



Ki Teitzei

Vol. 7, Issue 46 • 8 Elul 5783 / August 25, 2023

CONTENTS: Schwartz (Page 1); Alpert (Page 5)

Sponsorships for Lehrhaus over Shabbat are available at
<https://thelehrhaus.com/sponsor-lehrhaus-shabbos/>

ON GIZZARDS AND THE MAKING OF RABBIS

Ezra Y. Schwartz is a Rosh Yeshiva and Associate Director of the Semikha Program at RIETS where he holds the Harry Rabin Chair of Talmud and Jewish Law.

Of late, there has been a robust conversation about the role of artificial intelligence and the ways it will impact the rabbinate, specifically regarding responding to *shailos*. Many have opined on why a human must serve as a halakhic authority, and not a machine. I agree with this assertion, and I would like to show how gizzards, the muscular, thick-walled part of a bird's stomach that is used for grinding food, can explain why human involvement is needed in the world of Halakhah.

There is a well known story, variously retold as having occurred with Rav Boruch Ber Leibowitz,

the *Rosh Yeshiva* of Kaminetz and with the Mittlerer Rebbe of Chabad. Whomever it was, he happened to be in an abattoir and asked what a particular animal organ was. He was told that it was a gizzard, a *kurkevan*. Overtaken with emotion, the *gadol* blurted out, “The *Heiliger Kurkevan* (the holy gizzard)!” This rabbi had delivered many *shiurim* involving the intricacies of *hilkhot treifot* and had spoken often of a pin found in a *kurkevan*. Now, for the first time, he saw an actual *kurkevan*.

Some retell this story as lauding the abstract style of learning that R. Boruch Ber, modeling his teacher Rav Chaim (Brisker), embodied. Torah should be abstract, pure ideas and ideals. In fact, Torah is meant to be so pristine and pure that it cannot connect to realia. The Torah which is the blueprint for the world must exist where there are no real birds with gizzards.

Others, however, understand the “*heiliger*

kurkevan” not as laudatory but as laughable. How can one be so removed from reality, so unconnected to the real world, that he does not recognize a gizzard? Shouldn’t Torah be a real-world and embodied experience? Didn’t *Hashem* offer the Torah to humans, those born from a womb, rather than to angels, precisely because we humans are connected to the real world? How can we speak of a “*heiliger kurkevan*” when Torah is meant to be practiced, when *shailos* about realia need to be answered? How can a rabbi be so removed from the realities of the world?

In Brisk, R. Chaim was not responsible for answering *shailos*. Rav Simcha Zelig Reguer, the *dayan* (judge) of Brisk, actually looked at the *kurkevan*. R. Chaim was free to lecture about the *kurkevan*, but he did not have to look at it or *pasken* on it. Various reasons are offered as to why Brisk employed a *posek* separate from its *rov*—why R. Simcha Zelig and not R. Chaim answered the *shailos*. Some maintain that R. Chaim’s conceptual method of learning did not lend itself to answering *shailos*. Others suggest that R. Chaim, with his tremendous knowledge of sources, would feel a need to rule against the accepted approach in the *Shulhan Arukh*. Be that as it may, Brisk employed two rabbinic figures of tremendous esteem: the *rov*, R. Chaim, and the *posek*, R. Simcha Zelig.

Of course, today’s communities can’t and won’t employ both a R. Chaim and a R. Simcha Zelig. Even if money were no object, even the best graduate of

RIETS (or any other contemporary yeshiva) cannot conceivably be on the level of either R. Chaim or R. Simcha Zelig. Today, a single individual, who trails the greats of Brisk by leagues, needs to occupy both roles. That individual must recognize the *kurkevan* and lecture about it. The rabbi must present cogent conceptual *shiurim* often mimicking the style of R. Chaim as well as definitive *piskei halakhah* mimicking the approach of R. Simcha Zelig.

