up the real issues in her life. I’d give her my opinion, if it seemed she was open to it, trying to be as honest as possible without being critical. It was often a juggling act. Gradually, I came to realize that she appreciated my being a straight shooter with her. I remember her once laughing ruefully after she asked me for advice about some lies she planned to tell her parents, “What am I asking you for? You always see their side, too.”

I was constantly amazed that she trusted me simply because I was willing to listen and to give her the respect that an honest response implied.

LESSONS IN THE PROCESS

Despite her issues, there was much to compliment, and I tried to sprinkle my listening with as many subtle compliments as possible – not too overt or forced, but genuine compliments: About her shopping smarts (that was more in the beginning), her street smarts, her intuition, and eventually, about her willingness to lay down her self-absorption and really work on her character. This conscious attempt to make her feel respected was great practice for me for my own children. This had a bonus benefit for me: I learned to polish my *ayin tova* (generous eye) by seeking the good in her... there was, indeed, much of it. Hopefully I can apply that to my other fellow Jews.

I also garnished some tips about what NOT to do with my own children. For example, she once complained about her mother’s seemingly interminable phone calls to her, undoubtedly due to her mother’s desperate need to connect with

her. *Hmmm. That was exactly what I was doing with my son, who was learning out of town.* I think he was pleasantly surprised when our protracted calls became short, upbeat conversations. Like many kids at risk, she held those around her to a much higher standard than herself – she should have been a *mashgiach* – and honed in on any possible inconsistencies she found in her parents’ behavior or observance. I resisted joining her in her parent bashing (a very tempting way to forge a connection with kids), but listened thoughtfully, and processed that message....

And yet another lesson: Like many of the mentors at the Project Y.E.S. meeting, I was dubious at first that a teen would have any interest in being mentored, since it was the parents who initiated this relationship. We were assured that nearly all the kids who were referred for mentoring were open to it, and with Nechama, that was indeed the case. Overcoming my own fear of challenge (and rejection) was a plus for me. While Nechama easily accepted our relationship, and enjoyed it, one approach that definitely did not work was pontification or preaching. On very few occasions, since I learned my lessons quickly, I tried to share what I thought was an inspiring *d’var Torah* with Nechama. Her eyes glazed, she became intensely bored very suddenly, and it was evident that this approach was a bit too direct. But the indirect approach, of simply being an honest, loving friend whose own family was imperfect but happy, did work. I was stunned when one day, a few years after I began mentoring her, we were discussing her future family, and she talked about how idyllic my life seemed to her.

NOT AN OVERNIGHT PROCESS

Her evolution into a true *bas Yisroel*, with a deep understanding and appreciation of people, was something to behold. It was slow in coming, and many factors other than the mentoring, including wonderful, involved teachers, family, seminary experience, and time, intertwined to help her flower. Still, it was not an overnight

process, and so, yet another lesson was brought home: patience...

Of course, my most important lessons came from learning from Nechama’s example. Here she was, a young girl saddled with some pretty difficult issues, and yet, she summoned the will to deal with them, and to grow from them. Her strength of character, and personal growth, emotionally and in *Yiddishkeit*, are an example for me: Whatever situation *Hashem* sends our way, deal with it. Grow from it. She has.

Finally, a plug for Project Y.E.S. Theoretically, I should have been able to take on responsibility for helping another mother’s child in a committed way, on a regular basis. I think that without doing it in a formal way, my commitment would not have been the same. Also, despite my large extended family and friendly block – like many *frum* Jews in the big city, I crave for community. Doing this as part of an organization filled my need to feel connected.

THE NET GAINS

So, to recap, these are some of the areas in which I’ve grown (or should have), thanks to Nechama – time management, involving my family in *chessed*, learning to listen and compliment, understanding my own children better, recognizing the relative ineffectiveness of direct *mussar*, learning to conduct my own observance more consistently, gaining patience, and the ability to surmount challenges.... Most important, though, I’ve learned to love her. When we first met, I wasn’t sure how I could possibly relate to a very materialistic girl – as I dimwittedly and simplistically saw her at the very beginning. But just like each child expands one’s understanding of and connection to different types of people, so did Nechama expand my outlook. Despite our differences, we came to love each other and appreciate the breadth of each other’s personalities. If I can take that love and appreciation and bring them to my relationships with all my fellow Jews, then I indeed will have gained beyond measure. □

MARSHA SMAGLEY



A Flower That Bloomed in Brooklyn

A Tribute to Esther, My Partner in Torah

Esther Solomon was my partner in Torah for four years. She was tragically hit by a car *Erev Shabbos* (June 30/4 Tamuz) on a street near her home in Flatbush, Brooklyn, and died. She was only fifty-nine years old, and had just celebrated her thirty-second wedding anniversary with her husband, Nosson. This article is a tribute to my partner in Torah, my dear friend, Esther, *aleha hashalom*.

