

Pesach in Florida: Hillel Boys Read The Sefer Torah

Albert Sutton and Charles Saka read the Sefer Torah in the Beit Edmond J. Safra Synagogue in Aventura, Florida during the Passover holiday.

Mr. Daniel Massry, a congregant at Magen David Synagogue of West Deal, came up with the idea and made all the necessary arrangements. Having heard the boys read before, he was confident in their ability to impress and delight a large community audience.

Albert Sutton, who is in tenth grade at Hillel Yeshiva High School, was not even planning on going to Florida for Pesach. When approached by Mr. Massry, he jumped at the opportunity and quickly made plans to stay with relatives. Albert read on the 7th and 8th days of Passover in the early minyan and on Saturday evening for the main minyan. Albert runs the Parent and Child (PAC) Shabbat minyan in the Magen David Synagogue. He is currently taking voice lessons and also studies hazzanut with Shlomo Teherani, the *hazzan* (cantor) of Magen David of West Deal.

Charles Saka, an 8th grader at Hillel Yeshiva Middle School, read all of Parashat Aharei Mot on Shabbat HaGadol in the main minyan and read the holiday portions on the first two days of Yom Tob for the early minyan. When first approached by Mr. Massry, he was somewhat apprehensive knowing that many old-timers who would be in attendance are sticklers, demanding perfection. But, after a few days of preparation, Charles felt confident that he was up to the job.



Charles Saka



Albert Sutton

Mr. Isaac Mossery, who heard Charles read, was most impressed. He commented that the way Charles read was possibly the best he had ever heard. Considering the fact that Charles is only 13, Mr. Mossery thought that this was "just amazing." When Charles was asked how he was able to prepare with only a week's notice, he said that he committed a substantial amount of time

to practicing each day. He also mentioned that from the age about six, his father, Sammy Saka and his uncle, Raymond Saka, had devoted many hours to teaching him how to read properly. Charles reads every week in the Parent and Child (PAC) minyan in Magen David Synagogue.

Rabbi Galimidi, the new rabbi of the Safra-Turnberry Synagogue, graciously allowed Albert and Charles to read, relying on Mr. Massry's assurance that the boys would not disappoint. Rabbi Galimidi was so impressed by their excellent performances that he gave both boys an open invitation to read any time they were back in Florida.

IG (Isaac) Gindi said that giving young men the honor and opportunity to read for the community is a great way to motivate and inspire all boys to learn how to properly read the Sefer. Mr. Mossery commented that hearing the boys read was very inspiring. It made him optimistic that our traditions are being transmitted to the younger generation and made him feel hopeful for the future of our community. Mr. Daniel Massry is to be commended for bringing this wonderful idea to fruition.

"We are extremely proud of Albert and Charles for setting a wonderful example for the youth of our community. May they continue to go *mehayil el hayil* (from strength to strength)," said Rabbi Saul J. Kassin, Halachic Rabbinic Authority of Hillel Yeshiva.

Hazak u'baruch to Albert and Charles for being a source of pride to Hillel Yeshiva, the community and their families. □