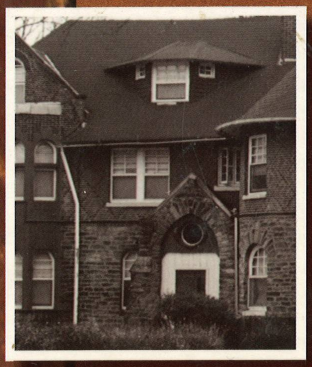
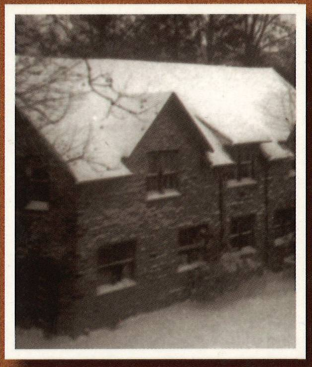
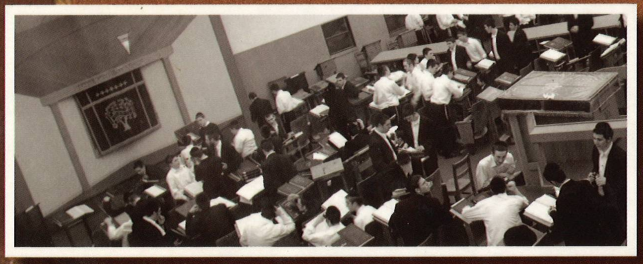


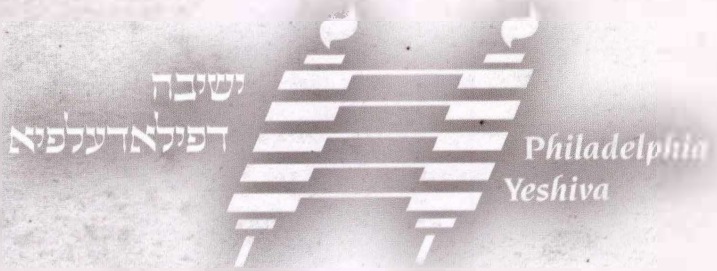








ישיבה
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Philadelphia Yeshiva
תשי"ד – תשס"ד



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Foreword

The finished product you hold in your hand is the result of many individuals' cumulative time and effort. First and foremost, as with all Yeshiva of Philadelphia's projects, the inspiration and guidance come from the ראשי הישיבה שליט"א. May this commemorative journal serve as a קידוש שם שמים and a נחת רוח for the ראשי הישיבה.

Producing a masterpiece such as this requires one individual to plan, direct and carry it out. From its planning stage to its final completion, from compiling articles to layout and design, Rabbi Pinchas Lando shouldered the responsibility of producing this work. It bears his imprint in so many ways.

Rav Sholom Kamenetsky and Rav Yehudah Svei also contributed to the completion of this book. Their input, suggestions and expertise were invaluable, and they deserve our great appreciation.

The staff of Artech, and Boruch Mordechai Wenger in particular, worked miracles. Their ability to synthesize so many ideas and concepts into the beautiful designs before you is nothing short of remarkable. May they go מחיל אל חיל and be זוכה to publish many more works of such stature.

The bulk of the writing that appears in this journal is the work of Rabbi Shaul Dov Miller. It is an eloquent expression of his professionalism and incisive understanding. יישר כוחו וחילו לאורייתא.

We hope that you and your family will enjoy reading this historic document as much as we enjoyed preparing it – and that you will cherish the memories and inspiration therein for many years to come.

Yossi Stern

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פתח דבר

יובל היא (ויקרא כה' י').
שנה זאת מובדלת משאר שניס
בנקיבת שס לה לגדה (רש"י שם)

איתא במדרש תנחומא (במדבר פרק יז) פקד את בני לוי היה השבט הזה חביב לפני הקב"ה יותר מכל השבטים שנאמר (שמואל א ב) ובחור אותו מכל שבטי ישראל גו' כיצד ברא הקב"ה ימים וברר לו אחד מהם וכו' ברא שנים ולו אחד מהם וכו' ברא שבועים ולו אחד מהם שנאמר (שם) וקדשתם את שנת החמשים שנה זה יובל וכו' עכ"ל.

"הנה לנו שלש שבתות, שבת בראשית, שבת של שביעית, שבת של יובל, כל אחד בדיניו שלו, וכולם ענינם מסוד 'ומנוחה לחיי עולמים', מסוד עוה"ב, דרור ודאי, יציאה לגמרי מ'רשות בעלים', 'למען ידע האדם כי יש לו הבורא המושל עליו'." (ר' ירוחם זצוק"ל בספרו "דעת תורה".)

ברוך שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה, לחוג את חג היובל שנת החמישים של ישיבתנו הקדושה. שנת היובל הוא זמן נכבד ובולט שמחייב אותנו להתבונן, לברר ולהכיר שרשי והתפתחות ישיבתנו, איך הגיעה עד הלום, ואיך קנה לעצמה מעמדה הגדול. מהו סוד הצלחתה, ואיך השיג צביונה המיוחדת שאופיינתה מוכרת על כל בוגריה. איך נעשה להמוסד הדוגמתי והמופתי בעולמו של בני תורה אשר עיני כל ישראל אליה.

ובאמת, כבר הורינו חז"ל שאין כבוד אלא תורה, וכבודה של ישיבה הוא הדברי תורה של הישיבה, שהן הן הרוח חיים שלה, ובודאי שמן הראוי היה שנוציא לאור קובץ של חידושי תורה. אכן כן הוא, ואין הקונטרס הזה אלא הקדמת הגוף להנפש.

כתיב זכור ימות עולם בינו שנות דור ודור. חמדת כל תלמיד של הישיבה לדעת איך ואיפה נתייסדו יסודי ביתו, בית הגדול שבו נתגדל לתורה ולתפילה. וכבר גילה לנו תורתנו הקדושה שדרך הבנת שנות דור ודור הוא על ידי שאל אביך ויגידך זקניך ויאמרו לך.

איתא בחז"ל (ברכות ח.) אמר ליה רבא לרפרם בר פפא לימא לן מר מהני מילי מעלייתא דאמרת משמיה דרב חסדא במילי דבי כנישתא אמר ליה הכי אמר רב חסדא מאי דכתיב אוהב ה' שערי ציון מכל משכנות יעקב אוהב ה' שערים המצויינים בהלכה יותר מבתי כנסיות ומבתי מדרשות עכ"ל. הרי שדרשו חז"ל "ציון" בגדר של שערים המצויינים בהלכה, והנה כתיב (תהילים מח יג, יד) סבו ציון והקיפוה ספרו מגדליה. שיתו לבכם לחילה פסגו ארמנותיה למען תספרו לדור אחרון. גם כאן "ציון" נפרש שערים המצויינים בהלכה אשר נצטווינו מדברי קבלה להקיפה ולספור מגדליה. גם לשית לבינו לחילה, ולפסוג בארמונה, הלא ע"י זה גם אנחנו נוכל לספר לדור אחרון, מה שקבלנו מאבינו וזקיננו, ודברי התורה הזאת לא ימושו מפינו ומפי זרענו.

כסדר בריאת האדם שהוקדם הגוף להנפש, כן הוא סדר כל בנין, בבניית החומר אשר הוא מקבל אחר כך הצורה. כמו כן, בקונטרס זה נבין ונתבונן בהחומר, אבל הצורה, אשר היא העיקר והתכלית, עבודתה מרובה, וסוף הכבוד, זה תורה, לבא. מתכוננים אנחנו להוציא לאור "ספר היובל", שם נלקט משיעורי מרנן הגאונים הראשי הישיבה שליט"א, אשר הם עיקר פארה והדרה של ישיבתנו, וחידושי תורה מבוגרי הישיבה, שיופיע בעתיד הקרוב בעזהשי"ת.

*****

תפלתנו ותקותנו, שיהא הקונטרס הזה מזכרת משנותכם בהישיבה, ותתחזקו על ידו, ותקחו ההזדמנות הזאת לחזק דרככם, כל אחד ואחד על דרכו המיוחד לו, ותזכו לנצל השנה הזאת לקבל מחדש רעננות חדשה. איתא בילקוט (תהילים רמז תשנ"ו) א"ר נחמן מה שהיה הוא שיהיה, כשם שנטל הקב"ה את ישראל ממצרים בענני כבוד כך הוא עושה להם לעתיד שנאמר מי אלה כעב תעופינה. ספרו מגדליה, כמה גינאות עליזות להיות בירושלם כו', שכל "המגדלות" עתידים להגיע לירושלם, ולואי שנזכה כולנו יחד לראותה שם בתפארתה, בביאת ינו"ן, בב"א.

בס"ד

אל מעלת כבוד הרבנים הגאונים מגדולי מרביצי תורה בדורינו הגאון רבי **אלי' שווי** שליט"א והגאון רבי **שמואל קמנצקי** שליט"א רו"מ ישיבת פילאדלפיא, ה' עליהם יחיו.

שמחנו לשמוע שאתם זכיתם לגדל עדרים בני תורה במשך תקופה ארוכה של חמישים שנה.

וכידוע שיש מהם תלמידי חכמים מופלגים, מרביצי תורה ויראה בכל תפוצות עמנו, בהם ישראל יתפאר, מה טוב חלקכם.

ומצוה גוררת מצוה לכן בודאי תזכו להוסיף תורה עוד רבות בשנים ולהעמיד תלמידים הרבה לתורה ולתעודה כשאיפתכם הטהורה עד עת יבוא ינון ובא הגואל בב"א.

בני ברק יצ"ו

בברכה ועתירה לעתיד



מיכל יהודה ליפקוביץ
זכרון מאיר
בני ברק

בס"ד, ג' מנוחה תשפ"ה

מכתב ברכה

מת רבת השמחה לרגל מלאת יובל שנים ליסוד חישיבה הגדולה פילאדעלפיא תוא חבית חגדול בראשות ידידי פאח"ד חגאון הגדול רבי אליחו שווי שליט"א והגאון הגדול רבי שמואל קמינצקי שליט"א.

ב"ה זכתה הישיבה בהנהגת רה"י וצוות הרבנים גדולי תורה שליט"א להעמיד במשך שנות קיומה פירות מפוארים של תלמידים שיסדו בתיהם ומחנכים בניהם ובנותיהם על פי החינוך הטהור שקיבלו בישיבה חק', לחעמיד את יסוד החיים בהשקפה טהורה. ומהם גם זכו להמשיך את מסירת התורה לרבים ע"י הרבצת תורה לתלמידים בישיבות הקדושות והקמת בתי חנוך לצעירי צאן קדשים.

חנני בברכה למע"כ ראשי חישיבה הגאונים שליט"א שחקב"ה יחזקם בבריאות איתנה ושלוה, ויזכו להמשיך בעבודתם הקדושה בחרבצת תורה ויראה וחעמדת תלמידים לתפארת בית ישראל, ולרומם קרן חתורה ועמלית.

בחוגת ידידכת וכוש מיכל יהודה ליפקוביץ

יוסף שלו' אלישיב
ירושלים

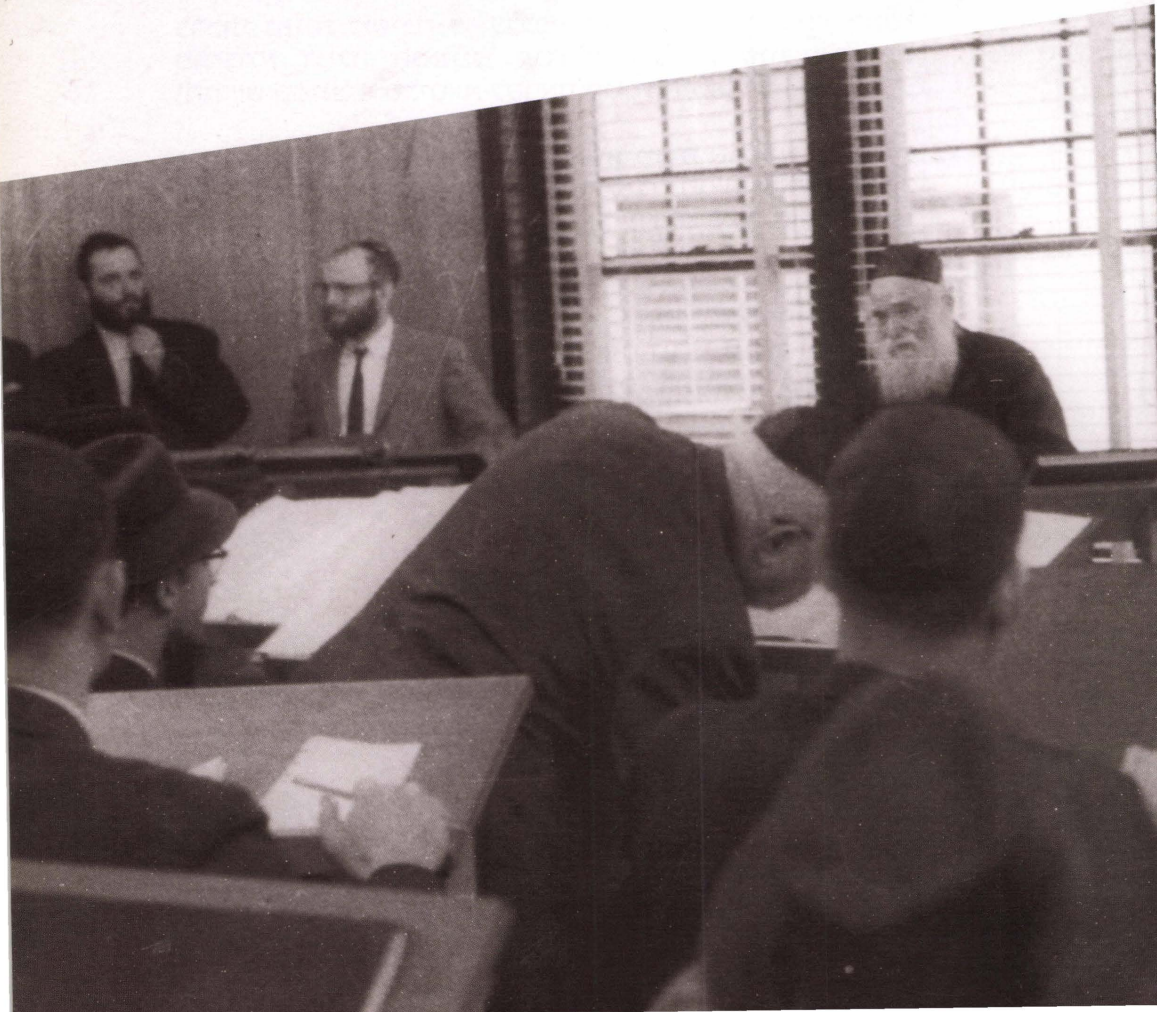
בס"ד, י"ב טבת תשס"ד

ברכתי נתונה לישיבה דפילדלפיה יצ"ו בראשות ידידי ראשי מתיבתא דגולה הגאונים הגדולים הגר"א שווי שליט"א והגר"ש קמינצקי שליט"א לקראת חגיגת היובל.

זכות ראשונים לה בהיותה נטע ראשון מבית אולפנא רבא בית מדרש גבוה – אשר יסד מרן ראש הישיבה הג"ר אהרון קוטלר זצוקללי"ה. ומעת הקמתה – גידלה עדרים עדרים של ת"ח וירי"ש.

יהא רעוא קמיא שמיה – כי יזכו ראשי הישיבה שליט"א מנהלי ותומכי להמשיך בפעלם ולחזק מרכז תורה חשוב זה, להרחיב גבולם בתלמידים השוקדים בתוה"ק מתוך נחת והרחבת הדעת.

בברכת התורה



מרן רבן של ישראל
הגאון רבי אהרן קוטלר זצוק"ל

בענין תלמוד תורה של קטן - ושל אשה

דרשה בבר מצוה – (כנראה אחד מהנכדים)

א.

קטן שאינו חייב במצוות אלא מדרבנן מדין חינוך. יש להסתפק, מה"ת האם נחשב מעשה מצוה שלו כמי שאינו מצווה ועושה, שאף שאינו מחויב הריהו מקבל שכר, ולדעת ר"ת אפשר גם לברך על מעשה כזה. או שמא אין מעשה של קטן נחשב למעשה מצוה כלל.

ולכאורה דבר זה תלוי במחלוקת (ר"ה כח ב) אם מצוות צריכות כונה. דלמ"ד צריכות כונה אין מעשה של קטן נחשב כלל למצווה. כיון שקטן אין לו מחשבה. כמו שאמרו לענין שחיטה (חולין יב ב), שלדעת חכמים שחיטה בעי כוונה לחתיכת סימנים, וקטן שחיטתו פסולה משום שאין לו מחשבה. ולדעת ר' נתן שאין צריך כונה בשחיטה כלל, שחיטת קטן כשרה. וכן הוא במצוות למ"ד צריכות כונה כיון שאין לו מחשבה אין בעשייתו קיום מצוה כלל. אך למ"ד אינן צריכות כונה כיון שמעשה יש לו לקטן, מסתבר שהוי כמי שאינו מצווה ועושה.

וכן משמע משחיטת קדשים, שדעת רש"י (שם) שקטן פסול בשחיטת קדשים אע"פ שסתמא לשמן קאי, כיון שאין לו מחשבה. אך התוס' סוברים שאע"פ שאין לו מחשבה, כיון שסתמא לשמן שחיטתו כשרה מעיקר הדין. אלא כיון שאינו בר דעת חשיב כמתעסק, וכמי ששחט וחשב שהוא חולין שפסול. ואע"פ שמי ששוחט לשם חולין שחיטתו כשרה, היינו דווקא ביודע שהוא קדשים, אך אם שאינו יודע כלל ששוחט קדשים וסבור שמה שהוא שוחט הוא בהמת חולין שחיטתו פסולה משום מתעסק. וכן הוא בשחיטת קטן שאין ידעתו חשובה וכמי שחשב ששוחט חולין דמי שדינו כמתעסק.

ולפי"ז קטן שעשה מצוה למאן דאמר אינן צריכות כונה, הרי כיון שמעשייתו נראה שעושה במתכוין, נחשבת עשייתו למצוה, שהרי מעשה יש להם.

אכן אם גדול עומד על גביו לכאורה יועיל גם למ"ד מצוות צריכות כונה, כשם שמועיל בגט (גיטין כב ב) וכן בחליצה לדעת התוס' (חולין שם), משום שאין החסרון במעשה של קטן אלא מחמת ידיעתו, וכשהגדול עומד על גביו ומודיעו כבר אינו מתעסק, וגם כונה יש לו על ידי הגדול שעומד על גביו. וא"כ יהא נחשב מעשה של קטן למצוה כשגדול עומד על גביו.

Dedicated to the Roshei Yeshiva and the Hanhala
by The Rajchenbach Family, Chicago, Illinois

אך שיטת הרשב"א בשם הרמב"ן היא שגדול עומד על גביו מהני רק בדבר שיש בו שליחות, כגון בכתיבת הגט שנעשה בשליחות הבעל, וכשאנו מסופקים אם כתיבת הקטן היתה בשליחות הבעל, מועיל עמידת הגדול שהקטן עושה על פי ציוויו, ונחשב בכך שכתב בשליחות הבעל. אבל בדברים שלא שייך בהם שליחות כגון שחיטה, שאין הכשר השחיטה צריך שליחות בעלים, לא מהני גדול עומד על גביו. ולפי"ז במצוות שבגופו לא יועיל גדול עומד על גביו שיהא נחשב למעשה מצוה, כיון שאין בהם שליחות.

והנה התוס' שכתבו שיש לקטן כוונה כאשר גדול עומד על גביו, הוכיחו זאת מהגמ' (יבמות קד ב) לענין חליצה שקטן נתמעט משום שנאמר איש, משמע שלולא המיעוט היתה חליצתו כשרה, ור' יוסי אמנם סובר כן שחליצת קטן כשירה, ואע"פ שצריך כונה להתיר בפניהם, וקטן אין לו כונה. אמנם הרשב"א שסובר שאין מועיל גדול עומד על גביו בדברים שאין בהם שליחות, תירץ קושיא זו, שצריך מיעוט רק בתינוק כבן עשר שמקחו מקח ויש בו דעת. אך התוס' הביאו ראיה מכאן שכיון שחליצה בבי"ד היא נעשית, הוי כגדול עומד על גביו ומהני אף בחליצה.

ולפי"ז נמצא שממה נפשך צריך להועיל שחיטה בקטן שהוא סמוך לגדלות וגדול עומד על גביו, או מצד שיש לו כונה כהרשב"א, או מצד שהגדול עומד על גביו כדעת התוס'.

ולפי"ז תמוה מש"כ הרמב"ם (פסהמ"ק פ"א ה"ו) שהקטן פסול לשחיטת קדשים משום שאין לו מחשבה ואפילו גדול עומד על גביו. והרי הרמב"ם אינו מחלק ופוסל אפי' קטן הסמוך לגדלות, ולהאמור צריך היה להכשיר עכ"פ בקטן הסמוך לגדלות וגדול עומד על גביו. וזה צריך להועיל גם לשיטת הרשב"א, שהרי שחיטת קדשים ישגה בשליחות.

<u>והנה נתבאר שלמ"ד מצוות צריכות כונה, אין מעשה של קטן נחשב למעשה מצוה מן התורה אלא מדרבנן מדין חינוך, ולהרשב"א גם גדול עומד על גביו לא יועיל.</u>

*

ב.

אמר ריש לקיש משום רבי יהודה נשיאה אין העולם מתקיים אלא בשביל הכל תינוקות של בית רבן, אמר ליה רב פפא לאביי דידי ודידך מאי, אמר ליה אינו דומה הבל שיש בו חטא להבל שאין בו חטא. (שבת קיט ב)

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דברי חז"ל אלו מסעירים את לבו ורוחו של המעיין בהם, שכן תורתם של אביי ורב פפא עם כל טהרתה וקדושתה, אין בכוחה לקיים את העולם, ואילו הבל פיהם של תינוקות שאין בו חטא, בזכותו העולם קיים, ללמדנו עד כמה החטא גורם.

אך עדיין אין בזה להשקיט את הסער, שהרי נתבאר לעיל שלמ"ד מצוות צריכות כונה, אין במעשה של קטן קיום מצוה כלל, וגם אינו בכלל אינו מצווה ועושה שעכ"פ הוא מקיים מצוה, משא"כ קטן שאין לו כונה אין בעשייתו מצוה כלל, ואיך יתכן שהבל פיו הוא המקיים את העולם.

ומוכח מזה שהתורה מצד עצמה היא מציאות שאינה תלויה בגדר המצוה של ושננתם, אלא שכך היא עצם מהותה של התורה שהיא שורש כל הבריאה, וקיום העולם תלוי בה. ושאני תלמוד תורה משאר מצוות, כגון לולב שאם אין ציווי אין נטילתו כלום, ואין הדבר כן בעסק התורה, שאף ללא מצות השינון יש כאן תורה, שהיא קדמה לעולם, והיא שורש נשמתם של ישראל. (עי' נפש החיים ש"ד). ומציאותה של תורה בעולם היא הנותנת לו זכות קיום.

<u>וגם אם לא היה ציווי של תלמוד תורה כלל, הרי שקיום העולם אינו אלא מכוח העסק בתורה. אך תנאי יש בדבר שלא יהא החטא מעורב בו, ומעלה זו ישנה בהל פיהם של תינוקות של בית רבן, שאין בו חטא.</u>

ולפי"ז מבואר שפיר שבמצוות תלמוד תורה אין צורך בכוונה למצווה כדי לצאת ידי חובה. אפילו למ"ד מצוות צריכות כונה. ודוקא בשאר מצוות שאם אינו מקיים מצוה אין עשייתו כלום, כאשר חסר כונה אינו מקיים מצוה, וגם עשייתו אין בה כלום. משא"כ בתלמוד תורה שאף בלא כוונה הוי בגדר תורה, ממילא גם קיום מצוה יש לו. ולכן גם בקטן שיש לו מעשה נחשב לו לימוד התורה לקיום מצוה של תלמוד תורה.

ג.

מאי מברך א"ר יהודה אמר שמואל אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו לעסוק בדברי תורה, וכו', ורב המנונא אמר אשר בחר בנו מכל העמים וכו', אמר רב המנונא זו היא מעולה שבברכות הלכך נימרינהו לכולהו.
וברש"י, מעולה שבברכות התורה לפי שיש בה הודאה למקום וקילוס לתורה ולישראל. (ברכות יא ב)

לאחר שהעלינו את המרגניתא שתלמוד תורה הוא ענין בפני עצמו חוץ ממעשה המצוה שיש בו, הרי שמסקנת הגמ' שברכת אשר בחר בנו מעולה מכולן מאירה לנו כשלהבת, כיון שאין תלמוד תורה כשאר מצוות שיסודם הוא מכך שנצטוינו לעשותם, ועל כן ברכתם היא אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו. משא"כ תלמוד תורה שהיא פועלת פעולתה בבריאה מכח עצמה גם ללא הצווי של ושננתם, אין עיקר ברכתה אלא ברכת השבח, קילוס והודאה למקום על נתינת התורה ובחירת ישראל מכל העמים.

וכעין זה מצינו בתפילה שעל אף שחובת התפילה היא מתקנת חז"ל, ולדעת הרמב"ם היא מן התורה, לא תקנו לה ברכה. והיינו משום שמציאות התפילה היא דבר לעצמו אף בלא קיום מצוה שיש בה. כשם שלדעת הרמב"ן אין חובת התפילה נתנית בכלל המצוות, – אע"פ שגם לדידיה תפילה נחשבת מה"ת עבודה שבלב, שעל זה נאמר "ולעבדו בכל לבבכם". –אלא שאינה מצוה, שכן הזקוק לצרכיו יבקש ממי שבידו למלאות בקשתו ולספק צרכיו. ולכן לא תקנו ברכה על תפילה.

מאזרי האומה במשיכי שלשלת התורה שליט"א
נגיה תלחש גחלתכם ולהבתכם לעולם לא תכבה
המאחלים מקרב לו"נ אחרן יוסף ששערן ומשפחתו

וכן הוא בתורה שאין מציאותה יונק חיותה מכוחה של ציווי, לא תקנו לה ברכת המצוות, שגדרה הוא ברכה והודאה על עצם הצווי שנצטוינו בה, אלא ברכת השבח.

ומהאי טעמא נמי לא בעי כונה, משום שכונה היא מדיני המצוה, ואילו תורה גם בלא קיום מצוה הרי היא פועלת פעולתה כחפצא של תורה. ולכן גם קטן שאין לו כונה לימודו הוא לימוד של תורה אע"פ שאינו בר חיוב, ואינו מקיים מצוה של תלמוד תורה.

אלא שלכאורה קשה על זה ממה שאמרו בסוטה (כא א) שהזכות תולה לשותה מי סוטה שלא תמות. והקשו זכות דמאי אילימא זכות דתורה הא אינה מצווה ועושה היא. הרי שכיון שאינה מצווה אין זכות בתורתה. ולא כמו שבארנו שגם בלא קיום מצוה יש זכות בעסק התורה להגן ולקיים, ולכן תורתם של תשב"ר מקיים את העולם.

ותירוץ הגמ' תמוה אף הוא, שאמרו שם רבינא אמר לעולם זכות תורה, ודקאמרת אינה מצווה ועושה, נהי דפקודי לא מפקדא, באגרא דמקרין ומתניין בנייהו, ונטרן להו לגברייהו עד דאתו מבי מדרשא, מי לא פלגאן בהדייהו. ופרש"י שטורחות על בניהן להביאן לבית הספר לקרוא מקרא ולשנות משנה. והוא תמוה אם תלמודו של קטן שמלבד שאינו מצווה, גם אין לו כונה, ואעפ"כ בכוחו להגן על אמו, למה יגרע תורתה של אמו ואמאי לא יתלה לה.

ועל כרחך צריך לומר שחלוקים המה אשה וקטן בעיקר השייכות למצות תלמוד תורה, והוא על פי מה שאמרו בגמ' (ב"ק ל"ח:) גדול המצווה ועושה ממי שאינו מצוה ועושה. ונאמרו בזה כמה ביאורים להסביר חילוק זה. ושורש כולם נעוץ הוא במטבע של ברכת המצוות, "אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו". היינו שיש יחס וקשר הדוק בין הצווי לקדושת המצוה. והוא שבעיקר בחירת עם ישראל בסיני, הוכשרו הנפשות להיות כלי מוכן לקבלת קדושת המצוות שנצטוו עליהן. וככל שיגדל חומר המצווה כן תגדל קדושתו על עושה המצוה. אבל כשאין ציווי חסרה היא הנפש את ההכשר לקבלת הקדושה. ואין לו אלא שכר מעשה בלבד, וזהו שכרו של האינו מצווה ועושה.

נמצא שההבדל בין המצווה ועושה לאינו מצווה, הוא בהכנה הקיימת בנפש האדם לקדושת המצוה, שישנה רק אצל המצווה ולא אצל מי שאינו מצווה.

ועל יסוד זה מתבאר ההבדל בין אשה לקטן. שאמנם שניהם אינם מצווים, מ"מ קטן הוא בחפצא בר חיוב, אלא שקטנותו גרמה לו שאינו מצווה משום שעדיין לא הגיע זמנו. אבל נפשו בעצם מוכשרת היא לקדושה, ואינה חסירה אלא את החיוב בפועל. ולכן כיון שהתורה שבעצמה היא מציאות של קדושה גם בלי החפצא של מצוה, הרי יש לתורתו של קטן כוח וקדושת התורה, אע"פ שאינו מצווה, [וגם שהרי יש לתלמודו גדר של מצוה מצד חובת האב ללמד את בנו תורה].

מה שא"כ אשה שלעולם אינה מחויבת בתלמוד תורה ולא מיפקדא כלל. הרי היא מופקעת מקדושת המצוה שבעסק התורה, ואין תלמודה בכלל "אם לא בריתי יומם ולילה חוקות שמים וארץ לא שמתי". ולכן גם אין זכות התורה תולה לה, אלא טרחתה בתורת בניה, שתורה זו יש לה

קדושת עסק התורה, כיון שקטן אינו מופקע מעצם החיוב של תלמוד תורה, אלא שעדיין לא בא לכלל חיוב. ולכן תורתו מצד עצמה אין בה חסרון כלל אף בלא קיום מצוה, וזכות זו תולה לה ולא תורה שתלמד בעצמה.

וידועים הם דברי חז"ל שהובאו בספר "שם עולם" (ח"ב ה–ו) לבעל חפץ חיים, שהעסק והעיון בתורה בעולם הזה הוא בגדר הכנה לעולם הבא, שאז יתגלו פנימיותם ועומקן של דברי תורה. שבעוה"ז אינם ברי השגה כלל. ודברי תורה אלו יתגלו רק למי שעסק בעולם הזה בפשוטם של דברים, ועל יד העיון ועסק התורה נעשית נפשו כלי להשגת דברי תורה בעולם הבא.

ונראה שגם זה אינו אלא למי שנצטווה על כך, שעם הציווי ניתנו בו כוחות לקבל קדושה זו. אבל אשה שלא נצטוותה בתלמוד תורה אין לה הכשר זה, ואע"פ שדברי תורה קדושתם היא גם בלא קיום מצוה, מ"מ המעלה והכוח שיש בתורה להשפיע על נפש האדם, בעוה"ז ובעולם הבא זה אינו אלא כשיש בהם קיום מצוה, אבל קטן הגם שאינו מצווה מ"מ אינו מופקע מהמצוה, ויש בתורתו את כל המעלות שנאמרו בתורה.

וכעין זה מצינו בשליחות (קידושין מב א), שקטן אינו בר שליחות ואינו יכול למנות שליח, מ"מ זכין לקטן הגם שאינו יכול לעשות בעצמו. משום שאינו מופקע משליחות ואתי לידי שליחות כשיגדל. משא"כ גוי שאינו בתורת שליחות כלל גם זכיה לא תועיל לו.

וכן בגירושין חוץ מפלוני, אמרו בגמ' (גיטין פח א) שאם הוא בר תפיסת קידושין הרי זה נחשב לשיור בגירושין והגט פסול, אך מי שאין קידושין תופסין בו משום שהוא קרוב מחייבי כריתות, או גוי אין זה שיור והגט כשר. וקטן אע"פ שבפועל אינו יכול לקדש, כיון שאי"ז אלא מחמת קטנותו ולכשיגדל קידושיו תופסים, לכן אם גירשה חוץ מפלוני קטן הוי שיור, כיון שאינו מופקע מחלות קדושין.



וכן הוא גם בענייננו, שתורתו של קטן חשובה היא לקיים את העולם, וכן נחשבת היא לזכות לתלות לאמו שטרחה עבורו. אע"פ שאינו מחויב בת"ת - כיון שאינו מופקע מכך שהרי יתחייב כשיגדיל, אלא שעתה אין עליו עדיין חובה. משא"כ אשה אינה חייבת בת"ת כלל והיא מופקעת ממצוה זו, ולכן תורתה חסירה היא את המעלות שנאמרו בעסק התורה.

ד.

וזהו גם הביאור במה שאמרו (נדה ל ב) על עובר במעי אמו שנר דלוק על ראשו ומלמדין אותו כל התורה כולה, וכשיוצא לאויר העולם בא מלאך וסוטרו על פיו ומשכח הכל. והתועלת שיש לו מזה הוא, שאע"פ שלפני הלידה אינו שייך לחובת וקיום מצוות ת"ת, מכל מקום כיון ששורש נשמתו בתורה היא נעוצה, ועתיד הוא להתחייב, כבר הוא שייך לתורה, וכל מה שלומד לפני יציאתו לעולם מועיל לו אח"כ להבין ולהשכיל.

והנה אמרו חז"ל (מועד קטן ט ב) עה"פ (משלי ג) וכל חפצים לא ישוו בה אפילו חפצי שמים. היינו שאין מצוה ששוויה עולה על עסק התורה. ויש לפרשה בשני אופנים, שעצם סגולת התורה וחשיבותה יתירה היא מכל המצוות, אבל בתורת מצווה אין יתרון לתורה יותר משאר מצוות. ואפשר עוד שכיון שבעצם מהותה של התורה אין שאר המצוות שווין לה, אף בתורת מצווה שלה אין שאר מצוות שווין בערכה.

ויש להוכיח זאת מהספרי (עקב יא יג) שמוסיף על המימרא שבגמ', כשם ששכר מצות ת"ת גדול מכל המצוות, כך עונש ביטולה גדול מעונש שאר העבירות. והרי עונש אינו בא אלא על ביטול מצוה, ואילו על תורה כשלעצמה בלא ציווי וחובה לקיים לא שייך עונש, כיון שאין חובה לעשות. ומזה שאמרו שעונש ביטול תורה גדול מעונש שאר מצוות משמע שאף מצוות ת"ת שקולה כנגד שאר המצוות, וכל חפצים לא ישוו בה.

אלא שצריך להוסיף שאע"פ שאין חובת ת"ת על הקטן, מ"מ ודאי שאותם דברים שנאמרו באופן הלימוד, שיהא ברתת וזיע ואימה ויראה כשם שהיה בסיני, אף בקטן נאמרו, וככל שתגדל ההכנה, כך תרבה הקדושה והזכות על ידה, גם בקטן.

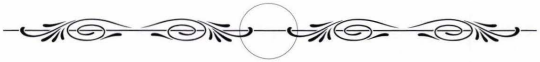
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בתהלים (צ יג) נאמר "שבענו בבוקר חסדך ונרננה ונשמחה בכל ימינו", ופירש האבן עזרא, שאם נשבע בחסדו של הקב"ה, בבוקר, היינו בשנות הנעורים, הרי זה יביא לידי כך שנרנן ונשמח כל ימינו. ואיתא בחז"ל שחסד היינו תורה, ולשון הכתוב הוא "חסד אל כל היום". והיינו שאם נשבע בתורה בימי הנעורים, הרי שכל ימינו מכאן ואילך יהיו ברנן ושמחה.

ומשום שעיקר קושי העבודה הרוחנית הוא בזמן הנעורים שאז האדם בכל כוחו, וכמאמר הכתוב (משלי כב ו) "חנוך לנער על פי דרכו גם כי יזקין לא יסור ממנה". שהחינוך באותם שנים משול הוא לקליפת האגוז, שמתחילת גידולו עדיין היא ירוקה ונוחה להסירה ולאחר מכן היא מתקשה. כך בשנות הנעורים נטייתו ומידותיו של האדם רכים הם וניתן ליישרם, ותפקיד האדם בשנים אלו הוא לכוונם ולהעמידם על תיקונם. ולאחר מכן כאשר הם כבר נקבעו והוא מורגל בהם, עיקר עבודתו של אדם היא לכבוש את יצרו הרע. וההולך בימי הנעורים בדרך התורה וביראת ה', הרי שאחר מכן בשנות העמידה אין לו קושי בכבישת היצר, שכבר מידותיו הורגלו בכך, וממילא הרנה והשמחה היא מנת חלקו.

וכן מבואר באור ישראל מהגר"י סלנטר (מאמר ל'), שבימי הנעורים עיקר העבודה היא תיקון המידות, שזהו הזמן המסוגל לזה, ובשנות העמידה העבודה היא כבישת היצר, שנקל הוא בשנים אלו יותר משנות הבחרות. וזהו הפירוש "שבענו בבוקר חסדך", והיינו כאשר נשבע מהתורה – שהיא חסד האל– בימי הנעורים, על ידי זה "נרננה ונשמחה בכל ימינו", כיוון שהתורה מתקנת ומישרת את מידותיו, ומעתה כבישת היצר יהיה קל יותר, ועי"ז יהיו ימיו בשמחה, כמו שאמר הכתוב (תהלים) "אור זרוע לצדיק ולישרי לב שמחה" היינו, שמי שעקמומיות שבלבו נתפשטה וליבו ישר, ראויה היא השמחה שתשרה בקרבו.

כמובן שככל שיקדים השובע כן תגדל השמחה וישרות הלב, ואינו דומה יושר ליבו של זה שתחילת דרכו בתורה היתה כבן ג', למי שתחילת לימודו כאשר הוא בן ט"ו או ט"ז, וכהקדמת השביעה כן תגדל הרנה והשמחה.



