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The SA Jewish Report, directors, editor, general manager and staff, wish the Jewish community and our advertisers, Chag Sameach and a meaningful fast. May you be inscribed in the Book of Life for a sweet year.



Northcliff shul's stunning windows /24

SOUTH AFRICAN Jewish Report 

www.sajewishreport.co.za Friday, 7 September 2007 / 24 Elul 5767 Volume 11 Number 34

Ehud Olmert won't go the American way...

PM Olmert has promised to pass legislation for a more stable government. Israel has had no less than 31 governments in 59 years of statehood. The past eight years have seen six defence ministers, seven foreign ministers and eight finance ministers. Well-intentioned efforts to refine the system in the past have come to naught because political will was lacking. This time the prognosis for change looks good. **PAGE 27**

Ya'alon: Stop pressing Israel for more concessions / 29

'The region is riven by clashes that have nothing to do with Israel. For instance, the Jewish state plays no role in the conflict between Shi'ites and Sunnis, between Persians and Arabs or between Arab nationalists and Arab Islamists. 'The second misconception is that Israeli territorial concessions are the key to progress.'

Israeli columnist slammed for 'apartheid' comment / 26

Recipes for Chagim / 48

Should kingklip be kosher? / 14

Scales can also always be found on the kingklip's cheek, if not on their bodies, which holds true for many other fish as well. But some antagonists claim that the scales are too thin to be considered scales as such.

Symbols and sounds of the shofar / 44

600 attend grand Mizrachi dinner / 18

Saying sorry / 8

SAJR Publishing schedule

Due to the Chagim the SAJR will not be published next week. Our next three issues will appear on September 21, October 1 and October 12. Thereafter we will resume our regular schedule every Friday.



On their way to shul

It's before Shabbos and people start their journey to shul. Come rain, come shine, the Jewish faithful keep their covenant with Hashem. This photograph was taken in the Johannesburg suburb of Highlands North, as dusk sets in. (Photo Shelley Elk)

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New Year's message: Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein



ROSH HASHANAH is a time for focus. It is a time to prioritise. There is so much involved in being a good Jew, but there are also certain foundational values of Judaism.

Community is one such value. This was brought home to me during a recent visit to our community of one of the great rabbinic leaders of our time, Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetsky.

We had the enormous privilege of having such a great man in our midst. At the age of 82 he is one of the elder statesmen and leaders of world Jewry, a widely respected Torah scholar and leader. On a number of occasions during his visit he reiterated the importance of being what he called a "Klal Mensch".

The word Klal refers to community, but also conveys a giving person who is dedicated to the welfare of others and of the community in general. Making a difference to others, to the community and to society for good is so important. In Ethics of the Fathers (2:4), we are taught "Do not separate yourself from the community."

We each have something unique to contribute. Each one of us has a different role to play. There are so many areas in which to get involved. As a community, we have a very proud record in establishing and running highly effective shuls, schools, welfare institutions, and even emergency ambulance services. Most recently, I have been so inspired to see members of our community taking responsibility for the fight against crime through our very successful initiative, called CAP - Community Active Protection.

Rabbi Kamenetsky emphasised that one of the key areas of focus for Rosh Hashanah is to ensure that we are part of the community through being dedicated to helping others and making a difference. This is clear in the portion which is always read the Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah, which states (Deuteronomy Ch 29: 9 - 14):

"You are standing today, all of you before the L-rd, your G-d: the heads of your tribes, your elders, and your officers - all the people of Israel... from the hewer of your wood to the drawer of your water, for you to pass into the covenant of Hashem, your G-d... in order to establish you today as a people to Him and that he be a G-d to you, as He spoke to you and as He promised to your forefathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

These verses, which emphasise the unity of the Jewish people as part of G-d's covenant, are situated significantly after G-d's warning to the Jewish people not to stray from the path of the good-

ness and the disastrous consequences that flow from that.

The Talmud (Midrash Tanchuma) says that the people became frightened after hearing these warnings. G-d comforted them by saying: "You are standing here today, all of you before the L-rd your G-d."

When we are part of the Jewish people, we are able to rise above all the trials and tribulations of our destiny. As we approach Rosh Hashanah, we feel a sense of trepidation that comes with the Day of Judgement. So, we read these verses to remind ourselves that when we become attached to the Jewish people - to our community - we can face the challenges that lie ahead with fortitude.

