

Bridging the Sephardic Ashkenazi DIVIDE

A conversation with Yehuda Azoulay,
founder of the Sephardic Legacy Series:
Institute for Preserving Sephardic Heritage

By Rabbi Yitzchok Frankfurter



C O V E R F E A T U R E

An American poet once said: “It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.” This perceptive statement is all the more true when it comes to the Sephardic/Ashkenazi divide.

Lest anyone needs to be reminded, many of the greatest Jewish leaders and scholars were *Sefardim* who lived in lands under Muslim control. In fact, the Rambam, who was born in 1138, lived under Islamic rule his entire life. He grew up in Córdoba, in what is now southern Spain, and after it was conquered by the extremist Almohads when he was ten years old, his family fled to Morocco. In 1166, after a brief yet formative visit to Eretz Yisrael, then under Crusader rule, they ultimately settled in Egypt, first in Alexandria and then in Fustat (part of present-day Cairo). The Rambam lived there until his passing in 1204. Yet how many *Ashkenazim*, the majority of whom cling to every utterance of the Rambam, especially his *Mishneh Torah*, are aware of his Sephardic heritage? So when Yehuda Azoulay tells me about his mission to promote Sephardic



Judaism and to bring *Sefardim* and *Ashkenazim* closer, it certainly resonates.

A Well-Balanced Life

“The entire Jewish world learns the Rambam, the Beit Yosef, and many other Sephardic *Rishonim* and *Acharonim*,” he tells me. “At one point, 90% of world Jewry was Sephardic. But the ratios have changed since the 12th century, when the Rosh and other *gedolim* and their families and communities left Spain for Germany.”

Yehuda, however, is determined to bring the Sephardic legacy back to the fore. A first-generation Canadian, Yehuda is of Moroccan descent. Both of his parents were born in Morocco. His father came to Canada at the age of 23, and his mother’s family arrived when she was five.

Before the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, there were between 250,000 and 350,000 Jews living in Morocco, making it

the largest Jewish community in the Muslim world. Jews were the first in the country to adopt the French language. Today, very few Jews remain.

“I grew up in Toronto, and in the synagogues we attended I heard more French, Arabic and Spanish being spoken than English,” he shares. “I went to a Sephardic school and a Sephardic camp. Everything around me was 100% Sephardic. It wasn’t until the eighth grade when I heard an *Ashkenazi* rabbi make a *brachah* on the Torah that I heard someone pronouncing the words that way. I didn’t even know that such a thing existed. We knew about *Ashkenazim*, but we didn’t know that they prayed differently.”

“How would you define the Sephardic heritage in a nutshell?” I ask.

“I would describe it as a unique amalgamation of Torah and *mitzvot* and whatever positive things we can incorporate from the

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Yehuda Azoulay visiting
Rav Shaul Kassin



secular world,” he states assertively. “If you study the history of the Jews in Morocco or the Ottoman Empire or Egypt, they didn’t isolate themselves from the rest of society. They participated in it up to a point, but they also knew how to draw the line and maintain *kedushah* in their homes and communities. Our greatest *gedolim*, from the Rambam to the Arizal, worked to earn a *parnasah*. On the other end of the spectrum, c The best term to describe it would be ‘balanced Judaism,’ and there is still much to learn from such an approach today. I’m not saying that we are better than the *Ashkenazim*, but our unique lifestyle can bring a big, shining brightness to the entire Jewish world.”

Yehuda’s description of Sephardic culture as “balanced Judaism” reminds me of the narrative that appears in the critically acclaimed book *Aleppo Tales* by Rabbi Haim Sabato, whom I have the great privilege of knowing personally:

“In keeping with the ways of many of the sages of Aleppo, my grandfather did not make a living from the Torah. He was a trader in fabrics, spending a few hours in his shop and the rest of the day at his studies. What would have been surprising in Eretz Israel was considered normal in Aleppo. Once a certain scholar came from Eretz Israel to Aleppo. He went into the *beit midrash* and asked the local scholars about a halachic ruling that was the subject of a dispute in Eretz Israel. They could not answer him. They told him, ‘We have no answer, but there is a sage among us; perhaps he can answer your question.’ He asked them, ‘And where is he studying?’ They told him, ‘In the textile market.’

