

THE HEBRON FUND/THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF HEBRON

HEBRON Today

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From Purim to Pessach From Amona Back to Hebron!

By Yossi Baumol, Executive Director of the Hebron Fund

Pessach is the holiday that signifies G-d's might and power, yet without Nachshon's courage and determination to take that first leap, would the Red Sea have split?

Purim, on the other hand, represents Jewish courage, but if not for Mordechai and Esther's political savvy, the Megillah may have ended differently.

In **Amona**, after offering every possible compromise, our side exhibited great heroism and self-sacrifice. The bloodied, mangled faces of our innocent children just may have put the fear of G-d into the hearts of those who were overzealous in their plot against Eretz Yisrael.

In **Hebron**, on the other hand, after almost ferocious posturing and the threat of violence, the leaders of the Jewish community were able to negotiate a deal to preserve and hopefully advance Jewish rights in Hebron.

This then is the traditional Jewish recipe for success— the courage which stems from faith and devotion, tempered with political savvy and realpolitik. We never deserved the term wild-eyed messianists – we have left this to the left – the delusionary proponents of the "New Middle East" which now includes a Hamas state in Gaza.

For 30 years now, it is our camp which

has won the elections, only to have victory snatched from our hands again and again by political trickery. Voting in an Israeli election is a mitzvah – it is the periodic exercise of Jewish sovereignty that we treasure again and again ever since the State was founded, but it isn't all that it's cracked up to be. Mysteriously, Prime Ministers from different parties always end up acting the same way.

"The hearts of ministers are in the Hands of Hashem," our Rabbis claim. G-d works his plans through them, but they are practically devoid of free will. **Let's stop blaming the politicians – it's up to us to carry the ball. ■**

Let the stories
of Hebron &
Kever Rachel
**change your
life too!**

Join
Rabbi Simcha Hochbaum,
Yossi Baumol,
Ziva Glanz
or David Wilder
on an unforgettable day
tour of Hebron & Kever
Rachel.

Contact Ziva Glanz today
to reserve you next tour with
the Hebron Fund!
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Call today about our Pessach
Holiday Concert on Monday
April 17th and Holiday Tour
Schedule



The Sons Have Returned!

How Stories of Hebron & Kever Rachel turned Max Nordau into a Zionist

From "Ezer HaRav" by Prof. A.S. Yehuda, translated by David Wilder



On the second night of the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, Dr. Max Nordau spoke in German, giving a long speech. He mentioned several times, as a motto, three words from Jeremiah, in Hebrew, "v'Shavu Banim l'Gvulam," – "Our Children Have Returned to their Borders." When asked by a young representative at the Congress how he found this verse, and especially in Hebrew, for this did not fit Nordau's educational background, Nordau replied: "I know these words from the person to whom I owe all my Judaism and Zionism. A person whose name I don't even know. A person who was,

in essence, only a little boy of eight or ten."

This is what happened:

"I have a children's clinic in Paris. A woman, an immigrant from Poland, her hair covered with a scarf, came in with a pale boy, 8 or 10 years old. I took out a form for a new patient and tried to speak to him in our local language, but he could hardly understand French. I turned to his mother, whose French was also very poor, and she explained: 'No he doesn't go to a regular school, he goes to a "Cheder," a Jewish religious school.'

I scolded her harshly. 'This only causes anti-Semitism. We have opened the door for you, the gates to the country, to

refugees from Poland. Why doesn't your child learn the national language here?'

She apologized and said that he is still young and that her husband is from the 'old generation,' but that he will grow and study in the 'gymnasium' (modern school), and will learn the language.

In anger I asked the child, 'So what did you learn in ... Cheder?' His eyes lit up, and in Yiddish, which I understood because of my German, told me as follows:

"Ya'akov," he said, "was dying and he invited Yosef and commanded him, pleaded with him, please don't bury me in Egypt. In Ma'arat HaMachpela are buried Avraham, Yitzhak, Sarah, Rivka, and there I buried Leah. Take me from Egypt and bury me with them... And when I came from Padan, Rachel died in Canaan, on the way to Efrat, and I buried her there, on the way, in Beit Lechem.

