

FROM "POPSICLES TO GALAXIES"-MOREINU HORAV YISROEL BELSKY ZT"L

Yaakov Binyomin, the youngest son of Rav Belsky ZT"L, spoke at the airport, *Motzai* Shabbos before the *Aron* was taken to Eretz Yisroel for *Kevurah*, and said over how when someone asked his father how to make "Popsicles", he told his father; "Poppy; that was a stupid question", to which his father responded; "Yaakov; there is no such a thing as a stupid question. Everyone's question is very important to them"! I remember asking Rav Belsky for a *heter* to listen to Jewish music Cds on Chol Hamoed during the year of my *Aveilus* for my father Z"L. The Rosh Hayeshiva gave me permission, since it's *simchos* Yom Tov for me to listen. That Psak saved my Chol Hamoed and to me that was my Popsicle Question! I told Avrohom that what he had said over in his hesped on erev Shabbos in yeshiva, you can take with you for life. He mentioned how his father never pushed them to learn, but by always seeing him with a *gemarra* even at an amusement park, that alone was a tremendous lesson & *limud* for them to try to emulate and to look up to. The oldest son, Aryeh said how you can't be a genius like his father but he was able to learn lessons of *tzeddoka* & *chesed* from him. Aryeh would complain to his father that how can he give \$100 checks away to *nitzrachim*, and his father would answer him nicely to leave him be. A non *frum* lady even come barging into the house on Yom Kippur, but Rav Belsky would C"V not throw her out, and instead told his family to let her sleep on the couch. Shlomo Yehuda said over at the levaya how he wrote a song to the holy words of *Raza D'Shabbos* that we say over at Kabbolas Shabbos right before Maariv. His *Shver* lived another 208 Shabbosim from the last incident when he was B"H saved miraculously. It was exactly 4 years later from the *Motzai Shabbos Yisro* that he was taken in emergency to the hospital last time. ***Raza equals B'Gematriah 208!*** Dovid Frischman, from Camp Aguda, said over at the airport, how there was a kid from camp who stuttered very badly, and Rav Belsky tried very much to help him all summer long with no success. Rav Belsky cried when the camper had to leave at the end of the summer. The next summer, Dovid came to tell Rav Belsky the good news that although he couldn't help him, but someone else helped him improve all throughout the year. Rav Belsky smiled, and Dovid knew that Rav Belsky would not mind that someone else had helped the child improve and helped him with his stuttering. Little did Dovid realize at the time until he found out much later that it was none other than the Rosh Hayeshiva himself who took off from his very hectic schedule during the entire year, and would find the time to go to the boy's house once a week to help him improve and not stutter BS"D. He would take out the time from his meals to answer the camper's shaylos even though they were the same questions over & over however, to each camper, he would again take out the *Mishnah B'rurah* to show the boy inside the *Psak Halacha*, even though he just did that a minute ago. Rabbi Dovid Goldstein, a son in law and Rebbe in the Mesivta Torah Vodaath cried out in Eretz Yisroel how he would sometimes find his *Shver* with his plate of supper untouched 4 hrs later! He was so busy answering people's *Shaylos*, questions, helping the *Nitzrachim*... The Rosh Hayeshiva had a good sense of humor. Once, I tried to argue with him in learning [sorry that's my nature, & I'm sure he was *mocheil* me] to which he told me; "I'm not deaf. I heard you the first time"! Rabbi Genack from the OU Kashrus told over how Rav Belsky was once asked by someone from the secular world; "Why so many children? To which the Rosh Hayeshiva answered on the spot; "because, We JEWS are an **ENDANGERED SPECIES!**" Zvi said over at the *Bais Avel* during the *Shiva* how someone from camp Aguda told them over how their father told him "I would even sleep on the floor if I was able to make room for even just one more *Masmid* to be able to come and join the *Masmidim* program in Camp Aguda"! Someone else told them over how one time the *Masmidim* went on a trip and hiked up a mountain during the summer. This *Masmid* did not prepare himself correctly for this trip, and therefore didn't drink enough beforehand. When he finally reached the top of the mountain, he was completely dehydrated. The Rosh Hayeshiva

himself carried the boy all the way down the mountain on his “Broad Shoulders- “Breita Pleitzas”! [Noseh B’ol Chavero v’Talmido.] It was told over by Zvi at the *hespeidim* how his father would make Mayo for the Seder, since there was a *ben bayis* who loved Mayo for Pesach [that was his Popsicle!] A talmid told me over how he was asked to give a *shiur* on the galaxies and the Stars of *Shomayim* with all the planets in the universe. The Rosh Hayeshiva put his head down for 4 minutes and gave a shiur for the next 2 hrs. I told this close talmid; [“Could you imagine if he would have put his head down longer!] I told over to my brother Yechiel [who used to challenge Rav Belsky in handball in camp Aguda,] that I cried my eyes out saying *tehillim* on the night of the *petirah* seeing the tall Rosh Haysehiva now lying on the floor of the Beis Medrash of Torah Vodaath wrapped up in a *tallis* with *Yartzeit* candles surrounding him all around. When I was *menachem avel* his brother Rav Mendel, I told him that we all cried along with him when he cried out by the levaya; “Achi My Brother.....{Acheinu Kol Beis Yisroel}. The son in law, Rav Presby said over by the airport how Rav Belsky, when he was saying good bye to the campers and *Masmidim* of Camp Aguda and the end of the summer, he said that next year he won’t be here in camp, but instead he will be in Yerushalayim. Prophetic words that we will IY”H join him soon in **YERUSHALAYIM! NAFLAH ATERES ROSHEINU-MI YITEIN LANU TEMUROS-O-Y’HEI ZICHRO BARUCH!**

Rabbi Moshe Shochet