



HASHOMER

(Affiliated with the National Conference of Shomrim Societies
and the International Association of Jewish Public Service Employees)

P.O. BOX 35688, LOS ANGELES, CA 90035
July-August-September 2008 Issue

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President's Message

One of my favorite author's is Jeffery Archer. In one of his latest books of short stories he placed a short story, Death Speaks, by an anonymous author. It is printed in this addition of the Hashomer. Archer says that "I have rarely come across a better example of the simple art of storytelling." Jeffery Archer, himself has had an illustrious past. From his book jacket: "He has served five years in Britain's House of Commons, fourteen years in the House of Lords, and two in Her Majesty's prisons. . ." (For perjury.) In any case he is a great author and I recommend him for a "good read." Another interesting essay on death, authored by Tzvi Freeman, is contained in this issue.

We have our "Steak Fry" coming up next month, August 17th, and I hope that all who are able to attend do so-it is always a lot of fun-with a great menu. I have it on good authority that joining us will be the President of the Shomrim Society of South Florida, Barry Mankes and the Past President of South Florida and the current President of the International Association of Jewish Public Service Employees Steve Liebowitz. Barry is with the Miami-Dade Police Department and Steve recently retired from there. We also hope to have with us Israel Police Attaché & Liaison to the U.S. and Mexico, Chief Superintendent (Lt. Col.) Avishay Bar-Tal.

As an early preview for next year our Banquet will be held at Sinai Temple on Thursday, March 19, 2009. Our Honorary Member and Honoree is going to be L.A. County Assistant Sheriff Paul Tanaka, and our Honored Member will be L.A.P.D. Police Commissioner and Reserve Commander in the L.A.S.D. Alan Skobin.

Hope to see you at the "Steak Fry."

Marvin Goldsmith, President

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2008 SHOMRIMSOCAL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

STEAK "FRY"

Sunday, August 17th at 5:00 P.M.

סיכורי גולדסמיט

(Goldsmith's BBQ)

229 South Clark Drive, B.H.

September/October Meeting

October 16th at 6:30 P.M.

In a Succah.

229 South Clark Drive, B.H.

Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors and the Membership

Wednesday, November 5th at 6:30 P.M.

King David Grill

6118 West Pico Blvd, L.A.

(Just East of La Cienega)

Hannukah Get Together

Tuesday, December 23rd at 6:30 PM

Pizza World

365 South Fairfax Avenue, L.A.

(Just South of Third St.)

MAZEL TOV

To Paul Scauzillo (Retired Lieutenant, L.A.S.D. and newly appointed Res. Deputy) upon his becoming a proud Grandfather to Ari Isaac Yuditsky, born June 17, 2008 to Stephanie (his daughter) and Gadi Yuditsky.

REFUAH SHELEMAH

To our founding member Joe Rosen.

CONDOLENCES

To the family of Lt. Daniel Farkas. May the Almighty comfort the bereaved family along with all mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

WE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

Steven I. Katz, Deputy District Attorney, L.A. County D.A.'s Beverly Hills Office, Deputy in Charge.

Eric Baruch, Deputy Sheriff, L.A. County Sheriff's Department, (Brother in law to Res. Sergeant Mark Mintz, L.A.S.D.).

SHOMRIMSOCAL MEMBER ALAN SKOBIN

"Attorney Alan Skobin was unanimously reappointed to the Los Angeles Police Commission July 15, 2008 today [July 15, 2008], with the promise of providing resources to Los Angeles police officers. Skobin said giving officers the tools they need – both Manpower and technology -- is essential.

"For me, I have a strong compassion for ensuring that we provide the best possible equipment for our people so that they can do their jobs as safely as possible," he said. "I think it's a balance between people and support." Skobin, general counsel for Galpin Motors, also said he would like to see an end to the federal consent decree that has regulated the policies of the LAPD since 2000."

Alan Skobin was appointed to the civilian panel charged with setting policy for the police department by then-Mayor Jim Hahn in 2003. He was reappointed by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa in 2005.

THE HIGH HOLIDAYS - ROSH HASHANA AND YOM KIPPUR

**Compiled by Rabbi Chaim Kolodny, CMC, NHA
LAPD Senior Bureau Chaplain - Office of the
Chief of Police**

September 30 - October 9, 2008

'A day of sweetness and a day of atonement are the culmination of a month-long process of coming back to G-d'

Sukkot

October 14 - October 22, 2008

The Festival of Booths - with Lulav and Etrog in hand, we camp out under the stars seven days and remember that G-d is our ultimate protection

"When the cat's away, the mice will play." When the king was on a distant journey, Robert -- the servant who always cleaned the king's bedroom -- decided to try out the king's bed, the most comfortable bed in the kingdom. "I wonder what it would feel like to

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take a little nap there?" he thought. So for the entire afternoon he slept soundly in the royal bed.