The lesson of the *heiliger kurkevan* partly explains why AI is unable to properly answer *shailos*. Information is wonderful, but analysis is critical. You can only address the *kashrut* of the *kurkevan* if you can both look at it and analyze the reasons it may be kosher or non-kosher. There may be a time when artificial intelligence is able to see things, look at a *bedikah* cloth or a *kurkevan*, and analyze the reason behind each position to better answer the question at hand. But that time is light years away, if ever.

*

The tensions surrounding the *Heiliger Kurkevan* are expressed in contradictory writings of the Rav *zt”l* (Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik). On the one hand, the Rav famously depicted the Halakhic Mind as being Platonic and theoretical. Yet the Halakhic Man resides in the real world.¹

Many attempts have been made to reconcile the diverse positions of the Rav. It seems to me that the

¹ See [Yocheved Friedman’s article in the recently published Tradition](#) journal marking the 30th *yahrzeit* of the Rav.

two typologies are needed at two different times. One needs to master the abstract and ideal and take that knowledge to shed light on the real world. Shifting from the abstract and theoretical to the real is what the *Ribbono Shel Olam* did when He created the world. It is what the aspiring *lamdan* must do as well.

This transition from theoretical to practical is what the yeshiva system is based upon. In *yeshivos*, traditionally, students are initially educated in *lumdus*. They delve into the intricacies of *Nashim* and *Nezikin*, *tzererot* and *tzarat sotah*, before they engage in *Shakh* and *Taz*, *tumat ohel* and *te'imat kefeila*.

The yeshiva curriculum is such because *lumdus*, even its most abstract form, is not a distraction from practical real-world knowledge of Halakhah that a *rov* needs. Pure and pristine *lumdus* trains the mind to think with clarity and the eye to recognize detail. The categories developed in theoretical *lumdus* provide a scaffolding upon which to structure the halakhic *sugya*. The conceptual tools gleaned through sweating over a *Milhamot* can help one pry open and properly understand a *Shakh*.

The current yeshiva/*semikhah* structure is premised on the fact that one can't be a practitioner of practical Halakhah without first being a Platonic

idealist. This is certainly true of the way we train aspiring rabbis in RIETS, where the *semikhah* program has a mandatory *gemara* requirement. One needs to understand all the possibilities presented by the abstract *kurkevan* to properly *pasken* on the *kurkevan* that is present. Absent the theoretical training and attention to detail found in *lumdus*, salient aspects of the *kurkevan* may be overlooked. The Halakhah may be decided improperly.

In my role teaching aspiring rabbis at RIETS, I often question how much practical Halakhah should be included in *shiur* versus how much *lumdus*. The challenge is to train students to think openly and conceptually while at the same time maintain fealty to the halakhic text and halakhic process. I have found there to be no one proper ratio. I try to convey both.²

*

When I was young, one of the older men in the *shul* had learned in Yeshiva Torah Vodaath in the 1940s. I recall him repeating in the name of Rav Shlomo Heiman (if I recall correctly) that when an *almanah* (widow) comes with a chicken to ascertain if it is kosher—for example, if a woman knocks on the rabbi's door with a question about the *kurkevan* of her chicken—you don't only look at the chicken; you also must look at the *almanah*.

² The *semikhah* curriculum emphasizing *gemara* learning in its analytical form before advanced study of Halakhah is itself deficient. It is reported in the name of R. Chaim that any *sevara* (point of logic) that is not founded upon complete mastery of *Shas*, the entire corpus of Torah *she-be'al peh*, is a

boich sevara, logic of the gut, rather than logic of the mind. Study of *gemara* in its analytical form without first mastering *Shas Mishnayot* and *gemara (bekiut)* is deficient. The need for both information and analysis is critical, but the order that it is presented in *yeshivot* should perhaps be reversed.

This elderly Jew taught me a tremendously valuable lesson. Information and analysis are not sufficient to arrive at a proper halakhic conclusion. Empathy and emotion, looking the widow in her face, is equally critical.

