



CHADASHOT

A Year in Review

תשרי תשפ"ו • SEPTEMBER 2025



כת'בה ומת'מה 2/6!

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FOR YAMIM
NORAIM 5786**

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Beth Din Update
THE cRc BETH DIN CONTINUES TO
GROW AS IT SERVES THE GROWING
NEEDS OF THE KLAL.



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Greetings from the Executive Director



by
**RABBI LEVI
MOSTOFSKY**

Executive Director

ROSH HASHANA IS A DAY OF JUDGEMENT, a day of reckoning. It is an opportunity for personal and communal introspection, to refocus on what we do and how we do it. We look back on the year past and ahead to what's to come, for ourselves, our families and community. And for us at the cRc, we look at what we do, have done and what more we can offer.

In his *Sefer Yerech LaMoadim*, Rav Yerucham Olshin explains the nature of the judgement we face on Rosh HaShana, and what is expected of us.

Rav Yonasan Eybeschutz (*Yaaros Dvash* 2:5) cites the *Zohar* describing how, at the time of creation, the angels asked Hashem why He was creating man, *Mah Enosh Ki Sizkarenu* (*Tehillim* 8:5), and that each year on Rosh HaShana we need to re-justify our very existence.

In *Pirkei Avot*, the *Mishna* (6:11) teaches that the purpose of creation, that we celebrate on Rosh HaShana, is to glorify Hashem and his reign, that we reaffirm on Rosh HaShana. As the pinnacle of creation, that is our calling, and yet, as the angels challenge, how can we mere mortals fulfill such a lofty mission?

The Maharal (*Derech Chaim* 6:11) explains how we glorify Hashem in this world through the study of Torah, but he quotes the *Gemara* in *Yoma* (86a) with an additional, crucial, requirement. We not only bring *kavod* through the study of Torah, but also in the way that we do so. Our spiritual pursuits must be conducted in an honorable fashion that commands respect and honor, and that by extension is *Marbeh Kvod Shamayim*, bringing glory to Hashem. It is mankind, carrying out Hashem's will in the world He created, helping and supporting His children, with holiness and compassion, that is able to do what the angels cannot. That is why we were created, it is our mission, and each year on Rosh HaShana we recommit to the mission to renew our mandate for the coming year.

The cRc has had the privilege of serving the religious needs of the Chicago Jewish community for nearly a century. Since our creation, we have strived to encourage, inspire and provide services of the highest standards of *halachic* integrity, rigor and compassion. The past year has seen not only growth in the cRc, doing more, but improved and professionalized systems and innovative new layers of service.

We are blessed with an incredible staff of world-class professionals, increasingly sought globally for their leadership and expertise, focused on local impact. Guided by our community *rabbanim* and working in partnership with other local organizations, the cRc staff work to consistently deepen the spiritual and human impact we can provide our clients and community.

As you will see in this publication, our staff are focused on being *Marbeh Kvod Shamayim* by being *Marbeh Kavod HaTorah* and *Kavod HaBrios*. We wish a *Kesivah VeChasimah Tovah* to our entire community and for all *Klal Yisrael*, for safety and security here and in Israel, and for a new year of glorifying Hashem's name. ■



Presidential Message: The Lion's Share



by
**RABBI JOEL
GUTSTEIN**

President of cRc
and Rabbi of
Congregation
Yehuda Moshe

A VISITOR TO THE LATE RABBI Yechezkel Abramsky asked him to explain the miracle of the Six-Day War. Rabbi Abramsky opened the window of his apartment and showed his visitor the mountains around Jerusalem. He then quoted to his visitor the verse (*Tehillim* 125:2), “ירושלים הרים סביב” – לה' סביב לעמו – Jerusalem is surrounded by mountains and G-d surrounds His nation.” Just as the mountains around Jerusalem are clear for anybody to see, so is G-d's protection for the Jewish people.

This has been an extraordinary year for the Jewish people. It has been a year when we have seen miracles in Israel and the hand of G-d operating – not behind the scenes – rather in the open for all to see. There was first-hand testimony from IDF soldiers of strongly fortified positions and enormous amounts of powerful weapons abandoned by Hezbollah. We have seen numerous job openings for leadership positions in Iran – both in government and nuclear science. There are plenty of positions open in Hezbollah and in Hamas. We have seen Israel operating freely in the streets of Iran and in the skies above Iran.

For all the magnificent accomplishments of Israel, all had to happen as planned. Any slight bump in the road and their plans would have been foiled. King David writes in *Tehillim* (121:5), “ה' שמרך ה' צלך על יד ימינך” – G-d watches you, G-d protects you on your right hand.” There is only one way to explain it all. G-d watches over us.

At the same time, King David also writes (*Tehillim* 120:7), “אני שלום וכי אדבר המה למלחמה” – I speak of peace, and when I speak of peace, they speak of war.” Despite all the kindness that we have seen from G-d and that our enemies have seen what G-d has done for us, they still plot our destruction. We must continue to be grateful to G-d for all He has done and continues to do for us, and we must continue to daven that He will continue to show kindness towards us.

At the cRc we also show gratitude to G-d for making us a wonderful organization that provides so much – not just for the Chicagoland Jewish community – but also for the American Jewish community and beyond – even to Israel. We have been blessed with a super-human Av Beth Din, Rabbi Reiss, who tirelessly provides leadership and scholarship throughout the Jewish world. Whether he is directing our Beth Din, assisting other *Batei Din*, lecturing or writing, Rabbi Reiss has brought much honor to our organization. Rabbi Reiss - together with our other *dayanim*, Rabbi Raccah, Rabbi Kraft and

Rabbi Langer – have given our Beth Din a well-deserved international respect.

Our executive director Rabbi Mostofsky has brought much recognition to the cRc. Among the many matters with which he is occupied is our office of divorce mediation – unfortunately a much-needed service in our day – and servicing the many converts who come through our Beth Din. Many communities from around the country have sought our office for these vital services and Rabbi Mostofsky deserves much credit for bringing these matters to the forefront.

**“Just as the mountains
around Jerusalem are clear
for anybody to see, so is
G-d's protection for the
Jewish people.”**

Rabbi Fishbane and his kashrus staff have developed our *kashrus* department to be one of the leading – if not the leading – kashrus department worldwide. Rabbi Fishbane has been instrumental in raising *kashrus* standards nationwide and not just in the Chicagoland area. He has given our kashrus department a name that is לכבוד ולתפארת – bringing glory and honor to G-d, His Torah and the Jewish people.

I would also like to thank our office staff for their time, effort and organization. We could not accomplish as much as we do without their skills and support.

The Prophet Micha writes (7:15): “כימי צאתך מארץ מצרים” – as in the days when you left Egypt, I will show you wonders.” This past year we have merited to see numerous wonders of G-d in the world. G-d willing, may we continue to experience wonderful times for our organization – the cRc – for the Jewish people, and for the Land of Israel. ■

From the Av Beth Din

THE ROSH HASHANA EXPERIENCE: INDIVIDUAL & INDIVISIBLE



by
**RAV YONA
REISS**

Av Beth Din

PART OF THE REALITY OF ROSH Hashanah is that it evokes a sense of fear and trembling. Although we may sometimes try to distract ourselves during the year from the vagaries and vicissitudes of human existence, we are woken up by the clarion call of the *shofar* as we approach Rosh Hashanah to be reminded of the fact that judgment is now upon us. As we know from the powerful *Unesaneh Tokef* prayer recited during *mussaf* of the High Holy Days, nobody is impervious to Divine judgment.

Nonetheless, the Tur (*Orach Chaim, Chapter 581*) provides a reassuring message, noting that we wear our finest clothing on Rosh Hashanah and partake in festive meals, based on the expectation of a positive judgment. The Tur even goes so far as to state that we are certain that Hashem will perform miracles on our behalf at this time.

This latter comment of the Tur seems to fly in the face of our tradition that we are never supposed to rely upon miracles. In fact, the Talmud (*Berachos 54a*) states that a prayer for a miracle to occur is considered a prayer in vain.

However, there are exceptions to this principle. One exception is that one who prays on behalf of the entire Jewish community, one is allowed to pray for a miracle (see *Sha'arei Teshuva* 187:3).

Perhaps this idea lends some insight concerning how we can head into this fearful judgment day with a sense of optimistic spirit. The *Lev Eliyahu* (3:339) states that when each individual attaches himself or herself to the collective whole of the Jewish people, everyone can have confidence in a positive judgment because Hashem will always judge the collective entity of the Jewish people favorably.

This sentiment is beautifully captured in an essay in the recently published book, *Yehoshua Eved Hashem*, honoring the legacy of the late Zidichover Rebbe of Chicago, Rabbi Yehoshua Heschel Eichenstein zt"l. In an essay describing his Torah insights (see p. 199), the author notes that the Talmud (Rosh Hashanah 18a) states that on Rosh Hashanah each person passes before Hashem *k'nei maron*, which means (according to the Talmud's first interpretation) like sheep passing one by one through a corral, indicating that each person is judged individually. However, the Talmud goes on to say that נסקרים – that they are all scanned with one scan.

בסקירה אחת – that they are all scanned with one scan.

So, which is it? Are we judged individually or collectively?

The answer is that both statements are true. Thus, as the essay continues, we state in *Unesaneh Tokef*, that Hashem is וסופר ומונה – He counts and enumerates. Here too we can question why both terms are mentioned. The answer is that Hashem counts us as part of a group that forms a מספר, an aggregate number, in addition to enumerating us as individuals, each with our own separate identity.

On Rosh Hashanah, we are judged both for our personal deeds but also in terms of how well we have interacted with those around us. Have we been kind and appreciative towards family members? Have we been generous and dependable towards neighbors? Have we interacted respectfully with members of our community in *shul*, at work, in the supermarket, in our business interactions? Have we served to sanctify the name of Hashem in the universe?

Based on this dichotomy of purpose, the Zidichover Rebbe z"l used to ask family members who would be visiting Chicago for the holiday season (in Yiddish), “what will you be adding here?” Whenever we are placed in various settings, whether from birth or through life's circumstances, there is a purpose and reason why we are in a particular setting or atmosphere, and our job is to enhance that setting. We must always strive not only to make ourselves better people but to uplift our surroundings.

