



VAAD HARABANIM
THE RABBINICAL COUNCIL
of GREATER WASHINGTON

THE BULLETIN

PESACH 5779 • APRIL 2019 • VOLUME 7.1

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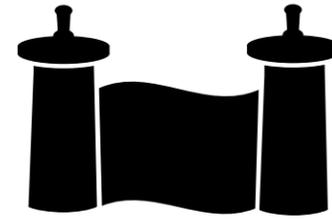
*An Interview With Rabbi Mordechai Rhine,
Administrator of the Beis Din for Geirus*

**21 Development, Growth and Transformation of the
Orthodox Community in Greater Washington:
1962 - Today**

Reflections by Rabbi Avrom Landesman

***Wishing you a
Chag Kasher
v'Sameach***





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Introduction

We are pleased to present Issue 7.1: The Pesach Edition of The Bulletin of the Vaad HaRabanim of Greater Washington.

This issue contains informative articles and practical lists for Pesach 5779 as well as Kashrus and Community sections. It is our hope that the material contained within these pages will enhance both your Pesach preparations and Yom Tov experience.

In the Pesach section, Rabbi Shaya Milikowsky explores the background and essence of the Jewish people's unique relationship with G-d as His "firstborn," while Rabbi Yehoshua Singer analyzes the joy inherent in and intrinsic to Pesach preparation and our performance of mitzvos. We thank the Star-K for granting us permission to reprint their Quick Pick Lists of approved medications and personal care items for Pesach use.

Additionally, we direct your attention to the Kashrus section. There you will find clarification of Vaad policies and a closer look at the operations and advancements of Capitol K Kosher. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Rabbi Zvi Holland for his incredible efforts responding to the around-the-clock demands of his position as Director of Field Operations of the Capitol K. It is my great pleasure to work with Rabbi Holland daily. Thank you as well to the Vaad's Kashrus committee for its role in formulating Kashrus policy and procedure, to our two expert Vaad HaKashrus auditors and to our devoted team of mashgichim, the unsung heroes of Kashrus in Greater Washington.

In the Community section of the Bulletin, please read the informative interview with Rabbi Mordechai Rhine about the Vaad HaRabanim's Beis Din for Geirus. Finally, this section is graced with an article by a pillar of the Greater Washington community, Rabbi Avrom Landesman. Rabbi Landesman surveys the development and transformation of the Greater Washington Orthodox community from 1962 to the present. We thank him for his decades of tireless effort on behalf of our community and for penning an insightful review of the history of its growth.

A very special thank you to Mrs. Mindy Tolchinsky for her expertise and precision in editing this issue and to Mrs. Wendy Guberman for its beautiful typesetting and graphic design.

Last, but far from least, my thanks to Rabbi Yosef Singer, President of the R.C.G.W. for his direction, commitment and leadership in all the Vaad's efforts and responsibilities.

We hope you enjoy and share this edition of the Bulletin. Chag Kasher v'Sameach!

Rabbi Moshe Walter

Director, Rabbinical Council of Greater Washington



Rabbi Yosef Singer
Cong. Young Israel Ezras Israel
President

VAAD HARABANIM
THE RABBINICAL COUNCIL
of GREATER WASHINGTON

Rabbi Moshe Walter
Woodside Synagogue Ahavas Torah
Executive Director

To the Greater Washington Jewish Community:

It is my honor to introduce the 5779/2019 Pesach Edition of the Vaad Bulletin. The reader will find in its pages a great deal of practical information such as Pesach product lists, and an updated guide to purchasing chametz after Yom Tov. There is also a special feature by Rav Avrom Landesman shlit" a on the history of the Greater Washington Jewish community.

Clearly, I would be remiss if I did not express my hakaros hatov to Rabbi Moshe Walter, our editor in chief, for the hard work and creativity he has invested in producing this volume. In his capacity as the Vaad's Executive Director, however, Rabbi Walter is even more deserving of our praise. He brings great dedication, halachic knowledge, yiras Shamayim and highly refined interpersonal skills to the holy work of providing services that are essential to the viability of our community. His contributions have played a critical role in helping the Vaad's operations run smoothly, bli ayin hora, and in maintaining — even enhancing — its local, national and international reputation. We all agree that working with Rabbi Walter is an unqualified pleasure.

It remains, of course, a great honor and privilege for me to work with all the Rabanim who comprise the Vaad. They are authentic yirei Shamayim who are motivated by their sense of service to HaKadosh Baruch Hu and to the community they respect and love.

On behalf of the Vaad HaRabanim of Greater Washington, please accept my thanks for your continued support and my blessing that we merit a chag kosher v'sameach and be zocheh to see a geulah shleimah bimheirah b'yameinu.

With Love and Respect,

Rabbi Yosef Singer

President

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum
Young Israel Shomrai Emunah
Vice President

Rabbi Michoel Frank
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My Firstborn Son, Israel

Rabbi Shaya Milikowsky

One of the most dramatic and often quoted statements in the story of the Exodus occurs after the plague of *barad* (hail) at the end of Parshas Va'eira (9:27). Paroah asserts: "This time I have sinned; Hashem is the Righteous One, and I and my people are the wicked ones."

One would imagine that, after this "aha moment," we would see a major shift in the story line. Yet Paroah's heart is once again hardened by Hashem and he and his servants refuse to let the Jewish people go. Why does Paroah continue to deny the Jews the opportunity to leave Egypt after his declaration of G-d's righteousness?

I would like to suggest, based upon the commentaries of the Netziv and the Rashbam, that while Paroah does admit that Hashem is the Tzaddik (the Righteous One), he continues to deny another fundamental doctrine: Hashem's designation of the Jewish people as His firstborn child. Moshe clearly articulated this relationship to Paroah before the first plague (4:22-23): "You shall say to Paroah: 'So said Hashem, My firstborn son is Israel. So, I say to you, send out My son that he may serve Me — but should you refuse to send him out; behold, I shall kill your firstborn son.'"

