

reference was made to the way Rabbi Twerski davened Neilah from the amud. The Twerski family and Mrs Sterman's family have connections going back to Pittsburgh.

Dr Sterman informed us that Tekheles can currently be extracted from the Mirex trunculus shellfish, and so, this is believed

tekheles, although his ancestor Reb Motte did not wear it. Rabbi Twerski viewed mesorah in the following terms: "What would my ancestors have done if they had the knowledge that we have today?"

The view of the Chazon Ish was mentioned next, followed by the Malbim.

The next evening in this series is this coming Sunday, 19th of June at 7.30pm Israel time (5.30pm in the UK). The subject is: Understanding and approaching addiction: personal and professional accounts"

York and Israel, that supports those in crises on the their journey back to normalcy through the pillars of kindness, support, sensitivity, understanding and respect

Register here: <https://twerskicenter.org/#upcoming>

Shavuos in Yerushalayim

JERUSALEM REFLECTIONS
AKIVA AARONSON

The first indication of the approach of Shavuos here in Jerusalem is the usual multitude of *chasunahs* in the days beforehand. Over here, things are less formal than *chutz l'aretz*. The custom is just to give invitations to family and close friends. For everyone else, it's an invitation on the shul noticeboard, if you can find space. When the great day arrives someone marks on it 'Hayom' (Today), so you know to attend!

Chasunahs themselves are also less formal here, most people arriving for the *Simchas Chassan v'Kallah* after the *seudah*. Of course, there's a dance with the *chassan*, then the 'Bar'. This usually consists of *parev* cholent, kugel and chicken nuggets. You might just about find a place to sit down. In peak season, you may have even more than one *chasunah* a night, especially as the halls tend to be in close proximity to each other, so you can dance at two *chasunahs* at the same time.

Another indication of the approach of Shavous - especially with Shabbos and Yom Tov coming together this year - were supermarkets queues stretching even further than usual. A look inside any one of them *erev* Yom Tov and you would have thought a food shortage was on the way! Bakeries, of course, take the biscuit: a multitude of cheese cake varieties to choose from, together with plenty of other *gutter zachen*. Why not? After all, it's a land flowing with milk and honey! Yom Tov arrives, and after the *seudah* everyone returns to shul for all-night learning. Proceedings kick off with *Avos Uvanim*, and there's hardly a seat to be found. It's a



question who makes more noise, fathers or boys! Afterwards, the *Avos Uvanim* gifts are given out and a program of *shiuirim* takes the boys through the night.

The roads are empty - of course no cars or busses - and

instead they are full of people going one way or another. The only thing you'll bump into are children's' buggies, likely young couples returning home after the *seudah*. It's the yearly public jet-lag - for other than for those who have arrived from America - night becoming day, and day, night!

Close to *alos* - about about 4 a.m. here - *shuls* begin to thin out as men go to the *mikveh*, returning a short while later, having taken the plunge. Someone who slept is found to say *brochos* on behalf of everyone else - usually it's arranged before to ensure there is indeed someone available - and davening begins. Towards the end of *Musaf* the *kohanim* ascend the *duchan* and together with the *tzibbur* recite a beautiful *tefillah* - 'V'Seyarev l'fonechah a'siraseinu...(May our entreaty be pleasing to You...) We pray for the restoration of the true *avodah*, and being so close to the *Makom Hamikdash* - from high ground in north Jerusalem the Old City is in sight - one feels we are virtually there. Concluding *Birchas Kohanim*, the *kohanim* chant their *niggun* and the *tzibbur* joins in, ending with a mighty 'Shalom'. One feels on the crest of a wave, carrying you through to the end of davening.

An unusual, and completely unexpected, addition to Yom Tov this year were hot cups provided by the *Iriah* (Municipality) to shuls in Jerusalem. Complete with their logo and good wishes - 'Chag Shavuos Somayach' - they were indeed welcome since tea and coffee are the order of the day, saving shuls a pretty penny. The *Iriah* provided them in quantity - more than four cups per person - another reason why this night was different from all other nights!