

The Cornerstone

A conversation on El-Al flight 1626 between my husband and the man in the fur hat

Shalom aleichem.

Aleichem shalom.

My name is Shlomo Friedrich.

Nice to meet you. I'm Norman Eliaser.

The lady with you, she is your wife?

Yes, that's my wife, Shira.

I saw at the airport she was laying tefillin.

Yes, that's right.

You know, she's not *chayyav*.

Of course not! But *patur zeh lo assur*.

So interesting. I never saw a woman wearing tefillin before. It is a Reform thing?

No, Conservative.

I never saw anything like it before. She has a rabbi who says it's all right?

She sure does!

So very interesting! Ach, *Hashem b'shommoyim hu ha-posek*.

The *beit hamikdash* is built with 304,805 stones and destroyed with 304,805 stones. Every Jew who speaks to another in words of peace and respect places there a stone, and every Jew who speaks to another with words of anger and contempt destroys a stone. When all those hundred thousand stones are placed, then will come the days of the Mashiach.

By Shira Eliaser