“He went to the market and found him grappling with rolls of satin fabric. He asked him, ‘Is it possible you have knowledge of such-and-such a *halachah*?’ The sage gave him the answer, then said, ‘Wait for me. I have a transaction to complete with this roll of fabric, and then I shall tell you the source.’

“He went to wherever he went, sold whatever he sold, and returned to his shop. He took the scholar from Israel by the hand, went with him to the *beit midrash*, climbed up, took from the bookcase a copy of *Nehar Shalom*, showed him the reference and returned to his shop. The scholar said to the people in the *beit midrash*, ‘Have you taken leave of your senses? You have such a treasure in your midst, and yet you let him waste his time among spools of fabric?’

“Our teaching has always been that it is a fine thing when *talmud Torah* is combined with secular employment, since success in

both fields discourages any inclination to defect from the straight and narrow. When he shut up his fabric shop each day, grandfather would return to his studies and sit among the sages of the *beit midrash*.”

“My goal is to promote Sephardic Judaism in any way possible,” Yehuda tells me with evident passion, “whether through education or the media. We are currently working on a Sephardic encyclopedia, which is a year or two away from completion. Part of it is funded by the Israeli Ministry of Education and the rest by a philanthropic family. The project will cost a quarter of a million dollars.

“Our group has also saved hundreds of manuscripts from Iraqi archives. We’ve lobbied the United States Congress, and in Ottawa we were in contact with Prime Ministers Harper and Trudeau. We’ve also lobbied the government of Morocco and the royal family. And there are other things in the works that I’m not at liberty to mention.

“I actually just received an email from the California-based JIMENA (Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa). The organization is in the midst of discussions with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo regarding certain cultural property agreements with Arab lands. There’s a big movement trying to have Jewish property excluded, and I was asked to represent 12 organizations in North America.

“One of the things I’m involved in is the return of *sifrei Torah*, books, manuscripts and land. But I don’t really do it aggressively because I’d rather focus on what I feel are more realistic goals. I’m not going to spend

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Yehuda Azoulay visiting
Rav Shlomo Amar

my whole life battling governments. I've spoken at the UN and I testified before the House of Commons Subcommittee on International Human Rights in Ottawa about the threat posed by the Iranian regime and the historical significance of Purim. I don't believe that it's possible to achieve everything politically, which is why I basically do my own thing. I was told by the Safra Foundation that when you support an event, the event comes and goes, but when you support something tangible like a book or a documentary, it lasts forever. I do occasionally speak publicly, but that's not my focus.

"I've written five books under my own name, starting at the age of 20, but we've published approximately a dozen titles in total, and five or six more are coming out very soon. *B'ezrat Hashem* we're going to have dozens and dozens of books. My goal is to keep the printing presses running constantly. I'm also going to be making YouTube videos on Sephardic history.

"The pitfall is that Sephardic culture on its own will get you nowhere. You can celebrate Mimouna or have a henna party, but the next day you're back to nothing. The *brachah* is when you have the Torah and the way of life our rabbis taught us. Our institute has three or four writers working on text, and I hope to make more documentaries as well. The objective is to be like a miniature ArtScroll."

I ask him how he supports himself.

"*Baruch Hashem*, I am married and the father of three beautiful kids. I support my family by operating two businesses, and I believe that the *brachah* for that came from Sephardic Legacy.

"I used to be a teacher and vice principal of a school called Torah High, which is a division of NCSY for public high school students, and I used to raise money for my books on the side. I also raised money for needy communities in Brooklyn, Lakewood and Toronto. I was really good at it and brought in several million dollars over the



years. Then one day someone said to me, 'If you're raising all this money for non-profits, why not do it for real estate investments?'