When we are constantly striving both to raise up ourselves spiritually and to raise up our surroundings, to think to ourselves, “what could and should I be adding through my presence, my abilities, my personality,” and then make a meaningful difference in all our interactions, we can enter this frightening time of year with a sense of serenity and security. We can even count upon miracles, because we thus become a representation of the collective unit of the Jewish people who together are assured of a favorable judgment.

May the year תשפ"ו be a fulfillment of שנת פרנסה – a year of sustenance and support, a year that we will have the physical wherewithal and ability to maintain our spiritual strivings and to nourish others with our good deeds and contributions. May we also speedily see a safe and healthy return of all the hostages being held in Gaza (as of this writing), and may we continue to witness the miraculous hand of Hashem that continuously guides and strengthens us.

כתיבה וחתימה טובה ■



A New Chalitza Shoe for the cRc Beth Din



WHEN VISITORS COME TO THE cRc Beth Din, one of the most memorable sights is the worn, faded *chalitza* shoe in a lucite case hanging on the wall. Its long leather straps rest limply on the sandal's sole as though they carry the weight of decades of stories and *halachic* legacy.

Rav Gedalia Dov Schwartz zt"l, the cRc *Rosh Av Beth Din*, was very proud of this particular shoe. It once belonged to his beloved father-in-law, Rabbi Eliezer Poupko, zt"l, who served as the *Av Beth Din* of Weiliz, Russia in 1913. The shoe, steeped in history, is currently on loan to the cRc by the Poupko-Schwartz families.

According to Torah law, if a married man dies childless, his brother is obligated to either marry the widow in a process called *yibum*, or to perform *chalitza* – a formal ceremony that severs the connection between them. During *chalitza*, the brother wears a specially constructed shoe, called a *chalitza* shoe, which the widow must remove from his foot. After the ceremony, the widow is allowed to marry others. Nowadays it is more common for *chalitza* to be done rather than *yibum*, in accordance with Ashkenazic practice, although there are exceptions.

The *chalitza* shoe must meet precise *halachic* requirements, including the type of leather used and the way the straps, clasps and loops are constructed. The cRc Beth Din has six *chalitza* shoes.

In 2022 the cRc commissioned a new *chalitza* shoe from Rabbi Yirmiyahu Benyowitz, a contemporary expert in the construction of *chalitza* shoes. This new shoe was designed to accommodate larger shoe sizes.



The *chalitza* shoe hanging on the wall in the cRc Beth Din.

More recently the cRc was honored to receive another historic *chalitza* shoe from the Twersky family. This shoe, brought over from Europe, is estimated to be around 100 years old. It originally belonged to the Lomza Gaon, Rabbi Yechiel Mordechai Gordon, who passed it down to his son-in-law Rabbi Chaim David Regensberg, zt"l, the founding *Av Beth Din* of the cRc. Some of the leather straps were later changed by Rabbi Israel Karno, the second *Av Beth Din* of the cRc. Those new straps were cut by Mr. Shuster, a leather manufacturer and survivor of Auschwitz and Dachau concentration camps.



Rabbi Israel M. Karno zt"l

The shoe had been in the possession of the cRc Beth Din which was located in Rabbi Yehoshua Heschel Twersky's Beth Medrash, the Beis Medrash Lev Sameach. Rabbi Regensberg chose the Beis Midrash Lev Sameach, located at 5555 N. Bernard



Rabbi Chaim David Regensberg zt"l

Street, as the central location of the cRc Beth Din because of the many *talmidei chachamim* who learned there.

Rabbi Reiss, the current cRc *Av Beth Din* has presided over 23 *chalitza* cases associated with the Beth Din of America, where he serves as *Segan Av Beth Din*. Among these were two cases following the 9/11 tragedy, and two others that took place during the COVID pandemic.

For a deeper understanding of *chalitza*, one can listen to a recording of Rabbi Reiss at crcbethdin.org/rabbi-reiss-on-chalitza or read an article by Rabbi Reiss in *Kanfei Yona*, *Siman* 35. ■

Finding Ourselves and Our Time in Our *Tefilot*



by
**RABBI ZVI
ENGEL**

Past President of
cRc and Rabbi of
Congregation Or
Torah

AS OF THIS WRITING, WITH FIFTY *chatufim* still in captivity and thousands of *chayalim* stationed on front lines in the South and North of Eretz Yisrael, I hope to think about these themes when I daven in this season, may they be *Yemei HaRachamim ve'HaSelichos*.

In spring 2023, Sapir Cohen became convinced something was wrong with her. Extensive tests revealed nothing. Yet, she could not shake the feeling. Though not particularly religiously observant, when an Instagram post suggested a particular *perek* of *Tehillim*—claiming that reciting it daily for 30 days would lead to health and miracles—she decided to start saying it. Only during the last week did she notice the strange words, unrelated to health but to war, and Hashem saving from enemies, even including the word Hamas. She wondered: from which war was she praying to stay safe? Day thirty fell on *Simchat Torah* morning, October 7th.

Hiding under a bed at Kibbutz Nir Oz, she suddenly understood her *perek's* meaning. As she told a shul in New York months later,

“And then I heard...hundreds of terrorists entered to the *kibbutz*... I was terrified. I was shaking. All my body was water. And I say my prayer again and again and again. And when I say it, I felt something deep inside of me. I felt peace and I didn't understand how can I feel peace in this situation.”

Her prayer? *Tehillim* 27:

לְנוֹד ה' אוֹרִי וְיִשְׁעִי מִמִּי אֵיךָא ה' מַעֲזוֹ חַיִּי מִמִּי אֶפְקֹד: בִּקְרֹב עָלַי

מִרְעִים לֶאֱכֹל אֶת בְּשָׁרִי צָרִי וְאֹיְבִי לִי הִמָּה כְּשִׁלּוֹ וְנִפְלֹו: אִם תִּהְיֶה עָלַי מִתְּהַנָּה

Of David. Hashem is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, my enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an encampment should set against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this I will trust...

She carried her *perek*. Now, her *perek* carried her. Cohen recited Tehillim 27 daily, even in airless tunnels, until her release.

Klal Yisrael has a long history of finding ourselves in our *tefilot*. Consider how Channah davens, bringing her young son Shmuel to the *Mishkan*, which we read in the *Haftarah* on Rosh Hashanah's first day:

עָלַץ לִבִּי בַּה' רָמָה קִרְנִי בַּה' רָחֵב פִּי עַל אוֹיְבִי כִּי שָׁמַחְתִּי בִּישׁוּעֶתְךָ: אֵין קְדוֹשׁ כַּה' כִּי אֵין בִּלְתֶּךָ וְאֵין צוּר כְּאַלְקֵינוּ: אֵל תִּרְבּוּ תִּדְבְּרוּ גְבוּהָ גְבוּהָ יֵצֵא עֵתְךָ מִפִּיכֶם כִּי אֵל דְּעוֹת ה' וְלוֹ נִתְּכֵנוּ עֲלִילוֹת: קִשְׁת גְּבָרִים חֲתִים וְנִכְשָׁלִים אֲזָרוּ קִיֹּל

My heart exults in Hashem; my pride is uplifted in Hashem. My mouth is wide with praise against my enemies, for I rejoice in Your deliverance. There is none holy like Hashem, for there is none besides You; there is no rock like our G-d. Do not speak so arrogantly, let not pride come from your lips, for Hashem is a G-d of knowledge, and by Him deeds are weighed. The bows of the mighty are broken, but the weak are girded with strength....



Rashi understands the *tefillah* of this *tzadeket* metaphorically, referring to overcoming private battles. Today, a grateful *chayal* returning from defending Eretz Yisrael could easily read those same words to thank Hashem for battlefield salvation.

Why does Channah resort to what sounds like a battle hymn for her personal situation? Rav Amnon Bazak suggests that perhaps Channah was invoking a *tefillah* already known to *Klal Yisrael* from prior generations—from wars in *Sefer Yehoshua* or *Sefer Shoftim*—which she personalized to her circumstances. If correct, Channah was among the first—but not last—*eishet chayil*, a woman of valor of the Jewish People, to find herself in her *tefilot*.

Chazal derive the nine *brachot* of Rosh Hashanah's *Musaf* from the nine times Hashem's name appears in this *tefillah*:

הַיְיָ תִשַׁע דְּרָאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה כְּנֻגַּד מִי? אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק דָּמֵן קִרְטִיגִּין: כְּנֻגַּד תִּשְׁעָה
אֲזֵכֻרוֹת שְׁאִמְרָהּ חָנָּה בְּתַפְלָתָהּ

These nine [*brachot* of *Musaf*on] Rosh Hashana additional prayer correspond to who? Rabbi Yitzhak of Kartignin says: They correspond to the nine mentions of G-d's name that Chana spoke in her *tefillah* (*Brachot* 29a).

Channah's *tefillah* serves as the template for how we *daven* on Rosh Hashanah. As Malbim notes, it's almost entirely praise and thanksgiving, with the sole request appearing in its final *pasuk*. As we approach the yamim noraim this year, may we also find ourselves and our moment in our *tefilot*. ■



THE cRc WELCOMES ITS NEW
RABBINIC COORDINATOR:

Rabbi Elozor S. Willner

THE cRc IS PROUD TO WELCOME RABBI ELOZOR S. Willner as its newest Rabbinic Coordinator. Rabbi Willner joined the cRc team in December, stepping into the RC role previously held by Rabbi Refoel Dovid Oppenheimer.

Coming from Lakewood, New Jersey, Rabbi Willner was a dedicated member of a *chaburah* at Beth Medrash Govoha that focused on practical *halacha*. He brings with him a strong background in *halachic* research and application.

Chicago was already well-known to Rabbi Willner before his father-in-law, Rabbi Yacov Felder, Chairman of the Rabbinical Vaad of COR in Toronto, informed him about the cRc job opportunity. Rabbi Shmuel Fuerst, Dayan of Agudath Israel of Illinois, was a guest lecturer at Rabbi Willner's *chaburah*. Rabbi Willner is also an avid learner of the *halacha seforim* series *Hilchos Kashrus Imrei Dovid*, written by Rabbi Dovid Cohen, the cRc's Administrative Rabbinical Coordinator.

Even during his years in yeshiva, Rabbi Willner showed a deep commitment to *halacha*. He authored *Brachos Me'in Sheva*, a *sefer* about the *bracha* of Magen Avos recited on Friday night, along with the various *halachos* associated with it. He also worked alongside his great uncle, Rabbi Yaakov E. Forchheimer, in reviewing and editing a *teshuva sefer* on *halacha*.

