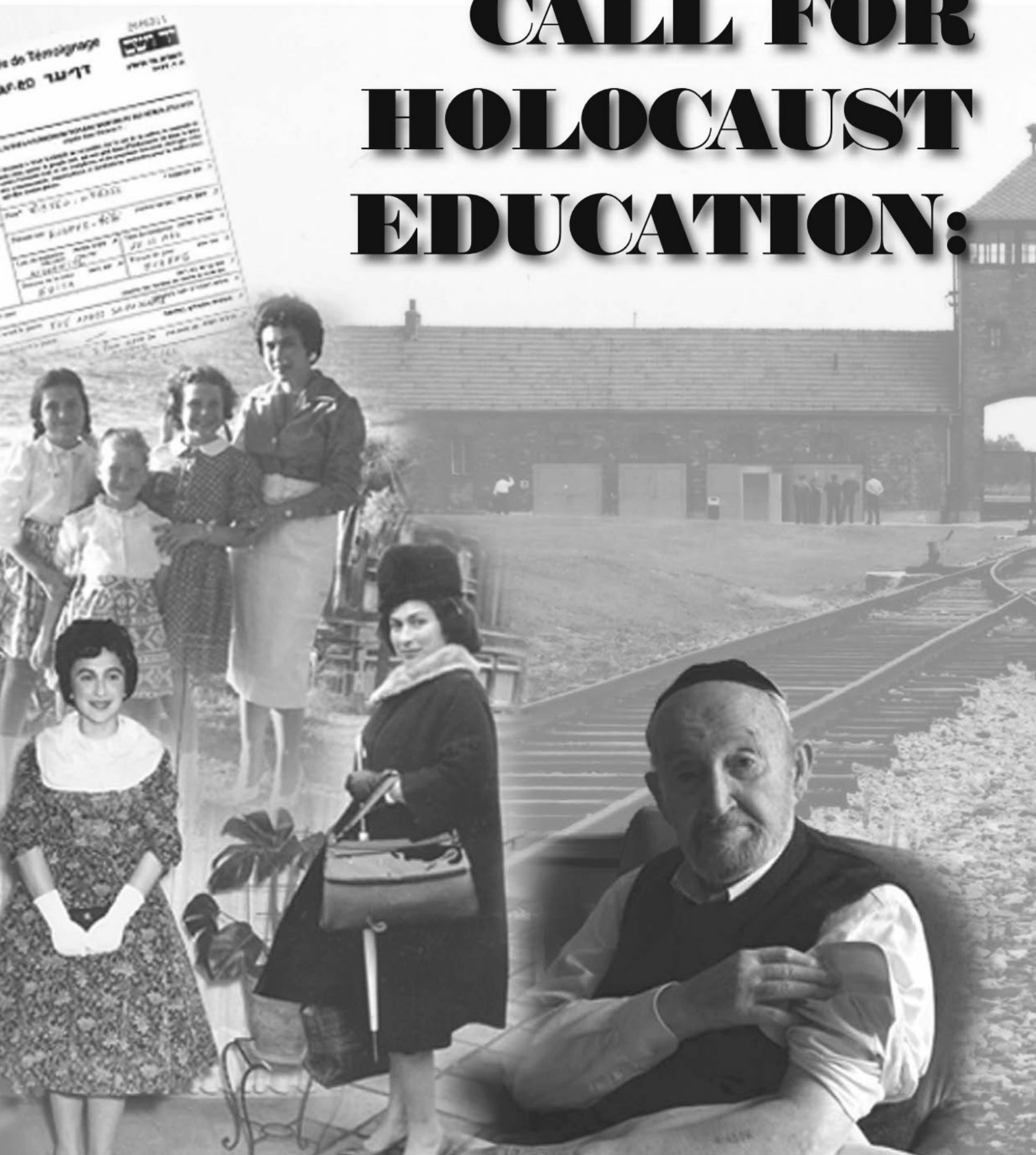
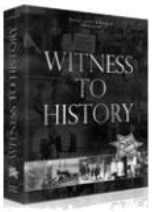
HEEDING THE CALL FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION:



How Project Witness Educates, Inspires, and Transforms

By Rishe Deitsch
With Deborah Schechter, Educational Director of Project Witness





There's a new name on the Jewish horizon—Project Witness. What is Project Witness? Who is behind it? What is its ultimate goal?

In this special section on Holocaust education, you will read about Mrs. Ruth Lichtenstein, of Brooklyn, NY, the daughter of Harav Leibel Levin and Rebbetzin Devorah Levin. Mrs. Lichtenstein is the dynamic and unstoppable publisher of *Hamodia* ("the newspaper for Torah Jewry") and *Binah* (a weekly magazine for Jewish women), and she is also the founder and director of Project Witness. Despite her accomplishments as a prominent and innovative publisher, Mrs. Lichtenstein views her work with Project Witness as the most important job she does, because, as she says, "I can face my parents now."