Esther caused each soul that she touched to bloom. I was fortunate to be one of those whom she touched. Esther was carrying flowers, which she had just gone out to buy for Shabbos, when she was hit by the car. When I told my nine-year-old daughter that Esther had died, she declared that Esther went straight to *Gan Eden*, while carrying flowers for Shabbos.

We began to learn Torah over the telephone through the Partners in

Torah program when Esther called me from the predominantly observant community of Flatbush. I lived in Highland Park, Illinois, a largely secular Jewish community. Esther, speaking with an authentic New York accent, disseminated beautiful lessons in Hebrew and *tefilla* (prayer), while personifying eternal lessons in living Torah.

As a *ba'alas teshuva* of seven years with a deep desire to discover my Jewish heritage, I asked Esther so many, many questions. There was so much I needed to learn. I was most impressed with her breadth of knowledge and kind patience. Although I only heard a voice over a telephone, her words painted a picture of what she truly was, a strong woman who loved to bring Torah into her home and into mine.

As I was not raised in an observant home, I needed words of inspiration to forge the conviction to change my entire life to come to Torah. Not Esther. She was raised with Torah and exemplified the strength and clarity of living each moment to do what we as Jewish people were created to do – to serve G-d and to shine forth His light. Esther illuminated her teachings with light. Her practical

style of living Torah in all that she did became my inspiration.

PESACH IN BROOKLYN: BRINGING NEW MEANING TO WELCOMING GUESTS

As the holiday of Pesach approached during our first year of learning, Esther invited me and my family to stay with her family for Pesach. I asked her if she wanted us to come for the beginning or the end of the holiday. In her direct manner of speaking, she asked why we should have to change over our home for Pesach and also pack up to travel. She insisted that we stay for the entire Pesach.

I did not think that I heard her correctly and asked her to repeat her offer. I could not believe that she wished to invite me, a woman she had only met on the telephone, my husband, and at that time, my six-year-old daughter and twelve-year-old son, to stay with her family for ten days. As a newcomer to Torah, I was touched by the beauty of observant living, where families would invite strangers to stay for Shabbos and holidays; yet, I sensed that her offer went

MARSHA SMAGLEY RESIDES IN HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS, WITH HER HUSBAND AND TWO CHILDREN. SHE HAS DEVOTED THE LAST SEVEN YEARS TO STUDYING TORAH, BECOMING OBSERVANT, GUIDING HER FAMILY IN TORAH LIFE, AND RECENTLY, WRITING ARTICLES THAT CONVEY HER HEARTFELT JOURNEY TO TORAH. HER "TO TOUCH A STONE, TO FIND A HEART" APPEARED IN *JO*, JUNE '06.

far beyond the mitzvah of *hachnasas orchim* (welcoming guests). I was to soon learn that Esther embraced this mitzvah with every part of her being.

My family agreed to come to Flatbush. I had never been to Flatbush. The name even sounded strange to me, and Brooklyn seemed like a world of its own. Although my husband, at that point, was not ready to change his life to one of Torah, he was raised in New York, and loved the idea of spending time in his native city with a nice family. We booked our flights, embarking

on an adventure in *Yiddishkeit*, hosted by the friendly Solomons. How could we have possibly known that this Pesach visit would result in changing our lives forever?

Esther appeared nothing like I had imagined her to look. Her strong voice portrayed a picture of a tall, large woman. Esther looked nothing like that. She was short in physical size, and as she was finishing her Pesach preparations, was dressed comfortably, wearing a baseball cap. She greeted me with a huge smile and a warm hug. I

could see that although she was small physically, she was a giant, spiritually. I felt comfortable from that very first meeting, as did my family.

As we had arrived in New York on the night before Pesach, we went with her family to an Italian kosher restaurant, each of us yearning to consume his last morsels of pasta and bread. Her husband, Nossou, was extremely kind. Her teenaged daughter, Chavi, and her two sons who lived at home, Moshe Chaim and Yehoshua, who were both in their twenties, were equally welcoming. We later met her married son, Avraham, and his wife, Leah, and Esther's young granddaughter, Michal. *Hashem* not only gave us the gift of Esther, He also gave us the gift of becoming part of her beautiful family.

