



KOL HAYESHIVA

THE VISION

With thanks to Hashem, we are happy to present the first ever edition of Kol HaYeshiva. Much work has gone on behind the scenes over the past few months to make this happen and we would like to thank everyone who helped make this possible. We would also like to take this time to present our vision for Kol HaYeshiva.

Kol HaYeshiva intends to serve as a talmidim-run news source for everything emanating from our Yeshiva. This will include actual news stories, but also less-timely articles as well, including interviews, biographies, and more. Generally speaking, we are aiming to provide valuable content for talmidim. We believe that the Yeshiva would benefit immensely from having such a source, as there has been a lack of a viable output for all-yeshiva related news for many years. We have consulted with many of our Rebbeim, who have all expressed excitement and stressed the potential benefit of such an endeavor. We intend to publish on a bi-weekly basis, likely on Thursday nights, Erev Shabbos.

Moving forward, article submissions will be open to all talmidim, meaning one does not need to be an official member of Kol HaYeshiva to write. This being said, the editors of Kol HaYeshiva along with the psak of our Rebbeim will have final say over the publishing of any questionable article. Kol HaYeshiva intends to follow Halacha in its highest form, especially the Halachos of Lashon Hora. Our intention is to bring our Yeshiva together, not push us further apart.

Finally, Kol HaYeshiva will operate in a mode of continuous improvement. The content, layout, scope of articles, and so on, will expand and improve with time. We ask you to help us in this process of improvement by providing feedback, or suggesting new ideas we haven't yet thought of. Again, our goal is to provide the most valuable content for talmidim, so we will work to constantly improve to achieve that lofty goal.

Enjoy.

What's inside
this issue and
more:

**YESHIVA
NEWS- 2**

**RAV SCHACHTER
Q&A- 4**

**FRUM IN THE
WORKPLACE- 7**

OPINION - 12

SHTICK- 13

YESHIVA BEGINS WITH VIBRANT SINGING AND LEARNING

Yeshivas Rabbenu Yitzchok Elchonnan officially opened for the new Zman on Tuesday night, August 24th. Morenu HaRav Schacter Shilta kicked off the Zman with a Shiur Pesicha on Bava Basra, the Yeshiva's Masechta this year.

Following the shiur, HaRav Yitzchok Cohen gave his famous mussar schmooze to get us all in the proper mindset for learning during Elul. To finish off the festivities on Tuesday night, Sy Syms Dean Noam Wasserman made a Siyum after Maariv on Maseches Sanhedrin. Dean Wasserman's Siyum was particularly inspiring due to the nature of how he learned Sanhedrin: Dean Wasserman, a longtime Daf Yomi learner, is currently doing double Daf Yomi. Dean Wasserman was inspired by HaRav Yissocher Frand's speech during the last Siyum HaShas to make one's learning more meaningful/challenging with each successive Daf Yomi cycle. Dean Wasserman took up the challenge, and is doing Daf Yomi with two Masechtos simultaneously. For Talmidim, it shows us the value/importance of adding new dimensions to our cyclical-based learning, whether that be Shnayim Mikra or something else. Adding layers not only increases the amount of learning one does, but it actually adds new energy to our learning, and helps ensure Torah we have learned previously does not become "stale", chas veshalom.

On Wednesday morning, the first day of full morning seder/shiur, the Yeshiva joined together as one for opening words of chizuk from Rav Kalinsky and Rabbi/President Berman. Talmid Ephraim Weisenberg described the scene of all the morning programs packed into Glueck Beis Medresh as "An unbelievable sight." Rav Kalinsky's speech had two memorable moments. Firstly, Rav Kalinsky helped the Yeshiva prepare for the opening night of Slichos by leading the singing of L'Maancha, which is always an incredibly moving song for all. Secondly, Rav Kalinsky instructed Talmidim to turn to the person sitting next to them, write down their Hebrew name, ask them about one thing they are trying to work on this year, and save the piece of paper so they can daven for Hatzlacha on behalf of their new friend. The intention was not only to break the ice among Talmidim, but also served to open our hearts and minds to our friends' dreams and struggles. Following this, Rabbi Berman addressed the Yeshiva, and offered encouraging and uplifting words for all of us to think about throughout the year. However, the highlight of the morning's celebrations came when Rabbi Berman led the Yeshiva in the singing and dancing to Ashreinu Ma Tov Chelkeinu, which lasted for quite some time. "The energy was actually palpable, you could feel it when we were singing" Yosef Tropp said.

To cap off the beginning of the zman, HaRav Moshe Weinberger, the Yeshiva's Mashpia, gave a moving Sichas Mussar at Night Seder on Wednesday night, giving us more strength and motivation during this time of Teshuva. Following Maariv, Rav Weinberger led his annual Elul Farbrengen (which took place in the Heights Lounge this year), which happened to coincide with Chai Elul, the birthday of both the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe. Rav Weinberger elaborated on the themes of Teshuva he discussed earlier in the evening, and joined the talmidim in energetic singing and dancing as well.

All in all, the Yeshiva got off to an exciting and motivating start last week, providing Talmidim with plenty to think about and inspiration to hold on to as we head into the Yomim Noraim next week.

FISCHEL/ZYSMAN/MTA BEIS MEDRESH OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Following almost 18 months away, the Yeshiva's talmidim have returned to full-time learning in the Fischel/Zysman/MTA Beis Medresh. It marks a significant milestone in the Yeshiva returning to its full capacity with all talmidim on campus.

