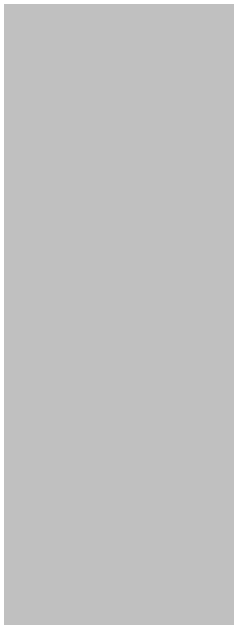


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October 2003

The following excerpts from the **Lamp** are available for your review:

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From the Desk of Rabbi David E. Fass *E-mail Embarrassment*

Here are two e-mails I received within a few minutes of each other. Please be sure and read both.

#1:

Many thousands of Jews, myself included, enjoy Starbucks. I find it appalling that they have chosen to sell out to Arab pressure by boycotting Israel. I would appreciate it if we join together to encourage our congregants to write, phone, fax, and e-mail protests to Starbucks. In addition, difficult as it may be for coffee addicts like me - we need to STOP patronizing their shops.

By the way, while being insensitive to Israel Starbucks wants to prove to "our Saudi Friends" that Starbucks "cares". The company has actually altered their logo to appeal to "regional sensitivities". It seems that (I actually never realized this) the image in the center of their logo is of a mermaid ---- FORBIDDEN by the Imams of Arabia! No problem - new logo just for our Arab customers!

Please, let's send a message.

#2:

By M.J. Rosenberg "Sticking with Starbucks and Israel"
May 30, 2003 - Issue #138 - www.israelpolicyforum.org

The other day, I received a chain e-mail urging a boycott of Starbucks coffee because,

the e-mail alleges, the Seattle-based company has surrendered to anti-Israel boycotters and pulled out of Israel.

The e-mail is simply untrue. The founder and Chairman of Starbucks, Howard Schultz, is both Jewish and a life-long supporter of Israel. In fact, Starbucks has long been boycotted by anti-Israel groups because of Schultz' outspoken support for Israel and because of his defiance of boycott threats in opening six shops there.

Earlier this year, however, Starbucks announced that it was shutting down its Israeli operation. The reason was anything but unusual in these troubled economic times; Starbucks was unable to penetrate the local market. Between the general declining economy and the absence of the tourists who would seek out Starbucks, the high-end product had little chance of success.

No big surprise there. The only unusual part of the story is the rumors that a purely economic decision was motivated by anti-Israel animus. The Anti-Defamation League investigated and rejected the rumors as false. Pro-Israel activists can enjoy their Starbucks without guilt.

I've gotten caught with egg on my face, too, more than once. I learned my lesson. I simply do not forward any of these messages. Period. In this time of information overload, it is very easy to get caught up in what seems to be truthful but in truth, is not.

We Jews created a unique corrective for this kind of thing centuries before the Internet began. It's the way we study, the way we learn. It's called commentaries, Midrash, interpretation. Do you know that even those Jews who think every word of the Bible is true and came directly from God, don't study those "true" words directly. They must be discussed, analyzed, commented upon, and the comments must be commented upon, and those comments... Even the "truth" of the Bible is never obvious, but must be carefully discovered. And even those discoveries are fluid, because they will be commented upon, and the comments will be commented upon, and those comments...

I find it both interesting and amazing that the truths of the Bible must be uncovered with great effort, yet we accept some of the ephemeral messages from cyberspace as completely authoritative. Don't! I have found that almost without exception, those "pass it on" e-mails are not true. If you want truth, moral truth, spiritual truth, the Internet is not a good place to look. The incredibly deep well of Jewish Torah study is.

Why don't you join us? My Torah study class meets every Tuesday night in the library. I look forward to seeking truth with you, and maybe even finding some.

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Cantor's Notes

What an exciting time we are going through now! Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Simchat Torah. Sukkot comes just five short days following Yom Kippur. It is quite a drastic transition, from one of the most solemn holidays in our year to one of the most joyous. However, the timing is not accidental. Only after we have reached a new level of purity and atonement on Yom Kippur, can we then be truly joyous on Sukkot. Indeed, there is a special Mitzvah of Simcha, happiness, on Sukkot. All these Holydays bring us such an excitement and inspiration. I just wish we could keep this feeling throughout the year!

Every year in the beginning of the year I write a plea to you to join our choirs. As you could notice during the High Holydays and Family services, number of participants in our choirs constantly grows (as well as I hope quality does). For last three years, we could

enjoy participation in our services of children's, youth and adult choirs. The choirs inspire our congregation during worship and help in continuing our musical heritage. However, we still and will always need more of you to be able in the future to enjoy various programs presented by our choirs. The requirements for joining our choirs are always the same, love of music and ability to carry tune. Our adult choir meets on Thursdays at 7:30 PM. The junior choir (4th –6th graders) will continue to rehearse on Mondays at 6:30 through 7:30. And our children choir (1st- 3rd graders) will meet on Sundays at 9:30AM right before Hebrew School starts.

This year, I hope we will be able to start and to introduce one more choir. Following the wishes of our teenagers, we will start a teen's choir consisting of 7th, 8th, 9th and up graders as well as some teenagers who currently not enrolled in Religious school. This choir will meet every other Thursday starting October 16. Thus, everyone in our congregation will qualify for one of these choirs. If you love music, come to rehearsals! You will not regret it and you will have a great time.

Moadim l'simcha! Have a wonderful Holydays!

Cantor Schwartz

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