Rabbi Willner continues to consult with Rabbi Oppenheimer and appreciates the support of his fellow Rabbinic Coordinators. "They are patient and also encourage me to find my own way of being an RC," he shared.

"We are very pleased with Rabbi Willner's grasp of the technical parts of *kashrus*, in which he's able to integrate his vast storehouse of *halacha* knowledge," said Rabbi Sholem Fishbane, cRc Kashrus Administrator. "He's a true *talmid chacham* whose love for *halachic* research and pleasant personality make him an ideal RC." ■

Zachreinu L'Chayim – Together

Rabbi Aaron Leibtag

Vice President, cRc

Menahel, Fasman Yeshiva High School; Associate Rabbi, Congregation K.I.N.S.



AS WE ENTER THE SEASON OF YAMIM NORAIM, WE begin a process of *teshuvah* that, when approached sincerely, is deeply personal, reflective, and growth-oriented. But as much as *teshuvah* is a personal journey, it's equally a path we walk as a *tzibbur*. From *tefillah* in the plural to the collective confessions of *Viduy*, the process is embedded within the framework of *tzibbur*. Usually when we think about the role of the *tzibbur*, it's in the inherent power that we have as a collective whole. Within our מחזור, we constantly reference the *tzibbur* - וְיַעֲשׂוּ כָלֶם אִגְדָּה. אָהֵת לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנָה בְּלִבָּב שְׁלֵם. The *Sifrei* (*Devarim V'zos Habrachah* 346) illustrates this idea with a parable of tying two boats together and then building on top of them. When we are following Hashem and acting as one, we can build on this strong foundation, but if we are splintered and divided, then nothing can be built.

But it's not only that we have the power of a *tzibbur* or that we are *davening* for one another, be it for health, *parnassa* or *shidduchim*. Our focus should also be that as a *tzibbur* we are growing, learning and reaching new heights.

A *tzibbur* that comes together to daven, to learn, and to uplift one another—that's the *tzibbur* that invites the *Shechinah*

This sense of togetherness lies at the heart of the debate surrounding one of the additions we make to *tefillah* during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*—that of *Zachreinu L'Chayim*.

The Rambam (הל' סדר תפילות נוסח הברכות האמצעיות) states:

“נהגו רוב העם מראש השנה ועד יום הכפורים להוסיף בכל תפלה בעשרת הימים.” During this period of judgment, it feels especially appropriate to express our yearning to be inscribed in the ספר החיים, a sentiment supported by Rav Mordechai Yaffa in the *Levush* (OC 582:5). However, this addition is not without controversy—particularly regarding the appropriateness of its placement.

A fundamental principle of *tefillah* is that one should refrain from personal requests during the first three and last three brachos of *Shemoneh Esrei*. The *Gemara* (*Berachos* 34a) teaches: “לעולם אל.” אדם צרכיו לא בשלש ראשונות, ולא בשלש אחרונות, אלא באמצעיות. A person should never ask for his personal needs in the first three or last three blessings, but only in the middle blessings.” Given that *Zachreinu L'Chayim* appears to be a personal request, how can we

recite it in the first blessing of *Shemoneh Esrei*? In fact, the Rashba argued against its recitation on precisely these grounds—asserting that it violates this *halachic* structure.

Many answers have been offered, but one interpretation in particular, cited by *Tsafos*, feels especially resonant as we reflect on the collective growth of our nation as we approach almost two years since October 7th. *Tsafos* distinguish between individual and communal requests. *Tsafos* writes: “פ' ר"ח ורבינו האי דוקא ליחיד.” אבל צרכי צבור שואלין. This redefines *Zachreinu L'Chayim* not as a personal plea, but as a communal one. When our *tefillos* extend beyond ourselves and when we daven for *Am Yisrael*, the restriction no longer applies.

Rav Matisyahu Salomon zt"l elaborated on this idea. He taught that if one recites *Zachreinu L'Chayim* with thoughts only of personal health, wealth, or success, it constitutes a *hefsek*, an inappropriate interruption. But if one's intent is for the broader welfare of the community and of *Klal Yisrael*, then the addition becomes a meaningful and integral part of *Shemoneh Esrei*.

This perspective resonates deeply as we continue to live in the shadow of pain and challenge since October 7th. Our sense of communal identity has only intensified. *Acheinu Kol Beis Yisrael* has been on our lips and in our hearts and not only as a call to daven for captives, soldiers, and families in mourning, but as a reflection of how we have come together in unprecedented ways. In the almost two years since, we have not only supported each other through crisis—we have risen together. Communities have strengthened their commitment to *tefillah*, to Torah learning, to acts of *chesed*. We have raised the collective bar of what it means to be part of *Am Yisrael*. *Zachreinu L'Chayim* becomes more than a request for life—it's a *tefillah* to live with depth, with *kedushah*, and with a real connection to Hashem and each other.

This vision of a united *tzibbur* reaching upward together finds powerful expression in the aftermath of Yom Kippur itself. The Torah tells us that וַיִּקְהַל מֹשֶׁה אֶת-כָּל-עֲדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל was said the very next day after Yom Kippur. As Rashi explains, this call to assemble was the beginning of the construction of the *Mishkan*. The *She'eiris Menachem* (Rav Shmuel Yaakov of Paris) notes that this timing is not incidental. It is specifically after *kapparah*, after we have stood together in *tefillah*, even with the *avaryanim*, that we are truly ready to build a dwelling place for the *Shechinah*. A *tzibbur* that comes together to *daven*, to learn, and to uplift one another—that's the *tzibbur* that invites the *Shechinah* and earns a place in the *Sefer HaChayim*—not just for life, but for a life of meaning.

May our renewed sense of *tzibbur*, and our deepened connection to every member of *Am Yisrael*, help usher in a year of *bracha* and *shalom*—a year in which we are all inscribed in the *Sefer HaChayim*. ■

Yom Kippur - A Taste of the World to Come

Rabbi Baruch Epstein

Lubavitch Chabad of Illinois Bais Menachem Chabad Center



GEMARA BERACHOS (17A): "העולם הבא אין בו לא אכילה ולא ... – in the world to come there is no eating, drinking, etc.

Remarkably on Yom Kippur these activities are also absent. Unlike Tisha b'Av, when fasting is an expression of mourning, Yom Kippur's fasting is liberating. On Yom Kippur we rise above our human frailties to Hashem's Essence.

This is why Yom Kippur atones. Yom Kippur is more than just an opportunity to be forgiven for our misdeeds and shortcomings. On this special day we experience a depth of relationship with Hashem, where sin has no stature.

Gemara Shavuot (13) debates if Yom Kippur alone creates forgiveness, or is forgiveness only granted when activated via *teshuva*. All agree it is the power of Yom Kippur effectuating forgiveness; the debate is over our requirement to tap into it.

So why are we in shul all day on Yom Kippur. Isn't Hashem doing all the work and we are the passive beneficiaries?

Basically: "yes!"

Our task is to not get in the way of the miraculous, to let that Divine power flow. That is what we are achieving via fasting, simply making sure we are not disrupting the Divine, allowing it to make its way to us.

A little background - Our connection with Hashem can be seen in three perspectives:

(1) How we serve Hashem – Through the *mitzvah* actions we do, we fulfill His purpose for creation.

(2) Even when we fail, we are still connected with Hashem – ישראל – אע"פ שחטא ישראל הוא (Gemara Sanhedrin 44) you can't *aveira* your way out of this relationship, just like you can't *mitzva* your way into it, it simply is.

(3) A Jew is simply one with Hashem.

Not due to accomplishment or even awareness of this connection, it simply is.

When we eat, we engage with the physical world to elevate its latent *kedusha* —The food is kosher, we make a *brocha*, we eat it with the intent of using its nutrients to have the energy to do more *mitvahs*. This is why we are dependent on material items, not just for survival, but rather to give these objects a path to be elevated to their purpose in Creation. Without our interaction a pencil remains a dormant combination of wood and graphite. When we engage it to write Torah, its latent Divinity is exposed. Absent this purpose, our reliance on mere food is degrading. Here we are, the elect of all of creation, and we are supported by these less developed species of animal, vegetable and mineral; this could be humiliating. When we engage, it is only to elevate. Without conscientious *kedusha* awareness we are no different than the animal eating simply for survival. The whole process is fraught with the danger that I too will eat simply because I am hungry and thus degrade myself and the food, missing the opportunity to extract and redirect its *kedusha*.

Even if I do eat, or for that matter engage with any material, human experience, and fail to distinguish my behavior from an animal, I have not forfeited my Jewish identity, and I can change my ways and begin to conduct myself in alliance with my *neshama*.

That's the standard operating procedure. We are compelled to engage with the world and aspire to elevate that experience. Should we mess up, there is repair via *teshuva*. (Continue on Next Page >)

Divrei Torah Publications

Throughout the year, cRc member rabbis share Divrei Torah about Yamim Tovim in our Divrei Torah booklets.



Yom Kippur - A Taste of the World to Come

(Continued from page 9)

Yom Kippur is unique, *אחת בשנה*; it is the opportunity to leave the struggle and do more than connect the material with its Divine purpose. On Yom Kippur we have the opportunity to become connected completely to Hashem—to abandon our human identity with all its neediness for creature comforts and subsume myself in the Infinity of Hashem.

All year long we must battle the tug of war; waffling between what is best for me versus what is best for Hashem. We win some, hopefully more than we lose, and when we lose, we get back up and try again. On Yom Kippur, we get a break; there's no struggle, no need to interface with the world. We are on more than a food-fast, we are in a human needy purge. On Yom Kippur we are so aligned with Hashem that nothing, no failing, no indulgence, no misbehavior can come between us and Hashem, because there is no space between us and Hashem.

This is why we have no specific mitzvah assignments on this day. No *matzah*, no *lulav*. It is a day to be one with Hashem. The rest of the year we serve Hashem and we fulfill His plan. This day we simply are, no tasks, nothing but connecting with Hashem *Echad*, so when those gates close, we are sealed up with Hashem.

Rather than a clock watch till we can get to the cookies, let us cherish each moment of this break from the material world and indulge in the sanctity offered to us. We pray to be sealed in the Book of Life, because we know that Life means a life of oneness with Hashem, not the pursuit of the next meal. ■



THANK YOU!