When Yeshiva reopened after Sukkos last year, the Fischel/Zysman/MTA Beis Medresh was closed to talmidim in YU, and instead only open for MTA. The goal was to segregate the two populations, and hopefully limit the potential spread of COVID. With many YU talmidim remaining at home for all or parts of last year, the Yeshiva was able to manage without its second-biggest Beis Medresh. However, the Yeshiva did still need to find a place to learn for the talmidim who had grown accustomed to learning in the Fischel/Zysman/MTA Beis Medresh. To accommodate these talmidim and stay conscious of COVID, the Yeshiva spread out shiurim and talmidim in various locations through repurposing many mini-shuls on campus. This included turning Rubin Shul into a Beis Medresh for Rav Neuberger's shiur, Shenk Shul for Rav Sobolofsky's shiur, and so on.

Some talmidim actually grew to enjoy the system in place last year. Simon Morgenstern said: "It was heimish. I liked it." On the other hand, some are excited about the return to normalcy. Avi Fried said: "It's about time we can return to the Fischel/Zysman/MTA Beis Medresh. It's a much more real learning experience compared to being in segregated rooms, or strictly on Zoom."

On a side note, the Yeshiva is looking to choose a name for this Beis Medresh that we can all agree on.*

*Probably made up

THE END OF BITUL TORAH...OR JUST THE BEGINNING?

After 18 months of closure, Nagel's Cafe reopened this week to much excitement. Due to limited staff and COVID related issues, Nagel's had been closed since March 2020. With COVID in the rearview mirror and the Yeshiva returning to normal operations, Talmidim last week streamed into the mini-store before and after Seder to grab a quick bite, or in between classes. The reopening represents a return to the quick-and-easy method for Talmidim to grab a bite when in a rush, and is certain to save valuable time when compared to the trek across campus to Furman Dining Hall. In truth, an interesting debate has broken out if the reopening will serve to increase Torah learning in Glueck or decrease it.

On the one hand, any talmid who needs a quick boost during seder would save precious minutes when compared to the walk to Furman. If a talmid is feeling tired in seder and needs a coffee to wake himself up, Nagel's is a roughly 20 second walk from the Beis Medresh. In such a scenario, Nagel's would certainly increase the quality and quantity of Torah learning (due to the time savings and coffee's effectiveness), and therefore Nagel's reopening should be celebrated.

However, the above is not always the scenario. Many talmidim may find themselves taking advantage of Nagel's proximity to Glueck by choosing to take a short break and check out Nagel's offerings. As we are all well aware, such breaks can easily stretch on for 15-20 minutes if we are not careful. If Furman was the only option on campus, most talmidim would probably not bother with the 5 minute walk each way, especially in the colder months, and would continue learning instead. These are obviously two specific scenarios, but they bring out the point. On the one hand, Nagel's gives quick and easy options for anyone who needs a boost during seder, but on the other hand, it has the potential to lead to more bitul Torah due to its proximity.

There is no clear answer on this issue, but one thing is for certain: it sure is good to see Marco again.



CHANGES TO ENTRANCES/EXITS

B'Chasdei Hashem, the Talmidim of Yeshivas Rav Yitzchok Elchonon experienced a yeshua gedolah with the beginning of the new Zman. For the first time since the Pandemic hit our community, Talmidim are allowed to enter buildings on campus by simply presenting their ID cards, and can finally enter Glueck from the doors closest to the Beis Medresh.

When Talmidim returned to campus following Sukkos last year, they were met with an unusual system of entry into the Beis Medresh and other buildings. Talmidim were required to do a temperature check, fill out a survey on an electronic device confirming they had no COVID symptoms, present their ID card, and could only enter from the Library with exit only from the Glueck doors.

The system often led to long lines to enter buildings, and headaches for anyone carrying many items. With the Pandemic largely behind us, we have returned to the system of old. Talmidim now can simply enter the Beis Medresh with only their ID card, and can enter/exit from the Glueck doors once again. However some talmidim are still unaccustomed to entering from the Glueck doors following nearly 7 months of using the Library entrance. 2nd year talmid Jono Katz said: "I still get so happy whenever I remember I can enter the door by Glueck, even after doing it for a few days."

RAV SCHACHTER Q&A



Interview by Eitan Carroll

Q: In the aftermath of the wildfires in Israel, is there any [permissibility] to plant trees during the shemittah year to replace those that were destroyed, if only out of concern for the blemish on the landscape?

A: Why should there be a heter to plant trees? They should wait until next year. Why do they have to violate shemittah? The country does a heter mechira. [It's] a very questionable heter mechira, but it's from the rishonim. The heter mechira comes from the Sefer Hatrumah, the Vilna Gaon quotes him, siman 331. So that's why they can't say it's absolutely incorrect, those who are not happy with this, the Beis Halevi is not happy, but they can't say it's wrong, the Sefer Hatrumah is a Baal Hatosfos.

Q: Does the heter mechira still have force if "[Kol] Yoshveha Aleha", that a requirement for shemittah to be a din diorysa is that [the majority] of Jews live in Eretz Yisrael, is fulfilled?

A: The heter mechira only works based on the assumption that Shemittah today is only midirabbanan. The Gemara says that if you don't have "Kol Yoshveha Aleha", then yovel isn't observed, and shemittah is a function of yovel. So whenever there's no yovel so shemittah is only a dirabbanan. That's what we assume, that shemittah bizman hazeh is a dirabbanan because yovel doesn't exist, but "Kol Yoshveha Aleha"- the Gemara says in the end of Eirchin when they have that din, it's not enough that you have 51% of the Jewish world population living in Eretz Yisrael, you have to know who's Shevet Binyamin, who's Shevet Yissachar, who's Shevet Zevulun, and each shevet should be living in its own area in Eretz Yisrael. We don't have that. The people don't even know who they are. Nobody knows, just the Kohanim and Leviim know they're from Shevet Levi, other people don't know which shevet they belong to. We're still a long way off from "Kol Yoshveha Aleha."

Q: What are Rebbe's thoughts about the halachic relevance of Bitcoin and other virtual currencies as opposed to physical currencies like the dollar?

