

# CHAVRUSA

December 2008 • Chanukah 5769

אין התורה נקנית אלא בחבורה (ברכות סג:)

Volume 43 • Number 2



## In This Issue

Divrei Torah from  
Rabbi Reuven Brand  
Rabbi Kenneth Brander  
Rabbi Shmuel Marcus  
Rabbi Dr. Dovid Horwitz

**Special Community  
Kollel Edition**



RIETS Dinner  
Highlights



Musmakhim  
in the Limelight:  
Community Kollelim



## Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary

Richard M. Joel  
PRESIDENT, YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm  
CHANCELLOR, YESHIVA UNIVERSITY  
ROSH HAYESHIVA, RIETS

Rabbi Julius Berman  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, RIETS

Rabbi Yona Reiss  
MAX AND MARION GRILL DEAN, RIETS

Rabbi Kenneth Brander  
DEAN, CENTER FOR THE JEWISH FUTURE

Rabbi Zevulun Charlop  
DEAN EMERITUS, RIETS

Rabbi Robert Hirt  
VICE PRESIDENT EMERITUS, RIETS

Rabbi Dr. Solomon F. Rybak  
PRESIDENT, RABBINIC ALUMNI

Rabbi Chaim Bronstein  
ADMINISTRATOR, RIETS

## CHAVRUSA

A PUBLICATION OF RIETS RABBINIC ALUMNI

Rabbi Ronald L. Schwarzberg  
DIRECTOR, THE MORRIS AND GERTRUDE BIENENFELD  
DEPARTMENT OF JEWISH CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND  
PLACEMENT

Rabbi Elly Krimsky  
EDITOR, *Chavrusa*

Rabbi Levi Mostofsky  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR, *Chavrusa*

Keren Simon  
ASSISTANT EDITOR, *Chavrusa*

Rabbi Robert Shur  
GRAPHICS AND LAYOUT, *Chavrusa*

*Chavrusa* is published three times a year by the Rabbinic Alumni of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary, through the office of the Morris and Gertrude Bienenfeld Department of Jewish Career Development and Placement.

Yeshiva University's Center for the Jewish Future serves as the community service arm of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS). It continues the work of the Max Stern Division of Communal Services which, for over 60 years, has served as one of the premier service organizations for the Jewish community.

500 West 185th St. Suite 413  
New York, NY 10033  
212-960-5400 x 6360  
chavrusamagazine@yu.edu  
www.yu.edu/cjf

Editorial contributions and submissions to *Chavrusa* are welcome. This publication accepts no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts or photographs. All submissions are subject to editing and are used at the editor's discretion. Opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect official Seminary and/or University policy.

# In This Issue



### Page 3 **News from RIETS**

A report on the successful RIETS dinner in honor of Rabbi Zevulun Charlop, and an overview of new activity in the CJF-RIETS community kollelim.



### Page 10 **Musmakhim in the Limelight**

An interview with three RIETS musmakhim who have formed their career through the experiences they had as fellows of community kollelim, plus a brief history of the American community kollel by Rabbi Dr. Adam Ferziger.



### Page 15 **Practical Halacha**

*Bein Yisrael La'amim*: Reflections before and after an encounter at the Vatican.

### Page 6 **Chomer L'Drush**

*Aharon's Chanukah:*

*Ahavas Yisrael and*

*Ahavas Hashem*

Rabbi Reuven Brand

### Page 10 **Back to the**

**Beit Midrash**

*Time to Light*

Rabbi Shmuel Marcus

### Page 7 **Divrei Chizuk**

*The Fires of Chanukah*

*and Havdalah*

Rabbi Kenneth Brander

### Page 17 **RIETS-CJF Kollel**

**Initiative Participants**

### Page 18 **Lifecycles**

## Editor's Correction

In the September '08 edition, we offered our condolences to Rabbi Aaron Chomsky. Unfortunately we misidentified his loved one who passed away. It was his wife, Rebbitzin Lillian z'l, not his mother. We sincerely regret the error.

# RIETS Dinner an Inspiring Success

Rabbi Zevulun Charlop '54R, dean emeritus of Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS) and special advisor to the president on yeshiva affairs, was honored for his extraordinary achievement in Torah learning and leadership over 35 years as the seminary's dean at the RIETS Annual Dinner of Tribute on September 17. Over 650 people attended at the event at the Grand Hyatt in New York City.