John, who was in charge of the king's stable, wondered how it would feel to mount the king's stallion. At that, he was riding all over the king's forest.

William, in charge of the king's crown, constantly kept the diamonds and rubies shining. "I would like to be king for a day," thought William as he seated himself on the royal throne wearing the shiny crown.

Suddenly the palace was in an uproar! The king had returned unexpectedly! One servant was sound asleep in the king's bed, another was riding the royal stallion, and a third was wearing the king's crown and sitting on the throne.

"Off with their heads!!" the king cried.

This story relates to our task as we prepare for the coming Rosh Hashana. We think of ourselves as the decision makers and catalysts of our lives. We imagine ourselves in the driver's seat and wearing the crown. Before Rosh Hashana we must contemplate the fact that the "King" will soon appear in our little world, with all His glory. So we must quickly remake the bed, return the horse to its proper place and take off the crown before it is too late.

Recognize the true Ruler of the universe and humble ourselves before Him. And let us proceed to blow the shofar -- the coronation of the King of Kings.

This following High Holy Day essay was written by a prolific Rabbi and Educator and I'd like to share it with you.

Labels are for Suits

By Rabbi Shalom Paltiel

Did you ever take a close look at Kol Nidrei, widely considered the most important prayer of Judaism? Read the translation and you might be quite puzzled as to why such a big deal is made out this particular piece of liturgy. It is a simple--albeit strong--statement of annulling vows. Is that the foremost thought on our minds as we enter the synagogue on the eve of the holiest day of the year?

Two Jews on an Airplane

After completing his morning prayers aboard the El Al flight en route to Tel Aviv, the elderly European Chassid turned to the American Jew sitting next to him and offered the use of his prayer shawl and tefillin. The problem was that a strong language barrier separated the two. The Chassid spoke only Yiddish and Russian, while our modern Jew was only able to converse in English. Even sign language didn't help facilitate communication between these two very different individuals. Finally, in frustration the Chassid blurted out the following--probably the extent of his English vocabulary: "I Jew--you Jew; I tefillin--you tefillin." There was no need to say another word. The man understood. Sure he'd put on tefillin aboard his first flight to Israel.

I love this story because it speaks volumes about the common Jewish spark that each of us possess, regardless of who we are and the extent of our Jewish observance. These two Jews had very little in common; they stemmed from different parts of the world, and didn't even share a common language. Yet, when it came to the Jew within, they connected seamlessly; they were one and the same. Suddenly they understood each other perfectly. In truth, there was no barrier at all. Because after all--"I Jew, You Jew."

Another one of my favorites is the story of the poor, jobless man who came to the circus looking for work. The only available position was to fill in for a missing tiger. They gave him a tiger's costume and put him in the cage. All was well until Mr. Lion began strolling in his direction. Petrified, the tiger said what a Jew says when faced with imminent death: Shma Yisrael Ado-noi Elo-henu Ado-noi Echad ("Hear O Israel, G-d is our G-d, G-d is one"). To which the lion answered: Baruch shem kevod malchuto leolam va'ed ("Blessed be the name of the glory of His kingdom forever and ever"--the second verse of the Shema).

That's the story of the Jews: On the surface we might look very different from one another. Underneath, we're all the same.

Brand Name Judaism

The problem is the labels. Every Jew has a label!

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Orthodox. Conservative. Reform. Reconstructionist. Modern. Traditional. Secular. Religious. The list goes on.

Where did all these labels come from? Do you think for a moment that Moses organized the people of Israel around Mt Sinai in accordance with their denominational affiliations? Of course not. These labels are not rooted anywhere in Torah or classical Jewish literature. They are recent inventions that serve absolutely no purpose other than to divide our people. And this, at a time when we need each other more than ever. I think all agree more unity is what we need. As for division amongst our people, we've got plenty of that...

When it comes to clothing I'd be the first to agree: labels serve an important purpose in helping us choose our preferred selections in terms of style, quality, etc. But who ever heard of labels for Jews?

Think about it. What use are these labels to the Jewish people other than to create partitions along denominational lines? Why can't we all just be "Jewish"? Why the need to label ourselves based on our level of observance?

It's true some of us are more religiously observant than others. Is that reason to categorically divide us into splintering groups? Let us each observe Judaism and its precepts to the best of our knowledge and ability, without the need of a name tag proclaiming ourselves a particular brand.

