



## Rabbi Philip S. Scheim

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Rabbi Alan Silverstein exemplifies what a rabbi, with skill, determination, conviction and dauntless energy, can achieve. In his beloved spiritual home of 42 years, Agudath Israel, in the Conservative Movement, both national and world-wide, in the Zionist enterprise, my dear colleague and friend has more than made his mark. He has set the bar high indeed for those who want to learn from one of the best.

Many years back, I attended a session at which one of the speakers was highly critical of our movement, sadly not an unusual occurrence. This particular speaker, emanating from the greater New York area, lamented the lack of great rabbis and strong congregations in the Conservative Movement, with one exception, she noted, that being Rabbi Alan Silverstein, whose rabbinate, and the shul he inspired, in her view represented a true success story. Whereas others of us would have argued that there may have been other successes, that things were not as bleak as our critic suggested, none of us would question her singling out of Alan and Agudath Israel for special mention and praise.

As a more recent past-president of the Rabbinical Assembly, I look back on Rabbi Silverstein's presidency a couple of decades earlier as the time when my interest in RA involvement was inspired. His emphasis on the need to couple our "day-jobs" with involvement beyond the walls of the institutions we serve, and his exemplifying how that outside activity enhanced our achievements in our paying gigs, resonated with me and countless others. During my RA presidency, I called upon Alan to chair one of our most sensitive committees, which, as expected, he handled with dexterity and dispatch. And as current president of *Masorti Olami*, I benefit from the vision of our founding president, Rabbi Alan Silverstein, who saw the need to transform the then-American centered World Council of Synagogues into a global organization based in Jerusalem. One of the true pleasures of these past few years has been realized in the teaming of my *Masorti Olami* presidency with Rabbi Silverstein's presidency of *Mercaz Olami*, since both of our organizations, by nature and design, work around the world very closely together.

As it happens, my own retirement from 40 years in my Toronto congregation corresponds to Alan's retirement after 42 years. For both of us, this represents a time to remember, to reflect, to revisit challenges of the past, achievements, and goals yet to be realized. In Alan's case, without a doubt, he can reflect with deep pride upon what he has achieved for Caldwell and indeed, for *K'lal Yisrael*.

Wishing Alan and Rita and family *Mazal Tov* on this monumental list of accomplishments, and to them and to Agudath Israel, my prayers for continued success and *nahas* in the years to come.

Philip S. Scheim

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