Until this point, the intent of the plagues was to educate Paroah about who Hashem is, the extent to which Hashem is in control of the world and His unique relationship with the Jewish people. Paroah's dramatic statement acknowledges that Hashem is the Tzaddik and that everything He does is proper and purposeful. Yet Paroah continues to reject Hashem's designation of the Jewish people as His firstborn child.

The Rashbam (9:34) points out that the first time the Torah criticizes Paroah as a *chotei*, one who rebels with intent, is during the plague of *barad*. This is because, despite his admission of Hashem's Righteousness, Paroah continues to deny that the Jews are Hashem's children; by not releasing the Jewish people, Paroah is effectively repudiating Hashem's unique relationship with *Klal Yisrael*.

From this point on, the dialogue between Moshe and Paroah shifts. Their exchange no longer focuses on proving that G-d is Master of the universe, which Paroah now recognizes, but rather concerns the parameters and responsibilities of the relationship between *b'ni bichori yisrael* (My firstborn son, Israel) and Hashem.

Paroah contends (10:8-11) that only those who know how to serve Hashem, i.e., the adults, need to leave Egypt. Moshe replies that *every* Jew must go, no matter how young

or old, because each person, no matter where they are at that moment, is valuable and necessary. As the Jewish people are children of Hashem, no Jew can remain behind in Egypt.

The next discourse between Moshe and Paroah (10:24-26) involves the extent to which each person must be prepared to commit his resources to Hashem. Paroah demands that the Jewish people must leave their animals in Egypt as collateral to ensure their return. Moshe says no; being children of Hashem means that we must be prepared to dedicate all our resources to our Father in Heaven. The Jews who were not prepared to devote themselves and their assets to Hashem perished during the plague of darkness, which followed this conversation. The remaining Jews, who did make this commitment, were then afforded the greatest compliment by Hashem, being designated *b'ni bichori yisrael*.

The Netziv explains (4:22): Being called *b'ni bichori*, My firstborn son, means that Hashem involves us in His running of the world, much as the oldest child assists his parents in the running of the family. With the commandment of "HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem" — in which the Jewish nation was instructed in the counting and designation of the months and, therefore, the holidays — Hashem imbued the Jewish people with *kedusha* (holiness) and gave them the power and responsibility to determine which days have special *kedusha* as well.

We can now understand why the mitzvah of tefillin was bestowed upon the Jewish people specifically at this moment in the story of the Exodus. The Rambam (based on a Gemara in Menachos) states that, while one is wearing his tefillin, he must continually touch them to remind himself that he is wearing them. This is derived from the fact that the Kohein Gadol was obligated to repeatedly touch the *tzitz*, the headband which said "Kodesh LaHashem" (Holy to G-d), to constantly remind himself of his holiness. The Rambam explains (Hilchos Tefillin 4:14) that tefillin, in which Hashem's Name is written 21 times in the *shel rosh* and 21 times in the *shel yad*, are more holy than the *tzitz*, on which Hashem's Name is only recorded once. At the time of the Exodus, when Hashem considered us so special that He gave us *kedusha* and the responsibility to designate which days have special *kedusha*, He gave us the mitzvah of tefillin as a daily reminder of this considerable holiness.

May we all merit to celebrate the upcoming holiday of Pesach with deeper awareness of the awesome potential for holiness that exists within each of us — because we are Hashem's *b'ni bichori yisrael*, His firstborn son.

Finding the Joy

Rabbi Yehoshua Singer

As we leave the joyous holiday of Purim behind and look ahead, we may begin to feel overwhelmed by the stress associated with Pesach preparations. We look for ways to encourage and inspire ourselves. Many of us can so clearly hear our mother's and grandmothers' voices ringing in our ears: "Be sure you scrub every corner! This is Pesach! We can't have a single crumb! Any *chometz* is a terrible *aveira*! There's no room to be lax!" Yet many of us look to this tension *itself* as a source of strength and attempt to appreciate more deeply the importance of our efforts, the great reward for our adherence to the laws of Pesach and the significance of every crumb cleared away.

Indeed this sentiment is echoed in the words of Chazal. The Medrash Rus Rabbah (5:6) encourages us to lend our full effort to mitzvah observance in light of the great attention given to our actions from Above. The Medrash relates three incidents in which focus on the importance of the moment would have led to greater dedication to the action at hand. Had Reuven been aware that Hashem would record for posterity his attempt to save Yosef from his brothers, he would have carried Yosef home to Yaakov on his shoulders! Had Aharon known that Hashem would note his joy in greeting Moshe when he arrived to free the Jews from Mitzrayim, Aharon would have turned out with drum and dance to greet Moshe! Had Boaz known that Hashem would enumerate the food he gave to Rus, he would have given her fattened calves instead of grain!

When we use this intensity of purpose to inspire ourselves, we often think in terms of pressure and urgency. In Parshas Ki Seitzei, however, Rabbeinu Bachye shares a very different perspective on this Medrash. The message of the Medrash, explains Rabbeinu Bachye, is that we must more deeply appreciate and rejoice in the great privilege and opportunity of every mitzvah we perform. Joy, he says, is the greatest inspiration. Joy is the emotion that increases our capacity and ability. Joy has such an impact on our conduct that the joy with which we approach the opportunity to do a mitzvah is a mitzvah unto itself.

This understanding of the Medrash is worth reflecting upon, particularly as we approach the pressures and intensity of Pesach preparations. Let us consider again the example of Reuven. Reuven joins nine of his brothers as they sit in judgement of whether Yosef is worthy of death. Chazal teach us that they are concerned that Yosef may be attempting to have them chased from Yaakov's home, leaving him the only heir to Yaakov's blessings. Yet they also have grave concern that they might be mistaken; killing Yosef would eliminate the forbearer of one of the twelve tribes of Israel, of Yehoshua bin Nun — Moshe's successor who would lead the Jewish people into the Land of Israel — and of Moshiach ben Yosef,

who will lead the battle before the building of the third Beis HaMikdash. The very future of the Jewish people hangs in the balance!

