



Ohr Somayach Light Lines

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Light Insight

Believing Your Own Press Release

*“And Moses grew, and he went out to his brothers.”
(Genesis 2:11)*

There once was a Hollywood cowboy who had come from a very “un-cowboyish” background: He was an assistant in a men’s clothing store in Detroit.

To beef up his image a bit, the studio publicity machine concocted a new identity for him. They did a quick face-lift on his life story, which now depicted him as being discovered in a Wells Fargo telegraph office in a small cowboy town in Arizona.

It happened one day that at the peak of his fame the Hollywood cowboy came to that small town. As befitting his fame, he was given a ticker-tape parade down Main Street.

As he was riding on the back of his open limousine, his car passed the Wells Fargo office. He leaned across to his press agent — the very same press agent who had re-written his past — and said to him without batting an eyelid:

“You see that Wells Fargo station? That’s where I was discovered...”

One of the dangers of fame is that you can start to believe your own press release.

The Midrash tells us that when Moses “grew,” he grew “not like the way of the world.” The way of the world is that when a person grows and becomes celebrated and famous, he forgets his roots, his

background and his brothers. He seems to have a kind of insidious amnesia when it comes to their problems and difficulties.

Moses grew up in the palace of Pharaoh with an Egyptian gold spoon in his mouth. Nevertheless, he grew up “not like the way of the world,” he never forgot the plight of his people. Moses “went out to his brothers.” He went out to discover their problems and the ways he could rescue them from oppression in .

The Prince of Prophets

“And a man from the House of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi.” (Genesis 2:1)

When writing about the union of Moses’s parents, why didn’t the Torah just say “And Amram went and married Yocheved”?

In his lifetime, Moses achieved a closeness to G-d unequaled by any other human being. He alone ascended to heaven and received the Torah for Israel. He alone spoke to G-d “face to face,” with crystal clarity, unlike any other prophets.

There was a concern that in the course of time someone might say that Moses came from heaven, and make Moses into a god. For this reason, the Torah stresses that his origin was as normal and earthly as anyone. “A man from the House of Levi married a daughter of Levi.”

Although Moses was the prince of prophets, his parents were regular flesh and blood.

THE OHR SOMAYACH WEB SITE
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LOVE of the LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and the Land of Israel

Kiryat Sefer

“Kalev declared: ‘To whomever shall conquer Kiryat Sefer, I shall give my daughter Achsah’s hand in marriage.’”

As the Jewish people under the leadership of Joshua began their conquest of the Land of Israel, the Tribe of Judah headed by Kalev reached the city of Kiryat Sefer in its efforts to

drive out the Canaanites from Judah’s portion of the land. The city presented a serious challenge that motivated Kalev to make this attractive offer. It was Kalev’s half-brother Otniel who conquered the city and won the hand of his extraordinary niece.

The Talmud interprets the name Kiryat Sefer to mean, “the city of the book” and ascribes a different sort of triumph to Otniel. During the mourning period following the

passing of Moses, 1700 passages of Jewish law which Moses had taught the people were forgotten. It was Otniel who, through his scholarly talents, restored them to his people and won Achsah as a wife.

The city today bearing the name Kiryat Sefer is about a half-hour’s distance from Jerusalem, and is fast becoming the third largest observant community in Israel. Right next to it is an area designated to house an Ohr Somayach housing project in the very near future.

Response Line

Dulberg Update

Hopefully our readers are already aware of the tragic story of the Dulberg girls, two Israeli children taken away from their mother by the Italian courts.

In brief: After four years of divorce, Moses Dulberg of Genoa Italy reopened custody hearings against his Israeli ex-wife Tali when he learned that she was becoming observant. Dulberg, a Jew himself who last year converted to Catholicism and was baptized, claimed that being an observant Jew renders her unfit to act as mother of their two daughters.

In an outrageous court case in which Orthodox Jews were likened to drug addicts and war criminals,

the Italian courts accepted the father’s claim. The mother’s great love for her daughters and the girls’ adamant wish to remain with her were accepted as evidence *against* the mother as proof that she was indoctrinating the girls into a strange cult.

As a result, the court awarded complete custody to the father. The mother has been declared no longer legal guardian and is prohibited from communicating with the girls in their native tongue, Hebrew. Her one monthly visit is limited by severe and complicated restrictions, and the girls are suffering as if in captivity.

The father, meanwhile, is attempting to break the girls of their observant Jewish lifestyle, by such absurd atrocities as keeping the girls separate from one another and reading to them from the New Testament.

On a positive note, the emails, faxes, and letters of protest that have poured in from all over the Jewish world have apparently had an effect. If you have not already done so, please fax or email your protest to the following addresses, expressing your outrage at the injustice of this anti-semitic court decision that denies the basic human rights of these girls and their mother:

Ambassador Francesco Paolo Fulci, Permanent Representative of Italy to the UN; Fax: 212-486-1036 Email: Italy@un.int

His Excellency Ambassador Ferninando Salleo, Permanent Representative of Italy to the United States, Embassy of Italy; Fax; 202-483-2187.

The Honorable Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, President of Italy Fax: 3906-46992384

The Honorable Massimo D’Alema, Prime Minister of Italy Fax; 3906-6783998.