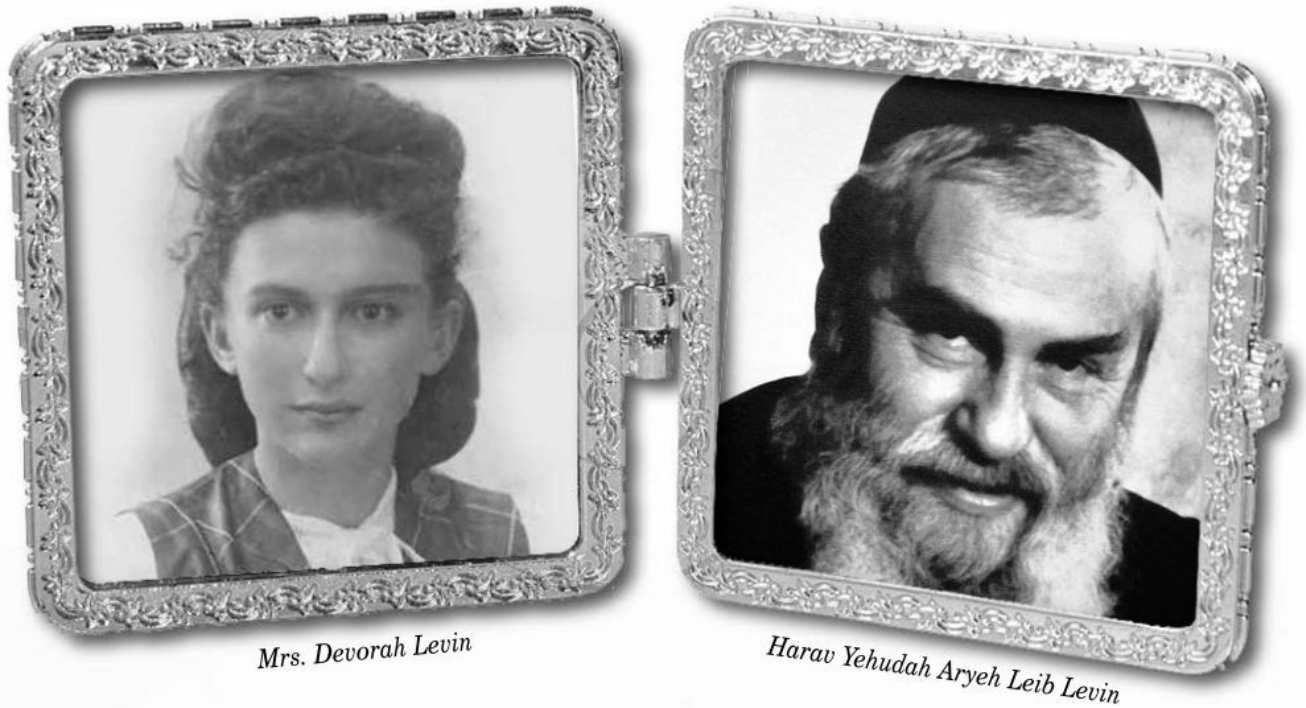
Project Witness, Mrs. Lichtenstein's brainchild, is a non-profit Holocaust resource center dedicated to transmitting the history, the spiritual courage, and the kiddush Hashem of the six million Jews caught in the Nazi trap during the Holocaust years. It merges lucid scholarship with cutting-edge media to provide Holocaust educational resources for schools, community centers, and lay readers.

Mrs. Lichtenstein asks, "How can Jews tolerate even the slightest hint that their children, grandchildren, or great-grandchildren might question the truth of what occurred and that they might, chas v'sholom, simply dismiss it as something that is not really applicable to them?" Yet, sadly, in many circles, this is already happening. Because of this, all Jews have a distinct mission — never to allow the world in general and Jews in particular to forget or minimize what the Holocaust has meant to us as a nation. All of us owe the six million who perished al kiddush Hashem a debt that can only be repaid by making sure that they did not do so in vain. Project Witness wants to help repay that debt.



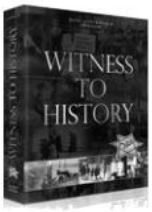
Through a variety of innovative programs, Project Witness has started down the long road toward ensuring that the significance of the Holocaust becomes ingrained in the minds, hearts, and souls of future Jewish generations. With this goal in mind, Mrs. Lichtenstein has authored a fascinating and comprehensive history of the Holocaust titled ***Witness to History***. This landmark textbook includes countless under-reported instances of spiritual courage and kiddush Hashem. It has been adopted as a textbook in a growing number of yeshivos, Jewish day schools and Hebrew schools of all stripes and types. It is accompanied by a DVD and detailed Teacher's Guide, and has been granted coveted NYSTL approval that entitles schools to purchase it using state funds. It is so highly regarded that is was reprinted for the third time in the summer of 2011.

Project Witness has also developed a new and innovative **Remember the Children** program designed to forge a positive emotional connection between today's youth and the youngsters who perished in the Holocaust. Through a sensitive, age-appropriate video entitled *Connecting the Links,* and by means of a meaningful passport program (see photo), today's children are asked to honor and remember



Mrs. Devorah Levin

Harav Yehudah Aryeh Leib Levin



those children of yesteryear who perished al kiddush Hashem. The response to this program has been electrifying. Hundreds of youngsters have participated in it. After viewing the video, youngsters are each given their own passport containing an individual name of one of the one-and-a-half million children who perished. They are asked to remember this name for as long as they live and to honor this child's memory by doing good deeds and learning Torah on his or her behalf throughout their lives. Here are some of the comments made by the youngsters after they participated in the program:

Which part of the program was most meaningful to you?

The story of the boy who rescued the Torahs from the shul and risked his life. A boy a few years younger [than me] is like a superhero.

Name at least one fact about the Holocaust that you didn't know before.

I didn't know about the ghettos. I didn't know how many people were forced to live in [a space] probably the size of my bed. And families living ten people in a room.

How would you describe the program to a friend who hasn't yet seen it?

I would describe it as unbelievable and inspirational. I would tell the person how amazing the whole thing was and how united I felt with the other kids in the auditorium with me, having the same experience.

What can we do to honor the children?

Think of them when we learn Torah and do all the mitzvos, because the Nazis wanted to get rid of us, so if we do all the mitzvos, we are doing the opposite of what the Nazis wanted.

Do more good things because of them.

What feelings did you have after the entire program was over?