MY GUIDE INTO "LIVING" TORAH

I had begun to learn Torah a little while before I met Esther. Torah transcended my secular world. Each precious word of Torah that I read gave me a glimpse into an entirely new world, into an entirely new reality: G-d's reality. There are no words to describe the enormity of the gift of Torah, which I pray will transform the lives of my family and its future generations.

With help from *Shamayim* (Heaven), I had been trying to lead my family towards observance. During that first year, we had transferred our children from public school to an Orthodox school. It is a daunting task to change worlds, to shed all that you have learned to be true and to start life anew. This is especially difficult after being married for a long time and already having children.

I wished to make our home into a place where *Hashem* could dwell; I wished to learn how to be able to live Torah. It was Esther and her amazing family that gave my family the opportunity to experience Torah living. This happened while we shared meals in their home, *davened* together, and walked down the many avenues of Flatbush.

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It was overwhelming at first to be immersed into Torah living within this huge observant community. I remember walking with Esther in her neighborhood, sighting in the distant horizon what appeared to be armies of men dressed in black and white, wearing black hats, walking towards us. I had never seen anything like this before. I must admit I was a bit scared.

As these armies came closer to us, to my relief, I could see that it was actually Orthodox men joined by their wives and children, many pushing strollers carrying more little children, all warmly greeting us with a "Good Yontif." Esther, with a big smile on her face, speaking with her strong voice, kindly greeted each person and introduced me to all she knew, which seemed to be everyone.

Esther, with her immense *ahavas habriyos* (love of people), became my guide into her world of Torah. With Esther at my side, the men dressed in black and white no longer appeared to be part of a military army, but rather part of the army of *Hashem*, clothed in an outer uniform that revealed their deep inner devotion to Torah. I began to feel much comfort in their presence and really enjoyed saying "Good Yontif."

**ENTERING OUR HEARTS
THROUGH OUR STOMACHS**

Esther was an extraordinary cook. I believe this greatly impacted on my family's desire to become observant. I have tried each Shabbos to recreate her dishes, and I just cannot. Without reading a cookbook, she conjured up such delicious culinary delights that we did not even realize that we had finished the Pesach Seder at 2:00 a.m.!

I remember my then-six-year-old daughter lining up just before midnight to fill her plate with scrumptious roasted chicken. Just the smell alone of Esther's food helped us to continue to consume the many pieces of *shemura matza* with hoards of romaine lettuce.

Esther invited us to stay with her family again the following year for

Pesach, and we did. Esther's mother, Mrs. Chaya Klein-Weinreb, affectionately called "Bubby," joined us for the end of the holiday. We instantly loved her. After meeting Bubby, I could understand where Esther gained her ability to so generously give without complaint.

As Pesach was drawing to a close, and the ability to eat *chometz* was near, Esther decided to make homemade blintzes. Bubby, with a knowing grin on her face, lovingly said that only Esther would start making blintzes when Pesach was ending. They tasted heavenly.

**HOW DO YOU PRONOUNCE
"FRUM"?**

I loved to sit at the Solomons' holiday table and join in this rich family heritage, filled with song and *divrei Torah*, words of Torah. I had never experienced this before; it was so beautiful. One time at the table, Esther proclaimed that I did not pronounce the word "frum" (piously observant) properly. She then illustrated how to say it. I thought I had correctly repeated this word, but not according to Esther. She then gave me words that

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rhymed with “*frum*,” saying that it was a cross between “room” and “from.” I still could not say it. Everyone then joined in with words to help me pronounce this word, including my children, but to no avail.

I recently shared this “*frum*” table memory with Esther. I had no idea that this would be the last time that we would ever speak. This experience had inspired me to wish to write a future article entitled “*How Could I Have Become So ‘Frum,’ If I Could Not Even Say the Word ‘Frum’?*” She burst out laughing, the kind of laugh that conveyed a special connection between friends, one that comes from a significant sharing of lives. Even though I still cannot correctly pronounce the word, Esther truly inspired me to become “*frum*.”

EXPERIENCING TRUE ACHDUS

The Solomons never made us feel bad about all that we did not know; instead, they caused us to feel that they were actually learning from us. They conveyed that it was my family that was giving to them, that we were bringing exciting new life to their Pesach celebration. This could be seen through the light in their eyes, the joy in their faces, and the thrill in their voices as they answered our many questions.