The cRc Chevra Kadisha thanks Mrs. Ellen Center for 4 decades of dedicated service as a leading *Metaheres*, and wishes her *Mazal Tov* upon her retirement.



Around the Office



cRc publications are also available online



Mincha minyan at the cRc



Rabbi Cohen gives a kashrus shiur on Friday mornings. Contact the office for details.



Rabbi Reiss gives a chaburah on Hilchos Shabbos. Contact the office for details.



Rabbi Langer involved in a vegetable checking procedure



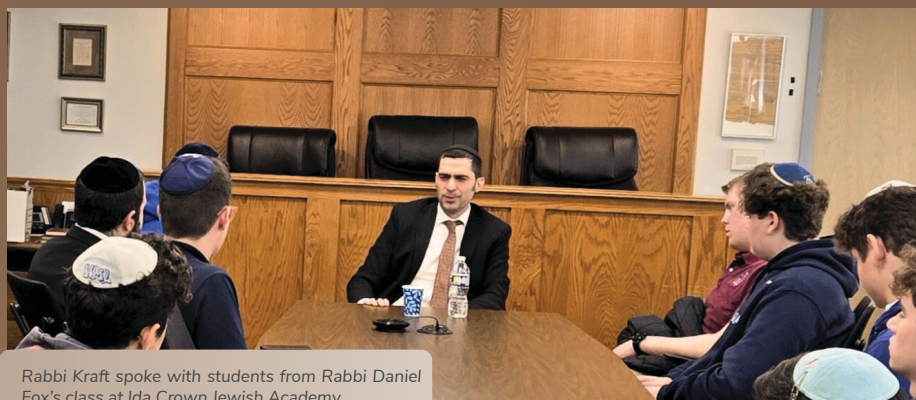
A group from Cincinnati, led by Rabbi Avrohom Weinrib, visited the cRc and heard shiurim from Rabbi Fishbane, Rabbi Landa and Rabbi Niehaus.



Rabbi Abramson, Rabbi Kraft, Rabbi Reiss, and Rabbi Mostofsky



Mrs. Lipman in a divorce mediation meeting



Rabbi Kraft spoke with students from Rabbi Daniel Fox's class at Ida Crown Jewish Academy.



Rabbi Eisenbach and Rabbi Willner



Rabbi Langer and Rabbi Fishbane spoke to students from Ateres Bais Yaakov HS of Monsey.



CHICAGO RABBINICAL CURRENTS

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תשרי תשפ"ו

HONEY and Other Animal Products

by Rabbi David Cohen

Rabbi Cohen is the Administrative Rabbinical Coordinator at cRc Kosher, where he leads the research and policy development efforts.

Shellac and Carmine

The *Gemara* (*Bechoros* 5b) teaches that something produced by a kosher animal is kosher, and therefore we may drink milk produced by a cow. However, something similar which is produced by a non-kosher animal is not kosher, and for that reason horse milk is not kosher. This is known as “*yotzeh*” (literally: what comes out of), and includes the two-part rule that (1) *yotzeh min hatahor*; *tahor* (what comes out of a kosher animal, is kosher), and (2) *yotzeh min hatamei*, *tamei* (what comes out of a non-kosher animal, is not kosher).

A significant exception to that rule is that if the animal produces something that is classified as *pirshah* (literally: excrement) then it is permitted. The most obvious examples of *pirshah* are items which are inedible, and *Igeros Moshe* (YD 2:24) makes the point that if they are inedible at the time they leave the animal, they are permanently permitted even if they later become edible. The logic is that the decision of whether something is “*yotzeh*” (as opposed to “*pirshah*”) must be made when it leaves the animal's body, and if at that point it is inedible then it was not a *yotzeh*. Later, when it becomes edible, it is no longer leaving the body of a non-kosher animal, and therefore it remains permitted.

Igeros Moshe's example of this is shellac (a.k.a., confectioner's glaze), which

is an excretion of an insect. Insects are not kosher and *yotzeh* from an insect is also non-kosher, but since the shellac is inedible when it leaves the insect's body, it is classified as *pirshah* and remains permitted even though it can be processed for use in coating candies, chocolate, and other foods. [This ruling is accepted by most American *hashgachos*, but there are those – especially in *Eretz Yisroel* – who disagree, and therefore do not allow shellac in kosher foods; see, for example, *Kovetz Teshuvos* 1:73:f].

This is different than carmine which all agree is forbidden. Carmine is a coloring agent made by crushing cochineal insects, and even if it is inedible when it is crushed, it is forbidden. The difference between carmine and shellac is clear: carmine is made from the insect itself and has a stricter status than shellac which is just a *yotzeh/pirshah* from the forbidden insect.

Bee Products

HONEY: Bees are obviously non-kosher but nonetheless the *Gemara* (*Bechoros* 7b) says that honey which comes from bees is kosher, either because it is not considered a bee “product” at all (but rather a minimally changed version of the kosher nectar which the bee collects from plants) or because of a special *Torah* exception to permit honey.

An apparent practical difference



between these reasons is the case of honeydew honey (a.k.a., forest honey) which is produced by bees who feed on a secretion of aphids (a type of insect) rather than on nectar. The secretion itself is sweet and edible and therefore is forbidden as *yotzeh* from the aphid. What about the honey made from it? The *Gemara's* first reason to permit honey was that it is not a *yotzeh* from the bee but rather has the status of the nectar it comes from. If so, since honeydew honey's source is a forbidden secretion of the aphid, it is forbidden. [According to the second reason of the *Gemara*, honeydew honey is permitted like any other honey]. Some have suggested reasons why this logic is incorrect, but most *hashgachos* follow this strict interpretation and do not consider it kosher.

Thus far, we have discussed the reason why honey is inherently kosher even though it comes from non-kosher bees. However, we must consider a few issues when purchasing retail containers of honey.

Honey which is flavored requires *hashgachah* to ensure that the flavor is kosher. In this context, it is noteworthy that when honey is marked as “orange blossom” that just identifies the trees (i.e., “orange blossoms”) that the bees collected the nectar from and is not reflective of the honey being flavored.

Most honey is filtered to remove parts

of the bee's body that might be stuck in the honey. In some cases, a "raw" honey will be unfiltered, in which case any "spots" or particles that seem foreign to the honey should be removed as these may be non-kosher parts of a bee.

It is possible that honey is heated to make it easier to bottle, and this raises a concern that the bottling equipment might have previously been used for non-kosher. Some consider this unlikely, while cRc and others are more concerned and recommend that consumers only purchase retail honey with *hashgachah*.

ROYAL JELLY, POLLEN AND BEESWAX: Royal jelly is a creamy, bitter-tasting, bee secretion which is consumed by the future queen-bee (hence the name) and developing larvae. [All other bees eat honey]. Some contemporary *poskim* permit this product based on their understanding of being included in the "honey" which the *Gemara* permits. However, most assume that royal jelly is not kosher as it does not meet one (or maybe even both) of the *Gemara's* rationales for permitting honey.

Pollen is found in the "pollen basket" on the bee's leg, and since it is not processed at all nor changed by the bee, it is surely not a *yotzeh* and it is kosher. Bees mix pollen with nectar to create a mixture known as "bee-bread" (a.k.a. ambrosia). Since it is made of these two permitted substances, it too is permitted.

Beeswax is excreted by bees, but it is permitted since it is inedible excretion and qualifies as *pirshah* (see above). Lastly, bees collect plant resins on their legs, mix it with some beeswax and possibly a bit of bee-saliva, and use it as a "sealant" for the hive. This sealant is called "bee propolis." The only component of questionable *kashrus* status is the saliva, but there are only very tiny amounts of saliva in the propolis (just like there is a bit in honey), and the saliva is assumed to be *batel*. Accordingly, bee propolis is also kosher.

Eggs

The eggs of kosher birds are kosher, but there are very few bird breeds for which we have a *mesorah*/tradition that they are kosher. That *mesorah* includes the common ones used to lay eggs in the United States but does not include certain other ones such as the South American breeds (e.g., Araucana) which lay green or blue eggs. Accordingly, those eggs are not considered kosher. Similarly, there are some breeds of duck for which we have no *mesorah*, and therefore one cannot purchase duck eggs unless they can ascertain that they are from a breed which is known to be kosher.

There are many small birds which are colloquially referred to as "quail," and there are just a few of them which are known to be kosher. Most people cannot differentiate one quail from the next, and therefore should only purchase quail eggs that are certified kosher.



Lactose, Colostrum, and Vitamin D3

Shulchan Aruch (YD 81:5) rules that lactose which is isolated from cow's milk is permitted, but there is a disagreement as to why that is so. *Shach* (YD 81:12) understands that this is because the only *yotzeh* which is forbidden is one which comes from a non-kosher species, and since cows are kosher, anything which is *yotzeh* from a cow is permitted. *Rosh* (*Chullin* 8:51) argues that lactose is only permitted since it is a component of milk (and we have specific sources that milk and eggs from kosher animals or birds are permitted). However, any other byproducts of a kosher species are forbidden because all living animals – even cows – are themselves

"forbidden" until they undergo *shechitah*.

Thus, *Shach* and *Rosh* disagree about whether the prohibition of *yotzeh* applies even to excretions of a kosher animal, and the later *Poskim* are divided as to which of these opinions is considered normative halacha. [See, for example, *Chasam Sofer* YD 19 and *Chazon Ish* YD 12:6].

There are two items whose status appears, at first glance, to depend on this disagreement: colostrum and lanolin. Colostrum is a liquid produced by the mammary glands of a female animal (or human) just before and after it gives birth. It has a noticeably different color (more yellowish), more protein, and less fat, than regular milk. According to *Shach*, colostrum from a cow is surely permitted since it comes from a kosher animal. While one might think that *Rosh* would forbid colostrum, in fact, there are sources which clearly indicate that it is permitted, and we therefore must assume that *Rosh* will consider it to be "milk" (and therefore permitted) just like lactose is. [It is highly questionable if the leniency of "*chalav stam*" applies to colostrum, and therefore it may well require to be produced as "*chalav Yisroel*"].

