

PROCRASTINATOR'S CORNER

Dear P.C.:

I want to help support the shul I love
And join our special **Diamond Club**.
I know June 20th is almost here,
But I feel hurried and hopeless this time of year.
I must admit I feel very sad
'Cause I didn't place even one Journal ad!
Is there hope for someone like me,
Or have I predetermined my own destiny?
Signed,
Hurried & Hopeless in the Hills

Dear H&H in the Hills:

Take a deep breath and relax,
And let me explain to you the Journal facts!
There is still time to join our Diamond Club,
To help support the shul you love.
Just write your ad for \$1000 in honor of
Rabbi Algaze and the honorees and sign your name,
And you will achieve eternal Diamond Club fame.
Or if you prefer to get ads totalling more than a few,
Let me show you what you need to do.
This is my easy rendition.
It's what I call Journal Ad-dition.
1 ad from yourself \$250 + 1 ad from your friend \$250 + 1 ad
from your dentist \$125 + 1 ad from your doctor \$125 + 1 ad
from your grocery store \$100 + 1 ad from your butcher \$100 +
1 ad from your baker \$50 = Diamond Club \$1000!!
Your ads from your butcher and baker
Can help you achieve Diamond Club, even for a procrastinator!

A JOURNAL AD IS . . .

- A great way to express your appreciation to our honorees and Rabbi Algaze
- A great way to commemorate a special occasion like an anniversary or graduation
- A meaningful way of commemorating a Yahrzeit
- The perfect way to express your gratitude to Havurat Yisrael, our rabbis, and all your friends
- A special way of showing you care about the future of the shul
*The funds raised support us and all that we do.
Whether or not you are joining us on June 20th,
show us you care and place a Journal Ad!*

GETTING TO THE DINNER

The directions sent with the invitation were a bit complicated. An easier route would be as follows:

Van Wyck Expressway to Nassau Expwy (878) to Rockaway Tpke. then follow the road to Peninsula Blvd. Make a left on Peninsula to Branch Blvd (there are signs for the Sephardic Temple) Left onto Branch Blvd. Follow Branch for 2 miles it becomes Hungry Harbor Road.

A van will leave from Havurat at 5:15 pm. Nominal cost of \$10 is made possible by a donation from Anonymous. Reservations MUST be received by Monday at 4 pm. (For a small tip, the driver will take everyone back to their home on the return trip)

Diamond are a Girl's & Guy's Best Friend **Join the Diamond Club**

Members and friends of our congregation (Non-Honorees) who contribute or raise \$ 1000 or more in Journal Dinner as well as a special listing on our Journal book. As in previous years, if you solicit a Journal ad from a Havurat Yisrael member, the "Journal Dinner" credit is applied to the member from whom you solicited the ad.

AN UMBRELLA OVER US ***by Rabbi David Algaze***

A rainy day is an apt metaphor for trouble and tribulation. The grey sky, the cold wind and the damp rain all signify a level of discomfort and pain. On days like this people prefer to stay inside, avoid exposure to the inclement weather and seek protection in one's warm shelter. However, when we venture outside, people carry an umbrella, a form of keeping warm outside but also a symbol of protection and safety. An umbrella is a metaphor for a protection that comes from above.

One day this week, I parked my car just outside my home on a rainy day. When I went back to the car I noticed a blue fabric on the roof of my car. Fearing that something had been wrong with my car, I approached it with some trepidation. Why was there something blue on my car? As I came closer, I noticed that it was an umbrella! Then I saw the beautiful sight! I had left my sunroof open and someone noticing that rain would damage the inside of my car had opened his or her umbrella and left it open over the open roof in order to protect my car! It was not a broken down umbrella, although even that would have been a wonderful act of kindness. It was a perfectly intact umbrella that someone had decided to leave over my car and probably walked to his or her destination without the umbrella. It appears that the person thought more about the integrity of my car than his or her own comfort.

I quickly jotted a thank you note next to the umbrella and I deposited it on the grassy spot next to where the car was parked. I wanted to let the person know that this was an incredibly beautiful act and that I was very grateful. As a result of this incident, I learned three things.

One is that there are good people in the world. We may not know them but there are out there, out of sight and anonymous and yet they are performing the acts that maintain the world's existence possible. The person may not have been Jewish; he or she may not have thought of fulfilling some obscure law or requirement. The person acted purely out of concern for others and a selfless gesture of love for other people. What a beautiful world we live in! We are so often jaded and cynical that we tend to forget that most people in the world are like that, despite the fact that when we encounter nasty and selfish people we tend to lump all of humanity in our reprobation. As King David said, "I said *in my haste* that all people are liars." (Psalms 116:11)

The second lesson is that we encounter problems in our lives in order that we experience new things. Had I not left my roof open, I would have never learned again how good people can be. This is a lesson for all our troubles. There is no incident in our lives, good or bad, that does not have a purpose. The Rabbis teach us, "We are obligated to recite a blessing for a misfortune just as we recite a blessing over a good turn." (Megillah 25a) Recently I read a beautiful story by one of my students, who now heads a kollel in Jerusalem, about an incident that happened to him. When he went to purchase a medication, he encountered some administrative obstacles and was unable to make the purchase. He became upset about it and was very frustrated that he could not get what he wanted. That evening, when he went to the Kuppas Cholim (the dispensary of his health plan) he discovered that at that place he could obtain a huge discount. What had seemed in the morning like a terrible frustration turned out to be in the afternoon a real blessing. How often we see this in our lives? Rabbi Travis writes, "When I heard this I laughed. Here I had been upset at the other pharmacy, while in truth Hashem had set up a situation to save me money. It was if I was telling the pharmacist, "Please let me pay more money for the medicine!" At this point I promised myself that henceforth, *be'ezras Hashem*, I would try to withhold my reaction to seemingly "bad" events and look for the good in every situation."

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The *Gemara* in *Niddah* (31a) asks: What is the meaning of the verse "Hashem does miracles by Himself, for His kindness is forever" (*Tehillim* 72). The *Gemara* brings a story of two people who were about to embark on a ship. One of them broke his leg and started to curse Hashem. A few days later he heard that the boat had sunk, and he praised Hashem. From here we see that when Hashem does miracles He is all by Himself, for He is active in doing good and we are shouting at Him to stop.

We should follow the Shulchan Aruch that recommends that we should become accustomed to saying, "All that G-d does is for the good."

The third lesson is that if we look closely at our lives, we will all notice that there is always an umbrella opened to protect us. That is the umbrella that G-d spreads over us continuously in order to save us from tragedies and guide us toward good destinations. Even when we are sure that no body is there, not even G-d, He stays by our side and never leaves us. "He Who spreads the canopy of peace over us..." (Siddur) Would that we would always see the umbrella over our weak roofs, our weaknesses and our tribulations. These words of King David should always be in our mouths: "For You, O L-rd, Hill never withhold Your Mercies from me; Your true love will always protect me." (ps. 40:12)