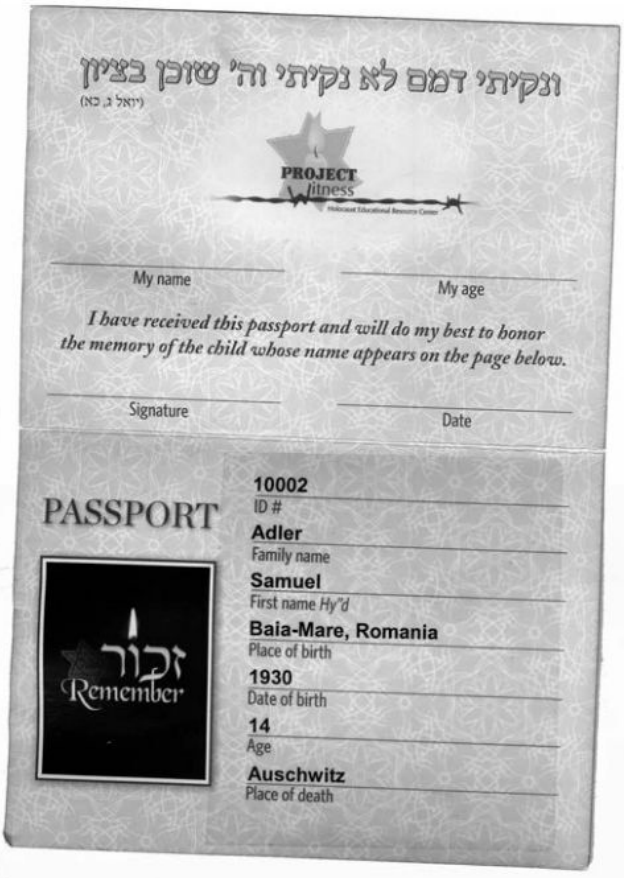
I take things for granted and don't thank Hashem for everything, even little things like shoes, and water.

I had goosebumps. I told my mother that I would try to find out more about her [the name I had received].

Project Witness has conducted numerous workshops, community events, and teacher-training seminars in Brooklyn, Monsey, Lakewood, West Hempstead, Chicago and Miami. These programs have been met with great enthusiasm. As one woman wrote, "The stories you told demand a commitment, they [help me to] set priorities in life…"

The online branch of Project Witness, projectwitness.org, is an interactive website that offers the very latest in Holocaust educational programming, resources, and events, for teachers, students, schools, and shuls worldwide.

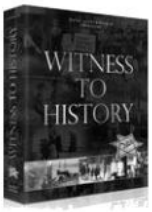
Mrs. Ruth Lichtenstein is a woman with a mission. She comes from a distinguished family—her father was Harav Yehudah Aryeh Leib ("Leibel") Levin, grandson of the Imrei Emes, the third Gerrer Rebbe. Harav Leibel Levin, in his



Passport

daughter's words, was "a man who had survived the biggest nightmare on earth, losing those nearest and dearest to him – his family, his friends, his relatives, the country in which he had been born and raised – and yet never despaired. Despite all he had suffered, he knew how to extract the positive from the negative…" He has merited to have his vision of a newspaper for Torah-true Jewry come true, not only in Eretz Yisroel and not only in lashon kodesh, but also in English, in *Hamodia,* throughout the Jewish world.

Mrs. Lichtenstein's mother, Esther Devorah Mostowitz, was 13 years old and living with her family in Otwock, Poland, when her father was caught with a sefer Torah and sent to Treblinka. Her mother was left alone with four young



children, of whom Devorah was the oldest still at home – and they went into hiding. Menachem, two years Devorah's senior, was in a forced labor camp.

One day a Polish policeman and a Jewish woman with an Aryan appearance came to the family's hiding place. They claimed they had been hired by family members in Radom for an exorbitant sum to bring the family to safety. Mrs. Mostowitz did not trust them. She sent her 13-year-old daughter Devorah to the post office to send a telegram to her family to verify that this was not a trap.

At first Devorah was afraid to leave the safety of the hiding place, but her younger sister Nechamah persuaded her to go, promising to pray on her behalf.

Devorah took a circuitous route to the post office, which normally could be reached in half an hour. When she arrived there the Polish officer and the woman were waiting for her. They told her the bitter truth…

Immediately after she had left home, her five-year-old brother had begun crying loudly, and the Germans had heard him and raided the family's hiding place. Her grandmother, her mother, her two sisters and her younger brother were all shot to death on the spot.

Devorah became hysterical and was inconsolable. In order to calm her down somewhat the two strangers took her to her brother in the forced labor camp where he convinced her to join the two strangers as she could not stay with him. She went with them to Radom.



