



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE RABBINICAL COUNCIL OF AMERICA

ירחון הסתדרות הרבנים דאמריקה

ANNOUNCING THE INAUGURATION OF THE RABBI STEVEN M. DWORKEN CONTINUING RABBINIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Rabbinical Council of America is pleased to announce the founding of The Rabbi Steven M. Dworken Continuing Rabbinic Education Program. Established in memory of the beloved past Executive Vice President of the Rabbinical Council of America, the program will provide ongoing courses, resources, learning and exchange opportunities for rabbis in the field of congregational, institutional and communal leadership. In recent years post-graduate learning and enrichment for professionals of all kinds have become standard and widespread. Rabbis, given their wide geographic distribution, and demanding schedules, will surely benefit from a rabbinic learning project to enhance their skills and knowledge in a constantly changing Jewish community. Through this project RCA rabbis, as well as their congregations, organizations, and communities, will reap many tangible benefits. This will enhance personal and professional growth, through structured learning opportunities led by peers, mentors, and experts, under the rubric of the largest Orthodox rabbinic group in the world.

PROGRAM DYNAMICS

The project will include numerous dynamic elements:

- Regional Y'mei Iyun** - These will bring participants together with senior rabbis and *rashei yeshiva*, professionals in a variety of disciplines impacting on rabbinic learning and effectiveness.
- Distance learning courses for busy rabbis** - These brief courses (4-6 sessions each) will facilitate group learning, mutual enrichment, and personal growth via emerging technologies such as conference calls, webcasts and streaming audio/video. They will be taught by master teachers, senior rabbis, and recognized professionals. They will feature a mix of practical Torah learning as well as essential rabbinic skills.
- Ongoing E-mail Modalities and Exchanges** - These will be designed to facilitate rabbinic growth and sharing, to effectively overcome distance and scheduling challenges. These will be grouped by interest, specialty, and need, e.g. for out of town rabbis, rabbis in larger cities, rabbis in communal organizations, military chaplains, institutional chaplains.
- Regular Newsletter** - This will include extensive learning materials on all facets of the rabbinate.
- Mentoring Program** - Seasoned and respected senior rabbis will be assigned to assist and guide younger colleagues, eager to learn from their cumulative experience
- Resource Center** - This will be hosted on the soon to be upgraded RCA website, and will link many and various resources available to rabbis, both online and beyond the digital world. Knowing what is "out there," being aware of rabbinic services of all kinds, in itself will be a valuable enrichment tool for the rabbi.
- Some of the elements of the program will be jointly undertaken with partnering institutions and their respective leaderships.

Wherever possible a collaborative spirit will inform the project, to maximize achievement of shared goals and priorities.

- The first semester of the project will consist of four courses (of four sessions each), to be followed by a similar second semester, in February and March of 2004.

STAFFING

Concurrent with the forthcoming launch of the program, the RCA is pleased to announce that Rabbi Gideon Shloush will be the new Director of Rabbinic Learning and Enrichment of the Rabbinical Council of America. He will have primary responsibility for implementing this project. Rabbi Shloush brings many talents, past educational initiatives, extensive networking, and great energy to his new position at the RCA.

FUNDING

The Continuing Rabbinic Education Program will be funded by a variety of sources. A generous founding gift has been made by the Dworken family. Friends of the family will be encouraged to participate. Rabbinic colleagues of the late Rabbi Dworken are being asked to support the project through personal and institutional funding sources. Every effort will be made to identify project benefactors who understand the crucial importance of a dynamic and effective rabbinate to the future of Jewish life.

Currently the following dedications are available:

Founder	\$18,000 (payable over 6 years)
Benefactor	\$10,000 (payable over 5 years)
Donor	\$6,000 (payable over 3 years)
Supporter	\$3,000 (payable over 2 years)
Fellow	\$1,000
Individual Course Dedication	\$5,000

Dedications may be undertaken by families, congregations, or corporate sponsors.