Oftentimes, a *shailah* is not so clearly answered. There are questions where, due to the exigencies of the case—the *sha'at ha-dehak*, or the *hefsed merubah* (significant financial loss)—the usual Halakhah will not apply. Questions of this sort must be the domain of the human rabbi and *posek*. AI is unable to hit the mark; *hefsed* is not an objective category that can be found in a computer algorithm.³ AI can't determine if something is a *sha'at ha-dehak*. Only human intelligence can weigh these considerations. No computer program will be able to properly answer a question that involves Halakhah as it “can be” rather than Halakhah as “it is.” Put in other words, even if AI can completely master the four *halakim* of *Shulhan Arukh*, the proverbial fifth *helek* of *Shulhan Arukh*, which refers to halakhic intuition and human insight, cannot be mastered. It is this fifth *helek* that is most indispensable when inspecting a *kurkevan* and arriving at a proper *psak*.

There are other cases where AI in all its forms won't do. There (always) are real people involved, individuals with feelings and families, egos and emotions. The *ravor posek* must be a pastoral guide who is attuned to the people involved and can soften the “no” or can laboriously work to find a “yes” if

needed. That skill is exclusively human.

*

Ralph Waldo Emerson's comment about consistency (“A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds”) is well known. In the world of Halakhah, it is equally well known that a major *posek* would answer what is seemingly the same question in two different ways. The questioner may be different; the circumstances may be different. For this reason, Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky's descendants were very hesitant to publish his halakhic rulings. It is well known that Rav Soloveitchik similarly would answer what seemed to be the same question in different ways. *Gedolei ha-poskim* often do not exhibit the consistency that is expected. They weigh each case and scenario differently considering the nuances and shades of difference between the cases, people, and communities. Artificial intelligence can be nothing but consistent. Consequently, AI *psak* will serve to denude genuine *psak* of its essence.

*

The justifiable hesitation many feel about AI serving a rabbinic role highlights the need for greater sensitivity and attention to the individual questioner. If we oppose the AI *posek*, all of our *piskei halakhah* must offer greater consideration to the individual, recognize what may lie behind the particular question, and understand the need for nuance in presenting the response.

³ See [Pithei Teshuvah, Yoreh Deah 31:2](#).

There are three forms of halakhic rulings: the *din*, the *psak*, and the proclamation. The *din* is a straightforward, unambiguous source. The *psak* involves competing sources or halakhic values, and AI can understandably not fill that role. One may think that a halakhic proclamation, straightforward and as un-nuanced as it is, may naturally lend itself to being written by AI. Nonetheless, it seems to me that precisely with these far-reaching statements, the emotional and empathic element is even more important.

Proclamations most often opine on a burning issue of the day: be it women's issues, questions about the environment, temperance, poverty, or LGBTQ+ issues. These proclamations serve a tremendously valuable role in maintaining communal cohesiveness, articulating significant values, and thereby forging communal identity. I am not opposed to issuing proclamations; I myself have signed on some.

Most, if not all, of the proclamations that emerged from our communities in recent years are carefully constructed and convey appropriate compassion. Nonetheless, due to the current passionate partisanship in our country and communities, and the realization that we wouldn't want them written by AI due to its lack of empathy (among other reasons), we should take pause and rethink the way proclamations are issued.

Behind every proclamation lie thousands or tens of thousands of real-world, flesh-and-blood people, with feelings and families, needs and desires, egos

and emotions. Whichever halakhic sources are brought to shed light on the issue of the day, the human and personal dimension must be included as well. The proclamation must not be, or even read like, a statement of abstract truths that could be constructed by AI. AI can also issue statements and halakhic proclamations. A flesh-and-blood rabbi needs to both analyze and recognize the *kurkevan*. He needs to look the *almanah* in the eye when paskening on a chicken and needs to be a master of all five *halakim* of *Shulhan Arukh*. An appropriate *psak* must of course consist of information and analysis but also the appropriate empathy. This reality means that a flesh-and-blood *posek* needs to be willing to appear inconsistent. This is a challenge that we must be up to.