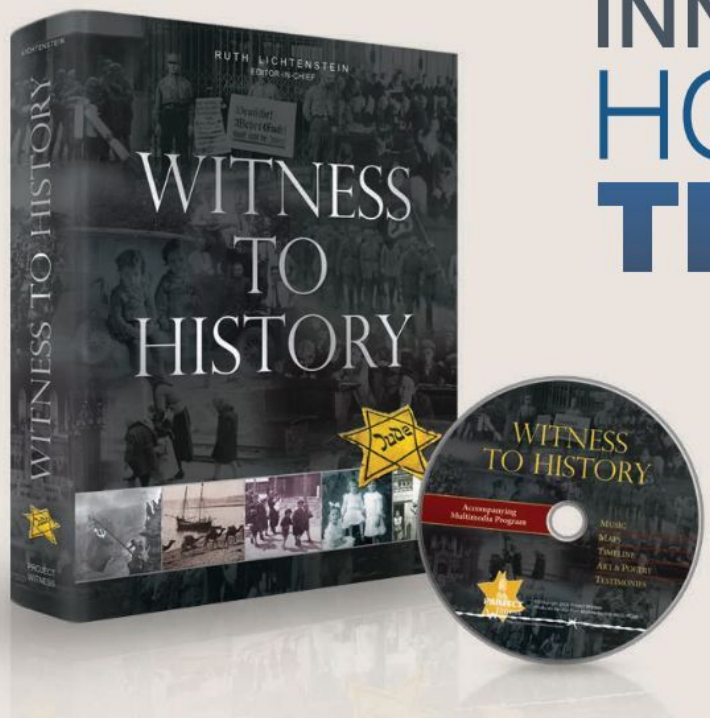
Three weeks after arriving in Radom, Devorah survived an aktzia (round-up of Jews for transport to death camps) where 21,000 Jews were murdered. In the summer of 1944, when there were not too many Jews left in Poland, she crossed Warsaw through the sewer pipes. With miracles, she came out and hid with her brother Menachem for eight months in a bunker. The day of liberation, May 8, 1945, they were liberated by the Russians who immediately arrested her brother. They accused him of assisting the Germans. For the next 2 1/2 years she thought she was a sole survivor until she was reunited with her brother.

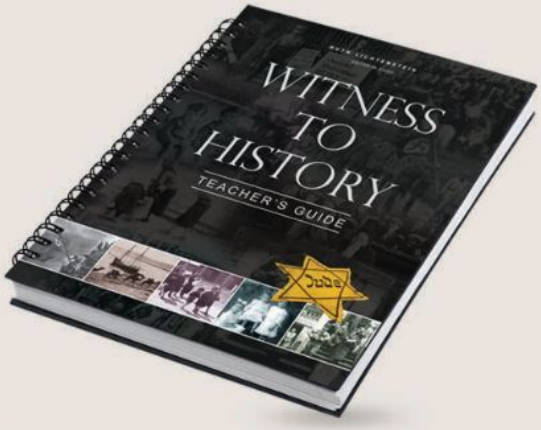
In May 1945, all alone, she decided to make aliyah. She went on a nightmarish journey to Romania, where she waited for a certificate, but still refused to go on a journey that was scheduled to start on Shabbos. Rebbetzin Chaya Miriam Shulman, who met her and was amazed by her inner strength, adopted her.

When she arrived in Israel, she insisted on getting married only to someone who reflected her father's way of

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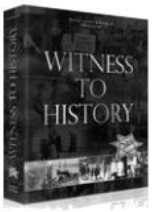




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life. Eventually Rebbetzin Shulman arranged her marriage to the Gerrer Rebbe's grandson.

Mrs. Ruth Lichtenstein can never forget what her mother endured and she can never stop making sure that the memory of what happened in the past is preserved for the future

What the Rebbe Said (and Didn't Say) About the Holocaust

Rabbi Yanki Tauber
Chabad.org

The Lubavitcher Rebbe is widely recognized as one who played a singular role in defining post-Holocaust Jewry. But what did the Rebbe say and teach about that event itself?

Like millions of his generation, the Lubavitcher Rebbe was personally touched by the Holocaust. His younger brother, DovBer, was shot to death and thrown into a mass grave, as were tens of thousands of other Jews in a series of massacres conducted by the Germans shortly after their occupation of Dnepropetrovsk in the fall of 1941. His beloved grandmother and other family members were also killed. The Rebbe's wife lost her younger sister Sheina, who perished in Treblinka together with her husband and their adopted son.

In his writings and discussions on the subject, the Rebbe rejected all theological explanations for the Holocaust. What greater conceit — the Rebbe would say — and what greater heartlessness can there be than to give a "reason" for the death and torture of millions of innocent men, women and children? Can we presume to believe that an explanation small enough to fit inside the finite bounds of human reason can explain a horror of such magnitude? We can only concede that there are things that lie beyond the finite ken of the human mind. Echoing his father-in-law, the Rebbe would say: It is not my task to justify G-d on this. Only G-d Himself can answer for what He allowed to happen. And the only answer we will accept, said the Rebbe, is the immediate and complete Redemption that will forever banish evil from the face of the earth and bring to light the intrinsic goodness and perfection of G-d's creation.

To those who argued that the Holocaust disproves the existence of G-d or His providence over our lives, the Rebbe said: On the contrary — the Holocaust has decisively disproven any possible faith in a human-based morality. In pre-war Europe, it was the German people who epitomized culture, scientific advance and philosophic morality. And these very same people perpetrated the most vile atrocities known to human history! If nothing else, the Holocaust has taught us that a moral and civilized existence is possible only through the belief in and the acceptance of the Divine authority.



The Rebbe also said: Our outrage, our incessant challenge to G-d over what has occurred — this itself is a most powerful attestation to our belief in Him and our faith in His goodness. Because if we did not, underneath it all, possess this faith, what is it that we are outraged at? The blind workings of fate? The random arrangement of quarks that make up the universe? It is only *because* we believe in G-d, *because* we are convinced that there is right and there is wrong and that right must, and ultimately will, triumph, that we cry out, as Moses did: "Why, my G-d, have You done evil to Your people?!"

But the most important thing about the Holocaust to the Rebbe was not how we do or do not understand it, nor, even, how we memorialize its victims, but what we *do* about it. If we allow the pain and despair to dishearten us from raising a new generation of Jews with a strong commitment to their Jewishness, then Hilter's "final solution" will be realized, G-d forbid. But if we rebuild, if we raise a generation proud of and committed to their Jewishness, we will have triumphed.

