

Queens And Las Vegas Communities Mourn Rabbi Yosef Kalter zt"l

Hundreds attend young rabbi's funeral in KGH



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The Bloomberg Years: A Retrospective

How does Mayor Mike compare to previous New York City mayors?



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Meet Rabbi Avrohom Hecht,

New Co-President of the Vaad Harabonim of Queens (VHQ)



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A Newlywed's Thoughts

The Cold Sendoff And The Warmth Of Solidarity

By Sergey Kadinsky

By now, if you're reading about the horrific kidnapping and murder of Menachem Stark, you are likely in agreement that what passes

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Shabbos Inbox

Jewish Jinxin'

By Eytan Kobre

The story is told of a woman who cursed her children habitually. Her distraught husband sought the advice of a friend. The friend devised the following plan. "Every time she curses the children, say 'Amen!' She will soon

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Outrage Over NY Post Headline

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New Feature!
Recipes
on page 71

Blue And White

Two Forgotten Jews

By Shmuel Sackett

We live in a very busy world that is getting busier all the time. With all the modern conveniences we have (I really call them "toys") that promise

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Striving For Greatness, One Baby Step At A Time

By Hadassah Silver

While swimming my laps at the Central Queens Y on 108th Street, my thoughts were focused on my earlier failed dav-

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Rabbi Eli Davidowitz eulogizes Rabbi Kalter



Rav Dovid Harris, Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim, delivers a eulogy

By Rabbi Eli Davidowitz and Rabbi Nachum Meth, Roshei Kollel Community Kollel of Greater Las Vegas

With heavy hearts, the Community Kollel of Greater Las Vegas, together with the Queens community and all of *klal Yisrael*, mourns the tragic passing of our dear friend, Rabbi Yosef Kalter, of blessed memory. Rabbi Kalter joined the Kollel a short while ago with a clear goal: to share the warmth and joy of Torah to those who don't yet appreciate it. In the year and a half that he was part of our Kollel, he touched so many people and impacted so many lives. Although he was taken from us so soon, his life's mission lives on within all of us.

Many people spend years searching; searching for a purpose or goal. Sadly, many never decide what their mission ought to be. Rabbi Kalter, however, decided early on what his was going to be: He wanted to be a *marbitz Torah*. Growing up in a house centered on the ideal of *harbatzas Torah*, Rabbi Kalter set out to study at that holy *yeshiva* dedicated to that value: Yeshiva Chofetz Chaim. During his many years studying there, he heard time and again from his *rebbeim* the importance of sharing Torah and Torah values to those who don't yet appreciate it. Rabbi Kalter decided he would commit his life to teaching the joy of Torah, and that he would build his own family dedicated to that mission.

Finding the right position in *harbatzas Torah* proved to be challenging. Rabbi Akiva Grunblatt, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva

Chofetz Chaim, described at the *l'vayah* an eerie conversation that he had with newly ordained Rabbi Yosef Kalter z”l a little over a year and a half ago, when he was searching for the right place to be a *marbitz Torah*. The Rosh Yeshiva told him that “maybe this year is not the year that you will find an out-of-town *shtetler*. Consider waiting a year; spend one more year learning and look for a position next Elul.” Rabbi Kalter answered, “*Rebbi*, who knows what will be in a year from now? I want to be a *marbitz Torah*, a teacher of Torah, now, when I know I can do it.”

A short time after that conversation, Rabbi Kalter took a position with the Las Vegas Kollel. According to some accounts, there are as many as 80,000 Jews living in the Las Vegas Valley; however, the overwhelming majority is unaffiliated. There is, relative to towns with comparably sized Jewish populations, very little Jewish infrastructure – both Orthodox and non-Orthodox. The Kollel's mission is to enrich the community with the warmth, vitality, and joy of Torah learning. It is an outreach Kollel. Rabbi Kalter's dream was to live that mission, so it was a perfect match.

One of Rabbi Kalter's primary roles in Las Vegas was to improve communal *kashrus*. He worked tirelessly at that, and he, along with his family, quickly became a crucial part of the growing *k'hilah*. However, as Rabbi Kalter mentioned time and again, he did not move out to Las Vegas just to improve the *kashrus*; he moved to Las Vegas to change lives. Indeed, in the short time he was in Las Vegas he did phenomenal work improving *kashrus*. But he also improved lives. He became an essen-

tial part of the newly forming *shul* led by Kew Gardens Hills native, Rabbi Dovid Y. Kitainik. He shattered stereotypes often held by non-affiliated Jews with his honest and disarming nature, and the honor that he gave to everyone. Rabbi Kalter's commitment to spreading Torah was unshakable, and his sincerity and integrity earned him immediate respect from those he taught. He was driven by the needs of his brothers and sisters who were not yet properly exposed to Torah, and he wouldn't let anything get in the way of an opportunity to teach.

A few months after he joined the Las Vegas Kollel, Rabbi Kalter was diagnosed with a devastating form of liver cancer. He fought valiantly, and, even more striking to the community and his family, he fought with tremendous dignity and powerful *bitachon*. Strong-willed determination and unyielding resolve were at Rabbi Kalter's core. He would often say, “The same way Hashem made me the one in a million to get this disease at this age, Hashem can make me the one in a million who will survive it!” *Chazal* teach us that true prayer is the realization that Hashem can do anything, and that He can save us from even the worst predicament. Even when a “sharp sword is resting on one's neck, he must still *daven*!” Although he knew his prognosis was not optimistic, he was determined not to give up and not let it break his spirits. On many occasions, he would reassure those around him: “Forget what the doctors say; we will fight this. I have unfinished work to do, I must get better!” During his long battle with his awful illness, his unshakable *emunah* inspired his friends and family to keep on

fighting alongside him. He would point out that while we don't know the future nor can we presume to know what is best, the Torah tells us we must *daven*, and that *davening* has immeasurable effects. So *daven* we did.

Rabbi Kalter spent many months in Las Vegas receiving treatment; however, a few months ago the doctors in Las Vegas gave up hope. Rabbi Kalter did not. The Kalter family decided to move back to Queens to enter a clinical trial only available in New York. In transitioning to New York, he again became a rallying point for *t'filah*, *chesed*, and *chizuk* in Las Vegas, in the Queens community, and around the world. He never lost his resolve to return to Las Vegas to continue his sacred work of influencing others and making a *kiddush Hashem*. He continued to inspire so many people to take on *kabalos* to grow to merit him a *r'fuah sh'leimah*.

Tragically, Rabbi Kalter succumbed to his illness just a few days ago. Rabbi Grunblatt pointed out at the *l'vayah* that although our *t'filos* were not answered with what we wanted, there is no such thing as a *t'filah* that does not have a profound effect. Hashem has His reasons not to give us what we want, but our *t'filos*, often in ways we will never see or understand, always make a tremendous difference. Reflective of the powerful impact that he had on the Las Vegas community, the Silver Family has dedicated the Beis Midrash in the Kollel's new building in Rabbi Kalter's memory. The dedication ensures that the impact and lessons Rabbi Kalter taught will resonate in the Las Vegas community for many years to come. *Tehei z'chro baruch!*



Mourners overflowed into the lobby