INAUGURAL EVENT

The project will be inaugurated on the night of the first *yahrzeit* of Rabbi Dworken's *petira*, Monday evening, February 2, 2004 at Congregation Bnei Yeshurun in Teaneck, NJ. The program will take place in two segments, hopefully to be webcast.

The first "rabbinic" part of the program, will begin at 5pm, when the first four courses of the project will be initiated. Each instructor will make an abbreviated half hour presentation by way of "a taste of things to come." In subsequent weeks, the courses themselves will be presented live, involving distance learning, by way of webcasts and conference calls.

Starting at 7pm, a catered inaugural dinner (at \$36.00 per head, for RCA members) will take place in the synagogue social hall, to which the entire community will be invited. Leaders of the Orthodox community will make brief remarks during the course of the dinner.

Finally, a *yahrzeit maariv* service will take place at 9.30pm.

THE INITIAL FOUR COURSES

In addition to the inaugural abbreviated sessions, these courses will consist of four sessions, to take place via conference calls. Simultaneously, for those who have broadband access to the Internet, the classes will be webcast to registered participants, who will be able to see the presenter live, and also access prepared documents online. Another benefit of such webcasts is that the presentations will be archived on the RCA website for future use.

Registration fee per course: \$36.00, payable to the RCA. Registration is upon receipt of full payment, to be received (check/credit card) in the RCA office by Friday, February 6th 2004. Early registration will be appreciated, to facilitate preparations.

COURSE 1: Helping your Congregant/Helping Yourself

Instructor: Dr. David Pelcovitz

Mondays from 3:00pm to 4:00pm. February 9th, 16th, 23rd, March 2nd.

This course will focus on acquiring skills in rabbinic crisis intervention and bereavement, as well as practical guidance in coping with family and rabbinic stress.

COURSE 2: Making Tanach Come Alive: New Models and Methodologies in Teaching the Text

Instructor: Rabbi Hershel Billet

Thursdays from 9:00pm to 10:00pm. February 12th, 19th, 26th, March 4th

This course will focus on a number of exciting and innovative traditional teachers of Tanach, in America and in Israel, analyzing their approaches and highlighting possibilities of rabbinic utilization thereof.

COURSE 3: Preparing Chomer L'Derush and Chomer L'Shiur for Spring 5764

Instructor: Rabbi Dr. Jacob J. Schacter

Tuesdays from 2:30pm to 3:30pm. February 10th, 17th, 24th, March 2nd.

A joint project of the RCA and the Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik Institute of Boston. This course will demonstrate a practical methodology for rabbinic preparation for public presentations, and will include extensive sources and ideas covering the included time frame.

COURSE 4: Batei Din, Gittin, and Balebatim: Guidelines for the Rabbi

Instructor: Rabbi Howard Jachter

Tuesdays 8:30pm to 9:30pm. February 10th, 17th, 24th, March 2nd

This course will provide essential information related to Bet Din procedures that rabbis need to know (and convey to their congregants) in dealing with Batei Din.

For further information and to register, you may call e-mail us at office@rabbis.org or call 212-807-7888.

FROM THE DESK OF OUR PRESIDENT RABBI KENNETH AUMAN

I had the pleasure of attending the recent GA in Yerushalayim last month, and would like to share some of my observations and thoughts with you. I must confess that I went with some degree of trepidation, since I generally anticipate great spiritual inspiration and renewal on my visits to Israel, and was unsure whether I could anticipate the same on this visit. After all, the General Assembly of UJC represents the totality of American Jewry which is basically secular in orientation. I was also heading a delegation from my *shul*, and was wary of the reaction of my congregants to the proceedings.