A: Is it legal tender? Is there any government that recognizes it as legal tender?

Q: I don't believe it is yet legal tender, though many countries do permit its use in transactions, but only view it as property rather than currency.

A: It's not legal tender, so then it's shaveh kesef, it's not kesef. In a country which does accept Bitcoin as legal tender, then it would be kesef. Usually shaveh kesef is kikesef, but for pidyon maaser sheini and machatzis hashekel, you need davka kesef, shaveh kesef is not good. The Shach writes in Hilchos Ribbis, he writes that there are different opinions how far dina dimalchusa dina goes, but on this they all agree as far as defining what's kesef as opposed to shaveh kesef, that depends on dina dimalschusa. Let's say you have a person who lives in Eretz Yisrael and he has a perutah chamurah that he sues for pidyon maaser sheini, [and] he brings the perutah chamurah to America. In America it's not legal tender, in Eretz Yisrael it's legal tender. In America it's called shaveh kesef, so he can't continue to use it for the purpose of pidyon maaser sheini. In America it's shaveh kesef. So if he leaves the coin in Eretz Yisrael at someone's house, then it's good, then it's dino kikesef. But once he brings it to America, it loses its status as kesef.

Q: The recent "Ben and Jerry's" controversy elicited a response by many that the Chof-K should remove their hechsher from the product as a penalty of sorts for their boycott. Should kashrus, or even halacha in general, take sides in such a conflict that is more political [in nature], or is kashrus simply a statement about the ingredients in a product and nothing more? Can a kashrus organization, due to a disagreement with the actions of the company [they are certifying], retract their hechsher?

RAV SCHACHTER Q&A- CONTINUED

A: The OU is an organization that represents Orthodoxy. So the OU can't give a hechsher on a place where they, let's say, have mixed-dancing or mixed swimming. If it's a place where Orthodox people are not supposed to go, so the hotel, for example, shouldn't get a hechsher. If it's a private hashgacha, you can give it, just saying the food is kosher. But when a big organization like the OU gives the hechsher, it's supposed to be saying that they are representing Orthodoxy. So this company is boycotting parts of Israel, so we shouldn't support that.

Q: Which "new fruit" does Rebbe use on Rosh Hashanah? Is there a "new fruit" Rebbe retains special for this purpose or does Rebbe choose a "new fruit" each year?

A: Whatever my wife finds in the store.

Q: Rabbi Efrem Goldberg recently published [an article] about how Rebbe doesn't take sugar in his tea because of a concern about maaser being taken from the host's sugar during Rebbe's trip to Israel, leading to Rebbe forswearing sugar in tea.

A: It's true.

Q: What should somebody do if they are in a situation like Rebbe's? Should they too forgo sugar in tea [long-term]?

A: Yeah, why not?

Q: To have 50 years of no sugar in tea?

A: I'm surviving.

Q: I was also told that Rebbe possibly has a unique shittah on the bracha on cheerios?

A: No. Rav Aharon Lichtenstein said he's machmir not to eat spaghetti unless it was toch haseuda because he understood that according to one opinion in Tosfos, spaghetti could be hamotzi. So once Rav Soloveitchik was giving shiur and he was giving a mashal of spaghetti as something that is borei minei mezonos. So one of the guys screamed out, "But I thought spaghetti was a safek hamotzi!" Rav Soloveitchik said, "Are you crazy?" So [the student] thought that whatever Rav Aharon Lichtenstein said is kodesh kodashim. That's his opinion, and Rav Soloveitchik didn't think so.

Q: Are kosher imitation products such as "fake bacon" or "fake crab" (substitutes for non-kosher products) permissible?

A: The OU used to give a hechsher on imitation shrimp. It was kosher fish and they claimed it tasted the same as shrimp. People who were baalei teshuva and used to eat shrimp said that it didn't taste like shrimp. And then the OU discontinued the hechsher because people didn't like it, they didn't enjoy eating the imitation shrimp. But it's still kosher and permissible.

Q: There's a shittah of the Gra that I believe Rebbe holds of, that on shabbos one should leave out some of the Harachaman's?

A: They quote from the Vilna Gaon that on Shabbos he left out from "Harachaman hu yifarniseinu bichavod" because you're not supposed to ask for parnassah on Shabbos, he left out from there until "Harachaman hu yanchileinu yom shekulo shabbos u'menuchah..." So [he said] the first three harachamans, then for the fourth he left out, that's about parnassah and he left out until "[Harachaman] hu yanchileinu.

Q: Should this practice become more widespread or limited only to those who generally follow the Gra?

A: It should be more widely practiced.

RAV YITZCHOK ELCHANAN SPEKTOR BIOGRAPHY



By Akiva Levy

In 1896, Yeshiva Eitz Chaim joined into the Yeshiva we know and love today, Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary. It was the first Orthodox rabbinical seminary in the United States, named after the great Rabbi at that time, Rabbi Yitzchok Elchanan Spektor. Rav Elchanan was a Gadol HaDor but unfortunately many people do not know much about him.

Rabbi Yitzchak Elchonon Spektor was born in 1817 in Rosh, Belarus to the Rabbi of Rosh, Rabbi Israel Issar. At the age of eight, Rav Elchanan was a pronounced iluy (prodigy) and got married at the age of thirteen. He and his wife moved to her hometown of Vilovisk, Lithuania where he lived under the support of his in-laws for six years. While in Vilovisk, Rav Elchanan became the student of Rabbi Benjamin Diskin, the Rav of Vilovisk, and became a close friend of his son, Rabbi Moshe Joshua Leib Diskin (the Maharil Diskin). However, due to the bankruptcy of his debtor Rav Elchanan was forced to move to Sabelin where he became the local Rabbi. His weekly salary was seventy-five kopeks (about one dollar), pushing him into great poverty. A few years later, he took a trip to Karlin where he met Rabbi Yaakov ben Aaron, the author of the Mishkenot Yaakov, who became impressed with Rav Elchanan and recommended Rav Elchanan to become the Rabbi of Baresa.