"Why, in the middle of Ya'akov's request, does he tell the story of Keve Rachel?" "Rashi says, (and this is all the child talks about, 8 or 10 years old, speaking about the 'Sages') that Ya'akov felt a necessity to apologize to Yosef, saying I now bother you like this, to take me from Egypt to Hebron, and yet I myself didn't bother to take your mother Rachel there, despite that I was very close. "Next to Beit Lechem" - Even into the city of Bethlehem I didn't take her, but rather I buried her at the side of the road.

But I'm not guilty and didn't act wrongly, explained Ya'akov. G-d wanted it this way, because he knew that in the future the murderer Nebuchadnezzar would exile the sons of Rachel and then she would leave her grave and weep and wail and her voice would be heard: "Rachel weeps for her children!" The

L-rd will respond to her: "Stop your voice from weeping, and your eyes from crying, for you will be rewarded for your actions, there is hope in the end, for the children will return to their borders – v'Shavu Banim l'Gvulam!"

"And I," says Dr. Max Nordau, "I didn't know what to do with myself. I turned to the window so that the mother and child wouldn't see the tears rolling down my cheeks, and I said to myself, 'Max, aren't you ashamed of yourself? You are an educated man, known as an intellectual, with a Doctor's degree, but you don't know anything about the history of your people. From all of the holy scriptures – nothing! And here, this sick child, weak, an immigrant, a refugee - he speaks of Ya'akov and Yosef and Jeremiah, and Rachel, as if it was yesterday, it all still lives in front of his eyes?'"

I wiped the tears from my cheeks and turned to them and said, in my heart, "A nation, with children like this, that actually live their past, they will have a glorious future."

In that weekend's newspaper I saw an advertisement - "Whoever believes that the fate of the Jewish people is important to them, please call to help find an answer. Dr. Theodore Hertzl." I called immediately.

When we founded the Zionist Congress, at the first one, when I was honored to speak and give a speech, the figure of that little boy, whose name I don't even remember, stood in front of my eyes. But those words I will never forget, because they are the foundation of Zionism, they are the pillars of Judaism, V'Shavu Banim l'Gvulam – and the children will return to their borders!" ■

Save the Date!

HEBRON FUND ANNUAL DINNER

NOVEMBER 5, 2006

By popular demand we have decided to go back to holding our annual dinner in November as a Kick-off for Shabbat Chayei Sarah.

**Please make sure you
save the date!**

The Marriot Marquis Hotel,
Sunday November 5, 2006
Reception at 5 PM,
Dinner at 6 PM

THE HEBRON FUND/THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF HEBRON



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Comments of guests from across the US

The Hebron Fund hosted over 300 American supporters in Hebron this past Shabbat Chayei Sarah. After reading some of the comments of our guests from across the US, contact our office to make sure we have your name down for next year!

■ "...completely awed... an unbelievable experience."
The Rubins, Teaneck, NJ

■ "Thank you and your lovely wife for the wonderful and fulfilling Shabbat in Hebron."
Steve Frisch, Brooklyn, NY

■ "Words cannot explain the experience...I can't wait for the rest of our family to experience it."
Deena Borzak, Boca Raton, FL

■ "Many of our mission members who had chosen not to come are now kicking themselves "big time"!"
Rabbi Moshe Hauer, Baltimore, MD

■ "...a truly amazing experience... the magnificence of being in Hebron and davening there on Shabbat."
Susan Bernstein, Esq. Yonkers, NY

■ "It was awesome and a tremendous zchus to be there."
Michael Greenwald, Hollywood, FL

■ "It was an amazing experience that I will always keep with me."
Leon Schenker, Teaneck NJ