In addition to dividing us, the labels also limit our growth as Jews. Once we've been labeled, we no longer feel the need to learn more about our heritage than is typical for members of our particular group. Remove the label, and Judaism is yours to explore, completely and freely, without fear you might cross the line and observe some tradition that's not for your type. See my point?

If I'm not Religious--Am I a Bad Jew?

Perhaps we subconsciously use labels to lower the bar so we can still feel good about ourselves as Jews even if we're not growing Jewishly. The truth is there's no need for that accommodation. G-d loves us just the same--even if we're not "perfect" Jews.

A famous Rabbi would always emphasize the value of performing even one single mitzvah (Jewish observance). He repeatedly proclaimed that Judaism is not an all-or-nothing religion as some might have you think ("Either observe all of Torah or don't bother with any of it 'cause you're a 'bad' Jew anyway"). This would be the case if G-d were a tyrannical dictator whom we needed to placate. In truth, G-d is a loving father. He asked us to fulfill the mitzvahs, not in quest of power or control, but out of His deep love for each of us--His precious children. With children, it's not perfection you look for. A good parent wants each child to reach their best potential. It's not "all-or-nothing." It's "do-your-best!"

A man from Brooklyn once complained to the Rabbi about one of his children who had "left the path" of Torah observance. "I raised all of my children exactly the same way. I can't understand why this one veered away." Replied the Rabbi: "Therein lies the problem. You raised all of your children the same way. But they're not the same. Each child is unique and requires direction and guidance in accordance with his or her individual personality."

G-d is a loving, wise parent who has a personal and unique relationship with each of us. Sure, He'd like us all to "reach for the stars" and try to observe Judaism fully in all of its beauty and depth. But that's for long term. For right now what is most important to G-d is that we do our best and continue to grow. If we observe one more mitzvah this year than we did last year--we are making G-d proud!

Annulling the Labels

So why the whole fuss around Kol Nidrei? On a deeper, mystical level it is much more than just the annulment of vows and promises. It is a powerful declaration of annulling and invalidating any and all labels, restrictions, demarcations, shackles, barriers and name tags that tend to obscure our sparkling inherent Jewish essence. All of us share one single designer label: JEW! We are one very special, indivisible people; the family of G-d's chosen nation. Sure, like any good family we have our share of sibling rivalry. But that doesn't change the fact that "I Jew--You Jew."

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DEATH SPEAKS

By Anon.

There was a merchant in Bagdad who sent his servant to market to buy provisions and in a little while the servant came back, white trembling, and said, Master, just now when I was in the market-place I was jostled by a woman in the crowd and when I turned I saw it was death that jostled me. She looked at me and made a threatening gesture; now, lend me your horse, and I will ride away from this city and avoid my fate. I will go to Samarra and there death will not find me. The merchant lent him his horse, and the servant mounted it, and he dug his spurs in its flanks and as fast as the horse could gallop he went. Then the merchant went down to the market-place and he saw me standing in the crowd and he came to me and said, why did you make a threatening gesture to my servant when you saw him this morning? That was not a threatening gesture, I said, it was only a start of surprise. I was astonished to see him in Bagdad, for I had an appointment with him tonight in Samarra.

THE DEATH OF A FRIEND

How do you respond to a part of yourself dying?

By Tzvi Freeman

Question: An old friend of the family just passed away as a result of a tragic accident. What is the Jewish way to help make sense of all of this?

Answer: As the years pass, we witness death many times, but the passing of a close friend is different than any other passing. In a way, a part of us dies as well. They say that two friends carry a small piece of one another wherever they go. And so, when this friend departs, we too experience death vicariously.

How do you respond to a part of you dying? You have a choice: You can resign to the inevitable with a broken spirit and eat away the rest of your years despondently awaiting full surrender. Or you can defy that taste of death by cherishing life even more.

We Jews often quote the words of Solomon the Wise, "V'ha-chai yiten el libo"--meaning, "And he who lives should take it to heart" (Ecclesiastes 7:2). In simple words, our response to death is to take life to a whole new level. Before witnessing death, we believe we will live forever--so we think nothing of

squandering our time. Now we understand that our days are counted, that not a moment will repeat itself.

In the words of one of our wise sages, "People fret about wasting their money, but no one frets about wasting their days. The money they saved cannot help them but their wasted days are forever lost."

Today is a great day to start living.

Rabbi Tzvi Freeman heads Chabad.org's Ask The Rabbi team, and is a senior member of the Chabad.org editorial team. He is the author of a number of highly original renditions of Kabbalah and Chassidic teaching.

