**What is the connection between a Rav in a Hesder Yeshiva and the head of the "Jerusalem Faction"?**

What brought a "Mizrochnik" Rav who served as an officer in the Israeli army to pay his last respects to one of the great Rabbis of the Charedi community? Rav Amichai Gordin explains that despite the gaping chasm between his own outlook and that of Rav Auerbach, that which they hold in common is far greater that which divides between them. Hesped for Rav Shmuel Auerbach ztz"l, by Rav Amichai Gordin. Original Hebrew appeared on the [Kipa website](http://www.kipa.co.il/%D7%97%D7%93%D7%A9%D7%95%D7%AA/%D7%9E%D7%94-%D7%9C%D7%A8%D7%91-%D7%91%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%99%D7%91%D7%AA-%D7%94%D7%A1%D7%93%D7%A8-%D7%95%D7%9C%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%A9-%D7%94%D7%A4%D7%9C%D7%92-%D7%94%D7%99%D7%A8%D7%95%D7%A9%D7%9C%D7%9E%D7%99/) on February 26th 2018.

I was there. I had the privilege of participating in the funeral of Rav Shmuel Auerbach, *ztz"l*, and paying him my last respects. I was privileged to turn to Heaven with tears in my eyes, and cry out together with all those present: "Amen. May His great Name be blessed forever and to all eternity."

What is the connection between a Ram in a Hesder Yeshiva who served in the Israeli army as an officer in the tank corps and the head of the "Jerusalem Faction"? What brings a beardless, hatless, and suit-less "Mizrochnik" to the funeral of an octogenarian Charedi Rosh Yeshiva?

What do they have in common? They share the Torah. The sweet Torah which occupied Rav Shmuel day and night. The sweet Torah to which I try to dedicate my life.

When I managed to get past the barriers and reach Rav Shmuel's Beit Midrash, I stood astounded. The Beit Midrash was full of young men whose eyes were red and teary, but focused on the volumes of Gemara open before them. Bava Batra, Ketubot, Yevamot. Each student with his eyes on a different tractate, sitting and learning Torah.

Rav Shmuel lived in the Yeshiva dormitory, near his students. Rav Shmuel was almost the only rabbinic figure in Yeshivat Maalot HaTorah. A one man Yeshiva. The souls of these students who filled the Beit Midrash were certainly torn. I remember how my soul was torn when my revered teacher HaRav Aharon Lichtenstein, *ztz"l*, passed away. How can people sit and study at such a painful and distressing time? "This is none other than the house of God."

Rav Shmuel continued in the path of Rav Shach, *ztz"l*, who firmly believed in the motto: "Only Torah." There was nothing in their world but Torah study. An outsider cannot understand this, but this is their world. This is where they come from, and this is where they are headed. Only one who has been privileged to immerse himself in Torah study in a Beit Midrash is capable of understanding this obsession.

It is true that my teachers taught me otherwise. My great teachers taught me that in God's world there is Torah and life, and that it is His will that we study and immerse ourselves in Torah while remaining connected to the world and to life. My teachers taught me that that there is a time to study in Yeshiva and a time to fight in the army. A time to immerse oneself in the holy and a time to encounter the secular world. This is what I was taught by Torah giants, my revered teachers HaRav Yehuda Amital, *ztz"l*, and HaRav Aharon Lichtenstein, *ztz"l*.

But the great disagreement between my teachers and Rav Shmuel and the immeasurable ideological abyss that set apart their respective Batei Midrash will not bring us to forget the much that they have in common. We will not forget the great love of Torah and the absolute dedication, both ours and theirs, to its study and observance. We with our outlook, and our brothers from the Jerusalem Faction with theirs. But in end, our Torah and theirs is one and the same.

Years ago, I was privileged to hear Rav Shmuel talk one Shabbat at Seudat Shelishit.In his talk, Rav Shmuel went on at length explaining the importance of Shabbat and its sanctity. "This is the holiest day of the year," he said, "even if we forget this." He then added that the climax of the week is the period of "*ra'ava dera'avin*," the most favorable Supernal Will, toward the end of Shabbat. The time when our daily desire for that day in the future when God will be one and His name will be one finds a response in the blessing found in the Shabbat Mincha prayer: "You are one and Your name is one." One mysterious moment when God's absolute unity reveals itself in a momentary flicker until Shabbat is over.

The day will come when all the people in the world will recognize that God is one and His name is one, and on that day the crooked will be made straight, and the ideological abysses between our Batei Midrash will be filled in. Then we will all stand up together and proclaim: "You are one and Your name is one, and who is like Your people Israel, a nation one in the earth."

Until that day arrives, we will grieve the loss of a great Torah scholar who lived in our city and is no more.

Translated by David Strauss