Reuven weighs the evidence and concludes that Yosef is innocent but cannot persuade his brothers. He stands alone, while nine of the greatest men in Jewish history — his own brothers — are convinced that Yosef is guilty and that they must kill him to save themselves and the future Jewish nation. Reuven is fully aware of the burden he shoulders as the oldest brother. He finds the only solution he can sustain: saving Yosef temporarily by having him thrown in a pit, planning to return later to rescue him. When he returns to find that Yosef has been taken from the pit, he tears his clothing in mourning and cries out, "Where can I go?" Interprets Rashi: "Where can I escape from our father's pain?"

With such pressure and intensity of emotion, what more could we conceivably ask of Reuven? Could anything have added to his strength and conviction? Could he possibly have inspired himself further?

Says Rabbeinu Bachye: This Medrash is teaching us that *even here* joy could have made a difference. Had Reuven known that Hashem would record his act for posterity — had he been aware of the full significance of the moment — that very recognition would have brought him a higher level of joy. That joy would have infused him with even greater strength and would have given him the capacity to stand up to Yehuda and his brothers and lift Yosef upon his shoulders to carry him home to Yaakov!

The importance and significance of the moment, the grave responsibility we are given, can provide us with the deepest inspiration when we focus upon the great privilege and opportunity with which we are blessed.

This is a message we should take to heart, as we prepare for Pesach and indeed at all times. We must strive to recognize the significance, importance and value of every endeavor in which we are involved, embrace the opportunity that has been afforded us to be part of such a moment and rejoice in that moment.

The Medrash concludes by applying this message to our time: When a mitzvah was performed in the past, the Navi recorded it. Who records our actions now? Answers the Medrash, "Eliyahu HaNavi writes it and Melech HaMashiach and HaKadosh Boruch Hu sign it." Hashem closely watches each one of us and He treasures each mitzvah we perform. If the mitzvah is of particular weight and importance, we should recognize and rejoice all that much more so in that special opportunity.

Let us strive to recognize our own worth and the value of each mitzvah we observe and may we find joy in those opportunities. As we appreciate how much Hashem cherishes each one of us and every mitzvah that we perform, may we merit to be blessed from Above with a truly joyous Yom Tov.

2019 QUICK-PICK MEDICINE LIST

A SAMPLE OF *CHOMETZ*-FREE AND KOSHER MEDICINES LISTED BY CATEGORY, FOR USA ONLY, UNDER THE BRAND NAMES INDICATED. PRODUCTS MAY CONTAIN *KITNIYOS* (see pages 91 & 118)

For a full list of *chometz*-free medicines, see list starting on page 128

Note: At the time of printing, some major companies still had not responded. For updates, visit www.stark.org

Cold, Allergy & Decongestants

Allegra- 24 hr. Tablets (Regular Only), 12 hr. Tablets, **Allegra-D**- 12 hr. Tablets
Allegra Children's- 12 hr. Oral Suspension
Benadryl Children's Allergy- Chewable, Ultratab Tablets, Dye Free Liquid
Claritin – 24 hr. Allergy Tablets (Dairy)
Claritin Children's- Allergy Syrup, Chewable Grape Tablets (NOT Redi-Tabs & NOT Bubble Gum)
Claritin-D – 12 hr. Tablets (Dairy), 24 hr. Tablets

Gastrointestinal Remedies

Alka-Seltzer- Original Tablets, Extra Strength
Dramamine- Original Formula (Dairy), Less-Drowsy Tablets (Dairy), For Kids Chewable (Grape), Chewable Tablets (Orange)
Kaopectate Liquid- Cherry, Vanilla, Max Peppermint
Konsyl Powder Original Formula- Unflavored (no kitniyos)
Metamucil- Original Coarse Powder (no kitniyos)
Metamucil- Orange Smooth Powder (Regular & Sugar-Free)
Miralax Powder
Pepto Bismol Liquid- Original
Phillips' Milk of Magnesia Liquid- Original [No Kitniyos]
Phillips' Milk of Magnesia Liquid- Mint
Senokot- Tablets, Senokot-S Tablets, Senokot Extra Strength (Dairy)
Tums- Regular Tabs (Assorted Fruit, Peppermint), Extra Str 750 Assorted Tabs (Berries, Fruit, Tropical Fruit, Wintergreen) & Ultra Assorted Tabs (Berries, Fruit, Tropical Fruit, Peppermint)

Pain Relievers & Fever Reducers

Advil Tablets - Coated (but not Film-Coated) approved when last inactive ingredient listed on panel is white wax
Advil Caplets - Coated (but not Film-Coated) approved when last inactive ingredient listed on panel is white wax
Advil- Children's Suspension [All Flavors], Infants' Drops (White Grape-Dye Free)
Advil- Jr. Strength Swallowable (NOT Chewable)
Aleve- Tablets & Caplets
Bayer Aspirin- Genuine Tabs, Low-Dose Chwbl. 81mg (Cherry, Orange)
Motrin - IB Coated Caplets
Motrin- Infant Drops (Dye-Free Berry), Children's Bubble Gum Suspension
Tylenol- Regular Strength Tablets, Extra Strength Caplets
Tylenol- Children's Suspension (Cherry), Infants Oral Suspension (Grape)

Sleeping Aid

Unisom- PM Pain Sleep Caplets, Sleep Tabs
NatureMade - Melatonin

2019 QUICK-PICK PERSONAL CARE LIST

A sample of *chometz*-free personal care products listed by category.