Rabbi Kamenetsky explained that when we are part of a community, we can stand before G-d in judgement because we do not stand on our own, but rather as part of the whole Jewish people. When we actively give to others and contribute to society, any decisions that G-d makes about us has an impact on other people.

A "Klal Mensch" is judged more favourably by G-d because whatever happens to him or her, affects the lives of so many other people.

Rabbi Kamenetsky also explained how G-d gave the Torah to the "Klal", to the whole community and people of Israel, and not to individuals. Thus, He did not give the Torah to Abraham, Isaac or Jacob, but rather waited until after the Jewish people were moulded into a nation through the Egyptian slavery and then their subsequent G-d-given liberation.

We as the Jewish people all share a common history and fate. Rabbi Kamenetsky commented during his visit that one of the most precious and unique aspects of our South African Jewish community is the togetherness, strong sense of community identity and unity that we have here.

He witnessed it at our Annual Rabbinical Conference, where he was a special guest. He saw it at a variety of communal functions where large and diverse crowds greeted him excitedly wherever he went.

The Talmud, in commenting on the verse "all of you", says that our strength comes from our unity: that while a single twig can easily be broken, a bundle of twigs together can resist destruction. So, too, when we stand together before G-d, we can endure.

Let us rededicate ourselves this Rosh Hashanah to contributing to community and togetherness and, in the merit of this, may Hashem bless us all with a year filled with His abundant goodness.

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SHABBAT AND YOMTOV TIMES

Sep 07 / 24 Elul
Sep 08 / 25 Elul

Starts	Ends	
17:40	18:29	Johannesburg
18:10	19:06	Cape Town
17:26	18:17	Durban
17:46	18:36	Bloemfontein
17:46	18:38	Port Elizabeth
17:37	18:29	East London

Parshat Nitzavim Vayelech

Please note that these are the latest times for candle-lighting. Don't forget to also light a flame which will burn over both days.

Erev Rosh Hashanah
Sept 12 / 29 Elul

Starts	
17:42	Johannesburg
18:10	Cape Town
17:29	Durban
17:49	Bloemfontein
17:49	Port Elizabeth
17:40	East London

Please remember to light from a pre existing flame. These are the earliest times for candle-lighting.

2nd night Rosh Hashanah

Sept 13 / 1 Tishrei

Starts	
18:31	Johannesburg
19:10	Cape Town
18:19	Durban
18:39	Bloemfontein
18:41	Port Elizabeth
18:32	East London

Shabbat Times

Please remember to light from a pre-existing flame. Please note this is the latest time for candle-lighting.

2nd day Rosh Hashanah
Erev Shabbat

Sept 14 / 2 Tishrei
Sept 15 / 3 Tishrei

Starts	Ends	
17:43	18:32	Johannesburg
18:10	19:11	Cape Town
17:30	18:20	Durban
17:50	18:40	Bloemfontein
17:50	18:42	Port Elizabeth
17:42	18:33	East London

Parshat Ha'azinu

Sept 16 / 4 Tishrei
Tzom Gedalia - Fast of Gedaliah

Starts	Ends	
04:56	18:20	Johannesburg
05:30	18:57	Cape Town
04:43	18:07	Durban
05:02	18:27	Bloemfontein
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The SAZF, together with other Zionist organisations, is hosting a plethora of wonderful celebrations for Israel's 60th independence anniversary from November 2007 – November 2008. Please diarise these events. Further details will be released at intervals. Contact 011 645 2505.



14 November 2007; Linder Auditorium; Bookings: 011 645 2541	WORLD PREMIERE: ISRAEL'S DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY CONCERT Starring Dudu Fisher; Yevgeny Shapovalov; Colin Schachat; Lionel Mkhwanazi
February 2008 & August 2008	GOURMET QUIZ EVENINGS - With quizmaster Larry Benjamin
9/10 March 2008	"CELEBRATION 60" Concert - Oshy Tugendhaft and the Celebration Singers and Orchestra
13 April 2008	OFF SIMCHAS - Vibrant and exhilarating Israeli band
2/3 May 2008	SHABBAT AM YEHUDI - For the whole family, a special Shabbaton celebrating Israel
6 May 2008	YOM HAZIKARON - In the midst of our joy, we grieve for the lost lives
7 May 2008	YOM HA'ATZMAUT - Exciting, vibrant and electrifying celebration
May- June 2008	YOM YERUSHALAYIM - 60 years of Israel in photographic, stamp and coin exhibitions
May 2008	60th Anniversary ISRAEL NOW TOUR - 13th Unique Tour
May 2008	PANEL DISCUSSION on ISRAEL - With expert speakers including top international journalists
June 2008	PIANO RECITAL - Young Israeli prodigal pianist from Ma'alot
July 2008	SPORTS MONTH - Junior (→ 10 years) Triathlon; Bowls and Golf Days; Fun Walks for Israel
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November 2007	SING A SONG OF DELIGHT - Song writing competition for everyone
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PARSHA OF THE WEEK