The mission turned out to be wonderful in all respects. The fact that this was the best-attended GA in its history, is testament to the fact that Israel still holds a magnetic attraction for all sorts of Jews. Jerusalem can attract Jews as no American city can, and the magic of Israel in general and Jerusalem in particular had its effect on the entire assemblage. The solidarity march from Binyanei Ha'uma, where the proceedings took place, to Kikar Tzion, was a highlight for all who participated.

I ended up being inspired in two very different ways. One was from witnessing so many different types of Jews, from so many different communities all across North America all befriending each other and all present for the purpose of providing *chizuk* to Israel. It created moments of *achdut* that are unfortunately rarely found and that are therefore extremely precious. The other area of inspiration was derived

from what I perceived to be the positive way in which Orthodoxy - Torah Judaism was presented throughout. This was not done by specific design, and we cannot take collective credit for it, but the impression created was of a vibrant Orthodoxy that cares for all Jews. This came across in many different ways, both subtle, and not so subtle. From Michael Steinhart's closing address in which he strongly criticized every group but the Orthodox for failing to insure and encourage Jewish continuity, to a *dvar Torah* given *bifnei am va'eda* by one of the leading Federation heads, the honor of Torah was enhanced.

The RCA Israel region used the opportunity of having so many Americans in Israel to hold a special convocation in honor of New Jersey Metro West Federation of which funds some of our activities in Israel. The gathering was well attended, and featured such distinguished participants as the Chief Rabbis of Israel and Cabinet Minister Natan Sharansky among others. I had occasion to meet privately with the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi to be updated on the serious issue of the consequences of the dismantling of the Ministry of Religion and its implications for the *Batei Din*. We also met with Mayor Lapoliansky to discuss the feasibility of a significant and well attended RCA program in Israel in the near future.

May we all be *zocheh* to continue working *lehagdil Torah ulehaadira*.

I am happy to take the opportunity - presented by another issue of *Ma'aseh Rav* - to share with our *chaverim* an update of developments in and around the RCA. I do so not out of a sense of satisfaction at accomplishments achieved or imagined, but rather in the hope that this will in turn elicit a greater sense of ownership and belonging, and therefore participation, by all our *chaverim*, in the affairs of the RCA. What follows is the result of the efforts of many people - including our elected leadership, far-flung members, office staff, and outside professionals.

I. THE PROCESS OF REVIEW AND CONSULTATION PROCEEDS APACE

- a. We have received a very respectable number of responses to the questionnaire sent out several weeks ago to our membership list, and they continue to come in on a daily basis. We cannot stress enough how much importance we attach to the thoughts that our *chaverim* are sharing with us in this and other ways. Therefore please make sure to fill out and return the survey in the envelope provided.
- b. The three Task Forces (Membership Services, Relationships with Organizations and Institutions, and Finance/Operations) charged with responsibility to review our committees and many activities are moving forward on track. In the months ahead they will be soliciting information from a wide variety of *chaverim*, lay people, and professionals.
- c. We continue to maintain and enhance close relations with sister organizations such as YU and the OU, seeking ways of helping each other better achieve our shared goals and aspirations, by revitalizing the RCA as a central address for Torah Judaism.

2. CONTINUING RABBINIC EDUCATION

a. I am thrilled to report that Rabbi Gideon Shloush, one of our most dedicated, enthusiastic, and talented younger *chaverim*, has been engaged on a part time basis as the Director of Rabbinic Education and Enrichment. He will be working closely with me as we move

forward on a variety of rabbinic educational projects in the months ahead.

b. His first task will be to oversee the launch of the Rabbi Steven Dworken Continuing Rabbinic Education Program. This will occur on the occasion of the first *yahrzeit* of our beloved *chaver*, *alav hashalom*, in early February (see elsewhere in this issue for further details.)

c. You will shortly receive the first online mailing of our rabbinic listserv project. Moderated by our *chaver*, Rabbi Daniel Korobkin, this will provide a wonderful opportunity for *chaverim* to address and share questions, issues, comments, and ideas with colleagues, and enable us to compensate in some measure for the physical distances that separate us.

