

October 29, 1974

Rabbi Alexander M. Shapiro
Congregation Oheb Shalom
170 Scotland Road
South Orange, New Jersey 07079

Dear Ali,

We keep missing each other by phone. I would like to set the date of November 24th, as our Rabbinical Assembly Day. In that period from 2:30 P.M. to 8:30 P.M., our region desperately needs a definite report on the state of kashruth.

The Short Hills Caterers came to my Synagogue a few hours before Sabbath ended, complete with trucks and lit stove. Can there be public standards, or must this be a hit or miss understanding between every Rabbi and every caterer? Will the commission on kashruth become a force in Essex County and serve as a model in other counties?

The presentation should be no more than a 1/2 hour, but I believe it is absolutely critical for the Conservative Rabbinate to stop sluffing off our responsibilities.

Please call me, and I will definitely get back to you one way or the other, as I feel this is a most critical aspect that deserves further discussion at our gathering.

D "S M B. B.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Jehiel Orenstein

J0/ct

October 28, 1974

Miss Lisa Stern

Dear Lisa,

How are my Jewish American Indians? Your letter came like a breath of fresh air. I'm so over my head in nonsense and serious things----if I only knew which were which, I would be alright. My desk is piled high with letters, but I promised myself I would not put yours off another moment longer and I'm sneaking you in ahead of the Prime Minister of Israel.

We are seriously thinking of inviting a Montrealnik to our "Sunday at Seven" series in the spring---the author of "Duddy Kravitz". Have you heard anything since he was blackballed in Montreal since writing "belle lettres" detrimental to the character of a Jew. I am fascinated by your courses---I only hope the teachers are worthy of their subjects. Let me know what's really giving you joy.

I'm teaching a very good course in Sanhedrin to the Central Hebrew High kids; another course in Avodah Zarah to those people who can study Talmud. I'm teaching a Bible course Sundays on the temptation of Joseph and a Mishna course to parents and children on Sunday evenings. I also teach a course on the Prayer Book on Monday and have a course in Ten Crises of Jewish Faith on Monday nights. The first crises is --what do I teach? I'm studying at NYU--research for doctoral students---an intro to sociology it's turning out to be; and administration, which hasn't helped me nor my desk in the slightest. I do have a great course in the Mishna with a great scholar, but life has a way of slipping by and I don't get a chance to do the things I want to do. At least today I did something I wanted to do---I wrote to Lisa.

Affectionately,

Rabbi Jehiel Orenstein

October 28, 1974

Dr. & Mrs. Joachim Prinz
306 Elmwynd Drive
Orange, New Jersey

Dear Joachim & Hilde,

There are certain cards that I set aside on Rosh Hashonah and promised that I would just not give them a cursory reply. I kept them on the shelf and enjoyed them these past months, thinking of the old and good friends who had, in some creative way, touched my life.

I wish you day by day, all the blessings that you prayed for in 5735. Above all, may G-d give you the strength to shape the year, so that you may mold your life to fit your prayers.

My warmest regards,

Rabbi Jehiel Orenstein

J0/ct

October 27, 1974

Rabbi Jack Riemer
Beth Abraham Synagogue
1306 Salem Avenue
Dayton, Ohio 45406

Dear Jaakov,

In order to cease the avalanche of kindness from your side to mine, I balance with this sermon on being tested, which of course, was not delivered as written. I use 1/3 of the prepared material. For instance, in the opening paragraph, I said that I could not even see this marvelous multitude, if I had not passed my pphthamologist and optometrist test, and at least all the people who wore glasses, laughed. I finally cut out the section on the test of aliveness, but the material is certainly pregnant and you can make use of this throughout the year, particularly Charles Dickens. I hope the xerox comes out, as we've been having trouble with it.

I preached another sermon suggested to me by Ben-Zion Bokser who, next to my father-in-law, I consider to be the greatest in our metropolitan area. I'll send you a copy of that - no rush - I may even re-write that one, because there were so many personal additions that turned out to be quite successful. Just to keep you in contact with me, the title is "The Creative Uses of Guilt."

Hopefully, I will be in Israel in February. I'm taking courses at N.Y.U., which are this time, for the first time, a total waste...the garbage business that is required for a doctorate.

A young Rabbi called me up today and asked me how do I turn Jews into Jews. We finally worked out that he would invite people who care, into his home, sound them out, and prepare a program of study. But I have the same questions and still don't have a decent answer.

(2)

I spend a lot of time teaching here, Monday afternoon, Monday night, Tuesday afternoon, Tuesday night, Sunday morning and Sunday night. The last is a Mishna group of parents and children an hour before the youth group meets, mainly Hebrew High School kids. There is some joy in this. Last night we went to the local traffic court and received a private audience with the Judge (we are studying San Hedrin).