■ "...one of the most moving Shabbatot we have ever had. The davening, the sights, the warmth of the people, and the spirit and closeness to Hashem will be something that will stay with us for the rest of our lives."
Joyce & Lewis Kaufman Houston, TX

■ "My mother, daughter and I had a great time!"
Lorri Hershenov, Lawrence, NY



Shabbat Hebron 5766

by David Wilder & Yossi Baumol

On Shabbat Chayei Sarah, Hebron celebrated the purchase of Ma'arat HaMachpela, bought almost 4,000 years ago by the Patriarch Abraham, to bury his wife, Sarah. Annually, as this Torah portion is read, thousands of people arrive in Hebron for Shabbat to hear these verses recited at the very site Abraham purchased.

This year, over 25,000 people from Israel and around the world, arrived in Hebron to participate in this special event. Hundreds traveled from the United States especially for this Shabbat, via Hebron's New York office, the Hebron Fund, and through AFSI. The Hebron Fund group included a mission from Baltimore headed by Rabbi Moshe Hauer and an Emunah Mission headed by Rabbi Larry Rothwachs and Rabbi Mark & Linda Karasick from Teaneck, New Jersey.

In addition, thousands of Israeli couples and youth were hosted by Hebron and Kiryat Arba families. Youth slept in public buildings, prepared especially for

Shabbat. Due to the warm weather, many also pitched tents in Hebron and Kiryat Arba. Shabbat meals were provided for those who made prior reservations.

Families in Hebron and Kiryat Arba hosted dozens of people in their homes, with guests sleeping on any available floor space.

Friday night, the multitudes gathered at Ma'arat HaMachpela, the Tomb of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs, for evening worship. The entire building was open to Jewish worshipers, including Ohel Yitzhak, the Isaac Hall, open to Jews only 11 days during the year.

Huge prayer services were held both inside and outside, in the Ma'ara courtyard. Thousands joyously sang and danced the traditional Kabbalat Shabbat service.

Following the evening meal, many of the guests attended classes and lectures in Hebron and Kiryat Arba. People could be seen roaming the streets of Hebron through the early hours of the morning.

At five thirty in the morning, thousands

gathered for early morning prayers at Ma'arat HaMachpela. A 'central service' began at eight o'clock in Ohel Yitzhak, with thousands crowding in and participating.

Hearing the ancient words chanted, written by a scribe on parchment, describing the lengthy negotiations leading to Abraham's purchase of the caves and field, almost four millennium ago, at that very site, left everyone in awe.

Following the services and afternoon meal, throngs toured Hebron's Jewish neighborhoods, with tours given in Hebrew, English, French and Russian.

A festive 'third meal' was attended by hundreds of guests from the United States in the Gutnick Center.

Hebron leaders, extremely happy with the huge turnout, said that this was the largest "Chayei Sarah" Shabbat gathering ever.

They expressed hope that Israeli politicians and world leaders would take note of the tremendous international support for Hebron's Jewish community. ■

HEBRON HAS BECOME A "HOME AWAY FROM HOME" FOR JEWS WORLD-WIDE.

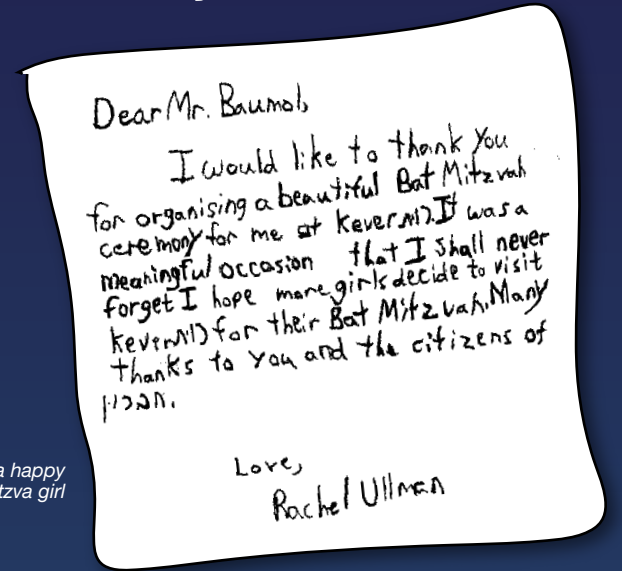
More and more people are choosing to hold their personal celebrations in Hebron.