d. A similar project has already been launched to bring together our *chaverim* who serve all over the world as chaplains in the U.S. military.

e. We thank the many *chaverim* who responded to our questions regarding the sermonic materials prepared and sent out by our *chaver*, Nissan Shulman. We are in the process of reviewing and further improving on this valuable resource, for which we are most indebted to Rabbi Shulman.

f. Rabbinic Educational and resource material will be a regular feature of *Ma'aseh Rav*.

g. A key element in providing rabbinic resources and enrichment will be the new member section of the RCA website. Within a matter of weeks we expect to have it up and running, with all kinds of material: extensive digitized audio and video tapes, as well as written summaries, of the Torah of the Rav and Rav Aharon; digitized audiotapes of sessions delivered at past and recent conventions; the texts of all past RCA convention resolutions; links to valuable online resources (including *shiurim* at RIETS, popular *parsha* and Torah sites,) programmatic ideas and resources, how-to and best practices modules, and more.

3. TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

a. We have chosen a very fine software program that will tie together our membership databases, Tradition subscriptions, Registry information, members billing and demographic information, cemetery plot information, convention registrations, and more. This will lead to much greater efficiencies (and avoidance of error) in keeping track of essential information. Much of this information will be available to *chaverim* on the members-only section of the RCA website (which *chaverim* will be able to access with their own password) soon to be established.

b. We continue to upgrade our computers, networking, and use of technology *bichlal*. This will include digital recordings and photographs of conference calls and meetings to be made available on line.

c. We have added many member e-mail addresses to our database in the past few weeks. Going forward many of our communications will be sent via e-mail and using the RCA website, for reasons of immediacy, economy, efficiency, and remaining current. We cannot stress enough the importance of our *chaverim* sharing their e-mail addresses with us. Indeed this will be last issue of *Ma'aseh Rav* to be physically mailed to the entire membership. Only those without e-mail, or who request it, will henceforth receive it in the mail. And increasingly this will be true of other mailings of the organization as well.

d. We continue to find that face to face meetings are increasingly difficult to setup, attend, and render effective. Obviously some meetings will continue to be in person, as needed, but for the most part we will increasingly use conference calls, webcasting, and other emerging technologies, for the benefit of all concerned.

4. FINANCES

a. We have engaged the services of Loeb and Troper, a highly respected consulting firm, specializing in non-profit organizational management and finances, to review and

make recommendations in all areas of our financial and organizational procedures, reporting, and protocols. This will ensure that we conform to the best standards of industry-practice, as well as *halachic* accountability standards. This will also ensure that we are fully aware of the practices and policies of organizations similar to ours.

b. We are making sure that our current financial resources are being put to best use in the current low-interest environment. This includes ongoing review of all income and expenditures.

c. We continue to make every effort to collect dues receivable from all of our *chaverim*. This involves a time-consuming and expensive repeated billing of *chaverim*. We urge you therefore to pay all amounts due as soon as possible so that we can provide the highest level of service to our membership.

d. We are well into the process for establishing a comprehensive budget for the coming year 2004.

e. We are making efforts to followup with, and expand on, the roster of Tradition Fellows.

5. NEW MEMBERSHIP ISSUES

a. The Semicha Standards committee has met to consider a number of *semicha*-granting institutions and private *masmichim* not currently on our approved list. Letters have gone out to solicit pertinent information, so that their *musmachim* will be evaluated on the merits and the facts, both of their *semicha* sources, and their personal qualifications.

b. Those institutions already on the approved list will also be reviewed, evaluated, and their status updated.

c. The Membership Application form is currently being revamped.

d. Applications for membership continue to come in on a regular basis.