In 1839, Rav Elchanan in fact became the Rabbi of Baresa, and his reputation began to spread across Europe. In 1846, he was recruited to be the Rabbi of Nishvez, a larger nearby community. However, the residents of Baresa were starkly unwilling to see their beloved Rabbi leave. So much so, Rav Elchanan had to sneak out in the middle of the night in order to leave quietly. He was in Nishvez for five years until, in 1851, he became the Rabbi of Novohrdak. It was in Novohrdak that Rav Elchanan penned his Seforim; Be'er Yitzchak, Nahal Yitzchak, and Ein Yitzchak. Rav Elchanan noted the serenity of Novohrdak and the learning that was allowed to him. It was not until 1864 that Rav Elchanan became the Rabbi of Kovno, where he stayed for the remainder of his life. In Kovno, he was heralded as one of the prominent Russian Rabbis of his time.

There is a story that highlights his devotion to learning and gadlus of his character. While his son, Rab Tzvi Hirsch Rabinowitz, was visiting Rav Elchanan in Kovno, he noticed his father was up well past midnight. Concerned for his father, he urged Rav Elchanan to go to sleep, to which Rav Elchanan reluctantly approved. It wasn't until about half an hour later that noise returned to Rav Elchanan's study. When asked why he wasn't asleep, Rav Elchanan replied that the Korban Netanel disturbed him and did not let him fall asleep. Only once the kasha of the Korban Netanel was resolved did Rav Elchanan fall asleep for the night.

Rav Elchanan was a prime supporter of the Hovevei Zion movement, helping the movement gain support among the observant Jews of Russia and Europe. Rav Elchanan additionally played a large role in the question of Shemitah of the year 1889. Israeli settlements were only just forming and a year of rest in the field posed a large risk to the infant yishuvim. Rav Elchanan was crucial in providing a lenient ruling (specifically for 1889) that allowed the yishuvim survive.

Moreover, Rav Elchanan's wisdom and sensitivity was evident in his aid of agunot. The 19th century created new problems of women unable to get a halachic divorce, which is where Rav Elchanan played a large role. He not only helped many women in need, but set a precedent of how to deal with those modern cases of agunot. Even in his later years, busy with many questions and growing weak from old age, Rav Elchanan devoted himself to helping agunot.

In Adar of 1896 Rav Elchanan developed a sickness which took his life after a sixteen day battle. Rav Yitzchak Elchanan Spektor zt"l was niftar on the twenty-first of Adar 5656, March 6, 1896. Tens of thousands of people mourned the Gadol HaDor at his funeral, although he affected the lives of far more than that. Jews all over the world mourned his passing and Rav Elchanan's gadlus is still felt to this day.

Even though he never lived in the United States, Rav Elchanan's influence and harbatzas haTorah was great. So much so, that Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary was established soon after the petirah of Rav Elchanan and, as it says on the RIETS website, "RIETS was named after Rabbi Spektor as the ultimate tribute to his scholarship and noble deeds, a legacy of learning." The loss of Rav Elchanan was intimately felt here in New York, leading to our Yeshiva to be named in his memory. Our learning today is still greatly impacted by Rav Elchanan, with the help of HaShem we can continue to learn in his name.

FRUM IN THE WORKPLACE- LAIZER KORNWASSER



Interview with Laizer Kornwasser, President and COO of CareCentrix. Mr. Kornwasser graduated from YU in 1992 and Harvard Business School in 1996. Mr Kornwasser currently teaches a course for Syms Honors Students at both Wilf and Beren Campuses.

(Kol HaYeshiva)- What have been some keys to success in your career regarding being Frum and working? Can you talk a little about what has worked for you over the years?

(Laizer Kornwasser)- Yiddishkeit shouldn't be an excuse, it's who you are. If you can't be in the office late on Friday afternoon, you assure people you will be there on Motzei Shabbos instead and will get the work done by Monday morning. Yiddishkeit is who you are but it shouldn't be an obstacle.

Another key is being true to yourself: find where you will draw the line and don't budge. Be sincere and be consistent. The hardest thing is when people are not consistent. That's when your co-workers will question your commitment and sincerity.

As long as you are hardworking and sincere, people will respect you for your decisions and you will be able to get things done.

(KHY)- What is an area that you wish you could've done better over the years, or had more time for (in Yiddishkeit or family life)?

(LK)- Learning a little more. I always had family in mind. I didn't want to sacrifice my family and be the person looking back at 70 regretting everything.

(KHY)- Let's say there are 3 main pillars in a person's life: work, learning/davening, and family. How do you balance the 3 and focus on one area at a time?

(LK)- There are times you need to be good about shutting things down and shutting out everything to focus. But on the other hand you are living your life and all aspects of life blend into each other. You don't really separate Yiddishkeit and work. It should be front and central while working, but the same goes for work. There are very few 9 to 5 jobs. Key is to know your limits and prioritize appropriately. People come out of YU and expect the ideal balance and it is unrealistic. The biggest challenge is when you first start out. Manage your expectations but know your priorities.

My wife was very understanding when I was in investment banking at the beginning of my career. She knew it was a 2 year journey and wasn't my life dream. We were able to work together to make sure that we didn't sacrifice our relationship, long term goals, or dreams together.

(KHY)- Is there a particular thing in Judaism which has been hard to explain/justify over the years?

(LK)- Probably some of the "minor holidays," Tisha B'av, 17th of Tammuz, Simchas Torah. Stuff they wouldn't have necessarily heard about.