THE MASHIACH CARD

A native of Washington Heights, New York, Rochel is a teacher and lecturer who is currently completing her master's degree in Jewish History at Touro's Graduate School of Jewish Studies.

Shloimie Gouber's credit card company was small but growing. Requiring either the signing of a *hetter iska*, or payment in full every billing cycle, the card would ordinarily have never made it off the ground. This was, however, no ordinary card, and Shloimie was no ordinary banker. He wasn't a banker at all, in fact, and how Gouber LLC had managed to satisfy all pertinent regulations, requirements, and certifications was somewhat of a

mystery, only partially explained by the card's being underwritten by the First (and only) Bank of Tuvalu, South Pacific.

The Mashiach Card, as Shloimie dubbed it—with its options of *gedolim* portraits, pictures of *mekomot ha-kedoshim*, and Judaica objects d'art—catered to a niche market. For every purchase made, customers would receive the underwhelming amount of 0.01% back in the here and now. But, depending on their credit tier, they would receive—fully guaranteed and underwritten—18%, 36%, or 54% back on every single purchase upon the official arrival of Mashiach, or the year 6000 A.M.—whichever came first.

Should they, Shloimie pondered, offer a Rebbetzins' line for female customers? Seminary graduates were still somewhat of an untapped market. Perhaps something for Jewish foodies? Shloimie studied the steadily climbing line graph of new customers. There was always room for improvement. Initially, it had been rough going, attempting to persuade people to trade in a share of what would have been their cash-back points or airline mileage for something on a more transcendent plane, nor had the *haskamot* flooded in.

But Shloimie was dogged; success in business came from hard work and setting the right priorities. He soon learned the best sales pitches were delivered immediately after inspirational speeches, reminding everyone of the urgency and immediacy of the Mashiach's coming. Ads and discounts blared in the days following Tisha Be-Av. The renewed interest in Mashiach's coming, along with his generous

donations to *mosdot* and *tzedakot*, gave his card a solid backing in the *frum* world, and the grudging respect—or toleration—of its leaders. Perhaps this was what the current generation needed, the thinking seemed to go.

Not one to favor one group in Klal Yisroel over another, Shloimie invested in targeted marketing, setting up Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram accounts hand-tailored to the various interests, religious levels, hashkafic views, and political leanings of every segment of *Am Yisrael*. Always a proponent of *achdut*, Shloimie was pleased to see that the most popular card designs were almost equally split among the Rebbe (on an elegant 770 background—Mashiach flag optional at no extra cost), the Ben Ish Chai, the Chafetz Chaim (with a cheery “Money talks—make sure it's not *Lashon Hara!*” emblazoned across the top), and the Rav. Basic black—understated yet implying one's top credit line—rounded out the top five picks.

Admittedly, Shloimie could not originally have been described as the most Mashiach-conscious Jew. Throughout his adult life, he had flitted from one business venture to the next with little time to think beyond the basic needs and luxuries of his family. Mashiach was a go-to way to end off a speech, or a means to comfort those who had suffered a loss. Of course, he believed as fervently in Mashiach's coming as did anyone else; it was all just a bit vague and far-off—until the day it had hit him as the business opportunity of the century. Sitting through yet another *chizuk* event that either his wife or his conscience had dragged him to (he could no longer recall whom it was he had to thank), it had occurred

to him that he must surely not be alone in mentally reviewing his portfolio and other more temporally pressing concerns while one enthused speaker after the next went on and on about the days to come. When the final speaker had interrupted Shloimie's mental calculations of airline miles (it had been a long event; Shloimie had run through his entire investment portfolio, 401(K), and crypto holdings) with a truly fervent cry hailing the true wealth that would only be *Klal Yisrael's* portion with Mashiach's miraculous arrival, the idea for The Mashiach Card had popped fully formed into his head, leaving Shloimie (and his somewhat surprised wife) with nothing but praise for the event.