Repent now - avoid the Yom Kippur rush

ROSH HASHANAH is almost upon us and, interestingly, is alluded to in the opening line of this week's Parsha. You are standing this day, all of you, before Hashem, your G-d. Commentary informs us that this day - Hayom - is a reference to the great Day of Judgment, the day of days.

Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of the Ten Days of Repentance which culminate on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. So it is not too early to talk about repentance, or as we refer to it in Hebrew - Teshuvah.

There are two popular misconceptions about Teshuvah and, ironically, they come from opposite sides of the spectrum. The first is I'm too good, ie repentance is for sinners and since I'm no sinner and am basically a good guy and a good Jew, this process is irrelevant to me. No need for it on my agenda.

If I'm okay, I'm exempt from Teshuvah. Right? Wrong! That's the first fallacy. No one is exempt. Teshuvah is not only for blatant sins and misdemeanours, it is also for failing to live up to our potential. Even if we did nothing wrong, but we could have done much more good, Teshuvah is necessary.

Even the righteous of holy rabbis *klop al chet* (beat their chests in penitence) - either for their own subtle failings; or, for the members of their community whom they have not yet succeeded in transforming into a Torah lifestyle.

Only those who are 100 per cent perfect are exempt from Teshuvah. All others must get to work. So who is perfect? In fact, there is no one as imperfect as he who thinks he is perfect.

I remember many years ago, going to the Berea Shul in Johannesburg to hear a famous chazzan daven on Shabbos Mevorchim Elul. Indeed, the melodies and nusach were evocative of the High Holy Days.

Afterwards, I bumped into a well-known baalebos, a prominent shul-going businessman. I said to him: "Nu, you really felt Elul during the davening, didn't you?"

He shrugged his shoulders and said: "Elul is for sinners. I don't need Elul."

How wrong he was. Oy, did he need it! People with over-inflated egos can sometimes fool themselves into believing



**PARSHAT
NITZVAIM-
VAYELECH**

Rabbi Yossy Goldman
Sydenham-Highlands North Shul

everything they think about themselves.

The other fallacy belongs to the overly humble, the fellow who puts himself down so low that he really believes he is beyond salvation.

I'm too bad for Teshuvah. Too far gone, there's no hope, I'm a lost case. Give up on me rabbi, I'm too old, too tired, too lazy, too sinful - or just too set in my ways.

The ethical teachers insist that all the above arguments are rooted in the yetzer hara, our inclination for evil. The more we put ourselves down the less sense of hope and optimism we will have and, thus, the less energy we will find to try and change.

But the fact is that there are numerous true stories of some of the worst sinners in history who found G-d, Torah and themselves in an instant and returned with a full heart.

The renowned Talmudic sage, Reish Lakish, was previously a robber chieftain. Eliezer ben Durdaya was infamous for his immorality (he once boasted that there wasn't a harlot he hadn't patronised) and yet in a moment of inspiration he returned and was accepted, gaining eternal life then and there. And who in our community does not know one or more people today who have turned around their lives in the most beautiful way?

We are heading into the annual time of opportunity to put ourselves right. In these days G-d is more easily found and we can probably find ourselves, ie our true, pure, untainted, innermost selves as well.

Please G-d, we will all embrace this mitzvah which applies to every one of us, from the holiest to the most far removed. Teshuvah is a great equaliser. May our return be sincere, genuine and well-received up where it counts.

I wish you all a Shana Tova - a Good and Sweet Year filled with all the Almighty's abundant blessings.

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Message from Prime Minister Ehud Olmert

Rosh Hashanah 5768 -
 September 2007



AS WE stand at the threshold of a new year, I take great pleasure in sending you warm greetings from Jerusalem, the eternal and undivided capital of the State of Israel and the Jewish people.

The period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is one of introspection and atonement. We must look back and learn from the year which has passed, and integrate these lessons as we look ahead towards the future.