DEDICATED BY MR. AND MRS. SHIMON PLUCHENIK



רבי יוסף חיים שניאור קוטלר זצ"ל
ראש ישיבת בית מדרש גבוה

מאמר קבלת התורה

כתיב: "בחודש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים ביום הזה באו מדבר סיני" (שמות יט, א) וברש"י "בראש חודש (עי' שבת פו, א), לא היה צריך לכתוב אלא ביום ההוא, מהו ביום הזה, שיהיו דברי תורה חדשים עליך כאלו היום נתנו" ולכאורה הדברים טעונים הסבר, דהרי פסוק זה נאמר עוד קודם נתינת התורה, דהפסוק הזה אינו מספר את קבלת התורה, אלא את **ביאתם** להר סיני, ומה שייך גרידא, לומר על זה שיהיו כחדשים.

ובספר "פרי צדיק" האריך על דרשת המכילתא: בחודש הזה, בא חודש, שאז באה התחדשות בלב ישראל, ומהי ההתחדשות שבאה אז, והרי לא ניתנה עדיין התורה, ומבאר שם, שהוא החשק והתשוקה לקבלת התורה שהתעורר בלב כל אחד מישראל כשבאו למדבר סיני – מקום הקבלה, והוא על פי מה שאיתא בתנא דבי אליהו (א"ר סו"פ כ"ב), שאמר לאותו תלמיד שאמר לו, עוסק אני בדברי תורה ומחמד ומתאוה ומצפה אני אם תורה תבא אלי, ואמר לו, לא זכה איש לדברי תורה אלא אם כן מוסר נפשו עליה ואומר, העניים והאביונים מבקשים מים ואין, לשונם בצמא נשתה אני ה' אענם וגו' (ישעי' מ"א, י"ז) והיינו שאין הקב"ה נותן דברי תורה רק למי שצמא להם עד כי לשונם בצמא נשתה – ואז אני ה' אענם. וכן מצינו (תדבא"ז פ' י"ד) שאמר לאותו אדם שאמר שלא נתנו לו בינה מן השמים, ואמר לו הפסוק (ישעי' י', ד') ה' אלקים נתן לי לשון למודים לדעת לעות את יעף וגו', הא למדת שאין דברי תורה נבלעים בלב האדם אלא במי שהוא יעף להם, כמו האדם שהוא צמא למים קרים על נפש עיפה, וזהו "ביום הזה" שהיה להם החשק והרצון, ואז באה להם ההתחדשות שירגישו על ידי זה טעמי מצוות בדברי התורה שיקבלו, ולכן נדרש על הפסוק "ביום הזה" שיהיו דברי תורה חדשים עליך כאלו היום נתנו, שתמיד יהיה לישראל חשק זה כמו אותו יום שבאו למדבר סיני שהיה להם החשק הנפלא וכמש"נ במכילתא, עכת"ד.

והנה ביחס לימי הספירה מבואר בחינוך (מצוה ש"ו) וז"ל להראות בנפשנו החפץ הגדול אל היום הנכבד והנכסף אל לבנו, כעבד ישאף צל וכשכיר יקוה פעלו, עכ"ל. ומבואר בדבריו דמהות הספירה היא השאיפה והקיווי אימתי יגיעו לקבלת התורה, ומצוה זו לספור את הימים מתוך תשוקה ורצון להתחדשות התורה לדרגא זו של כאלו היום נתנה – נשארה לדורות. וכידוע בספרים שהמ"ט ימים מכוונים כונה מעלות התורה, מ"ח ימים כנגד מ"ח מעלות שהתורה נקנית בהם (אבות פ"ו מ"ח), ויום המ"ט לחזרה עליהם, וידוע מ"ש הגר"ח ז"ל שאפשר להשיג תורה רק לפי ההכנה במעלות שהתורה נקנית בהם. ואאמו"ר זצוק"ל היה מסביר שכמו שבכל דיני קנין שבתורה אין קונים הדבר אלא דוקא באותו קנין שנתפרש בו ולא בזולתו – כך הוא בתורה, דהלכה היא דכך הוא קנינה.

והנה במ"ח מעלות שנאמרו בקנין התורה אנו מוצאים הן מעלות בעצם הלימוד ואופני הלימוד, דהיינו העמל והיגיעה בלימוד התורה, הן סגולות נפשיות כגון טהרת הנפש, ישרות ההשקפה וההנהגה, וביטול הרצונות והמניעות, שעי"ז נעשה האדם מוכשר להעשות בית קיבול לתורה, ומ"מ כל המ"ח מעלות הללו שהתורה נקנית בהם לא יועילו בלא הרצון, והתשוקה והשאיפה המוחלטת, בבחינת כעבד ישאף צל, ורק ע"כ יגיע לדרגא של "ביום הזה" שנתבאר לעיל, ובתנחומא (עקב ז') איתא: כל יום שאתה עוסק בתורה, הוי אומר, כאלו ביום הזה קבלתיה מסיני, כי זו היא צורת הלימוד שנאמרה לדורות – ההשתוקקות והרצון שהי' במעמד הר סיני.

והנה חלק מהמעלות שהתורה נקנית בהם, מתבטא בביטול הרצונות והתשוקות. והיינו משום, שאם יש לאדם רצונות ותשוקות אחרות הרי זה סתירה לרצון וההשתוקקות הנכונה לקניית התורה. וכן כתב הרמב"ם (בהקדמה לפירוש המשניות) אין התאוה מצוי' אלא בלב פנוי מן החכמה, והוא, כי בלב מלא חכמה לא תמצא התאוה מקום, וכן אחז"ל (תדא"ו כו) עד שאדם מתפלל שיכנסו דברי תורה לתוך גופו, יתפלל שלא יכנסו מעדנים לתוך גופו, והוא כי התורה צריכה את כל האדם, את כל כוחותיו ומאווייו – הכל צריך להיות מכוון לתורה, וכל הרצונות החמריות ומעדני העולם הזה הם סתירה וניגוד לתשוקת התורה ולרצון הנכון לה.

כתיב (שמות י"ט, ה') ועתה אם שמוע תשמעו בקולי ושמרתם את בריתי וגו', וברש"י ועתה, אם עתה תקבלו עליכם, יערב לכם מכאן ואילך, שכל התחלות קשות (מכילתא שבת פ"ז) והוא כי הערבות והטעם בתורה לא עולה בנקל, אלא רק אחר התחלה קשה, כי רק אחרי ביטול כל הרצונות נעשה האדם בית קיבול לתורה ומוצא בה ערכות ותענוג, ומצינו בקרא (בראשית ב', ט"ז) ויקח ה' אלקים את האדם ויניחהו בגן עדן, וברש"י, ויקח, לקחו בדברים נאים ופתהו ליכנס, ולכאורה למה הוצרך לפתותו להיכנס לגן עדן אשר הוא תכלית העונג והעידונים, והלא כל אחד ואחד הי' רץ מעצמו לשם, אך הביאור בזה הוא, כי תענוג הגן עדן והעידון אשר בו, אינו תענוג לאדם אלא כשהוא מבפנים, דהיינו רק אדם שכל מהותו ומציאותו נעשתה של "בר גן עדן" יכול להרגיש את התענוג והאושר האמיתי שבגן עדן, אבל כל זמן שהוא מבחוץ, והוא עדיין בבחינת כל התחלות קשות ועדיין צריך לפיתוי ולדברים יפים כדי להכנס.

והנה בהשמטות הרמב"ן במנין הלא תעשה מצוה ב' כתב: "שנמנענו שלא נשכח מעמד הר סיני ולא נסיר אותו מדעתנו, אבל יהיה עינינו ולבנו שם כל הימים, והוא אמרו יתעלה השמר לך ושמור נפשך מאד פן תשכח את הדברים אשר ראו עיניך, ופן יסורו מלבבך כל ימי חייך, והודעתם לבניך ולבני בניך יום אשר עמדת לפני ה' אלוקיך בחורב וגו', והכונה בזאת גדולה מאד שאם היו דברי תורה באים אצלנו מפי הנביא עליו השלום בלבד אע"פ שנתאמת אצלנו ענין נבואתו באותות ומופתים, אם יקום בקרבנו נביא או חולם חלום בזמן מן הזמנים ויצונו בשום דבר הפך מן התורה ונתן לנו אות או מופת, תהיה התורה נצוחה על יד השני או יכנס בלבנו ספק על זה, אבל כשהגיענו ביאור התורה מפי הגבורה לאזנינו ועינינו רואות אין שם אמצעי, נכחיש כל חולק וכל מספק לא יועילהו אות ולא יצילהו מידינו מופת, שאנחנו היודעים ועדים בשקרותו ובפחזותו וכו' ובמגילת אסתר שם כתב: נראה לי כי מה שלא מנאה רב הוא לפי שגם זאת היא מצוה כוללת כל התורה כולה, והוא שלא נשכח את הדברים אשר ראו עינינו דהיינו ענין התורה כולה ושנלך בדרכיה

ונקיים מצוותיה, וכן משמע מפירוש רש"י שם בזה הפסוק שכתב וז"ל השמר לך פן תשכח את הדברים אז כשלא תשכחו אותם והעשום על אמרתם תחשבו חכמים נבונים, ואם תעותו אותם מתוך שכחה תחשבו שוטים, עכ"ל.

אאמו"ר זצוק"ל היה מסביר כי ענין מעמד הר סיני אינו צריך זכרון מיוחד, שהרי הכל מונח בתורה עצמה, כל הגילויים הנוראים של מתן תורה נמצאים בתורה, וכמש"כ במתן תורה (דברים ה, י"ט) קול גדול ולא יסף, ותרגם אונקלוס ולא פסק, והוא, דבתורה מונח הקול הגדול וכל המראות שהיו במעמד הר סיני, ועצם האותות והמופתים נשארו בתורה (ורק מתוך עמלה רואים ומרגישים בחוש איך שכל דברי תורה מתאימים ומשלימים זה את זה) וגם ההתגלות שבמעמד הר סיני נמצאת בתורה, וכמו שמצינו בחז"ל (ירושלמי פ"ב דחגיגה) בר"א ור"י שלהטה האש סביבותם כמו במעמד הר סיני, ובגמ' ברכות (כב, א) איתא: והודעתם לבניך ולבני בניך, וכתוב בתריה, יום אשר עמדת לפני ה' אלוקיך בחורב, מה להלן באימה וביראה וברתת ובזיע אף כאן באימה וביראה וברתת ובזיע, מכאן אמרו: הזבים והמצורעים ובאין על נדות מותרים לקרות בתורה ובנביאים ובכתובים לשנות במשנה וגמרא ובהלכות ובאגדות אבל בעלי קריין אסורים, וכו' ומבואר מדברי הגמ' דאנו למדים הלכה לדורות לגבי בעל קרי ממעמד הר סיני, והוא משום דמעמד הר סיני מתמשך לדורות וכלול בעצם התורה.

ושמעתי מאת הגאון רבי ראובן גרוזובסקי זצוק"ל שאמר בשם חמיו הגרב"ב לבוביץ זצוק"ל, לגבי הא דאיתא בגמ' שבת (פח, ב) ואריב"ל: כל דיבור ודיבור שיצא מפי הקב"ה יצתה נשמתן של ישראל, שנאמר (שיה"ש ה' ו') נפשי יצאה בדברו, ומאחר שמדיבור ראשון יצתה נשמתן דיבור שני היאך קיבלו, הורידו טל שעתיד להחיות בו מתים והחית אותם וכו', והקשה הגרב"ב זצ"ל, אם לא יכלו לעמוד בפני דבר ה' עד כדי שפרחה נשמתן, א"כ מה התועלת במח שהחיה אותם בטל של תחיה, הרי למעשה אין בכח גופם לקבל את דבר ה', והסביר בזה, כי האדם מורכב מגוף והנפש, ואף שאין לגוף את הכח לקבל, אך לנפש יש את הכח לקבל את דבר ה', ולכן החיה אותן בטל החיה, וטל תחיה זה נעשה חלק מעצמותן ומהותן והועיל להדק ולחזק את החיבור שבין הגוף לנפש. והתבטא אז כי טל תחי' "איז נאך א טשוואק אין דער חיבור" מסמר נוסף לחיבור בין הגוף לנפש, ויוצא מזה כי במעמד הר סיני נוצרה מציאות חדשה בנפש הישראלית אשר לא היתה קיימת עד המעמד הגדול הזה, ובאמת מצינו כך בנבואה, כמבואר ברמב"ם (פ"ז מהל' יסודי התורה הל' ב') וכולן כשמתנבאים אבריהן מזדעזעין וכח הגוף כשל ועשתונותיהם מתטרפות ותשאר הדעת פנוית להבין מה שתראה וכו', תרי דהתגלות דבר ה' בבחינת נבואה היא בחינה של פרחה נשמתן.

וברמב"ן בריש פרשת תרומה כתב וז"ל: וסוד המשכן הוא שיהיה הכבוד אשר שכן על הר סיני שוכן עליו בנסתר, וכמו שנאמר שם וישכן כבוד ה' על הר סיני, וכתיב הן הראנו ה' אלוקינו את כבודו ואת גדלו וכן כתיב במשכן וכבוד ה' מלא את המשכן, והזכיר במשכן שני פעמים וכבוד ה' מלא את המשכן, כנגד את כבודו ואת גדלו, והיה במשכן תמיד עם ישראל הכבוד שנראה להם בהר סיני, ובבוא משה היה אליו הדיבור אשר נדבר לו בהר סיני וכמו שאמר במתן תורה, מן השמים השמיעך את קולו ליסרך ועל הארץ הראך את אשו הגדולה, כך במשכן כתיב ושימע את הקול מדבר אליו מעל הכפורת מבין שני הכרובים וידבר אליו, ונכפל וידבר אליו, להגיד בזה שאמרו בקבלה שהיה הקול בא מן השמים אל משה מעל הכפורת ומשם מדבר עמו, כי כל דיבור עם משה

DEDICATED BY MR. AND MRS. SANDY HOFSTADTER

היה מן השמים ביום ונשמע מבין שני הכרובים כדרך ודבריו שמעת מתוך האש וכו', והמסתכל יפה בכתובים הנאמרים במתן תורה ומבין מה שכתבנו בהם יבין סוד המשכן ובית המקדש וכו', עכ"ל הרמב"ן, הרי שהדיבור נתייחד מבין שני הכרובים שהממוצע שביניהם הוא התורה, ומשם בא הדיבור באהל מועד כמו הקול ששמעו בהר סיני, כי החיבור בין הקב"ה וישראל הוא ע"י התורה, בזה הוא נצח ישראל ותקותו, ומיום שחרב ביהמ"ק אין לו להקב"ה בעולמו אלא ד' אמות של הלכה. והם במקום המקדש, ולכן אמרו חז"ל (ירושלמי מכות ב',ו') סנהדרי' גדולה אצל המזבח, והוא כי השפעת התורה בדרגא זו של הקבלת תורה היתה במקדש, ולכן מקום ישיבתן הי' אצל המזבח. ועוד אמר חז"ל (שהש"ר ד' ז') סנהדרי' גדולה יושבת אחורי ביהמ"ק. והיא היתה תכשיט של ביהמ"ק, והביאור בזה, כי כל היופי וההדר של ביהמ"ק הוא ע"י שיוצא לפועל תכליתו ומהותו של המקדש, והוא קבלת התורה וההודאה לכלל ישראל.

יסודה של קבלת התורה היא מכח "ויחן שם ישראל נגד ההר – איש אחד בלב אחד", וכתב במשך חכמה (שמות כ', ט"ו) שאילו היה עם ישראל מאוחדים בלי שום פירודים ומסכים המבדילים, ומבטלים כל המחיצות, היה כל אחד מהם כולל כל ישראל ושקול כנגד כל ישראל כמשה, וכל אחד ואחד היה יכול לקבל את התורה מפי הגבורה כמשה, והביאור בזה כמו שביארנו, כי אם יש מקום לתשוקות ורצונות אחרות הרי זו סתירה לקבלת התורה הנכונה ולכן לא הגיעו לדרגה הגבוהה והרוממת של משה.

וביחס למה שהזכרנו את דברי חז"ל "בכל יום יהיו בעיניך כחדשים" יש להוסיף, דהנה איתא בחז"ל איסתכל באורייתא וברא עלמא, ובספר נפש החיים (ד' כ"ב) הביא את דברי הזוהר: כל זימנא דאורייתא מתקיימה בעלמא וב"נ משתדלין בה וכו', דהוא על מהימנותא מתתקנא בתיקונוהו ומתקשטא בשלימותא וכו', היינו דהתיקון נעשה בבריאה עצמה, וכמו שביחס לבריאה נאמר המחדש בטובו כל יום מעשה בראשית, היינו התחדשות מתמדת, כך צריך להיות בתורה בחינה זו של התחדשות מחודשת בכל יום.









מורינו הראש הישיבה
הגאון רבי אלי' שווי שליט"א

ובחרת בחיים

א) כתב רבינו יונה (שערי תשובה שער ג' י"ז) ודע כי מעלות העליונות נמסרו לנו במצות עשה, כמו מעלת הבחירה שנא' ובחרת בחיים וכו'. ולפי פשוטו אינה מובן דמשמעות דברי רבינו יתה הוא שיש מעלה בפנ"ע חוץ מקיום המצוות עצמן, והוא לבחור במצוות, ואינה מובן שהרי מחייבים לקיים את המצוות, ואיזה מעלה בפנ"ע ניתוסף ב"בחירה" לקיים המצוות.

ומרן הגה"צ ר"י לעווענשטיין זצ"ל מבאר שבאמת בהך קרא ד"ובחרת בחיים" נתחדש ענין חדש מלבד קיום המצוות עצמן, והיא המעלה עליונה שרבינו יונה מתייחס אליה. ומבאר הדברים באופן זה. רש"י ריש פ' בהעלותך (ח' א') מפרש למה נסמכה פרשת המנורה לפרשת הנשיאים לפי שכשראה אהרן חנוכת הנשיאים חלשה אז דעתו שלא היו לו חלק עמהם. ויצ"ש ברמב"ן שמתקשה בד' רש"י מה טעם לחלישות הדעת הזאת, הרי אהרן הכהן הקריב בימים ההם קרבנות הרבה כל ימי המילואים יעו"ש. ומבאר שבאמת יש להבין עוד יותר בד' רש"י מה שייך חלישות הדעת אצל אהרן הכהן–הרי כלום חסר לו–הרי מדרגתו של אהרן הכהן היתה הרבה יותר גדולה משל הנשיאים.

ומבאר עפי"ד הסבא מקעלם זצ"ל שאמר שהרי מצינו שהקב"ה השריש בתוך כלל ישראל נטיעה של רוחניות "וחיי עולם נטע בתוכינו." זאת אומרת שישנו בכאו"א נטיעה של חיי עולם–נטיעה של נצחיות. וכשרוצים לבחון מצבו של נטיעה זאת–זאת אומרת לבחון חזקו של הנטיעה, האם היא צומחת בקרבו–או האם ח"ו להיפוך, שהולכת ומתייבשת, הסימן הוא כמה שואף הוא ליותר חיים–אם הנטיעה חזקה וצומחת, הרי בהכרח ישאף ליותר ויותר חיים, שהרי הנטיעה של חיי עולם אשר בקרבו לא נותנת לו מנוחה.

נמצא שכשרואה בעצמו יותר חשק לחיים, ורואה שמבקש חיזוק בקיום המצוות, ומחפש מדרגות יותר גבוהות בתורה, הרי בהכרח שהנטיעה אשר בקרבו בריא וחזק. אבל אם ח"ו להיפוך, הוא רואה בעצמו שאינו מבקש עלי' רוחניות ומסתפק במדרגתו א"כ סימן לכך שנטיעת חיי עולם בתוכו חלשה ר"ל. ולפי"ז מבאר המשגיח ר' חצ'קל זצ"ל שזהו הביאור שחלשה דעתו של אהרן הכהן כשלא השתתף בחנוכת הנשיאים, האף אומנם שמדרגתו הרבה יותר גבוהה מהנשיאים, מכ"מ סוכ"ס הרי יש כאן עוד קצת חיי עולם שהנשיאים זכו לה ושאהרן הכהן לא זכה לה, ואדרבה אהרן הכהן שהיתה טמונה בקרבו כ"כ חיי עולם שאף תמיד לעוד חיי עולם שאפשר להשיג.

מכתבי התלמידים. נאמר כ"ב סיון, יום היארצייט של הרב שמואל לייב שווי זצ"ל.

לזכר נשמות ר' אליהו יהושע בן ר' משה
ומרת פריידא בת ר' זאב וואלף ששטרן ז"ל

עוד דוגמא לזה הראה המשגיח ר' חצ'קל זצ"ל מרבי עקיבא, שבשעת מסירות נפשו על קידוש ה' אמר "כל ימי הייתי מצטער על פסוק זה מתי יבא לידי ואקיימנה ועכשיו שבאה לידי לא אשמח." ואינה מובן מה ששאף רבי עקיבא למסור נפשו על קידוש ה', כאילו שעד עכשיו חסר לו הך קיום, הרי כל עוד שלא נמצאים במצב של חיוב מסירות נפש עדיין לא חלה עליו חיוב ולמה חסר לו הקיום של מסירות נפש ומבואר כנ"ל שהרי אם אך יש כזאת מעלה לנפש, למסור נפשו על קידוש ה', ע"כ שואף למעלה זאת ג"כ, כל מעלה שאפשר להשיג שואף לה. וכך הוא מבאר ד' רבינו יונה הנ"ל שיש מעלה בפנ"ע של "ובחרת בחיים" זאת אומרת הביקוש התמידית ליותר ויותר חיים, לכל מעלה שאפשר להשיג, זה מה שנתחדשה במעלה עליונה של "ובחרת בחיים".

ב) איתא ברמב"ן (ויקרא י"ח ד') "שחיי האדם במצוות כפי הכנתו להם" זאת אומרת שיש הרבה מדרגות של חיים והמדרגה שיזכה לה תלוי בהכנתו, ומבואר שם ברמב"ן שמצינו כמה מדרגות במקיימי מצוות, יש המקיים ע"מ לקבל פרס-פי' בשביל שכר בעוה"ז, וע"ז נאמר "ובשמאלה עושר וכבוד", דהיינו שזה מדרגה אחת מהמדרגות של "חיי האדם במצוות". וממשיך הרמב"ן שיש עוד מדרגה של מי שעושה כדי לזכות לחיי עוה"ב, ויש עוד מדרגה של העושה מאהבה, שזוכה לחיי עוה"ז ועוה"ב. ויש מדרגה גבוהה ביותר כל מי שיעזב לגמרי עניני עוה"ז, וכל מחשבתו הוא בבוראו בלבד ושכרו שיחיה לעד בגופו ונפשו, ולפיכך יאמרו הכתובים בשכר המצות "למען יאריכון ימיך" "והארכת ימים" כי הלשון כולל כל מיני חיים לפי הראוי לכאו"א עכת"ד הרמב"ן. ולדרכינו ביאור הדברים שהנטיעה של חיי עולם לא נשאר שוה אצל כאו"א אלא תלוי בהכנתו ויגיעתו לאיזה חיים יזכה בה.

ונראה שבחיוב של "ובחרת בחיים" נכללת החיוב לכמה יותר חיים שאפשר להשיג, ושיהיה לו מדרגת ה"חיים" היותר גדולה שאפשר, צריכים אמנם להתחיל ממדרגה פחותה, מ"שלא לשמה" ומתוך שלא לשמה בא לשמה, אבל כאמור שאיפתו האמיתית תמיד צריך להיות למדרגה היותר גדולה.

ג)וצריכים להתבונן שאין לנו דבר יותר יקר מרגע אחת של חיים. מרן ראש הישיבה זצ"ל היה רגיל לומר בשם הסבא מסלבודקה זצ"ל על מה שמצינו בחז"ל על גלית שחירף וגידף ארבעים יום, ולמה ניתן לו הכח לחרף ולגדף ארבעים יום בשכר מ' פסיעות שפסעה ערפה אחרי נעמי. ותמה הסבא זצ"ל איזה שכר הוא זה על הפסיעות של ערפה, אטו בשביל מעשה טוב של ערפה שלחמה עם יצרה ללכת אחרי נעמי זכתה לגלית שיחרף ויגדף? אלא הפי' שסוכ"ס זכתה שניתנה מתנה של חיים של ארבעים יום לבן בנה, ואפי' למי שהוא נמצא במדרגה פחותה כמו גלית, אין לך מתנה יותר טובה מן החיים, אין לשער מה שאפשר לעשות עם רגע של חיים, אפשר לשוב בתשובה שלמה ולהגיע למדרגה היותר גדולה.

ד) ישנם הרבה צרכים גשמיים הנצרכים לאדם בשביל לחיות, למשל כאו"א צריך לאכול כדי לחיות. אמנם אין צורך לאכול כל רגע אלא מספיק מה שאוכלים שלש פעמים ביום, ואפשר לחיות ג' ימים בלא אכילה. יש צורך יותר גדול, והוא שתייה, והכלל הוא שכל הנצרך יותר מצוי יותר

בבריאה, והיותר מצוי הוא אויר שנמצא בכל העולם כולו כיון שא"א לחיות אפי' רגע בלא אויר. וכל זה לגבי צרכים הגשמיים, אמנם שכן הוא הדבר לגבי צרכים הרוחניים של האדם,יש מצוות שחייבים בהם רק אחת לחמישים שנה, ויש מצוות שחייבים בהם רק אחת לשבע שנים, יש מצוות שחיבים פעם בשבוע, ויש מצוות שחייבים פעם אחת בכל יום, יש מצוות שחייבים כמה פעמים ביום וכו' והכל על דרך הנ"ל, שחייו הרוחניים ניזון מכח קיום המצוות, ויש מצוות שהנפש נצרך יותר לקיום שלהם, ויש שהנפש נצרך פחות לקיום שלהם, אבל במצות תלמוד תורה כתוב "והגית בו יומם ולילה" מצות תלמוד תורה היא מצוה תמידית שחייבים בה כל רגע, והוא משום שהחיי עולם שנטוע בתוכינו תלויה לגמרי בתלמוד תורה, כמו אויר לנשימה, נותנת התורה חיות לנפש.

ה) והנה במנחות צט: יש מחלוקת תנאים בדין "לפני תמיד" שנאמרה בלחם הפנים ת"ק סבר דבעינן תמיד ממש שעד שלא מסירים את הישנה כבר מניחים את החדשה על השולחן ור' יוסי חולק וס"ל דאפי' סילק הישנה שחרית וסידר החדשה בערב, מיקרי "תמיד". ומדברי ר' יוסי יליף ר' אמי שאפילו לא ישנה אלא פרק א' שחרית ופרק א' בערבית קיים מצוות "לא ימוש ספר התורה הזה מפיך" ור' יוחנן אמר בשם רשב"י שאפי' לא קרא אלא ק"ש שחרית וערבית קיים "לא ימיש" ודבר זה אסור לאומרו לעם הארץ [ופירש"י שלא יאמר בקריאת שמע סגי ולא ירגיל בניו לת"ת] ורבא אמר מצוה לאומרו בפני עם הארץ ופירש"י "דסבר משום ק"ש נוטל שכר גדול כזה "כי אז תצליח את דרכיך," אם הי' עוסק כל היום כל שכן ששכרו גדול ומרגיל את בניו לתלמוד תורה" עכ"ל.

ומפרש המשגיח רבי ירוחם זצ"ל שיטת רבא, שהרי אנו מוציאים שא"א לחיות בלי אויר לנשימה, אמנם הרי למי שאינו יכול לנשום בכוחות עצמו, אפשר לחיות ע"י "מכשיר הנשימה", אמנם מובן לכל אחד הרי לאיזה חיים יחשבו חיים כאלו. וזהו ביאור שיטת רבא, כשישמעו שכל עיקר חיותו של האדם והצלחתו תלויה בלימוד התורה, ויראו שדבר זה שייך אפילו ע"י פרק א' ביום ופרק א' בערבית, הרי יבינו כבר – איזה חיים הוא זה–"דאס הייסט א לעבען"? ודאי שיבקשו יותר תורה, יותר חיים.

אם מכירים ש"החיי עולם נטע בתוכנו" זהו באמת החיים שלו, שוב לא שייך רפיון, ולא שייך זמנים שצריכים "פחות חיים" שהרי עד כמה שיפסיק מעבודתו, הרי יחסר חיי עולם שלו שהי' יכול לצמוח יותר ויותר, ועד כמה שלא צמח, הרי מתה אותו חיות, ואין עצה אחרת שיצמח יותר ויגדל ויעשה פירות אלא על ידי "לא ימוש ספר התורה הזאת מפיך."

ו) יש משל במדרש, שהיו שני אנשים א' ביהודה שהיה כרמו בגליל וא' בגליל שהיה כרמו ביהודה. והסכימו שאותו שביהודה ישמור כרמו של חבירו אשר ביהודה ואותו שבגליל ישמור כרמו של חבירו אשר בגליל. וכך אמר הקב"ה לכלל ישראל, נרי בידכם ונרך בידי, "כי נר מצוה ותורה אור", זהו נרו של הקב"ה הנמצא בידם של ישראל, ונרכם בידי זהו נשמת האדם שהיא בידו של הקב"ה, ע"כ ת"ד המדרש וביאור הדברים, שהרי הקב"ה נתן לנו נשמת חיים "לעבדה ולשמרה," זאת אומרת לעבוד עליה, לטפח אותה להטיב ולגדל אותה, אמנם הרי הנשמה היא חלק אלוק ממעל ואיך אפשר לו להאדם להשפיע עליה? על זה באה התירוץ שחיי עולם נטע בתוכינו,

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ומהו הדרך שאפשר לתת ולהוסיף חיות לחיי עולם האלו, על זה התירוץ "נר בידך" הכוונה ל"נר מצוה ותורה אור" והיינו שאם ישמור את ה"נר ה'" שיקיים המצוות ויתעסק בתורה עם כל הכוחות "מיט אַ ברען", בכך הוא ישמור את ה"נרך בידי" ויזכה לחיי עולם.

איתא בגמ' מנחות צט: "ר' יוחנן ור' אלעזר דאמרי תרווייהו תורה ניתנה במ' יום ונשמה נוצרה במ' יום, ללמד שכל המשמר תורתו נשמתו משתמרת וכל שאינו משמר את התורה אין נשמתו משתמרת. ומה הפירוש "המשמר תורה" הוא מה שחז"ל לומדים מהפסוק "השמר לך ושמור נפשך מאד פן תשכח" וכו' שיש לאו של שכחת התורה, ואמרים חז"ל שאינו חייב עד "שיסירם מלבו." ומהו העצה שיזכור את תלמודו? העצה תלויה באופן הלימוד עצמה, אם לומדים עם חיות, "מיט אַ ברען", הרי באופן כזה נעשה התורה חלק מעצמותו, ועל חלק של עצמו לא שייך שכחה. ועוד עצה הוא שהלימוד צריך להיות רצוף בלי הפסקים, ויחזור על תלמודו, ואם לומדים באופן כזה, אז חשיב לימוד באופן שאינו "מסירה מלבו," ועי"ז משמר את התורה ונשמתו משתמרת.

ז) בפרשת בהעלותך יש נ' הפוכות לפני פרשת ויהי בנסוע הארון ולאחרי'ה. ולמדו מזה חז"ל (שבת קט"ז) ששני פסוקים אלו יש להם דין ספר בפני עצמן ולפיכך מנו ז' חומשים. והקשה שם בכלי יקר, הלא עיקר תורה למצוותיה ניתנו, ואיזה מצוה יש בהך ספר של ויהי בנסוע הארון ובמה חשיב ספר. ומפרש הכלי יקר שיש כאן רמז למצוות פרי' ורבי' כיון דכתיב בהך פרשה–שובה ר' רבבות אלפי ישראל, ולומדים מזה חז"ל שאין השכינה שורה על פחות משני אלפים ושני רבבות מישראל ואילו חסר אפי' נפש אחת ל"ש השראת השכינה, וחסר בהשראת השכינה הנצרכת לתורה בישראל, א"כ זה רמז למצות פריה ורביה, וא"כ מי שלא התעסק בפריה ורביה גורם לשכינה שתסתלק מישראל יעו"ש בפנים.

ונראה שיש כאן לימוד גם לולא מצות פריה ורביה, שנלמד כאן החשיבות שיש לכאו"א מכלל ישראל שבלעדו ל"ש תורה אצל כלל ישראל משום שבלעדו חסר בהשראת השכינה.

ח) בואו ונעבוד ונתחזק בכל היסודות שנתבארו כאן, להתבונן בחשיבות שיש לכל יחיד ויחיד, להכיר את גודל המתנה הטובה של מעט יותר חיים, להשריש אצלינו ה"וחיי עולם נטע בתוכנו" שיש בתוך כולנו חיי נצח, לדעת שיש לנו חיוב של "ובחרת בחיים" שיהי' שאיפתנו לחזק נטיעה זו, ולעשות שמירות כדי שלא נשכח ח"ו את התורה, שכל העסק שלנו יהי' רק תורה, ללמוד עם חיוב, עם התלהבות, רצוף בלי הפסקים, ועם נתחזק בכל זה, נזכה ל"אם אתם משמרים את נרי אני אשמור את נרך" ונזכה למדרגות עליונות של חיים.









מורינו הראש הישיבה
הגאון רבי שמואל קמנצקי שליט"א

מודים על העבר וצועקים על העתיד. בהודאה בכל לבב שזכינו להעמיד תלמידים גדולי תורה יראי השם. כן תפילתי שתומשך הרבצת התורה על ידינו להעמיד תלמידים לומדי תורה ומחזיקי תורה יראים ושלמים.

בגדרי תפילה

רמב"ם פ"א מהלכות תפלה מצ"ע להתפלל בכל יום שנאמר ועבדתם את ה"א. מפי השמועה למדו שעבודה זו היא תפלה שנא' ולעבדו בכל לבבכם. אמרו חכמים אי זו היא עבודה שבלב, זו תפלה עכ"ל, וכן כתב בסה"מ מצוה ה', ובהשגות הרמב"ן הקשה מהא דאמרינן בכמה מקומות תפלה דרבנן. ובתוך דבריו כתב וז"ל ומה שדרשו בספרי ולעבדו זו תלמוד, ד"א זו תפלה אסמכתא היא או לומר שמכלל העבודה שנלמוד תורתו ושנתפלל בעת הצרות ותהיינה עינינו ולבנו אליו כעיני עבדים אל יד אדוניהם וזה כענין שכתוב וכי תבוא מלחמה בארצכם על הצר הצורר אתכם והרעיתם בחצוצרות ונזכרתם לפני ה"א והיא מצוה על צרה שתבוא על הצבור לזעוק לפניו בתפלה ובתרועה וכו' וכן כתב הרמב"ן שם בסוף השגתו וז"ל ואם אולי יהי' מדרשם בתפלה עיקר מן התורה נמנה אותו במנינו של הרב ונאמר שהיא מצוה לעת הצרות שנאמין שהוא יתברך ויתעלה שומע תפלה והוא המציל מן הצרות בתפלה וזעקה והבן זה עכ"ל.

בספר החינוך בסוף מצוה תל"ג מסיים שם וז"ל ועובר ע"ז ועמד יום ולילה בלא תפלה כלל בטל עשה זה כדעת הרמב"ם ז"ל ומי שצר לו ולא קרא אל הש"י להושיעו בטל עשה זה כדעת הרמב"ן. ולכאורה צ"ע אמאי לא מנה הרמב"ן במנין שלו הך מצוה להתפלל בעת צרה. במגילת אסתר הקשה בשיטת הרמב"ן וז"ל ומה שאמר עוד שאם היא דרשה גמורה לא תהיה רק בעת צרה, אני אומר שעל זה כבר נצטוינו בתרועת החצוצרות עכ"ל. עוד צ"ע ברמב"ן פ' אמור (פרק כג פסוק ב) וז"ל וטעם מקראי קדש שיהיו ביום הזה כולם קרואים ונאספים לקדש אותו, כי מצוה היא על ישראל להקבץ בבית האלהים ביום מועד לקדש היום בפרהסיא בתפלה והלל לאל בכסות נקי. וכן מפרש הפרמ"ג במשבצות זהב סי' ת"צ אות ב'. ולפי"ז למה לא ביאר הרמב"ן שמצות תפלה בעת צרה או ביו"ט מדין מקרא קודש.

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ברמב"ם פ"א מהלכות תעניות מצ"ע מן התורה לזעוק ולהריע בחצוצרות על כל צרה שתבא על הצבור שנאמר על הצר הצורר אתכם והרעותם בחצוצרות כלומר כל דבר שייצר לכם כגון בצורת ודבר וארבה וכיוצא בהן זעקו עליהן והריעו עכ"ל, והצ"ע דמה נתחדש כאן דהא לשיטת הרמב"ם מצות תפלה היא מדאורייתא ולכאורה זהו קושית המג"א על הרמב"ן דחיוב תפילה דוקא בעת צרה הרי כבר נכלל במצוה זו. אבל צ"ע גם לשיטת הרבמ"ם דסובר דתפלה מה"ת. והי' אפש"ל דכאן נתחדש מצוה להריע בחצוצרות יתר על התפילה, אלא שצ"ע ממ"ש שם הרמב"ם במנין המצוה וז"ל מ"ע אחת והיא לצעוק לפני ה' בכל עת צרה גדולה שלא תבא על הצבור עכ"ל. הרי לא כלל בהמצות עשה להריע בחצוצרות שזהו עיקר מה שנתחדש בהך מצוה וצ"ע. במגיד משנה הקשה על דברי הרמב"ם וז"ל וראיתי לרבינו בסהמ"צ שלו שמנה תרועה זו ותקיעה שבשעת הקרבנות במצוה אחת, ותמה אני למה שהרי שני פסוקים הם בכתוב וצ"ע בתירוצו. בספר פרשת דרכים הוסיף להקשות דאף שמעשה שניהם שוה הואיל ואין זמנם שוה שזה על קרבנות וזה על צרה שלא תבא מן הדין למנותם לשתי מצוות וכמו בתקיעת שופר של ראש השנה ויובל שהם נמנים לשתי מצות.