The Ma'arat HaMachpela has always been a popular venue for Israeli weddings and "Brit Milah" celebrations, but more and more American Jews have been choosing to hold their Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations in Hebron.

We can take care of everything-

armored buses, special tour of Hebron, music, catering and ceremony in the Ma'arat HaMachpela.

Just contact our office today!



Thank you letter from a happy Bat Mitzva girl



Dancing with Bar Mitzva boy Marlon Lerer are his happy father, Dr. Paul Lerer from Englewood, grandfather Jack Nagel from LA. Yossi Baumol & Simcha Hochbaum join in as well

The Story of Mitzpe Shalhevet

Hebbron faced an ultimatum: Move nine families out of their homes in the Mitzpe Shalhevet neighborhood, or else! The only alternative was the forced eviction of the families and the destruction of the homes so lovingly renovated. As we later saw to our horror at Amona – this was no idle threat!

These homes were built on Jewish land, purchased by Rabbi Haim Bajaio in 1807 for Hebron's Jewish community. Following the Jordanian occupation in 1948, an Arab vegetable market was built on the site. This market was finally closed by Israel in the 1990's for security reasons, and the buildings left vacant, despite requests by the Hebron's Jewish community to lease them from the Israeli



Police needlessly manhandling Tzippy Shlissel during serving of eviction notices

government's "Custodian of Enemy Property". (Enemy meaning the Jews!)

Following the murder of 10 month old Shalhevet Pass in March, 2001, the community took action, and renovated the vegetable stalls, transforming them into nine beautiful apartments and a Torah study hall, in Shalhevet's memory. For five years the sweet sounds of Jewish life had returned to the area.

When leftist organizations sued to return the Arabs to the area, even Israel's courts

suggested that the government could rent out these homes to the Jews of Hebron. However, when push came to shove, the attorney general's office ordered the IDF: Evict the settlers!

While the threat of violence hung over Hebron after the forced serving of eviction notices, Hebron's leadership, meeting with senior military and government officials were able to negotiate an agreement: The families would leave peacefully and the government would take the legal steps necessary to lease out the homes to other Jewish residents within

a few months. The community, gathering in an emergency meeting at two o'clock in the morning, decided to ratify the proposed agreement.

Suddenly, nine families found themselves



The Bar Kochva Family- still on the move, looking for a permanent home.



The Shuvaels - He had to move while on active IDF duty

homeless. The community mobilized, and was able to relocate most of the families, either in the Beitar Guest House, in vacant apartments or mobile homes slated for renovation, or with other families in Hebron. Every one of the nine families is a story unto themselves – a story of trials and tribulations, courage and optimism, a story of much done and much left to do.

One of those families is Rabbi Yisrael and Tzippy Shlissel, parents of ten children. Rabbi Shlissel, originally from the US, serves as the Dean of the Ohr Shlomo Torah Kollel in Tel Hebron – the site of biblical Hebron. The Kollel was founded in memory of Tzippy's father

Rabbi Shlomo Ra'anan, who had been murdered by an Arab terrorist in his Tel Hebron mobile home years ago. The Shlissels moved to Hebron following Rabbi Ra'anan's murder and moved into a beautiful, new apartment in the Mitzpe Shalhevet neighborhood, living there happily until they were forced from their home. The Shlissels were temporarily housed in three rooms in the Beitar Guest House, and a month later, moved into an empty mobile home in Tel Hebron. The previous residents – Rabbi Gavriel and Bracha ben Yitzhak and their 14 children, had moved into Beit Menachem, the new apartment building in the neighborhood. The mobile home was in terrible condition and most of the floor had to be replaced. However, following intensive efforts, the family moved



The Shlissel Family visiting Gush Katif, Now find themselves in similar situation

into their new, partially renovated home.

