

MAY 1, 2006

3 IYAR 5766

## A Message from the Rabbi: The World of Lies

On our flight back to St. Louis from the Rabbinical Assembly Convention in Mexico City, we had to stop in Dallas-Fort Worth to clear customs and change planes. It was close to 10 pm and we hadn't eaten since lunch. I found a food court that was in the process of closing down for the night. The shutters on the stalls were just starting to come down.

I found one of the workers and asked if I could buy a bagel.

"Sorry sir, I don't have any money."

I wasn't sure why his inability to provide change precluded his

ability to sell me a bagel; I would have been happy to pay him to the nearest dollar, but it was clear that he wasn't going to help me so I moved to the next concession.

I noticed that they had about four bagels right there in the case. I thought I might have a better chance of effecting a purchase. I asked the gentleman behind the counter if I could buy a bagel.

"I'm sorry, I don't have any."

Undeterred, I responded, "I see you have some right here in the case."



*Rabbi Mordecai Miller*

"Sorry, those are for display!"

This made even less sense to me than the "I don't have any money" story, but I knew better than to enter a debate that I was sure to lose. I (see "Lies" page 3)

## The President's Perspective

It's certainly been an honor serving BSKI as President of the congregation over the last two and a half years. My term as President will be ending on May 31, 2006 and I am looking forward to joining the ranks of our esteemed Past Presidents. Since

time flies so quickly, I've recently been contemplating what my continued involvement at BSKI will be as of June 1 when I become the Immediate Past President. I've certainly considered what I will miss about being President and, to be honest,

what I won't miss. After mulling things over what I usually realize is that my involvement at BSKI won't really change much. I'll still continue to do all the things I love at BSKI. I'll still continue to be (see "President" page 2)

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Lauren Buchsbaum's special tzedakah project*
- *"Name That Bulletin" Contest*
- *New themes for the newsletter*

## Light (from page 1)

had learned my lesson and took off to see if I could find another concession that might still be open.

I was left with the impression that both individuals felt more comfortable giving me half-baked excuses instead of simply telling me that once they were in the process of closing, they weren't allowed to take any more customers. Their responses left me with the feeling that they could have, in fact, done something and simply chose not to. It all felt vaguely insulting. The fact that two independent individuals had chosen this tactic was disheartening. Was this behavior now part of our culture?

I wondered about what motivates people to lie. I certainly can't

claim complete innocence in the matter. It seems to me that we generally wind up bending the truth when we feel a sense of shame. (Think of the story of Adam and Eve when they are confronted by God after eating the Forbidden Fruit). There's a wonderful principle that states: The best way to teach a child how to lie: respond in anger every time he or she tells you the truth. Confronting anger leaves us feeling ashamed and that's about one of the most uncomfortable feelings in the world. So we try to cut it off at the pass by coming up with lame excuses; in other words, lying.

What were the odds that those two individuals had experienced angry responses on the part of

customers when they told them the truth in the past? Ask yourself about the level of stress most travelers feel at an airport at 10 o'clock at night and I suspect you can figure out the result for yourself.

Questions: How do we react when the answer to our request is "No?"

On the other side, are we willing to risk an angry response by telling the truth in denying a request?

Inevitably, how we act in such situations defines our character.

Shalom,  
Mordecai Miller



### Alexandra Gould

May 27, 2006

Alex Gould is a seventh grader at Ladue Middle School. She enjoys dance, soccer and spending time with her friends and family. Her Halftorah is about the strong bond of friendship and loyalty between Jonathan, son of King Saul, and his best friend, the future King David.

### Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to Andrew Olschansky, the son of Ed & Marilyn Olschansky, and Julie Frank on their engagement.

Mazel Tov to David and Elizabeth Chernof on the birth of their baby boy.

Mazel Tov to Myrna Meyer for being chosen as a Woman of Achievement (see [www.e-bski.org](http://www.e-bski.org) for details).

To BSKI Congregants:

I wanted to thank my extended BSKI family for being there to celebrate and for making contributions to BSKI in honor of my becoming a Bat Mitzvah.

Wendy Low