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The Voice of Torah Jewry

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Welcome Prime Minister Eshkol

It is with a deep sense of pride that we join the American Jewish community in welcoming to these shores the Prime Minister of the state of Israel, Mr. Levi Eshkol.

Mr. Eshkol is here on an official visit and will take up with the United States government issues that are critical for the Jewish state. Let him know that the Jews of this country stand behind him in his search for peace and stability in the Middle East.

We can only hope that his friendly and sincere personality can help to persuade President Johnson to reverse the State Department's foolish policy of appeasement of Arab monarchs and dictators and thus usher in a new era of friendship in the Middle East.

Coexistence At Any Price?

Faced with the serious challenge of China for the leadership of the communist world and with a critical agricultural situation at home, the Soviet Union has made one of its periodical switches in favor of co-existence with the free world. As usual, it is an extremely tempting thing to accept the Russian pipe of peace and allow tensions to ease, trade to flourish and friendship to grow.

Indeed, this is the policy that the government of the United States has been pursuing lustily for the past year and a half, as it has brought pressure to bear on all concerned to reshape the image of the Soviets. In this policy, our government has a powerful weapon in the fears of all people of a hydrogen-bomb holocaust.

Both as human beings and as Jews, however, we must ask ourselves the vitally moral question:

Have we the right to accept coexistence at the price of our fellow human's slavery?

Within the iron curtain there exists many peoples who have been in bondage for years; whose freedom has been destroyed and whose right to live their own lives has been denied them. As Jews, we especially feel the deep pain of knowing that two and a half million of our brothers are doomed to spiritual destruction unless the Soviet regime changes. Can we therefore accept coexistence with its corollary — the ceasing of all attacks upon the Soviet Union — while our brothers languish in religious captivity?

We dare not agree to such a thing. Coexistence is a great ideal but not greater than the ideal of freedom. Peace is wonderful but not as sacred as justice. Peace and coexistence can only begin when freedom and justice for all captive peoples have been achieved.

So long as Soviet Jewry is enslaved, not only are we forbidden to acquiesce in the principle of coexistence, but we are obligated to oppose it.

Glorifying The State of Israel

In response to our editorial criticizing the American-Israel World's Fair Corporation for leaving its pavilion open on the Sabbath and holidays, many of our readers have written letters of protest to that group (whose address is 1776 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y. for any others who might wish to protest).

One of the letters was answered by the Corporation and we reprint part of that answer below:

"The Fair regulations require all Pavilions to be open at all times that the Fair is open. This also applies to all religious pavilions. Although ours is not such a Pavilion we did consider the alternatives: leave Israel and the Jewish people unrepresented at the World's Fair or to abide by the Fair's regulations.

"It was our feeling that we must be represented on

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Letters to the Editor...

U.S. MAIL

Letters must be typewritten double spaced and signed. If you desire, your name will be withheld.

The Sun Revolves Around The Earth

Dear Editor:

I was pleased to note that you were good enough to publish in your May 1st issue, my letter regarding the question "Does the earth revolve around the sun or vice versa?" which your columnist Rabbi Sholom Klass has discussed in recent issues.

I would have been content to leave it there, were it not for the fact that in the meantime (April 24th issue) the question was dealt with again by your columnist, and, I regret to say, that I noted several inaccuracies in this new statement, which comes under "Editor's Note" (in reply to another correspondent).

I read with great surprise the view cited in the said Editor's Note to the effect that the fact that we can calculate beforehand the time of the eclipses of the moon and of the sun, as well as calculate the orbits of space flights, etc., support the theory that the earth is moving around the sun and not vice versa. This is a most amazing argument, especially and inasmuch as it is well known that the calculations relating to the eclipses of the moon and the sun were made thousands of years before Copernicus. Moreover one of the tables used in the calculations was that of Ptolemy, whose theory was that the sun is revolving around the earth.

I also fail to understand another line of reasoning in your Editor's Note, to the effect that when the astronauts orbited around the earth they experienced day and

night every few hours, etc. This has no relevance whatever to the question of whether the sun is revolving around the earth or vice versa, but to the fact which is undisputed by anyone, namely that all of us on earth experience day and night (whether because the sun travels around the earth or vice versa). Of course, anyone circling the earth at a great speed would experience day and night every few hours, but it has no bearing on our point of issue.

Similarly the assertion of your editor that the fact that modern scientists can calculate the position of various planets etc., has anything to do with the question under discussion. The position and movement of the planets were also well known before Copernicus. The only difference is that with the advancement of technology and the perfection of instruments etc., it was possible to discover new planets, and to attain a greater accuracy with regard to the movement of the heavenly bodies, but this has no bearing on our issue.

To bring the space flights, etc. into this discussion is both confusing and misleading. As a matter of fact if we are to deduce any proof from the attainment of success in regard to space flights, any proof that does have a bearing on our issue, "the shoe is on the other foot". For, these orbital calculations, and the speed which has been possible to attain recently in space flights, have been made possible on the basis of the theory of relativity, in other words on the basis of the presently accepted scientific view (in

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QUESTIONS



By SHOLOM KLASS

Readers are invited to submit questions. All questions must be submitted in writing and should be of a general nature. The purpose of this column conducted by Rabbi Sholom Klass is NOT to decide matters of Halacha (law) but ONLY to discuss the issue in question. Consult your competent Orthodox Rabbi for a decision.

ARE WOMEN PERMITTED TO BE CALLED UP TO THE TORAH OR TO BECOME CANTORS

QUESTION: In the 1963 winter issue of the National Woman's League of the United Synagogue of America (Conservative), Rabbi Harold Kamsler of Norristown, Pa., in his article "It all depends upon the woman", advises that it is permissible for a minor, a slave, or a woman to be counted for an Aliyah, quoting from the Talmud Megilla 23a.

Will you be kind enough to answer this question and set the record straight on this highly important controversy.

Theodore Rombro
Orlando, Florida

ANSWER: We have been receiving many letters recently in regards to women praying as cantors, or being called up to the Torah. This question was discussed in the June 9th, 1961 issue, but due to the many requests we will review it again.

While women today attend synagogue services, similar to the men, it is done voluntarily and it is not required of them to do so. For praying and reading of the Torah is a 'Mitzva Essay Shehazman Grama Lo', a positive command relating to a specific time, of which women are excused.

Women's Role In Life

Women play a greater role in our life than praying in a synagogue. The Gemara Brachose 17a, tells us that "Greater is the reward which G-d promised to women, than to men. Rab said to Hiyya: "How do women earn merit? By making their children go to the synagogue to study Scriptures and their husbands to the Beth Hamidrash to learn Mishna and waiting for their husbands until they return home." (and giving their husbands permission to learn in another city - Rashi, ibid. See also Sotah 21).

"The wives of Talmidai Chachamin who do not sleep, (caring for their husbands) in this world, will enter the future world (Kosovose 62a).

The Gemara continues: Women are permitted to read the Megilla for other women. Women may hold their own 'Birchose Hamawzone' (Grace after meals). Women are required to pray (Brachose 20b). Rashi explains it because it is a supplication to G-d.

The RAMBAM (Hilchose Tilla

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