Herbert Smilowitz and his son, Rabbi Mark Smilowitz '95R, were the inaugural America/Israel Dor L'Dor Award recipients. RIETS also recognized members of its 10<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary classes (1998, 1983, and 1958). More than \$1 million was raised for the seminary. The evening was marked by warm tributes and a celebration of RIETS. In recognizing Rabbi Charlop, Yeshiva University President Richard M. Joel said, "You have raised all of us to be your wonderful family, and you've done it just by being Rabbi Zevulun Charlop."

"He has set the pattern for the needs, and for filling the needs, of the modern rabbi in the modern community," said Rabbi Julius Berman, chairman of the RIETS Board of Trustees.

"Rabbi Charlop has left us with a legacy of excellence, a legacy of integrity, a legacy of erudition, a legacy of honor and a legacy of kindness, compassion and sensitivity towards all students," said Rabbi Yona Reiss '91R, who succeeded Rabbi Charlop this year as The Max and Marion Grill Dean of RIETS.



(L-R) Rosh HaYeshiva Rabbi Norman Lamm; Rabbi Zevulun Charlop; Herb Smilowitz; Rabbi Mark Smilowitz; Mrs. Marilyn Smilowitz; President Richard M. Joel.

"I wouldn't be who I am without the support of Rabbi Charlop," said Rabbi Reuven Brand '05R, a RIETS alumnus who came to the dinner from Illinois, where he is the director of the Yeshiva University Torah Mitzion Chicago Kollel in Skokie. "There's a magic in RIETS, and a magic in what we have in this room. Thank you, Rabbi Charlop, for helping us to share this magic with others."

President Joel announced that a wing of the Jacob and Dreizel Glueck Center for Jewish Study—now under construction on YU's Wilf Campus in Washington Heights—would be named for Rabbi

Charlop, thanks to gifts from a group of YU supporters. He also presented Rabbi Charlop with the first edition of *Sefer Zeved Tov*, a volume published for the occasion, which is a compilation of halachic, philosophic and Torah articles written by gedolei Yisrael. Rabbi Ari Zahrtz '04R, a member of the Bella and Harry Wexner Kollel Elyon and assistant to the rabbi at Congregation Bnei Yeshurun in Teaneck, NJ edited the volume.

A 1951 Yeshiva College graduate, Rabbi Charlop received his semikhah from RIETS in 1954. He

*continued on page 4*

# RIETS-CJF Augment Kollel Initiatives

The Center for the Jewish Future – RIETS is proud to announce the opening of several new transformational community initiatives. These new initiatives, currently located in Chicago, South Florida, and San Francisco, serve to position Yeshiva University-RIETS as a "Yeshiva without walls", primed to spread the values of Torah Umadda to the broader community. Each in their unique way, these initiatives look to enrich and engage the greater Jewish community with inspired Torah living and learning, celebrating the core values of the primacy of Torah, embracing the larger world through the prism of Jewish ideals and the religious significance of the State of Israel. Moreover, these initiatives create a laboratory for cultivating RIETS *musmakhim* as future communal leaders.

Rabbi Aaron Leibowitz is charged with coordinating all of the activities of these new initiatives. According to Rabbi Kenneth Brander '86R, dean of Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future: "As start-ups they have unbelievable potential but must be nurtured if they are to serve as effective satellites of Yeshiva University in various regions of the country. Rabbi Leibowitz and Phil Moskowitz are charged with this responsibility and are doing an exceptional job at enabling these kollelim to blossom."

## Chicago

As an outgrowth of the highly successful Chicago summer kollel, RIETS-CJF and local community

*continued on page 4*



Rabbi Reuven Brand and Rabbi Aaron Leibtag of the YU-Torah Mitzion Chicago Kollel.

## RIETS Dinner an Inspiring Success

*continued from page 3*

was appointed The Max and Marion Grill Dean of RIETS in 1971 and served in that position until this past July. Rabbi Charlop has also served as the spiritual leader of the Young Israel of Mosholu Parkway in his native Bronx for the past 54 years.

Rabbi Charlop comes from a long line of rabbinic leadership and Jewish scholarship. His father, Rabbi Jechiel Michael Charlop, was ordained at RIETS in 1921 and served as the spiritual leader of the Bronx Jewish Center for 46 years. His grandfather, Rabbi Yaakov Moshe Charlop, was an associate of Chief Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook and rosh yeshiva of Merkaz HaRav in Jerusalem from its inception.

Visibly moved by the many tributes he received, Rabbi Charlop thanked all the speakers, and added of the evening's other honorees, "I'm extremely happy that I can share this evening with my very

good friends, Herbert and Mark Smilowitz."