The other item is lanolin, which is a wax found on unprocessed sheep's wool. It has several uses, and the most prominent one of them is as a precursor for Vitamin D3. Once again, the simple understanding would be that *Shach* would permit it (since sheep are kosher) while *Rosh* would not, since it is the *yotzeh* of a living sheep. It has been suggested that *Rosh* might agree to permit lanolin since it is inedible when it is washed off the wool and therefore qualifies as *pirshah* (see above). Most American *hashgachos* rely on this or other reasons to permit Vitamin D3 made from lanolin, but some *hashgachos* (and individuals) do not accept this position. ■

This article is excerpted from several volumes from Rabbi Cohen's series of seforim entitled "Imrei Dovid," including *Animal Products*, Chapters 10-14, 24, and 26.

Chicago Rabbinical Currents

A newsletter from the cRc Beth Din and cRc Kosher, featuring articles on practical halacha relevant to all.

Read online at crcbethdin.org/chicago-rabbinical-currents.



RABBI OPPENHEIMER RETIRES AFTER 25 Years at the cRc



THE cRc HONORED RABBI REFOEL Dovid Oppenheimer at its annual Melava Malka upon his retirement from his position as Rabbinic Coordinator for 25 years.

“Rabbi Oppenheimer is the manifestation of the *mishna*, *Kol sheruach habriyos nocha heimenu, ruach HaMakom nocha heimeinu*. If the spirit of one’s fellows is pleased with him, the spirit of the Omnipresent is pleased with him,” said Rabbi Reiss, Av Beth Din.

Throughout the evening, the cRc Rabbinical Staff, plant employees, community rabbis, and personal friends reflected on Rabbi Oppenheimer’s contributions. A moving video presentation highlighted their comments that focused on his being a true servant of Hashem.

Rabbi Oppenheimer specialized in bakeries, candy, and nut establishments. He had more plants under his supervision than any other Rabbinic Coordinator.

The personnel in those plants highly respected Rabbi Oppenheimer. “To have someone who is in that position, which is in essence an auditing position, be highly regarded speaks very well about that person,” said Rabbi Elisha Prero, Kashrus Commission Chairman.

That admiration and respect made the employees look forward to his visits. If he did not come on a visit to the plant, they’d lovingly ask, “How is Rabbi O?” said Rabbi

David Brand, cRc Mashgiach. One bakery employee shared how Rabbi Oppenheimer inspired him, “I believe your passion was to make the world a better place with your job as well as being a man of faith, and you did that very well.”

“He is an interesting mix,” mused Rabbi Yisroel Mintz, cRc Mashgiach. He is disciplined and will come exactly on time to appointments, and yet he is “extremely easy-going and pleasant to work with. He is so much fun to be around.”

Rabbi Oppenheimer is known as a big *talmid chacham*, as attested to by his *Rebbeim* and peers. At the same time, he is also known for his humility. Rabbi Oppenheimer leaves the cRc with “a legacy of growth,” said Rabbi Mintz, cRc Mashgiach. He is someone who feels that someone else might know more than you and that we need to keep improving.

Rabbi Oppenheimer “does not compromise on emes (truth) in all aspects of his *avodas Hashem* – learning, *davening*, and *hashgacha* work,” said Rabbi Langer, cRc *Dayan Kavua* and Rabbinic Coordinator.

In his remarks, Rabbi Oppenheimer attributed his accomplishments to his parents, who lived their lives dedicated to Hashem and His Torah. Growing up in Argentina, Rabbi Oppenheimer saw his father serve as the Rav of a shul, and was instrumental in starting the *mikvah* and a Bais Yaakov. He was involved in *kashrus* and *shechita*. Rabbi Oppenheimer’s mother took care of the family and was *moser nefesh* to send her children away to places where they could study Torah and grow in their *avodas Hashem*.

He also thanked his father-in-law who was *kulo Torah*, entirely Torah, and his mother-in-law who was a true *ba’alas chesed*, who even risked her life to help others in the concentration camps she was in.





“He leaves the cRc with a legacy of growth.

— RABBI YISROEL MINTZ, cRc MASHGIACH

Rabbi Sholem Fishbane, Kashrus Administrator, said the best way to summarize Rabbi Oppenheimer's traits was done by Shlomo Hamelech in *Koheles*. Shlomo Hamelech says that the main trait to work on is having fear of Hashem. “The sum of the matter when all has been considered: Fear G-d and keep His commandments, for that is man's whole duty.”

“It's been a mark of pride to have Rabbi Oppenheimer working with us to serve the community,” concluded Rabbi Levi Mostofsky, Executive Director of the cRc. ■



Beth Din Updates

THE cRc BETH DIN CONTINUES TO GROW AS IT SERVES THE GROWING NEEDS OF THE KLAL.

THE cRc BETH DIN CONTINUES TO GROW AS IT serves the growing needs of the *Klal*. Our case load increases in the number, and complexity, of cases. We are busy encouraging more engagement, but we don't only encourage more people to use our services, we continue to innovate and develop more layers, leveraging our existing services and expanding community partnerships for greater impact. We consistently examine our systems and are developing models of service that are examples for other *Batei Din*.

We are responsible to represent *din* and *rachamim*, rigor and compassion, in an environment where *halachic* integrity and personal dignity go hand in hand.

The *Beth Din* focuses on the individual, the community and the *rabbanim* who partner to guide people through life changing processes.

Rabbi Avrohom Abramson, *Menahel*, coordinates the busy Beth Din docket with respect to all the *Dinei Torah*, *Gittin* and *Geirus*, and guides the parties through the various processes. He works diligently to resolve *Din Torah* disputes through his personal mediation efforts whenever possible for the purpose of fostering peace and harmony.

DINEI TORAH

Rabbi Yisroel Langer one of our *Dayanim Kevuim* demonstrates strength and understanding in halachic matters as he presides as a dayan in *Dinei Torah*. Rabbi Langer has a deep connection with community as a Rav in his *shul* and beyond, and uses his sensitivity to answer an increasingly growing amount of diverse shailos in all areas of Jewish living. Other facets of his position are integral to the kashruth department as well, as a Rabbinic Coordinator specializing in produce. Rabbi Langer trains many in this area.

We welcome back Aaron Retter, a lawyer who is a special assistant to the Beth Din.

GEIRUS

Converting to Judaism is a transformative journey that includes significant personal transitions. Every case presents its own unique complexities. Sometimes large families go through conversion together. Rabbi Aaron Kraft, a *Dayan Kavua* at the cRc, and the other *rabbanim* involved give attention to the whole individual both from a *halachik* view and a caring view about the individual and his/her family.

Geruth Liaison — To support conversion candidates, the cRc created the role of Geruth Liaison. This year we hired Mrs. Miriam Gersten to be the Geruth Liaison, acting as a bridge between the candidate, the sponsoring rabbi, and the Beth Din Geruth Committee, respectively.

Mrs. Gersten attends meetings and provides information and assistance to the candidates as well as feedback to the committee to improve communication and facilitate the process as necessary.

GITTIN

With respect to *gittin*, the Beth Din emphasizes not just the actual get procedure, but every individual is offered counseling and opportunities for divorce-mediation (with our in-house divorce mediator, Elana Lipman, Esq.) and collaborative arbitration with the Beth Din.

The Beth Din sometimes needs to resolve when a get should be given in a *Din Torah* proceeding when there is a dispute about the get timing.

Rabbi Daniel J. Raccach, our Senior *Dayan*, continues to strengthen our Beth Din in all its aspects. His input taken from his vast Torah knowledge and his interaction within the



A Geirus meeting with Rabbi Abramson, Rabbi Mostofsky, and Mrs. Gerstein



Rabbi Kraft, Rabbi Reiss, Rabbi Mostofsky, and Rabbi Nathan



Rabbi Nathan writing a get



Rabbi Langer

community and beyond helps him in his involvement in *Gittin*, *Geirus* and *Dinei Torah*.

Gittin volunteers — A *get* can be one of the most emotionally intense moments in a person's life. To support women during this vulnerable time, the cRc has introduced the *Gittin* Volunteers program.

This initiative provides trained female volunteers to accompany women during the *get* process. These volunteers understand the procedures and sensitivities involved, offering a presence that promotes emotional comfort, confidentiality, and safety.

The volunteer, sometimes called a “divorce docent,” explains the process to the woman so she knows what to expect. The volunteers do not address *halachic* or philosophical questions. They are not social workers, but they can refer individuals to appropriate resources for further support.

DIVORCE MEDIATION

Launched three years ago, the Divorce Mediation service addresses the emotional and financial stress of divorce. Rather than resorting to costly and adversarial court proceedings, couples can work out a full divorce settlement in a respectful and collaborative setting. The outcomes are legally recognized and supported by civil courts.

Mrs. Elana Lipman, Esq., Director of Divorce Mediation, is a licensed attorney in Illinois. She holds an undergraduate degree from New York University and a law degree from Cardozo School of Law (Yeshiva University). She also completed a mediation training course at Northwestern University. Mrs. Lipman works closely with Rabbi Reiss, Av Beth Din of the cRc, to ensure that the mediation aligns with *halachic* and ethical standards.

Her goal is to settle an entire divorce agreement in mediation. In mediation, the couple makes decisions together and they create a mutually respectable agreement. If any issues remain unresolved, the couple agrees to submit those matters to the Beth Din for a binding decision. The process promotes communication skills that can benefit the couple, especially when children are involved—ensuring the best interests of the children remains a central focus.

“We care about the family structure and do what we can to provide the family members a calm and healthy future,” explains Mrs. Lipman.

The program has received endorsements from divorce attorneys, mediators, financial advisors, social workers, therapists, and psychiatrists.

Rabbi Aaron Kraft is also involved in the mediation initiative. He and Mrs. Lipman attended a national conference for Jewish mediators organized by the Neuberger Foundation, where the cRc Beth Din stood out as the only formal mediation program. They have also participated in Zoom seminars with Shalom Task Force and Sacred Spaces, focusing on detecting domestic violence and abuse.

SERVICES: PERSONAL STATUS CERTIFICATES

Nefesh B’Nefesh and the Rabbanut have changed their requirements for acceptance and there is a need for those applying to meet their directives. The cRc Beth Din attempts to help the applicants navigate the



CRC Divorce Mediation CLE
Sunday, November 24, 2024
10:00am-11:30am
Zoom Webinar

Speakers:

Rabbi Yona Reiss, Av Beth Din, Chicago Rabbinical Council
Elana Lipman, Esq., Mediator, Chicago Rabbinical Council
Candace Meyers, Esq., Partner, Beerman LLP

Moderator:

Judge Mitchell B. Goldberg, Cook County Domestic Relations Court

Presented by The Decalogue Foundation

1.5 hours CLE credit for all attorneys

Register by noon, Friday November 22 at
www.decaloguesociety.org/cle



Rabbi Reiss and Rabbi Mostofsky



A divorce mediation meeting with Rabbi Reiss, Rabbi Kraft, and Mrs. Lipman



Training Gittin Docents



Rabbi Reiss at the recent Mesadrei Gittin and Choshen Mishpat Dayanus conferences hosted by the Beth Din of America (BDA), joined by Rabbi Abramson and Rabbi Mostofsky



Rabbi Reiss meeting with the new head Sefardic Chief Rabbi, Hachochom Dovid Yosef

new regulations.