Antiperspirants/Deodorants

Arrid- Antiperspirant [All], Cream [All], Clear Gel [All], Solid [All], Spray Deodorant
Irish Spring - Deodorant & Antiperspirant [All]
Lady Speed Stick- Deodorant [All]
Mennen- Speed Stick Deodorant [All], Speed Stick Antiperspirant [All]

Creams & Ointments

A & D- Ointment
Chapstick- Classic Original, Classic Strawberry, Medicated, Moisturizer, Overnight
Desitin- Max Str. Original Paste, Multi-Purpose Ointment
Coppertone- Lotions - Spf 4-70+, Cont. Spray Spf 15-70+
Tinactin- (Liquid & Powder Sprays, Cream)
Vaseline Petroleum Jelly- Original

Mouthwash

Colgate - Mouthwash [All] [All use Vegetable Glycerin]
Listerine- Cool Mint Antiseptic, Total Care Zero, Zero
Scope [All]

Shampoo, Conditioner, Hairspray

Head and Shoulders Shampoo- Classic Clean
Herbal Essences Hairspray- Bio Renew Flexible Airspray Alcohol Free
Pantene Pro-V- Aqua Light (Shampoo), Beautiful Lengths (Shampoo, Conditioner), Classic Care (Shampoo, Conditioner, 2-in-1), Classic Clean (Shampoo, Conditioner)
Pantene Pro-V Airspray- Smooth Alcohol Free Hairspray
Prell- Classic Clean Shampoo
Suave- Juicy Green Apple (Shampoo, Conditioner), Kids 2-in-1 (Smoother's Strawberry)
Tresemme - Luxurious Moisture Shampoo, Smooth & Shine Shampoo

Soap/Washes

Dial- Bar Soap [All], Liquid Hand Soap
Dove- Bar Soap [All]
Ivory Bar Soap- Regular, With Aloe
Irish Spring- Bar Soap, Body Wash [All]
Softsoap- Body Wash [All], Liquid Soap [All], Shower Gels

Toothpaste

Aim [All]
Close Up [All]
Colgate [All] [All use Vegetable Glycerin]
Pepsodent [All]
Ultradent [All] [All use Vegetable Glycerin]

Chametz after Pesach 2019

It is rabbinically prohibited to purchase *Chametz* after Pesach from a Jew who maintained *Chametz* in his possession over the course of Pesach. This is referred to in rabbinic literature as *Chametz She'avar Alav HaPesach*.

A product is defined as *Chametz* if it consists of any of the five major grains, including wheat, barley, oat, rye or spelt in a significant concentration. There is no prohibition to purchase *Chametz* from a non-Jew who was in possession of *Chametz* over Pesach.

The list below consists of establishments where one may and may not purchase *Chametz* immediately after Pesach. Stores from which one may purchase immediately following Pesach have no Jewish ownership or a valid sale of *Chametz* (by the Jewish owner to a non-Jew under the auspices of a Rabbi) was executed. Stores from which one may not purchase *Chametz* immediately after Pesach are Jewish owned or supplied and a valid sale of *Chametz* was not performed.

The list below is the most current as we go to print. Please understand that new information may become available as Pesach approaches.

We suggest that you contact your Rabbi for any further clarification or understanding of the issue of *Chametz* after Pesach.

Chametz may be purchased from the following stores immediately after Pesach 2019:

- All Capitol K establishments and caterers.
- National stores:

Aldi, BJ's, Costco, CVS, Food Lion, Harris Teeter, Kmart, Petco, PetSmart, Rite Aid, Royal Farms, Save-A-Lot, Sam's Club, Shoppers Food and Pharmacy, Trader Joe's, Walgreens, Walmart, Wegmans, Whole Foods Market, Winn-Dixie

- Stores in our community:

H Mart, MOM's Organic Market, ShopRite of White Oak

Chametz may not be purchased from the following stores immediately after Pesach 2019:

- **Snider's:** *Chametz* may only be purchased beginning four weeks after Pesach.
- Due to possible *Chametz* distributed by a Jewish company, if one has the option of purchasing *Chametz* from other stores, it is commendable not to purchase *Chametz* from **Giant, Safeway, and Target** until four weeks after Pesach.

Inside the Capitol K

A Guide to Capitol K Kosher Certified Catered Events

Rabbi Zvi Holland

When community members attend a catered affair, they have the right and responsibility to confirm that the food they are eating is kosher. *Halacha* allows and requires us to confirm that food is kosher in one of three ways: prior knowledge that an item is unquestionably kosher (e.g., an apple or glass of water), a Kosher seal on the product or testimony from at least one kosher witness that the item is indeed Kosher. When attending a Kosher-certified event, consumers are enjoined by *halacha* and common sense to confirm that the event is actually Kosher-certified. The mere statement that an event is catered by a Kosher caterer or the mention of a caterer's name (e.g., "The food is from Such and Such Store") is not always sufficient to determine that an event is certified as Kosher.

Full-Service Catering vs. Food Service

There are two methods through which the *Vaad* provides Kosher food: Full-Service Catering or Food Service. In Full-Service events, where the caterer is presenting and serving the food, a *Mashgiach's* presence is required to supervise service and equipment. In Food Service events, where all the food arrives Kosher-sealed and ready-to-serve on disposable equipment, the caterer does not present the food. Food Service may be chosen due to the specific nature of the event or because of the higher cost of Full-Service Catering.

For the consumer, this distinction is critical. At a Full-Service *Vaad* certified event, the *Vaad* is responsible for the food and everything served along with the meal. At a Food Service event, however, the *Vaad* only guarantees the food until the Kosher seals are broken and can take no responsibility for anything else provided at the event.

Therefore, the single most important piece of information required to determine the status of an event is whether it is a Full-Service Catered affair or a Food Service affair. The *Vaad* carefully defines a Food Service event to ensure that no claim or implication of Kosher certification can be inferred.

