



In 1964, in an article entitled “The Vanishing American Jew,” *Look Magazine* predicted the demise of American Jewry, and, of course, Orthodox Jewry along with it. Ironically, *Look Magazine* no longer exists while Orthodoxy today is flourishing.

To be sure, *Look Magazine* was simply commenting on the reality: some fifty years ago Orthodox Jewry was foundering, overwhelmed by the challenges of transplanting Judaism to America. Jewish education was in its infancy, and Orthodoxy seemed helpless in the face of the other stronger denominations.

“I remember when I arrived in Rochester, New York, the story was Reform A, Conservative B, and Orthodoxy a poor third,” recalls Rabbi Max Schreier in this issue’s cover story, “Fifty Years in the Pulpit: Seven Veteran Rabbis Tell It Like It Was.” This seminal article is a transcript of a recent *Jewish Action*-sponsored symposium that included some of the most prominent and venerable pulpit rabbis of our time. In January, *Jewish Action* invited Rabbis Rafael Grossman, Joseph Grunblatt, David Hollander, Dr.

Gilbert Klaperman, Ralph Pelcovitz, Fabian Schonfeld and Max Schreier to participate in a roundtable discussion—possibly the first of its kind—on the growth and evolution of American Orthodoxy. The dialogue touched upon a broad range of critical topics, from the frightening pace of intermarriage to challenges on the college campus to the *shtiebelization* phenomenon.

We at *Jewish Action* feel truly honored to be able to provide our readers with the penetrating insights of these distinguished rabbis, each of whom has spent decades serving the community. Beginning their rabbinic careers when American Orthodoxy was fragile, these rabbis, each in his own way, helped make American Orthodoxy what it is today.

Also in this issue, our own Phil Chernofsky, educational director of the Seymour J. Abrams Orthodox Union Jerusalem World Center, provides us with a unique take on the year ahead. Aspects of Rosh Hashanah are explored with Rabbi Allen Schwartz of Congregation Ohab Zedek in New York, who reminds us of the significance of writing a *prozbul* as the

*shemittah* year comes to a close, and Rabbi Dr. Ari Z. Zivotofsky, our erudite Legal-ease columnist, who questions whether or not a pomegranate, that quintessential Rosh Hashanah fruit, contains 613 seeds. Finally, in a special section, we examine the very real problem of addiction, and how our community should respond to this terrible disease.

As space is tight, I won’t point out every article in this jam-packed issue. However, I do want to take a moment to mention our magazine’s fresh and exciting redesign. Members of our editorial board have long discussed redesigning the magazine’s look, but we finally took the plunge because of the incessant urging of our highly talented creative director, Eli Kaufman of KZ Creative in Brooklyn [[www.kzcreative.com](http://www.kzcreative.com)]. Launched to coincide with Rosh Hashanah, the clean, new look provides the magazine with a contemporary feel that complements our timely and original articles.

I always look forward to receiving your feedback. Please continue to send your thoughts and comments to me at [ja@ou.org](mailto:ja@ou.org). *Gemar chatimah tovah!* ■

# What do these rabbis have in common?



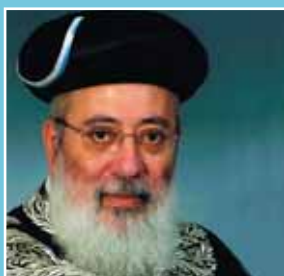
Rabbi Shaul Yisraeli z"l  
Former Dayan, Chief Rabbinate of Israel



Rabbi Dovid Shloosh  
Chief Rabbi of Netanya



Rabbi Avraham Shapira z"l  
Former Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel



Rabbi Shlomo Amar  
Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel



Rabbi Ovadya Yosef  
Former Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel



Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu  
Former Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel

**They all agree that brain-stem death is halachic death even though the heart is still beating – and support organ donation!**

### **Rabbi Zalman Nechemia Goldberg**

***“In my opinion, even a Torah observant Jew can sign an organ donor card on the condition that [the donation of organs] be done under the guidance of a competent halachic authority, and preferably the name of the rabbi should be specified.”***

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**Register for your organ donor card from the Halachic Organ Donor Society either on-line at [www.hods.org](http://www.hods.org) or by calling 212-213-5087**



The HOD Society has saved over 100 lives by facilitating organ transplants that otherwise would not have happened. Please support the HOD Society by sending a tax-deductible charitable contribution to the HOD Society, 49 West 45th Street, 10th Fl., NY, NY 10036.

**Articles and videos on the topic of organ donation and halacha may be accessed at [WWW.HODS.ORG](http://WWW.HODS.ORG)**

**Medical Emergency Phone Number: 877-700-HODS**