6. PUBLICITY

a. We are reviewing and planning more effective means of promoting our views and perspectives on the public issues of the day. To this end we have been holding meetings and interviews that we hope will result in our retaining the services of a publicist in the near future.

b. We have similarly met with individuals who are experienced with promoting such views and perspectives in the Jewish and general media.

c. We will be examining available practical models for formulating responsible viewpoints and responses to public issues as they arise, including Israel issues, science and technology, gender issues, denominational politics, etc.

7. PUBLICATIONS

a. Tradition continues to be an outstanding journal of Torah thought. We are reviewing a number of production and financial issues, which will further enhance this valuable RCA project.

b. Other potential publications that are under consideration include a new RCA *siddur*, *Madrikh*, etc.

c. The RCA *ketuba* second marriage document will shortly be reprinted.

8. CONVENTIONS

a. Many *chaverim* have shared their feelings that our conventions need updating and rethinking. In the months ahead we will consider all our options and possibilities.

b. This is true of the annual convention, as well as the Israel summer conference.

c. To supplement the major annual events, we will make special efforts to schedule mini-conferences or *yemei iyyun* in different parts of the country.

9. PHYSICAL FACILITIES

a. With the help of a generous grant from the OU, we continue to upgrade our physical facilities at 305 Seventh Avenue.

b. New carpeting, file cabinets, and office furniture will shortly be added. We are also looking to expand our *sefarim* base. If any *chaver* has access to a spare complete set of *Shas*, *Rambam*, or other major rabbinic works, that are in good condition, we could certainly make good use of them for our conference room.

c. *Chaverim* should feel welcome to visit our facilities (including the Beth Din of America, and our Israel *yeshivot* offices, with whom we happily share facilities) at any time. We have a well-attended *mincha minyan* Monday through Thursday at 1:45pm.

In conclusion, I stress once more the importance of our *chaverim* sharing their thoughts and concerns with our officers and myself. This is an exciting time for the RCA, and with your enthusiastic participation, much can be accomplished, for the good of our *chaverim*, our synagogues and communities, as well as *Klal Yisrael*.

NOTICES:

We urge our *chaverim* to take care of their dues before the end of the fiscal year with all of the tax benefits to accrue. Follow-up bills will be in the mail during the next few weeks.

Beginning with the next publication of *Maaseh Rav*, *Maaseh Rav* will be posted on our website and mailed only to those *chaverim* who do not have e-mail. If you would like to continue receiving *Maaseh*

Rav via snail mail, please e-mail the RCA office at office@rabbis.org.

A number of our *chaverim* are serving as military chaplains around the world. At the present time, they have a need for the following:

1. A *megilla* on loan until after Purim. The chaplain will be leaving for Iraq on January 15th and will personally transport and take responsibility for the *megilla* to be brought back after Purim.

2. A *Sefer Torah* to be loaned for a lengthy period of time.

3. An Air Force chaplain is searching for used Bimbaum *machzorim* either for sale or donation. If you can be of help please contact Chaplain Don Levy at Donald.Levy@USAF.af.mil or 719-333-2856.

For further information, contact Rabbi David Lapp at davidlapp@jcca.org.

JONAH (Jews Offering New Alternatives to Homosexuality)

is the only Jewish based organization dedicated to assisting individuals with unwanted same sex attractions move from "gay" to "straight."

Rabbis may refer any individuals within their congregations who are dealing with unwanted same sex attractions or any families who have a member thereof facing such an issue. Please contact them if you need referrals for therapists who specialize in working with this population or for programs that may be of assistance. JONAH's numerous support groups may be of value to congregants, either for those struggling with the issue and/or for their families.

Their Speaker's Bureau (including many individuals who have recovered from same sex attraction) helps educate the Orthodox world that change of sexual orientation is achievable (contrary to popular mythology that people are born that way and that such condition is unchangeable). Such change of sexual orientation can occur, whether such orientation involves arousals, fantasies, identity, or behavior. Speakers are available to synagogues anywhere within the United States, Canada and certain other countries.

