



# McGill

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*For: Royal Reach*  
*For: Lawrence Kaplan*  
*(3102)*

Rabbi Norman Lamm  
President  
Yeshiva University  
New York City

Dear Rabbi Lamm,

Thank you for your very kind letter and for sending me the offprint of your sermon. I had, of course, together with many of my fellow rabbinical students, read The Royal Reach when it first appeared, and it seemed to us at the time as a model of what sermons should be like. I must confess that over the years the details of the book faded from my mind, and when I was trying to recall, while writing my essay on Levinas, where I had come across the idea that hadar kibluhu biyemei Ahashverosh was connected with Purim being a hidden miracle, I did not think to look at your book. Naturally, had I remembered it, I would have mentioned the book in note 18. Then again, perhaps you would not have wished to be mentioned in the company of such distinguished colleagues as Irving Greenberg and David Hartman!

In truth, I think my essay on Hirsch is much more important than my essay on Levinas, and should prove an important resource for all who are concerned about the issue of Torah and the natural sciences. It goes without saying that I would have very much preferred that the essay appear in the Torah U-Madda Journal, but I hope that whatever its provenance it will be read by students at Yeshiva and that they will find it of value.

I am sure that you do not really believe that scholarship and clarity are contradictory, and certainly your own scholarly articles are proof to the contrary. As for myself, I strive to the best of my ability, even when writing about Rav Kook, to remain understandable. I must confess that Levinas' writings are particularly obscure, but there is a plus. I am not at all convinced that the interpretation of hadar kibluhu biyemei Ahashverosh that I attributed to Levinas is what he meant, but he is, fortunately, obscure enough for me to insinuate my interpretation into his words; and if it's not what he meant, it's what he should have meant!

I am taking the liberty of sending two other articles of mine that I believe will be of interest to you and that you may not have come across.

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*Larry*  
Lawrence Kaplan  
Associate Professor