Rabbi Abramson continues to do the necessary research in each case and does his best to help those who apply in order to ensure that the strict standards of the cRc and the Israeli Rabbanut are met.

SHAILOS

The Beth Din is handling an increasingly growing amount of *shailos*. Rabbi Reiss and the *dayanim kevuim*, Rabbi Aaron Kraft and Rabbi Yisroel Langer, handle *shailos* on topics ranging from *halachic* wills, medical questions, *kashrut* mishaps, the kashering of utensils and appliances, to kosher shavers and business *shtarot*. In addition to these topics, Rabbi Reiss often deals with end-of-life questions. Broad reach

The *dayanim* attended conferences both locally, nationally, and internationally to coordinate with other *Batei Din* and Rabbinical leaders throughout the year.

Communities that we have serviced include San Francisco, Oakland, Edmonton, Las Vegas, Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, New Orleans, Baltimore, Richmond, Newport News, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Memphis, Minneapolis, Kansas City, Omaha, and St. Louis.

PERSONAL

Rabbi Daniel J. Raccach, *Senior Dayan Kavua*, speaks at the monthly Q&A at Hanna Sacks Bais Yaakov with the other members of the *Vaad HaChinuch*, Rabbi Aharon Leibtag and Rabbi Yaakov Robinson. Rabbi Raccach also spoke at the Chicago Mitzvah Campaign Symposium on *Hashkafa* and *Emunah* with Rabbi Moshe Soloveichik and Rabbi Yosef Posner.

Rabbi Reiss spoke at the Halichos Am Yisroel Conference for *dayanim* in Israel. While In Israel, Rabbi Reiss met with the new head Sefardic Chief Rabbi, Hachochom Dovid Yosef, and gave a shiur at the Mirrer Yeshiva.

Rabbi Reiss served as Scholar in Residence in South Africa this summer at the invitation of the Beth Din of Johannesburg; in Los Angeles at the YU Community Kollel and at Pepperdine University Law School; Buffalo Grove, Northbrook, Skokie, the Shavuos Yarchei Kallah in upstate New York; Columbia Law School; and in Lake Geneva. Chicagoans enjoyed Rabbi Reiss's *Shabbos Shuva* and *Shabbos HaGadol Derashos*.

Rabbi Reiss also spoke in St. Louis at the Annual Torah Law and Ethics Symposium at the Chabad of Greater St. Louis; for the Chicago Board of Rabbis on "Monarchy in Ancient Israel," and on "Torah, Halacha, and Democracy;" for NAJC (Neshama: Association of Jewish Chaplains) on the "Mitzvah of Hospital Chaplaincy," on Jewish Divorce Mediation (with Elana Lipman) for the Decalogue Society of Lawyers and American Academy



Rabbi Reiss's shiur on International Law in Halacha in the Halichos Am Yisroel Conference



Rabbi Reiss delivering a shiur on medical halacha for health-care professionals in Johannesburg



Rabbi Raccach at the monthly Q&A at Hanna Sacks Bais Yaakov

of Matrilineal Lawyers; and at the RZC (Religious Zionists of Chicago) - Mizrahi about "Redeeming Captives in Wartime."

Rabbi Reiss was also this past year's speaker for the Beth Din of America's annual Sheldon Rudoff lecture, and he also spoke at the annual convention of the Rabbinical Council of America, as well as at the H3 Summit in Chicago, and several times on Halacha Headlines. Rabbi Reiss's local Dayan's Desk series is recorded and posted online on YU Torah. Rabbi Reiss also gave a Dayan's Daf series online on *Maseches Sanhedrin*.

Rabbi Reiss had articles published in *Sha'arei Tzedek*, *Kol Zvi*, *Kavod Chachamim* (together with Rabbi Langer and Rabbi Kraft), *Mizrachi Journal*, *Tradition Online*, and *Medical Halachah Annual* (upcoming).

FINAL THOUGHTS

The Beth Din continues to grow in volume of cases and worldwide reputation. We are honored to continue in the tradition of the late Rav Gedalia Dov Schwartz zt"l in promoting services based upon preservation of the integrity of *halacha* and *derech erez* in our interactions with all parties. We are humbly reminded at all times of the motif from the Torah that is emblazoned on the wall of our Beth Din courtroom, *Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof* ("Justice, Justice, Thou Shalt Pursue"). It is our great privilege to serve the Chicago Jewish community. ■

THANK YOU!

The cRc Beth Din thanks Rabbi Yochanan Nathan for 4 decades serving as our sofer, and wishes him continued hatzlacha as he makes aliyah.

FROM THE

Dayan's Desk

FEATURING

RAV YONA REISS

Av Beth Din of the Chicago Rabbinical Council

WEEKLY SHIUR FOR MEN

MONDAYS | 8:00 PM | CONGREGATION KINS | 2800 WEST NORTH SHORE AVENUE, CHICAGO

SEPTEMBER 1

Prostate Surgery, Vasectomies and Hysterectomies

SEPTEMBER 8

Issues in Stam Veinam

SEPTEMBER 15

Hataras Nedarim and other Halachos of Erev Rosh Hashana

SEPTEMBER 29

Pas Akum during Aseres Yemei Teshuva and the Rest of the Year



DAYAN'S DESK

To find out the current schedule scan here or visit crcbethdin.org/from-the-dayans-desk-series-5785-2025-2026

BETH-DIN OF JOHANNESBURG
תבנית: 2025/2026 721 218 17 23

Jewish Law Symposium Breakfast Event

An Exclusive Event for Lawyers, Advocates, and Legal Professionals

EVENT TOPICS

- The Role of Lawyers in Beth Din Proceedings
- The Ethics of Practicing Law according to Halacha
- Din Torah vs Civil Court: Two Systems, Two Values, Two Outcomes

GUEST SPEAKER

Dayan Yona Reiss
Av Beis Din of Chicago - Yale Law Graduate

He is also an attorney who practiced for six years as an associate at the international law firm of Davis, Connolly, Spier & Hamilton. A sought after speaker and prolific author, Dayan Reiss has published extensively in both halachic and legal journals, including the Halachic Journal, the New York Law Journal, and Teshuva. He is the author of "Kiddush HaTorah", a series of responses and essays on halachic issues.

ADDITIONAL SPEAKER

Chief Rabbi Goldstein

EVENT DETAILS

Who: Lawyers, Advocates, Clerks and anyone involved in the legal profession

Location: Beth Din Offices, 55 Durham Street

Date: 8th August 2025

Time: 7:30 am on Friday

Presented by: Andrew Lenz, Labour Law Specialist, The York Group, Demand and Protection

***Free admission**

CONGREGATION K.I.N.S. PRESENTS

שׁוּבוֹ אֵלֵינוּ

SHABBAT SHUVA DRASHA

דרשת שבת שובה

SEPTEMBER 27, 2025
שבת פרשת וילך

at KINS North with
RABBI AARON LEIBTAG
Shabbat morning following Musaf

COMMUNITY DRASHA
at KINS Main with
HARAV YONA REISS
שליט"א
Av Beit Din, cRc
5:00 pm

KINS Rabbinical Council of North America

VISIT CONGREGATIONKINS.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION

cRc Student Awards

WINNERS OF THE cRc REBBETZIN SHOSHANA SCHWARTZ, A"H, TORAH RESEARCH PROJECT

FIRST PLACE WINNERS:

Mussi Hecht (Lubavitch Girls High School)
"Halakhic Directives as Regards to Jewish Soldiers Fighting in War"

Leah Gitty Rand (Bais Yaakov High School of Chicago)
"Redeeming Captives"

SECOND PLACE WINNERS:

Nava Dreytser (Ida Crown Jewish Academy)
"Achdus Post October 7"

Ella Kakon (Ida Crown Jewish Academy)
"Paying Ransom to Redeem Captives"

WINNERS OF THE cRc TORAH ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

The award is given to a senior in each high school who will be studying in Israel during the 5786 school year and displays dedication to Torah and to the maintenance of high Middot standards.

Emanuel Bereliani (Fasman Yeshiva High School)

Elky Meisels (Bais Yaakov High School)

Avi Okner (Ida Crown Jewish Academy)

Chaya Mushka Schusterman (Lubavitch Girls High School)

Leyla Stern (Hanna Sacks Bais Yaakov High School)

Congratulations to all of the above cRc winners on your excellent work, and hatzlacha rabbah as you continue your Torah education in Israel.

Thank you, Rabbi Michael Myers, Chairman of the Education Committee, for organizing these programs.

DAYAN'S DAF

MASECHES SANHEDRIN

Daf Yomi Shiur by
Rav Yona Reiss

לענין חיים בן סעדיה והב

www.dayansdaf.org



Highlights in the Kashrus World

WITHIN cRc & ACROSS THE GLOBE



Rabbi Fishbane spoke at the National Agudah Convention about Heimishe Kashrus vs. National Kashrus: What's the Difference?



Based on an interview with
RABBI SOLEH FISHBANE

Kashrus
Administrator

RABBI FISHBANE, cRc KASHRUS Administrator, and Executive Director of AKO, Association of Kashrus Organizations, shared with us events that affected the cRc and global *kashrus* this year.

This year the cRc made two changes that affected the kashrus world.

NEW APP:

By far the most significant breakthrough in technology for the cRc is the cRc's new app that was released right before Pesach, under the lead of Rabbi Akiva Niehaus. This revolutionary app, includes a logo/*hechsher* scanner. Since it was introduced, it has had over 30,000 downloads, 5 million events, and 68,000 images scanned. As there is an option on the app to email the cRc questions, the cRc has received hundreds of emails since the new app was introduced.

"It's a real game changer," according to Rabbi Fishbane. "It brings us to the next level of *kashrus* and of helping people."

