

The President's Message

Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm

It is a pleasure for me to greet the readers and congratulate the editors of this newest addition to the literary and Torah endeavors of our student body.

That this publication appears at the beginning of a new *zeman* and the eve of a New Year, 5745, augurs well for the sense of freshness it promises to bring to the spiritual and intellectual ambiance of our Yeshiva.

The advent of Rosh Hashana offers me the occasion to share some thoughts with you that may be germane to our whole enterprise of Torah Umadda at Yeshiva University.

The theme of *Zikhronot* in the Rosh Hashanah Musaf speaks not only of memory, but of *loving* remembrance. Thus, the citation of Jeremiah's זכרתי לך חסד נעורייך or Hosea's וארשתיו אוהבת כלולותיך לי לעולם וכו'.

It highlights the theme of the Holy One as a loving spouse and Israel as His beloved. This love relationship describing the nature of the Jewish religious commitment can even be epitomized in the metaphor of a wedding.

The Talmud (*Eruvin* 54a) tells us of the Amora Shmuel counselling his younger contemporary, Rabbi Yehudah, חטוף ואכול חטוף ואשתי—דעלמא דאזלינן מיני' כהלולא דמי—“Hurry and eat, hurry and drink, for the world we are leaving is like a wedding.” According to Rashi and some other commentators, Shmuel is offering some sage and brooding advice: Enjoy yourself with legitimate pleasures as long as you can because life is all too short. It is like a *chup-pah* which is put up and then quickly put away again. The wedding party doesn't last forever.

But for our purposes I commend an interpretation by the great Hasidic teacher, R. Yaakov Yosef of Polonne, one that goes back to the metaphor of the Divine Lover and that illuminates not only an obscure passage in the Talmud, but an obscure aspect of our passage through life.

All the world's a wedding. At a wedding there is much going on: food is eaten, drink is imbibed, cigars are smoked, toasts are exchanged, there is dancing and music and camaraderie and posing for photo-