FRUM IN THE WORKPLACE- LAIZER KORNWASSER- CONTINUED

(KHY)- Any stories which coworkers gave pushback to what you were doing for religious reasons?

(LK)- Yes, very clearly. I was at a large company and was one of the top 5 senior executives, I was responsible for a large part of the company's operations. One Erev Shabbos, I told the CEO I had to leave. The CEO went onto Chabad.com to see the Zman for candle lighting, then checked on Google Maps how long it would take me to get home. He came back to me and said I had more time and needed to stick around longer. I said sorry, I need to be home before the Zman to prepare for Shabbos and getting home at Zman doesn't work for me, I left and told him "if you don't want me here on Monday let me know".

(KHY)- Any areas you think nowadays are particularly hard for religious Jews? In other words, for someone who wants to learn everyday for a normal amount, etc., anything one shouldn't do?

(LK)- Starting in any of the service industries, such as investment banking, consulting, or law, where you are at the clients' calling is the most challenging.

(KHY)- Has it been hard to find time for Mincha in the middle of the working day throughout your career? Learning?

(LK)- Mincha is the hardest, hardest, hardest. Very often people will say their schedule is open at the end of the day and it shouldn't be a problem for Mincha, but then a meeting pops up which you can't control, and the meeting might start 2 hours before the Zman but it ends up going past the Zman. I tell people it's sometimes better to daven early b'yechidus with kavana rather than roll the dice on being able to make it to minyan later if you anticipate an issue. You never know what will come up. But Mincha is the hardest, hardest, hardest.

(KHY)- Are there any areas you think YU talmidim should prepare for now while in YU? Maybe maintaining a good schedule, etc?

(LK)- Students need to understand there are tradeoffs, and need to manage those tradeoffs appropriately. Life and the workplace are rarely about black and white situations. How you will deal with all the gray areas is good to think through now. Students are blessed to have numerous courses and chaburas about being frum in the workplace. Use this time to think about the gray areas and how you will handle those situations.

(KHY)- What was one thing from your time in YU you did a good job taking advantage of? One thing that you wish you would've done better?

(LK)- YU is like a field. You need to decide how much you want to work the field. Some people are at YU Monday to Thursday, while others are at YU 24/7.

It's chaval when people run in and out of YU and don't take advantage of what's here, whether that's chevra or potential networking, and obviously the opportunity to be surrounded by Torah all day and night. It's the perfect place to maximize your business networking and relationships and ability to thrive and enjoy in a safe way.

Spend as much time as possible on campus, don't run away from it

I have no regrets, I was here 24/7 because I was an out of townner. Maybe my only regret was not going to other people for Shabbos more often.

If you're an in-towner, invite out of townners for Shabbos. But don't be general and say you should come to me for Shabbos, but be specific about when they should come, because maybe it's not actually a real invite. Out of townners feel stuck on campus too much and sometimes they don't feel like they have places to go.

COMMUNITY RABBI CORNER- RABBI JONATHAN MORGENSTERN



Interview with Rabbi Jonathan Morgenstern, Head Rabbi of the Young Israel of Scarsdale. Rabbi Morgenstern graduated YU in 1999, and got Semicha in 2002. He also teaches and interacts with students at Frisch.

(Kol HaYeshiva)- At what point did you decide to become a rabbi? And how did you make the decision?

(Rabbi Morgenstern)- High school senior year, and then once I got to Israel it was solidified. I felt very inspired by my rebbe in high school. Up until that point in school, I didn't feel that the Rebbeim I interacted with A) spoke my language and B) were living/marketing a brand of Orthodoxy that the schools I attended were really about- they weren't Modern Orthodox on a hashkafic level, they were coming from a different place. I felt that they would judge me or look down on me for the life I was leading or the life my parents gave me, and it was odd. My rebbe senior year really spoke to me and didn't judge me. It was the first time a rebbe saw me as a person and not just a religious object. What I mean is, Rebbeim would say things like "Hey Jon, how are you doing? Where's your Tzitzis?" I was just kinda an object to be made to be religious. While my rebbe would ask "How's your family doing?" or "How's this and how's that?" He really related to me as a person and a being, and it really inspired me religiously. When I was growing up, this mode of Rebbe was few and far between. And I really wanted to make a difference.

I think our generation of Rebbeim is really a reaction to a lack of having these inspirational types of Rebbeim when we grew up. When the Rebbeim I had would hear us talking about sports, they would say: "That's Shtuss." Or I remember when we once spoke about the movie The Ten Commandments, a Rebbe said "That's filth!" and the worst kinds of things, as if it was some kind of R-rated show. Granted, it was not a good representation of Yetzias Mitzrayim in any way, but it was just ridiculous. It was a level that from my upbringing, I just couldn't talk to them because there was this major chasm.

Then I went to Reishit, and the Rebbeim were all young. They were people I could relate to. I was taught a real hashkafa, as opposed to "You're not doing it right because you're not dressed this way," or because "you're not part of this segment of the Jewish world" and so on. That's when I said I want to do this and make an impact.

(KHY)- What is one thing you think you took full advantage of while in YU? One thing you wish you had done better looking back?

(Rabbi Morgenstern)- The shiurim I was in were really amazing. I jumped around, which was a good thing ultimately, because I got a taste of a bunch of different mehalchim. I was in Rav Parnes' Shiur, Rav Twersky, Rav Bronshpiegel, and then Rav Goldwicht. All the rebbeim were different, but all contributed in a totally different way. But very different mehalchim and personalities. I was blessed to grow my relationship with Rav Willig, which had started in Morasha Kollel. I could just go to him for shailas all the time, whether at home in Riverdale (where I was living), or at YU. My exposure to rebbeim was just amazing.