PESACH GUIDE:

Another monumental change made was the format of the *Pesach Guide*. The cRc was averaging 6000 copies distributed mostly in Chicago. This year the cRc went national and distributed 60,000 copies. The guide was inserted in *Mishpacha Magazine*, the *Voice of Lakewood* and in supermarkets in the east coast. "We've received very positive feedback," said Rabbi Fishbane.

KITCHENS IN SHULS AND CAMPS:

The cRc staff helped the AKO Camp Committee in setting up standards and

**It's a real game changer.
The new cRc app brings us
to the next level of kashrus
and of helping people.**

visitations of camps. Our staff also helped the AKO Shul Committee by calling on five local shuls to participate in the initial test case.

Global Kashrus News

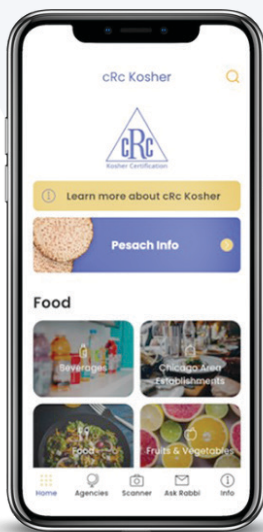
SHECHITA:

Shechita challenges did not remain in Europe; this year they came to Canada. For a while, many Canadian *shechita* groups were forbidden to work, and there was a significant and legitimate threat that the US groups would be challenged next. A lot of behind-the-scenes movement took place to stop the threat. A group of rabbis, including Rabbi Fishbane, who represented the cRc, went to Israel to meet Agriculture Minister, Avi Dichter and other ministers of the office of Interior in Rishon L'Tzion as that office is involved in establishing the protocol in slaughtering. The group successfully adjusted the text in the protocols to make those protocols clearer.

Two peer-reviewed articles assessed and proved that *shechita* is the most humane method of slaughter. These articles also helped to prevent the threat of *shechita* challenges from coming to America. It also helped the European countries.

KOSHER BILL:

Another significant *kashrus* related happening that occurred in Illinois was the passing of a Kosher bill. In it





Rabbinic Coordinators with Rabbi Fishbane

the word “kosher” was clearly defined to mean that something can only be marked kosher if it is in compliance with the strictest standards of Jewish law as expressed by reliable and recognized Jewish entities and Jewish Rabbis. This bill is one of the stronger kosher laws in the United States. The cRc helped in the consultation process with the Agudath Israel of Illinois both on language and substance of the bill.

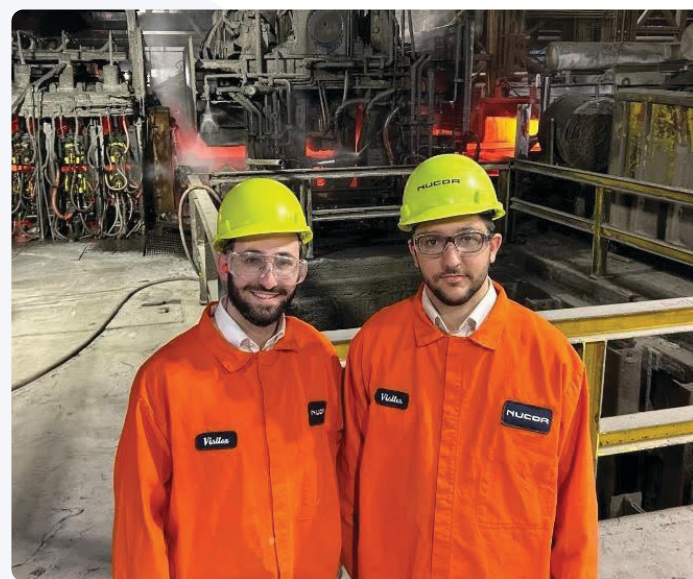
GLOBAL POLITICS & FINANCES EFFECTS ON KASHRUS:

Sourcing, where companies get their ingredients from, is an area of concern at present. In certain countries, an ingredient may be in the group one category, not requiring certification. In other countries, that same ingredient may require supervision.

The United States Secretary of Health and Human Services, Robert Francis Kennedy Jr., has banned certain color and flavor substitutes. The government has also issued increased tariffs on products from some countries. Because of these developments, companies might try to source their ingredients from other countries. Companies, for example, are switching to using domestic oils instead of overseas oils in order to avoid tariffs.

The US used to give government credits to boost the biodiesel industry. Because the government stopped giving the credits, many companies closed. Glycerin, an ingredient commonly used in the kosher market, is a byproduct of biodiesel fuel; its cost is therefore going to rise.

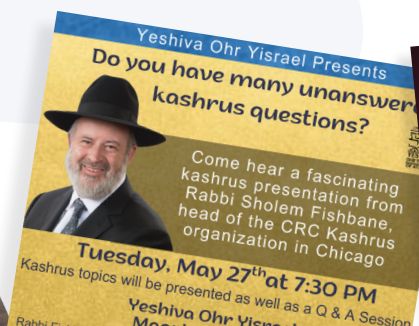
The *kashrus* world has to be aware of changes in the political and financial world to know where to increase our vigilance. The cRc is warning their companies of which items are sensitive to these changes so that their ordering teams can be aware of the issues. They are also giving their companies alternate sources for these products. ■



Rabbinic Coordinator, Rabbi Elozor Willner, and Mashgiach, Rabbi Sholom Mimran, visiting a cRc company in Charleston, South Carolina



Rabbi Reiss and Rabbi Fishbane



Recently Certified Kosher

AS OF JULY 2025



BAKERY



Aldi, Inc. (Batavia, IL)
Big Kahuna Fundraising (Fort Worth, TX)
Giant Eagle, Inc. (Pittsburgh, PA)
iLoveSnacks.com (Miami, FL)
Kredo Inc. (Englewood, CO)
Mrs Field Gifting and Licensing, LLC (Salt Lake City, UT)
My Mochi (Vernon, CA)
Trader Joe's Company, Inc. (Monrovia, CA)

CANDY & NUT



Albertsons Better Living Brands, LLC (Pleasanton, CA)
Alec's Ice Cream Company (Petaluma, CA)
Azure Standard (Dufur, OR)
Sally's Nuts, LLC (Highland Park, IL)
Setton International Foods, Inc. (Commack, NY)
Stover & Company / eleven o'one Chocolate Company (Pittsburgh, PA)
Topco Associates, LLC (Itasca, IL)

CHEMICALS



Apex Water + Process (St. Michael, MN)

Applied Innovations Specialties, LLC,
A Tidal Vision Company (Avon Lake, OH)
CID LINES an Ecolab Company (Ieper, West Vlaanderen, Belgium)
Gordon Food Service (Wyoming, MI)
Intercon Chemical Company (St. Louis, MO)
Norman Fox (Industry, CA)
Polaris Specialty Chemicals, Inc. (Chesterfield, NJ)
Stepan TX (Pasadena, TX)
US Chemical Corp. / Solenis Diversey (London, Ontario, Canada)
US Chemical Diversey (Florence, Kentucky)

DAIRY



Annie's Frozen Yogurt (Edina, MN)
Barfresh Food Group, Inc. (Los Angeles, CA)
DFA Dairy Brands Fluid, LLC / Dairy Farmers of America (Belvidere, IL)
DFA Dairy Brands Ice Cream, LLC (Toledo, OH)
Dierbergs Markets, Inc. (Chesterfield, MO)

GMI Trading, LLC (South Plainfield, NJ)
Mid Valley Family Foods (Turlock, CA)
Prairie Farms (Plant #39-111) (Orrville, OH)
Red Scoop Manufacturing (Des Moines, IA)
Southeast Dairy Processors (Tampa, FL)
Two Spoons Creamery, Inc. (West Hollywood, CA)
Upstar Nutrition, Inc. / Keto Foods (Scottsdale, AZ)

EQUIPMENT



Kosher Innovations (Toronto, Ontario, Canada)

FISH



Coastal Bay Foods, Ltd. (Toronto, Ontario, Canada)
Revel Taste, LLC (Mundelein, IL)
Urban Fish Farm, LLC (Cleveland, OH)

FLAVORS



Mantrose Group (Fairfield, CT)

Pesach Initiatives

PESACH FAIR

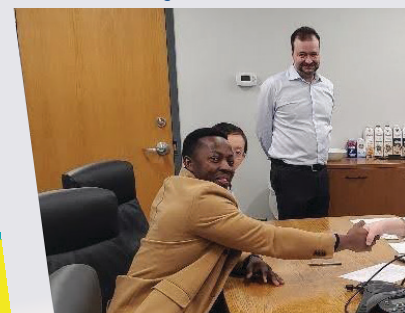
The cRc Pesach Fair is a one-stop, hands-on event that helps families prepare for Pesach with practical services like utensil kashering, knife sharpening, and shaatnez testing. It brings the community together while offering trusted halachic guidance—all in a welcoming, convenient setting.