The Smilowitz family has a deep and long-standing connection to RIETS. "Blessed is the father who has such a son, and blessed is the son who has such a father," said Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm '51R, Rosh HaYeshiva and chancellor of Yeshiva University. Dr. Lamm hailed Herbert Smilowitz as "a quiet giant," and noted that Mark Smilowitz is "a superb politician—not in the vulgar sense of the word, but in the Aristotelian sense: he has an intuitive knowledge of human relationships."

Herbert Smilowitz, honored at the dinner as "a humble man of faith," joined the RIETS Board of Trustees in 1994 and now serves as its vice chairman. He received the RIETS Eitz Chaim award in 2002. Mr. Smilowitz and his wife, Marilyn, are benefactors of YU and reside in West Orange, NJ.

Rabbi Mark Smilowitz, who was cited for his rabbinic leadership and educational commitment, graduated from Yeshiva College in 1992 and earned his master's degree from YU's Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration. Rabbi Smilowitz resides in Beit Shemesh, Israel with his wife, Michelle, and four children.

The America/Israel Dor L'Dor Award recognizes parents and children who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of higher Jewish education in the Torah Umadda model and who have made a meaningful impact in communities in both the United States and Israel. ■

## RIETS-CJF Augment Kollel Initiatives

*continued from page 3*

leaders partnered to open a new year-round kollel this year in the Windy City. The Yeshiva University – Torah Mitzion Chicago Community Kollel is headed by Rosh Kollel Rabbi Reuven Brand '05R, a past member of the Bella and Harry Wexner Kollel Elyon and former assistant rabbi at Congregation Shomrei Torah in Fair Lawn, NJ. The Chicago kollel will enhance the already strong Jewish community while raising the level of Jewish commitment throughout the greater Chicago area. Like all community initiatives, this kollel will give its members an opportunity to develop their teaching, learning and leadership skills.

Rabbi Brand is joined in Chicago by eight other American and Israeli families and an administrative staff. With the goal of both enriching and engaging the Chicago community, Rabbi Brand hopes to create an institution "of outstanding Jewish learning which will be warm, inspiring and welcoming — a beacon of light of which our community can be proud." Oren Skidelsky, president of the board of YU Torah Mitzion Kollel, commented: "I am excited to partner with Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future to create a kollel which promotes the values of Torah Umadda and religious Zionism and shares these values with the broader Chicago community. Our children need to grow up hearing that Torah is more than a text, it is a way of life."



Bill Bernstein, Federation of South Palm Beach County



(L-R) Rabbis Avi Billett, Joshua Flug, David Gutterman and Yaakov Gibber of the Center for Jewish Leadership and Learning in South Florida.

### South Florida

The Center for Jewish Leadership and Learning (CJLL) in South Florida has brought together a diverse team of community scholars who will deliver shiurim and coordinate programs for the greater South Florida Jewish community. Targeting communities from Miami to North Palm Beach, the CJLL looks forward to partnering with local synagogues, federations, schools and rabbis to increase the level of Torah study and a commitment to the values of Torah Umadda Lchatchila. CJLL is led by Executive Director Rabbi David Gutterman. Rabbi Gutterman served as the rabbinic scholar for

the Philadelphia Jewish Federation and directed the Hillel at Rutgers University. The community scholars include Rabbi Avi Billett '05R, Rabbi Josh Flug '01R, and Rabbi Yaakov Gibber '03R, who also serves as the rabbi of Ohev Shalom in Boca Raton. The CJLL reaches out across the spectrum to share the values of Modern Orthodoxy, serve as a resource to rabbis from all denominations and aid the RIETS rabbis in South Florida: Rabbi Efreim Goldberg '01R of the Boca Raton Synagogue, Rabbi Moshe Rothchild '02R of Beit David Highland Lakes Shul in Aventura, Rabbis Edward Davis '70R and Yosef Weinstock '05R of the Young

Israel of Hollywood, and the aforementioned Rabbi Gibber. The fellows will also work with the local day schools: the Hebrew Academy Brauser Maimonides, Solomon Schechter, Donna Klein Day School, Weinbaum Yeshiva High School and Hillel of Boca Raton, to name a few.