Strengthening Emunah and Bitachon

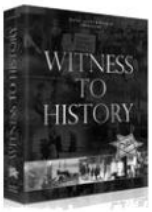
Rabbi Elimelech Silberberg
West Bloomfield, MI

Importance of Knowing Our History

Several years ago, while talking to a group of Jewish Russian-American girls about the importance of knowing Jewish history, my wife asked if any of them knew the name Bogdan Chmielnicki. One girl from Ukraine said that she knew the name: Chmielnicki's statue stood in the town square of the village that she hailed from, and, she added, "He was a hero."

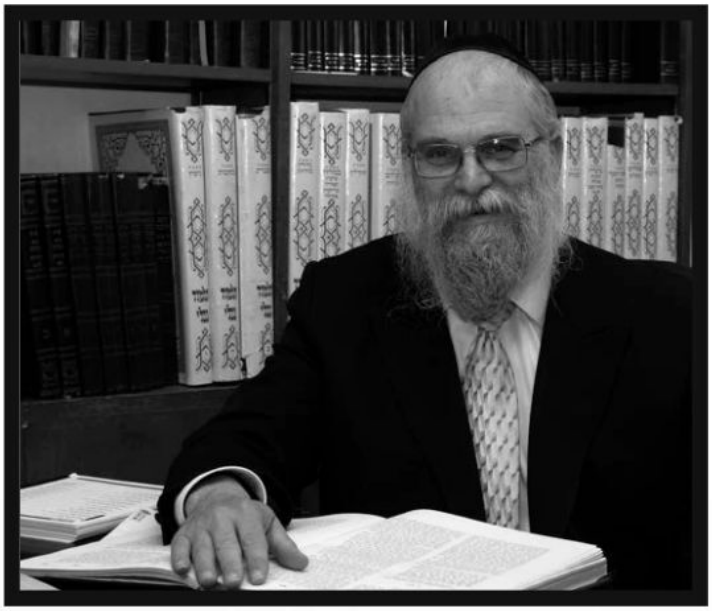
This was the man who instigated the pogroms in 1648-1649 ("gezeiros Tach v'Tat") wherein hundreds of thousands of Jews were brutally murdered!

This exchange underscores the world's distortions of history in general and of Jewish history in particular. How many people know that the Crusades were an excuse for the Christians – encouraged by Popes and kings – to murder tens of thousands of Jews? Many now naively believe that the world will always remember the heinous atrocities committed by the Nazis against Klal Yisroel, and there is no need for us to make any special effort to make sure people do remember what happened. Historic reality does not



support this belief.

One might argue that the Holocaust is of the past; why should one dwell on such an ugly part of our history? But Torah and Chassidus address the importance of remembering. There is a general obligation to know history, *Z'chor yemos olam; binu shnos dor vador.* "Remember the days of the world; understand the years of every generation." (Devarim 32:7) Furthermore, the Torah commands us: *Zachor es asher asah lecha Amalek baderech betzaitzchem mi'Mitzraim.* We are obligated to remember the despicable actions of the nation of Amalek, which persecuted and attacked us for no reason. Aside from the general mitzvah to know our history, there is certainly a particular mitzvah to remember the tragedies and persecution that we have suffered.



Rabbi Elimelech Silberberg

Elevating Gevurah by Identifying and Condemning Evil

Why is there a specific mitzvah to remember the wickedness of Amalek? Chassidus teaches that we must serve Hashem "bechol nafshecha," with all ten kochos of our soul. One of those soul powers is gevurah – strength, severity, might, etc. By expressing our condemnation of the wicked, we use the attribute of gevurah correctly and elevate it. Mishlei 10:7 states: *V'shem resha'im yirkav.* "The names of the wicked shall rot." When we mention a wicked person, our custom is to add *yemach shemo*, may his name be erased. When we write of those murdered because they were Jews, we add to their names the letters Hey, Yud, Daled – *Hashem Yinkom Domom,* may Hashem avenge their blood. This is a correct and righteous expression of gevurah. Tanya also teaches that the measure of a tzaddik is how much he abhors and despises evil. Our children must know that evil exists, and learn to despise and condemn it utterly.



Value of Sippurei Tzaddikim

Chassidim place great emphasis on stories of Tzaddikim. The Torah view is that anyone who is killed because he is a Jew is a kadosh – a holy person. Our children must learn about the Holocaust, with an abundance of inspirational stories about the commitment of these kedoshim to the Ribono shel Olam.

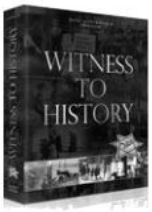
When the Frierdiker Rebbe was in a bomb shelter during the bombing of Warsaw, a bomb exploded nearby, and all the Jews cried out Shema Yisroel in unison. The Frierdiker Rebbe pointed out that even the Jews who were not fully Torah-observant said the Shema, demonstrating the deep commitment of every Jew to Hashem.

> Now, on his deathbed, he was talking about how he would soon be dancing with the angels, this time for real.

My father-in-law, Reb Yaakov Kopel Schulkind, z"l, a Holocaust survivor, told a similar story. He was on a march with hundreds of Yidden from one concentration camp to another. Until then, he had managed to have his tefillin with him. But upon their arrival, the Nazis stripped the prisoners of all their clothes and belongings and threw them in a barn; they then assigned each person a prison shirt and pants, and a pair of shoes. At that point, my dear Shver lost his tefillin.

The man in front of him received two right shoes. At first he was afraid to complain to the Commandant, but he soon realized that he couldn't continue wearing two right shoes. He went to the officer, and was sent to the barn to find a pair of shoes. While searching for shoes, he noticed my Shver's tefillin shel yad. Knowing very well that he could be shot for taking the tefillin, he nevertheless secreted them in his clothes. For the duration of their stay in that camp, hundreds of men donned those tefillin every day. The procedure started at 3:00 in the morning, so that each man could have a turn. Each man would quickly wrap the tefillin around his arm, recite the first pasuk of Shema (there was no time for more), and pass them to the next man. This despite the very real danger of being killed for this without warning.

