

Rabbi Alan Silverstein
Congregation Agudath Israel
20 Academy Road
Caldwell, NJ 07006

June 28, 2021

Dear Rabbi Silverstein, our Rabbi:

What is the true sign of a great Rabbinic leader? Some would say it is measured by the sermons he delivers, or how he handles life cycle events. Some might say that it is based on the number of books or scholarly articles the Rabbi has published. Others might say it is based on the politicians, cultural speakers, or scholars that the Rabbi has enticed to impart wisdom to the congregation. Still others might say that the sign of a great rabbinic leader is seen in the active, loving, and vibrant lay and professional community that the Rabbi envisioned and forged.

Rabbi, you have done all of these in unparalleled fashion. But we think that there is a marker that is a truer indication of a Rabbi's value. If one wants to quantify a Rabbi's true impact, one should look to see how many people that Rabbi has caused to become Jewish professionals, Jewish educators, Cantors, or Rabbis. In this area, Rabbi, no one has surpassed you.

There is little doubt in our minds that, if Sheri and I had not met you many years ago at a MetroWest Young Leadership Division event, and had we not decided based on that meeting to check out Shabbat services at Agudath, and had we not joined Agudath, I would not, today, be writing this note as a Rabbi with my own congregation.

We thank you for your part in our journey and for the part you have played in the Jewish journeys of so many.

M'Chayil El Chayil B'Ahavah – Sammi, Sheri, and Rabbi Michael S. Jay