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GIGGLES

Jewish Farmer

A Jewish farmer, walking through his hay field, notices a man kneeling down and drinking from his farm pond. The farmer shouts, "Trink nicht die wasser. Die keyen haben gesheissen dorten." (Which means: "Don't drink the water, the cows shit in it".) The kneeling man shouts back, angrily, "I'm a Muslim, I don't understand you. I speak Arabic and English. If you can't speak in the sacred tongue of Islam, speak to me in English." The Jewish farmer replies, "Use two hands, you'll get more."

The Witness

A man, returning home a day early from a business trip, got into a taxi at the airport. It was after midnight. While en route to his home, he asked the cabby if he would be a witness. The man suspected his wife was having an affair, and he intended to catch her in the act. For \$100, the cabby agreed. Quietly arriving at the house, the husband and the cabby tiptoed into the bedroom. The husband switched on the lights, yanked the blanket back and there was his wife in bed with another man.

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The husband put a gun to the naked man's head.

The wife shouted, 'Don't do it! This man has been very generous! I lied when I told you I inherited money. He paid for the Corvette I gave you. He paid for our new cabin cruiser. He paid for your season Dolphins tickets. He paid for our house at the lake. He paid for our country club membership, and he even pays for the monthly dues!'

Shaking his head from side-to-side, the husband slowly lowered the gun. He looked over at the cabby and said, 'What would you do?'

The cabby said...

'I'd cover him up with that blanket before he catches a cold.'

Russian Military Academy

At the Russian military academy, a General gave a lecture on 'Potential Problems and Military Strategy'.

At the end of the lecture he asked if there are any questions.

An officer stood up and asked: 'Will there be a third world war? Will Russia take part in it?'

The general answered both questions in the affirmative.

The officer asked: 'Who will be the enemy?'

The General: 'All indications point to China.'

As the audience gasped in shock, the officer asked: 'General, we are only 150 million, there are 1,500 million Chinese. Can we win at all?'

The General: 'Just think about this. In modern warfare, it is not the quantity that matters but the quality. For example in the middle east we have had a few wars recently where 5 million Jews fought against 150 million Arabs, and the Jews were always victorious.'

After a small pause the officer asked, 'Do we have enough Jews?'

The Army of G-d

Ira Goldberg was in front of me heading out of the Synagogue one day, and as always our Rabbi was standing at the door shaking hands as the congregation departed.

The Rabbi grabbed Ira by the hand and pulled him aside. The rabbi lunged these words at him, "You need to join the Army of G-d!"

"I'm already in the Army of God, Rabbi."

Rabbi questioned, "How come I don't see you except for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur?"

He whispered back, "I'm in the secret service."

NATIONAL SHOMRIM AND SHOMRIMSOCAL ON THE WEB

Visit our website. We're at www.shomrimsocal.org just a click away. Get the latest updates on meetings and announcements, read about your organization, look at photos of recent events, etc. Our webmaster Marc Cohen would like to hear from all of you with your comments. Active links to other Shomrim sites, including the National Conference of Shomrim Societies.

The National Conference of Shomrim Societies has a new website due to the efforts of our national webmaster Scott Bresalier:

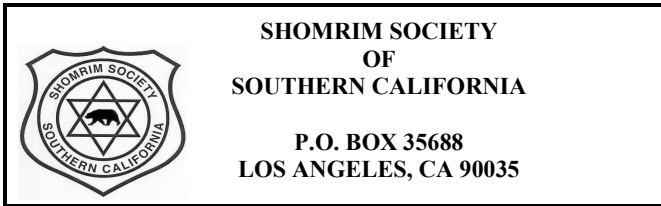
www.nationalshomrim.org. Visit the new website and sign the guestbook and leave your comments.

If you have something you would like added to our website send an e-mail to story@shomrimsocal.org or drop us a letter to our P.O. Box.

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The initial membership fee is \$18.00, which includes membership for the first year. Annual membership dues thereafter are \$36.00. Associate Membership (non-voting) may be granted by the Board of Directors, to persons who are interested in furthering and advancing the purposes of the Shomrim Society of Southern California who do not qualify for Regular membership. Such members may be proposed by any Regular Member; however, such members must be approved by the Board of Directors and are subject to annual review by the Board for continued membership. The annual membership fee for Associate Members is \$36.00.

Additional Information

Further information about the Society may be obtained by writing to the above address, e-mail to shomrimsocal@msn.com.

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July-August-September 2008 Issue

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