Of course the atrocities must be described. But then the heroism. This would follow the chassidic approach of focusing on the positive powers of the Nefesh Elokis, instead



of being preoccupied with exposing evil.

The magnitude of evil was such that there is no way to understand why Hashem allowed it to occur. My Shver, who very rarely talked about his six years in ghettos and concentration camps, once mentioned that sometimes he would wake up in middle of the night and just not believe that it had happened. Even for a survivor, it was impossible to understand, and almost impossible to believe.

May Hashem extend special wisdom to those who attempt to convey the messages of this tragic period, and in the zechus of the kedoshim, and of teaching it correctly, may we be zocheh to the Geulah shleimah when all suffering will finally end.



visited the still-standing spectacular Shul. What distinguishes this refurbished shul is not just its beauty; it is its walls. The walls of this 400-year-old shul are decorated with words from the siddur. The entire Kabbolas Shabbos is on the wall. Many other prayers cover all four walls, painted attractively. Perhaps there were not that many books available in that time, certainly not in this remote shtetl, so they painted the words on the tall walls in paint that really lasts.

Just being present in a place where Yidden came to daven for 400 years is extremely moving. After davening, we were told a story about a survivor from a small shtetl who, on his



Rabbi Lew dancing with students



Rabbi Lew dancing with survivors

Dancing With Angels

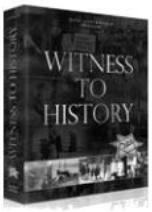
The Importance of Teaching Our Children About the Holocaust

Rabbi Yossi Lew

A few months ago, I was visiting Poland as part of the March of the Living, which takes high school juniors and seniors for a week to Poland to stand at the scene of the horrors of the Holocaust (and then a week in Israel). We were in the shtetl called Tykocin, not too far from Bialystok. We

deathbed, said he was looking forward to "*tantzen mit di malachim*" – dancing with the angels – after his passing.

When he was a youngster, the Nazis invaded his town during the festival of Sukkos (1939). All of the Jews in his town were ordered to assemble in the town's main square. Understanding that they were soon to leave town, the boy asked his father how they would be able to dance on the festival of Simchas Torah, if they went away now. An SS guard overheard the innocent question and said, "*Tantzen?* You want to dance?" With that he grabbed the boy, together with three others, and made them dance in a circle. He then shot one of the kids through the head and told the other three to continue dancing or they would be shot too. He then shot



another to death, and then another, leaving just that young man, the one who had asked the question. He ordered that young man to continue dancing alone.

And so, arms stretched out to the air, the young man continued turning around in sheer terror, scarred forever. The Nazi beast then asked the boy, "With whom are you dancing?"

The boy replied: *Ich tantz mit di malachim!* [I am dancing with the angels.] Inexplicably, the Nazi let the boy live.

After surviving the Holocaust, this person would always find some time during the yearly dancing on Simchas Torah to dance on his own in the middle of the circle, just as he did as a boy in the town square. He called it the *malachim tantz.* Now, on his deathbed, he was talking about how he would soon be dancing with the angels, this time for real.

After hearing this story we all stood up and danced. We danced for the members of that shul whose final dance was brutally ended in starvation, in gunfire or in gas, and who are now dancing with the angels. We danced because we were here in the name of those holy martyrs, while the vile beasts who sent them to heaven are in purgatory.



And we danced because this is our response to that eternally damned villain, Hitler. The way I see it, there is nothing we could say or do that would be more powerful than to dance. For the eternal dance of the Jew is just that No one ever can or ever will succeed in making it stop.

For those who grew up in the late sixties and early seventies, awareness of the Holocaust was easy to achieve. Survivors were a regular part of the neighborhood. It was perfectly normal to bump into parents and grandparents who had come from the "other world," some with the numbers that had been tattooed onto their left arms by the evil murderers in places like Auschwitz-Birkenau.

As the *N'shei Chabad Newsletter's* Rishe Deitsch told me, "In the 1960s, we used to drive in to Crown Heights from Worcester, Mass., where we lived, to shop for kosher food. We always made a stop at Singer's, with those barrels filled with Mrs. Farkash's homemade pickles and sour tomatoes. While we were gathering the items on the list, Mrs. Farkash always spoke at length with my father in Yiddish, and sooner or later, the conversation would give way to tears. *'Daddy, what's wrong,'* we would whisper to our father. *'Don't you see the blue numbers on her arm?'* he would reply. Later, on the drive back to Worcester, he would repeat some of the painful memories Mrs. Farkash had shared with him. Mrs. Farkash was the first Holocaust survivor we knew."

We knew survivors – and yet, to be candid, awareness of the Holocaust did not carry that much significance for me. There are probably two reasons for this:

First, personally, all four sets of my great-grandparents had left Eastern Europe by 1917. I had no close family connection with any survivors.

Second, from a communal standpoint: in Lubavitch, the major emphasis was on the horrors of

When news of the [Nazi] book burnings reached the international community, reactions ranged from shock to apathy. Books by Helen Keller, the famous American deaf-blind activist, were among those burned by the Nazis. In a [1933] letter distributed by the AP news agency, addressed to the "student body of Germany," Keller wrote:

"History has taught you nothing if you think you can kill ideas. Tyrants have tried to do that often before, and the ideas have risen up in their might and destroyed them.

"You can burn my books and the books of the best minds in Europe, but the ideas in them have seeped through a million channels and will continue to quicken other minds.