JONAH can be reached either through their message line 201-433-3444, through an e-mail to jonahhelp@aol.com or by mail to P.O. Box 313, Jersey City, NJ 07302. Our website is www.jonahweb.org.

Loss and Renewal One Day Conference - A full day conference for rabbis, chaplains and mental health professionals will take place on March 16th, 2004 at the JCC in Manhattan on the theme of understanding the grief process from a Jewish perspective. Titled "Out of the Narrow Straits: Integrating Jewish Narrative into Grief Counseling Skills," the conference will explore the Torah texts of *Gan Eden* and *Yeziat Mitzrayim* as metaphors of the grief and transformation process. The one day conference will include experiential exercises that will help participants work with the grief of their congregants in a fuller manner.

The conference speaker is Benyamin Cirlin, CSW, Executive Director of the Center for Loss and Renewal, a group private practice specializing in Life Transition Therapy, and Bereavement Coordinator of the Jacob Perlow Hospice at Beth Israel Medical Center. Mr. Cirlin has years of experience in working with professionals around issues of grief and loss.

The fee for the workshop, including a kosher lunch, is \$95. For further information, contact Mr. Cirlin at 212-874-4711 or benmir@lossandrenewal.com

Sha'at Ratzon is a Residential Treatment Program located in Jerusalem designed to provide a safe and secure atmosphere of recovery for Orthodox Jews suffering from self-destructive behaviors such as drug and alcohol abuse.

Sha'at Ratzon understands and respects the individuals religious practices and cultural background. The *Sha'at Ratzon* staff has experience working with emotional problems including domestic violence, sexual abuse, and assorted addiction issues.

For further information please contact shaatratzon@bezeqint.net

Siddurim/Machzorim:

Available Phillips/Adler *machzorim*, *Tikkun Meir* and other such siddurim in decent condition. For more information, please contact Rabbi Zvi Romm, 212-475-0165 or zdromm73@aol.com.

Vacation Homes in Israel: To help Americans find and secure vacation homes in Israel during a visit of as little as 2-3 days, the Israel Homes Program has been recently created. The predominantly U.S.-born team consists of an attorney, a licensed real estate agent, and a mortgage banker in Israel, as well as a coordinator in New York.

Contact Gary Steinman at 718-278-7676 or dav4601@aol.com for more information or to arrange a PowerPoint presentation to interested groups in your *shul*.

Yoatzot Halacha. If you are interested in bringing a woman Torah scholar to your community, including *Rabbanit* Chana Henkin or a *Yoetzet Halacha*, please contact Sondra H. Fisch at American Friends of Nishmat at 212-983-6975 or AFNishmat@aol.com.

A sample of the topics addressed by the *Yoatzot Halacha* are:

- * Women's Health and *Halacha*
- * *Taharat Hamishpacha* and Women's Health
- * A Refresher Course in *Taharat Hamishpacha*
- * Menopause and Women's Health

**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE EPILOGUE (CHAPTER X) OF
RABBI JOSEPH B. SOLOVEITCHIK'S THE LONELY MAN OF FAITH**

We are all familiar with the Rav's *The Lonely Man of Faith*, published originally in *Tradition* Volume 7.2, in 1965, and republished since then (most recently by Jason Aronson, Inc.) It is without doubt a brilliant statement and analysis of the human condition, as experienced by the Jew of faith. But it is also of particular relevance to the rabbinic calling, a message that we should return to, again and again, for inspiration and guidance as we toil in the vineyards of *Hashem Yitbarach*.