"That was over four years ago, and today I manage a very large mortgage investment portfolio called Concrete Mortgage Capital Inc. I also have a small wealth management company called Yellowstone Wealth Management. Having these businesses allows me to focus on Sephardic Legacy and Ezrat Achim, which is an organization for needy Sephardic Jews in Toronto."

The Two Leading Subcultures of Judaism

There are two distinct subcultures within Judaism, and while the beliefs of Sephardic Jews are more or less similar to those of the *Ashkenazim*, Sephardic interpretations of

halachah are often different. Many of the known differences have to do with Pesach. Sephardic Jews are permitted to eat rice, corn, peanuts and beans on Pesach, while *Ashkenazi* Jews are prohibited from eating them. There are also differences in the pronunciation of Hebrew as well as in the *nusach* for *davening*.

More importantly, there are differences in Jewish practice that affected the very family structure of these communities. For example, when Rabbeinu Gershom issued his famous edict against polygamy it was accepted by the *Ashkenazim* but not by the *Sefardim*, and many leading Sephardic *gedolim*, including the Baba Sali, had more than one wife.

While the term "*Ashkenazi*" is derived from the Hebrew word "*Ashkenaz*," meaning Germany, the nomenclature has now broadened to include most European Jews. Similarly, the Hebrew word "*Sefarad*" means Spain, but all Jews who hail from Spain, Portugal, North Africa and the Middle East are considered to be *Sefardim*. Sephardic Jews are often further subdivided into *Sefardim* and *Mizrachiyim*. The former refers to Jews from Spain and Portugal, and the latter to those who hail from Northern Africa and the Middle East. Up until the 1400s the Iberian Peninsula, North Africa and the Middle East were all under Islamic rule, and

"I went to a Sephardic school and a Sephardic camp. Everything around me was 100% Sephardic."

the Muslims generally allowed Jews to move freely throughout the region. It was against the background of this relative tolerance that Sephardic Jewry developed. As a result, Sephardic Jews have historically been more integrated into the local non-Jewish culture than *Ashkenazi* Jews. In the Christian lands where *Ashkenazi* Judaism flourished anti-Semitism was much more rampant, which had the effect of segregating Jews from the larger society.

While nowadays most American Jews are *Ashkenazi*, the early Jewish settlers of North America were Sephardic. In Israel, by contrast, a little more than half of all Jews are *Mizrachiyim*—descendants of those who lived in the land since ancient times or were forced out of Arab countries after Israel was founded. Yehuda's primary mission is to highlight the beauty of the Sephardic version of Judaism and thus bridge the divide between *Ashkenazim* and *Sefardim*, primarily in North America.

I ask Yehuda what inspired him to undertake this mission.

"I was inspired by my parents and the rabbi of my synagogue, Chacham Amram Assayag, who is a *talmid* of Rav Mordechai Eliyahu and Rav Shalom Messas. Chacham Assayag brought a sense of pride into my community through the teachings of the Sephardic *chachamim*, *hillulot* and *piyutim* chanted with the ancient Moroccan melodies. He embedded all these things into our souls. So it's all really thanks to him."

"How big is the Sephardic community in Toronto?" I want to know.

"There are about 15,000 Sephardic Jews. We have 18 synagogues, one *kollel* and one school. About 80% of us are Moroccan, and there are also two Bukharian synagogues and an Iraqi one.

"I've always felt that there was a great need to educate our own. Right now on my desk I have a biography of Rav Mordechai Eliyahu that was given to me by his family, and *A Legacy of Torah*, which is a book of Sephardic commentators on the *parshah*. Our institute

is at the forefront of promoting this heritage. It does a great disservice to everyone when the history of the Jewish people isn't told in a complete and holistic way. When a person reads the standard books on Jewish history he is reading a book with missing chapters, and those chapters contain the untold story of Sephardic Jews.