For many years, researchers and leaders have spoken of the dangers facing the Jewish people - whether in the form of hatred and anti-Semitism, or because of the issues of intermarriage, assimilation and erosion of Jewish identity and affinity with the State of Israel.

The State of Israel and the Diaspora communities must work together to ensure that the Jewish people continue to grow stronger and become more unified. We must encourage and support the next generation of Jewish leadership in this important endeavour.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel, we have been partners in the Zionist enterprise, and we must now be partners in ensuring our future as a vibrant and inclusive people.

We are all Jews, first and foremost. We must never lose sight of this, nor can we forget the central role the State of Israel plays in this identity. One cannot exist without the other, and we must work together to strengthen both halves of the whole.

Wishing you a Shanah Tova, a year filled with joy, love and health.

These branches have landed near its roots

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY
 DIANE WOLFSON
 PRETORIA

"THROW A branch of a tree in the air, it will always land near to its roots."

This Talmudic saying proved itself when another 15 bochorim who attended the Institute for Rabbinical Training, Yeshiva Mahon L'Hora'ah, obtained smicha in Pretoria last Sunday.

Rabbi Zalman Katz, the son of Rabbi Michael and Messody Katz of Chabad Illovo and the grandson of the late Rabbi Sidney Katz Z"l and Jill Katz, who served the Pretoria Jewish community for almost 40 years, became the 101st rabbi to be ordained in Pretoria, studying in the very room named after his grandfather, and receiving his smicha exactly one week before his grandfather's yortzheit, a day which is commemorated annually by the Pretoria Chevrah Kadisha in his honour.

"I just wish my grandfather was here this evening," said Zalman.

Others in the "returning" group are: Rabbi Dovid Efuno, who, although he arrived from Brighton, England, is the son of Rabbi Pesach Efuno who grew up in Waverley Johannesburg and Rabbi Danny Gavin from Houston Texas. Gavin is the son of Brian Gavin originally from Cyrildene and Dana Palte of Bulawayo.

The other local rabbis are Avi Steiner, son of Henry and Bernice Steiner and Moshe Medalie, son of Stan and Marilyn Medalie, both of Johannesburg.

But the cherry on the cake for the rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Levy Wineberg who has resided in South Africa for the past 24 years, must surely be the nachas he and his wife Sterna had when he gave smicha to his own son, Zevi.

Apart from the six new rabbis with roots in Pretoria or in South Africa, the other newly ordained rabbis are: Yosef Chaim Laima Barber and Levi Blecher from Australia; Mendel Brodie from Miami; Sholly Freundlich from London; Yudell Reiz from Kansas City and Yosef Rivkin; Moshe Shmueli; Yossi Bronstein and Velly Slavin, all from Crown Heights New York.

Joining Rabbi Levy and Sterna Wineberg and Rabbi Michael and Messody Katz, were parents and other family members of the new rabbis who travelled from near and far to attend the ceremony, namely Rabbi Ephraim and Raizel Shmueli and Rabbi Eli and Chana Esther Slavin from Crown Heights, Brian Gavin from the US, Rabbi Yitzhak Barber from Sydney as well as Henry and Bernice Steiner, and Stan and Marilyn Medalie from Johannesburg.



Rabbi Yaakov Warhaftig, Rabbi Zevi Wineberg, Rabbi Levy Wineberg and Rabbi Gidon Fox.



The Katz family, Chani, Brachi, Bobba Jill, Rabbi Michael Katz, Rabbi Zalman Katz, Rebbetzin Mesody Katz with Pinchus and Shabsy in front. (PHOTOGRAPH: WINKY RINGO)



Nachas is giving smicha to your own son. Sharing the joyful moment is Mendy, Rebbetzin Sterne, Rabbi Zevi Wineberg, Rabbi Levy Wineberg, Chanoch, Devorah and Shneur.

An exceptional achievement for the Mahon L'Hora'ah, as a total of 105 rabbis have now received smicha from Rabbi Levy Wineberg of Yeshiva Mahon L'Hora'ah as well as from Rabbi Yaakov Warhaftig of Mahon Ariel in Jerusalem.

After a warm welcome by Pretoria's Rabbi Gidon Fox, Rabbi Michael Katz spoke on behalf of all the parents, thanking not only Rabbi Wineberg and the Yeshiva, but the Pretoria Hebrew Congregation.