Kashering kelim at the Passover Fair



Rabbi Fishbane selling chometz for a Jewish owner





GENERAL PRODUCTS



26 Flavors, LLC / Single Source Beverage Distribution (Paterson, NJ)
Atlantic International Products (Utica, NY)
B & H Bakery Distributors (Hayward CA)
Balance of Nature, LLC (Rogers, AR)
Bill Knapp's, LLC (Ann Arbor, MI)
Cedar Lake Products (Fayetteville, AR)
Clark Associates (Lancaster, PA)
ColdFire Coffee Roaster (Houston, TX)
Daedong Korea Ginseng Co., Ltd. (Geumsan-gun, Chung Cheong Nam-do, South Korea)
Dutch Farms Organics (Chicago, IL)
EverlastingEats Freeze-Dried Door County, LLC (Sturgeon Bay, WI)
Gordon Food Service (Wyoming, MI)
Grocery Outlet Holding Corp. (Emeryville, CA)
Hadley Gamble, LLC - Madly Hadley (San Diego, CA)
Harris Teeter (Matthews, NC)
Lesaffre Corporation (Milwaukee, WI)
Massiva, LLC (San Jose, CA)
MM2A Tunisian Export (Tunis, Sfax, Tunisia)
National Food Group (Novi, MI)
Norfolk Crush, LLC (Norfolk, NE)
Nowi Biotechnology Co., Ltd. (Ji An, Jiangxi Province, China)
Nuestra Cocina (Elk Grove Village, IL)

Our Home (Las Vegas, NV)
Parchmeta Inc. (Toms River, NJ)
Performance Food Group (Richmond, VA)
Publix Super Markets, Inc. (Lakeland, FL)
Realm Foods, LLC (Tampa, FL)
Redemption Road Foods, Inc. (Charlotte, NC)
Smude Farm (Pierz, MN)
SP Sales, LLC (Brooklyn, NY)
Sparrow Coffee Roastery (Chicago, IL)
Spirit Tea (Chicago, IL)
SSB Distribution or 26 Flavors, LLC (Paterson, NJ)
Star of the West Milling Co. (St. Hilaire, MN)
Ste Frigorifique Du Sud (Tozeur Kebili, Nefzaoua, Tunisia)
The Kroger Co. (Cincinnati, OH)
Tiger Power Co. (Phnom Penh, Cambodia)
Trader Joe's Company, Inc. (Monrovia, CA)
Zack's Mighty, Inc. (Brooklyn, NY)

JUICE



Continuum Packing Solutions, LLC, a Leahy IFP Company (Minden, NV)
NLX Beverage Solutions, a Leahy IFP Company (New Lenox, IL)

LIQUOR



Origami Sake (Hot Springs, AR)
Song Dog Spirits, LLC / Song Dog Distilling (Boyd's, MD)

RESTAURANT



B'sari (Chicago, Illinois)

TRUCK WASH



Bulkmatic Truck Wash (Winston Salem, NC)
DCI (Salt Lake City, UT)
Heil Transportation, Inc. (Clymer, NY)
KAG Food Products, LLC Transport Service Co. Wash (Morton, IL)
Kenan Advantage Group Truck Wash (Beaumont, TX)
Total Clean, LLC (Janesville, WI)
Total Clean, LLC (New Orleans, LA)

TRUCKING



2M Transport, LLC (Eagle Pass, TX)
Bulktran Carrier Company (Ivyland, PA)
Hydrite Chemical Co. Valley Process Technologies, LLC (Wahpeton, ND)
Kinder Morgan Queen City Terminal (Cincinnati, OH)
RMT Companies Denver Rock Island (Denver, CO)
Service Transport (East St. Louis, IL)
Trey Transport, LLC (Mokena, IL)
Ventura Transfer Company - SF2 (Phoenix, AZ)
Woodland Transport, Inc. (Freeport, MN)



company



Selling chometz at Congregation KINS



ONLINE FORM TO SELL CHAMETZ

The cRc's online Mechirat Chametz form makes it easy for Jews worldwide to sell their chametz, ensuring halachic reliability and extending the cRc's impact far beyond Chicago.



Membership Meetings ▶

Throughout the year, cRc member rabbis had the opportunity to connect with and gain valuable insights from the following featured guest speakers.

Rav Yona Reiss

ELECTION ETHICS

Mr. Harry Reiss z"l Yahrtzeit Shiur

Rav Meir Goldwicht

ADDRESSING LOVE OF ISRAEL TO COMMUNITIES OUTSIDE OF ISRAEL

Rav Yona Reiss

NON-JEWISH CLEANING HELP ON SHABBOS

with cRc Halacha Chabura Siyum for completion of Hilchos Shabbos - Mishna Berura

Rav Yona Reiss

HILCHOS OF PURIM MESHULASH

Rav Herschel Schachter

LAG B'OMER

Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon

QUESTIONS OF JEWISH LAW IN THE CURRENT WAR

Rav Yona Reiss Rabbi Sholem Fishbane Rabbi Dovid Cohen

TOPICS OF PESACH 5785

Rav Yona Reiss

LAWS OF EREV ROSH HASHANA



Rabbi Goldwicht



Rabbi Reiss's chaburah siyum



Rabbi Rimon



Rabbi Schachter



רפואה שלמה לאורך ימים ושנים להרב ישראל זאב בן מענייא רחל



Membership Announcements

cRc Staff & Membership Breakfast

"חזון לארץ" וקדילות וחיבת הארץ

Friday morning, November 15th
י"ד חשוון תשפ"ה | עש"ק פר' נחלא

9:30 - 10:30 AM

With
שליט"א Rav Meir Goldwicht

cRc Membership & Staff
are invited to join the members of
THE cRc HALACHA CHABURA
for a Siyum Breakfast
recognizing their completion of
Hilchos Shabbos - Mishna Berura

Rabbi Reiss will be giving a shiur on
NON-JEWISH CLEANING HELP ON SHABBOS

TUESDAY DECEMBER 3rd - ב' כסלו | 9:15am

cRc MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Featuring Shiur From אב בית דין Rabbi Yona Reiss שליט"א
Please RSVP so we can prepare lunch appropriately

Tuesday, Feb. 25 | 11:30 | כ"ז שבט

הלכות פורים המשולש

cRc Staff & Membership Meeting

BREAKFAST, SHIUR AND Q&A

"שאלות הלכתיות במלחמה הנוכחית"

Friday morning, March 7th
ז' אדר תשפ"ה | עש"ק פר' תצוה (סדר)

8:45 - 9:45 AM

With
שליט"א Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon
Rav, Gush Etzion Regional Council | Rav, Ashkenazi Synagogue of Amon Shvil Dorein | Rav, Yeshiva, Mosheim Lev | Rav, Kotel, Yeshiva Yosef Eliyahu | President of the World Maronite Movement

cRc MEMBERSHIP MEETING

WITH
RABBI YONA REISS
RABBI SOLOMON FISHBANE
RABBI DAVID COHEN
AV BEIS DIN
KASHRUS ADMINISTRATOR
ADMINISTRATIVE RABBINIC COORDINATOR

Wednesday, March 19th - י"ט אדר | 5:00 PM (Shekiah 7:02)

עניני פסח תשפ"ה

ANNUAL YAHREZIT SHIUR

ר' צבי בן אפרים הכהן ז"ל Mr. Harry Reiss Z"l
נבד"ק כ"ח תמוז תשס"ז

Who is Obligated to Serve in the Army of Israel ?

By Rabbi Yona Reiss שליט"א

Sunday, July 27th '25 ב' מנחם אב תשפ"ה
9:30 AM (Chicago - CDT) 5:30 PM (Israel - IDT)

cRc MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Shiur by רב יונה ריס שליט"א

הלכות ערב ראש השנה

NEW DATE !

Wednesday, September 3rd - י' אלול | 5:00 PM



The cRc's 2025/5786 Guide to a Kosher New Year

It is customary to eat certain foods and simanim on Rosh Hashana. Below are the Chicago Rabbinical Council's recommendations to avoid any kashrus concerns on these items. All further inquiries can be checked at www.ASKcRc.org, on our cRc Kosher apps, or by calling the office at (773) 465-3900.

NOTE: This chart should only be used in 2025/5786.



Honey

- Requires kosher certification, as packaging equipment for retail honey may be produced on non-kosher lines.



Carrots

- FRESH OR FROZEN** (including baby carrots) with no questionable additives are acceptable without hashgachah.

- CANNED** Requires kosher certification.



Leek

Separate each leaf. Place into soapy water, then wash each leaf individually under strong running water.

Cabbage

FRESH GREEN

Remove and discard 4 outer green leaves. Rinse remaining leaves thoroughly (front and back) under a stream of water.

- PRE-WASHED** Acceptable without kosher certification; no further washing is required.



Beets

- RAW** A general inspection is needed to rule out obvious infestation.

- COOKED, CANNED OR JARRED** Requires kosher certification.



Pomegranate

- FRESH** No checking required.

Dates

- FRESH** Slice open each date, and check for worms and beetles inside. This applies to all dates - domestic and/or pitted.

DRIED with no additional flavors are acceptable even without certification. Slice open each date, and check for worms and beetles inside. This applies to all dates - domestic and/or pitted.



Gourd

- FRESH** No checking required.

- CANNED** requires kosher certification.



Raisins

- All domestic do not require certification, unless they are oil treated or flavored. No checking required.



Fish / Head of Fish

RAW FISH It is preferable to purchase raw fish in a kosher fish store. If this is not possible, one must first make sure the fish is, in fact, a kosher species. The only reliable method of determining that a fish is from a kosher species is by inspecting its scales to be sure that they are the type that can be removed from the fish without ripping any flesh. (One notable exception is salmon where the flesh-color is unique and is considered a clear identifying mark of the kosher, salmon fish.) Secondly, the knives used to scale, eviscerate, fillet and/or cut the fish may have been previously used for non-kosher fish. To avoid this issue it is necessary to ask the store employees to clean the knife and work on a clean piece of butcher-paper. If this is not possible, there is basis to permit the purchase of packaged, pre-cut fish but it is necessary to scrub clean any surfaces that had been cut.

- SMOKED / COOKED / PROCESSED / JARRED / CANNED** Requires kosher certification.



Head of Sheep

- Requires kosher certification.

Black-eyed Peas

- RAW** A general inspection is needed to rule out obvious infestation.

- COOKED, CANNED OR JARRED** Requires kosher certification.



Fenugreek

- FRESH** Use cRc cleaning thrip-cloth method, as directed below.



Spinach

- FRESH** Use cRc cleaning thrip-cloth method, as directed below.
- PRE-WASHED** Use cRc cleaning thrip-cloth method, as directed below.
- FROZEN OR CANNED** Requires kosher certification.

Thrip-cloth Method (using a silk cloth)

You will need a large bowl, dish soap, 2 strainers, a thrip-cloth, and a light box.

1. Separate the leaves and place them into a bowl of water.
2. Put enough dish soap (a good choice would be Seventh Generation 0% fragrance) or kosher vegetable wash into the bowl until the water and leaves become somewhat slippery.
3. Agitate and soak the leaves in the soapy water for 1-2 minutes.
4. Remove the leaves from the bowl and discard the water.
5. Repeat steps 2-4. Alternatively (instead of repeating steps 2-4) one can wash each leaf under running water (both sides) and then place leaves into a new bowl of soapy water.
6. Remove leaves and pour the water through a thrip-cloth (fine silk cloth that can be purchased from the cRc) that is sandwiched between 2 strainers.
7. Check the cloth carefully on top of a light box or similar apparatus. If a bug is found, repeat. If no bugs are found, rinse and enjoy.

FURTHER DIRECTIONS on checking for infestation can be found on our website at www.cRckosher.org/fruitsandveggies

*The Chicago Rabbinical Council
wishes everyone a Kesiva Vchasima Tova.*