וע' מש"כ הפמ"ג במשב"ז סי' תקע"ה שענין תקיעות הוא לעורר כיוון גדול להשי"ת וזהו מצות חצוצרות בעת קרבן שצריך כוונה גדולה שלא יקריבוהו רק לשמים משא"כ בשופר של ר"ה ויובל הם שני ענינים זה לשבור לבינו ולשוב בתשובה, וזה לחירות עיי"ש. דבריו מיוסדים עפ"י מש"כ בס' החינוך מצוה שפ"ד וז"ל ומשרשי המצוה לפי שבשעת הקרבן היו צריכין לכוין דעתם יפה כמו שידוע שהוא נפסל במחשבות ידועות וכן צריך הקרבן כוונה שלימה לפני אדון הכל שצי+ונו עליו וג"כ בעת הצרה צריך האדם כוון גדול דהתחננו לפני בוראו שירחם עליו ויצלהו מצרתו וכו' עיי"ש.

בגמ' שבועות (יג.) וכריתות (ז.) דתניא יכול לא יהא יוה"כ מכפר אא"כ התענה בו וקראו מקרא קודש ולא עשה בו מלאכה לא התענה בו ולא קראו מקרא קודש ועשה בו מלאכה מנין ת"ל יום כפורים הוא מ"מ. ופרש"י לא קידשו בברכותיו לומר מקדש ישראל ויוה"כ, וכן פרש"י בכריתות מקרא קודש בתקון סדר התפלה. ובתוס' הקשו דלא אשכחן ברכות ביוה"כ דליהווי דאורייתא. בתוס' כריתות פירשו מקרא קודש בכסות נקיי' ובערוך לנר מפרש דרש"י בכריתות וז"ל י"ל דס"ל דאם הקריאה דכסות נקייה נקרא קראו מקרא קדש כ"ש הקריאה בתפילה וכיון דהחיוב הוא מן התורה להפריש בכבוד הימים שנאמר בהם מקראי קדש משאר הימים מקיים מצוה זו באיזו ענין מפרישו לכבוד ולכן עתה שתקנו החכמים סדר התפלותך והברכות מקיים בהם מקרא קדש ג"כ וכן אם לה התפלל בו התפלות והברכות שתנו מפני שאינו רוצה לקדשו אזי נקרא מן התורה לא קראו מקרא קדש כיון שנתכוון בזה לחלל יוה"כ עכ"ל, ועי' עוד בספר צפנת פנעח על הרמב"ם דמפרש דשיטת רש"י דהוי דאורייתא דכל היכי דצריך הזכרה לצורך היום הוי מה"ת.

והנראה בזה ולמעט במחלוקת דאפשר לבאר בשיטת רש"י בענין מקראי קודש שלא קיבל בברכותיו לומר מקדש ישראל ויוה"כ עפ"י שיטת הרמב"ן בחומש פ' אמור הנ"ל דטעם מקראי

קודש שיהיו היום הזה כולם קרואים ונאספים לקדש אותו כי מצוה היא על ישראל להקבץ בבית אלקים ביום מועד לקדש היום בפרהסיא דתפלה והלל לקל בכסות נקי' ולעשות אותו יום משתה ושמחה כמו שנא' בקבלה וכו' הרי ממעלות החג שמחייב את האדם בתפלה ובהלל ובכסות נקי', וביאור הדבר שהקב"ה נתגלה בימי המועד שהם ימי עלי' וימי הדין וזהו המחייב את האדם לקבל פניו בהלל ובתפלה ובכסות נקי'. ולכן נראה שאין זה מגדר כיבוד וכמו שביאר בספר ערוך לנר בכריתות לבאר שיטת רש"י אלא שעל האדם לקדם פני ה' בתפלה ובהלל וכסות נקי', ובכן אפשר לבאר דהך מצוה לצעוק לפני ה' בכל עת צרה גדולה שלא תבא על הציבור, וכמש"כ הרמב"ם בכתר דריש הלכות תעניות הביאור שהצרה מחייבית את האדם להתקדם להקב"ה וכמו שהוסיף ברמב"ם בהלכה ד' ודבר זה מדרכי התשובה הוא שבזמן שתבוא צרה ויזעקו עלי' ויריעו ידעו הכל שבגלל מעשיהם הרעים הורע להם ככתוב עונותיכם הטו וכו'. וזהו כונת החינוך שענין חצוצרות ליישב כונת האדם שהצרה צריכה יחוד הכונה בהתחננו לפני השי"ת.

ולפי"ז יתיישב קצת הא דכתב הרמב"ם דכתב בראש הלכות תעניות מ"ע לצעוק לפני השי"ת כו' ולא הזכיר כלל הך מצוה להריע בחצוצרות אלא המכוון שהמצוה להכיר שזה מעשה ה' ולא מקרה וכמו שהאריך בהלכה ג'. ובזה יתורץ קושיית המגילת אסתר שאם היא דרשה גמורה לא תהי' רק בעת צרה והקשה במג"א שזה כבר נצטוינו בתרועת חצוצרות ולפי הנ"ל אין זה ענין של תפלה אלא להכיר שזה מעשה השם, וזהו שכותב הרמב"ן להך מצוה לזעוק בתפלה ובתרועה אבל המחייב הוא הצרה עצמה שע"י יתקרב להקב"ה, וכשנדייק בסוף דברי הרמב"ן בהשגתו במצוה ה' מוכח כמש"כ וז"ל ואם אולי יהי' מדרשם בתפלה עיקר מה"ת נמנה אותו במנינו של הרב ונאמר שהיא מצוה לעת הצרות שנאמין שהוא יתברך ויתעלה שומע תפלה והוא המציל מן הצרות בתפלה וזעקה והבן זה עכ"ל הרי לא הדגיש עצם התפלה אלא שנאמין שהוא שומע תפלה ומציל מן הצרה דהיינו האמונה שכן הוא ולא עצם התפילה.

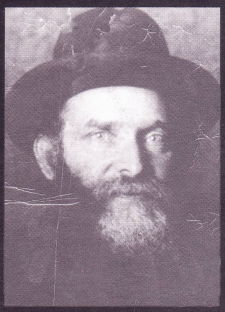
אבל עדיין צריך עיון במה שהמליץ הרמב"ן בשורש ג' על שיטת בה"ג שמנה מצות פרשת ויחל משה תחנתו של מש"ר ע"ה על מעשה העגל שהיא פרשת צבור ונוהגת לדורות שממנה נלמוד תחנונים בעת הצרות כמ"ש ויעבור ה' על פניו מלמד שנתעטף הקב"ה כש"ץ ואמר לו כ"ז שישראל חוטאין לפני עשה כסדר הזה ואני מוחל להם. ובמגילת אסתר חולק דלא צריכים להך דויחל משה שהרי נצטוינו להתפלל בכל יום בין עת צרה בין עת הרווחה. ולפי מש"כ אפשר שיש מחייב מטעם הצרה מצד עצם ההאמנה, אף שכבר התפלל ויצא כבר חובת תפלה. אבל עדיין קשה וכמו שהקשה במגלת אסתר בעצמו שככר נצטוינו בתרועת חצוצרות שבזה נכלל מצות תפלה וא"כ מה נתחדש בהך דויחל משה וצ"ע.

DEDICATED BY MR. AND MRS. CHAIM KAUFMAN



The seeds of Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia were planted years ago in the small town of Kletzk, home of the revered sage, Moreinu Rav Aharon Kotler zt"l.

When the fires of hate raged through Europe during W.W.II, Rav Aharon was forced to flee, and his beloved Yeshiva was destroyed.

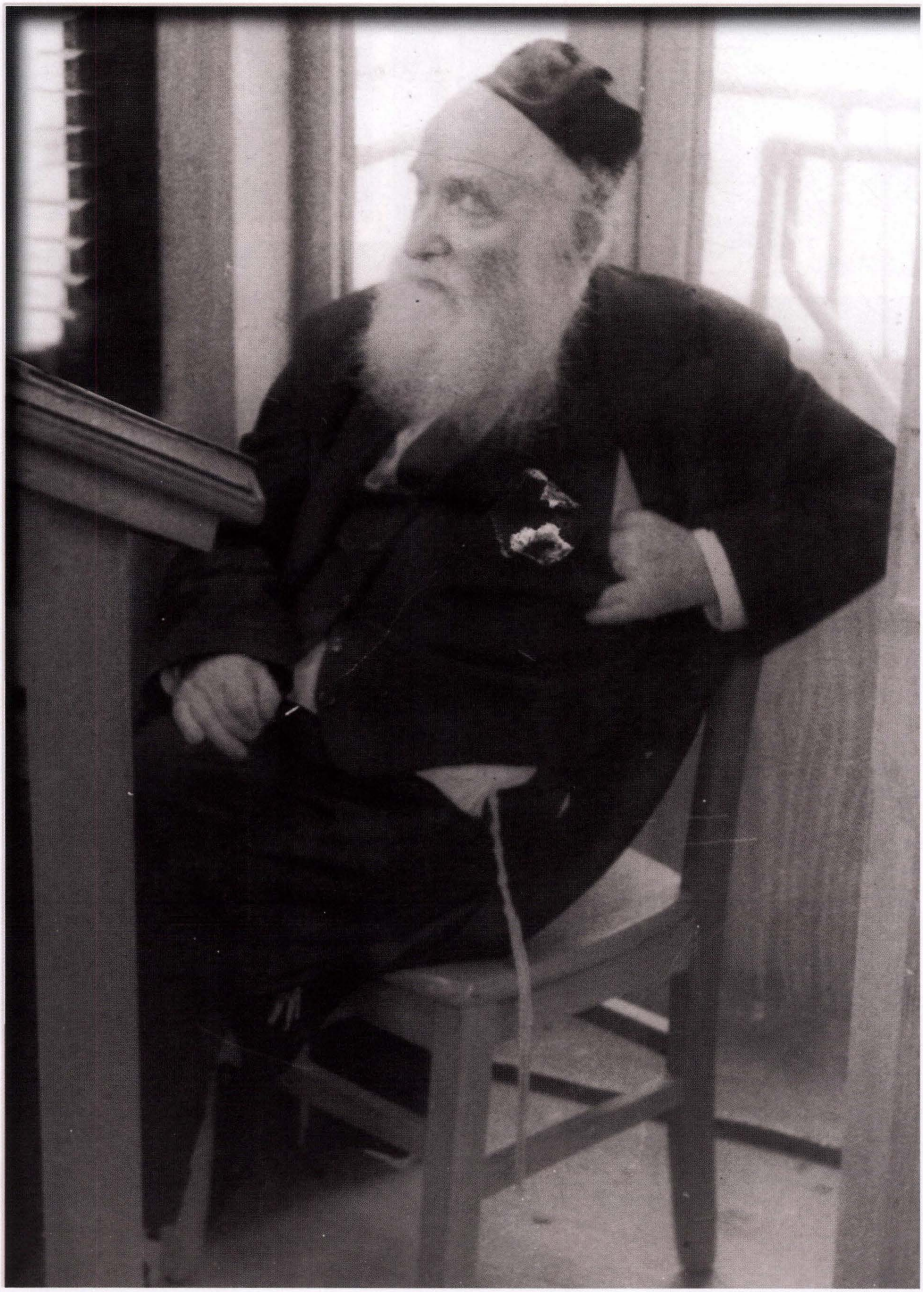


Upon his arrival in America, he was determined to rebuild what was lost. With his fiery resolve, he established Torah in America, refusing to compromise in a "new World".



He started a yeshiva in Lakewood, which produced a new generation of Torah leaders. In this setting, the Roshei Yeshiva of Philadelphia spent their formative years, absorbing fully the message of their rebbe.

Above: Morienu HaGaon Harav Aharon Kotler zt"l in Kletsk, c. 1922. Middle: Rav Aharon zt"l in the 1930's. Bottom: Rav Aharon zt'l 1950's



Rav Aharon zt'l following a shiur in Philadelphia Yeshiva - 1961





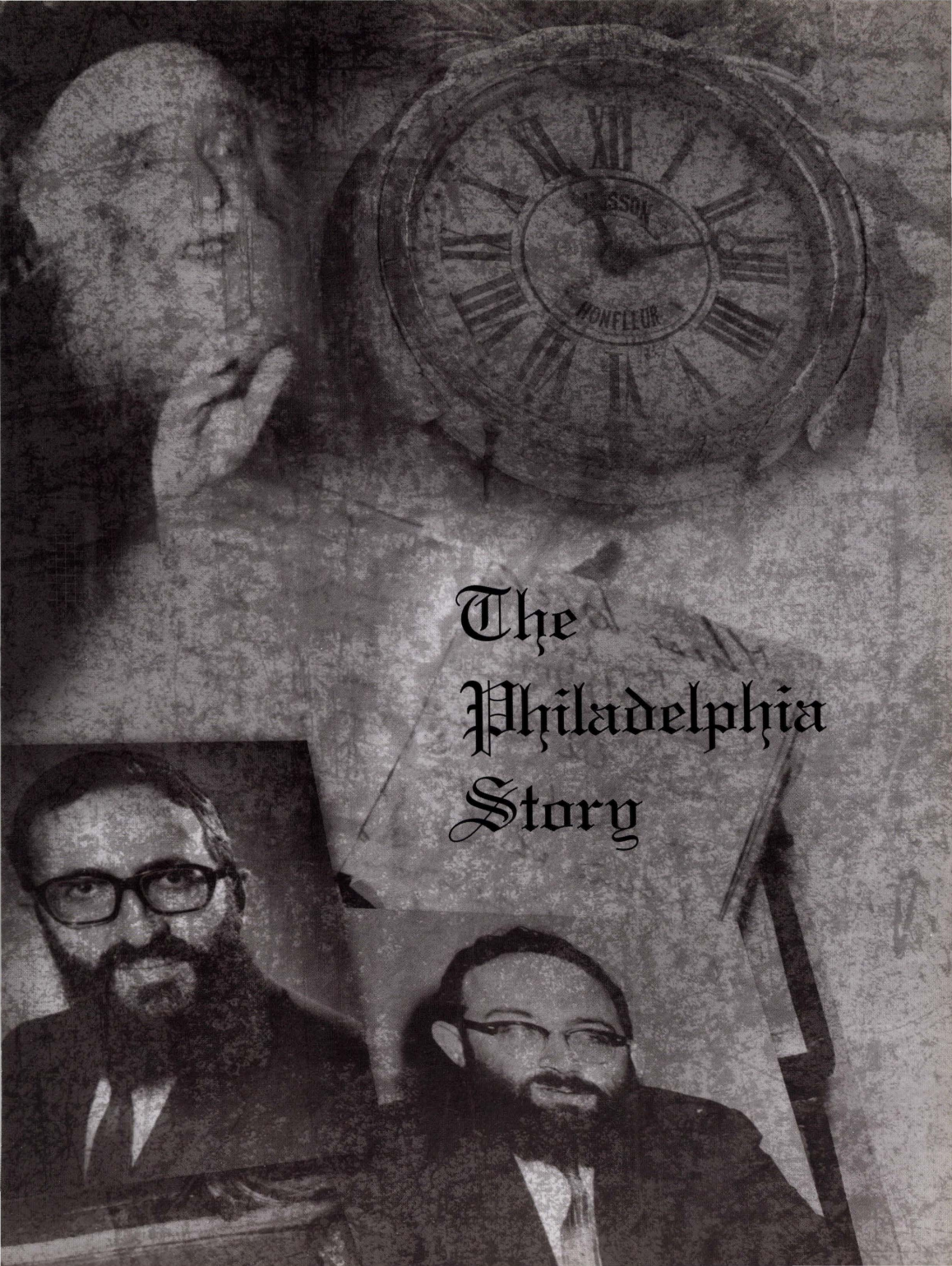
It is rare indeed for a yeshiva to have the exceptional fortune to be led by two such revered gedolim as our Roshei Hayeshiva. Perhaps the greatest impetus for talmidim's growth is the recognition of heights to strive for. While teenagers can hardly attempt to fathom their Roshei Hayeshiva's gadlus, they do intuitively sense it, and it imbues them with a sense of mission and shteiging.

As each Rosh Hayeshiva contributes his own unique approach, life instruction and Torah personality, the confluence of input is one that has been of unparalleled value to bochurim and alumni as well. The Roshei Hayeshiva's own legendary interaction has also been a lesson unto itself.

Surely the foundation of the yeshiva's outstanding success throughout the years is the synthesis of guidance and leadership provided by the Roshei Hayeshiva shlita.






The
Philadelphia
Story



The Philadelphia Story

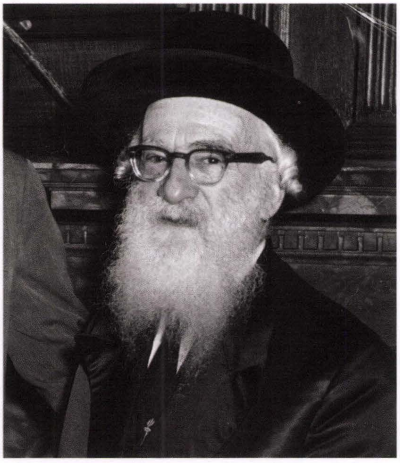
Often, pivotal events in history are not recognized as such until much later, when their significance becomes apparent in retrospect. One could certainly apply this observation to the inauspicious beginnings of the Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia.

In order to appreciate the unlikely founding and early years of the Yeshiva's existence, it is necessary to understand Philadelphia Jewry of the 1950's, as well as the challenges that were faced by the Torah world at large. Philadelphia had been the cradle of the Conservative movement in America since the early 1900's, and was still the epicenter of that movement's activity by the 1950's. While there was a nominal presence of authentic Torah Jews as well, they were vastly outnumbered by their less observant but substantially more affluent brethren. Moreover, the Conservative movement had quite successfully blurred the crucial distinctions between itself and Orthodoxy, and presented a glamorous picture of Judaism infused with modernity. Sadly, many of the less educated among Orthodoxy's ranks fell prey to this deception.

DEDICATED BY MR. AND MRS.
SHMUEL DOVID LEVINSON



HARAV NOSSON WACHTFOGEL ZT'L



HARAV MOSHE LIPSHUTZ ZT'L

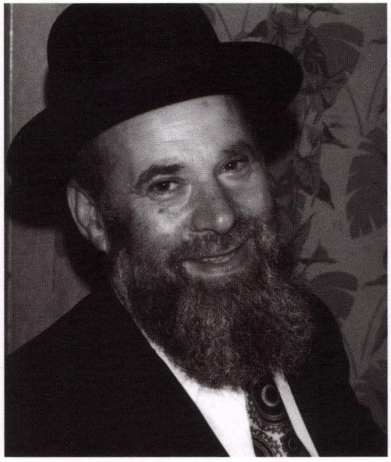
All of which did not logically point to Philadelphia as a likely location to found a yeshiva. In fact, when a different yeshiva entertained the possibility of relocating to Philadelphia, a local Rav practically forbade them to do so.

Rav Moshe Lipshutz was the Rav of K'hal Machzikei Hadas on Sixth Street in Philadelphia. A warm and vibrant rav of the classic chassidishe mold, Rav Lipshutz felt that a Bais Medrash level yeshiva should be established in Philadelphia to serve as a mokom Torah and a rallying point for bnei Torah. It is not surprising that when Rav Lipshutz began actively soliciting for qualified Roshei Yeshiva the response was skeptical. Anyone familiar with the city's religious climate considered his quest unrealistic at best. Rav Lipshutz, undeterred, continued his search, becoming a frequent visitor at Beth Medrash Govoha of Lakewood.

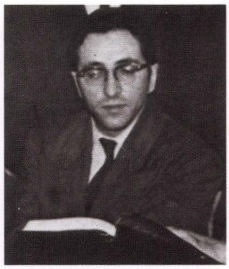
It was the legendary Rav Nosson Wachtfogel zt'l, mashgiach of BMG who took Rav Lipshutz' request seriously. Rav Nosson was ever on the lookout for opportunities to expand the horizons of Torah in America, and he was not daunt-

ed by what others perceived as insurmountable obstacles. Thus, it was he, along with R' Meir Mintz zt'l, who suggested Rav Shmuel Kamanetsky for the position of Rosh HaYeshiva.

Not all the parties involved were of like mind. Rav Lipshutz was interested in opening a Bais HaMedrash, whereas Rav Nosson and Rav Shmuel felt that a high school was most crucial for Philadelphia's youth in order for authentic Torah Judaism to take root and thrive.

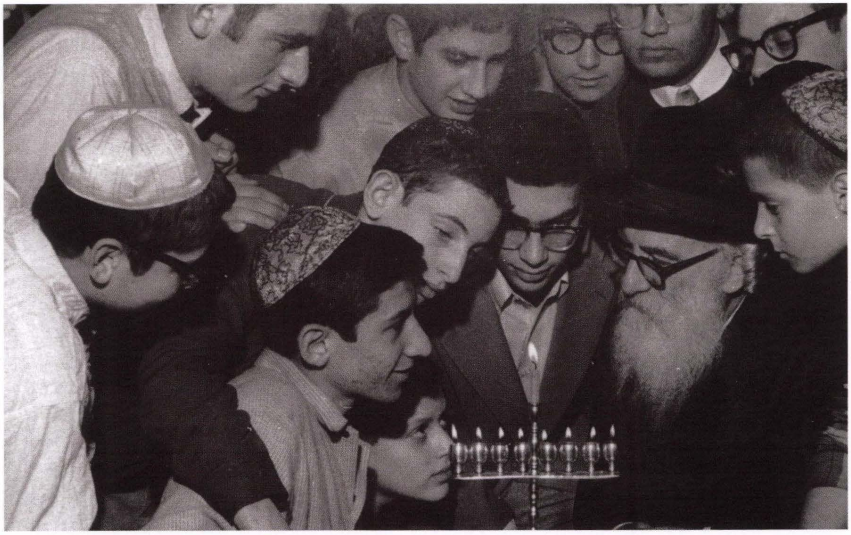


HARAV MEIR MINTZ ZT'L



THE ROSH HAYESHIVA, RAV SHMUEL SHLITA, DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF THE YESHIVA.

CHANUKAH 1956. TALMIDIM FROM THE YESHIVA GATHER AROUND RAV MOSHE LIPSHUTZ.





HARAV SHOLOM SCHNEIDERMAN ZT'L



HARAV YAAKOV KAMENETSKY ZT'L AND HARAV NAFTALI RIFF ZT''L ARRIVE AT YESHIVA FOR A BRIS.

In fact, a yeshiva high school actually had been opened some time earlier, but its existence was short-lived. Rabbi Sholom Shneiderman, a talmid of the RaShaB, was the Rav of K'hal Dorshei Shalom in Philadelphia. He was very involved in the struggle to advance chinuch in Philadelphia, and although the high school he had opened did not survive, he was very instrumental in the eventual opening of the Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia.

The decision was reached to open a pilot Bais Medrash level class that would serve as the nucleus around which a high school would subsequently be formed. However, in order to accomplish this, it would be necessary to enlist the assistance of local rabbonim, whose endorsement would hopefully convince wary ba'alei batim to embrace the new yeshiva. To this end, Rav Nosson and Rav Meir Mintz worked tirelessly, campaigning and garnering both moral and monetary support, laying the necessary groundwork for the yeshiva to flourish. In a short time, many local rabbonim were galvanized into action, and became strong advocates of the Yeshiva's mission. It is interesting to note the famed Rov of Camden, HoRav Naftali Riff zt'l, also rallied to the yeshiva's cause although his kehilla did not directly benefit from its founding.

It should be noted that there were a number of ba'alei batim and lay leaders who were also active on behalf of the yeshiva. Among these were Mr. Nathan Perilstein, the Yeshiva's first president, Mr. Hyman Korman, who served as Chairman

הרב שלום צבי שניידערמאן זצ"ל

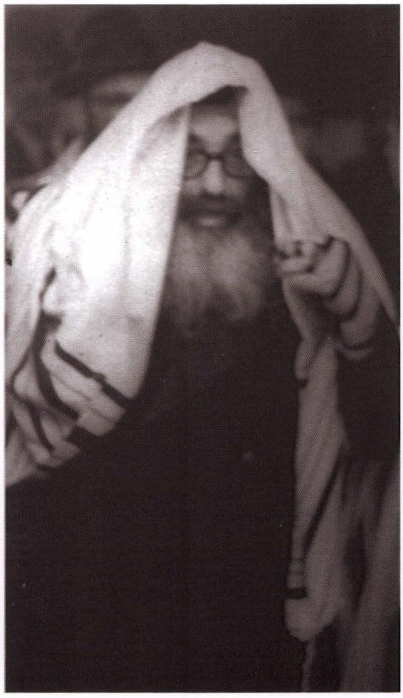
A talmid of the Rashab, Rav Sholom Schneiderman zt'l was determined to improve the yiddishkeit of the Strawberry Mansion community. In what was considered a very bold move, he established Yeshiva Ohel Moishe, the only talmud torah that had a dormitory to shelter young minds from the elements of society, as they progress in Torah. Unfortunately, those efforts did not bear fruit, and the yeshiva was forced to close its doors. When the idea surfaced of establishing this yeshiva, he embraced the project by offering his building as the Yeshiva's first home. It should be noted that this was done covertly lest they raise the ire of the Yeshiva's powerful opponents. En route to a meeting for what was to become our Yeshiva, Rav Sholom was tragically struck by a car. Rav Sholom and his Rebbetzin Charna ע"ה who toiled for Torah and for the klal were not blessed with children of their own. Their legacy lives on in the Yeshiva and its talmidim.

שם עולם אתן להם אשר לא יכרת

of the board, and Mr. Edward Gornish. The important behind-the-scenes work of these and other individuals was fundamental to the Yeshiva's success.

Meanwhile, it became clear that the monumental task of opening and successfully conducting a yeshiva was not a job for one individual. Rav Shmuel chose Rav Dov Schwartzmann, who was then delivering chaburos at Mesivta Rabbi Chaim Berlin, to be his shutaf. Rav Hutner zt'l, the Rosh HaYeshiva, reluctantly consented to Rav Dov's departure.

It was Rav Sholom Shneiderman who took care of the basic necessity of a building. With his connections at the local Talmud Torah, he procured the use of a building in the Strawberry Mansion area



RAV HUTNER ZT'L CAME TO YESHIVA TO ATTEND THE BRIS OF RAV ZEV'S SON, THE FUTURE RAV AVROHOM YITZCHOK HOBERMAN, - NINTH GRADE REBBE. BOTTOM: RAV SHMUEL WITH RAV ZEV .





RAV ZEV SURROUNDED BY TALMIDIM ON PURIM.

that was not being used at the time. The building served the multiple functions of Bais Hamedrash, dormitory, kitchen and dining room. And so it was, on Chanukah 5714, December 1953, that nine bochurim harking from various mesivtos in New York, convened in the old building for their first z'man at the Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia.

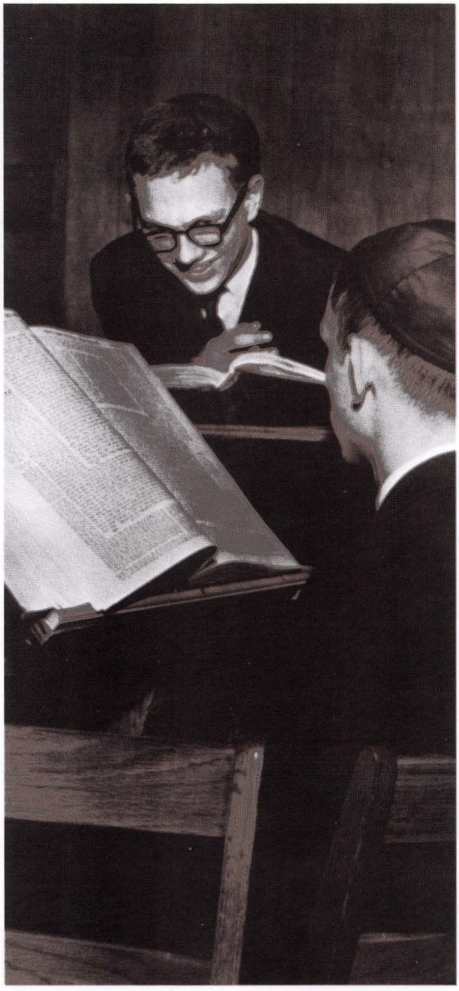
In September of 1955, when the fledgling Bais Hamedrash was a almost two years old, the pilot ninth grade class of the Talmudical Yeshiva began. Carefully selecting from the elite cadres of BMG's scholars, the roshei yeshivah chose Rav Zev Hoberman to inaugurate the high school. Although the first class did include a number of local Philadelphians, the majority of boys came from New York and elsewhere. Indeed, it is interesting to note, that the yeshiva which was initially intended primarily to service the host community, has had a great impact on the broader Orthodox world. While there has always been a noticeable presence of Philadelphians in the high school, the



lion's share of the student body has been from other areas.

It must be realized that although a small number of yeshiva high-schools with dormitories did exist at the time, the concept was somewhat of a novelty. Indeed, any high school which put such an emphasis on the primacy of Torah lishmah – for its own sake – was not at all in consonance with the prevailing attitude of the time, which reflected a pursuit of The American Dream.

One of the cornerstones of the yeshiva's philosophy was the absolute, unequivocal approach towards the quality and the centrality of the limudei kodesh program. Although many parents' primary concern was their child's secular education, which the yeshiva provided, the yeshiva's goal and mission statement remained clear. The gemorah would be studied in depth at a high level of scholarship, so that talmidei chachomim of the highest caliber would develop.



In order to accommodate the yeshiva's additional enrollment, and with an eye towards the anticipated continued growth, the yeshiva in 1955 purchased a building at 6040 Drexel Rd. The building served as Bais hamedrash, dining area, kitchen, and partial dormitory

DEDICATED IN HONOR OF OUR PARENTS
MR. AND MRS. SHLOMO RIEDER
BY YUSSI AND ESTHER RIEDER













Clockwise from top left: The first Bais Medrash at 6040. A group of the very first talmidim of the Yeshiva. The Dining Room in 1956. Two talmidim from the early days.







facility. An additional dormitory site was rented on nearby Woodbine Avenue.

Things seemed to be developing nicely for the nascent Yeshiva, as the following year saw the addition of another class. The yeshiva was earning a reputation for excellence, and was beginning to gain the confidence of potential applicants.

And then, an unanticipated crisis occurred. Due to personal reasons, Rav Dov found it necessary to leave Philadelphia. As the yeshiva was still in its gestation period, this event could have had devastating repercussions. However, in late 1956, Rav Elya Svei, a talmid of Lakewood who had been delivering chaburos in the Mirrer

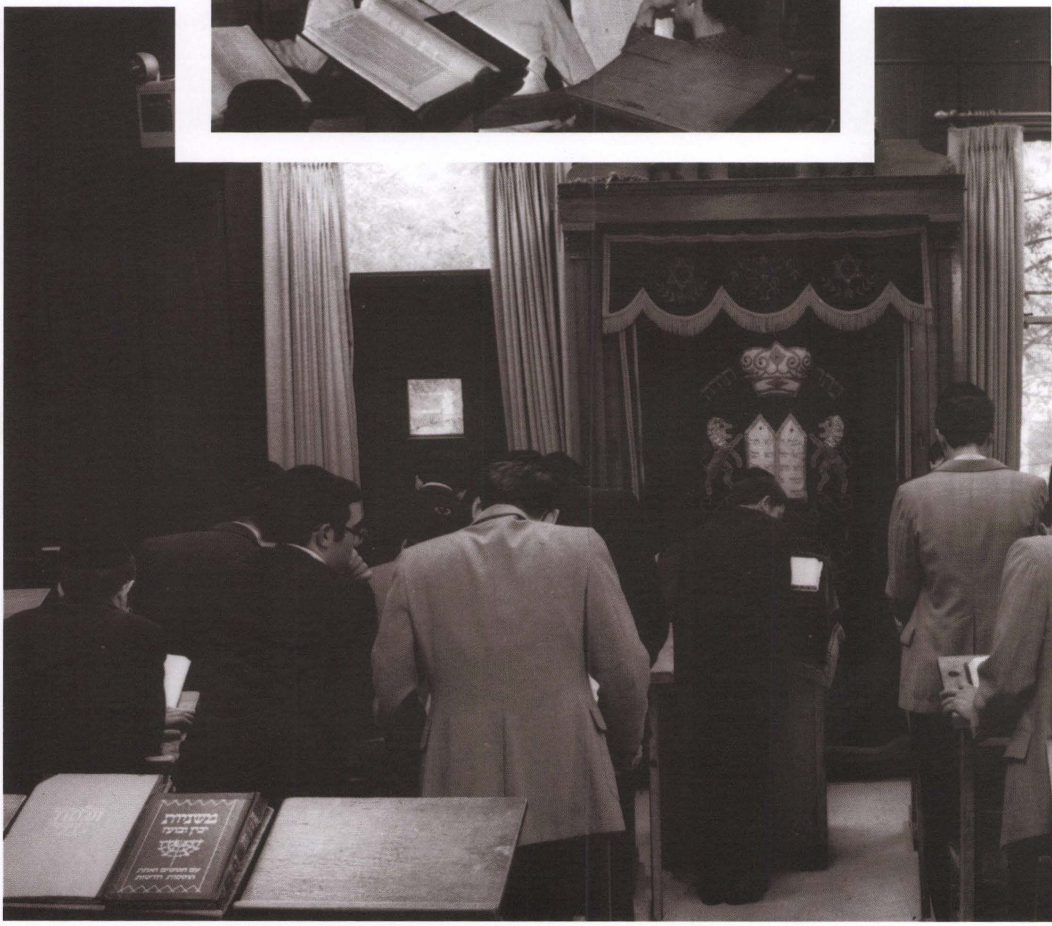


Yeshiva, assumed the vacant position of Rosh Hayeshiva. Rav Shmuel and Rav Elya had been childhood acquaintances in Europe, where their fathers had studied in Slabodka, and had enjoyed a very close relationship throughout the years. They learned together as chavrusos in Bais Medrash Govoha.

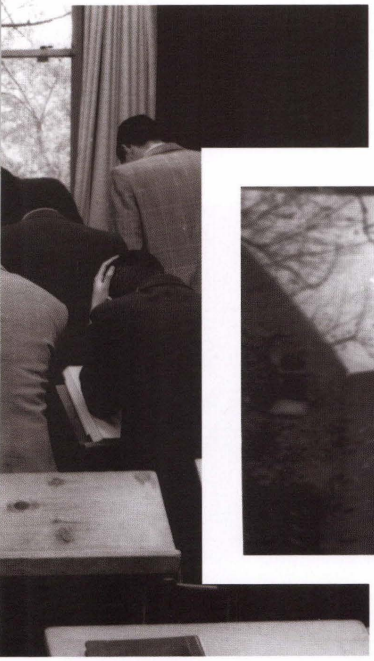
Several bochurim came from Lakewood at this juncture, in order to lend chizuk to the bais hamedrash during the transition period. One of these was a young Uri Mandelbaum, who would eventually become a member of the hanhalah.

With abundant siyata d'shmaya, the yeshiva continued to thrive uninterruptedly. By 1958, the high school was complete. The ninth grade shiur was given by Rav Uri Mandelbaum, the tenth by Rav Moshe Eisemann, the eleventh grade rebbe was Rav Leib Taub, and Rav Zev Hoberman taught the twelfth grade.















The yeshiva's growth was not only discernible in numbers but in the type of bochurim who now sought to be accepted. Whereas initially the Roshei Yeshivah would canvass other schools or summer camps trying to find bochurim whose latent talents had not yet blossomed, the yeshiva had now, in those few years achieved renown for uncompromised excellence in learning. Bochurim who aspired to develop into true bnei Torah recognized the Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia as a unique opportunity to do so.

ABOVE LEFT: REB URI DURING HIS EARLY DAYS AT THE YESHIVA.
LEFT: (L TO R) REB URI, REB AVROHOM, REB LEIB.
BELOW: RAV SHMUEL WITH TALMIDIM OF THE YESHIVA





LEFT TO RIGHT: RAV MOSHE, RAV ELYA, RAV LEIB.

Significantly, from its very inception the yeshiva also placed great emphasis on the refining of middos and the study of mussar. Indeed, the daily mussar seder is seen as a crucial element of the yeshiva's success in the molding of b'nei torah who are clearly identifiable as Philadephia talmidim. Periodic shmuessen by the Roshei Hayeshiva, and later by the Mashgiach, Rav Avrohom Golombek, are basic staples of the complete chinuch that the yeshiva espouses.



Beyond the textual study of mussar, there is perhaps an element that has played an even more central role in producing this special brand of bnei Torah. For it is ultimately the subtle, subliminal influence of role models that forms the backbone of character development and life's views. As bochurim

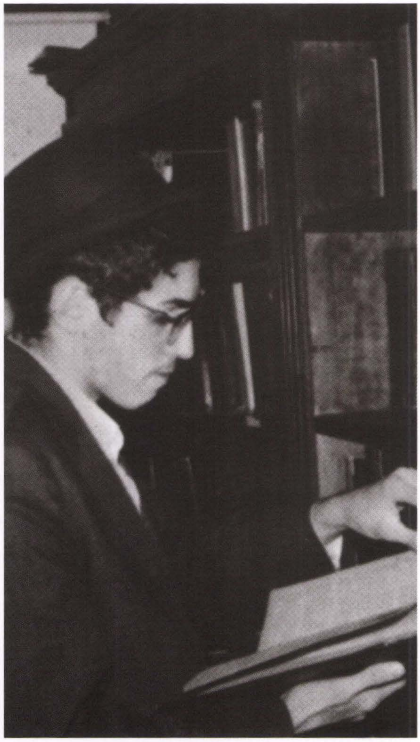
HARAV MOSHE CHEVRONI ZT'L, ROSH YESHIVAS CHEVRON, LISTENS TO A COMMENT AFTER DELIVERING A SHIUR IN THE PHILADELPHIA BAIS MEDRASH.

DEDICATED BY DUVIE AND YOCHEVED FISHER



witness the constant striving for growth and improvement displayed by the Roshei Hayeshiva, this ideal becomes incorporated into their own mindset: don't stagnate in life. Always continue shteiging, both in learning and in personal growth.

Similarly the ultimacy of k'vod shomayim as the absolute value in rendering many life and tzibur decisions, is one that has been well absorbed. As personal concerns, even apparent spiritual gains, are considered by the Roshei Hayeshiva only iin light of the ulimate resultant Honor of Hashem, bochurim observe and emulate.