“We are thrilled that Yeshiva University Center for Jewish Leadership and Learning is partnering with the Federation in our shared aspiration to nurture a more literate and Jewishly engaged community,” noted Bill Bernstein, president and CEO of the Jewish Federation of South Palm Beach County. “In the short amount of time that Rabbi David Gutterman has been leading the CJLL initiative, we have greatly enjoyed his dynamic teachings and genuinely warm and welcoming personality. We look forward to working together with him and his team to benefit our community.”

Rabbi David Gutterman, executive director, added: “Some men see things as they are and ask why— others dream things that never were and say ... YU! The Center for Jewish Leadership and Learning is an initiative that is groundbreaking in its conception and breathtaking in its intention. As a community partner of Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future, the CJLL has as its most noble aspiration the desire to become a community gift by bringing our version and vision of a Torah Umadda renaissance to the south Florida Jewish community. Together with our creative cohort of Rabbis Avi Billet, Yaakov Gibber and Josh Flug, we, the ‘rabbis-without-borders’ will work mightily to make this vision a reality.”

## San Francisco Bay Area

In collaboration with the Jewish Study Network (JSN), Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future-RIETS has formed a premier outreach



Rabbi Shayne Guttenberg reaching out to Bay Area Jews.

kollel dedicated to supporting our local RIETS musmakhim and increasing Jewish literacy in the San Francisco Bay Area. Although JSN has had a presence in the Bay Area for several years, this new collaboration allows JSN to form a partnership with Yeshiva University and our kollel members focusing on San Francisco and Oakland. New kollel members are Rabbi Shayne Guttenberg '08R, who now serves as the director of the JSN San Francisco Kollel and Rabbi Josh Marder, who in addition to his kollel responsibilities will be furthering his professional development by pursuing a master's degree in drama therapy. The JSN San Francisco Kollel will work closely with Rabbi Joshua Strulowitz '05R, rabbi of Congregation Adath Israel of San Francisco, himself a graduate of TORCH, a community kollel in Houston, TX and Rabbi Judah Dardik '01R, rabbi of Congregation Beth Jacob, Oakland. Rabbi Judah Dardik is joined by a new assistant rabbi and recent RIETS graduate Rabbi Michael Davies '08R. Oakland has been the primary address for RIETS talent over the years, where Rabbi Howard Zack '85R, helped build a Torah infrastructure in the Bay Area during his 16-year tenure there (Rabbi Zack currently serves as the rabbi of Torat Emet in Columbus, OH). Rebbitzin Bethany Strulowitz and Rabbi Michael and Ora Davies teach at the Oakland Hebrew Day School, which was founded during Rabbi Zack's tenure.

“As a graduate of Yeshiva College, Azrieli and RIETS and a member of the Yeshiva University family on the one hand, and as the new director of the JSN in San Francisco (and now a member of the JSN family), I feel that I am part of the shidduch that links the two organizations,” declared Rabbi Guttenberg. “The JSN-YU relationship is synergetic and dynamic- with similar visions and goals. Both organizations believe, as a fundamental principle, that the Jewish observant community must not remain insular but must extend its resources to bring the wisdom, the beauty, and the teachings of Judaism to light –for the thousands of Jews who have not had the opportunity to study Jewish text.

## School and Shul Based Kollelim

In addition to these new initiatives, CJF-RIETS currently operates a community kollel in Dallas, school kollelim in Ramaz, the Frisch School and Davis Renov Stahler Yeshiva High School for Boys (DRS), a synagogue kollel in The Jewish Center of

*continued on page 19*



“Our ongoing partnership with YU-CJF has been a critical factor in building a vibrant Modern Orthodox community in Dallas. In particular, our YU community kollel has had a transformative impact on our community by attracting young, ambitious and talented Jewish educators who have helped energize our day schools and revitalize our shul while serving as models of Torah Umadda L'chatchila.”

Rabbi Ari Perl

*Congregation Shaarei Tefilla, Dallas, TX*



“It has been a distinct pleasure to work with the staff of the CJF in developing effective strategies for building a brighter Jewish future for the Bay Area Jewish community.”

Rabbi Joey Felsen

*Executive Director and Founder, Jewish Study Network, San Francisco, CA*



“The Fellows that we've seen at the YU Kollel at Ramaz have been remarkable young men. The thing that impressed me the most is at the very end of the first year [of the Kollel], when we had a closing assembly, the entire student body stood up and gave them [the kollel fellows] a standing ovation.”

