

Wherever I travel in the Jewish world, I am struck by the way that Jewish people of all types are determined to make a Kiddush Hashem (sanctification of God's name) and to avoid a Hillul Hashem (desecration of God's name). The concept of the Kiddush Hashem originates in the Biblical command "I shall be sanctified amongst the people of Israel". One interpretation of this verse is that Jews should display total dedication to their faith and even be willing to lay down their lives for it. This belief motivated millions of Jewish martyrs throughout our history to give up their lives rather than abandon their Judaism. Today, it is rare for Jews to be faced with such a stark choice between their faith and their lives, but Kiddush Hashem offers another powerful challenge which has particular resonance in our times. Each one of us has to ensure that the word "Jewish" is always associated with the highest levels of ethics and kindness, so that our behavior always brings credit to our heritage and to our God.

On a daily basis, we witness the disgrace that is attached to religion when it is linked with the horrors of priests engaging in child abuse and the fanaticism of "religious" suicide bombers. Tragically, throughout our long history, our own faith has also spawned instances of the desecration of God's name. The rabbis recognized these and declared that it was our failure to show care, compassion, decency and loving kindness to one another that caused so many of our sorrows including the destruction of the Temple. In our own times, the most famous desecration of God's name was the massacre of Arabs at prayer in the mosque in Hebron and the murder of the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. It was these outrages that drove me to put to aside my work as a Chief Rabbi of Norway and to enter Israeli politics. I felt that it was crucial for the government of Israel to work on a grand scale to restore the image of Judaism from one of intolerance and fanaticism to one of ethics, tolerance and compassion. It was my duty as a rabbi to play my part in that campaign. This is a crucial message of Judaism. Holiness is not the exclusive possession of those who engage in detailed ritual observance nor is it the preserve of those who devote their energies to the pursuit of spirituality; true holiness is found in the small actions that make a profound difference to the lives of the people around us and the world they live in.

This is why I am so delighted that in partnership with the Koldor organization, my office is launching the Jewish Social Action Month this Cheshvan (November). It falls one month after Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur so it is a time to draw on all of the resolutions that we made over the High Holidays. It's also a month with no festivals in it which enables us to dedicate time to Social Action activities.

Throughout the month Jews from across the globe will be performing acts of loving kindness to their neighbors both Jewish and Gentile. The concept of social action can be interpreted broadly and there are endless possibilities for action. The Israeli Friends of the Earth, for example, will be launching initiatives to clear up the debris which ruins our countryside, the Israeli Police Force will be engaging in projects to show care and concern in the community, one youth movement will be organizing a sports event for the underprivileged, another arranging a national blood donation drive. It is beautiful to see how in Israel, and spreading across South America, North America, Russia, and Europe, Jews ranging from Chief Rabbis to the most secular of our people will be engaged in the Social Action Month.

I very much hope that you will feel moved to join in the project; to make a Kiddush

Hashem and turn our world into a better place. I look forward to hearing about your activities and reading about them on the website of the Prime minister of Israel.

CHECK THE CALENDAR—CHESHVAN IS NOW
JEWISH SOCIAL ACTION MONTH
(By Tzvi Kahn)

NEW YORK, June 30.—Aryeh Green and Yosef Abramowitz were sipping tea in a Bedouin tent last year in Sde Boker, a kibbutz in Israel's Negev desert, when they had an idea.

Participants at a conference of Kol Dor, an organization that seeks to revitalize Jewish activism and unity across the globe, the two were discussing how the group could promote Jewish identity and peoplehood.

"Most Jewish institutions and endeavors are out of touch with the next generation of Jews because of a lack of relevance," Abramowitz, CEO of Jewish Family and Life, which publishes several Jewish Web sites and magazines, told JTA. "But we do know that the idealism and the desire to contribute to the world" are predominant.

It occurred to them that a month in the Jewish calendar formally dedicated to social action would be an ideal means of mobilizing and inspiring the Jewish community.

Their initiative received a major boost this week when the Knesset's Committee on Immigration, Absorption and Diaspora Affairs proclaimed the Jewish month of Cheshvan, which falls in November this year, as Social Action Month.

According to Green, who serves as an adviser to former Israeli Cabinet minister Natan Sharansky, "We agreed that if we wanted Kol Dor to succeed, we would have to focus on practical, tangible contributions."

"What makes this initiative interesting and unique is that it harnesses the power of different social action and Jewish organizations to get involved," Green said. The goal is not to spearhead specific projects, but to "pull together the existing frameworks of social action."

The effort has garnered the support of various Jewish groups, including the Jewish Agency for Israel and Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, the Israel Defense Forces' education branch and the World Union of Jewish Students.

Abramowitz said Labor Party legislator Colette Avital, who chairs the Knesset's immigration committee, has sent a letter to various Jewish organizations expressing support.

Jewish schools in Israel and the Diaspora will be a particular focus of the initiative. According to Abramowitz, Social Action Month will receive special attention in the Babaganews, a monthly magazine on Jewish values that JFL publishes for elementary school students. The magazine serves 1,400 Jewish schools and has a circulation of more than 40,000.

The JFL journal Sh'ma and magazine JVibe also intend to publish features on the subject, he said.

Abramowitz said Cheshvan was selected for the project because it immediately follows the High Holidays, which usually spur higher levels of Jewish observance.

The Knesset decision also represents a victory for Kol Dor, whose philosophy formed the ideological foundation for Social Action Month.

"The paradigm that we are advocating in Jewish life is that peoplehood is a central mobilizing force," Abramowitz said, citing the success of the movement to rescue Soviet Jewry as one example.

The group seeks to use the Jewish concept of tikkun olam, or repairing the world, as a unifying theme.

REMEMBERING MRS. ROSA PARKS

Mr. ALEXANDER. This week we have honored the memory of Rosa Parks, a woman whose quiet stand for her individual rights reverberated across this country.

We often discuss how far we have to go as a country in terms of race relations. Thinking of Rosa Parks reminds me how far we have come. In 1955 when she refused to give up her seat on the bus in Montgomery, African Americans in the South could not eat in the same restaurants, go to the same colleges, sleep in the same motels, be cared for in the same hospitals or compete on the same sports teams as other Americans.

Rosa Parks' actions that day in Montgomery helped spark a movement that changed our country forever for the better. Condoleezza Rice, one of the bright minds leading our country today, rightly noted at the memorial service in Alabama, ". . . that without Mrs. Parks, I would not be standing here today as Secretary of State."

Rosa Parks and those who took up the call inspired me, too. As editor of the student paper at Vanderbilt University, I wrote editorials urging desegregation of that school in 1962.

We made great progress in those days, as we continue to do today. Our Nation has always been a work in progress, ever since our Founders signed the Declaration of Independence declaring that "all men are created equal." We're still working to achieve that noble goal of recognizing our equality. But thanks to Americans like Rosa Parks, we've come a long way.

Rosa Parks' courage has earned for her a noble place in the history of our Nation's struggle for equal opportunity. We will miss her.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT
ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On October 1, 2003, just east of West Hollywood, a gay man was attacked in his home with a bat by a pair of assailants. The two assailants took the victims house key after he ran home and left his keys in the door as he hurried inside. The victim, who identified his attackers as Evar Rivera and Selvan Campos in court, said he received 14 stitches for his injuries. According to police, anti-gay slurs were yelled during the bat attack, and police later classified the attack as a hate crime.

I believe that our Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, in all circumstances, from threats to them at