“So he departed thence, and found Elisha, the son of Shafat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him and he with the twelfth; and Elijah passed by him and cast his mantle upon him. And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, ‘let me I pray thee kiss my father and my mother and then I will follow thee,’ and he said unto him, ‘go back again for what have I done to thee.’ And he returned back from him and took a yoke of oxen and slew them and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen and gave unto the people and they did eat. Then he arose and went after Elijah and ministered unto him. (I Kings, 19:19-21)”

Elisha was a typical representative of the majestic community. He was the son of a prosperous farmer, a man of property, whose interests were centered around this-worldly, material goods such as crops, livestock, and market prices. His objective was economic success, his aspiration-material wealth. The Bible portrays him as efficient, capable, and practical, remindful of a modern business executive. When Elijah met him, we are told, he was supervising the work done by the slaves. He was with the twelfth yoke in order not to lose sight of the slave-laborers. What did this man of majesty have in common with Elijah, the solitary covenantal prophet, the champion of God, the adversary of kings, who walked as a stranger through the bustling cities of Shomron, past royal pomp and grandeur, negating the worth of all goods to which his contemporaries were committed, reproaching the sinners, preaching the law of God and portending His wrath? What bond could exist between a complacent farmer who enjoyed his homestead and the man in the hairy dress who came from nowhere and who finally disappeared under a veil of mystery? Yet unexpectedly, the call came through to this unimaginative, self-centered farmer. Suddenly the mantle of Elijah was cast upon him. While he was engaged in the most ordinary, everyday activity, in tilling the soil, he encountered God and felt the transforming touch of God's hand. The strangest metamorphosis occurred. Within seconds, the old Elisha disappeared and new Elisha emerged. Majestic man was replaced by covenantal man. He was initiated into a new spiritual universe in which

clumsy social-class distinctions had little meaning, wealth played no role, and a serene, illuminated, universal "we" consciousness supplanted the small, limited, and selfish "I" consciousness. Old concerns changed, past commitments vanished, cherished hopes faded, and a new vision of redemptive-covenantal reality incommensurate with the old vision of an enjoyable-majestic reality beckoned to him. No more did the "farmer" care for the oxen, the means of making the soil yield its abundance, which were so precious to him a while ago. No more was he concerned with anything which was so dear to him before. He slew the oxen and fed the meat to the slaves who, half-starved, tilled the soil for him and whom he, until that meeting with Elijah, had treated with contempt. Moreover, covenantal man renounced his family relationships. He bade farewell to father and mother and departed from their home for good. Like his master he became homeless. Like his ancestor Jacob he became a "straying Aramean" who took defeat and humiliation with charity and gratitude. However, Elisha's withdrawal from majesty was not final. He followed the dialectical course of all our prophets. Later when he achieved the pinnacle of faith and arrived at the outer boundaries of human commitment, he came back to society as a participant in state affairs, as an adviser of kings and a teacher of the majestic community. God ordered him to return to the people, to offer them a share in the covenantal drama and to involve them in the great and solemn colloquy. He was God's messenger carrying, like Moses, two tablets of stone containing the covenantal *kerygma*. Many a time he felt

disenchanted and frustrated because his words were scornfully rejected. However, Elisha never despaired or resigned. Despair and resignation were unknown to the man of the covenant who found triumph in defeat, hope in failure, and who could not conceal God's Word that was, to paraphrase Jeremiah, deeply implanted in his bones and burning in his heart like an all-consuming fire. Elisha was indeed lonely, but in his loneliness he met the Lonely One and discovered the singular covenantal confrontation of solitary man and God who abides in the recesses of transcendental solitude.

Is modern man of faith entitled to a more privileged position and a less exacting and sacrificial role?

The following rabbis have applied for membership in the RCA. Members are invited to comment in preparation for their acceptance.

Rabbi Joseph Bloch
Kitchener, ON

Rabbi Raphael Bokov
Glasgow, SCOTLAND

Rabbi Naphtali Burnstein
Beachwood, OH

Rabbi Aaron Frank
Baltimore, MD

Rabbi Joshua Joseph
Lawrence, NY

Rabbi Shmuel Lipszyk
Woodbury, NY

Rabbi David Moyal
Dallas, TX

A LETTER FROM OUR *CHAVER* IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY

Dear *Chaver*:

On behalf of the Jewish Community of Turkey I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the heartfelt messages of condolence and encouragement that rabbis of the RCA so kindly sent immediately after the terrible incident in our synagogue.