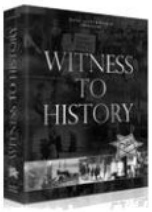
"I gave all the royalties of my books for all time to the German soldiers blinded in the World War with no thought in my heart but love and compassion for the German people. I acknowledge the grievous complications that have led to your intolerance; all the more do I deplore the injustice and unwisdom of passing on to unborn generations the stigma of your deeds.

"Do not imagine your barbarities to the Jews are unknown here. G-d sleepeth not, and He will visit His judgment upon you. Better were it for you to have a millstone hung around your neck and sink into the sea than to be hated and despised of all men."

Witness to History, page 22



Helen Keller



Communist Russia. Growing up, there was not a major farbrengen in which the Rebbe did not mention the Jews behind the Iron Curtain. Around me were giant heroes of mesiras nefesh against Communism, like Reb Bentzion Shemtov and Reb Mendel Futerfas, plus other Chassidim from Russia. All this strongly impressed upon us the struggles and the heroism of those who were forced to contend with the twentieth century's other odious ideology.

Moreover, Communism was still very much alive in Eastern Europe in those days, while the Holocaust and Nazism were over and gone.

I later learned how wrong I was to feel that Chabad-Lubavitch had little to do with the Holocaust. I now know that there were ten Chabad shuls in Riga alone. Throughout the Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland, Chabad shuls were filled with Jews. In many instances, Jews were forced into the shul, the doors were locked, walls were doused with gasoline and set on fire. The remaining Jews were forced to dig pits and then were shot into them. Rabbanim were targeted first in order to make it easier to get the now-leaderless townspeople to fall in line.

A similar fate awaited the remaining Jews in the town of Lubavitch – all murdered at the hands of the Nazis. Lubavitch has suffered a great deal under Hitler.

As time moved on, many survivors left us, and yet – or maybe therefore - awareness of the Holocaust actually grew. As they grew older and retired from the daily grind, survivors began to find the strength and the courage to take the time to think about it, face it, and then even talk about the awful horrors and traumas they and their families had endured. Memoirs were written. Books and films appeared. Museums were built. All this coincided with the crumbling of the walls of Communism. People were now traveling to Eastern Europe, especially Poland, to visit those places that had been locked up for decades.

Close friends and congregants from my community in Atlanta, Georgia, returned from there with a message: *You must go.* I wasn't overly enthusiastic. Even after visiting several Holocaust museums and reading much more about it, the Holocaust still did not feel like a priority to me. Wasn't it time for all Jews to move on and get over it, just like we have done throughout history's other calamities that have befallen the Jewish people?

About six years ago, I finally ended up traveling on the March of the Living. As with anyone who goes on such a trip, it opened my eyes. I have since been back three more times, and I have begun to organize trips like this for adults, two or three times a year.

No, I am not a glutton for punishment. Each visit there is definitely gut wrenching, but remembering the Holocaust, learning more about it, and helping to spread the word to my fellow Jews has now become extremely significant to me for many reasons, and every visit there is deeply inspiring to me.



One perspective is just being in the presence of kedoshim, where so many of our brothers and sisters were slaughtered al kiddush Hashem. And more: one is in the presence of kedushah as their remains are still present. And you can feel it.

Another is a sense of urgency that many people (including me) now feel, as the elderly Holocaust survivor population is dwindling and the chutzpah of utterly shameless Holocaust deniers is growing.

Both knowledge and perspective are crucial. So, how does one acquire knowledge and perspective?

It must start in the educational system. It must start with our teens.

For whatever reason, Chabad educational institutions have been slow, or even reluctant, to introduce Holocaust education into their schools. All of this, mind you, at a time when school systems across the globe, including Poland itself, have implemented comprehensive curricula about this subject. It is high time for our institutions to catch up.

It was very heartening to receive an invitation from Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch's Chinuch Office in partnership with Yad Vashem, inviting Chabad educators to a weeklong seminar in Jerusalem at the end of February 2011. This seminar enhanced teachers' understanding of the Holocaust in an effort to prepare them to educate future generations.

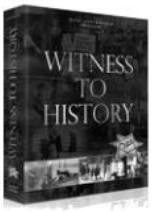
There is a wealth of available information about the heroism of those who saved the lives of others at the risk of their own, while doing their utmost to keep the flame of Yiddishkeit burning amid the impossible conditions of that time. To its everlasting credit, the *N'shei Chabad Newsletter* has written and published the stories of many Holocaust survivors. The stories of:

Benjamin A. Samuelson – who recalls the joyous day his beautiful baby sister was born in a shtetl in Romania; who cannot forget the day he watched from afar as she walked into the gas chamber.

Mrs. Edith Davidovici – who sold her bread, while starving, for a candle on which to bentch licht.

Reb Shmuel Farbenblum – who would not take bread out of a starving Jew's mouth to save his own son's life.

Mrs. Perel Schulkind – who painfully limped from the infirmary back to her bunk to get a nightgown with which to cover herself, and upon her return, found the entire infirmary



had been "liquidated."

Mrs. Miriam Fellig – who was hidden under the dining room floorboards by the non-Jewish nanny after her grandparents and parents and brother were murdered. Every afternoon as she waited for the nanny to return from work and take her out, she would worry, "What if she doesn't come back?"



Mrs. Perel Schulkind and great-grandchildren

Reb Shimon Goldman – who is the sole survivor of his entire family, but has rebuilt and now has nachas from his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, kein yirbu.

The *N'shei Chabad Newsletter* has told these precious stories and many more – but it is far from enough.

Our children need to know and know and know some more. They need to read and hear and see and wonder and feel it … and all of it, always, with the proper Torah hashkafos.