Food Service is defined as providing food and set-up for an event. Once the event begins, however, no service is supplied. The Food Service provider and/or provider's employees may not remain at the event; third party servers and kitchen staff are permitted access to the event. No uniforms, equipment or other signage bearing the caterer's logo may be used at the event. Contracts for Food Service should indicate that the client understands that once packages are unsealed, the *Vaad* is longer responsible for the *Kashrus* of their contents.

Consumers attending a Food Service event can only rely upon the *Kashrus* of the food presented if they or someone *halachically* reliable has seen the food arrive sealed. Drinks, party favors, other food, serving equipment and heating done at the event are

not the responsibility of the *Vaad*. For further detailed guidance when questions arise, a consultation with one's rabbi is required.

Full-Service Catering is defined as providing the food as well as being responsible during the event for service. There are numerous differences between Food Service and Full-Service Catering.

How To Determine That an Event is *Vaad* Certified

At a *Vaad* certified Full-Service event, both a *Mashgiach* and a *Hashgacha* card signed by the *Mashgiach* should be present. The *Mashgiach* generally oversees the *Kashrus* at an event and is therefore not available to answer consumer questions regarding the Kosher status of the affair. Therefore, the *Hashgacha* card is usually placed near the washing station and should be referred to as the primary method of determining whether an event is certified by the *Vaad*. The *Hashgacha* card will contain the following information:

- The name of the caterer
- The date of the event
- The *Mashgiach's* name
- Event status – Meat, Dairy, *Pas Yisroel*, *Cholov Yisroel*, *Yoshon*, etc.

In the event that there is no *Hashgacha* card, the kosher status of the event should be confirmed with the *Mashgiach*. If there is no *Mashgiach*, the event is not certified by Capitol K.

To clarify: if you attend a bris at any venue, it is often a Food Service event. This means that, although the food may have been provided by a *Vaad* establishment, there may be other food — brought in by the Ba'al Simcha — which does not conform to *Vaad* policy (but would be subject to that venue's policies). Although you may hear that "the bris was 'catered' by so-and-so," that is incorrect. They merely delivered platters and left; other food, such as pastries and the like, may have been brought by different people.

On the other hand, if you attend a dinner that is catered by a *Vaad* caterer, which means that there is a *Mashgiach* present and a *Vaad* card certifying that it is catered, that means that all the food is certified — from the appetizer to all party favors you may find on the table. If the event takes place on a *Vaad* establishment's premises, such as a restaurant, it likewise means that everything is under *Hashgacha*.

***Vaad* Certified Sealed Individual Meals**

Individual Kosher-certified meals may be ordered for meetings or other events to provide for the needs of Kosher-observant guests. At such events, which are completely unsupervised, Kosher-observant consumers should be careful to ensure that the meal arrives with seals completely intact and with all the required cutlery and dinnerware. If a meal arrives unsealed, a rabbi should be consulted. The *Vaad* cannot be responsible for any food, drink or utensils that are not part of the Kosher-sealed package.

Capitol K Chalav Yisrael Policy

Rabbi Moshe Walter

Chalav Yisrael refers to milk or dairy products, including butter, cheese and milk powder, which are derived from milk that has been under the supervision of an observant Jew from the beginning of the milking process until the completion of production of the product.

The Capitol K, based on the ruling of Rav Moshe Feinstein *zt"l* (*Igros Moshe - Yoreh Deah* 1:47-49), does not require its dairy establishments to adhere to a *Chalav Yisrael* standard. Rav Moshe Feinstein *zt"l* maintains that governmental inspection of dairies serves as halachically sufficient verification that milk from non-kosher animals is not present.

Capitol K dairy establishments that are certified as Chalav Yisrael adhere to the following requirements:

1. Every dairy ingredient, including milk powder, must be *Chalav Yisrael*.
2. All prepared products offered for sale by restaurants/caterers must be *Chalav Yisrael*.
3. All dairy equipment must have been purchased new or *kashered* to *Chalav Yisrael* status.

Supermarkets and stores that are certified as *Chalav Yisrael* may sell non-*Chalav Yisrael* items in their original sealed packages.

Capitol K does not take responsibility for the *Chalav Yisrael* status of any products unless the establishment is certified as *Chalav Yisrael*.

At this time, the following establishments are certified as Chalav Yisrael by the Capitol K:

Ben Yehuda Café and Pizzeria

Carmel Caterers

Goldberg's New York Bagels (Rockville, Silver Spring and Potomac)

Moti's Market: Dairy takeout prepared products

Nut House Pizza

Siena's Vegetarian Pizzeria

As of April 14: Shalom Kosher: Dairy takeout prepared products

Vaad Certified Establishments

For the benefit of community members and visitors who are meticulous to eat Cholov Yisroel, Pas Yisroel, or Yoshon, we have provided the information as to which establishments maintain such a Kashrus standard.

KOSHER FOR PESACH

Al Ha'esh
Candyman
Carmel Caterers
Char Bar
Moti's Market
Shalom Kosher
Signature Catering
Soupergirl I & II
Wrap 2 Go

DAIRY RESTAURANTS

Ben Yehuda Cafe and Pizzeria
1370 Lambertson Drive
Silver Spring Maryland 20902
Phone: (301) 681-8900
Cholov Yisroel, Pas Yisroel, Yoshon

Café Sunflower
6101 Executive Boulevard
Rockville, MD 20852
Phone: (301) 321-3280
Dairy, Pas Yisroel, and Yoshon (except for items with oats)

Goldberg's New York Bagels
4824-6 Boiling Brook Parkway
Rockville, MD 20852
Phone: (301) 816-9229
Cholov Yisroel, Pas Yisroel

Goldberg's New York Bagels II
9328 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: (240) 450-4177
Cholov Yisroel, Pas Yisroel

Goldberg's New York Bagels III
7731 Tuckerman Lane
Potomac, MD 20854
Phone: (240) 404-1210
Cholov Yisroel, Pas Yisroel

