

Thoughts From The Lubavitcher Rebbe

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

...and it shall be that the place in which G-d your G-d will choose to make his name abide there. (Deut. 12:11). Rashi explains that the place which G-d will choose is Jerusalem.

Synagogues in this country are built so that the congregation faces east; the ark and Torah scrolls being placed on the east wall. When we say the Amida (the silent devotional prayer highlighting every service) we are to face east which is the direction in which the Holy land lies, relative to America and Europe. In every country we are to face the direction in which Eretz Yisroel lies, so that in Turkey, for example, which lies to the north of Israel, synagogues are built facing the south. Worshippers outside the Holy land must turn their faces towards the land in prayer and they must have in mind that they are facing toward Jerusalem, the Bais Hamikdash (the holy sanctuary), and the Holy of Holies, the inner sanctum of the Holy Temple.

The hearts of the people of Israel, are scattered all over the globe and are turned to one point - Jerusalem. Wherever a Jew prays he turns to the Holy city; thus, even in those places that are physically outside the boundaries of Eretz Yisroel, spiritually Jerusalem is there.

In the "Book Of Life," a work authored by a brother of the famed Maharel of Prague (Rabbi Judah Lowe) he explains that the Torah uses the expression "...the place which G-d will choose..." to imply that wherever a person prays to the Almighty that is the place which G-d has chosen. But what of the statement in the Talmud "whoever lives outside Eretz Yisroel is as if he has no G-d"? This refers to one who has, in his mind "permanently established" his residence in the Diaspora to the extent that he has no thoughts of the redemption, no thought of "moshiach" (the messiah) and no thoughts of the Holy land. But the person who turns towards Eretz Yisroel whenever he prays, his place of residence wherever it may be is "chosen by G-d."

Let us all turn toward Israel in its time of need. Let the people hear our voices of support. Let us unite with Israel and pray for the coming of Moshiach NOW.

אל תפוש מן הצבור

DO NOT SEPARATE YOURSELF FROM THE COMMUNITY

Governor Appoints 3

Dr. Susan Cernyak, Cele Scher and Kitty Huffman have all been appointed to the recently formed state-wide Governor's Commission on the Holocaust. The functions of this commission will include conducting the annual Holocaust Commemoration, arranging for Holocaust displays around the state and exploring ways to keep the lessons of the Holocaust known and understood among all the residents of the state.

Each of the three appointees from Charlotte has made major contributions to Holocaust education and understanding in our community. Dr. Cernyak, a Holocaust survivor, has worked with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System to incorporate Holocaust Education into ongoing curriculum. Mrs. Scher is the chairperson of the Holocaust sub-committee of the Federation Community Relations Committee. She has been an organizer of Holocaust commemoration programs for the Jewish Community.

Mrs. Kitty Huffman is the former director of the local chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. She has worked with Dr. Cernyak on the issue of curriculum and organized the annual community-wide Holocaust Memorial Service conducted by NCCJ in cooperation with the synagogues and churches.



Benjie Schrader celebrates his Bar Mitzvah at Temple Beth El's retreat at Wildacres. Left to right: Kim Robert, Jay, Benjie and Sally Schrader with Rabbi Krantzler.

Yiddish Book Drive Begins

A city-wide drive to collect old Yiddish books began today in Charlotte. Marvin Bienstock, area spokesperson for the National Yiddish Book Exchange, announced plans to round up discarded Yiddish books from cellars and attics throughout the city. Collected volumes will be sent to a central repository in Northampton, Massachusetts, where they will be restored and made available to teachers, students and university libraries.

Yiddish literature once enjoyed enormous popularity among the area's immigrant Jewish population. Sets of Sholem Aleichem, Y.L. Peretz and other Yiddish classics were to be found in almost every Jewish home. In later years, however, assimilation took its toll. Books which had been treasured by parents and grandparents were often

packed away and forgotten by a new generation of American-born Jews, who read no Yiddish.

Today, after a gap of almost fifty years, Yiddish is experiencing a startling revival. Courses in Yiddish language and literature have been introduced at more than forty North American universities. Long forgotten Yiddish books are urgently needed by a new generation of students and scholars.

Collectors hope many needed volumes will be found in local homes. All donations of Yiddish books and periodicals are welcome. Books should be brought to the area drop-off point, located at 600 N. Sharon Amity Rd., Charlotte, N.C. at the Jewish Comm. Center. Pick up service is also available. For more information please phone Marvin at 366-0358.

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Ilse Bergen

mentioned over and over was that of transportation for the members of "Chai" to and from classes. "I used to shake and have sleepless nights about it," she said.

But problems aside, Bergen looked back on her years as program director of "Chai" as a "very, very, VERY rewarding experience."

"I'm not leaving with any bitterness," she said. "It is

really something to be proud of, and I'm really proud of it."

Part of the reasoning behind her resignation was the heavy burden of responsibility of the program and the toll it was having on her, Bergen said.

She also said that her seven years of work with "Chai" has exhausted her resources, and that her replacement could help expand the group with new and better contacts, ideas and experience.

Commenting on her successor, Bergen said that there would be no problem running the program because "it practically runs itself."

The new program head must have a special quality, she said that enables him or her to deal with older people, to really like them, and to have patience with them.

As for the future of "Chai," Bergen said that she would like to see it expand. "I want it to get bigger and bigger," she said.

Bergen plans on spending a vacation in Europe and then seeking "some meaningful volunteer work."

"I'll do something or I'll go nuts," she said.

But no matter what she does, Chai will never be far away.

"I may even go back and help again. I'll always be interested in the "Chai" group," she said. "My heart is with them."

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