

FROM THE PUBLISHER AND EDITOR WWW.JEWISHLIFE.CO.ZA

With this issue, *JL* celebrates the miracle of Chanukah. We're also celebrating 13 years of publishing this magazine. The first, of course, is a far greater miracle and will last a great deal longer, but in its own much smaller way *JL* is quite a story too! At the time of its launch I was a newly observant Jew who felt that the community might benefit from a vibrant publication that would inspire, entertain, and educate all South Africa's Jews, regardless of their level of Yiddishkeit.

I must thank Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein who kindly agreed to the very first official meeting about the publication. He urged me to go ahead and encouraged all the Rabbis in the country to open their shuls to receive a regular copy for their congregants. The support of all these Rabbis showed everyone that the purpose of *JL* was something real, and that it could build bridges and help people grow in their appreciation of what it means to be a Jew.

Without the Chief and the Rabbis of SA you wouldn't be holding this magazine in your hands now. And thank G-d we have been able to continue publishing during the COVID-19 crisis.

Over the years, I and many of the team have received wonderful comments about the magazine. People have collected every single issue we've published and constantly refer to them. We've always tried to be a balanced voice in a tempestuous sea of uncertainty, none more so than during this year of unprecedented confusion and trepidation.

Jewish learning and a clear hashkafa corrects the imbalances that can attack us in the world at large. This search for truth, coupled with the acknowledgement that we don't know it all, uplifts us, refines us, and helps us be more in tune with a higher purpose; to appreciate the great privilege of being Jewish.

I hope *Jewish Life* continues to help the local and international communities grow in their love of Torah and Judaism and to keep a perspective that is far more inspiring and valuable than anything else in the world.

Enjoy this issue and I look forward to the future ones.

MARTYN SAMUELS, PUBLISHER



Why has Hashem caused a lockdown of so many fundamental Jewish institutions: shuls, yeshivas, schools? This is something that has never happened on such a scale before, a worldwide lockdown that has resulted in a massive destruction of Torah.

Rabbi Yitzchok Sorotzkin explains that Hashem has locked up the *Mikdash Me'ats* (the miniature Temples) in order that we should instead focus on the real *Beis HaMikdash* (Temple). As long as we feel that we're successful, in control, and can flourish spiritually while in *galus* (exile), we totally forget that we are actually living in exile, that Hashem is in exile, and that our homeland is *Eretz Yisrael*.

The Chofetz Chaim says that people make a big mistake when they daven the *Shemoneh Esrei* (*Amidah*), focusing on things like livelihood and health, putting little emphasis on the brachos that talk about the *geulah* (redemption), building *Yerushalayim* and the *Beis HaMikdash*, and the return of the *Shechina* (Hashem's Divine presence). All of our sufferings are a result of the *Shechina* being in exile. We mustn't daven to get rid of our suffering; that's not what our focus should be about. Instead, we need to recognise that if we would have the *Beis Hamikdash*, then we wouldn't have all of these troubles and we wouldn't have a need to daven for these things! It is imperative that we focus our attention on these over-looked *brachos*.

People think that every generation has davened for the redemption, so how will our davening help? This is a mistake. Every *tefillah* gets added to those of previous generations, so it's not just our generation's davening that is going to bring the redemption, but the sum total. Maybe all that's missing is our *tefillah*! The closer we get to the coming of *Moshiach*, the easier it is to bring the redemption – so it's our obligation, perhaps more than any other generation, to daven for the redemption.

The Chofetz Chaim further explains that it's not enough to just daven for the redemption, we have to demand it from Hashem. We need to feel the pain of exile, to feel that the Jewish People cannot exist without the redemption, to yearn for it and to ask for it.

Please G-d, may we merit to experience very soon the dedication of a new *Beis Hamikdash* and our very own Chanukah celebration.

The *JL* team was saddened to hear of the passing of Morris Jacobson, z"l, husband of Jackie, *JL*'s sales executive. We wish Jackie and her family long life.

ROBERT SUSSMAN, EDITOR

Based on a sicha by Rabbi Yitzchok Sorotzkin: www.torahanytime.com/#/lectures?a=127841

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A BOY AND GIRL
ENJOYING THE HOLY
LIGHT OF THE
CHANUKAH CANDLES.
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