Kosher Pastry Oven
1372 Lambertson Drive
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
Phone: (301) 592-8844

Nut House Pizza
11419 Georgia Avenue
Wheaton, MD 20902
Phone: (301) 942-5900
Cholov Yisroel

Siena's Pizzeria
12303 Twinbrook Parkway
Rockville Maryland 20852
Phone: (301) 770-7474
Cholov Yisroel. Pizza is Pas Yisroel and Yoshon

MEAT RESTAURANTS

(All Glatt Kosher)

Al Ha'esh
4860 Boiling Brook Parkway
Rockville, MD 20852
Phone: (301) 231-0839

Char Bar
2142 L St NW
Washington, DC 20037
Phone: (202) 785-4314

Holy Chow
1331 Lambertson Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20902
Phone: (301) 649-5466

Oh Mama Grill
188 Rollins Ave.
Rockville, MD 20852
Phone: (301) 770-3003

Max's Place
2311 University Blvd West
Silver Spring, MD 20902
Phone: (301) 949-6297

The Brooklyn Sandwich Co.
Kosher Food Truck
Washington D.C.
Meat- Glatt Kosher
<https://www.brooklynsandwichco.com>

Sabra Deli: At University of Maryland Hillel
7612 Mowatt Lane
College Park, MD 20740
Phone: 301-422-6200 X 205
Only open between Aug-May when school is in session

BAKERIES

Breadsmith of Potomac LLC
7937 Tuckerman Lane
Potomac, MD 20854
Phone: (301) 983-6033
Pas Yisroel

Goldberg's New York Bagels
4824-6 Boiling Brook Parkway
Rockville, MD 20852
Phone: (301) 816-9229
Pas Yisroel

Goldberg's New York Bagels II
9328 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: (240) 450-4177
Pas Yisroel

Goldberg's New York Bagels III
7731 Tuckerman Lane
Potomac, MD 20854
Phone: (240) 404-1210
Pas Yisroel

Kosher Pastry Oven
1372 Lambertson Drive
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
Phone: (301) 592-8844
Bakery is pas yisrael and yoshon

Krispy Kreme - Dairy
14919 Shady Grove Road
Rockville MD 20850
Phone: (240) 453-0334

Krispy Kreme - Dairy
1350 Connecticut Ave NW
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 463-0414

HOTELS

Kosher events program available

Washington Hilton
1919 Connecticut Ave NW,
Washington, DC 20009
Phone: (202) 483-3000

Grand Hyatt
1000 H Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (202) 637-4928
Glatt Kosher

Park Hyatt
24th and M Street NW
Washington, DC 20037
Phone: (202) 955-3871
Glatt Kosher

Marriot Marquis
901 Massachusetts Ave NW,
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (202) 824-9200

Washington Convention Center
801 Mt Vernon Place NW,
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (202) 249-3000

OTHER

The Candy Man
1351 Lambertson Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20902
Phone: (301) 681-1100

Soupergirl I (Vegan restaurant)
314 Carroll Street, NW
Washington, DC 20012
Phone: (202) 609-7177

Soupergirl II (Vegan restaurant)
1829 M Street,
NW Washington, DC 20036
(Between 18th and 19th Streets)
Phone: (202) 733-4401

COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS AND SHULS

Am HaTorah Congregation
Berman Hebrew Academy
Beth Sholom Congregation
CESJDS Middle School
CESJDS Lower School
Chabad of DC - theSHUL
Charles E. Smith Life
Communities (Hebrew Home)
Ezras Israel Congregation
Kehilat Pardes - The Rock Creek
Synagogue
Kemp Mill Synagogue
Keshet Israel Georgetown
Synagogue
Maryland Hillel
Ohev Shalom Talmud Torah
Congregation of Olney
Ohr HaTorah
Southeast Hebrew Congregation
-Knesset Yehoshua
Woodside Synagogue Ahavas
Torah
Young Israel Ezras Israel of
Potomac
Young Israel Shomrai Emunah

Geirus in Greater Washington

Rabbi Mordechai Rhine

Following the Exodus, the Torah describes the process the Jewish people underwent to become the Jewish Nation. Most well known is the statement “Na’aseh V’Nishma” (We will observe), with which the Jewish people accepted Torah. This, as well as additional steps in the process (codified by the Rambam, Issurei Biah 13-14 and Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 268-269), has become the guideline for the Geirus (Conversion) process in our time. As the Rambam writes: “And so it is for generations, when a non-Jew wishes to join the Jewish people and accepts Mitzvos...”

About three years ago, recognizing a significant regional need, the Vaad HaRabanim of Greater Washington formed a Beis Din for Geirus that is quite active today. In this issue of the Bulletin, we present an interview with the administrator of the Beis Din for Geirus, Rabbi Mordechai Rhine.

When did the Vaad HaRabanim of Greater Washington begin its involvement in Geirus?

In 2015, we were contacted by the Rabbinical Council of America, which maintains the Geirus Policies and Standards (GPS) for conversion in North America. They had identified a major void in the Greater Washington area and a need for a Beis Din that could handle the significant caseload of conversion candidates. They asked if we would set up a Beis Din to address this need.

Are there really a significant number of people who want to convert to Judaism?

Surprising as it may seem to some, there are. We currently have over 40 active candidates in our system at various stages of the process.

What exactly is the process for conversion?

Once a person has undergone their own personal discovery and wishes to convert, I am responsible to ensure that some simple conditions are in place before arranging a meeting with the Beis Din. The candidate must have a sponsoring Rabbi, must be living in an observant community, and has to have progressed to some degree in knowledge and observance. Once that is in place, they may apply. The Beis Din will provide further guidance at the first meeting.

What exactly is the Beis Din looking for to consider a candidate ready for Geirus?