"My ambition is to bring this knowledge into the schools and museums. There are other organizations out there with similar goals, but unfortunately many of them aren't religious. Then there are organizations that preserve *sefarim* and manuscripts, such as the Sephardic Heritage Foundation in the Syrian community and Rav Yaakov Hillel, but their scope isn't as broad as ours.

"In Israel, the Bitton Institute is painstakingly going into all the curricula currently being taught in the elementary and high schools and incorporating Sephardic history. That's what I want to do in America and Canada too. Our story is barely being told. Nobody's asking anyone to become Sephardic, but our contributions and history must be recognized.

"It's not an easy mission, but I think I'm uniquely suited for it. I'm not too modern and I'm not too *chareidi*. I'm right in between, so I can easily reach both worlds. Chacham Ovadia gave me a blessing specifically for that, and I accepted it humbly."

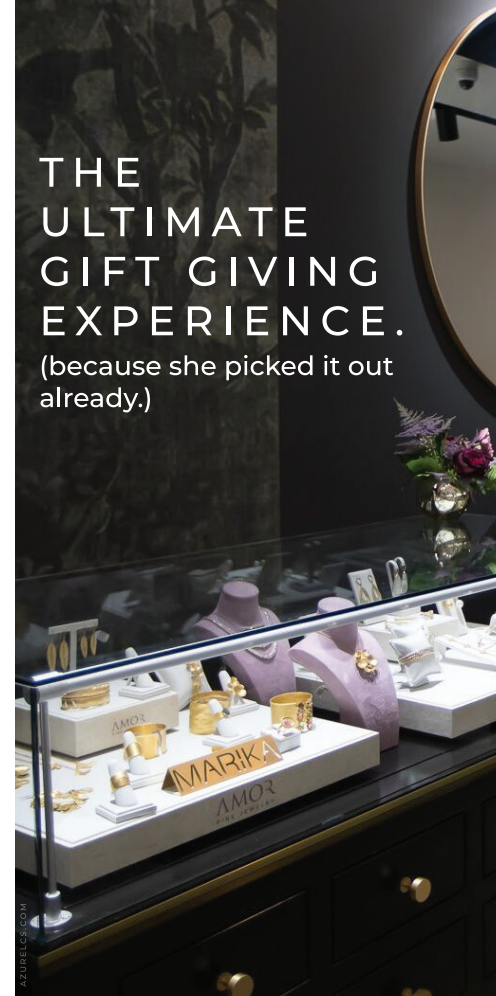
With Rav Ovadia Yosef

Yehuda's forerunner in recent times was Rav Ovadia Yosef, *zt"l*, whose motto was "*Thachazir atarah l'yoshnah*"—to return the crown to its former glory. This embodied both a social and halachic agenda. On the social level, it was widely viewed as a call to pursue a political agenda that would bolster the standing of Sephardic Jews in Israeli society, as they had historically suffered discrimination and were generally on a lower socioeconomic level than their *Ashkenazi* counterparts. With regard to Jewish practice, it referred primarily to the obligation of *Sefardim* to abide by the rulings of their own

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poskim, especially the Beit Yosef. As Rav Ovadia wrote in *Yalkut Yosef*, “Even if a hundred *Acharonim* disagree with the Beit Yosef...no teacher is permitted to rule stringently contrary to the Beit Yosef’s instructions to rule leniently.” In other words, *Sefardim* should not try to emulate their *Ashkenazi* brethren, even if it means that their observance of certain *mitzvos* may not be as demanding.

I ask Yehuda if he is inspired by Rav Ovadia’s message.

“Very much so. It summed up his whole desire to bring back our Torah luminaries, like the Beit Yosef and the Rambam. But whereas his efforts consisted of authoring *sefarim* because he was a *gaon*, I’m doing it through educational material. I once told him about a certain biography of Sephardic *gedolim*, and he couldn’t believe that such a book existed in English. ‘Only *Sefardim*?’ he asked me several times, incredulous that we’d finally made it. No one will ever be able to fill his shoes, but he wanted Sephardic Jews to follow their own ways.”