The one thing I wish I had done better, which I always regret: being in such a rush to finish YU. I majored in Economics, which is not my thing. I took someone's advice. I was kinda in a rush to get married, and someone told me "take this major, and take classes at Ramapo College" and so on and so forth. I really would've enjoyed and appreciated Psychology or English, I love those areas. I regret not being able to really take advantage of the full array of the madda part of YU, which would've helped me as a person but also as a rabbi.

(KHY)- You were in YU about 20 years ago. What's one big change you've seen from when you were in YU, compared to now when your child is in YU?

COMMUNITY RABBI CORNER- RABBI JONATHAN MORGENSTERN- CONTINUED

(Rabbi Morgenstern)- From what I hear from others and from what I hear from my son, the level of talmid centric-ness is amazing. We didn't have a mashpia, and a this and a that, we were literally on our own. I'm not saying anything negative, that's just the way it was back then. We didn't have all these chugim and night seder and night shiur etc., we had a mashgiach- Rabbi Blau- who was amazing and Roshei Yeshiva, but we didn't have all the different levels of Rebbeim. We had Shoel U'Mashivim, and asked shailas and got answers, but I feel like there are so many layers of rebbeim to connect to and make your Yeshiva experience better. There also wasn't much going on for Shabbos back in my day. We had a Shabbos once in a while with Rebbeim in, but I went home a whole lot.

(KHY)- What strengths/abilities do you think YU talmidim have which set them up for success in life? One area we need to work on?

(Rabbi Morgenstern)- The biggest piece in terms of success in life is regimenting yourself. If you're learning a morning seder and a night seder and you can keep that up, and you're doing the work for general studies, it speaks volumes to what you can accomplish in the working world. Both regimenting yourself as a professional- I know employers look at YU guys and say "Wow, they are so motivated etc.," because the reality is that people who are serious about this stuff will be serious Jews and serious professionals, and people appreciate that- and also on a Jewish level, it is hard with all the demands of jobs- which are so high now- and with the mortgage, and family, but at the same time you have to have a seder of learning, just being able to set that up for yourself and that foundation at YU is amazing.

On the flip side, guys need to build the connection with Rebbeim. I know that each situation is different and some Rebbeim are more forward than others, but the Rebbeim are so approachable and so real-world that you just have to take advantage of it. You'll have a Rebbe/Posek for your whole life, and that's pretty amazing.

(KHY)- So often you hear people in Yeshivos saying Gemara, Gemara, and more Gemara. There is obviously a value to learning Machshava/Mussar/etc too. What's one area you think YU talmidim should be learning more of? And can you recommend some Seforim for people to be learning at this age?

(Rabbi Morgenstern)- Obviously I'm going to say Chassidus. Any sefer of Chassidus al HaTorah, whether from the more fundamental Nesivos Shalom to a Kedushas Levi. The other ones are a little bit harder to pick up and learn every week, let's say Sfas Emes. But it could also include Chovas HaTalmidim or Nefesh Hachaim, anything that will accentuate the depth of Torah and the reality that Hakadosh Baruch Hu loves us and is misaneg in all that we do and mamish has nachas from us as Jews, we need hear and need to know that this exists. In this shallow and fast paced world, we need to know there's depth in the world. Obviously learning Gemara B'iyun teaches you there is depth in the world, but as much as that sparks the depth in your intellect- Rav Parnes used to say "Boys, do you understand we are contemplating the thought process of Hakadosh Baruch Hu?!" during a deep lomdishe shiur- but you also need to contemplate the depths of your soul and you can't forget about that. You don't want to spell trouble for yourself down the road. You have to have both.

(KHY)- You interact and teach students at Frisch and you're the Rabbi of a big shul. You see a lot of people who go through their years in Israel, and who have grown tremendously in that time. What are some classic mistakes that you see people make when they get back? And what are some pieces of advice you can give to help fix that?

(Rabbi Morgenstern)- The mistake of thinking that you're still in Eretz Yisroel in Yeshiva when you're not. You're going to resent yourself if you do things like setting a goal of learning five hours a day, but you fail, these things are killer. And even something like a minyan, if you miss a minyan for whatever reason and knock yourself, these kinds of things mamish drag you down. Kids really end up in peril of totally falling off when they do things like this.

COMMUNITY RABBI CORNER- RABBI JONATHAN MORGENSTERN- CONTINUED

So how do you fix it? You find the middle ground. I asked the Amshinover this question when I was in Yeshiva, how do I keep it up in America when I go back, etc.. And he told me: set a goal for myself that is a doable modest goal in learning per day, whether that be learning an amud a day or chazering half an amud a day, whatever makes sense for you, something reasonable- not too much but not too little. Set a goal and accomplish it, and if you learn more in the end, gevaldig.

The other thing is when you push your parents too much when you come back. Saying things like you can't ever go to a family dinner or vacation because you might miss a minyan, those things cause strife, and at a certain point just to do basic things you are making strife with your parents, and they become worried and anxious, etc. It's about having chochmah to respect your parents and how to deal with them, and not turning things into yeharig v'al yaavor. If you turn to that, and you didn't have the same attitude towards certain things before Israel, you are coming back and literally showing your hand that you're a different person. And questioning the way they raised you and the schools you went to, and what's happening in the house, it's just making problems for yourself. It will push them away and push you away. It's about speaking to your rebbeim about these issues. And it's not just your rebbeim in Israel, it's your rebbeim who knew you beforehand and knows you and your family, maybe your shul rabbi. Rebbeim need to understand where you are coming from, and oftentimes rebbeim in Israel don't fully understand the situations here, which can just create further friction.

(KHY)- You come from a distinguished Rabbinic lineage, going back to the Kotzker rebbe. Has this made you feel obligated in any sense to “carry on the legacy” throughout your life?