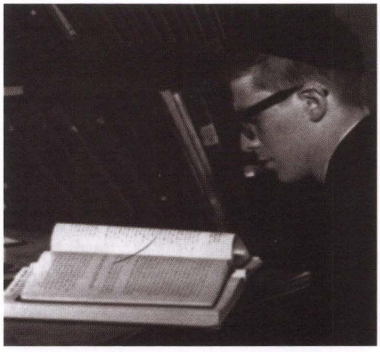
To accommodate some local bochurim whose background in Gemara was less extensive, the



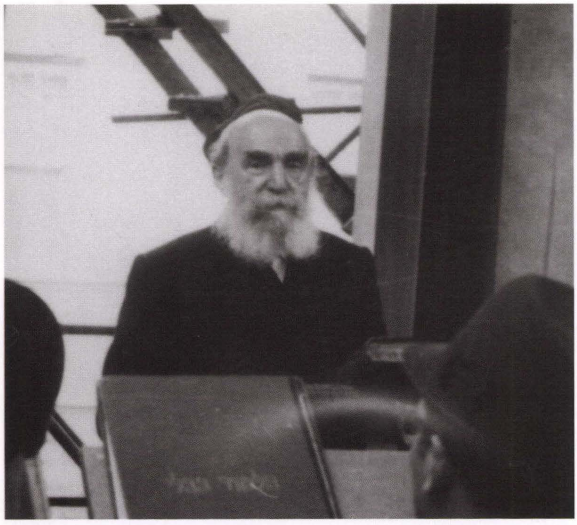
yeshiva at this stage began engaging the services of an additional ninth grade rebbe, to teach a parallel class. This helped the weaker boys gradually mainstream with their peers in the regular class. This, too, was a reflection of a core component of the yeshiva's unwritten mission statement - to assist each bochur in achieving his maximum potential, without compromising the overall high caliber of learning.

In 1959, the yeshiva moved into the recently purchased building at 6063 Drexel Road, which served as a dormitory, bais hamedrash, dining room and kitchen facility. The campus was beneficially consolidated, no longer requiring the use of the rented Woodbine Avenue facility. The building at 6040 Drexel was now used exclusively as a dormitory. In conjunction with the otherwise low key chanukas habayis of the new bais hamedrash, a momentous event took place. The Rosh Hayeshiva of Lakewood, Rav Aharon Kotler visited Philadelphia, and





OPPOSITE PAGE CLOCKWISE: STANDING: RAV ZEV, RAV LEIB, RAV MOSHE, RAV URI. SITTING: THE ROSHEI HAYESHIVA.
RABBI BORUCH BER YOFFE – NINTH GRADE REBBE FOR PHILADELPHIANS – MAKES A POINT AS HIS TALMIDIM LISTEN ON.
A TALMID LOOKING AT A SEFER IN THE LIBRARY OF THE YESHIVA.
ABOVE: THE ROSH HAYESHIVA ZT'L, RAV AHARON KOTLER JUST AFTER DELIVERING A SHIUR IN THE BAIS MEDRASH OF PHILADELPHIA YESHIVA.





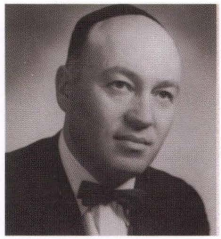




delivered a shiur on Maseches Kiddushin, making a strong impact on the bochurim. The Rosh HaYeshiva zt'l's nachas from the acoomplishments of his talmidim was apparent.

At around this time, R' Avrohom Golombek, an alumnus of the yeshiva and a talmid of HoRav Yechezkel Lewenstein, the Ponovezher mashgiach, joined the hanhalah. As the high school continued to grow, it was necessary to employ a mashgiach who would help guide bochurim through various life situations as well as instill a striving for yiras shomayim and tikun hamidos in the young charges.

Upon the passing of the yeshiva's president, Mr. Ed Gornish, in 1962, the post was filled by Mr. Erwin Weinberg. Mr. Weinberg, like his predecessors, was of invaluable assistance to the yeshiva's continued growth, and has been a constant source of innovative leadership throughout the years.



MR. ERWIN WEINBERG.

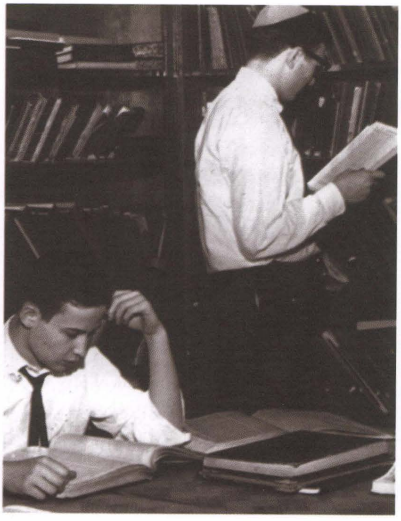
OPPOSITE PAGE CLOCKWISE: RAV MOSHE FEINSTEIN ZT'L DELIVERING A SHIUR IN THE OLD BAIS MEDRASH; RAV AVROHOM; A CHABURA DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF YESHIVA; THE ROSHEI HAYESHIVA IN CONVERSATION AS A BOCHUR LOOKS ON.











In 1964, it was decided to add an additional shiur to the bais hamedrash, which would be delivered by Rav Zev Hoberman. Rav Yaakov Stefansky, a talmid of Bais Medrash Govoha, assumed the tenth grade position.

The 1960's proved to be a time of great social upheaval for America at large, and for its youth in particular. College students challenged their parents' values and morals, openly flaunting their opposition and disdain. In retrospect, this was the flash point of the subsequent steady decay in American society, its supposed ethics, and inherent morality. Throughout this eruption of moral confusion, the yeshiva remained a bulwark, a veritable Teivas Noach, shielding its talmidim from the negative influences of society and fortifying them with the unwavering confidence of hashkofas haTorah.

Opposite Page Clockwise: Rav Moshe Eisemann with-Rav Yaakov; A Talmid Engrossed in a Sugya; Rav Elya, Talmidim Learn in the Library of the Yeshiva.









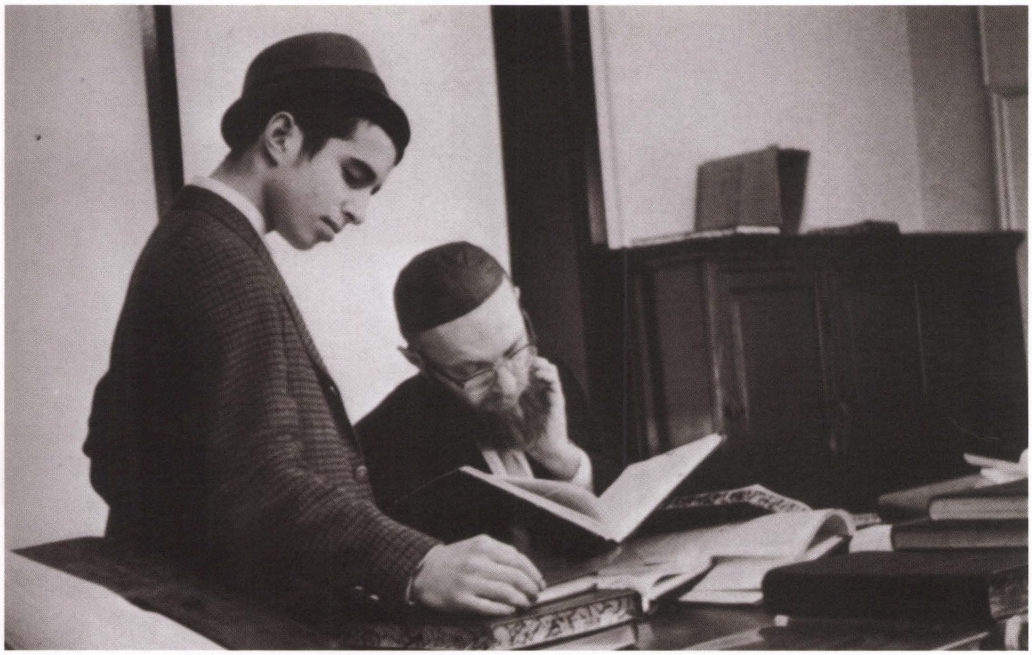




Rav Boruch Ber zt'l with Rav Shimon Shkop zt'l.
Opposite page: Bottom left: Rav Elchonon zt'l,
Bottom Right: Rav Yeruchum zt'l

In 1966, Rav Zev Hoberman left the yeshiva, and it became necessary to find a new bais hamedrash rebbe. In a departure from precedent, the Roshei Yeshiva did not select a Lakewood avreich, but chose Rav Mendel Kaplan, a talmid of Baranovich and Mir in Europe, who had taught for many years in Skokie, Illinois. Rav Mendel introduced a new dimension of mesorah from Reb Elchonon Wasserman, Reb Yeruchum Levovitz, Reb Shimon Shkop and other European gedolim. It should be noted that in general, although the yeshiva's Rebbeim often share somewhat similar backgrounds in learning, they vary widely in the style of shiur they deliver. Thus, talmidim are exposed to a variety of analytical approaches and paces in their learning rather than being limited to a specific mold.

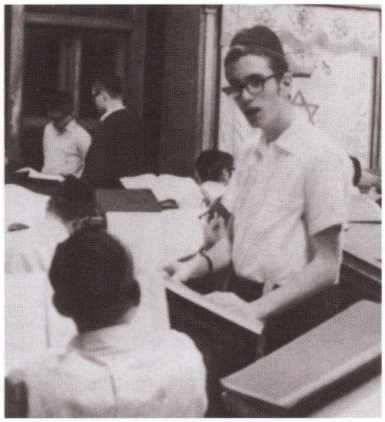
Its great popularity notwithstanding, the yeshiva generally maintained a careful quota, not allowing oversized classes which would compromise the success of the talmidim. Nurturing individual growth and helping each bochur reach his poten-



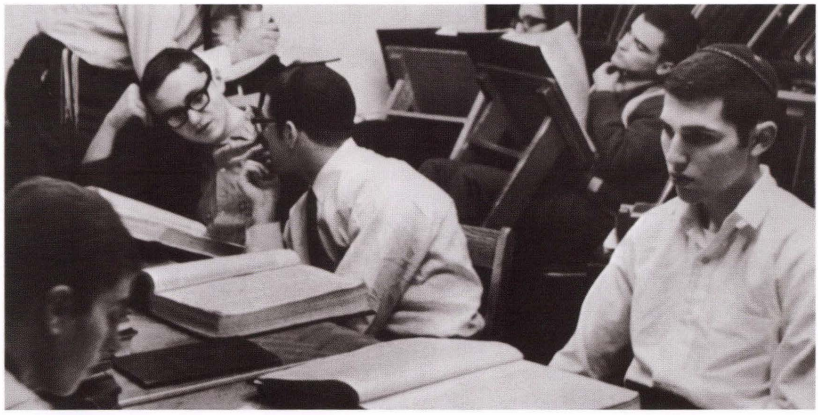
ABOVE: RAV LEIB PONDERS A TALMID'S POINT.
BELOW: RAV YITZCHOK WITH A TALMID.



tial has always been a basic tenet of the yeshiva. Nonetheless, the additional bais hamedrash shiur along with the trend of remaining in the higher bais hamedrash shiur for several years, increased the yeshiva's numbers. To accommodate this growth, the yeshiva purchased a structure abutting the main campus, at 6020 Overbrook Avenue, which was used as additional dormitory space.







In 1968, Rav Moshe Eisemann left Philadelphia to assume a position in Yeshiva Ner Yisroel of Baltimore. The Roshei Hayeshiva selected Rav Yitzchok Perman, a talmid of Ner Yisroel and Bais Medrash Elyon, to deliver the eleventh grade shiur.

Continued growth necessitated the move to a new bais hamedrash in 1969. An adjacent building that had been included in the 6063 purchase had served until that time as a gymnasium. It was now renovated to serve as a bais hamedrash, with the first floor remodeled with shiur rooms and offices for the Roshei Hayeshiva.





CHANUKAS HABAYIS 1969

Kislev 1969. On a blustery Friday afternoon, students and some laymen and gathered together for the humble dedication of the yeshiva's new residence. The event was not marked with much fanfare and publicity, but attended by those who believed in its vision.

Enthusiastic and joyous dancing erupted, as the energy filled the room. Clutching the siferi torah, they excitedly brought them into their new home.

The Rosh HaYeshiva Rav Elya arose to address the audience. His shuir delved into the laws of the sanctity of a Bais Haknesses. The shuir reminded all those present that it was not the exterior appearance and décor which gives the meaning to a place. True beauty derives from how much one treats a place with the proper respect.



Rav Elya continued with a shmuess. He quoted a Medrash that while the mishkan was completed in the month of Kislev, it was not inaugurated until Nissan. It was Hashem's desire to commence the dwelling of his Shechina in the month of Yitzchak's Avinu's birth. Because the opportunity to commence the mishkan existed in Kislev and was passed over, an obligation was incurred to repay that month. Years later, this repayment came in the form of the Chashmonim's victory and immediate rededication of the Beis Hamikdosh.

Rav Elya asked why was it of paramount importance to have the mishkan inaugurated in the month of Yitzchak's birth. Additionally, if this reason still existed in the future, how was it possible to repay Kislev.

The underlying message of the Medrash, explained Rav Elya, was the requirement for "mesiras nefesh". In order for the Shechina to dwell among man, one must have self sacrifice. Yitzchak embodied this ideal, reaching its zenith at the akeida. Nissan was his month, thus it merited the Mishkan's inauguration. Kislev had no such hero, and was passed over. Many years later, the Chashmonaim personified this same virtue, total sacrifice and pure dedication. Hence, Kislev was repaid with its own chanukas habais.

The Rosh HaYeshiva concluded by stating that the Yeshiva is our vehicle to bring down Hashem's Presence. In order to accomplish this goal one must exhibit mesiras nefesh. Staying to learn after the regular taxing schedule of the yeshiva is one example of how this ideal is realized.

This message has remained a constant part of the yeshiva's essence. One can walk into the beis Medrash well into the night, with the sweet sounds of learning tirelessly prevailing, only be reminded of the late hour by the clock.



ABOVE: RAV SHIMON WITH A TALMID.
BELOW: RAV SHMUEL WITH RAV URI.

In 1970, the ninth grade was divided into two parallel classes to provide greater individual attention to students requiring more assistance in their learning, a practice that had been implemented as necessary throughout the years. Rav Shimon Sturman, an alumnus of the yeshiva who had continued learning in Lakewood, was hired to teach the additional ninth grade class.



Until this time, there was no official menahel of the high school, and Rav Shmuel had fulfilled that capacity alongside his other numerous responsibilities. When obligations from both within the yeshiva and from the outside began to increase, the necessity of a designated



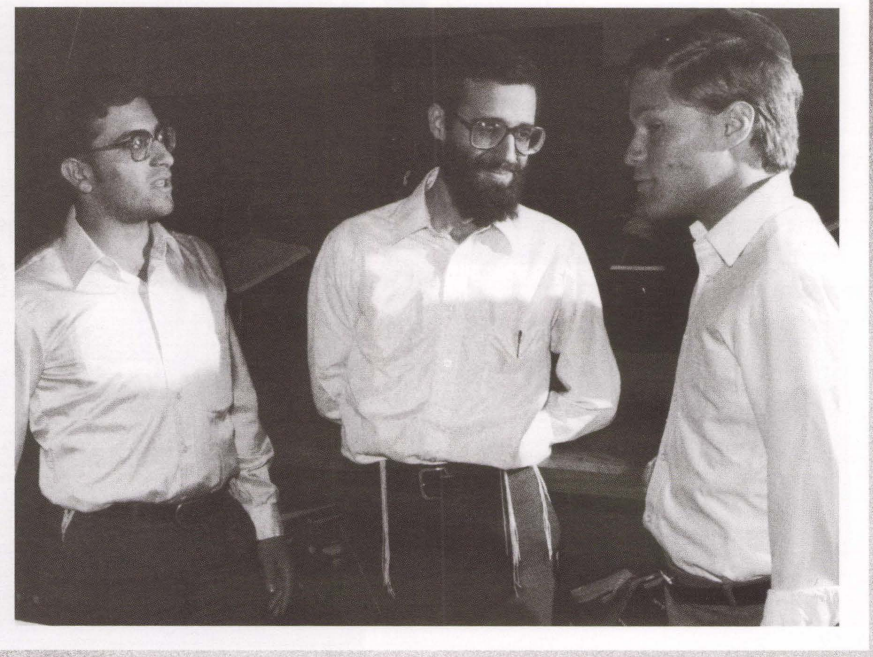




CLOCKWISE: RAV ELYA, RAV URI; RAV URI SPEAKS AT A GRADUATION; TWO TALMIDIM DISCUSSING A SUGYA.

menahel became obvious. Rav Uri, who had been a member of the hanhallah from the yeshiva's earliest years, assumed that position in 1971, leaving Rav Shimon as the regular ninth grade rebbe.

The 1970's saw the yeshiva as a leading force and pacesetter in the yeshiva world, as emerging mosdos sought to duplicate its successes. The yeshiva's already glowing reputation was further enhanced by the growing ranks of its alumni who had assumed positions as mechanchim, rabbonim and askonim. As such, it also became common knowledge that Philadelphia talmidim are privileged to have a chinuch for life as well as rebbeim



for life. Alumni needing advice on issues of marriage, chinuch, career, hashkofa, or any of life's challenges, frequently consult the roshei hayeshiva, whose selflessness and dedication on behalf of their each talmid is legendary. Far beyond attending simchos and spending countless hours counseling talmidim, the roshei hayeshiva unassumingly assist their alumni in other tangible ways, bespeaking love and concern that endure long after talmidim have left the yeshiva.

Undoubtedly,it is this relationship that has caused Philadelphia alumni to be so communally involved. As they witnessed firsthand the Roshei Hayeshiva's tremendous sense of responsibility and concern for individuals and tzibur alike, the talmidim invariably absorbed this lesson and emulated it well.

As the trend towards yeshiva high school attendance gained momentum, the yeshiva continued to accept bochurim from a wide range of geographical locations. Indeed, the diversity of backgrounds that

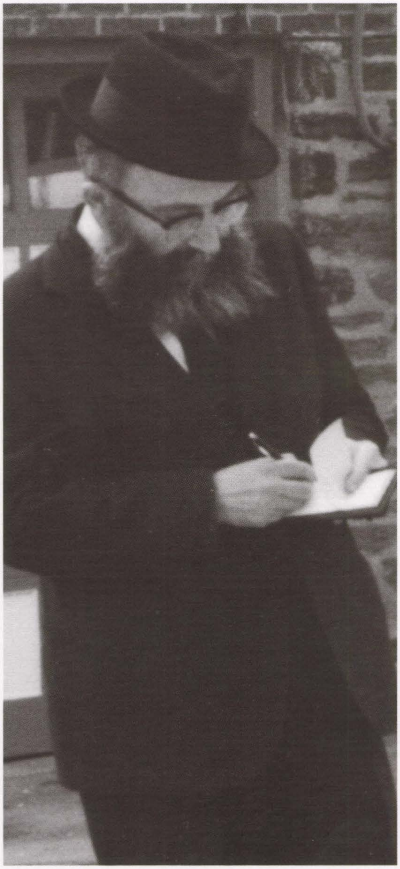






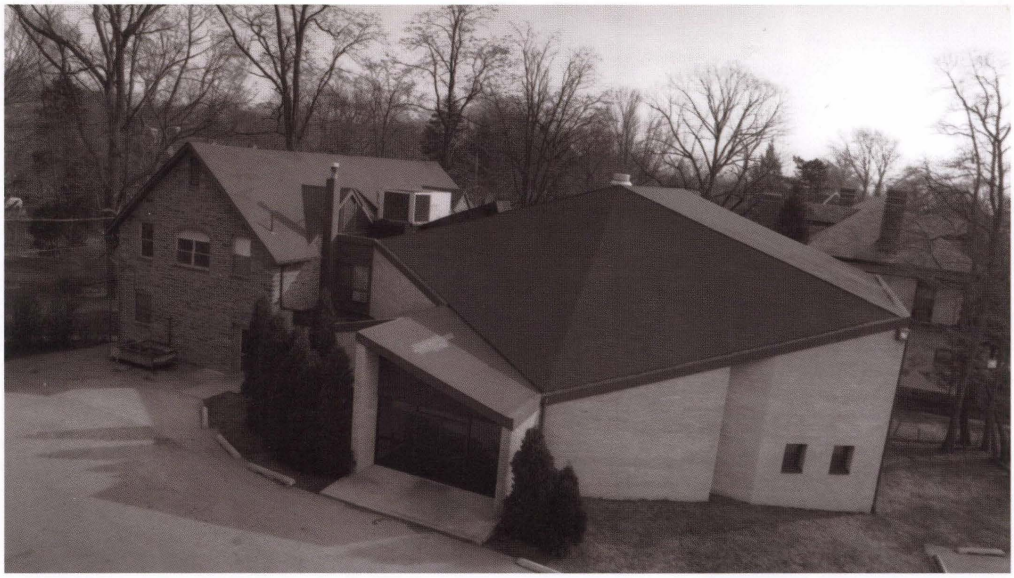
DEDICATED BY MR. AND MRS.
AVROHOM SHIMON REIDER

has always typified the yeshiva's student body has been considered an important benefit. The yeshiva does not, and never has catered to a specific element or type of bochur. At any given period one could find boys of Chassidish, Litvish, Sephardic, or any other background, harking from places such as Toronto, Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, Montreal, Detroit, Los Angeles – literally from coast to coast. The yeshiva has welcomed boys from Eretz Yisroel, Mexico, Belguim, Switzerland and even Australia. This diversity also helps underscore the idea that the primary area of commonality is shteiging in learning, yiras shomayim and tikkun hamidos.



In 1975, the yeshiva purchased the building at 6055 Drexel Road adjacent to the main building, to serve as an additional dormitory facility. Although this would be the yeshiva's final property acquisition, the campus would still undergo considerable metamorphosis in the coming years.

In the later 1970's and early 1980's, the yeshiva reached its maximum capacity, and the bais hamedrash was inadequate to accommodate the burgeoning student body. Thus, in 1983, the yeshiva completed the construction of its new bais hamedrash building. The chanukas habayis was perceived not only as an inauguration of the bais hamedrash building, but also as a celebration of the yeshiva itself, which



had indeed come full circle with its spacious and modern bais hamedrash. The simcha was attended by a broad spectrum of roshei yeshiva and gedolim, including Rav Yitzchok Ruderman zt'l, Rav Nosson Wachtfogel zt'l, R' Levi Krupenia zt'l, and Rav Avrohom Pam zt'l among others. Throngs of alumni crowded the building for the gala affair, which was emotional and uplifting.

The building was joined to the old bais hamedrash building, which underwent a complete renovation. The upper level now housed a complete well-stocked library, offices of the roshei hayeshiva, an ezras noshim overlooking the new bais hamedrash, and a shiur room. The lower level consisted of a rebbeim's office, a spacious locker room, and restrooms.







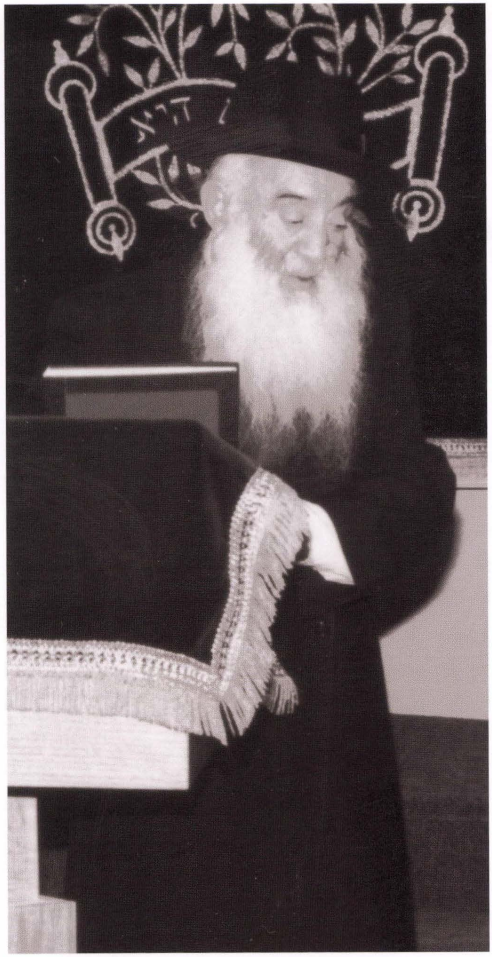




Clockwise: Rav Yerucham Olshin, Rav Malkiel Kotler; Rav Avrohom Pam zt'l; The Roshei Hayeshiva shlita; Rav Zev Hoberman, Rav Nosson Wachtfogel zt'l, Rav Yitzchok Feigelstock; Rav Shmuel, Rav Leizerowski zt'l, Rav Ruderman zt'l; Rav Elya, Rav Avrohom Pam zt'l.











clockwise: Rav Nosson Wachtfogel zt'l, Rav Yolles zt'l, Rav Ruderman, Rav Elya shlita; Rav Zeilberger, Rav Yitzchok Feigelstock; Rav Shmuel shlita walking Rav Ruderman zt'l; Rav Laivy Krupenia zt'l, Rav Avrohom Pam zt'l





Dedicated by Mr. and Mrs.
Chaim Yitzchok Grossman

In 1985, the yeshiva was struck by tragedy, with the sudden petirah of the beloved Rav Mendel Kaplan. Rav Mendel had inspired generations of talmidim and imbued them with a love of learning, and aspirations to live an elevated life. The levaya, hastily conducted at Kennedy airport, took place right before erev Pesach. As Rav Shmuel noted, "r'tzon y'rei'av ya'aseh"- Rav Mendel who lived his whole life in self-negation and fleeing from honor merited a levayah which exemplified that attitude.

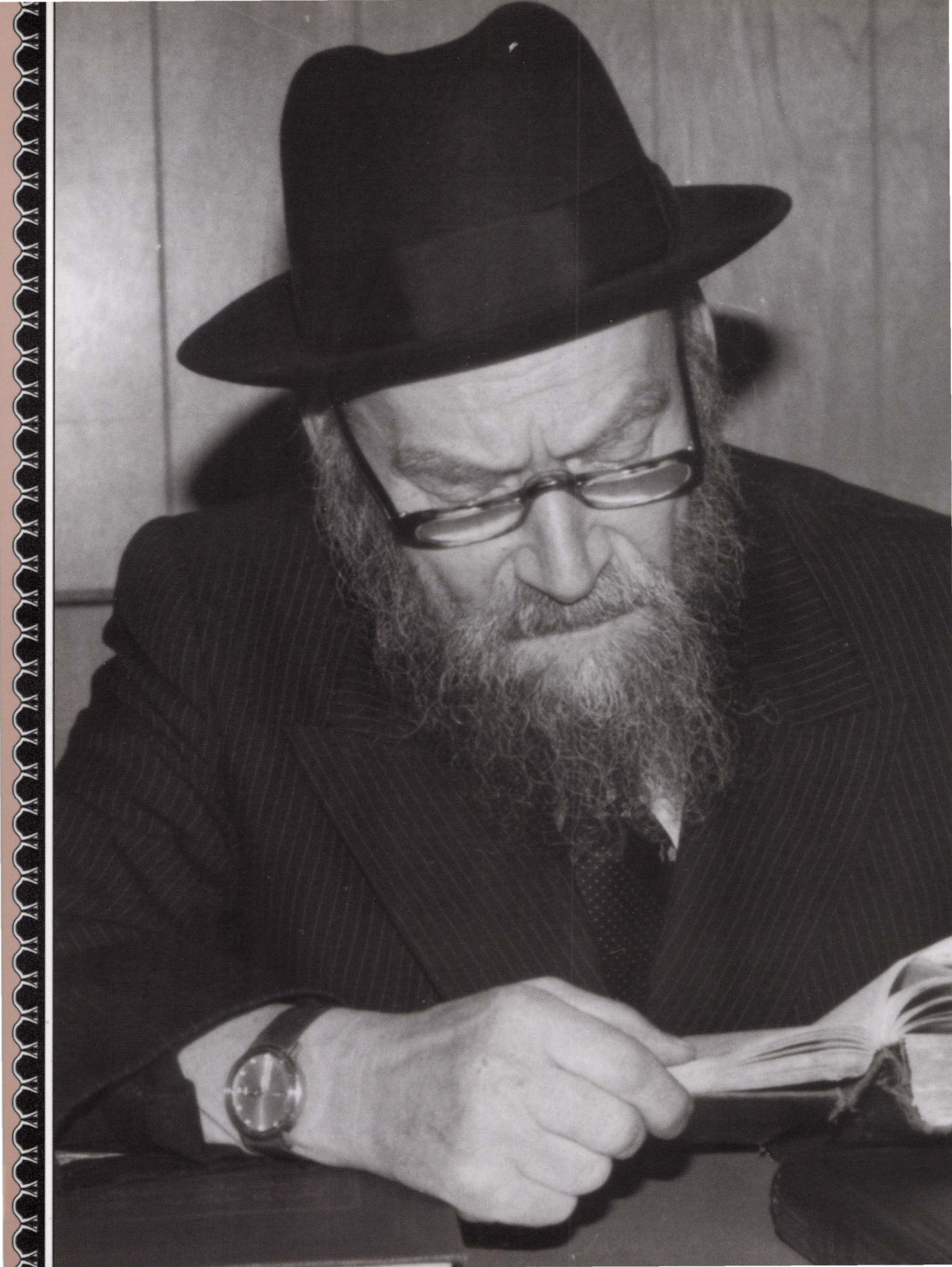
Rav Mendel's passing left a gaping void in the yeshivah, which was enveloped in sadness. The roshei hayeshiva, their own sense of loss notwithstanding, strove mightily to bolster the bochurim's morale, so that their learning could continued unimpeded.



The following Elul, Rav Chaim Ozer Gorelik assumed the first year bais hamedrash position. A talmid of Yeshivas Bais

Hatalmud and Rav Berel Soloveichik zt'l of Brisk, Rav Chaim Ozer had been a maggid shiur for many years.





Rav Mendel Kaplan's arrival in Philadelphia Yeshiva added a new dimension to the personality of the yeshiva. Although the intent was to have a rebbe who was bred in the European yeshivas, Rav Mendel's keen abilities and personality allowed him to transcend any boundary or stereotype. His youthful vigor and energy closed any generation gap as he was widely loved and respected.

A talmid of the gedolim of Europe, he was a bridge to the past. In his youth, he studied in Baronovitch under the tutelage of Rav Elchonon Wasserman, who maintained a yeshiva for younger bochurim. He then advanced to Grodno to learn from one of the foremost analytical minds of his time, R' Shimon Shkop. Eventually he went to the Mir. His exposure to all these gedolim formed deep impressions which he later passed on to the future generations.

First seder by Rav Mendel began with the talmidim learning b'chavrusa. Every so often, Rav Mendel would want to make a remark, and would gather the talmidim around him by knocking on his desk. One day, he banged, but instead of summoning his talmidim to his desk, he walked towards the window. He noted that he was greatly privileged to see the gedolim of yesteryear. Looking outside he instructed his talmidim to observe Rav Elya. "This is how a godol walks. He walks with an *oyl*, a yoke." The high esteem and respect in which he held the Roshei HaYeshiva was evident. Once observing Rav Shmuel, he commented to his talmidim on the Rosh HaYeshiva's sacrifice for Torah. "With a mind like that, Rav Shmuel would have been head of "*l'chol hapachus* Chrysler". Instead, he dedicated his immense talents to the spread of Torah.

This typified Rav Mendel's style in being able to inspire people to elevate their life and personal motives. A nephew of an old acquaintance of his from Europe came to his class. Rav Mendel constantly reminded the boy of his prestigious roots, imploring him to reach the great stature of his family.

His impressions always reflected a bigger picture. Once, a bochur picked up a piece of shamoios that was lying on the floor and gave it a kiss. Rav Mendel asked the bochur if he would kiss a piece of bread that was on the ground as well. Rav Mendel exclaimed that he would be quicker to kiss the bread. Looking at the boy's puzzled expression, he explained that the talmidim, born in America, don't appreciate the abundant supply of food around us. We can not fathom what is like to not even have a simple slice of bread to eat.

DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF
RAV YONAH WEINSTEIN ז"ל

His approach mirrored the magiddim of past. His shiur was constantly peppered with stories and anecdotes. Rav Mendel once arrived with clippings from a newspaper. A bochur, unaccustomed to such behavior approached Rav Elya. "Many people can teach torah, but how many rebbeim can teach how to read the New York Times," Rav Elya said. On another occasion, bochurim commented on the superfluous nature of Rav Mendel's stories in the larger context of the shiur. Rav Elya told the bochurim that if he had the ability, he would lift up his kapata and go to Rav Mendel's shuir just to listen to his stories". Rav Elya emphasized this point by relating an incident involving Rav Chaim Voloshin. A bochur once approached Rav Chaim and asked that his rebbe teach him kabala. Rav Chaim acquiesced, and took a stroll with the boy, telling him stories, as if it was a storytelling session. The bochur was quite disappointed. Expecting to unlock great mystical secrets, he instead went home with some mundane stories. Years later, this young scholar became a godal b'yisrael, and delved into the kabala himself. He recounted that he was only able to comprehend the ideas that were subtly contained in Rav Chaim's stories. Any concepts not touched upon in those sessions were beyond his ability to grasp. Rav Elya concluded, "This is the power of stories a godol tells you. They can open up your heart and mind to understand your learning!" Many years later, students realized the stories that Rav Mendel clothed in such simple garb, were only fully understood after much personal experience and time.

He once brought a Ruziel Hamalach to the shuir. All were deeply impressed when he informed us it was written by a malach. With a twinkle in his eye, he said he could show us one even better. Picking up a Chumash, he said "this one was written by Hashem". His keen insight into human psychology understood that many times it is just a matter of how things are packaged and presented that could inspire others.

Rav Mendel always managed to gain some insight from any circumstance despite its surroundings. Once traveling by train to attend a wedding, Rav Mendel struck up a conversation with a nearby Gentile. When the Gentile heard of the Rav's destination, he told him "have a good time". Rav Mendel when telling this incident to his class added that in the mind of a gentile, life revolves around having a good time. In contrast, a Jewish mind understands that nothing could equate bringing true joy to a choson and kallah.

His life was the yeshiva. He came on Sunday and did not travel home until Erev Shabbos. He tried very hard to avoid all displays of honor towards him. He believed that kovod comes from heaven in a metaphysical way, and receiving any honor would diminish his true reward in the world to come. Once, as he arrived in the Yeshiva, a talmid insisted on carrying his rebbe's suitcase. Rav Mendel adamantly refused. The student threatened to take his rebbe to a din torah. He explained that he has an obligation to honor his rebbe. Although his rebbe refused assistance in order not to diminish his olam haba, but I am being robbed of my duty to be m'chabed the rebbe. Rav Mendel grinned and gave in to his eager student.

Rav Mendel was loath to receive help from anyone. He went to great lengths to avoid any help. Once, at two o'clock in the morning, he crept silently out of the building. A student whose room was adjacent to his rebbe was surprised by hearing Rav Mendel leave at such a late hour. Trailing quietly behind, he was in total disbelief when Rav Mendel went to the trunk and took out a tire. He wanted to change his tire without anyone's help, and realized that the late hour would be the perfect opportunity. The dazed student rushed to the scene and insisted on allowing him to finish the job, while his rebbe would get his well needed rest.

A certain talmid, whose parents were not thrilled about their son's choice to stay in Yeshiva, heard that they were coming to visit him. At the time, the yeshiva did not yet have the modern dormitory that exists today. Consequently, rooms were often not very grandiose. Rav Mendel told the bochur not to take his parents to his room. When they see the poor conditions of his sleeping quarters, it might reinforce their opposition to his learning. Instead, suggested Rav Mendel, "take them to my room". This way they'll walk away with a better impression of their son's commitment to learning.

He was a master at his art, instilling hundreds of students with a love of learning. His own remarkble character served as a reminder to others to care not only about ones self. He was able to impress upon generations a sense of what was right.

In 1985, right before Pesach, our beloved rebbe passed away. The hastily arranged levya took place on erev Pesach, the humble and sad ceremony at Kennedy airport. His disdain of all honor still continued even in his death, leaving the bereaved yeshiva only with his legacy. Yehi zichro boruch.

DEDICATED BY LABE AND BLIMIE TWERSKI

Just as it seemed that the yeshiva had achieved menucha v'nachala , poised to continue its harbotzas haTorah uninhibited, the greatest crisis in its history occurred. On a wintry night in November 1988, just one week before Chanukah, a fire raged through the main building, causing extensive damage. Fortunately, everyone was evacuated from the building, but it took firefighters nearly five hours to get the blaze under control. And so, at a stage in life when the roshei hayeshiva might have been enjoying the fruits of their many years of toil, the Herculean task of rebuilding now demanded their rising to the challenge as never before.











EWS

Students housed in the school's
uildings and their teachers st
outside and watched as fire
fought the fire, which was dec
under control at 9:56 p.m.
Fire officials said the blaze
ently started in the basemen
building's east wing. Firem
aged to confine most of the
to that area, officials said.
was under investigation.
The damaged buildi
classrooms, a dormit
room and chemistry la
dents said.
Some 215 students fr
world attend the sch
Talmud, the code of
law.

Tal

The main building
school of Talmudic learning in
city's Overbrook Park section was
damaged last night by a smoky, five-
alarm fire.
More than 60 students, many of
whom were sitting down to dinner in
the building when the fire started
shortly before 7:30 p.m., were evacu-
ated from the Talmudical Yeshiva of
Philadelphia, 6063 Drexel Road. No
one was hurt.
"Someone opened the door from
the kitchen to the basement, and the
kitchen filled up with smoke," said a
student, Pinny Lando of Baltimore.

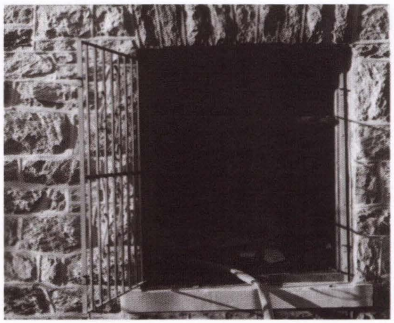
Dedicated by Rabbi and Mrs. Mechel Gruss

Sleeping accommodations were quickly arranged for the dozens of bochurim whose dormitory rooms had been consumed by the fire. However, by the following morning, the painful but necessary decision had been made – the entire student body would be sent home until the yeshiva could facilitate a temporary solution to the greater problem that loomed ahead.