Although a candidate will be aware of and accept all portions of Torah, there are specific

areas upon which we focus: Shabbos and Yom Tov, Brachos and Tefillah, Kashrus and the 13 Ani Ma’amins (Articles of Faith). We interview the candidate to ensure that he or she has a significant degree of proficiency in these focus areas. Additionally, we rely heavily upon the relationship that a candidate forges with the sponsoring Rabbi (and in the case of female candidates, with the Rebbetzin or other qualified women in the community, as well) and the connections that the candidate develops within the community. Our mandate, as we see it, is not just to legitimately convert eligible candidates but to make a reasonable effort to ensure that they will be on a firm footing in the Jewish community.

Would you turn away a candidate who is wholly qualified just because they don’t have strong relationships?

We do not generally turn away candidates at all. The Beis Din articulates its expectations for a smooth transition into Judaism and proper Kabolas Mitzvos (Acceptance of Mitzvos). Our role is largely to provide open and instructive coaching to the candidate throughout the journey. The candidate then has the opportunity to decide to pursue the journey or realize that it is not for him or her.

Regarding a person who appears qualified in terms of knowledge but does not have a sponsoring Rabbi or has not properly integrated into a Jewish community, we would not consider him or her ready for conversion. Indeed, we do not consider a self-taught candidate truly qualified. An essential part of Judaism is the experience — to recognize Judaism not just as an intellectual exercise but as a way of life. It is therefore important to experience Torah Judaism in a community and receive personal guidance and instruction from a mentor. Critical components of the journey are the questions, answers and discussions that take place between the candidate and the sponsoring Rabbi. In such a case, therefore, the Beis Din would refer the potential convert to a specific local Rabbi for guidance.

Are all candidates treated equally by the Beis Din?

We do have basic requirements and apply them equally. Invariably, there are guidance needs that are unique to each candidate. The Beis Din attempts to provide the guidance and consideration that is appropriate for that candidate.

Does your work involve any great disappointments or gratifying moments?

There are, of course, candidates who choose not to continue in the process, but I would not consider that a disappointment. It is reassuring to know that we provided the necessary clarity to allow the candidate the opportunity to make an informed decision.

Every successful Geirus is a celebration and we try to convey our admiration to the candidate, the sponsoring couple and the mentors. It is inspirational to experience the

Kabolas Mitzvos and to relive the acceptance of Torah — the “Na’aseh V’Nishma” — in our communities. Most gratifying is when the once-candidate touches base with us years later to let us know that he or she is marrying and building a Bayis Ne’eman B’Yisrael.

Did you ever imagine that you would be so involved in the field of Geirus?

Truly not. As the need grew, however, I reflected upon the entire topic. In the Shemoneh Esrei, we mention Geirei Tzedek (Righteous Converts) in the bracha of “Al HaTzadikim.” The mitzvah to love the Ger is also quite prominent in the Torah. So when the need arose to establish a successful regional system for Geirus, the Vaad accepted. At this point, unpredictable as it may have been, I am pleased to be part of that system.

How many Rabbis/Dayanim are involved?

Rabbi Walter serves as Rosh Beis Din. Rabbi Rosenbaum, Rabbi Kreiser and I also serve on the Beis Din. I should note that Rabbi Weinberg has been invaluable in his service, good counsel and hospitality, as most of the meetings take place in Kemp Mill Synagogue.

What message can you share with community members who wish to become involved?

Many people are reluctant to become involved with mentoring or hosting a candidate for Geirus; the only thing they know about Geirus is that, at first, the candidate should be discouraged from conversion. There is so much more to Geirus, however, after that initial verification that they are sincere about the journey. It is very important that someone who genuinely wishes to convert be supported adequately so that he or she does it correctly. The profile of a successful candidate is very clear: it includes multiple community members who have generously provided study/mentorship and even more people who have offered emotional support in the form of friendship and Shabbos hospitality.

The current model for Geirus — a formal, organized program — is very helpful. Once a person is in the program, they have a sponsoring Rabbi and are on a sincere journey considering conversion. Our hope is that the candidate will be supported to the point that a successful, enduring Geirus will be possible. Friendly greetings, invitations and patient responses to questions are amazingly positive ways to play a role in a candidate’s extraordinary journey towards Judaism.

Development, Growth and Transformation of the Orthodox Community in Greater Washington: 1962–Today

Reflections by Rabbi Avrom Landesman

Our move to the Washington, DC area in 1962 was both exciting and frightening. The prospect of a legal position with the Federal Government was very promising for me. Our anxiety stemmed from the limited religious life in the area.

As new parents of a two-month-old boy, it was not clear how long our family would last in a community with one small day school, one small mikvah (miles away from our home), the membership of the nearest shul only fifty percent Shomer Shabbos, no kosher restaurant of any note and no yeshiva education beyond middle school. The DC area was a major metropolitan center but the Orthodox population had distinctly limited facilities and very little ambition.

During the early 1960’s, the Orthodox community was primarily centered in DC. While small shuls existed in Northeast Washington, Georgetown and Takoma Park, the observant community was largely concentrated in Shepherd Park (a neighborhood in Northwest Washington close to the Montgomery County border). There was a small shul in Riggs Park (in Northeast Washington near the Prince Georges County line), but it was fading. There were no shul buildings anywhere in Silver Spring and there was not a single Orthodox minyan in Northern Virginia, Potomac or anywhere outside the Beltway.

During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, the size of the federal workforce expanded significantly. Many young Orthodox families were drawn here for those positions. The Vietnam War required many physicians, who were deferred from the draft while in medical school, to enter military service following graduation or join a federal medical service agency, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) or the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). A large contingent of Orthodox doctors flocked to this area rather than risk deployment to Vietnam. At one point, more than forty doctors attended Summit Hill Congregation, which was established in 1963.

The marked increase in the number of observant young families — mostly from large and established Jewish communities — created the demand for expansion of religious institutions in the Washington area. Many of the newcomers were day school and yeshiva graduates with substantial Jewish educational backgrounds; many elected to settle here permanently.