These days, Shloimie found himself thinking of Mashiach rather involuntarily, at least once a day, sometimes once an hour, and the various melodies for the twelfth *Ani Ma'amin* alternated as the current tune stuck in his head. His own ads did nothing to lessen the nagging thought, as they blared from the pages of every Jewish magazine (*HaYom—Im BeKolo Tishma'u*—Put your money where your mouth is, and make an investment you will never regret!) “*Achakeh Lo BeChol Yom SheYavo—Do* you? Why don't you have The Mashiach Card in *your* wallet?”).

Everything had two sides to it, and while The Mashiach Card gained market share by the day, Shloimie's worries had become chronic, and his anxiety rarely left him. His accountant's bright financial summaries did nothing to allay his fears; the more success, the more customers they had in the here and now, the more Shloimie was in debt, in

the if-and-when—to the sickening tune of hundreds of millions of dollars. Day-to-day, things were great. He had the house, and the *dirah* in Israel; he had the cars, he had the lifestyle, the vacations, the Guest-of-Honor donor level at the *mosdot* of his choice, everything that he and his family wanted and deserved. Between marketing meetings and investment strategy planning, he even had time to learn. His rabbi had suggested learning something in *Kodshim*, seeing as how his entire life seemed centered on the imminent arrival of the Mashiach, but Shloimie felt very firmly that business should be kept entirely out of one's *keviut* for learning.

Pushing his anxieties and Mordechai Ben David's “*Ani Ma'amin*” away for what seemed like the thousandth time, Shloimie had to admit: Things were working out pretty well. And if all of his clients' good faith did bring Mashiach the next day? What of it? If his own innate cynicism did not shoo the good man away, what would it then matter anyhow? What would a measly 18% (or even the 54% super-saver max option) mean, when the streets would be paved in carbuncle, the windows wrought of jewels, and Borsalinos, steaks, and matching European *Yom Tov* outfits for the kids hung on the trees, ripe for the picking? So, he had millions in unrealized debts right now, growing by the day—what was the matter with that? One just had to do one's part, and HaShem would do the rest—that was what *bitachon* and *hishtadlut* were all about, weren't they?

The day Shloimie signed his fifty-thousandth customer (a Breslover, who surprised the sales team

by opting for the *Ein Od Milvado* design over the Na Na Nachman pictorial), he wrote out a few *tzedaka* checks, gave his staff a raise, and went home early. He was grateful, but it was all a bit unnerving.

And whenever he got overwhelmed, the Rambam appeared in his head, uninvited—Rambam, who wrote that Mashiach’s arrival would be hailed by no miracles, no golden trees and showers of gems, but regular life, with the exception of the Jewish nation once again enjoying full sovereignty and under the control of no foreign entity. While in the past, Rambam’s more approachable vision might have been the most appealing to a hard-nosed businessman like Shloimie, it held no comfort for him these days. He envied his wife’s apparent full confidence in the more miraculous versions of the future that his kids tended to come home from school with.

Shloimie davened *Maariv* and drove home. As much as he loved sharing his successes with the family, he was in no mood for a grand celebration just now. To his relief, the kids were either asleep or on their iPads (filtered, of course), and his wife, he recalled, had said something about hosting her *Tehillim* circle’s wine and sushi night. Or was that the next week? Maybe tonight was the *N’she’s* parlor meeting. Carefully skirting the magnificently appointed formal dining room and its female occupants, Shloimie reached the kitchen, grabbed a bite (it *was* sushi, and good too, whatever the event might be), and sank wearily into bed, the Rambam still his illustrious but unwelcome companion. Shloimie recalled phrases from the *Mishneh Torah*, describing the return of the *beit din*—a fully-

empowered *beit din* authorized to punish, freeze assets, seize properties, foreclose, and even administer lashes. Did all of that apply to debtors, even debtors whose intentions were as well meant as his? Who knew, he countered the nagging voice of worry in his head—and really, who could care? Let everyone dig up the Goubers’ driveway for the carbuncle—or had the *Medrash* said it was diamonds? The Rambam had mercifully drifted away. It was all so far off, some distant, blurry spot in the future, and his eiderdown pillow was so near and so soft.