The repetition of such acts of terror just days after those that occurred in our synagogues only increased our sorrow and pain. Your letters and phone calls were of much comfort.

I myself was not in either *shul* at the time. My father (the Chief Rabbi), three brothers, and other family members had been in the synagogues. My brother was injured in the attack. He underwent a twelve-hour operation; his face and one eye had been badly cut by glass shards from the window; he now has 60% vision restored in that eye. The first miracle was that only one person was killed inside the synagogue. Five Jews were killed outside. A Jewish guard, who was doing a favor for another guard and was told his service would be for just an hour, prevented the bomber from entering the building with his one ton bomb. If that had happened, hundreds of synagogue-goers would have died. He died a hero. A second miracle was about an early *minyan* which usually disperses at 9:30. An older congregant kept them there an extra ten minutes because he elongated *shaharit* by reciting *shema* in Turkish as well as Hebrew. If this *minyan* had left on time, 80 men would have been outside - in the most deadly path when the bomb went off.

May G-d strengthen us to resist such cruelty and achieve the goal to live on in peace.

If any one wants to help families of the victims, you may send donations to the J.D.C. 711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017 earmarked for Turkey.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Naftali Haleva

בשורות טובות

Rabbi and Mrs. Kenneth Auman on the birth of their granddaughter, Menucha Tova.

Rabbi and Mrs. Richard Bieler on the birth of their granddaughter, Ahuva.

Rabbi and Mrs. Hershel Billet on the birth of their granddaughter, Aliza Miriam.

Rabbi Irving Glickman on the birth of his great grandson, Yisroel Chaim.

Rabbi and Mrs. David Gorelik and **Rabbi and Mrs. Moshe Gorelik** on the bar mitzva of their son/grandson, Eliezer Tuvia.

Rabbi and Mrs. Kenneth Hain on the birth of their grandson, Ami.

Rabbi and Mrs. Joshua Hertzberg on the bar mitzva of their grandson, Yehuda Yair.

Rabbi and Mrs. Barry Kornblau on the birth of their twin daughters, Ayelet Meira and Shira Hadassah.

Rabbi and Mrs. Shalom Kurz and **Rabbi and Mrs. Moshe Gorelik** on the marriage of their daughter/granddaughter, Tova, to David Halpern.

Rabbi and Mrs. Ari Perl on the birth of their son, Assaf Yehuda.

Rabbi and Mrs. Chaim Sacknovitz on the marriage of their daughter, Ilana, to Ami Plaksin.

Rabbi and Mrs. Gideon Shloush on the birth of their daughter, Ariella Malka.

Rabbi and Mrs. Brian Thau on the bar mitzva of their son, Yori Yeshaya Shalom.

Rabbi Louis M. Tuchman on the marriage of his granddaughter, Shifra Davidman, to Ryan Shell.

נחום אבלים

We mourn the loss of our *chaverim*:

Rabbi Oscar Fasman, ז"ל and **Rabbi Eugene Markovitz**, ז"ל

Mrs. Emanuel (Norma) Holzer on the loss of her mother.

Rabbi Jacob Rubinstein on the loss of his father.

to: רפואה שלמה

Rabbi David Stavsky

SAVE THE DATES:

**RCA ANNUAL
CONVENTION**

TUESDAY-THURSDAY

י"ב-י"ד סיון, תשס"ד

JUNE 1-3, 2004

ארץ החיים

Situated in the Jerusalem hills, near Beit Shemesh, the RCA has available for sale, at reasonable rates, *kevarim* for our *chaverim*, their families, as well as congregants and members of your community. With such a purchase, you will ensure peace of mind and the highest level of professional treatment after 120 years, as well as providing financial support to further the important work of the RCA in assisting all our *chaverim* and communities.

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