(Rabbi Morgenstern)- No, I didn't feel a sense I had to be a Ruv or I should. I definitely knew about the lineage in the back of my mind, but I didn't see it as a requirement, but that being said, when I officially got smicha, there was an incredible feeling of being a part of the shalshelas hamesorah of my family going all the way back to the Kotzker. And there's no question I feel it a lot now and talk about it now. My email address is even kotzker truth @ gmail.com. I really try to live my life in that way and connect to the Kotzk mesorah/hashkafa.

(KHY)- You've been serving in various capacities in the Rabbinate for 20 years now. How do you avoid the Yomim Noraim feeling cyclical? How do you give it new energy every year?

(Rabbi Morgenstern)- When I started at the Young Israel of Scarsdale, someone said to me early on: “The Yomim Noraim are like the Super Bowl” and I was kinda like “Yeah, okay” but once you go through it you really see it is like the Super Bowl and World Series, lehavdil, in the sense that a baseball player doesn't need to get psyched up for the World Series even if he is in the World Series every year. My point is you can feel the energy. There is a certain energy in the community definitely during the Yomim Noraim, but even beforehand. Once Elul comes, people really want to connect, it's unbelievable the kinds of emails and phone calls I'll get, it's amazing.

(KHY)- What's the one food you need to have on Shabbos for it to be really Oneg Shabbos? What about Rosh Hashana?

(Rabbi Morgenstern)- My wife's chicken soup. I have a minhag that when I have her soup, I say “Honey, this is the best soup I've ever had.” I say it every week, her soup is amazing. It's mamish Oneg Shabbos. On Rosh Hashana, for me it's that first dip of Challah into honey, I love it. Amazing.

(KHY)- If you could have a chavrusa with one individual, who would it be? What would you learn?

(Rabbi Morgenstern)- Rav Moshe Weinberger, I want to learn Rav Kook with him. If I can choose someone not alive anymore, there were 3 gedolim/rabbis who were alive during my lifetime and I never met but I should've tried: Rav Moshe Feinstein, The Lubavitcher Rebbe, and Shlomo Carlebach. If I had a chance to learn Tanya with the Lubavitcher Rebbe, woah, that would be holy.

(KHY)- You're known to be an avid Mets fan. Which suffering is worse: being a Mets fan, or the Jewish people in exile?

(Rabbi Morgenstern)- I told my son at his Bar Mitzvah, “We're Mets fans, it's like being Jews. We're suffering, it's hard, but you stick with it.” Which is worse? Being a Mets fan is obviously worse. Being a Jew is the most amazing thing in the world.

OPINION

A NEW REASON WHY AN IPAD SHOULD REPLACE YOUR LAPTOP: FILTERS

By Yehuda Dov Reiss

Since the release of iPadOS 13, iPad has become a powerful and capable laptop replacement, with lightning-fast speeds, a beautiful interface, and powerful multitasking features, including split-screen, a pop-over window feature, a customizable dock that can be pulled up within apps, and a massive selection of amazing apps. When I switched to an iPad from my laptop, I was delighted at the premium hardware, gorgeous screen, super-portability, and its many great apps and features. They also sell at a great price, starting at \$299 on sale, and they retain their value (and usability) over a long period of time. The iPad I use is a seven-year old model (iPad Air 2), but it feels like the latest in technology. But that's not what prompted me to make the switch.

Apple devices are the only devices that can be securely filtered in a way recommended by TAG (Technology Awareness Group) that doesn't cost any money. The cheapest recommended filters on other devices usually cost at least around \$90 per year, and Chromebook doesn't really have any adequate filtering solutions that suit a college student's needs (all that's available is a pre-set whitelist, which, as far as I'm aware, can't be modified). Apple, however, has built-in controls that enable you to disable the App Store and create a customized whitelist for internet browsing, and put a time limit on apps and websites. All you have to do is download all the apps you anticipate you'll want to use, make a list of the websites you think you will need, and take your iPhone or iPad to TAG to be securely filtered. If you're like me, you're not going to cover all your bases on the websites or apps you'll need to access on the first try, so you can have the people at TAG send a PIN code to a family member or friend, and any time you need to make a change, they can put in the code and enable you to do so. Also, one of the many great things about being in YU is that in a pinch you can always use the computers in the library or in a computer lab (on Wilf there's one in the Morg basement). For me this combination of factors has ensured that I've never had a major issue with the limits of the filter.

Even for someone who feels they have a decent handle on technology, filtering is a necessity that makes a world of difference. It prevents you from getting distracted with unproductive pursuits and helps keep you disciplined and focused. Having a filtered device has helped ensure I keep a consistent bedtime and get my work done promptly, and prevented me from being tempted to waste time. It has tremendously enhanced my quality of life. If you need/prefer to have a smartphone besides for iPhone, or a laptop besides for iPad, then it's well worth it to take it to TAG and just pay for whatever the filter costs; the hours you save and the life you reacquire are infinitely more valuable. Otherwise, the free filtering solutions for iPhone and iPad are the easiest things you can do - both physically and financially - to completely transform your life.

YU NEEDS CHOLENT EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT

By Yehuda Waitman

One of the biggest tainas people will say about YU is that it isn't heimish enough, that it doesn't feel enough like yeshiva in Israel. Personally, while I think this claim is true, it is horribly misguided. YU is not meant to be your yeshiva in Israel. Your yeshiva in Israel is meant to be your yeshiva in Israel. YU is a whole different animal. In my view, YU is meant to be two main things.