All the best, and let me hear from you. Where else can we be free to be disorganized.

Have a nice Shabbos. Vayarah!

Warmest regards,

Rabbi Jehiel Orenstein

P.S. I am writing this same letter to Hal Kushner.

J0/ct

January 31, 1975

David, Michael & Melissa Seltzer
72 Westview Road
Short Hills, New Jersey 07078

Dear David, Michael & Melissa,

For a very long time, I have been trying to think of a nice gift for your father. He was very kind to me and helped our family very much.

My wife and I asked ourselves what gift could we give to your father. He insisted that we should not give him anything and we were puzzled for a long time.

This month is the holiday for trees in the land of Israel. We thought that your father would be happy to know that growing in the land of Israel are two (2) trees named David, two (2) trees named Michael and two (2) trees named Melissa.

It is our prayer that these trees will grow strong and tall just as the children should grow, strong and tall.

This is not a gift that in any way can be equal to what your father did for us, yet it is a way to let his children know how good he is and what he does for others, as well as helping the land of Israel, a little country, that now has six (6) new trees.

I know that you will treasure these trees and I hope that some day soon you will visit this land and visit our forest in Jerusalem, in which you now have your part.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Jehiel Orenstein

J0/ct

January 31, 1975

Edward Gerald Gingold
23 Hickory Drive
Great Neck, New York 11021

Dear Edward,

Thank you for your beautiful note. I'm not going to respond to it now. I'm going to settle down and work.

I want you to know your inspirational note came at a critical time and it turned the balance in the favor of the good. Keep punching.

All my love to the family.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Jehiel Orenstein

BO/ct

August 26, 1974

Mrs. Helen Rosenblum
10 Tudor Court
Elizabeth, N.J.

Dear Helen,

Our Rabbis teach that out of the deepest sorrow there always shines a ray of light. Out of the tragic loss of your beloved husband, I have seen great growth in the family. Children and grandchildren have been superb in the face of this terrible tragedy. After one of our prayers in Thelma's home, someone remarked that it was a shame he could not be with us, for he would have enjoyed it so. In the deepest sense, this is his greatest tribute; for he raised with you children and grandchildren of whom he could be truly proud and prideful.

May you altogether only know joy henceforth. May the name of Abraham Rosenblum always be remembered for a blessing.

Sincerely yours,

Rabbi Jehiel Orenstein

J0/rkb

August 26, 1974

The Farberman Family
60 Stanford Ave
West Orange, N.J.

Dear Irving, Henry and Jack,

I have received your checks and as you know, from the day of his burial, we have been saying Kaddish at Congregation Beth El in memory of your beloved brother. I am sending a copy of this letter to Bette for I feel a good deed should be totally shared. The funds that you have given will be used for our synagogue and in our school, so, in this act of remembering the beloved one through daily Kaddish, you have strengthened Torah for one more generation.

Sincerest Regards

Rabbi Jehiel Orenstein

JO/rkb

August 26, 1974

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Monigman
91 East Parkway
Hillside, N.J.

Dear Richard and Linda,

I'm writing to you the day after your wedding to recapture the joy that we all shared. I'm going to hold you to your promise to share good news with me always, and to see me from time to time.

Sincerely yours,

Rabbi Jehiel Orenstein

JO/rkb

June 25, 1974

Rabbi Marvin I. Bash
Arlington Fairfax Jewish Center
2920 Arlington Blvd.
Arlington, Virginia 22204

Dear Marvin,

I'd love to see your Dissertation, or at least a few papers of the critical conclusion material. I am vitally interested in this topic.

Mazel Tov on getting through this miserable business.

Cordially yours,

Rabbi Jehiel Orenstein

JO/rkb

June 19, 1974

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Glatt
380 Ravine Drive
South Orange, New Jersey 07079

Dear Gloria and Herb,

Thank you for your beautiful note. The check was truly unnecessary as you probably know. Somehow it is all the more precious to me because we both understood that it wasn't really necessary. I will use your very kind gift in Israel for charity and for our own needs, and I will think of the Glatt family.

I do not know if our letters crossed. I had dictated a letter to Melissa awhile back. She is at a very critical stage (aren't we all?). Perhaps more than anything else, the quality of her friendships will determine a great deal about her future for the next few years.

I hope and pray that the joy she gave us on her Bat Mitzvah will be but the beginning of her growth and maturity. She is good, and from my point of view, a delight. Kids are different with different people. But I think you will agree with me.

We look forward to seeing you after our Israeli trip and to continue to share only good news.

All my affection,

Rabbi Jehiel Orenstein

J0:fg