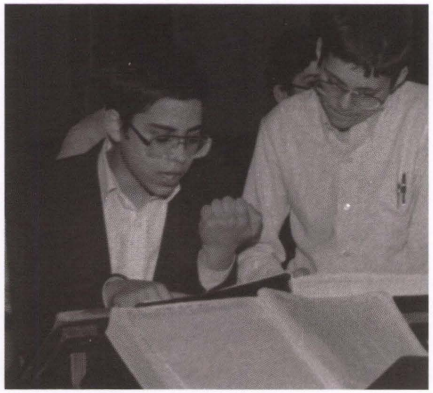


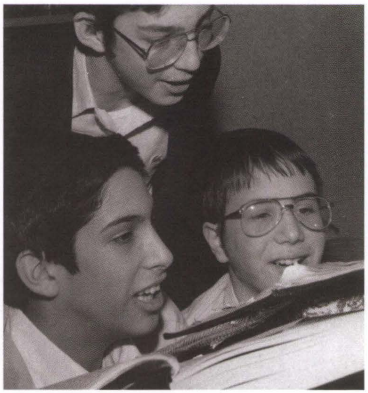


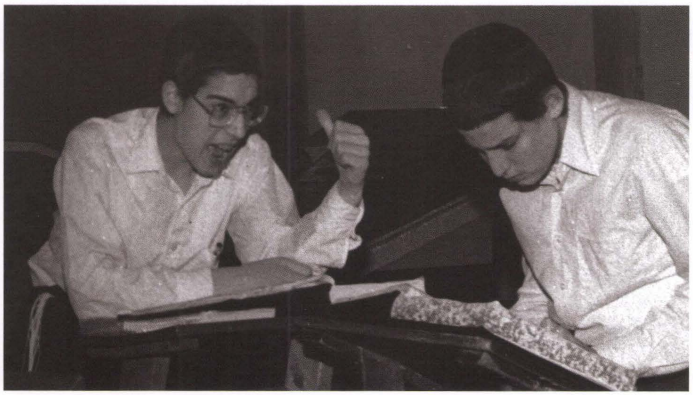




Before resuming the incredible narrative of the yeshiva's rebuilding, it behooves us to focus on the unsung heroes of the tragic fire – the bochurim. A renowned mussar personality once noted that a bochur learning well while in yeshiva has not yet proved his credentials. It is when he is thrust into an environment that is not conducive to shteiging that the real litmus test of greatness occurs. Almost immediately after the talmidim were sent home, regular sedorim were organized at the Bais Yehudah shul in Boro Park. The punctuality, the determined hasmodah and the keen sensitivity to shmiras hazman which have always been the hallmark of the Philadelphia yeshiva, were now put to the test. Those try-









ing times were perhaps the yeshiva's finest hour, as the kol Torah that reverberated in a shul in Brooklyn was truly reminiscent of the Bais Hamedrash in Philadelphia. Throughout the ensuing period of severely compromised conditions in Philadelphia, the bochurim doggedly pursued their limudim with an intensity that was actually heightened in the face of adversity.

The yeshiva was now faced with a dual task. Firstly, to conceive of and implement a plan of action that would enable talmidim to return as quickly as possible. Secondly, to embark on a new building endeavor, envisioning the yeshiva's needs for the future, and raising the enormous funds it would require.



Extra Extra Extra

PUBLISHED BY THE YESHIVA IN 1988 FOR THE REBUILDING CAMPAIGN

Five Alarm Fire Ravages Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia

Fire is a most unusual force: properly harnessed it provides us with light, warmth and comfort. Unchecked, it can be utterly devastating—to human life, property, and possessions.

Fire can be stubborn, ruthless, and unpredictable. It can move with incredible speed or it can lie smoldering for hours.

On Tuesday evening, November 29th, 1988, the students in the main building of the Philadelphia Yeshiva were attending to business as usual. Some were upstairs reviewing their studies, others were preparing for evening class; but most of the bochurim were in the dining room getting ready for dinner when the intrusive sound of smoke alarms suddenly filled the air. At first, many students didn't know what to think: 'was it for real, or just a false alarm?' But then all doubts were laid to rest when an unrestrained cry of "FIRE!" came from the kitchen. Flames began to appear, licking the walls, together with climbing columns of thick black smoke. All of a sudden life became a race to see which could travel faster—the fire itself or the message that there was one.

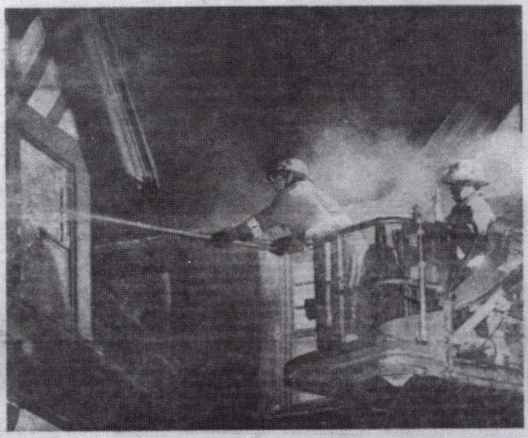
In a matter of seconds, the students organized effective measures of escape. Doors opened, shouts were heard, and frantic footsteps filled the halls as lights flickered and then went out, leaving only emergency fixtures to mark the exit route. Once safely outside and into the street, the older boys immediately began taking careful head checks in order to account for all of the 130 students who were then in the building.

Moments later firefighters arrived on the scene; 150 in all, together with 35 pieces of firefighting equipment. It took 3 hours to finally contain the blaze that had grown to 5 alarm status, and the fire's reach was so extensive that the fire department had to stay at the scene through most of the night in order to quell the remaining flames.

Students stood outside in the cold night air, shivering and watching as their yeshiva home went up in explosive bursts of towering flame and clouds of black smoke. Some were just too stunned to speak. Some stood with tears trailing from their tired eyes, while others swayed over thin, open pages, chanting verses of T'hillim.

Hundreds from the surrounding community gathered to offer help and show their support. Mayor W. Wilson Goode and the Philadelphia City Manager arrived on the scene to survey the damage, and all major television stations were present to issue reports on the tragic event.

Everyone connected with the yeshiva expressed profound gratitude to the Al-mighty that there was no injury to human life as the yeshiva's facilities suffered a devastating loss. Two thirds of the yeshiva's main building—a three story structure—was totally destroyed. Gone are the yeshiva's extensive meat and dairy kitchens, dining room, science lab, and store rooms; four classrooms, office facilities, and 41 dormitory beds. The remaining third of the building sustained extensive smoke and water damage. All electrical, water, heat, and gas systems were cut off, and all windows were shattered as part of the fire fighting effort.



It was later determined that the blaze began with a ruptured gas line in the basement of the building's east wing. Damage to the yeshiva is estimated to be in excess of 2 million dollars.

A Fire's Aftermath: Ruin and Rubble



The day after, fire damage at the Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia is examined by Rabbi Elya Svei (right), dean of the Orthodox Jewish school, and Rabbi Avraham Golombeck. Fire officials said yesterday that they had not yet determined what caused the Tuesday night blaze, which heavily damaged the main building of the school in the Overbrook Farms section.

On Wednesday morning, November 30th, after the dust had settled and the smoke had finally cleared away, faculty and students of the Philadelphia Yeshiva were able to assess the horrendous fire damage of the night before.

The clock on the charred dining room wall still read 7:25; a stark reminder of when the yeshiva's routine was so suddenly disrupted. There was nothing appetizing about the dinner and dishes that were still stuck in neat rows to the burnt dining room tables, but there it all remained: a dinner served that would never be eaten.

Students outside, milling around the ruins, were still recovering from the emotional shock, but a number of logistical problems had arisen during the night. One immediate concern was sleeping arrangements for those 61 boys who roomed in the main building. Beds were set up in other buildings, in Rebbeim's homes, and

(Continued on page 2)

...But The Sound of Learning Continues

In spite of all the physical damage, the yeshiva's staff and students made plans to temporarily relocate the Bais Medrash to Brooklyn, New York. Arrangements were made to use the B'nai Yehudah shul on 16th Avenue in Boro Park; and by early Sunday morning the melodic sounds of Philadelphia bochurim learning Torah were heard once again wafting through the air of the shul.

Regular shiurim and two sedorim a day were well attended by New Yorkers and a number of out-of-town students who were hosted by New York friends. The diligence that these students displayed left a lasting impression on the many visitors who stopped in to show their support.

After all—for a yeshiva to even temporarily close down is tragic enough, but why should the loss be compounded by any subsequent halt to Torah learning? These dedicated talmidim didn't permit this to occur; in spite of the physical adversity, they maintained the sacred 'Kol-Torah' during these difficult days.

* * *

In the meantime, back in Philadelphia, another sort of diligent effort was being made to reopen the yeshiva right after Chanuka. Over 25 talmidim volunteered to return on Thursday night as well as on Motzoei Shabbos. They worked through the night in a last attempt to retrieve that which the fire hadn't destroyed. The next morning contractors began their full-scale sweep of the wreckage.

These efforts were successful, and by the time the contractors were through, at least part of the main building was back in use. There was complete smoke rehabilitation, rooms that were not condemned were thoroughly cleaned, and the basement was drained of 3 feet of water.

By Sunday night after Chanuka the Bais Medrash bochurim returned to the yeshiva, and the Mesivta arrived the following day. Through the cooperative efforts of the hanholo, the talmidim, and yeshiva friends, the seemingly insurmountable task of returning to a program of full-time Torah study was accomplished—and more quickly then anyone would have imagined.









Work Begins On The Philadelphia Yeshiva's New Dormitory Facility

The steady, driving sound of Torah learning that normally fills the halls of the Philadelphia Yeshiva, is experiencing a fair amount of competition these days—from construction machinery pounding just a few yards away—as land is being cleared and foundations will soon be set for the yeshiva's new and long-awaited dormitory complex.

Work actually began on February 15th as giant trees came down, followed by bulldozers clearing and levelling land that would eventually develop into a modern, three-story structure capable of housing 224 students. The new dormitory will replace a 97-year-old building that stood on the same site: a hazardous structure that became untenable to maintain, and that the yeshiva had outgrown years ago.

The new dorm is being built by the Whiting-Turner Co. of Maryland; the same firm that oversaw construction of the famous J.F.K. Memorial Bridge, and that did work on the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. as well. Estimated cost for the new yeshiva dormitory is set at $3.2 million, and this is aside from the $2 million dollars needed to rebuild the yeshiva's main high school building, which was destroyed by fire last November. In that blaze the yeshiva lost its dining room, kitchens, high school classrooms, science lab, and office space.

It has been a most difficult year for the Philadelphia Yeshiva: a prestigious academy of higher learning that has graduated Torah scholars and responsible Jewish leaders for over 36 years; but with help from loyal supporters and the Jewish community at large, the yeshiva hopes to soon fully re-establish itself. A healthy sign in this direction, of course, is the construction currently underway on the new dormitory—replete with special fire-proofing material.

Scheduled completion date for the new dormitory facility is September 1, 1989—to coincide with the beginning of the new school year.



A fires's aftermath *(continued from page 1)*

in the homes of the yeshiva's friends and neighbors. By morning buses were chartered and Mesivta students were sent home—many without any belongings. The Bais Hamedrash stayed on for one more day of classes.

* * *

For the yeshiva's hanhala it was a most hectic day—for devising interim accommodations as well as for establishing long range plans.

A group of concerned friends of the yeshiva came in from out-of-town to meet with the hanhala and express their support. Among those present were Rabbi Naftoli Neuberger and Mr. Jerry Kadin of Ner Israel, Baltimore; Mr. Avrohom Fruchthandler of Olympia and York; Mr. Yossi Stern of Edison, New Jersey; Mr. Shmuel Rieder of South Brunswick, New Jersey; and Mr. Seymour Lieberman of New York City.

The Mayerfeld family of Vineland, New Jersey called, offering the use of two huge trailers. These were promptly accepted: one for use as a dining room, and the other to be divided into classrooms. A contractor was hired to work 16-20 hours a day—except Shabbos—to repair, clean, deodorize, and temporarily revitalize the front third of the main building, so that it would be ready for use in 10 days—immediately following the Chanuka break.

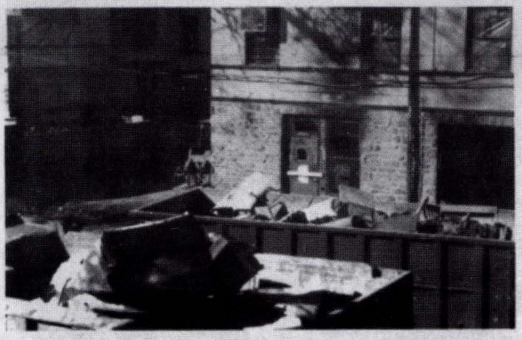
As the embers of the previous night's fire were still dying out, faculty and friends of the yeshiva were gathering to map out constructive strategies—so that the yeshiva could resume its course of sacred study as soon as possible.











The Philadelphia Yeshiva: Facing a Period of Unprecedented Need

Classes resumed after Chanuka and the students are learning with a renewed fervor, that's true; but there is no denying the fact that the yeshiva is operating on a makeshift basis: a trailer has been converted into classroom space, and a four-car garage functions as a kitchen.

Over the years, the Philadelphia Yeshiva has developed dramatically—both in number and in stature—and plans were already being implemented for new, improved accommodations to meet the yeshiva's growing needs. With November's fire, the picture has only taken a drastic turn for the worse; not only do the old and nagging needs persist, but they have been joined by new, obviously pressing needs as well.

A new building to house classrooms, a kitchen, dining room, and offices is an obvious necessity. But there is also the pre-existent need for a new, fireproof dormitory structure. Architects are working on plans to rebuild the fire damaged facility, and initial repair costs have already amounted to $165,000. Preliminary discussions with contractors indicate that it will cost an additional $2.0 million to complete the building, not including equipment and furnishings. Construction of the new dormitory facility, with minimal furnishings, will cost $3.5 million. Total cost for the completion of both buildings amounts to approximately $5.5 million.

The burden is great and the need is immediate, but supporters of the yeshiva are prepared to make an all-out effort, and are resolved to meet the challenge.

"We cannot let this educational system grind to a halt, G-d forbid," says one of the leaders of the emergency reconstruction campaign, "we must lift this financial burden off the shoulders of the Roshei HaYeshiva so that they can return full time to the Bais Medrash where they are desperately needed."

באש הצתה

It was destroyed in a fiery blaze . . .

On November 29, 1988 the high school building of the Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia went up in flames. The dining hall, kitchens, classrooms and residence hall were consumed. Thanks to the Almighty, nobody was injured. But the student body had to be sent home. Many lost all their clothing, books and personal belongings.









The instantaneous generous offers of help by individuals who were moved by this heart-rending tragedy made it possible to resume operations after ten days. The small portion of the burned building that was salvageable was renovated and cleaned at great cost. Trailers were brought in to be used for classrooms and dining room, a temporary kitchen was set up in a garage and dormitory facilities not affected by the fire were pushed to their limit.

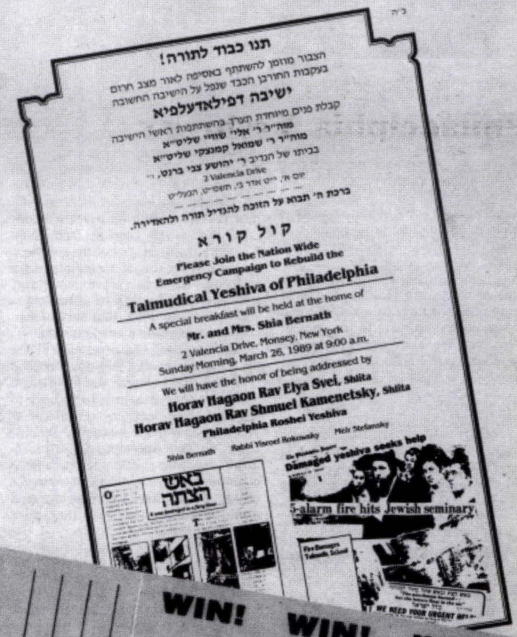
The urgency for continuing with our plans for a new fireproof dormitory building was greatly emphasized by the devastating inferno. The fire now requires that we begin this project concurrently with the construction of a completely new high school building. The estimated cost of these two projects is $5 million.

The pressure of undertaking both these projects at once is enormous.

באש אתה עתיד לבנותה

. . . it must be rebuilt by the warmth of your heart

alone. We desperately need your help. Please send a generous check today. And let the warmth of your heart



A Student Reflects—On the Fire of Torah and On the Fire That Destroyed A Good Part of His Yeshiva

Gavriel Rokowsky is 20 years old and came to the Yeshiva of Philadelphia in 1982 when he entered his second year of high school. He is presently in his seventh year at the yeshiva—his last, and graduating year.

In a recent telephone interview Gavriel spoke about the yeshiva and of course—about last year's catastrophic fire. But a fire, as you know, can take on many forms; for as I was questioning Gavriel, I noticed that his every word was coming from a deep 'inner fire'—all his own. In yiddish that is known as a "bren." It was quite obvious that Gavriel has a burning love for learning Torah, and that he bears a healthy enthusiasm for the yeshiva that instilled him with that love. You can see it for yourself—in his own words . . .

Q. Let's begin by discussing the fire that swept through the yeshiva's main building last November. What do you recall about that night?
A. Well, we all came in at around 7:15 P.M. preparing for dinner—as we usually do. One of the 'bochurim' went into the kitchen and smelled something unusual. His suspicions led him to a door that leads down to the basement level. As soon as he opened that door smoke came billowing out. He ran from the kitchen back in to the dining area yelling out loud—"FIRE."

Everyone immediately got up and evacuated the building. The fire alarm went on, but soon the fire itself—as it spread—damaged the entire electrical system, shutting off the alarm.

We also know from experience that a number of boys spend this particular time of evening up in their rooms—taking care of personal matters; so I and two others ran back into the building and went up to the 3rd floor to search for and alert anyone up there to the danger. We each canvassed one wing of the building, and B"H everyone got out safely.

Q. What else do you recall about those initial minutes of activity?
A. Well, at first there was just an awful lot of smoke. The actual flames climbed out of the basement and appeared along the walls of the building some moments later.

All of the students went across the street and into the courtyard where a thorough attendance was taken several times to account for absolutely everyone.

Many of us were saying Tehillim. At first we all thought that it would be a small, contained blaze; that it would soon be under control and that it wouldn't be long until everything was back to normal. Perhaps we felt that way because the flames were not so apparent right away.

But then we were genuinely shocked as the fire spread and developed. In fact, a half-hour later we were evacuated again; this time from the Bais Medrash for fear of explosions on account of materials in the science labs situated in that main building.



ANDREA MAHALIN/ DAILY NEWS

Q. How about the morning after; what were your feelings then?
A. Well, there was a great deal of uncertainty about what would be. Chanukah had almost arrived; a lot of out-of-towners were getting ready to leave—for Canada, the West Coast, and other distant places. However, many of us maintained a strong learning schedule during those difficult days by attending a shul in Boro Park that served temporarily as yeshiva headquarters.

When we returned after the Chanukah break, we were shocked to find that so much hard work had been done to enable us to go back to a full time learning schedule. Of course, it was the middle of Winter, and we were operating out of makeshift facilities; like trailers and a four-car garage. But the fact remains that we were back in full swing. And that really says a lot about the type of yeshiva this is.

Q. Any other thoughts before we move on to something else?
A. Just one thing: I know we all felt extremely fortunate that everyone came out O.K. All the bochurim responded with alacrity, and responsibly. We were all deeply grateful to HaShem that what occured—happened to wood and stone, and that there were no injuries.

Q. In looking back upon it now, what thought remains regarding the whole instance of the fire?
A. Well, I know I speak for all the bochurim with what I'm about to say. Our primary and on-going concern is that the Roshei Yeshiva —who even before the fire were so very occupied with day to day yeshiva concerns, would now have to be even more greatly burdened with the responsibilities of having to shoulder all that came about in the aftermath of the fire. There's no question that this amounts to added strains, and that it would affect the amount of time they could devote to their talmidim. They have to travel frequently, raise funds, arrange meetings—just to take care of the yeshiva's physical needs.

All this is especially difficult in a yeshiva such as ours, that thrives on the close and constant interaction between Rebbe and talmid. We cherish every precious moment we can spend with the Roshei Yeshiva and we feel deprived when a moment of that personal contact is lost.

After all, this is one of the most unique features of our yeshiva: to be in the presence of such great Torah leaders; to look up to them and to try and emulate them. The Roshei Yeshiva are models of devotion. By the examples they set, they heighten our own sense of standard and responsibility. They encourage us and help us live up to that higher standard.

And this sort of atmosphere permeates through the entire yeshiva. There's an air of 'hasmodo'—a consistency, a commitment, a unified effort on behalf of all the students—striving toward a common goal: to establish ourselves as genuine B'nai Torah.

Q. Is there anything else, that impresses you about the yeshiva that you'd like to mention?
A. Perhaps one more point. Generally, a student stays for 8 years, and there is this realization that these 8 years play such a crucial role in shaping the quality of the rest of your life.

That is why the time spent with the Roshei Yeshiva is so very precious. And not only that, but I've been here for seven years and I have repeatedly seen how special that relationship between Rebbe and talmid is. Having been here for a while I continuously see students from previous years keep coming back to confer with the Roshei Yeshiva. So it isn't just a connection for the time that you are here, but it's the beginning of a lifelong association.

All of this has made a deep and lasting impression on me, and I am just very grateful to be here.

The American Jewish Community Responds to the Philadelphia Fire

With utmost gratitude the yeshiva would like to acknowledge all those who have expressed concern and support on behalf of the yeshiva's current plight. (If there are any oversights in this listing, please forgive us. This list is but an example of the outpouring of support.)

Appeals were held in shuls across the country.

Parlor meetings were held at the following locations:

On December 31st in Lakewood a Melave-Malka was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Shimon Zeldes.

On January 8th an Alumni Breakfast was held at the Aperion Manor chaired by Mechel Gruss and Mordechai Mandelbaum.

On January 11th in Baltimore, Maryland at the home of Rabbi and Mrs. Moshe Heinemann.

On January 16th in Deal, New Jersey at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gamal.

On January 15th in Lawrence, New York at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Shimon Pluchenick.

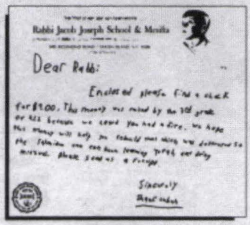
On February 15th in Los Angeles at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bryan Kaplan.

The Rebbeim of the Hebrew Academy of Cleveland have organized efforts on behalf of the yeshiva.

Mrs. Judy Rajenbach of Chicago has organized a national raffle campaign.

On March 26th a breakfast was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Shia Bernath in Monsey, New York; co-hosted by Meir Stefansky and Rabbi Yisroel Rokowsky.

A national dinner will be held on Sunday May 28, 1989 at the Sheraton Centre Hotel in New York City.


Rabbi Jacob Joseph School & Mesifta

Dear Rebbi:

Enclosed please find a check for $8,000. The money was raised by the 7th grade for all because we loved you and cared. We hope that money will help in rebuild our shul, we dedicate the Tehillim and the mon having prayed our daily morning Shmoneh Esreh a Perek

Sincerely



RAV ELYA WITH RABBI HERMAN NEUBERGER OF NER YISROEL.



THE ROSHEI YESHIVA, RAV URI AND REB SHMUEL LEIBERMAN POSE WITH ACTIVISTS WHO HELPED THE YESHIVA OBTAIN A SIZABLE LOAN FOR THE REBUILDING CAMPAIGN.

Fundraising on such an enormous scale posed a challenge on a different level as well. The Philadelphia Yeshiva has always adhered to the ideal of simplicity, in all facets of its operations. Classrooms, dormitory buildings, furniture, even meals, were always adequate, but never elaborate. Similarly, the yeshiva had always maintained a low profile when it came to fundraising. No glossy brochures or eye-catching advertisements had ever been published. Thus, the urgent need to convey the yeshiva's desperate straits to potential donors was almost anathema to the roshei hayeshiva.

The overwhelming initiative taken by the tzibbur at large and by alumni particularly was truly heartwarming. An emergency meeting, attended by six devoted yungerleit, was convened in the home of R' Avrohom Yitzchok Hoberman in Lakewood. The assembled undertook the obligation of spearheading a campaign to motivate their fellow yungerleit to raise $100,000. Alumni from around the globe, who never imagined that they would have the opportunity to repay the yeshiva in some small way for all they had gained, now rallied around the yeshiva in its time of crisis. Even bochurim learning in the yeshiva pitched in.

DEDICATED BY SHLOMO KOHN, YONI KOHN AND YITZY ROKOWSKY



On the Motzei Shabbos following the fire, a carload of bochurim drove to Philadelphia and worked literally through the night, helping to clean up the damaged building.

Perhaps more surprising was the overwhelming response of the community at large. Even people who had previously not been affiliated with the yeshiva responded wholeheartedly and generously. Evidently, the yeshiva's preeminence and the vital role it played in the Torah world was recognized by the general tzibur.

While the details of the rebuilding story, so replete with hashgacha protis, are too numerous to recount, some incidents surely merit being retold.

The morning after the fire, a Mr. Mayerfeld of Vineland, New Jersey called to say that he had two double-sized trailers that were then available, which he would gladly contribute to the yeshiva as temporary quarters. The hanhallah was amazed at this gracious offer, which was actually the crucial factor that allowed the resumption of learning within ten days after the fire. The trailers were delivered that very day. Upon arrival, it was discovered that the trailers were too wide to enter the yeshiva's lot, almost resulting in their return to Vineland. With abundant siyata d'shmaya and some minor alterations to the yeshiva's landscape, Mr. Mayerfeld's dedicated workers eventually maneuvered the cumbersome trailers into position. These trailers were converted to serve as a makeshift kitchen and

dining facility including refrigeration and storage capacity. Interestingly, the local zoning board, which could have put major obstacles in the way of this ersatz structure, granted immediate approval.

Although the building had sustained extensive damage, the smallish front section had been left largely intact and salvageable. R' Avrohom Fruchthandler a noted behind-the-scenes philanthropist and askon, dispatched a professional expeditor to expertly assess the remaining structure's usability, and to develop a sound strategy to maximize its function. Indeed, with incredible speed, the front section of the building was remodeled to consist of several shiur rooms, for the high school and first year Bais Hamedrash.

RAV URI, RAV SHMUEL AND REB YERACHMIEL TAUB REVIEW THE FIRE DAMAGE WITH AN EXPIDITOR.



The very fact that the front of the building was spared is in itself a fascinating sidebar to the story. Several days prior to the fire, the yeshiva had stocked up on a complete supply of paper goods, which were stored in the basement of 6063. These combustibles were actually directly in the path of the frames, and came within inches of being ignited, which would have significantly increased the fire's scope and duration. Through great Hashgacha, a nearby water pipe burst, effectively stopping the flame's advance.

Dormitory space was still a challenge. Even after filling the yeshiva's other dormitory buildings to maximum capacity, there was still a shortage of beds. Hanhallah members took bochurim into their own homes for the next year and a half, but there was still a dearth of accommodations. Rav Uri approached the landlord of a neighboring apartment building to negotiate a lease. The landlord agreed, but adamantly insisted that the two- bedroom apartment, which also had a living room, dining room and kitchen, had a maximum occupancy



of four. Rav Uri eventually persuaded him to allow twelve bochurim to occupy the apartment. Shortly thereafter, the landlord approached Rav Uri to offer an additional apartment for other bochurim, claiming he had never had such fine, well-behaved tenants.



Providentially, even before the fire occurred, the yeshiva had already planned to demolish the 6040 dormitory and erect an entirely new dormitory facility to accommodate the entire student body. In anticipation of this, the yeshiva had purchased the building at 6076 Drexel Rd. to serve as temporary dormitory space during the 6040 construction. This building was now put to good use.

And so it was that a mere ten days after the fire, the bochurim returned and regular sedorim were resumed. Anyone who was involved in the yeshiva's crisis during those days, and in the ensuing months and years of rebuilding, gained a new appreciation of the Roshei Hayeshiva. For the entire planning, doing, running, phoning, and accomplishing, was completely orchestrated not by a committee, not by a board, but by the Roshei Hayeshiva alone. Their amazing sense of direction, of remaining in control during a time of frenzy, made an indelible impression on the numerous individuals who worked alongside them.

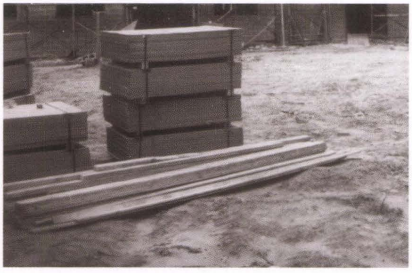
Temporary measures having effectively been implemented, the Roshei Hayeshiva now turned their attention to the daunting task of rebuilding the yeshiva. The original plan of demolishing 6040 and erecting a new dormitory on its site was now given top priority.

DEDICATED BY SHIMON AND GITTY ZELDES
SHRAGIE AND HINDY ZELDES











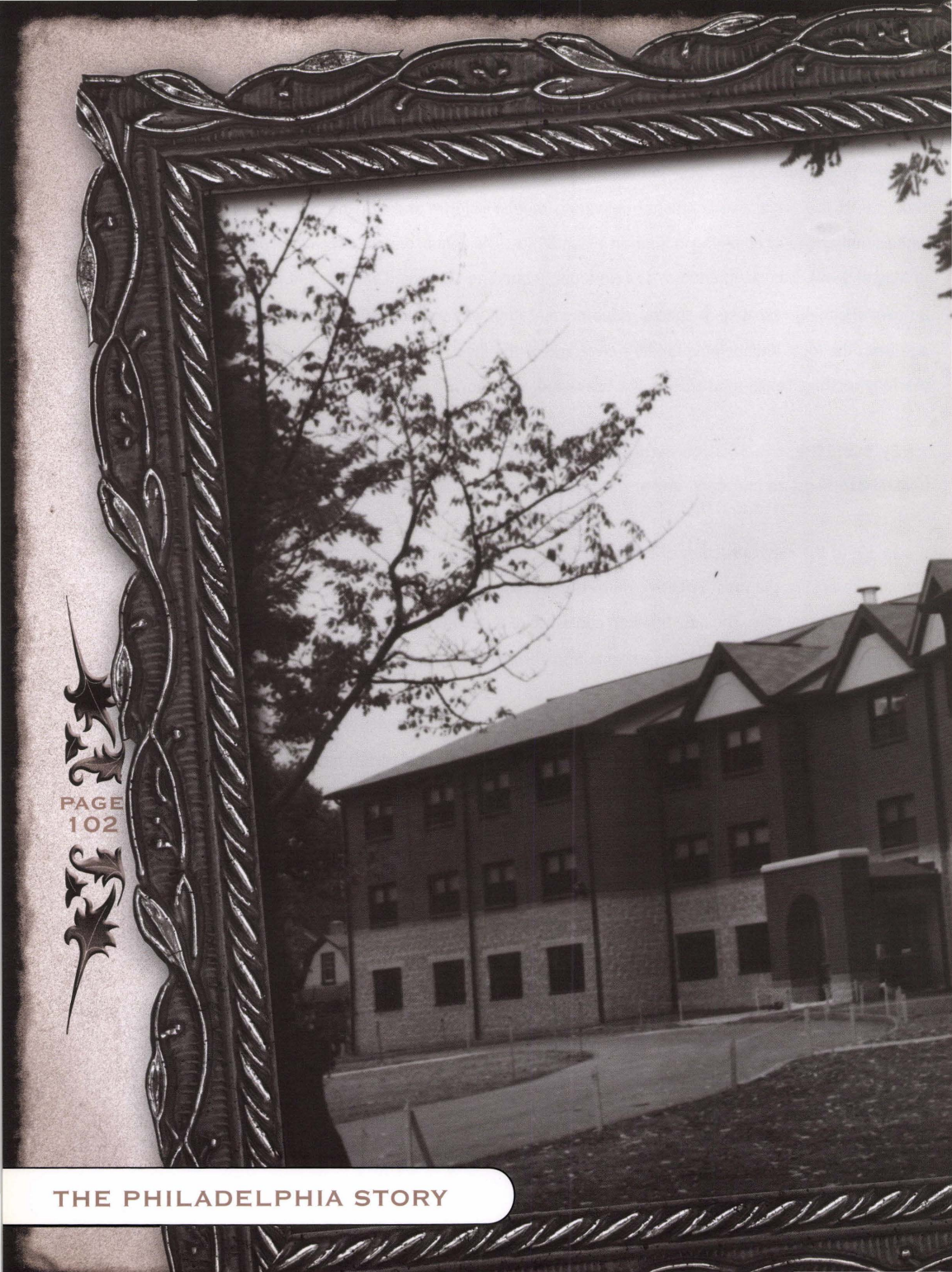
Demolition and subsequent construction got underway with a sense of urgency. During this time, the roshei hayeshiva continued delivering regular shiurim and running the yeshiva, while simultaneously engaging in fundraising activities. The annual dinner, which took place in May of 1989, was designated as the National Rebuilding Campaign Dinner, and it drew an overwhelming response. A special video presentation was shown, which included footage from the local Philadelphia media's coverage of the fire. The sight of young bochurim tearfully reciting Tehillim outside as the fire raged, was moving beyond words.

By mid 1989, the 6040 dormitory was completed. The beautiful modern structure housed 216 beds, an infirmary, and a separate section with four apartments for guests.

In 1990, the reconstruction of 6063 got underway. Much thought and planning were invested to ensure the most effective utilization of space, and to join the new structure to the old in a logical way. The new building consisted of a dining room and kitchen facilities, six shiur rooms, a laboratory, a gymnasium, and several office rooms.

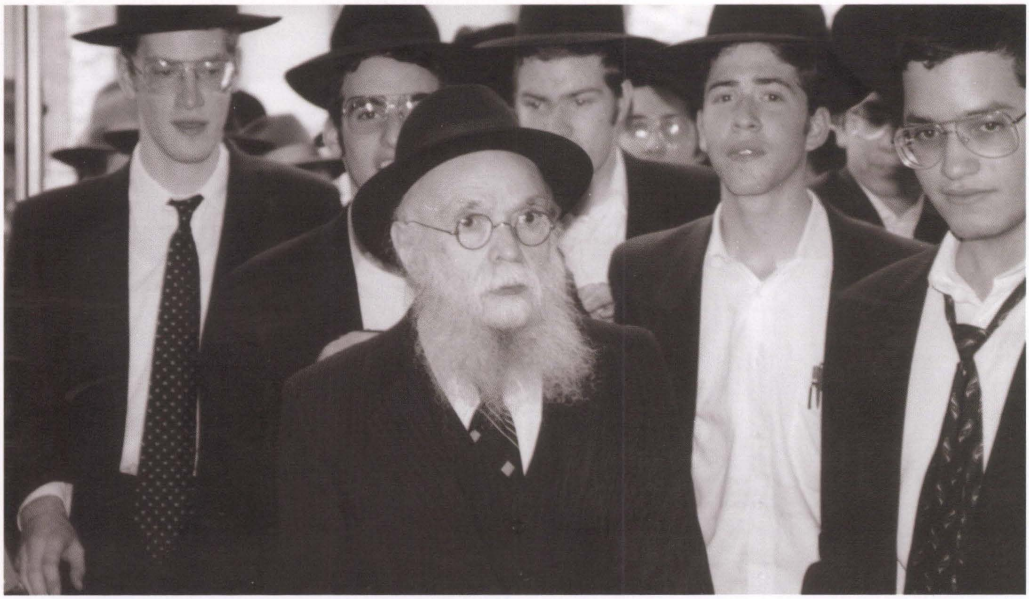
In Elul of 1990, Rav Sholom Kamenetsky and Rav Yehuda Svei joined the hanhallah in the capacity of shoe'l u'maishiv for the second seder of the bais hamedrash bochurim. This idea had been entertained for several years prior to this time, as the schedule of the Roshei Hayeshiva had become increasingly demanding and hectic, sometimes eclipsing their availability during second seder. During the years of the rebuilding, the hiring of second seder rebbeim became an absolute necessity.