By the mid-1960's, a number of changes had taken place. In 1963, the Yeshiva High School for girls was founded, followed a year later by the Yeshiva High School for boys. At about the same time, Orthodox shuls were started in White Oak, Kemp Mill and the Summit Hill apartment complex near downtown Silver Spring. These synagogues grew fairly rapidly in areas where young families could find inexpensive houses.

The serious rioting that followed the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968 affected the safety of the area's only mikvah, located on 14th Street NW. A group of young people quickly undertook to find a new site. Within a short time, a house in Woodside was converted into a mikvah. A few years later, operation of the mikvah was turned over to a new charitable corporation: Mikvah Emunah Society of Greater Washington. Following further community expansion, that group helped finance several regional mikvaot and later built a major central facility — the Wallerstein Mikvah in Kemp Mill. The new mikvah project enlisted the support of a large group of young people, many of whom were new to organizational leadership but who mastered the complexities of a major communal project.

The development of mikvaot in our area is representative of the many changes in local religious institutions over the past 50 years. In 1960, a single mikvah served the entire Jewish community; today there are 11 mikvaot in the metropolitan area.

Kashrut in the Washington area has also seen major changes. When we arrived here in 1962, there were two kosher butcher shops, one kosher restaurant with a limited menu and a couple of small caterers — but no bakeries under hashgacha, no kosher pizza stores and no take-out food establishments. Today there are two major kosher supermarkets that include butcher shops, full bakeries, comprehensive prepared foods and catering services. There are several kosher eating establishments and pizza shops and kosher food is widely available, even in non-Jewish markets. Kashrut is supervised by the Rabbinical Council of Greater Washington, which coordinates a large staff of able mashgichim and sets up rules and procedures that ensure a high level of kashrut reliability.

Social welfare services is another area where major transformation has taken place. The considerable mitzvah of caring for the dead used to be handled primarily by local synagogues, each of which had its own burial society. Non-Orthodox members of the community desiring a traditional burial were at the mercy of local funeral homes. Today, the well-organized community Chevra Kadisha, with divisions for men and women, provides proper burial preparation for anyone who requests the service. The Chevra Kadisha maintains close contact with the Rabbinical Council of Greater Washington to ensure that preparations are performed in accordance with halachic standards. Periodic training sessions are conducted to encourage the absorption of new volunteers into the burial society.

Assistance to persons in financial need has likewise undergone major change. In former times, individual rabbis and synagogue charity funds raised money to help individuals requiring assistance. More recently, an energetic group of young people established Yad Yehuda of Greater Washington, which maintains a kosher food pantry and provides Shabbos meals, emergency financial assistance and other forms of vital support to members of the local community. This is a remarkable addition to other charity organizations that have also developed in our community over the years.

Another relatively new institution is Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington, which offers varied forms of assistance to the sick, disabled or infirm. Their services include providing meals for the ill and their caregivers, visiting the sick at local hospitals, caring for families of sick persons from other cities, transporting infirm patients to medical appointments, maintaining rooms at local hospitals stocked with kosher food, providing religious services (e.g., Shofar, Megillah reading) at local hospitals and educating the public on health, illness and caregiving issues.

The most dramatic change in our community concerns the number of Orthodox shuls. Compared to six shuls in 1960, there are now approximately thirty different locations at which one can find an Orthodox minyan. In several instances, there are multiple minyanim at the same location.

Among other novel communal projects are the number of Kiruv organizations which run programs designed to attract Jews of all ages and backgrounds to Torah study and increased commitment to mitzvah observance.

In the 57 years since I arrived here, the most personally satisfying religious improvement has been in the realm of Torah education. Formerly home to a single small day school, struggling financially and under pressure to satisfy multiple denominational ideologies, the area now boasts several strong schools.

As previously noted, the Yeshiva of Greater Washington began to offer senior high school studies in 1963. The school was expanded to include middle school at about the same time that the Berman Hebrew Academy opened a senior high school program. The Torah School, for elementary school grades, has grown steadily over the past years. A number of other day school programs exist in the general metropolitan area.

In 1995, the Yeshiva Gedolah was started in Silver Spring and, in 2000, Kollel Zichron Amram was founded. These projects introduced Torah learning at higher levels and made Washington an attractive place to live for an additional group of Jewish people. Many students at the Yeshiva Gedolah married local young women, settled here permanently and became leaders in various community endeavors.

Finally, it must be noted that an enormous change has taken place in the local rabbinate. In 1962, all the rabanim had served local congregations for many years. Their wisdom and devotion provided valuable leadership for decades. With the passing of many of these early rabbinic leaders over recent decades, nearly all the senior rabbis of this area have been replaced with younger men. These young rabanim assumed religious leadership with enormous skill and wisdom. They have encouraged the vibrant growth and vigorous expansion of numerous religious, social welfare and educational institutions.

May our community continue to prosper, b'ezras Hashem.



VAAD HARABANIM
THE RABBINICAL COUNCIL
of GREATER WASHINGTON



Vaad Harabanim of Greater Washington
The Rabbinical Council of Greater Washington

Rabbi Yosef Singer, *President*

Rabbi Moshe Walter, *Director*

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301-770-0078

13217 New Hampshire Ave.

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Silver Spring, MD 20914

The Vaad Harabanim of Greater Washington is an organization of Orthodox rabbis that provides the Greater Washington Jewish community with critical services such as *kashruth* supervision, a *beis din* for the administration of Jewish divorce, a *beis din* for arbitration of financial disputes and a *beis din* for conversion. In addition, the Vaad, also known as the Rabbinical Council, acts as a rabbinic resource and supports vital communal service organizations including the *Chevra Kadisha*, *Bikur Cholim*, *Yad Yehuda* and the *Mikvah Emunah Society*. Members of the Vaad Harabanim are dedicated to serving the broader Jewish community in whatever way possible and appreciate the opportunity to do so.