

February 19, 1995     Boston

Handling Dead Bodies

Dear Yoneq,

Sameach called us here in Boston to inform us of a situation involving our brothers Hoshua and He'emin. They were traveling to an EMT seminar in Vermont on the Sabbath — because that was the day the class was held — and they came across an accident scene. It was a bad one, one young man had fallen asleep at the wheel and the other had fallen asleep in his seat. They hit a stone wall and both died. Hoshua and He'emin both handled their bodies. So they called Shoresch and he had them call Sameach, since he had experience with these situations working at Boston City Hospital and Shoresch knew you had spoken with him about weighing the cost of working at the hospital versus being outside the camp for seven days if he handled dead bodies.

Sameach told them what he thought was your mind, that they needed to be outside the camp for seven days. Since we don't have a place like that they are staying in the clinic in Island Pond for seven days until the time of their uncleanness is over. Sameach wanted Keli to run this by you for confirmation, perhaps owing to the seriousness of the roles these men fulfill in their communities. Sameach said he is not going to change his advice apart from hearing from you. In retrospect, after learning of this, He'emin felt that he at least had not really needed to handle these dead young men's bodies. It seems like something we can all really learn from and it makes it clear why Peter had the young men in the community bury Ananias' and Saphira's bodies. (That is what Sameach said too.) We just wanted to let you know of what was going on in case you had anything to say about this matter.