

# FROM THE

# Editor



**W**hile preparing this Sukkot edition of *HaMizrachi*, my family and I arrived in Israel to begin the adventure of a lifetime – Aliyah! Due to the pandemic, no dignitaries or public celebrations were awaiting our arrival. Like thousands of others making Aliyah during the pandemic, we immediately entered a whole week of *bidud* (quarantine).

After several (thankfully!) negative PCR tests and seven pies of pizza, we emerged from quarantine on a Friday morning, finally free to explore our land. But where to go first? Like any believing Jew, my initial inclination was to bring my family to the Kotel. I imagined myself sitting reflectively at the wall, together with my children, soaking in the holiness.

Ultimately, my stir-crazy children outvoted me, and we began our life in Israel in a slightly different way – devouring hot waffles soaked in Nutella while standing smack in the middle of the chaos of Machane Yehuda. For my younger children, it was their first time experiencing the madness of Erev Shabbat in Jerusalem’s famous Shuk, and they were simultaneously enthralled (how often do you eat hot rugelach and candy for lunch?) and terrified (Covid who?).

The Kotel it was not. But while polishing off the waffles, we marveled at the diversity of Jews – our people! – who surrounded us. Ashkenazim and Sephardim, Ethiopians and Russians, religious and ‘secular,’ men and women of all ages. Though we’ve often spoken *about* the diversity of our people with our kids, never before had they *seen* it with their own eyes. We felt that we were part of something extraordinary, something far greater than ourselves for the first time. We experienced, tangibly, the words of Rav Kook: “As soon as one comes to the Land of Israel his soul is nullified before

the great light of the communal soul of Israel which enters him...” (Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook, Orot Yisrael, 7:18).

Sukkot is the *chag* of Jewish unity when it is fitting for all of Israel to dwell together in one *sukkah* (Sukkah 27b). Rebbe Nosson of Nemirov explains that we fulfill this teaching by sitting in the *sukkah* and concentrating on being part of the entire people of Israel, with intense love and peace.

In this edition of *HaMizrachi*, we highlight the extraordinary diversity of the Religious Zionist movement, spotlighting remarkable Jews from Israel and all over the world who are bound together by their shared love of Zion. Our “*Ushpizin*” feature and “Jews with Views” section celebrate the glorious diversity of our movement and our people, and in the spirit of Rebbe Nosson help us remember how privileged we are to be a part of this nation. We wish farewell to our *shlichim*, who will bring the Torah of Israel to Jews all over the world. At the same time, Rabbi Shmuel Goldin and Yael Leibowitz remind us how fortunate we are to live in this generation of ingathering, as thousands of Jews stream “to the land that will make everything sweeter, and harder, and deeper and right.”

May we soon celebrate together with all of our people, here in the holy land. In the words of Rav Kook, שלום וברכה מערי יהודה – wishing you peace and blessings from the cities of Judah!

*Elie Mischel*

**Rabbi Elie Mischel**  
Editor