It seemed to him he had barely shut his eyes when his ears—even in sleep able to differentiate among the various alerts, notices, and ringtones of his devices—made him sit upright. There seemed to be a veritable hail of electronic sound, an unceasing clamor as every app and number he had lit up, beeped, pinged, and notified him.

His wife, whom he was able to perceive over all the noise, must have also been awoken, and she had a call on her phone. She seemed concerned about something; he wouldn’t disturb her. Adding to the din from his night table, his pajama-clad kids had all burst in and seemed to be whooping in jubilation. Had a snow day been declared? He saw neither snow, nor why his screens would be lit up with messages about that from as far away as Melbourne. Still half asleep, he scrolled through his messages: Kollel Kodshim, requesting his attendance as their Guest of Honor at the upcoming dinner. Lots of likes for the pictures of his kids elephant-riding in Thailand (it had been a good mid-winter vacation trip). A message from his office, informing him of

several clients maxing out their credit lines in Israel—buying property, it seemed (with one card featuring Rav Yoel, to boot).

He scrolled further, trying to catch up on whatever it was that was breaking news now and causing such a clamor. He clicked on *Yeshiva World News*' headlines: “*Shofar* heard at *Kosel Plaza*, no one visible—tourists and *Neshot HaKotel* ruled out.” “*Tzadik Nistar* appears in *Yerushalayim*.” “*Shofar* heard again, louder. IDF: Under investigation.” “*Ga'avad* extends *Divrei Bracha* to two unknown *Tzadikim*.” “Earthquake felt in *Yerushalayim*—*Har HaZeisim* moves, splits.” “Breaking: Instructions and *Divrei Chizuk* given by *Tzadik* rumored to be Eliyahu HaNavi. Check back for updates!!” “Bennett co-Prime Minister again—this time with *tzadik*—likely *mekubal*.” “*Shofar* sounds continuously—Mossad investigating.” “Earthquake was 6.13 magnitude—miraculously, no serious damage reported.” “*Hayalim* ditch weapons, join in massive *tefillah* rally.” “Red cow spotted in Mea Shearim—brief pandemonium ensues.” “Yeshivat Eliyahu HaNavi begins tackling *sefeikot*.” “Donate to *Kupat Ha'ir*!” That was an ad at least. “Rabbis present their evidence on *techelet*.” “Arabs seen leaving *Har Ha-Bayit*, burning mosque behind them.” “Yeshivat Eliyahu HaNavi declares: We *pasken* like Rambam in this unfolding situation.” “Official word from *rabbanim*: Nothing official yet.”

Shloimie's fingers shook, and he put the phone down. “Not official yet”—he must do something, and quickly. He could barely hear himself think over his kids' jubilations, and a pillow thrown in happy

abandon nearly knocked his phone from his hands. He didn't object to his kids' wholesale invasion of the bedroom every now and then, but a pillow fight was not something he could stomach just now. “Abba, can we go right now? I want to see him,” his eight-year-old begged. Only his oldest, David, whose bar mitzvah they had only just recently celebrated in style at the Kotel (Shloimie shuddered at the outlay now) had a slight shadow of concern on his face, Shloimie noticed—he had always felt like his *bekhor* had inherited his business acumen. A lot of good that would do now. When *would* it be “official”? Where was his wife now? He *thought* he'd detected a look of concern on her face, before she'd exited their bedroom, still yakking on the phone, but did she grasp the import of the situation? The consequences? Some *eishet chayil*—for all he knew, she was busy rejoicing with her *shemirat halashon* group of friends. Where was an *ezer kenegdo* when you needed one? Well, he'd just have to handle the situation by himself.