The story of the modern-day return to Hebron is fraught with ups and downs. While right now we are struggling to accommodate the displaced families, we succeeded in preserving our property and getting government recognition of Jewish rights in the area. If the past is any indication, we will soon find ourselves back in the Mitzpe Shalhevet neighborhood with the Jewish community in Hebron bigger and stronger than ever! ■



Late night Emergency Meeting in the Avraham Avinu Synagogue



Rabbi Shlissel welcomes Purim guests in his new home... while Rebbezin Tzippy puts the final touches on the costumes



If you can't visit Hebron in person- you can always drop in at **www.hebron.com**

for news, articles, history, legends, videos and much, much more!

Shopping in Hebron online is just as simple! Just go to **www.hebrongifts.com**

Also see our new site **www.machpela.com**

all about the Cave of the Patriarchs
English site coming soon!



Please remember to send us your **Maot Chittim money** before the Pessach holidays!

ON BEHALF OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF HEBRON AND THE HEBRON FUND,

We would like to extend our condolences to the Jacobs family
on the tragic passing of

Brad Jacobs of blessed memory

Brad was a valiant warrior in the struggle for Eretz Yisrael who chose the most difficult of all battlefields - the field of media and public opinion. He is sorely missed, not only by his family and friends, but also by all who cherish Eretz Yisrael.

May his memory be a blessing to us all.

Our deepest thanks to all those who complied with the family's request
and made donations in his memory to the Hebron Fund.

Today

Help us resettle the evicted families within Hebron!

Tomorrow

Help us move new families back into the Shuk and into other new areas!



Please Redouble Your Support of The Hebron Fund at this crucial time, so you can be a partner in...



- **The Purchase & Renovation of Ancient Jewish Homes,**

Construction of New Housing



- **Meeting the Educational, Social & Humanitarian**

needs of the Hebron Jewish Community



- **Promoting Tourism in Hebron** & Waging a Mass

Public Relations Effort for Hebron & Eretz Yisrael



- **Maintenance & Development of the Ma'arat HaMachpela,** the Avraham

Avinu Shul, the Kollel Or Shlomo and other crucial religious services throughout Hebron

Urgent Projects

- **Armored Transport for our expanding student population: \$50,000**

- **Apartment Renovation: \$50,000**

- **Mobile Home Renovations: \$18,000, \$10,000, \$5,000**

- **Hebron Day Camp: \$54,000**

Keep over 200 children ages 3-13 off the streets in a safe, educational environment for 5 weeks

- **Sleep Away Camp: \$12,600**

150 Children camp out in a JNF campground for 5 days.

- **Pool Day or Amusement Day \$3,600 per day**
8 fun-filled days of swimming or amusement

park rides throughout the summer for over 200 children.

- **Summer Torah Classes: \$2600 per class**
5 classes of extra hours of Torah study in the Ma'arat HaMachpela for 150 children

- **Adopt a Club: \$100/\$1000**

Encourage the children of Hebron to take part in one of the many extra-curricular programs we offer them such as computers, sewing, art, martial arts, dance, drama, music, Torah, etc.

- **Sponsor a Children's "Siyum" at the Ma'arat HaMachpela: \$1,000**

- **Sponsor a Mini-Vacation for a Hebron Mother: \$500 each**

OUR DEEPEST THANKS

TO ALL THOSE WHO OPENED THEIR HOMES RECENTLY TO OUR REPRESENTATIVES, especially **Moshe & Amy Bodner** of Hewlett Neck, Long Island and **Vivian & Michael Greenwald, Joan & David Kornbluth, Rachel & Tzvi Schachter** and **Haya & David Tepper** of Hollywood Florida.

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