They influenced us most, not by preaching observance, but simply by being a nice family that just naturally lived Torah in their low-key way. They also expressed a true caring for us in everything they did, and it was clear that our lives really mattered to them. This caring gave us the needed support and courage to transform our lives.

I remember how *bentching* Grace After Meals had seemed so daunting to me. I wished to recite this prayer in Hebrew, determined not to miss a single word. As I had learned Hebrew many years before in Hebrew school, it took me forever to finish it. I would still be *bentching* long after everyone, including my family, had left the table. Esther took notice of this, and urged

me to sing this prayer; she said that she did not want me to be left behind my family. Although even now, I am still the last one to finish *bentching* at our table, Esther's teaching me to sing my praises to *Hashem* has ensured that I am not left behind.

Nosson thoughtfully spent much time with my husband, researching and answering his questions in a way that appealed to his reasoning. My husband recalls that one rainy Shabbos day, while walking together to shul, he asked Nosson why we cannot carry an umbrella on Shabbos. It did not make sense to my husband to think that G-d would want us to get soaked while walking to shul to *daven*.

Nosson explained the reasons why, and then used an example from the business world, which my husband, who works as a Chief Financial Officer, could relate to. Nosson asked my husband, "Would your father want you to correct a fraudulent situation at work even if it meant losing your job?"

My husband responded, "Of course he would want me to do the right thing." This was a turning point for my husband. It helped him to understand that even if there are short-term, negative consequences, we must choose to do what is "right," which is always to trust and to follow *Hashem's* will.

My husband, for the first time in his life, wore a *kippa* each day during our first Pesach stay. He became comfortable enough wearing the *kippa* that he continued to wear one after he returned home, even at work in a secular company. It simply did not make sense to him anymore not to have a *kippa* on his head just because the holiday was over. It was the action of wearing a *kippa* that helped my husband move from observance only during the holidays, which he was accustomed to as a secular Jew, to eventually incorporating Torah into his daily life.

Only one month after spending that first Pesach at the Solomons, at age forty-five, my husband suffered a heart attack. Fortunately, he came through in excellent health, which I cannot help but believe was from the merit of observing Pesach with the Solomons, along with his growing observance, which followed.

Esther and her family, in all that they did, became an eternal part of my family's journey to Torah. We appreciated learning from them, and they appreciated seeing Torah through our eyes – eyes which they helped to open to see into *Hashem's* world. Our journeys to come closer to our Creator became one, and together, we experienced true *achdus* (unity).

ESTHER, THE MORNING STAR

King David, in Psalm 22, pays tribute to Queen Esther, referring to her as *Ayelles Hashachar*, the morning star. The personality of Queen Esther represents the slow dawning of the light of the Jews who were engulfed in the darkness of exile. Esther is derived from "*Istahar*," a very bright star (ArtScroll Psalms, *Yalkut Shimoni* – *Megillas Esther* 1053).

Esther, as her name illuminates, was blessed with the ability to shine forth her bright light throughout her entire life, a light that caused all the souls that she touched to bloom. This world is now missing Esther, who brought so much light to my family. I will forever miss Esther, my partner in Torah, and my dear friend, the special soul that left this world carrying Shabbos flowers to *Gan Eden*.

I pray that *Moshiach* will come speedily, bringing us *shalom* (peace). May each precious Jewish *neshama* (soul) cause a rose to bloom within the thorns of this long and bitter *galus* (exile), and may we no longer feel its sadness and pain. May we all merit becoming a shining star, an emissary of *Hashem's* exquisite light.

May this tribute serve as a merit for the elevation of the neshama of Esther bas Avraham. □

Daf Hayomi – D'var Yom Be'yomo

YOSSI HUTTLER

every day I turn
a page
another appears before me
a day's distance away

some days, getting ahead of everyone else and
myself shorter of breath running
parchment-skin unsteady hands I keep turning
learning praying that the coming days
can today be squirreled away too

but these are the rules:
a page
a day
no guarantees beyond
today
and its daf

YOSSI HUTTLER, WHO LIVES IN STATEN ISLAND, NY, IS AN ATTORNEY AND AN ORAL HISTORIAN, HAVING CONDUCTED OVER 120 INTERVIEWS OF SURVIVORS OF CHURBAN EUROPE FOR THE SHOAH FOUNDATION.