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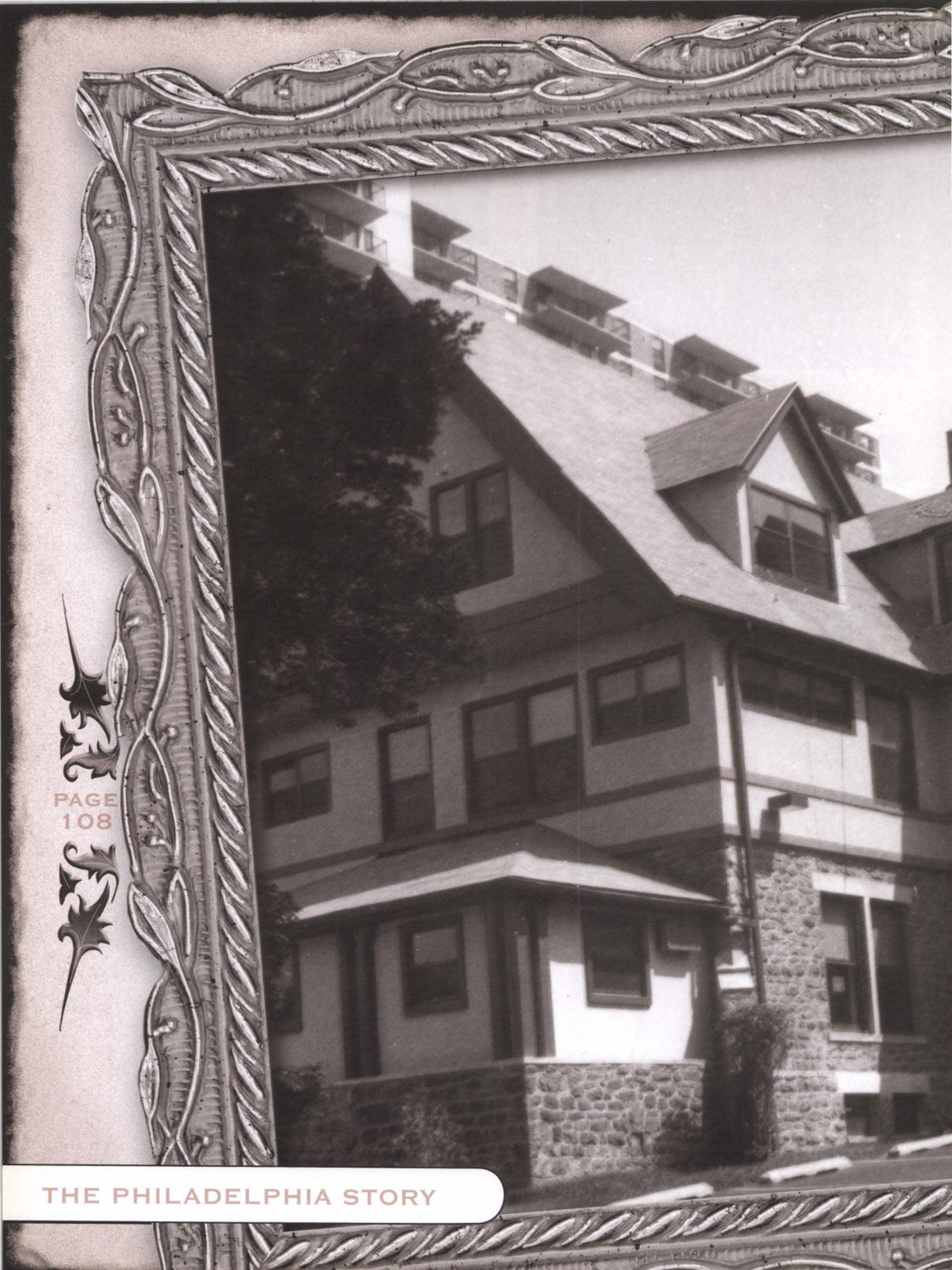














מלצא בת ר' יחיאל משה ע"ה. נפטרה כ"ט תשרי תשס"ד

MR. AND MRS. SHLOMIE KNOPF



TALMIDIM REJOICE AT THE CHANUKAS HABAYIS.

In April 1991 the building was completed. The chanukas habayis was on a much smaller scale than that of the new bais hamedrash in 1983, but it was in some ways more emotional. Rather than impose on so many roshei hayeshiva and gedolim to interrupt their schedules to attend, the roshei hayeshiva invited Rav Pam zt'l to address the assembled. The event was attended by hundreds of alumni, as well as many parents of talmidim, and local ba'alei batim and rabbonim.

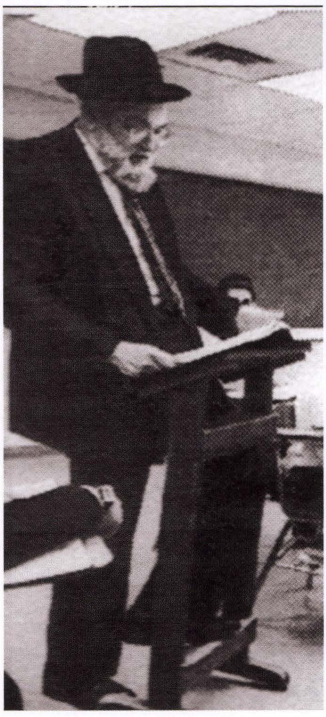


RAV ELYA WITH MARAN HARAV SHACH ZT'L

On the day after the fire occurred, Rav Shach zt'l called the yeshiva to offer divrei chizuk. "Zolt ihr vissen", he told Rav Elya, "fun ah feier ken men zich oifboyen" – you should know, that from a fire, you can grow. During the many difficult months of the rebuilding effort, it was often very difficult to visualize the light at the end of the tunnel. Now, finally, upon the completion of the main building, were Rav Shach's words truly appreciated. The fire was the catalyst that had resulted in a complete, modern and safe campus.



In April of 1995, the yeshiva suffered a terrible loss with the untimely petirah of Rav Shimon Sturman. Rav Shimon had been the rebbe of the ninth grade, but his influence and warmth permeated the entire yeshiva. He was renowned for his uncanny ability to identify a bochur who was struggling or upset, and always was equipped with just the right "gutte Yiddishe vort" to set him at ease.



Dedicated in honor of
the Roshei Hayeshiva and The Rebbetzins
by Mr. and Mrs. Chaim Wolf and Family



חיל וערדה אחזתני
כאשר הגיע לאזני לבבי
שמועה רחוקה--וגם כל כך קרובה
שרבי שליט"א זקוק לישועה
ויפג לבי כי לא אאמין
מורי ורבי
קשור ומקושר
אדוק היטב
מעולם
כגמל עלי אמו

תמהנו מעולם כולנו יחד
על התמסרותו לנו
לבו הטוב--למעלה מן המדה
כמה יכולים להכניס בלב אחד?
ובפרט - באופן שמעולם לא אמר
אחד צר לי המקום
ועתה - כולנו שופכים לב כמים
לראותו בתכלית השלימות
כולנו צמאים כמאז
לעצתו ולעידודו
כגמל עלי אמו

כל המציל נפש אחת מישראל
שכרו מרובה עד בלי די
מה נאמר על רבי
שהציל ומציל מאות
החי' אותם מכל וכל
פתח את שכלם
האיר את עיניהם
הקיץ אותם מתרדמתם
שפך על לבם חיות ואימוץ
את רוח התורה
את רוח טהורה
תוכחה וחיזוק משולבים יחד
מתוך אהבה שאין כדוגמתה
אשר כולם הרגישו
כגמל עלי אמו

אלפים זועקים עבורו
לומדים, מתפללם ועושים
לזכותו ולרפאותו
רבי רבי
כולנו צריכים אותו
כולנו אוהבים אותו
כגמל עלי אמו

חומל דלים הושעה נא
רופא חולים הצליחה נא
שיזכה רבי לשוב לאיתנו
במהרה במהרה
מתוך חסדים ורחמים
בנקל ובמהירות
שיהי' גופו בשלימות בלי
חיים ארוכים דשנים ורענ
נחת ומנוחה ושמחה תדיר
שיוכל להמשיך להרבות כ
יתב' תמיד
מתוך בריות ו
שיוכלו אלפי
אור תורתו ו
אור עצתו ו
כגמ

by Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetsky

A Rebbe Who Never Left Us

I was 13 going on nine. I was a small kid, from a small town, from a small yeshiva, who thought too much of himself. I quickly learned that it took only a couple of days to find out how easily it is to go from the top of your class and find yourself struggling to hopefully be somewhere in the middle. I was new at this, and so was rebbe.

Reb Shimon, was in his first year of teaching and he had a difficult job. He had to turn the babies into boys, and then he had to turn the boyiz (as he affectionately called us) into young men — into *b'nai Torah*. He had to break the silliness of childhood, develop one's independence without allowing him to become a free-thinker, and get him to realize that he is no longer a Mama's boy, but part of the *klal* — part of a yeshiva.

Those days were different then today. It was a time when body bags were still being brought out of Vietnam, and the past ten years in America had sown subtle seeds of irreverence toward authority. It was a feeling that believe it or not, pervaded the best and the brightest minds. It was post 60s America, and Reb Shimon had to knock

DEDICATED BY MR. AND MRS. DOVI FREUND

us out of the 1960s and bring us to the world of the 1860s — into the world where *Torah* reigned supreme and the rebellions of the streets, the riots of the past two years were all just a wisp of a corrupt culture — a fleeting moment of madness compared to the sacred permanence and everlasting stability of *Torah*.

Things back then were not as black and white as they were today. We had a mix of boys in our class from all types of backgrounds, from Boro Park to Silver Spring to the suburbs of Boston to the suburbs of Long Island. There were graduates of Maimonides Day School as well as Torah Voda'ath and T.A. of Baltimore and South Shore Yeshiva. And then there were the Philadelphians. They were there as a matter of right. Almost like the Indians had a right to the Wild West. We were the kids who had worked hard to earn the right to be in Philadelphia (except, perhaps, those of us who had relatives in high places). They were here because they were born here. We stayed in the dorm. They went home at night. Indeed, there was some contention between those of us who were in this special yeshiva because we chose to go to Philly and Philly chose us, and those boys who were there as a matter of birthright. Reb Shimon had to somehow meld us all together as one cohesive unit. He was there to remove all prejudices. He was there to teach us that the only thing that mattered from then on is the *blatt Gemara*. And he did so in amazing fashion.

Reb Shimon's job was to help build a *kesher* between all of us; the brighter ones, and the weaker ones, the *yeshivish* ones and the *greeners*. He had to not only to educate us as students of a Yeshiva, but also to give us a sense of belonging, a sense of responsibility to a *Mosad Hatorah* and achrayus to *Klal Yisroel*. Truth be told, his job was to make young men out of babies. It was amazing how he paired up *chavrusas* with *cheshbonos* that we at that young age would only appreciate after the folly of our youth was left somewhere in the dust of history.

There were so many challenges that a rebbe in a *Yeshiva Gedolah* such as the Philadelphia Yeshiva, trying to mold *bochurim* into *B'nai Torah* had to face back then. First, there was no uniform *tzurah*. The boys did not dress in the almost indistinguishable dark and white that *bochurim* wear today. Some of the *yarmulkes* had colored trim, if they were not crocheted, colored

shirts and pastel colored sport jackets did not merit a second look. It was a time when you were judged by whom you were, not how you looked. And honestly, Reb Shimon, who epitomized the philosophy of the old East Side, was probably the best choice in the world in cutting through the veneer that we find so prevalent today and getting straight to the *kishkes* of the *bochur*.

Reb Shimon had a way about him that seemed to meld the world of Rebbe, friend, and mentor. He would act casual to us to a point. It was probably most difficult for an accomplished *Talmid Chacham* to lower himself to get the attention of immature minds must have been extremely difficult for him. But he did not hesitate, or call into play his immense greatness. Instead, like a parent getting on his knees for a child, he acted sometimes in a manner that would get us excited, even amazed at the lengths he would go, to wake us up. Calling the "fellahs" by the ubiquitous sobriquet "Jackson," flicking his wrist while holding a cup that still had some water in it, in a way that a sleeping or inattentive bochur would get a wet-wake-up call. We were being trained to take it and accept the *mussar* of a rebbe, and learn to be *mekablim*. Dare we reciprocated to his warmth and his gestures of camaraderie by reciprocating with irreverence. We would learn that the right to address the *Rebbe* properly — in third person — was not a matter of rote. It was something that one had to earn. We had to learn what a *rebbe* is. And indeed he taught us.

But in addition to the many subtle lessons of *hashkafa* and *mussar*, his true goal in imparting to us *Torah* was to have us get a *klahrkeit*, clarity in the *pashut pshat*. He did not try to be fancy by throwing *pilpulim* at us. He wanted us to be clear in the *Gemara*, the *Rashi* and the *Tosfos*. He made me write the entire translation of the *shakla v'tarya* in English, in forcing me to articulate in writing, in a way that I could no longer *fumfe* the *pshat*.

Yet when he was getting hard on a talmid and they, (and in many cases I) was at a point of frustration, Reb Shimon knew to focus on strengths.

Reb Shimon knew that even as a 13 year old, I enjoyed learning and hearing drush. When he saw that I was frustrated during a difficult *sugya*, he would enliven me at recess by asking me how I understood a particular *Medrash*. Then he would lead me into saying a *pshat* that would make my day, and give me *chizuk* to go back to the sugya with a renewed confidence.

Reb Shimon had a library-like treasury of *Divrei Torah* that was amazingly wide-varied. From *Chassidishe* insights, to to diyukim of the Brisker Rav, Reb Shimon had what to say to any *Yid*, let alone to a talmid, who he encountered. Reb Feivish Smoke relates that it was those *divrei drush* that gave Reb Shimon (and himself) strength even in those trying times. When he was ill Reb Feivish sent him Sefer HaChaim, a sefer on *Agadah* from Rav Chaim the brother of the Maharal. Reb Shimon called to tell him how wonderful the sefer was. Indeed in Hakdama R' Chaim writes that he actually wrote the sefer during a very difficult period because *Da'agah* and *Agada* have the same letters therefore *Agadah* is an antidote for *da'agah*.

Reb Shimon had a *cheshbon* for everything. In his raspy voice, perhaps foreshadowing the illness that would one day prove terminal, *Rebbe* had often asked one of the boys to bring him a cup of water. It was a *z'chus* to bring him water and the chosen water carrier was someone special. But bringing water was also a lesson — just another example of how many things he taught way beyond the *blatt*. I was chosen once, and learned a lesson I never shall forget. Knowing that *Rebbe* would finish one cup and soon request another, I decided to be smart. I came back with two cups and gingerly placed the two cups on his desk. I received a look as if I had put a plate of *tarfus* in front of him. He mumbled something

I was very confused. He repeated. "*Zugos!* You don't bring *zugos*." The concept of *zugos* was still foreign to me, but that was not the point. It was the trepidation and fear that was written all over his face. The seriousness of my transgression of an often-overlooked *Gemara* was as serious as an *aveirah chamurah*. I do not know if he truly believed it, or if indeed he was *noheig* to be *makpid* on *zugos*. But he imparted an oft-overlooked reverence and appreciation toward any *ma'amar* of *Chazal*, and till today. I remember his admonishment in a way that has influence me to this very day.

Indeed, it was those small admonishments that impacted us most profoundly. A former *talmid* who is already out of Yeshiva for over 10 years still keeps a custom which he has adapted back in his philli days. 3 times a day, before starting *Shemona Esrei* he pauses to button his jacket. He began this practice

at the initiative of Reb Shimon. Reb Shimon would constantly implore him to do something before talking to the *Ribbono Shel Olam*.

His *mussar* on *Derech Eretz* was very powerful as well. One *Chanukah*, my parents sent me an envelope to give to *Rebbe*. I carefully folded in half and handed it to him. He flatly refused. But I was smarter. It was not long into the next day's recess in which I slipped the folded envelope into his coat pocket. I received a stinging rebuke. It was twofold. One, I disobeyed the *rebbe's* request. The second. It was clearly contrary to the laws of *Derech Eretz* to slip something into a *Rebbe's* pocket.

Indeed he did not ever want gifts. In later years when the *bochurim* would finally bandy together to buy gifts for their rebbe, he almost demurred. Finally he relented and asked for two books: All For The Boss and The Maggid Speaks.

Anyone who knew him as a young bochur knew that he always thought of others. His father would send him a box of fruit and he would put it down for all his friends to eat, only to be left with the remnants if anything for himself.

He always considered himself unworthy of the role he played. His humility was unimaginable. And the way he felt about himself was inversely proportional to the reverence that he had for the Roshei HaYeshiva. He once related to Reb Feivish Smoke that he tried to become close to Rav Laib. Reb Shimon felt that as Rav Laib was someone he could relate to, Reb Laib would be a bridge to gap the distance between his own level and the much higher *madreiga* of the *Roshei Yeshiva*.

Reb Shimon displayed a remarkable sensitivity to all human beings and creations of the *Ribono Shel Olam*. He worried about the small children who would run around the *Yeshiva* courtyard as well as for the tiniest creations in nature. Once, he walked into *shiur* and began to relay to his *talmidim* an incident, which he witnessed outside his home that morning. He saw two gentile teenagers obnoxiously torturing a squirrel. Reb Shimon did not simply relay to his boys what he saw. He went into every detail of his story, describing how these unruly kids held the squirrel upside down by the tail then forcefully dunked its head into the water. Reb Shimon let the story set in as he watched his *talmidim* squirm in their

seats trying to focus on better things. Then came the punch line. Lifting his head, Reb Shimon puzzlingly asked why they are so uncomfortable. "This is only an animal," he said. Imagine the *busha* of a fellow friend. Think about how that hurts...

There are many *talmidim* of the *Yeshiva* who were not *zoche* to be in Reb Shimon's classroom, yet they considered themselves *talmidim*. Reb Shimon had a keen eye for those who just did not make it on their own. He made those *bochurim*, his own project. If you would be able to be *nislabesh*, the words, "*L'hacahyos laiv nidchaim*" in a *tzooras ha'adam*, it would be Reb Shimon.

Reb Feivish Smoke, who now lives in Montreal thinks about Reb Shimon when learning the sugya in Ta'anis(22). Eliyahu HaNavie would frequently appear to Rav Broka in the *shuk*. Once Rav Broka asked Eliyahu if there is anyone there who are destined to *Olam Habah*. During the course of the conversation, two men came by and Eliyahu acknowledged that these men would have a *chelek* in *Olam HaBah*. When Rav Broka asked their occupation, they replied that they cheer up the downtrodden and they help resolve quarrels. Reb Feivish explained in the name of the *Ya'aros D'vash* that *Olam Habah* is a world without *kin'ah*. It is a world where everyone is equal according to his level. Making people feel welcome, making them feel comfortable, resolving quarrels, and cheering up the downtrodden — that was Reb Shimon.

In truth, Reb Feivish reminisces: "The first day that I arrived at the *yeshiva* I was greeted with a warm *shalom aleichem* and a short conversation by Reb Shimon. His greeting was more than just perfunctory, he imparted to me a feeling that he would make me feel at home, that he would help me become a part of the *chabura*, and that he would help me along to *shteig*. I sensed right away that I was in the presence of an *ehrlicher Yid* and an *oisgearibiter mentch*. His *Shalom Aleichem* and *sever panim yafos* were his trademark and his very essence and they eased the way for many *talmidim* to become an integral part the Yeshiva.

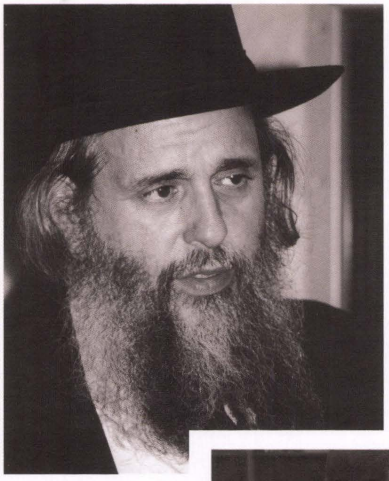
In every ensuing conversation that I would have with him, be it in person or on the phone there was tremendous *varemkiet* where he would guide me in how to think with the *hashkofas*

hatorah, the *hashkofas hayeshiva* and the *hashkofa* and the *mesorah* of the *Roshei Hayeshiva shlita*."

A *talmid* who after tenth grade complained to Reb Shimon that he hasn't grown at all since he came to *Yeshiva*. Reb Shimon responded went through the boy's history in *Yeshiva*, reminding this young *bochur* how immature he was when he first came to *yeshiva*. It was his way of being *mechazek* this distraught boy.

Indeed, during my entire tenure in *Yeshiva* for six ensuing years, followed by years in Ponovez, Lakewood, Pittsburgh and even moving back to Woodmere, Reb Shimon followed me. He encouraged me through failures and congratulated me on successes.

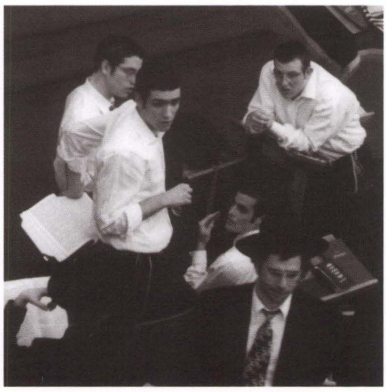
There was hardly a talmid who went through his classroom who did not have a piece of Reb Shimon tagging along wherever he went, following his progress inquiring on his well-being. He has been gone for many years now but I am sure that matter where we go, no matter what we do, anyone who ever had a connection with Reb Shimon, still has rebbe, following behind, watching and encouraging. Y'hi Zichro Boruch.



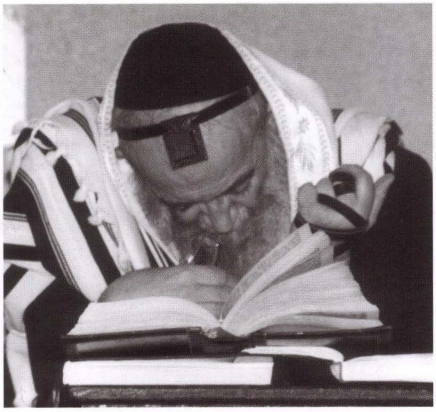
















Rav Avrohom Yitzchok Hoberman with a talmid.

The following Elul, the Roshei Hayeshiva chose Rav Avrohom Yitzchok Hoberman, an alumnus of the yeshiva, a talmid of yeshivas Brisk and Lakewood, and a son of Rav Zev, to teach the ninth grade shiur.

In 1989, at an alumni rebuilding breakfast, Rav Elya emphasized the importance of rebuilding according to the needs of future generations. The Rosh Hayeshiva went on to say, that not only will future talmidim need nicer facilities, they will require more personal attention from the hanhala, as well. The future Hanhala of the yeshiva must be able to involve themselves with each and every bochur, more so than today. Consequently, the Roshei Hayeshiva began to look for a s'gan menahel to bring a new chiyus to the high school by being involved with the bochurim on a one-to-one basis. In Elul of 2002 Rav Yaakov Moshe Willner, an alumnus and a talmid of Yeshivas Brisk and Lakewood, was chosen.

Rav Yaakov Moshe Willner



Rav Aharon Weintraub



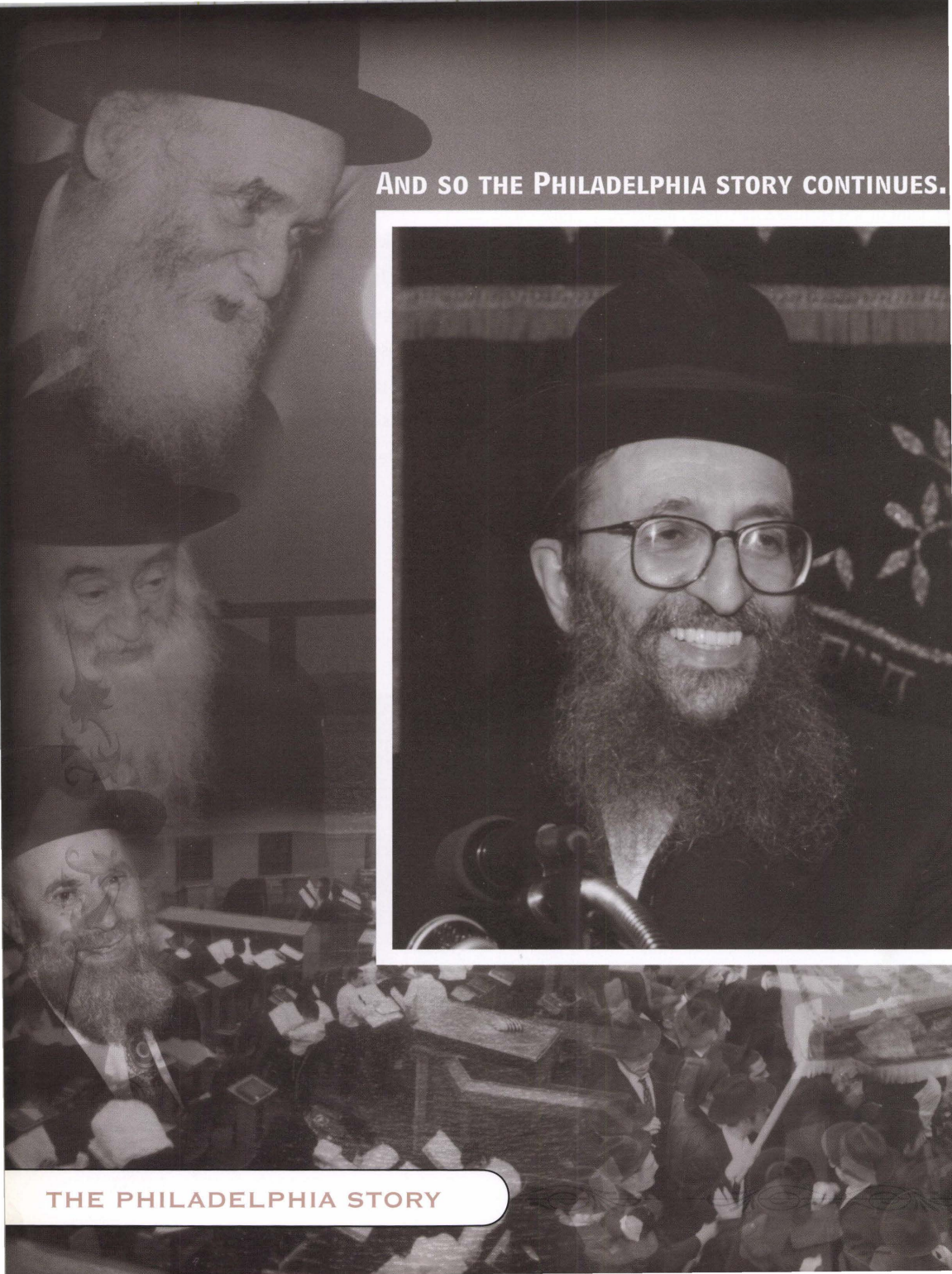
In Elul of 2003, Rav Leib, who had been teaching virtually since the beginning of the yeshiva's existence, assumed the position of second seder shoe'l u'maishiv, while delivering chaburos to the bais hamedrash bochurim on a weekly basis. Rav Aharon Weintraub, an alumnus of the yeshiva and a talmid of yeshivas Brisk and Lakewood, was chosen to teach the twelfth grade shiur.

Thus, the yeshiva continues to grow and thrive. In retrospect, the entire history of the yeshiva has been one of remarkable resilience, weathering crises both large and small. In part, this can be attributed to the general approach of adapting as necessary, maintaining enough flexibility to accommodate evolving needs and situations, while never compromising the core vision and mission of the yeshiva.

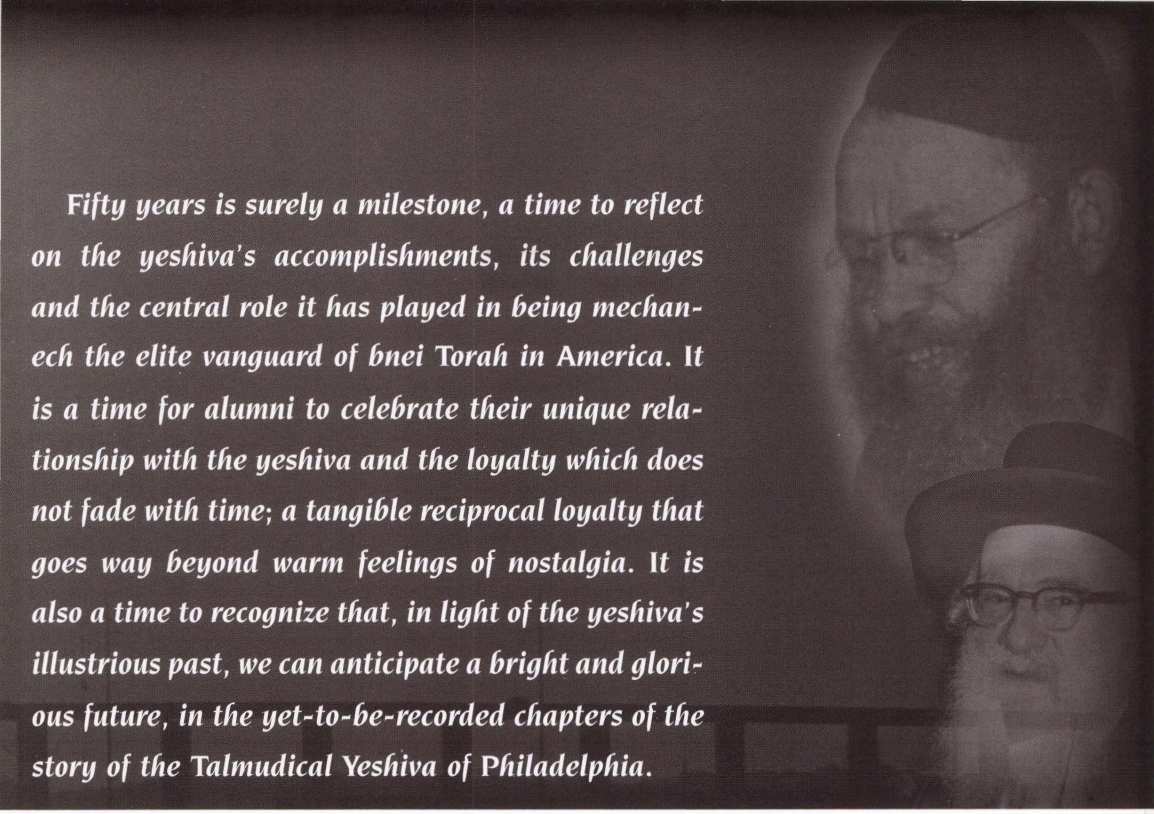
Rav Leib in 1985 talking in learning to talmidim.



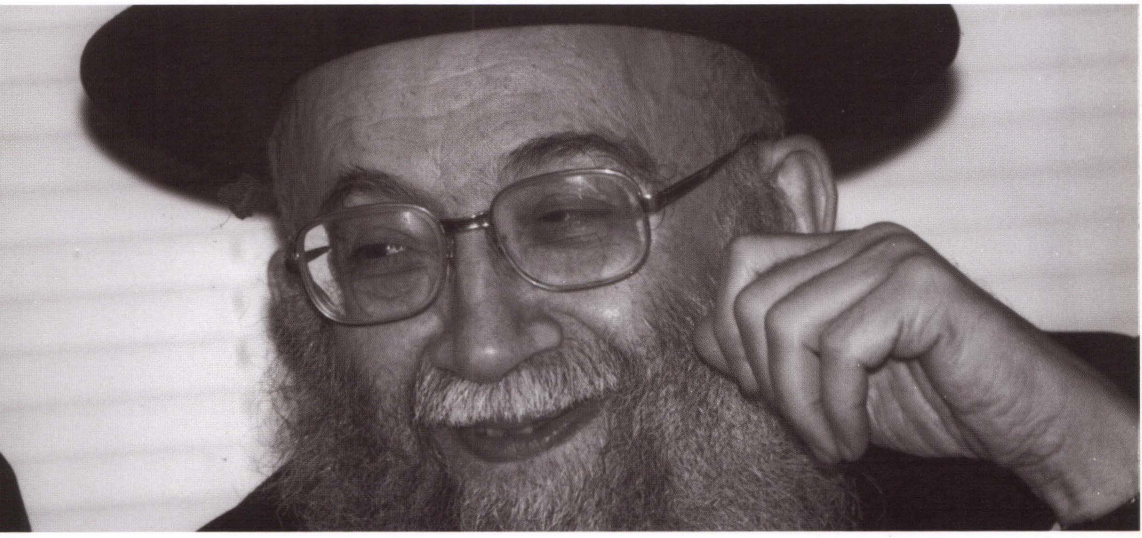
Dedicated by Rabbi and Mrs. Ezriel Munk
Lakewood, New Jersey

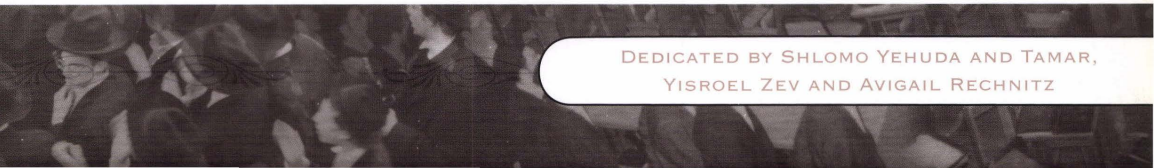


And so the Philadelphia story continues.

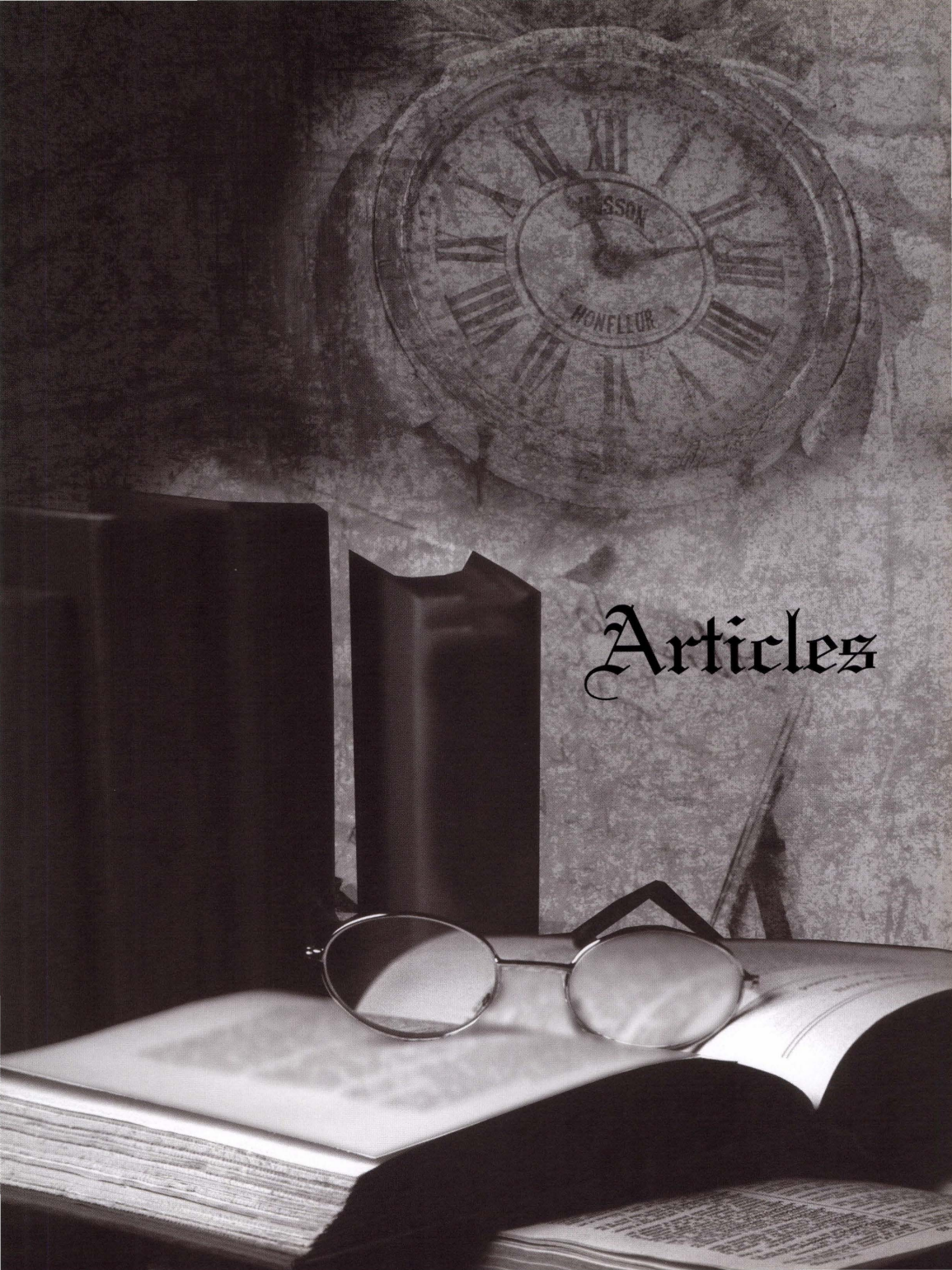


Fifty years is surely a milestone, a time to reflect on the yeshiva's accomplishments, its challenges and the central role it has played in being mechanech the elite vanguard of bnei Torah in America. It is a time for alumni to celebrate their unique relationship with the yeshiva and the loyalty which does not fade with time; a tangible reciprocal loyalty that goes way beyond warm feelings of nostalgia. It is also a time to recognize that, in light of the yeshiva's illustrious past, we can anticipate a bright and glorious future, in the yet-to-be-recorded chapters of the story of the Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia.





DEDICATED BY SHLOMO YEHUDA AND TAMAR,
YISROEL ZEV AND AVIGAIL RECHNITZ


Articles


RABBI
4-RITNER

Picture, if you will, a city with a population of approximately 250,000 Jews "boasting" the following statistics: one Jewish elementary school - with a student enrollment of about 250; sh'chita practiced in high volume - without b'dika; dozens of "kosher butchers"- two of them shomrei Shabbos; only 100 women using a barely functioning mikveh.

This was "Jewish Philadelphia" in the late 1940's and early 1950's. These and other indications pointed to a city where commitment to authentic Jewish life was held and practiced by a rare few.

Into this environment, we were told, a Yeshiva was going to be planted. Yet, planted it was, in the true sense of the word! This was a small sapling, planted by a giant, Rav Aharon Kotler, zt'l, to be carefully tended and nourished until it developed into a full-fledged "אח הלבנון" - a beacon unto the world of Torah study and "*yiras Hashem*".

Still, even those who were fully committed to the project were not sanguine about their prospects. Support from the local Orthodox community could be expected, of course; but its numbers were few and did not include any financial "heavy hitters". Help did also come, in fact, from some Conservative Jews, who were actively involved in helping the Yeshiva get started and this continued throughout the early years. Ultimately, the Yeshiva student body grew from barely a *minyan* to well over 200; its campus evolved from a small Talmud Torah building in Strawberry Mansion to its present multi-building presence in Wynnfield.

In this connection, one of the earliest supporters of the Yeshiva, who surely may be considered a founder, was Rabbi Sholom Schneiderman zt'l. He led a small Shul and Talmud Torah on Berks Street in Strawberry Mansion; and it was in this building that the Yeshiva started. Unfortunately, he was killed in an automobile accident on the way to a meeting about the Yeshiva. He was the epitome of an old time European *Rav*, eschewing the commercialism and other unsavory practices common at that time. He always lent support to worthy causes, and the revival of Orthodox Jewish life in the city was due in large part to his example of steadfast and active work on behalf of the Yeshiva and other institutions.