Yehuda then tells me about the relationship he was privileged to enjoy with that late Sephardic *gadol*. “When I was 14 I went to Camp She’arim, which is run by the *rosh yeshivah* of Waterbury, and my brother and I were the only *Sefardim* there out of 60 *bachurim*. It was there that we had the *zechut* to meet Rav Ovadia Yosef. Then when I was 18 I went to Yeshivat Mikdash Melech, which is the first-ever *Sefardi*-American *yeshivah* in Israel, whose *rosh yeshivah* is Rav Chaim Benoliel. Every Motzaei Shabbat we would go to Yazdim, a huge Persian synagogue where thousands of people came every week to hear Rav Ovadia speak. It was broadcast all over Israel, and then the next day it would be shown via satellite in places like Tehran, Djerba, Morocco and even Brooklyn.

“I was beyond impressed the first time I heard him speak because he was very charismatic. It wasn’t just his *divrei Torah*; it was also his sense of humor and poetic language.



Yehuda Azoulay with Rav Yaakov Hillel

I really wanted to know more about him.

“When I started Sephardic Legacy, one of the first things I wanted to do was to write about our rabbis. I was surprised that nothing had been written about Rav Ovadia in English, but there were other things I had to do first before tackling that, including finishing *yeshivah*. After I returned home I made sure to go to Israel at least once a year so I could visit his synagogue and pray with him. A few years later he found out about my work.

“Around that time, Shas created an organization called American Friends of Shas, and I was one of the people being considered for its executive director. As part of that

“My goal is to promote Sephardic Judaism in any way possible, whether through education or the media.”

effort, I flew to Israel and spent a week in the Knesset. I was all of 24 years old. Every day I went to Chacham Ovadia’s house for *Shacharit*, *Minchah* and *Arvit*. I ate in his house a few times as well. The idea was for me to get to know some of the Shas MKs so I could represent them, and I was going to move to Brooklyn for that purpose.

“At the time I was still living in Lakewood. I lived there for the four years I was studying in BMG. Then I moved to Washington Heights to attend the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education, which is part of Yeshiva University. After I earned a double master’s in education, I moved back to my hometown of Toronto. To make a long story short, that’s when I really started to strengthen my *keshet* to Rav Ovadia, even though I ended up declining the position with Shas. But every year I continued to go to Israel for the month of Tishrei and pray every morning in Har Nof. I also slept in the building next door to Rav Eliyahu Attias for four consecutive years so I could pray with him on Yom Kippur. Moshe Habusha was the *chazzan* there.

“For the last ten years of Rav Ovadia’s life my appreciation for him only grew. And the



more I knew him, the more I wanted to know everything about his background and accomplishments. His son, Chief Rabbi Yitzchak Yosef, once told me no one was as thorough as I was in doing research. I hired Rabbi Shai Cabessa to go through all 54 *sefarim* written by Chacham Ovadia and choose the main topics for inclusion in the book. I also hired someone else to go through all of the available biographical information, and then I oversaw the entire project. We were fortunate to get a lot of firsthand information from the family.”

“How would you describe the finished product?”

“Chacham Benoiel articulated it best: ‘You walked a fine line when writing this book.’ It’s an accurate description of Chacham Ovadia, who was simultaneously with the *hamon am* while being a *tzaddik* and *gadol*. In my opinion, he was truly one of the greatest leaders in Jewish history.”

“So you’re a disciple of his,” I say.

“He gave me *brachot* many times. I brought my whole family along plus my parents, brothers and friends. It was very hard to get in, but we did. Even a few months before he passed away I was able to speak to him on the phone to ask for a *brachah* for a boy, and we had a son after Chacham Ovadia passed away. We named him Ovadia Yosef, and since my father’s name is also Yosef it was a two-for-one package.”

Targeting the Whole World

“The *Ashkenazi* world is composed of many diverse groups. Is that also true of the Sephardic community?” I want to know.