In the Rebbe's Igros Kodesh volume 20 (page 48) there appears a letter from the Rebbe to a Dr. Isaac Lewin, who authored the book, "Late Summer Fruit," a compilation of essays, highlighting Yeshivos and religious Jewish life prior to and during the Holocaust. The Rebbe was disturbed by the false representation about observant Jewry by various authors and publications of that time. Truly, teaching our children about the Holocaust has to be done by the light of the Torah.

In addition to the experiences of individuals, it is vital to understand government issues and world politics at that time, and how Hitler and his minions got away with the wholesale, systematic murder of millions of innocents in this century. True, there was no internet yet, but there were telephones and there were cars and there were newspapers being published by the millions daily. How could they get away with it? How many had to look away and silence their consciences in order for it to happen?



The textbook *Witness to History* by Mrs. Ruth Lichtenstein is unique in giving a vast and thorough historical perspective of the years prior to the Holocaust. Government issues, especially in Germany; economic stressors; politics; understanding all this crucial to understanding what happened to the Jews under Hitler.

But there's even more to knowing about the Holocaust.

Knowing about the Holocaust is, in a sense, knowing ourselves.

Having traveled to Poland with Jewish boys and girls and men and women, I have witnessed complete turnarounds of people's faith in Hashem, and even to a full committed life to Torah and Mitzvos.

Take, for instance, the group of boys I was with this past March of the Living.

Four of them decided to lay Tefillin every day, continuing what we had begun in Poland.

Or the boy from a frum home who, after returning from the March of the Living, publicly parted from his non-Jewish girlfriend. He made that decision on the bus, pulling away from Auschwitz, with tears streaming down his face. A few days later, he followed through.

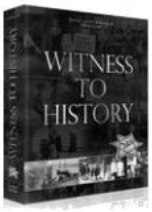
Or the girl who confessed that she was a complete atheist, but had begun a series of steps to study the Torah in the hope that she would begin to have faith in Hashem.

These are real stories, with which I have been and continue to be personally involved.

It is not just about standing inside the gas chambers, looking at the ovens, walking on the train tracks, or visiting the barracks. It is not just about feeling the wrenching agony of having a terrified child torn from your arms, or watching your elderly parent being pushed roughly to the ground. It is about the Jewish people. It is about G-d. It is about us and it is about our children.

And it is about the joy of Yiddishkeit and our relationship with our Father in Heaven that we continue to cherish even after such unprecedented horror as the Holocaust. As some Yidden wrote on the wall of a barn in which they had hidden from Hitler for two years, *"Ubechol zos Shimcha lo shachachnu…"* And even with all this, we have not forgotten Your Name.

Is it difficult to hear about the Holocaust? Could even teenagers have nightmares? Yes and yes… but it is clearer with each passing day, as the ugly voices of the Holocaust deniers grow louder and louder, that we do our children a profound disservice if we try to shield them from the reality



of life as Jews, cutting them off from the pain experienced by their grandparents merely 60 years ago.

Through learning and understanding history, one also sees Hashem's Hand in his or her life today, providing guidance as individuals and as a nation, leading to the ultimate Redemption. Each individual can appreciate being part of a grand plan. One gains perspective on one's individual role, as well as the collective role of Am Yisroel. When one knows about the Holocaust, one knows one's place in the world.

Let's not be afraid to teach our children about the bleakest moments of our history. Only this can lead them to the truest light..

Rabbi Yossi Lew is the dean of the Atlanta Semicha Program and a Rabbi at Chabad of Georgia. He is also the author of the book: "And the Living March On: Inspiration From the Holocaust Today." For details regarding an upcoming trip to Poland, please email rabbiyossilew@aol.com.



Reb Shimon Goldman learning Torah with his grandson, Yaakov Yosef Bruk, who is named after Reb Shimon's two brothers, HY"D. It is the Torah and the love of his family that have always sustained Reb Shimon despite his losses.

An Educator Speaks

Mrs. Kreindel Pinkus

Originally in my Jewish history course I devoted two weeks per year to Holocaust studies. Now that I have the Project Witness materials, I would love to extend it to one year and possibly even two years.



What I love best about it is that everything is done from a Torah perspective. When I first taught this subject it was very hard because my materials were from non-Torah sources, or I had to create my own if I wanted material that was strictly according to daas Torah. I know I can rely on Project Witness because it was written under daas Torah.

Another benefit of Project Witness is that it gives you a broad perspective. Many books only focus on the experiences of one person or one family or one city. Here you have the entire spectrum of world Jewry and how it was affected before, during and after the Holocaust.

Mrs. Pinkus is the General Studies Director at Lubavitch Girls' High School in Chicago, IL, where she also teaches Toldos Ameinu, a Jewish history course.

Why I Talk to My Children About the Holocaust

Shula Bryski
Thousand Oaks, CA.
www.jewishbookclubcourses.com

What is education? Is it simply accumulating knowledge? Or is it more? When it comes to telling our children about the Holocaust, it *has* to be more. Education about this genocide must be infused with the idea of action.

This is what I tell my children and students:

Close your eyes on the still grounds of Auschwitz...or here in America in a moment of contemplation...and you might hear the whispering voices of six million souls.

It is a collective voice, asking, imploring, that we ensure that the torch of Yiddishkeit burns brightly.

That we live for them in a way that they cannot.

The ultimate way to perpetuate the memories of the victims of the Holocaust as they look down on us from heaven is by being their hands and their feet with every mitzvah that we do.

It is only through our learning Torah and doing mitzvos and acts of goodness and kindness on this earth that we can live what they died for.

And it is with this living education that all the millions of souls, some of whom are nameless to us, will truly not be forgotten.

So long as we are still waiting for Moshiach, every Jewish home can greatly benefit from a copy of *Witness to History* by Ruth Lichtenstein on the table. ■