Should he fly out and assess the situation on the ground? Of what use would that be? Try to liquidate the assets he had? They were nothing, a drop in the bucket, compared to what he would be liable for. There was no way he could ever pay everyone out. How could he stop what appeared to be inexorably occurring before his very eyes? Commit some terrible crime? The guilt of one person would not, surely, change the course of *Am Yisrael's* destiny. It would take something massive. His head spun, and his eyes were involuntarily drawn back to the constantly buzzing screen of his overworked phone. Within those 5G networks and Wi-Fi signals lay his

only hope.

The event for which people had prayed for millennia was coming—and with it, his worst fears. His various feeds were buzzing even more rapidly, if such a thing were possible: “OMG!!!!” “Is this for real?” “*Yechi Adoneinu Melech HaMashiach*” “Not him!” “If you see Eliyahu can you please ask him if...” He scrolled on. “I’m rich! #MashiachCard #points! 😊” “Trust me—It’s my wife who’s got to be the richest!” “Lakewood West abdicates in favor of Lakewood East.”

He felt sick, but there was no time to lose. He would tweet his way out of this mess if it killed him. He began cautiously. “*Rabbanim* say nothing official yet,” he retweeted. @Imacynic quickly liked that. Shloimie switched to one of his targeted marketing accounts. “Any credentials? ID?? Is this just a cover for #judicial reform?” He pivoted to another feed and grimly went on. Would he be called out for his not-too-enthusiastic comments? Would it ruin his business? Ha—Shloimie grimly retorted—his business was about to be ruined in a manner he was sure no one had ever even imagined possible. It was a chance he had to take. There was no time to waste, no time to think. Shloimie’s business instinct kicked in. “No *moifsim* seen yet.” “Massive voter fraud detected! No one voted for him! #StoptheSteal!!” @Maga’24 re-tweeted that one to his 40,563 followers. “Liberal left-wing media again display their bias against Israel: Zimbabweans can yodel all night and #fakenews says nothing; a guy practices blowing *shofar* in Tevet and you’d think the world is coming to an end.” Likes popped up on his screen,

and his messages were being tweeted and retweeted across borders and denominations of *Klal Yisrael*.

He was emboldened: “Who is this guy? #Notmymashiach.” If he’d had the luxury to look, Shloimie would have noticed #Notmymashiach was now trending.

He sat back and waited five minutes, which felt like the eternity he was facing. Then, he took a drink, steadied his hand, and refreshed the news feed. “Persistent ‘*Shofar*’ heard at Kotel was pack of hyenas, Mossad claims.” “*Ga’avad: Mi Yodeia?*” “Yeshivat Eliyahu HaNavi abruptly closes—*Rosh Yeshiva* nowhere to be found.” “Arabs blame Jews for arson on *Har Ha-Bayit*.” “IDF regroup; clarifies *tefillah* rally was unsanctioned, spontaneous event—will investigate breach of discipline.” “Dangerous mad cow shot in Geula—Temple Institute had hoped was rare red heifer.” “Two *tzadikim* nowhere to be seen.” “*Rabbanim: HaYom—Im Rak BeKolo Tishma’u!*”

Shloimie breathed a sigh of relief. Yes, Mashiach would have been nice, and his family would be disappointed—but business was business, after all, and one had to have one’s priorities straight.

Managing Editor:

Yosef Lindell

Editors:

David Fried

David Kollmar

Chesky Kopel

Chaya Sara Oppenheim

Tzvi Sinensky

Miriam Zami

Consulting Editors:

Miriam Krupka Berger

Elli Fischer

Miriam Gedwiser

Chaim Saiman

Jeffrey Saks

Jacob J. Schacter

Sara Tillinger Wolkenfeld

Shlomo Zuckier

Please contact us at editors@thelehrhaus.com