“Yes and no,” he replies. “There’s less labeling because we are blessed to not have any Reform or Conservative denominations. One synagogue or institution may be more religious than another, but you can have a guy

with tattoos and someone in a black hat sitting next to each other. There is certainly no uniformity. That’s the way it is in both Israel and Brooklyn. We are divided geographically and with regard to customs, but we are not divided spiritually, emotionally or culturally. We have the same mentality and way of life. Yes, Jews from the same geographical region tend to stick together, but we’ll also mix with each other when it comes to marriage.

“I’m trying to preserve Sephardic culture in the tradition of Chacham Ovadia, Chacham Yitzchak Nissim and Rav Yosef Messas. I don’t mean this in a bad way, but none of them wanted Sephardic Jews to be *Ashkenazim*. G-d bless everyone, but when someone is born *chasidish* he should remain *chasidish* and follow his *rebbe*. *Sefardim* have to know that they don’t have to go elsewhere. In a certain respect, the problem is that we have it too easy; a *Sefardi* can go to Uman and become Breslov or he can become a Lubavitcher. In Montreal, a major chunk of the Sephardic community is either Breslov or Chabad, when all they really have to do is look in their own backyard, at their own *mesorah*. That’s what I’m trying to convey.

“I am not trying to sow division, *chas v’shalom*. I visited Auschwitz in May with a group from Aish, even though I don’t have any connection with the Holocaust other than the fact that I’m a Jew, and as a Jew it’s important that I be educated about it. The problem is that most *Ashkenazim* don’t feel the same obligation to learn about us. They think that the only thing going for us is that we have great food! Yes, it’s a great culture and we’re very colorful, but there’s a lot more to being Sephardic than that. We’re all part of the same Jewish fabric.”

“In Israel there’s always been an issue of Sephardic Jews being second-class citizens. Has the situation been resolved somewhat?”

“My father fought in the Six-Day War, and he always felt that his European-born friends had an easier time advancing in the army. He even joined the Black Panthers, who were

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mostly Moroccans. (Editor's note: The Black Panthers was an Israeli protest movement of Jewish immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East. It was one of the first organizations in Israel trying to achieve social justice for *Sefardi* and *Mizrachi* Jews, borrowing the name from the American group by the same name. It is also sometimes referred to as the Israeli Black Panthers to distinguish them from the American radicals.) Nowadays, the problem exists mainly in the *chareidi* community than in the more modern or secular communities."

"Whom are you targeting, the Sephardic reader, the Ashkenazi reader or both?"

"Both. There are all kinds of educated people out there including rabbis, laymen and businessmen of all different kinds who are simply unaware of a vast swath of Jewish history."

"If you had a single message for *Ashkenazim*, what would it be?"

"To paraphrase Rav Shlomo Amar, I would say that they should know how special the *neshamah tehorah* and *peshutah* of the Sephardic Jew really is. That's probably one of the reasons why we don't have the same dominance as the *Ashkenazim*, who are the powerhouses of the *yeshivah* world, because we're so simple that we just stayed in our own world. But a lot of it also has to do with history. When the *Ashkenazim* were being butchered not just by the Nazis but during the Crusades, then later by the Cossacks and during the pogroms, our situation was a lot better. Of course there were violent outbursts here and there—the life of Jews in Arab lands was also a roller coaster of ups and downs—but overall it was much less brutal. We're also trying to educate non-Jews as well."

"To what end?"

"My goal is to get this information into the hands of every reader. A while ago I gave a two-and-a-half hour lecture on Sephardic music at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. There were a number of non-Jews in the audience as well, and it was probably



Yehuda Azoulay
visiting Baba
Baruch Abuhatzera

my first non-Jewish exposure. I started off with the music from *Fiddler on the Roof*, and everyone laughed because they knew that it was neither Middle Eastern nor North African music. 'That's the problem,' I explained. 'Some people think that this is the sum total of Jewish music, but there's a whole other side to it.' Then I went through some of the Jewish music from various Sephardic countries including Andalusia, which is very important. Everyone loved it.