Firstly, YU is the bridge between our yeshivos in Israel and our lives when we eventually leave YU, and secondly, YU is the place to see who/what we are really made of and what we've really absorbed from our time in Israel. To achieve these goals on a practical level, YU needs to be a place where we have less of the typical hallmarks of yeshivos in Israel (think someone selling overpriced poppers out of their dorm room at 12:30 at night). It is easy for us to get swept up in the energy and excitement of our time in Yeshiva, without actually stopping to think what it is we are doing. We all know people who sadly returned from their time in Israel and had big yeridos in yiddishkeit when they came to YU. In 99% of cases, this is not a failure of YU, but is a failure due to a lack of internalization while in Israel. We do things in Israel without thinking too much about what, or why, we are doing things. YU gives us the opportunity and forces us to think. The very nature of YU, with its split schedule, forces us to make difficult decisions in time management and many other issues. When we are in yeshiva, we never are faced with such dilemmas: we go to a tisch at our rebbe's house without thinking twice.

YU NEEDS CHOLENT EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT- CONTINUED

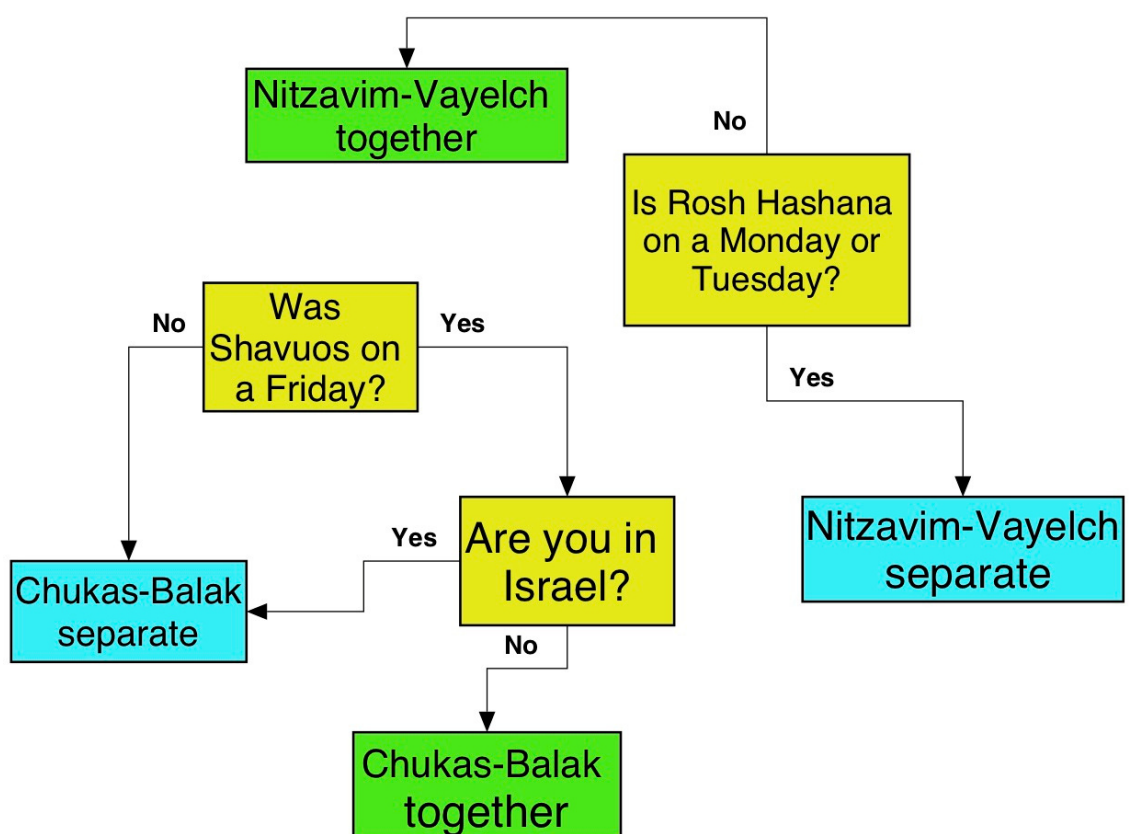
Some people would argue that the longer we can experience an atmosphere more similar to our yeshivos in Israel, why not do so? Why can't YU be a close continuation of our time in Israel? Besides for the obvious reason that YU is simply structured differently, there is a simpler answer: at some point, the music will stop playing. At some point, we have to leave yeshiva. The question is not if, but when, and we all have to decide when that is. Some might want to delay that transition, which is fine, but they need to realize YU is not the place to remain in the dream world of gap-year yeshivos. There are other places which allow you to do that. At the same time, it is wrong to think YU is a spiritual wasteland in terms of geshmak-ness compared to Israel. YU doesn't stop the "music we started listening to" in Israel, but instead lowers the volume, allowing us to focus and concentrate more clearly on who we are, and who we aspire to be.

All this being said, YU can still do better. We can still make this Yeshiva feel more geshmak and heimish, even if in small ways. One thing in particular is having cholent and other food on Thursday nights after night seder, sponsored by the Yeshiva. Firstly, it gives more of an incentive for chevra to stay in for Thursday night seder, and not ditch for our second-cousin's-four-times- removed engagement party. Never underestimate the power free food can have on a person. Secondly, and more importantly, it will make YU feel more geshmak. It will give more of that heimish feeling which we all enjoy from time to time, no matter how litvish one is. Yes, this is a small step, and it will not fundamentally change YU's character nor how we generally relate to our time here. But it will have some form of an impact. It will change things, even if ever so slightly. Night seder will go from not just being Thursday night, but more importantly, Leil Shishi. It's not hard to imagine the scene: chevra would grab bowls of cholent, head back into the Beis Medresh to learn with a hot bowl of cholent alongside, other chevra might just hock around while eating the bowls of cholent, or some people might come to Glueck special just for the cholent. The exact situation doesn't matter, the point is the same. The vibe surrounding Thursday night seder would change drastically, and by extension, our yeshiva experience as a whole.

Let's make this happen.

SHTICK BY SIMCHA- DOUBLE PARSHA FLOWCHARTS

By Simcha Feldman



SHTICK BY SIMCHA- CONTINUED

Double Parsha Flowchart