The president of the PHC, Evan Seligmann, welcomed everyone to the ceremony and the evening concluded with a vote of thanks by past president, Howard Yuter.

Plans are now well underway for the establishment in Pretoria of a kollel programme which will be designed to encourage young families to make Pretoria their home.

Walking to shul before Shabbos sets in

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SHELLEY ELK



Near Sydenham shul in Johannesburg.




A misty feel as a group makes its way to a shul in Highlands North.



A lone Sydenham congregant on his way to shul.

ת"ד



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I'm sorry

HESHY FRIEDMAN, PH D

THERE CAN be no peace without apology.

In 2005, teenager Ryan Cushing threw a 20-pound frozen turkey from a speeding car, as part of a prank. The ice-hard poultry crashed through the windshield of a bypassing car, crushing the face of Victoria Ruvolo, a woman from Long Island. It took numerous painful surgeries to rebuild her face.

In the courtroom, Cushing cried uncontrollably as he apologised to Ruvolo. He kept repeating: "I'm so sorry," to his victim.

Ruvolo, instead of seeking retribution, actually comforted Cushing in the courtroom; the prosecutor said he had never seen such a forgiving victim. Cushing's sentence was six months in jail; it could very well have been 25 years had Ruvolo not shown compassion and forgiveness, asking the judge to exercise leniency.

Judaism emphasises the importance of teshuva (repentance), from the Hebrew root meaning "return". But what is perhaps often overlooked is that the return it envisions is a two-way street. An apology does not count as repentance unless it is sincere, heartfelt, and has the ability to lead to genuine forgiveness.

Teshuva is about renewing a relationship that has been sundered, not simply curing one party's guilt. It is about curing a hurt that has caused a rift between parent and child, husband and wife, brother and sister, friend and friend. As much as is possible, it returns things to the way they used to be.

With some schools of psychology, apologies today are not so in vogue. They have tried to remove "guilt" from our lexicon. "Suppress it!" they say. But in truth, when we refuse to admit, the regret simply festers inside.

Judaism emphasises "healthy guilt" - where you maintain the sense that you're a good person, while acknowledging that in this case you used bad judgement and made a mistake.

Many people do not apologise because they are afraid of being seen as weak. A true apology, however, indicates strength. An apology is a magnanimous act, for it involves taking a bold and difficult step, perhaps at great emotional cost. A sincere apology allows both parties to move on, stronger than they would otherwise have been.

Regret and remorse

A proper apology must show both regret and remorse. Remorse without an apology may mean there is no opportunity for healing.

Apology without remorse is ineffective.

Often, regret derives from the fact that one was caught doing something wrong. Had the individual not been caught, she/he would not feel sorry, whereas remorse is about being truly sorry for causing another person pain, and an understanding that the act was morally wrong. It has to demonstrate a commitment to genuine change, which, after all, is what teshuva is really about.

Maimonides, in his classic work, Mishneh Torah, describes the steps for doing teshuva there has to be admission and regret over the misdeed. The individual must confess the sin to G-d, regret it, and resolve to never do it again.

If someone has hurt another person physically or financially, the offender must pay the victim. The perpetrator must also ask the victim for forgiveness.

Only when the aggrieved party receives such an apology - that the perpetrator both regrets it and feels it was wrong - will there be the possibility of true forgiveness.

Further, the apology has to be contrite, not accompanied by a litany of excuses. We're all familiar with conditional apologies such as: "If anyone has been hurt by my actions, I am sorry," or "I am sorry you feel this way," or "I didn't do it on purpose. I had a hard day and I didn't realise what I was doing. And why are you so sensitive about this, anyway!?" These do not indicate genuine remorse and therefore do not truly heal.

Get over it

The professional world today is increasingly recognising the importance of apologies. Legal scholars argue that sincere penitence is superior to punishment as a way of resolving mutual grievances, and that many legal disputes arise in the first place only because there had not been an apology.

Medical schools now teach future doctors to apologise when they make a mistake, and a growing number of businesses are apologising for manufacturing defective products or polluting the environment.

Apologies are important not only in interpersonal relationships, but in global relations.

The late Pope John Paul II effected a revolutionary change in Catholic-Jewish relations when he visited Israel in March 2000. He stood at the Western Wall and apologised for centuries of Catholic anti-Semitism.

Learning to forgive is a technique to elevate one's long-term level of happiness.

It takes great courage to say: "I am sorry for what I did and I regret it. Please forgive me."

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