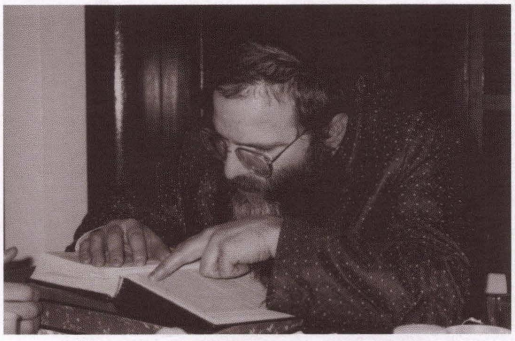
More names of the past come to mind - people who left an indelible mark on the Yeshiva. Edward Gornish ע"ה, was president until his untimely demise in 1962. His wife, Sylvia ע"ה, was for many years a fixture in the office. Julius Idstein, a staunch worker and supporter of the *k'lal*, became a close friend and valuable aide to the *Roshei Yeshiva* until the end of his life. His wife, Senta was a prime booster of the Yeshiva who made thousands of phone calls to marshal attendance at dinners and participation in other Yeshiva projects. Mr. Hyman Korman and Mr. Nathan Perilstein were officers and board members who provided strong early financial and moral support.

Probably, the major crisis in the 50 years of the Yeshiva's existence was the fire on November 29, 1988 that destroyed the building at 6063 Drexel Road. There were no injuries ב"ה, nonetheless, high hurdles had to be overcome. An emergency meeting was held the evening following the fire, attended by, among others, Rabbi Herman Neuberger from Yeshiva Ner Israel of Baltimore and Rabbi Avrohom Fruchthandler of Mesivta Chaim Berlin, which, above all else demonstrated the affinity and cordiality of the Yeshivos towards each other. The first need was to provide continuity for the students, despite the loss of a major building housing the kitchen, dining room, classrooms and some dormitory rooms. There was an eight-day cushion, as *Chanukah* was about to arrive. After the meeting was adjourned, we all proceeded to City Hall to meet with the mayor, who happened to live in the area and had actually witnessed the fire. He was very sympathetic and promised to help minimize the red tape normally associated with this type of demolition and rebuilding. We also received crucial assistance from the Mayerfeld family of Vineland, N.J. in the form of large trailers that collectively served as a versatile substitute for the destroyed structures.

The immediate need was for a massive cash infusion, to complete the new dormitory and to design and reconstruct the burnt-out build-

ing. Rabbis Svei and Kamenetzky "hit the road" as they say – or rather the airways – traveling throughout Europe and the United States, and, in a relatively short time, were able to raise the necessary funds to rebuild and improve the Yeshiva's physical plant. After *Chanukah* the student body returned, to find ready facilities, albeit temporary, but serviceable, to continue –virtually uninterrupted– their learning with the התמדה for which the Yeshiva is so famous.





Today, many of our students are second and third generation offspring of our early *talmidim*, testifying to the strong bond created between the hanhala and those pioneers during their years with us.

The face of Jewish Philadelphia has also surely undergone a drastic change over the last 50 years. While no one institution or individual can take credit for this remarkable revival, the Yeshiva is certainly a vital and central feature on the new "face" of Jewish Philadelphia.

Into any viable, enduring institution, young blood has to be infused constantly, to assist and to assure the perpetuation of the outlook and philosophy with which the Yeshiva was originally founded while remaining in tune with the requirements of today's students.

In this regard, Rabbi Sholom Kamenetsky and Rabbi Yehudah Svei, who joined the *hanhala* some time ago, have added much to the Yeshiva's "*matzav horuchni*". This is the way the Yeshiva has progressed and hopefully will continue to do so "*ad sh'bo l'tzion goel*".


שאגו בני נחמן
סיום התורה

"ושננתם לבנך" As we recount twice daily in Krias Shema, we are enjoined to teach Torah to our sons so that they become knowledgeable in Torah law and assume its perspective on life. And we, in turn, turn to our yeshivos to do the job for us.

What does that consist of? Just listen to yourself when you say Birchas HaTorah: "והערב נא ... — make learning Torah sweet in our mouths and in the mouths of our children." And then: "ותהיה לשמה תורתך ולמדי יודעי שמך כולנו ... אנחנו וצאצאינו." And may we and our offspring ... all know Your Name and learn Your Torah for its own sake." It's not just a wish or a prayer. It's a goal, the target of our game plan for our children's lives.

So I enrolled my son Raphoel in the Yeshiva of Philadelphia. He had been doing well, but I thought he could do better. He enjoyed his learning, but he could aspire for more. And as long as he satisfied his Rabbeim's expectations, he seemed to have no need to think in terms of reaching beyond the school's requirements.

He entered the Yeshiva of Philadelphia, and he lost his complacency, in fact, from the moment that he sat down in the shiur room of Rav Mendel Kaplan צ"ל, he discovered that there were no givens — not on the *Gemora* page and not in life's encounters. Every statement, every assumption, every obvious fact had to be proven. Every proof was open to challenge. And every challenge led to analysis and the peeling away of the layers of superficial judgments. Which resulted

in re-examination and resolution. This process endowed everything with a freshness, and nothing is as *geshmak* as a freshly experienced lesson. Thus, every day's learning was a response to our "והערב נא" pleadings.



This *geshmak* was accompanied by an overwhelming sense of mission. This, in turn, was the product of an extraordinary place fashioned by his *Roshei Yeshiva*, a place that was an extension of the pre-War Yeshiva of Kletzk. It was in Kletzk, and then in Lakewood, where Rav Aharon Kotler's words and his every action demanded that the *bochurim* be fully dedicated to learning, totally immersed in Torah, completely guided by Torah so they develop into bonafide *bnei torah*. Philadelphia's *Roshei Yeshiva* spent many years under Reb Aharon's guidance. Their words during the half century of their leadership of the Yeshiva echoed Reb Aharon's entreaties, just as Reb Aharon's commanding and inspiring presence was reflected in their every gesture.

This *geshmak* and this sense of mission were absorbed by my son during his years in Philadelphia, and continue to inform his thought and actions. I am thus overflowing with a debt of gratitude to the Yeshiva for fulfilling my hopes as articulated daily in *birchas HaTorah* — a debt that does not fade, but continues to grow as the years go by.

The following article was excerpted from a speech delivered by Rabbi Yaakov Fensterheim at the Yeshiva dinner, March 12, 1995.

The parsha of ביכורים demonstrates how to fulfill the obligation of *hakaras hatov*. The pasuk says 'ובאת אל הכהן אשר יהיה בימים ההם ואמרת אליו'. Says Rashi "שאינך כפוי טובה". The *parsha* continues with the words "ועניית ואמרת" and Rashi defines this idea as "לשון הרמת קול". *Hakoras hatov* requires *haromas hakol*.

Reb Yerucham Levovitz zt'l explains that "*dibur*" is not merely one of the methods available in expressing gratitude, rather it is integrated with the very essence of *hakaros hatov*.

The creation of Adam HaRishon culminated with "ויפח באפיו נשמת חיים'. Only then did Adam become "לנפש חיה", which the Targum translates as לרוח ממללא. *Koach haDibur* comes from the *Ribbono Shel Olam* alone. When a person has to be *makir tov*, utilizing the most valuable medium is pertinent to the very act of *hakaros hatov*. Thus, it is the *chush Hadibur* which the Torah chose in the mitzvah of *bikurim*.

ביתרון האדם על הבהמה – that's the way a person has to be *makir tov*. The *parsha* tells us just to say thank you is not enough. The *parsha* says that you have to start with ארמי אובד אבי. You have

to go back to the אבות. For me to properly be *makir tov*, I have to go back to a hundred years ago in America. When my *alter zeide*, Reb Moshe Weberman, and my grandfather, Reb Mordechai Tzvi Dicker, *"shaft" a zah shtarke ruach* in the *mishpacha*, that they were *zoche* to have five generations of American born *bnei torah*.

Today, I have to go back and I have to thank my father's *rebbe*, Reb Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz. The condition of *yiddishkeit* in America seventy years ago was very poor. At a time when people were struggling to keep *kashrus* and *shabbos*, Rav Shraga Feivel had my father struggling over a *tosfos* and over the *pshat* in a *pasuk* in *Tehillim*.

I must thank my parents, for in the fifties when everybody was pursuing the American dream, they only had one *hasaga* that I should *horava* on a *blot gemara*.

The biggest *yasher koach* that I feel that I am *mechuyav* is to my first *rebbe* in Philadelphia. Reb Zev Hoberman, who was my *rebbe* for 4 years in Philadelphia. Reb Zev transformed us into *bnei torah*. I must have been about 14 years old when I told my parents that I was going to sit and learn in a *kollel*. That was in a time when there were only 50, 60 *kollel yungerleit* in America. This is a *hasaga* not known to us.

Reb Zev taught us through example. We actually lived together with him in the same dorm, at 59-39 Woodbine Avenue. Every day, as we would walk in an out of the dormitory, we'd witness Reb Zev over



RAV SHLOIME HEIMAN ZT'L, WITH RAV SHRAGE FEIVEL MEDLOWITZ ZT'L.

his *gemora*. We went to sleep to his *kol torah* and we awoke to the greetings of his children.

Reb Zev taught us that we don't go into *chinuch* for *parnosa*, we don't go into *chinuch* for *harbatzas hatorah*, you go into *chinuch* to *shteig* in learning, to toil in *Torah*. *Chinuch* is a *tzinor*, certainly you're *marbitz Torah*, but it must be a place that is condusive to continuous growth in *Torah*. It was my experience in watching Reb Zev all those years in Philadelphia, that guided me to be *marbitz torah* in a *yeshiva*. In my mind, that *hasmoda* was the result of being away from the big city.



RAV ZEV HOBERMAN, RAV URI.

I also have to be *makir tov* to my *eltere bochurim* in the *Yeshiva*. You don't realize how much an *eltere bochur* can actually impact you. One such person was Reb Yechiel Perr, currently *Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshiva Derech Ayson in Far Rockaway. When I came to the Yeshiva he took me under his wings and he learned with me. Rav Yechiel guided me and he always advised me. And, I have to give him a *yasher koach* for the best advice of it all. When Rav Yechiel Perr was משדך into the *novardohker mishpacha* he called me and said to me, "Yankel, if you want to be able to sit and learn לעולם ועד, you have to be משדך into a *torahdika mishpacha*. Baruch Hashem, I was *zoche* to go into the *Mirrer Mashgiach's mishpacha*. My *shver*, zt'l never deviated from the path set forth in the Mir. My shviger, *zul zein gezunt*, constantly sees to it that her sons-in-law should be able to sit and learn במנוחה. It is already twenty years since the marriage of her last child, yet she is still *moser nefesh* for their *ruchniyos*. This kind of support is not commonplace.



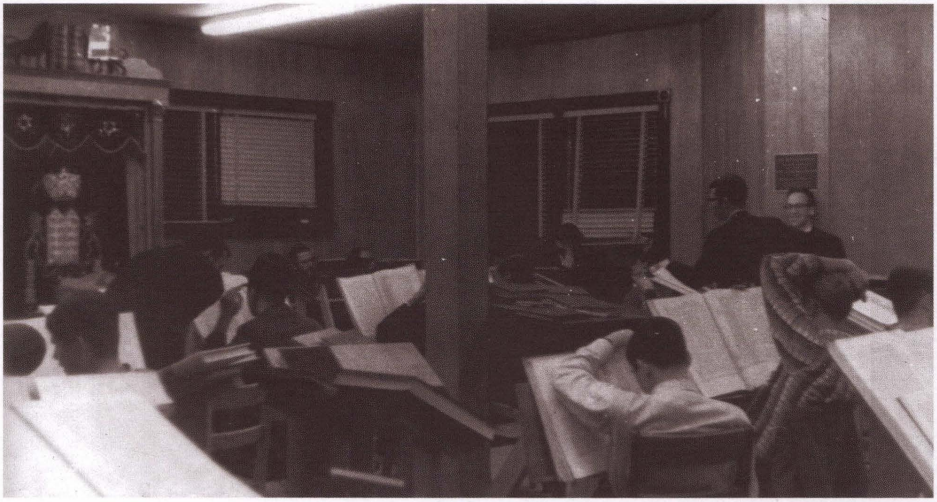
Over forty years ago, I was sitting in class, in Mesivta Torah Vodaas when Reb Dovid Bender zt'l called us out - myself and a few other *bochurim*. He introduced us to Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky zt'l and his son, יבלחט"א Rav Shmuel. He told us about their plan to make a yeshiva in Philadelphia. That day, Rav Shmuel learned with us the first *amud* in שור שנגח. I had such a *geshmak*, such a *varmkeit* that I decided right then and there that Philadelphia is the Yeshiva for me.

Throughout all the years in Yeshiva, the closeness and the warmth from Rav Shmuel was unreal. Even before he moved into the neighborhood, when he was yet in Strawberry Mansion, he invited us there for *shabbos*.

I still remember the first *shiur* that I heard from Reb Shmuel when I went into the Bais Medrash. We were learning אלו מציאות, and he said *pshat* in the first *Rashi*, that it is a *sha'la* if *yiush* is *m'taam hefker* or not.

Words cannot adequately express my gratitude to the *Rosh HaYeshiva*, Rav Elya shlita. From that first time that I ran to the door, to give him a *sholom aleichem* until today the *kesher* becomes *shtarker* and *shtarker*.

It took me years to appreciate the extent of what he did for me. Before I was even in his *shiur*, he would have a *seder* with me to tell me his *shiurim*. *Shabbos* afternoons I would go to his house where he would discuss the *Shiurim*. When I was in his *shiur*, I had a *seder* with him *pashut* learning *Chumash* and *Rashi*. Throughout all the years, he was always there for me, in every single way, both in *ruchniyos*, and in *gashmius*, he helped me with my *mishpacha* as well as with my *talmidim*.



How many times after a hectic evening that I am on the phone, or I have to run to a bochur's chasuna and I come home and I say "Oy." My *rebbitzen* says to me, "Your *Rosh HaYeshiva* does it for you. The *Rosh Yeshiva* has time for everybody, you have to have time for everybody!"



אילו ידע ראובן

The Value Of Hindsight

Every one of us has his own story of what brought him to the Yeshiva. For most, it was a *Rebbi*, a sibling, a friend, or the like, who provided the first inspiration. For me, it might just well have been a do-it-yourself shoe repair kit.

When my father returned home from one of his early business tours to Philadelphia, he spoke with admiration of the Kamenetsky household. In particular he related how he had seen the *Rebbitzen* doing her own repairs on the children's shoes. Most people would have seen a precarious financial situation; my father saw a value system. Subsequently, when Mr. Erwin Weinberg would stop at our house every two weeks on business and at the same time persistently extol the virtues of the new Philadelphia Yeshiva, my father began to listen. He never said so, but I believe he was influenced by the values that he saw being practiced in the *Rosh Yeshiva*'s house. The rest, as they say, is history. While most of my eighth grade classmates went on to the larger Brooklyn yeshivos headed by the elder *Roshei Yeshiva* of the generation, I was sent to a Yeshiva that was headed by two men in their low thirties and had not yet seen three high school graduations. In hindsight, I still marvel at my father's ability to see immediately what took others many years.



Indeed, hindsight, זאגט די וועלט, has twenty - twenty vision. By training hindsight on key little incidents, we can all recognize them now as markers on the path that life has taken because of the Yeshiva. In my case, a conversation that my father ע"ה and the late Vineland *Rosh Yeshiva*, Rav Moshe Eisenmann zt'l, had even before I came to the Yeshiva, takes on significance through the lens of hindsight. "*Mazel Tov*" he told my father when he learned of his decision to send me to Philadelphia. "*Ich herr az ihr vert a mechutan mit* Philadelphia." That phrase caught my ear then but it wasn't until I was a lot older that I fully grasped its significance: you don't just send your child to a Yeshiva, he was saying. You become a *mechutan* with it. That bespeaks a relationship; that connotes a depth of commitment. Only as the years progressed and I had occasion to call upon the *Roshei Yeshiva* for assistance at life's critical junctures, did I recognize the depth of that characterization. We all know that once you learned in Philadelphia, you became a *mechutan* with the *Roshei Yeshiva*. Your concern was their concern and your joy was shared by them.

Of even more significance was the longer, more serious conversation my father ע"ה had with יבלח"ט Rav Shmuel, shlita, a few years later. They spoke earnestly on the landing of the stairs leading to the *Bais Medrash* in the 6063 building, while I kept my respectful distance below. One snatch of their dialogue, though, wafted down to where I was standing. "*Nisht az mir zennen kegen* college," I heard Rav Shmuel saying. "*Mir zennen far dem lernnen*. Mr. Kempler, *luzzt eiher zunn lernnen. Z'kenn zeinn as z'vett fun ehm eppes zehn*." To his everlasting credit, my father ע"ה, born and raised in Berlin – unquestioningly accepted this *Daas Torah*. The rest of my life was shaped by those first few words - and my trying to live up to the last ones.

While hindsight's accurate vision helps us detect the wisdom of decisions made long ago – or regret the road not taken – *chazal* give us another perspective.

אילו ידע ראובן שהבק"ה מעיד עליו וישמע ראובן ויצילהו מידם היה מרכיבו על כתיפו ומוליכו לאביו. אילו ידע בועז שכתוב ויצבט לה קלי, עגלים פטומות היה מאכילה (ילקוט שמעוני פרשת וישב)

"If Reuven would have known that the Torah would record that he saved Yosef, he would not have placed him in a pit, rather, he would have carried Yosef on his shoulders to his father. If Boaz would have known that it would say in the Torah that he gave Rus a bit of toasted barley, he would have fed her stuffed veal."

In my first year in Philadelphia, I was *zoche* to hear Maran Rav Aharon zt'l cite this *chazal* at a Torah Umesorah Dinner, and ask the obvious question: Why would Reuven or Boaz have acted in a more ceremonious fashion had they realized that their actions would be recorded in the Torah? Were they like us, people who act better when there is publicity? *Chalilah*, he answered. Although I was perhaps too young to grasp the full meaning of the *Rosh Yeshiva*'s words (especially since the microphone failed at this point), I believe that the gist of his answer was in line with something I saw years later from the *Chiddushei Harim*. Due to the constraints of time, space and our own smallness, the *Chiddushei Harim* explains, we don't ourselves realize the importance of our actions. Sometimes their actual character is not clear to us. It takes the words of the Torah – תורת אמת - to put actions into their true perspective.

In the simplest of terms, Reuven succeeded in derailing the plans of his brothers. Yet, they certainly thought they wanted to do right. So, he himself may have had doubt. Did he save his brother – הצלת נפשות – the greatest of *mitzvos*? Or, was he an obstacle to their proper intentions? At the time, it might not have been clear. Perhaps, as a result, he may have acted a bit hesitantly. Had he known, though, that the *Torah* would write ויצילהו, he would have acted differently. He would have known the true value of his action. Similarly, Boaz gave a friendless, impoverished גיורת a bit of barley. Was he simply doing a *mitzvah* of being מקרב a גיורת – or was he taking the first small step towards the establishment of מלכות בית דוד? Perhaps Boaz himself didn't know. But, we know. ויצבט לה קלי is part of מגילת רות – the Torah's record of the genesis of מלכות בית דוד. Had he known that, Boaz would have acted accordingly.



This, the *Chiddushei Harim* says, is what *chazal* mean: אילו ידע ראובן שהבק"ה מעיד עליו. Had Reuven realized what Hashem says about him – and not how things appeared to him – he would have been more confident of his own actions.

When Rav Shmuel, shlita, took those first faltering steps to establish a Yeshiva in Strawberry Mansion, did he realize what he was doing? Probably not. He might have realized that he was creating an environment for motivated younger *bochurim* to learn away from the city. Or perhaps that he was bringing something positive to the large Jewish population of a city cynically referred then to as an עיר הנדחת. But could he have foreseen that he was establishing a role model yeshiva that would alter the pattern of learning in the American yeshiva system? Or, could he have foreseen the trend he was establishing, one which would bring Yeshivos to communities elsewhere, from Scranton to St. Louis, Boston to Denver, and thereby alter the spiritual landscape of the American Torah community. I doubt it. A few years later, when Rav Shmuel asked Rav Elya, shlita, to join him, did they realize they were creating a partnership that would define a generation of *Bnei Torah*? Probably not. At the time, they might have thought only of the moment - that their *Bais Medrash* needed *chizuk*.

Yes, had the Philadelphia *Roshei Yeshiva* realized 50 years ago what their actions would mean to Torah in America, they might have acted with more pomp and circumstance. But, that's what we're here for tonight. To make up with a bit of מרכיבו על כתיפו - a little publicity – and עגלים פטומות – a gala Dinner – for not celebrating an event that went so little noticed years ago.

Today, of course, we can see the value of what people did 50 years ago, better than they themselves could have then. But, the story isn't over yet. In fact, the best is still to come. The ילקוט concludes with the following stirring words:

לשעבר היה אדם עושה מצוה והנביאים כותבים אותה ועכשיו שאין נביאים מי כותב אותה? אליהו ומשיח, והקב"ה חותם הה"ד או נדברו יראי ה' וגו'

"In the past, a person would perform a mitzvah and the *nevi'im* would record it. Now that there are no longer *nevi'im*, who records it? אליהו ומשיח and Hashem seals it."

It takes the perspective of נבואה to ascertain the true value of a person's *mitzvah*. Today, we no longer have that. But, in the end, when the effect of every *mitzvah* performed will be appreciated in terms of how it figured in bringing about the ultimate גאולה then we'll truly realize what was done.

Tonight, we can celebrate the long range effects of the Yeshiva's founding fifty years ago. But, our vision is still limited. Is it humanly possible to gauge the effect the Yeshiva has had על בנינו ועל כל זרע ישראל עבדיך? *But, when we will see how much the* תורה *and* יראת שמים *generated by those faltering steps taken fifty years ago affected the cause of* אליהו *and* מלך המשיח *, then, we'll know. Then, we'll really celebrate* אי"ה. *May we all – together with the Roshei Yeshiva,* יאריך ה' בטוב ובנעימים *- be zoche to have reservations at that Great Dinner.*





The following article was translated from a yiddish speech delivered by Horav Yosef Mermelstein at the Yeshiva dinner, March, 2003.

I want to apologize to all my relatives and friends who might be thinking to themselves what a fine fellow I am – that I agreed to take this award and now they are forced to come and participate in my honor. I would like them to understand; my connection to the *Roshei Hayeshiva* goes back over 35 years – and during this period, I called on them for advice or assistance countless times, never to receive a "no." I, in turn, was unable to say "no" to an opportunity to help the yeshiva.

Truthfully speaking, I must apologize to the *Roshei Hayeshiva* as well. They called me a few weeks ago on a *Motzoei Shabbos*, to ask me to accept the award, yet I did not call them to accept until that Wednesday. I would like to explain to the *Roshei Hayeshiva* how I could do it.

Rav Chaim Brisker once needed to raise a sum of money for a certain purpose. He went to a certain town and stayed by someone named Zeldowitz. This individual proceeded to ask Reb Chaim how much money he needed to raise for this project. Reb Chaim answered that he needed 100,000 rubles. Upon hearing this, Reb Zeldowitz said, "Rebbe, you sit in the house and learn and I will raise all the money that you need." After





two weeks, he gave Reb Chaim 50,000 explaining that the rest would soon follow. Two weeks later, he presented to Reb Chaim another 50,000 rubles. Reb Chaim was overjoyed with the success of his mission.

Suddenly, a man came to Reb Chaim with a complaint. He wanted to summon Zeldowitz to a *din Torah*. He went on to explain, that he had a partnership with Zeldowitz that in any *devar mitzvah* in which Zeldowitz would be involved, he would be a 50-50 partner. Yet, now Zeldowitz gave the whole 100,000 rubles from his own money and didn't let his partner give his share.

Reb Chaim looked at both of them incredulously. He turned to Zeldowitz and asked "Is it true that you gave me all this money from your own pocket, then why did it take a month to give it to me." Zeldowitz explained that although he decided immediately to give Reb Chaim all the money himself – the decision was in his *sechel*, but his heart was not on that level. So it took two weeks until his heart was holding by giving 50,000 rubles and then an additional two weeks for the remaining 50,000.

I too, was in a similar situation. Not for a moment did I waiver or question if I would accept this award. Yet, although my *sechel* knew that I would, I needed time to work on myself so that my heart as well would be holding by it.

Having said this, I would like to point out a contrast. I mentioned earlier that no matter how many times I would call the *Roshei Hayeshiva* with

requests or questions, I never received a "no." But in truth, it is really much more than that. They didn't just not say "no." I called them for many many reasons. Whether it was for an *eitzah* or for *shiduchim*, regardless of how time consuming or uncomfortable it might have been for them, they never refused me. There was always the reassuring "yes"– without hesitation or reservation. They were always there – ready to do. I remember, sitting in my chair after hanging up the phone with tears in my eyes reflecting upon the message I was given. "We are here, *'hineini,'* throw your burden on us, we will help you carry it," that was the clear message we received by each and every call.

It is however, a bit perplexing. No hesitation, no reluctance, *heart* and *sechel* together, ready to help regardless of personal consideration. Was Zeldowitz wrong? Does this not take time and effort to reach this level of self sacrifice?

The answer is – Zeldowitz was right – of course a heart must be worked on to reach such high levels of giving. And I am sure that many years ago – the *Roshei Hayeshiva* did just that. But there is a big difference. After reaching the level to willingly give 50,000 rubles – the next 50,000 rubels needs the same work. Giving 50,000 rubles doesn't



REB CHAIM BRISKER ZT'L

make the next 50,000 come any easier. The *Roshei Hayeshiva* – they gave up not 50,000 ruble, not 100,000 and not a million. Rather, their whole מציאות was given over for their *talmidim* and for *klal yisroel*. The *Roshei Hayeshiva* gave over their entirety to help others welcome with their whole heart, any opportunity to assist *talmidim* and *klal yisroel* without any hesitation.

Having had the benefit of these few weeks to reflect upon my relationship with the *Roshei Hayeshivah*, my heart as well as my *sechel* is filled with happiness to accept this award. I welcome this chance to publicly express my deepest *hakoros hatov* to the *Roshei Hayeshivah* for all they have done for me. Who knows how my life would look today if not for the *Roshei Hayeshivah*.

I would like to speak, however, about a different point. *Chazal* state: "If the early generation is like angels then we are like people. If the earlier generations are likened to people than we are similar to donkeys in comparison to them." The *Alter* from Kelm says that *chazal* are trying to make an important point that we must understand. The difference between the earlier generations and the later ones is not that they were better or greater. Rather, the contrast is that the earlier generations are totally different, a completely different entity. We must, however, understand what is the importance of this distinction? What is the difference if they are greater or a different מציאות?

The answer I feel, is one of the foundations of the proper transmission of the *mesorah* from one generation to the next. What is the definition of 'greater'? Greater means that we are both in the same ball park. We both have the same scope of concepts. Just he might be smarter and more learned. But if we are in the same league, then I retain the ability to question what he says and to make my own evaluations of his ideas. I might choose to accept some of his theories while rejecting others.

Chazal are teaching us that this understanding of the difference between the generations is incorrect. "If the earlier ones are like מלאכים, then we are like people." Can a person understand a מלאך at all? Do they share the same scope of concepts? Are there any similarities at all between a person and a donkey? Can we relate at all to R' Akiva Eiger? Was he just much smarter than us or a bigger *masmid*? The entirety of his being is so totally removed from us. We can't begin to fathom it.

As I reflect upon this *yesod* of the true transmission of the *mesoras haTorah*, I realize that this is the *chinuch* that we, the *talmidim* of the Philadelphia Yeshivah were *zoche* to receive. Entering the Yeshivah, we immediately realize the chain that separated us from the *Roshei Hayeshivah*. What we thought were correct questions we realized were not so. The answers we thought so brilliant were shown to be false. The *mussar* ideals we were exposed to were incomprehensible at times. The *Roshei Yeshiva's Neilah drashos*, when with a voice choked with tears he would demand of us that we concern ourselves with *kavod shamayim*. These were ideals that were far removed from the understanding of such young *bochurim*.

There was so much that we didn't understand, yet we learned. So much was above our heads, yet we strived to reach those lofty heights. How is this done? How can a person learn from a מלאך since so much is uncomprehensible?

The answer is that a person, with his *sechel* can't learn from a מלאך. The only way to bridge the gap and learn from a מלאך is by laying your *sechel* to the side. You must be *mevatel* yourself to the מלאך and begin to develop a whole new way of thinking – a whole new way of understanding. You have to give over your total "*zich*", your whole entirety and only then can you hope to be able to internalize the lessons and ideals being transmitted. Yes, a young *bochur* can develop a feeling for *kavod shamayim* and *avodas hashem*, if he is willing to totally commit himself to be *mevatel* his entirety to his *rebbeim*.



There is, however, one more question remaining and it is a difficult one. How could the *Roshei Hayeshivah* develop a system of *chinuch* based on this *yesod*? Is that not too much to ask from a young *bochur*? Is it realistic to expect young *talmidim* to be prepared to be *mevatel* themselves to their *rebbeim* when many adults are unable to do so?

This is a very tough question – yet the answer is very simple and every single *talmid* can testify to its veracity. The answer is that we saw it. We saw *Roshei Yeshivah* who were *mevatel* their *sechel* to their *rebbeim* and to the earlier generations. Their whole beings were dedicated to understanding the earlier generations and be *mevatel* themselves to that *mesorah*. We saw this and were therefore able to attempt to imitate it in our little ways. We perceived that the *mesorah* we were exposed to was the *mesorah* of a previous generation. The *da'as torah* that the *Roshei Hayeshivah* possessed was the *da'as torah* of the previous generation that they acquired through the *hisbatlus*. Being exposed to living examples of the *gadlus* of the previous *dor* made it easy for *talmidim* to have the trust to be *mevatel* themselves to this special *chinuch*.

How can one say thank you for this? How can one adequately express his appreciation to someone who gave the gift of life itself – a life of *Torah* and *avodas hashem*. The only way one can thank their parents is by attempting to give them *nachas* – that is the true thank you for parents. So too, I feel, is the approach for talmidim to try and express our appreciation to the *Roshei Hayeshivah*. If we talmidim will try to *dedicate* our lives to bring out *kovod shomayim* in all that we do, it would bring the greatest *nachas ruach* to our *Roshei Hayeshivah*.



Ageless Bonding

Of all physical dimensions time, is the most pervasive, the cardinal creation that is the framework for all the others. It, more than anything else, is what makes us human. Eternity, that plane where time does not exist, is Divine, for Him alone. Human Beings are confined to a linear existence, bound by the constraints of time. העבר אין והעתיד עדיין. We age as we go from one experience to another, in single file. The nostalgic pangs that we feel when we venture to reconcile experiences from our different ages is our meager attempt to transcend the boundaries of time, to achieve something superhuman, to encroach upon the Divine.

Age is highly personal, guarded like a delicate possession. We see ourselves within the context of age more than any other singular attribute. We view recent history and world events, and needless to say, our own experiences, relative to how old we were at the time that they occurred. Only through the barometer of age, do we dare compare ourselves to others. Achievements of youth are ultimately more valuable than those of later years.

The camaraderie that can be achieved between friends of the same age, *B'nai Gil*, is unparalleled. They can share familiar sentiments that the rest of the world cannot feel. Observe classmates reminiscing about old times and you will sense the tangible bond that they share.

My *B'nai Chabura* and I have the unique distinction of sharing the same age as the Yeshiva. As we honor the Yeshiva upon its' *Yovel*, we commemorate our own *Yovel* as well. The thoughts and emotions that we attribute to the Yeshiva at this juncture are, for us, very personal and intimate. Milestones invite retrospection, compelling us to justify and evaluate our stature and standing.

On *Yom Hakodosh*, the designated day for introspection when we are charged to resolve the disparities between our past and our present, we declare עד שלא נוצרתי איני כדאי. These are not words of despair. To the contrary, they exalt and emphasize the worth of the penitent. Had I been created at some previous time, עד שלא נוצרתי, I would not have been of value, איני כדאי. It is here, in this time and in this place that I am significant, it is here and now that my triumphs resound and my failures devastate. It is my contributions and those of my age group alone that form and define this moment in history. Neither past nor future generations can accomplish what we can for this era.

This *Yovel* began in the post war years, a brief interlude of unprecedented elation. The victors were engaged with rebuilding the ravages of Europe and rehabilitating the vanquished enemies. Predominant as America now was, it was determined to spread its influence across the globe. Little did it know that the empires that it helped create would rise up against it with such vehemence. The United States was convinced that it had realized the dream of pursuit of happiness. No one would have dreamed of the internal unrest that the sixties would bring. As Jews, we were living in the shadow of the great destruction of European Jewry in a self-imposed euphoria. Lucky to have survived, we were afraid to disturb the security of our haven lest we invoke the ire of the outside world by reminding them of the great tragedy that had befallen us and that they did so little to prevent. It took years before the Eichmann trial, and the term Holocaust was not yet even coined. We spoke of it in hushed tones as if we were ashamed that the others would hear. Outwardly we were content, grateful to this great haven of religious tolerance.

It was a time of cold war. Churchill's iron curtain had closed off all vestiges of Eastern Europe. Although we, as *Yeshivaleit*, yearned for the warmth and the *Yiddishkeit* that we had heard about and witnessed in our parents and *Rebbeim*, they were far removed from us. Those *Yeshivos* and *Kehillos* that fired our enthusiasm and fed our dreams no longer existed. Even the physical areas were unreachable by travel, with virtually

no communication to anyone who may have been left there. We were, in short, a new American generation, severed from the prior generation in a way that denied us access to any notion of Eastern Europe. Much as we wanted to be a part of that generation, to our chagrin, our youth, our style, and even our humor were strictly American.

It was to this oasis in this most turbulent of centuries that we were born and the Yeshiva, simultaneously, took root. In a purely American, "out-of-town" city sorely lacking in *Yiddishkeit* and, indeed, even antagonistic towards it, the Yeshiva began as a fledgling of the great tree that had been planted in Lakewood a decade earlier. Despite the unlikely place and improbable period, the aura of *kovod hatorah* that was the hallmark of all who had lived *be'Derech Yisroel Saba* since his time shone brightly within its hallowed halls. The basic credo of the Yeshiva was that Torah is endless היום קצר והמלאכה מרובה; complacency could not be tolerated. We savored each *chiddush*, each *shiur*, but we always felt uneasy.

שש אנכי על אמרתך כמוצא שלל רב: The גר"א gives a *moshol* of a heroic soldier who is being rewarded for his valor. The King gives him one full day to gather as much treasure as he can from the booty of his defeated enemies. His exuberance is tempered with despair as the day goes on and he real-



izes how much he will have to leave over when the day is done. This is how ששון differs from שמחה: ששון comes with an underlying יגון. An encounter with the אין סוף leaves in its wake a feeling of unfulfillment. It is this combination of joy and anguish that is the obsession of the *ben torah*.

The great nineteenth century philanthropist, Baron David Gunzburg was introduced to the Yeshiva world by Rav Yisroel Salanter. Rav Laizer Gordon, who was then serving as *Rosh Yeshiva* in Kelm, had asked Rav Yisroel to join him when the Baron accepted his invitation to visit his Yeshiva. Having recently graduated from St. Petersburg University with a degree in Oriental studies, Baron Gunzburg was also well versed in Judaic studies, albeit from tutors who were renowned *maskilim*. His first reaction upon witnessing the *bais medrash* in session was to criticize the basic regimen. He asked why it was that in all institutions of higher learning there were various levels of classes, with each class studying in its own study hall. Whereas here all of the students, younger and older, study together packed into one study hall. Rav Yisroel's reply was that this is the way of Torah: together it was received at Sinai and together it is studied and probed. This is the most suitable system for a Yeshiva. In this short dialogue, Rav Yisroel succinctly defined the essence of a Yeshiva. The experience of *kabolas hatorah* is an on going occurrence that never ceases. A Yeshiva transcends time and place and performs a constant reenactment of *Har Sinai*. It proves that Torah is not linear, that there are no barriers between what we learn here and what we learned at *Sinai*.

I recall my first encounter with our Yeshiva when I came as an eighth grader for my entrance *farher*. I wrote to my parents that night, and, in an emotional letter told them how impressed I was with what I had seen. I really wanted to be a part of the Yeshiva. One thought and the surge that I felt when I wrote it remains in my mind. Here, I wrote, is a place where everybody lives together and learns together as one. What is remarkable about that letter, besides from the fact that I remember it so clearly, is that a thirteen-year-old boy rarely expresses his feelings in such a fashion to his parents. Something must have touched the stirrings of a *neshoma* that remembered such an experience from long ago, feelings that only a friend of the same age, a *Ben Gil*, can evoke.



"מימיהן של אבותינו לא פרשה ישיבה מהם היו במצרים
ישיבה עמהם וכו, היו במדבר ישיבה עמהם."

Chazal reveal that the secret of *klal yisroel*'s survival and success in all situations is *"Yeshivoh Imohem."* Whether in the midst of a difficult *golus* such as *mitzrayim* or throughout the trials and tribulations of the *midbor,* the *"Yeshivoh imohem"* kept *klal yisroel* going.

However it is not only the *klal* that have to subscribe to this secret.

אברהם אבינו זקן ויושב בישיבה הי'...
יצחק אבינו זקן ויושב בישיבה הי'...
יעקב אבינו זקן ויושב בישיבה הי'...
אליעזר עבד אברהם זקן ויושב בישיבה הי'...

Each individual's success is likewise measured by the extent one implements and carries *"Yeshivoh Imohem"* through the various stages of his life. *"Yehivoh Imohem"* is what gives us the strength to withstand our *nisyonos* and to grow in our *avoidas hashem* no matter when or where we find ourselves.

Our revered *Roshei Yeshiva shlita* were *zocheh* to establish a *Beis Ulpana l'Torah, Avodoh* and *Middos Tovos* which year after year produces true *bnei torah.* If the true measure of a yeshiva's success is the degree to which the *talmidim* go out

into the world carrying with them the all important *"Yeshivoh Imohem"*, then the *Roshei Yeshivah* have succeeded beyond all expectations.

This success can be attributed to the exceptional and remarkable role models the *Roshei Yeshivah* together with the rest of the wonderful *rebbeim* and the *mashgiach shlita* were and are for us. The impact they had on us during our years in yeshiva, serves as the *"Bais Ulpana L'Torah"* that accompanies us throughout our lives and is the *yesod* for *"Yeshivoh Imohem."*

I am sure that all of us can point to situations of *nissayon* where the *shmuessin* of Reb Shmuel *shlita*



by *seudoh shlishis* exhorting us to *"trachten vegen yenem"* or the *shmuessin* of Reb Elya *shlita* before נעילה demanding of us "מידת האמת", kept us out of trouble. We can all point to the lesson of the centrality of Torah, "תורה איז אלעם", that the *Roshei Yeshiva* so exemplified and continue to exemplify, which is what sent us along the *Derech HaTorah* בדביקות ובהתלהבות.