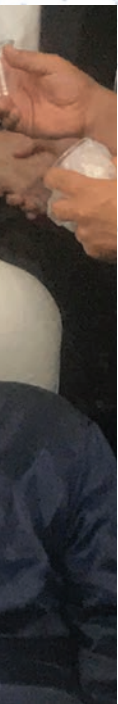
"I don't know if you've ever heard of *bakashot*, but they're old Sephardic melodies connected to the *parshat hashavua* that have been passed down through the gen-

erations. This is another means of preserving our heritage.

"A lot of Jews are simply unaware of the Sephardic *tzaddikim*. That's why when I started my organization I decided to focus on them and their teachings first. From there we can work our way down to the other aspects of our culture and history. I'm happy to tell you that there's a lot of interest being shown from all kinds of Jews. Not a week goes by without a call or email from a random person reaching out to me, which I find very inspiring. Someone asked me yesterday which American Sephardic *yeshivah* he should attend in Israel. Our institute has become not only a vehicle for education but a valuable resource for anyone with questions. Our team is supported not only by *Sefardim* but *Ashkenazim* as well. It used to take me a year to raise enough money for a book; now it takes only weeks or even days.

"I recently wrote a book about Rav Amram Ben Diwan called *The Miracle Worker*. It's not the usual style of the Sephardic Legacy Series, but it fell into my lap. We printed 2,500 copies, and 2,000 were sold within two months. The books are also available in French and Spanish.

**Yehuda's
forerunner in
recent times was
Rav Ovadia Yosef,
zt"l, whose motto
was "I'hachazir
atarah l'yoshnah."**



Putting all this stuff out isn't easy. I sometimes wish I could be the person who just walks into the Judaica store and finds these books!

"The first person who was shot in the Civil War was a Sephardic Jew. In Boston, they used to close the ports because of Shabbat. The first correspondence from President George Washington was addressed to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, which consisted of Spanish and Portuguese Jews, and the first synagogues in America and Canada were Sephardic. That doesn't make one group better or worse, those are just the facts. I've spoken at Chabad Houses, *shuls*, schools, *yeshivot* and universities. I love it. And I don't make any money, as all the royalties go to the organization."

"I don't know if you saw this, but Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez claims to be descended from Sephardic Jews."

"Yes. So does Ted Cruz. He was the emcee at the event my organization held in Congress. He spoke for 25 minutes and mentioned that he's the descendant of conversos."

I inquire about Yehuda's affiliation with the Syrian Jewish community.

"Our president is Joe Mansour, who lives in Brooklyn. My affiliation with the Syrian community goes back to Camp Shivtei Yisrael, which I went to as a 12-year-old. I went on to attend Syrian *yeshivot* and learned in the *kollel* of Rav Ezra Zafrani in Lakewood, aside from the Ashkenazi *yeshivot* I went to. I get a lot of *chizzuk* from being around chasidic Jews. They should be blessed forever. Lakewood is beautiful. I loved learning in BMG. But it's time for the Sephardic Jews to shine as well."

"Azoulay was the last name of the Chida, who is the subject of one of your books. Are you a direct descendant?"

"Yes. Our family has a *Megillat Esther* that was passed down from the Chida's grandson. We were also told by our parents and grandparents that we're descended from the Chesed L'Avraham. We're originally from Fez, Morocco. I was just at his *kever* on Har Hamenuchot a few weeks ago."

"Are you aware of the Skverer Rebbe's relationship with the Chida? He quotes him constantly. I think he even has original *kisvei yad* of his."

"No, I didn't know that, but that's certainly fascinating. People were blown away when they saw the Belzer Rebbe and Chacham Ovadia dancing together. Look, we all originally came from the same area of the world. I'm not saying that everyone should go back to his roots and become Sephardic, but a lot of people could use a refresher course in history." ●

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