Of course all these lessons are absorbed in more subtle ways, by merely being in the environment of the yeshiva. The *Roshei Yeshiva* succeeded in creating an environment that was rich in *yiras shomayim* and *middos toivos* which was enhanced by the many special personalities who were fixtures in the yeshiva. Whether it was, for example, Reb Mendel zt'l, whose very presence (even before learning in his shiur) gave us a glimpse of the pre-war yeshivah world along with the *mussar* of Reb Yeruchom and *"Der Alter"*. Or, Dr. Askowitz zt'l, who when we came back from breakfast to start seder, was always standing in the back corner of the *bais medrash* in *tallis* and *tefillin* learning until 10:00 before starting his work day. Or, Mr. Friedman zt'l who displayed a great degree of *emunah* and *temimus*. That, and his *simchas hachayim* was a powerful lesson in how a *yid* should be in those *inyonim*.

We, as *talmidim*, benefited from the insular environment (as much as is possible in the U.S.) that prevailed in yeshiva. Distractions were almost nonexistent, thus, the yeshiva kept a tone which was conducive for applying ourselves to our learning. Yet at the same time we were supplied with the tools to cope with and adjust to the "real world". It was only then, when our eyes were "opened", that we began to appreciate the true *gadlus* of the *Roshei Yeshiva*, especially the exceptional relationship of mutual respect and cooperation that they share.

If we further examine the words of *chazal* we are struck by the phrasing of "לא פרשה ישיבה מהם" – "the yeshiva did not leave from them". It would seem more appropriate to have said, they did not leave the yeshiva.

Perhaps we can explain that *chazal* are telling us an additional aspect of *"Yeshivoh Imohem."* Not only did our forefathers not separate from "Yeshiva", but also the "Yeshiva" did not separate from them. "Yeshiva" was always there, always available, they just had to be aware of this and connect themselves to *"Yeshivoh Imohem."*

This is especially true of the Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia; the yeshiva literally accompanied the alumni. Any *bochur* entering its gates became a lifetime member. The *Roshei Yeshiva* keep track of their *talmidim* as they continue along life's path. Any need, whether spiritual, monetary or emotional; the *Roshei Yeshiva* are there for us. In many cases it is *b`geder* "מרם יקראו ואני אענה" in a fatherly manner, they anticipate our needs and strive to better our situation as much as possible.

We all have a great debt of gratitude to השגחה עליונה for having placed us in "Philly" and to the *Roshei Yeshiva* for all they have done for us. The best expression of our gratitude is for us to strengthen our *kesher* with *"Yeshivoh Imohem"* and to refresh the lessons we absorbed during our formative years in yeshiva and to reapply them in the framework of our present mature understanding. It is only through such an ongoing and steady process that we can hope to attain the מדריגה of being עומד על דברי רבו after forty years.

As we mark this momentous milestone of *Yoivel* let us lift up our hearts in *tefilla* to the *Ribbono Shel Olam* for the continued success of the Yeshiva מחיל אל חיל and that הקב"ה should grant the *Roshei Yeshiva shlita gezunt, harchovas hadaas,* and *koach* to continue producing *bnei torah amitiyim ad bias go'el tzedek bimheirah b`yomeinu, amen.*



What Philadelphia Yeshiva Means To Me...

As I sit down to write this article I am overwhelmed by its title. Philadelphia Yeshiva means everything to me. From my youth growing up in Philadelphia with parents whose breath was the Yeshiva and all its needs, to becoming a Talmid and learning first hand from the illustrious Roshei HaYeshiva and devoted Rebbeim, to becoming an alumnus and eventually a Rebbe and parent myself appreciating more and more, day after day the lessons and life skills we were taught in so many different ways. Philadelphia Yeshiva doesn't merely teach Bnai Torah it molds and creates them. For this I am truly indebted.

My parents home was one in which כבוד התורה ולומדיה was paramount. This was taught to us in many ways but in particular with how they dealt with the *Roshei HaYeshiva* and made the Yeshiva a part of our daily lives. They spent time in board meetings, consulting with the *Roshei HaYeshiva* on a wide array of topics varying from *halacha* and *hashkofa* to Yeshiva finances, enjoying the Yeshiva's *simchos* and at times even its pain. Not only were the *Roshei HaYeshiva* so very important but the *bochurim* of the Yeshiva, boys who spent their days and nights toiling in *Toras HaShem*, were important as well. A Purim didn't pass without us waiting for the *bochurim* to visit our home as it was a momentous occasion we all looked forward to.

Upon entering the כותלי ישיבה as a Talmid myself, I witnessed first hand what my parents had supported all those years. The care, concern, love and admiration the Yeshiva and its *rebbeim* had for each and every *talmid* was unparalleled. In their eyes, each *talmid* was a fundamental building block in the future of *klal yisroel*. Linking that

bright future with the מסורה they were taught by Reb Aharon zt'l was their goal. Young, impressionable American *bnai torah* were the כלים they were given to work with. As I look back at the many *talmidim* the Yeshiva had during my תקופה, and the many diverse paths in life they have chosen, it is truly a tribute to the Yeshiva that all of us share in the *derech* we were taught.

There are so many different aspects of what makes a "Philadelphia *bochur*," but I'd like to focus on just one of them. By countless examples, we were taught that great people are a result of doing the little things right. No matter what we were to do, both inside and outside of the Yeshiva, it needed to be done completely and correctly. So many different שמועזין were given, but the common denominator amongst them was either perfecting our actions, by not leaving lights on or by treating even the janitorial staff with the dignity becoming a צלם אלוקים, or striving to learn better because each and every facet of our lives was governed by how we learned.

I remember vividly one summer when the Rosh HaYeshiva, Reb Shmuel, was kind enough to visit Camp Dora Golding, where I serve as Learning Director. The only stipulation that the Rosh HaYeshiva made was that he needed a ride back to Philadelphia as soon as Shabbos was over. On Sunday morning the *Rosh HaYeshiva* called to thank my wife for the beautiful Shabbos, while



apologizing that he hadn't said goodbye the night before because he needed to get back to Philadelphia right away and did not have time to return to the bungalow. The *Rosh HaYeshiva* who had given of his hectic schedule to do us a favor was concerned that maybe he had left and forgotten a thank you.

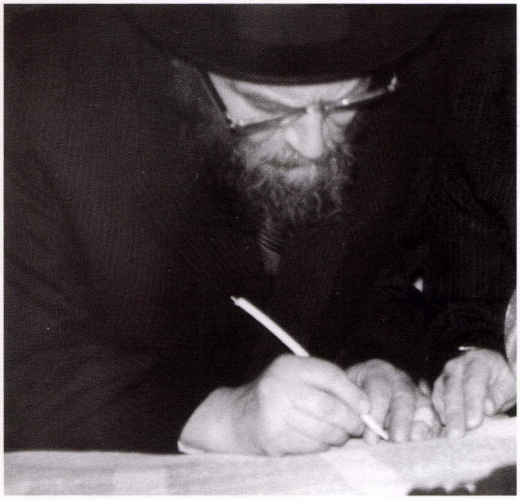
The Rosh HaYeshiva taught us the power of a few, thoughtful words. He once impressed upon me at a *chasuna* how important it is to compliment the waiter on the food, because he might in turn pass the compliment on to the chef. On a different occasion, upon meeting my father in law in Cleveland the *Rosh HaYeshiva* gave him regards from each of my children by name.

Who can forget how Reb Mendel zt'l would hone in on the little nuances of the American world and compare it to the life he lived in Mir in Shanghai & Baranovich with Reb Yeruchem & Reb Elchonon zt"l as role models. In the inside flap of my *Kiddushin Gemora* is story after story of the *gedolim* of Europe that Reb Mendel saw and learned from and shared with his *talmidim*. Each story was lined with the *mussar* that made us yearn to live that life ourselves. It was *mussar* that only Reb Mendel could give, in his very special way, and that remains with his *talmidim* today so many



years later. On a personal note, my entire family is grateful and will never forget the special last כבוד that the *Roshei HaYeshiva* gave at the levaya just a few months ago of my mother a"h, who together with my father z"l helped be מיסד the Yeshiva. When we thanked the *Roshei HaYeshiva* for all their efforts the response was, "and didn't your parents make efforts on behalf of the Yeshiva, and shouldn't we show הכרת הטוב." These are a few examples of the countless many, of how daily; we would witness people who impressed upon us by example how a *ben torah* was supposed to live.

This concept was also taught to us very clearly in our learning. One could not simply ask the *Rosh HaYeshiva*, Reb Elya a קשיא on a רשב"א, rather the *gemora, rashi and tosfos* needed to be said in it's



entirety first, then and only then if our question hadn't already resolved itself were we allowed to ask. Reb Elya would listen carefully to our every word gleaning the extra and superfluous ones and leaving us with a clarity of the pshat which was his goal. Reb Elya taught us how to be מקבל from others as well. Once, when I was in 11th grade, Reb Yitzchock asked me to run across to the *bais medrash* to get a *sefer*. There I found Reb Elya and a *bochur* from the *bais medrash* who were talking in learning. In a meek and quiet voice the *bochur* told the *Rosh HaYeshiva* a סברא which the *Rosh HaYeshiva* thought was lacking. In a loud voice the *Rosh HaYeshiva* told him so over and over again quite emphatically. The *bochur* listened and in his meek voice defended his logic. There was quiet for a moment. Then, as loudly as the *Rosh HaYeshiva* had shouted earlier he now responded with, "אנשולדיק, דו ביסט געוועכט!" Watching this as a High School *bochur* I was taught the lesson of a lifetime — you could be the *Rosh HaYeshiva*, respected & revered world-wide, make a small mistake in front of a bochur 40 years younger, and say so without a qualm! This is what it meant to learn and have a true ביקוש האמת.

In the High School each and every *rebbe* left his own imprint on the learning of the *bochurim* in his *shiur*. Reb Shimon zt'l taught his little "boyus" that learning was חשוב with a patience that was unparalleled, Reb Yaakov gave us a *geshmak* in learning, Reb Yitzchock exposed us to *lomdus*, and Reb Laib showed us first-hand *gadlus b'Torah*. All of this in an atmosphere permeated with the love, concern and שאיפות of the *Mashgiach*, Reb Avrohom, laced with the התבטלות and מסירות נפש of the Menahel, Reb Uri. Upon this steadfast foundation we entered into the *bais medrash* and whose life wasn't inspired in a myriad of ways by Reb Mendel and the *shiurim* of the *Roshei HaYeshiva?*

Often, relationships end once daily interaction concludes. But in the life of a typical Philadelphia *bochur* they become stronger and ever more appre-

ciated. The Yeshiva, its *rebbeim*, and the *Roshei HaYeshiva* continue to play an essential role in the lives of their *talmidim*. No matter what sort of life a *talmid* has chosen for himself the *Roshei HaYeshiva* are never too busy to give advice and provide a listening ear no matter what the topic or what time of day or night it is. I for one have been told by both the *Roshei HaYeshiva* on numerous occasions that there is no time that is too late or too early, if we are needed we want to be called. Many times I will talk over an issue with an old *chaver* and we will say, "What would Reb Elya have said," or "Reb Shmuel would never have allowed this." The Yeshiva taught and continues to teach an entire thought process to its *talmidim* imparting to them the ability to make the right decisions with the right priorities.

I could continue writing pages and pages of thoughts and feelings of gratitude for what the Yeshiva has done for me, and it would still only touch the tip of the iceberg. But I'd like to conclude with a short *moshol* I heard in the name of Reb Meir Chodosh zt"l. He was known to say that when one stands atop a high mountain and looks around at the scene that surrounds him he will see many different things. Trees of many different colors and types, people from all strides of life, buildings of many shapes and sizes, bridges, cars, and much much more. It seems from his panoramic view that this is a work of art with everything fitting just right, as if each piece was made to be together just the way they are. Upon his descent he speaks to the farmer who planted the trees, the architects who designed the buildings and bridges, the manufacturers who made the cars, together with the people in the streets, and to his surprise none of them had any of the same intentions! So too, said Reb Meir, it is with a Yeshiva. Every *bochur* has his personal עבודה, and is taught in a way that is special to him. But as time goes on and everyone leaves the Yeshiva and goes on his way from the panoramic view it is a beautiful picture with everyone fitting beautifully while fulfilling his תפקיד as a בן תורה.

For this and so many other things all of us, the *talmidim* of the Philadelphia Yeshiva, are so very grateful. It is our ברכה that the *Roshei HaYeshiva* and the *rabbeim* should be זוכה to be ממשיך their

עבודת הקודש במנוחת הנפש
והרחבת הדעת עד מאה ועשרים שנה



מהיכא גמיר לה

Several years ago I met an old friend from Yeshiva who said to me in the course of reminiscing "I still remember the speech you made at your סעודת פרידה . *I can still remember the utter simplicity of you declaring - I AM A PHILLY GUY - and hearing that, somehow stuck in my mind." Soon afterwards I took to thinking about this youthful proclamation. I began to wonder if perhaps I was onto something without realizing it at that time.*

As our years in Yeshiva recede further into the past, the natural tendency is for this connection to weaken. After all, we meet new Rebbeim who are משפיע on us, make new friends and move into other areas of life. What שייכות then do we still have with our "בחורעשע יארען"? . While it is easy enough to say that the years spent learning in Yeshiva provide the base on which our lives are built, I believe the connection is stronger, that our Yeshiva years remain with us on a day-to-day basis. I have always felt this connection but somehow could never quantify it. It is my hope that in the course of writing this piece I will be able to explain this feeling a little bit better.

The גמרא in מסכת סנהדרין יא. brings a מעשה with רבי גמליאל who called seven people to sit on בית דין to decide if a שנת העיבור was required. When eight people arrived he announced that the one who had come unasked should leave. Upon hearing this, שמואל stood up and left, not because he was the culprit but rather so as not to embarrass the individual who was. The גמרא then asks: מהיכא גמיר לה? Where did שמואל learn that it was

better to embarrass oneself rather then allow the actual perpetrator to be shamed? The גמרא then lists several similar stories of תלמידים, who had learned to act in this manner from their *rebbeim* tracing it all the way back to משה רבינו. After relating each story the גמרא asks the same question - מהיכא גמיר לה? From where did he learn this?

Reb Chaim Shmulevitz זצ"ל is bothered by the גמרא repeatedly asking מהיכא גמיר לה. Why does the גמרא assume that such behavior must be learned from someone? The stories related are about גדולי עולם who surely understood logically מסברא to behave in this manner? It would seem that not embarrassing another person is simple enough to understand on ones own. זאגט Reb Chaim Shmulevitz that the גמרא is teaching us:

> אין לאדם לעשות שום דבר מדעתא דנפשיה
> כי האדם הנוהג לעשות מדעתא דנפשיה
> מרה תהא אחריתו.... ולכן אפילו בדבר כזה
> שהוא מסתבר מאליו לא נהגו כן
> אלא ע"פ לימוד ממעשה רב.

Even though they understood these relatively simple concepts on their own, they only acted on them because this is what they were taught by their Rebbeim. In other words, we only do simple every day things because a Rebbe has taught us to do them. No matter how simple it seems to us now to be עוסק בתורה, involve ourselves in עניני צדקה וחסד and conduct our מעשה ומתן באמונה we must in each case ask ourselves מהיכא גמיר לה? And the answer will always be על פי לימוד ממעשה דרב!



I was not much past my בר מצוה on ראש חודש אלול תשמ"ג, a sweltering day in early August when my father drove me to Philadelphia for the start of my first זמן. There was no way my mind could really grasp what he meant when he sat me down in the dining room in "63" and before leaving warned me that Yeshiva was "not merely an extended version of sleep-away camp". Before long I was being flooded with concepts that were far beyond anything I had ever heard of. The most all encompassing one being אלול זמן! Somehow this novel phrase permeated the whole atmosphere of the Yeshiva. מוסר סדר??? What is that? (It actually took me a couple of years to get that one.) Wait, now I'm supposed to learn 7:15 to 8:00 and from 10:00 until 11:00? What exactly is the definition of the word "UNOFFICIAL" anyway? All of this before לימודי חול even began. That's when it got really interesting! FOUR PERIODS!! What do you mean homework? As far as I could tell I wasn't going home! Well, my father was certainly right about that one.

While such a transition was traumatic, the man who understood better then anyone what we were facing was Reb Shimon זצ"ל. With his unique blend of warmth and discipline he eased our entry into the Yeshiva world. His sayings are the stuff of legend. To this day when ever I am tempted to do something halfway or not give a complete effort, I hear him saying:

א נער ווייזט מען א האלבער ארבעט!

Even as he molded us into young Yeshiva bachurim he taught us lessons that would be meaningful the rest of our lives. One day right outside our classroom window, workers were rapidly removing a section of the new Beis Medrash's roof that required repair. Sensing that most of our attention was focused outside the classroom, he used the opportunity to impart a lesson. On September 11, 2001, as I stood on the roof of my office watching the collapse of the Twin Towers, I could clearly recall his raspy voice of some eighteen years earlier saying "Look how much easier and quicker it is to tear something down then to build it from new." Though this concept was lost on a fourteen year old, all those years later it was crystal clear what his meaning was.

He made a point of keeping up with us throughout our years in Yeshiva, often times inquiring about personal matters several years after they had occurred. Personally, I am particularly grateful for the חיזוק he gave me when I was leaving Yeshiva. He insisted that I take advantage of the unique opportunities to שמייג that I would have in Yeshiva Torah Vodaas. While it was a rather simple idea for a talmid in Torah Vodaas at that time to seek a שייכות with Rav Pam זצ"ל, I have always credited Reb Shimon's חיזוק for having spurred me on to develop a close קשר with Rav Pam in the two years I was זוכה to learn by him...

מהיכא גמיר לה?...ממעשה דרב!

מהיכא גמיר לה



In tenth grade I had the "privilege" of being seated in the בית מדרש directly down the aisle and in clear view of ר' שמואל שליט"א. One מוצאי שבת towards the end of מעריב I came out of a reverie to notice the ראש ישיבה speaking with Doniel Goldstein who sat right in front of him. As Danny made his way down the aisle towards me I looked past him to see the ראש ישיבה smiling broadly at me. Danny stopped at my seat an simply said, "The ראש ישיבה says maybe you should start davening!" Now, there is no more simple concept - and none more difficult to accomplish - then davening with בונה. Yet, there are times that I still see that smile when my mind wanders during davening, bringing my focus back to where it belongs...

מהיכא גמיר לה?...ממעשה דרב!

In response to some mischief during Physics in twelfth grade, I received what at the time seemed to be the mother of all punishments. Word came from on high that I must relate my little escapade in all its detail to R' Elya שליט"א. As I stood in line nervously waiting for the ראש ישיבה after שחרית, I endured the good natured ribbing of the older bachurim. One after another they asked what שוועדקייט I was waiting to discuss with the ראש ישיבה. As R' Elya pulled a ספר from his shtender my buddies and co-conspirators gathered in the back of the בית מדרש to witness the scene unfold. They wondered what deep מוסר ספר the ראש ישיבה had opened. He had actually taken out a חומש and said: "לאמיר לערנען א פסוק חומש און רש"י". Every year I can still hear the ניגון of his gentle reproach as he read me the last רש"י in the שבת פרשת יתרו פרשה:

...והרי דברים ק"ו ומה אבנים הללו שאין
להם דעת להקפיד על בזיונן אמרה תורה
הואיל ויש בהם צורך לא תנהג בהם מנהג
בזיון, חבירך שהוא בדמות יוצרך ומקפיד על
בזיונו על אחת כמה וכמה...

The Rosh Hayeshiva then finished by saying:

"איך וויים ניט וואס א טיטשער איז,
אבער מער וויי א שטיין איז ער!"

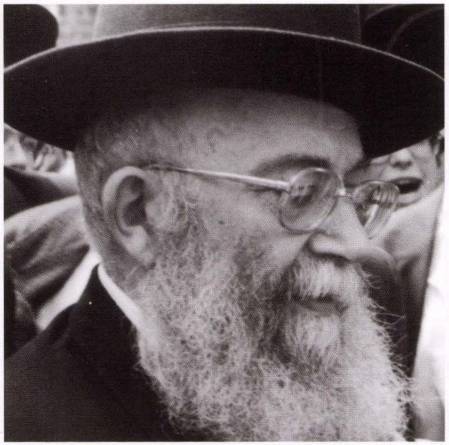
Throughout the ensuing years when I have been tempted to deal with subordinates in the workplace and elsewhere in a heavy handed manner, perhaps subconsciously feeling that these individuals were not worthy of being treated like mentchen, I hear the ראש ישיבה's voice loud and clear - מער וויי א שטיין איז ער!

There was another part of the lesson I learned that day. Not always is the in depth method the best way to teach a lesson. Sometimes something as "simple" as a רש"י is equally effective in bringing out all the nuances of a lesson.

מהיכא גמיר לה?...ממעשה דרב!

The מנהג in Yeshiva was for the gabbai to sell the עליות on Purim, the proceeds of these sales going to ת"ת. One year R' Elya שליט"א bid two times ח"י for a particular ביבוד. By merely submitting a bid he effectively ended the bidding. After davening, he asked the gabbai to come upstairs to his office so that he could give him a check for ת"ת. I was standing nearby when the gabbai returned with an amazed look on his face. He related that the ראש ישיבה had written a check for fifty dollars. After being reminded that his final bid had been thirty six dollars, the ראש ישיבה simply responded "but I had in mind to go up to fifty."







This year marks the eighth year I have been privileged to serve as the Yeshiva's Journal Chairman. One of the tasks that often falls to me is letter writing. On one occassion the ראש ישיבה determined that the source of one potentially large donation was not up to his exacting standards. I was awarded the uncomfortable task of composing the letter that accompanied the return of a substantial payment that had already been made. That the ראש ישיבה's objection later proved well founded, is irrelevant. What is important is the lesson of זהירות in ענייני ממונות.

Everyone is well aware that נשאת ונתת באמונה? is one of the first questions we will have to answer לאחר מאה ועשרים. Yet again ....

מהיכא גמיר לה?...מעשה דרב!

I have many memories of the period during and after the fire which destroyed the Yeshiva's main building. How can anyone forget Reb Shmuel שליט"א running through the burning building checking to make sure that it was completely vacated? Or the tears streaming down Reb Elya שליט"א's face as he stood motionless staring at the flames leaping skyward? Although the already tight living conditions got tighter - and even more so when "forty" was torn down to begin construction of the new dormitory - all of us rallied around one another to make the best of it. (We even allowed freshies to tread the hallowed ground of "forty" for one night.) Yet one memory more then others remains as clear as if I have just seen it. The morning after the fire, at the end of שחרית Reb Shmuel walked deliberately to the front of the *bais medrash*. While he made some

anticipated announcements as to the schedule and other pertinent items, his voice trembled as seemingly out of the blue he made the following declaration:

א פייער קומט ניט אין א ישיבה סתם אזוי,
מען מוז וויסען אז א פייער קומט אין א ישיבה
ווייל ס'איז פאראן זאכען אין א ישיבה וואס
באלאנגען ניט דארט.

The ראש ישיבה had certainly not slept that night as he attended to the the myriad of arrangements that needed to be made. Yet, the very nature of this remark clearly indicated that a great deal of thought was put into it. At a time of unimaginable stress, he had already made a חשבון of what the רבונו של עולם was demanding from us. In our years since leaving Yeshiva we have all, to one degree or another, faced adversity. In recent times כלל ישראל as a ציבור has faced tremendous adversity, and even in the bleakest מצבים, to us מאמינים בני מאמינים there is no simpler אמונה פשוטה then believing that - visible or not - the רבש"ע has a חשבון and that He is demanding something of us. Personally, when I need a little חיזוק in this ענין, I hearken back to the ראש ישיבה 's remarkable ability to make this חשבון at what was one of his own darkest hours.

מהיכא גמיר לה?...ממעשה דרב!

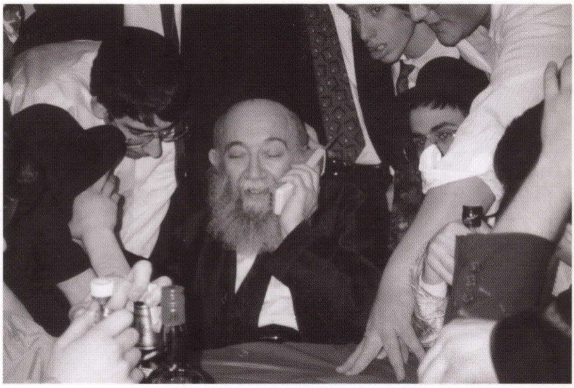
These anecdotes are merely representative of many others experienced by thousands of תלמידים *over the last fifty years. This, then, is the* שייכות *that all of us still have to our Yeshiva years. We may be many years removed and we may not see it openly, but our whole "*הלך ילך*" is the product of the teachings of our Rebbeim. And finally this is the explanation, after years of seasoning, of -* I AM A PHILLY GUY!


פולין

We crowded around the wooden table on Graham Street. It was a very hot Shabbos afternoon in the middle of Tamuz. There was absolute silence in the room. Everyone stood, bent over in rapt attention not to miss a single word. The Rosh HaYeshiva began:

"I was thinking of a possible eitzah to be mekarev to our simple minds, to be me-orer our simple hearts, to have some feeling of aveilus, to miss the beis hamikdash.

Reb Elchonon! Imagine if you were to see Reb Elchonon! Imagine learning in Baranovich! The Mikdash Dovid as Rosh Hayeshiva, Rav Yakov Yisroel at hand, and Reb Elchonon בראשם. *The olam here wasn't zoche to see Reb Elchonon, but I was. I don't think it was possible to know Reb Elchonon and not to have Yiras Shomayim. The* שר *of all midos tovos. The* ממלא מקומו *of the Chofetz Chaim! Reb Elchonon* איז געווען יראה אליין !



If we would merit the ability to learn Torah in those koslei beis Hamidrash – saturated with kedushas Hatorah u'midos tovos, how much aliyah would we be able to attain????

Then after setting our minds and being Misbonen so, try to continue that gefil by going back in time. Imagine Kelm ... Slobodka at its greatest glory ... Go further back and imagine Volozhin! Lithuania was quite small on the map of the world yet possesed so much Torah and so much Kedusha.

Since the churban Habayis, Hashem has nothing but the daled amos of halacha. Maybe this way we could try to develop some small hasaga in what it would mean to be within the Koslei Beis HaMikdash itself and to understand to some extent what we are missing."

We were no more in a packed and hot room. We were completely transported. We were in the Koslei Bais HaMedrash of Baranovitch.

The Kavod-HaTorah atmosphere was tangible. The illustrious Mechotonim sat on both sides of the Choson. Two world reknown Roshei Yeshiva; both Talmidim Muvhakim of the revered Gadol Hador Rav Aharon Kotler, zt"l came together b'kishrei shiduchim. Can there be a better davar na-eh u'miskabel?

It was the אבי הכלה's turn to speak, Hagaon R' Yitzchok Feigelstock, Rosh Yeshiva of Long Beach.

"When we sat down to plan our Yeshiva, we knew where to look for the road towards Hatzlacha. Each step of the way, in many difficult areas, we always ended up saying 'Let's see how Philadelphia did it.' Here in America, we have an eim HaYeshivos – Philadelphia."



RAV ELYA WITH HIS MECHUTAN RAV YITZCHOK FEIGELSTOCK AT THE PHILADELPHIA YESHIVA SHEVA BROCHOS OF THEIR CHILDREN RABBI AND MRS. AHARON SHLOMO SVEI.

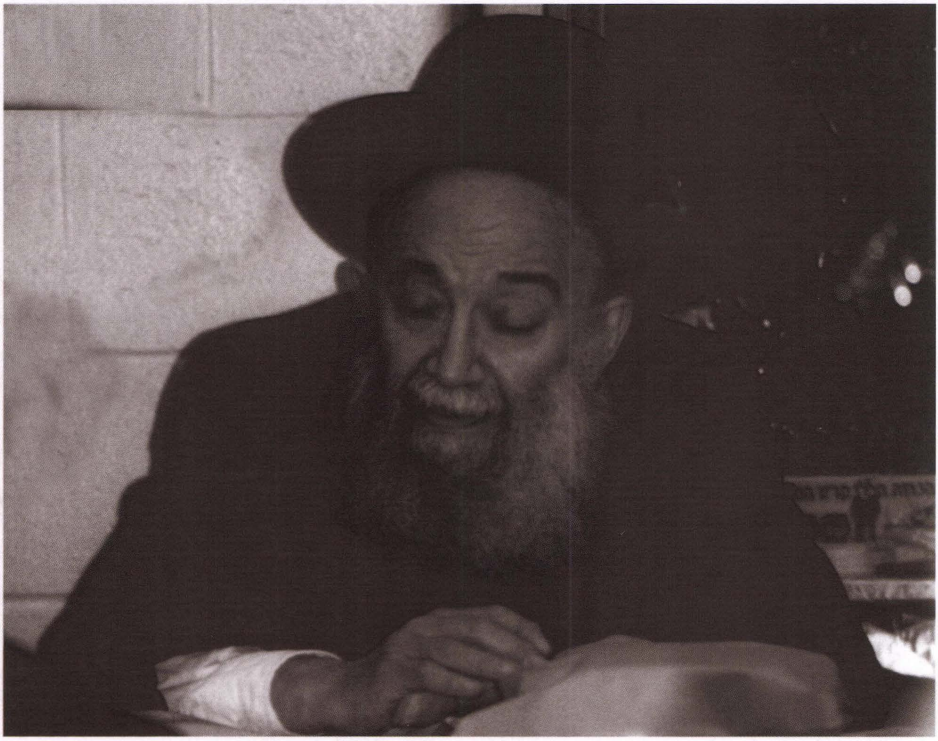
What makes the Philadelphia Yeshiva the eim Hayeshivos? What are the underlying currents that run through the Yeshiva that made it the role model for so many mosdos HaTorah?

Although it is obviously beyond my capacity to address these questions, allow me to share with you some of the ideals and feelings that I felt when I was zoche to invest my formative years in yeshiva.

In Yeshiva, we always felt we were standing by the מקור האמת. We strongly believed we were witnessing daily lives of emes. When we were told זה הדרך אשר תלכו בה we knew there was no other. We knew that as long as we'll live according to the life rules outlined by their lives and words, we cannot go wrong. The conviction that emanated from the Roshei Hayeshiva that their words were clearly coming from their illustrious Rebbeim gave us the feeling that a cord was being connected from our hearts to the gedolim

of the previous generations ... back until מתן תורה when we all heard Torah מפי הגבורה. The greatest inspiration a talmid can have is to watch people whose days and nights are steeped both in the depth of the sugyos and בצרות הכלל והפרט, yet still walk around with the sense of responsibility that there is still so much left to do. We saw and were taught the true definitions of יגיעה בתורה; *tefila*, derech eretz and mussar. We always felt that only here would the crystal clear view of Torah be told and experienced. The falsehood of our own yetzer hara, as well as the worldly ideas of success that unfortunately permeate even the Yiddishe world was completely unmasked.

This clear געפיל that we were always drinking from the מקור האמת brought us to two totally different realizations. Emes brings with itself two diametrical follow ups. They are responsibility and joy. Anyone sure he has merited a face to face meeting with emes is sure to be thrown into a double-lane highway of joy and responsibility.



One whose life is but a pursuit of affluence will probably feel a great sense of pride if he were to win a multi-million dollar lottery. So too, one who is given a thirst for *emes*, when he is then granted some contact with emes he feels as fortunate as possible. This pride comes along with a great sense of *achrayus*. He, more than anyone, knows how far his actual lifestyle is from the *emes* and therefore how great a task the essence of עול החיים really is.

People ask how the yeshiva enjoys such a large *chelek* of *talmidim* remaining so attached to the *Roshei Hayeshiva* even after leaving yeshiva. The answer is simply because the *Roshei Hayeshiva* created *talmidim*.

The systematic order of the yeshiva is incredible. People come back to visit 30-40-50! years later and feel like nothing changed, as if the air they breathed is still there. This comes from the phenomenal *seder* that exists. The force that keeps this, is the constant reminder that we are talmidim. We were taught the *hanhala* knows wrong from right. If we want to grow, we have to put ourselves completely in the hands of the yeshiva. The most intelligent way, the most successful way and the only way allowed in this *makom kadosh* is to follow blindly. In Yeshiva, the concept of *kavod haTorah* was translated into הכנעה לתורה. This compound of *kavod haTorah* together with the incredible seder the yeshiva possesses, brings such continuous *hatzlacha – kain yirbu*.

It wasn't just that we were told about הכנעה. We were privileged to witness the respect which the *Roshei Hayeshiva* have for the זקני הדור.

Morover, true respect for Hashem's Torah can properly be acquired through actual learning itself. In Yeshiva we expeienced the thunder and lightning of Torah. Through the *shiurim*, we were jolted by the elictricity hiding even in a single word of Rashi; in one letter of the Rambam! By delving deeply into the ocean of Torah, one develops true reverence towards the Torah.

At a meeting of *mechanchim*, one *mechanech* asked "The *talmidos* in Bais Yaakovs are being taught the highest levels of *hashkafa*. What will be when they marry *bochurim* who don't have any *hashkafa*? They only know about *Teshuvos Rebbi Akiva Eiger*."

If I may, I would venture to answer. First of all, no *bochur* in Philadelphia Yeshiva could ever go through this yeshiva without all the vibrant seeds of *haskafas haTorah* planted in him. Secondly, in yeshiva, we knew that only through toiling many



Rav Chaim Ozer with Rav Uri



Rav Sholom and Rav Shmuel

years in *Teshuvos Rebbi Akiva Eiger* can one attain all the views of *hashkafas haTorah*. Without true actual dedication to Torah, it is impossible to properly see the world through the Torah's view.

The relationship the *talmidim* acquired with our *hanhala* is very similar to our conduct with a sefer Torah. Although we touch the *Sefer Torah* with affection showing אהבה, we also rise when the sefer Torah comes towards us, showing reverence. In the physical world where there is closeness, the reverence subsides and when there is true awe, there is no room for closeness. The ספרי (ואתחנן) tells us that with *Hashem Yisborach* it isn't so. The אהבה and יראה go together. So to, with our *hanhala*, we always felt at the very same time, both reverance and attachment. These last and are strengthened many years thereafter.

One of the most common themes of the *divrei Torah* heard by all, high school and *beis medrash* alike, at *seuda shlishis* by the *Rosh HaYeshiva*, Rav Shmuel, shlita was being a *mentch*, thinking about someone else, what they need, what they're missing, how one can put his fellow *bochur* before himself, etc. It would be impossible to go through even one year in Yeshiva and not have the words "טראכטען וועגען א צווייטער" echoing in your head.

The greatest job and the foremost goal of any *rebbi* is obviously giving over a clarity and thirst for *limud haTorah*. It doesn't stop to amaze me how *Hashem Yisborach* arranged each *Rebbi* after the next to add his particular קנייטש in *aliya b'Torah*. There are no words to adequately express the *hakaros hatov* we owe, each and every member of the *hanhala* individually.

Above all, in order to eternalize any lesson it must be taught in a way where the *talmid* feels comfortably at home with the *rebbi* and issue being taught. In Philly, we felt at home. We visited our parents numerous times each year, but this was our home. This is why it's impossible to remove Philadelphia Yeshiva from their talmidim. Since it was internalized, it was therefore eternalized. What we call home remains in our bloodstream. One person *bifrat* of the hanhala particularly adds so much to this געפיל; the *mashgiach* HaRav Avrohom Golombeck, shlita. This אדם גדול cares, notices and treats any small change in both the *ruchniyus* and physical lifestyle of every bochur. For this, it is impossible to properly thank, because all the *Torah v'yiras shamayim* acquired will only last for generations because we felt at home.

The eim haYeshivos is in essence the eim haTalmidim too. Every Yid who learns Torah steadily is transformed into a ben Torah. This makom torah is our eim and we are her children.

The Rosh HaYeshiva, Reb Elya, shlita told us to illustrate in the inner chambers of our minds, the illustrious yeshivos of yore. By doing so, our imagery to properly feel what it means to be bkoslei beis haMikdash will be enhanced. The first one on his list was Baranovich.

If we may add one more name to that great list, just for us with our unfortunate limitations to gain some perspective in what koslei bais hamedrash mean, to help us go back in time... from Yeshiva to Yeshiva... until בחצרות בית ד'.. it might be by being misbonen into the walls of Philadelphia Yeshiva.

In addition to those already mentioned throughout the book, these individuals have taken part in this monumental project. Their contributions are greatly appreciated.

Horav Meir Simcha Bakst
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Rabbi Chaim Pechter
Rabbi Nechemia Rockove

Rabbi Menachem King
Rabbi Yosef Lipshutz
Rabbi Avrohom Mandelbaum

Rabbi Dovid Elias

R' Yitzchok Amsel
Mr. & Mrs. Mendel Beer
R' Yitzchok Beigelisen
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R' Yeruchem Fensterheim
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R' Avrohom Garfinkel
R' Yanki Gellis
Rabbi Mendel Goldberg
R' Doniel Goldstein
Tzvi Goldstein
Avrumi Hollander
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Rabbi Yosef Chaim Karmel
R' Chanina Katz
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Rabbi Moshe Kolodny
(Archives of Agudas Yisroel)
R' Benzion Kushner

Rabbi Levovitz
Rabbi Pinchos Lipshutz
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Rabbi Dovid Mulghey
Rabbi Mendel Nojovits
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Rabbi Tzvi Rotberg
Mr. Arthur Schaefer
R' Osher Schonkopf
R' Refoel Stefansky
R' Menachem Mendel Steinberg
R' Yankel Stern
R' Dovid Aryeh Stern
A. Barry Weintraub
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R' Yitzchok Willroth
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Our sincere apologies to anyone whose name has been inadvertently omitted. Please accept our sincere apologies and our deepest appreciation.

Rabbi Michel Stern
for permitting the use of rare photos
from his book about his father
The MAshgiach of Kaminetz zt'l

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for permitting the use of rare photos
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