Rabbi Jay Goldmintz

*Headmaster, Ramaz Upper School, New York City*

## Aharon's Chanukah: Ahavas Yisrael and Ahavas Hashem

Rabbi Reuven Brand

Rosh Kollel, Yeshiva University-Torah  
Mitzion Kollel of Chicago



At the start of *Parshas Beha'aloscha* (Bamidbar 8:2) Rashi questions the juxtaposition of *hadlakas hamenorah*, the beginning of *Beha'aloscha* and the preceding passage which deals with the *korbanos* of the *Nesiim* at the time of *Chanukas HaMishkan*. Rashi cites a Midrash that describes how Aharon felt neglected, as his tribe, Levi, did not participate in the *korbanos Hanesiim*. To assuage this hurt, Hashem promised Aharon that his descendents would be the ones to light the menorah of the Bais Hamikdash. The Ramban (ibid) takes issue with this approach and cites a *Megillas Setarim* of Rabbeinu Nissim that suggests that the Midrash is not referring to the lighting of the menorah in the Beis Hamikdash, but rather, to the lighting of the menorah of Chanukah for generations to come.

This entire description is perplexing. First, why was Aharon perturbed by his exclusion from the *korbanos Hanesiim*? Shouldn't he have been satisfied by all of the *korbanos* that he offers? The *Nesiim* have one *korban* and the *Kohanim* have all of the rest! Moreover, Hashem's response remains a mystery. What consolation is it to Aharon that his descendents would light the menorah, as he is still missing out on the *korban* of the *miluim*?

To better understand this portion, let us examine the nature of the *korbanos Hanesiim* and the lighting of the Menorah. We will suggest two approaches that can shed light on this issue; the first one follows the path of *bein adam lachaveiro* and the second follows a model of *bein adam lamakom*.

Each of the 12 *Nesiim* offered a *korban* on the first 12 days after the dedication of the *Mishkan* which included animal *korbanos*, a *mincha*, a *ketores* and donations of *klei shares*. This offering was unusual in two respects. This event is the only time that an individual, a *yachid*, offered a *ketores*, as the standard *ketores* is a *korban tzibbur*. In contrast to

the *ketores* of Nadav and Avihu, which was rejected by Hashem, the *ketores* of the *Nesiim* was instructed and welcomed by Hashem. In addition, these *korbanos* were brought on 12 successive days, including Shabbos. The Mishnah in *Temurah* (2:1) teaches that only *korbanos tzibbur* have the capacity to override Shabbos, yet these *korbanos* were *korbanos yachid*—voluntary offerings by the individual *Nesiim*?

The *Yalkut Shimoni* (*Parshas Naso*, *Remez* 717) teaches:

*Rabbi Yishmael says: What does it mean "from the princes of Israel?" To teach that they volunteered on their own all equal amounts and not one of them offered more than his friend, for had it been that one of them offered more than his friend, not one of them would have overridden Shabbos. Hashem said to them: you gave honor, each one to his friend and I will give you honor.*

Since all of the *Nesiim* offered identical *korbanos* and no individual attempted to surpass his colleague, Hashem honored them by allowing the *korbanos* to be offered on Shabbos. This Midrash fits with the Gemara's statement (*Yoma* 51a) that when a *korban* is brought as a group (*b'chinufia*) it is treated as a *korban tzibbur* and is *doche Shabbos*. Essentially, the unity of the *Nesiim* elevated each of their individual *korbanos* to a status of *korban tzibbur*, which allowed the *ketores* and the *korban* to be brought on Shabbos.

In light of this insight, perhaps we can understand why Aharon felt a particular desire to participate in the *korbanos Hanesiim*. *Avos Drabbi Nassan* (12:3) teaches that Aharon was the paragon of unity among the Jewish people, the quintessential *ohev shalom v'rodef shalom*. Aharon saw this unique demonstration of unity among the *Nesiim* and wanted to participate. In addition, the role of the *ketores* of the *Nesiim* is especially fitting for Aharon,

as the *ketores* itself represents unity. The Gemara (*Kerisus* 6b) states:

*Rabbi Channa Bar Bizna said that Rav Shimon Chasida said: Any fast that does not contain the sinners of Israel is not a fast day, for the "chelbenah" has a foul odor, yet the Torah lists it among the spices of the ketores.*

Aharon sought to partake in this symbol of unity, which he is actually given later in *Sefer Bamidbar* as an antidote to strife and plague.

It is in this context that Hashem replies with the consolation of the lighting of the Menorah. On a basic halachic level, the Gemara teaches (*Pesachim* 59a) that there is a *hekesh* between the *ketores* and the *neiros* of the menorah. However, the similarity exists on a philosophical level as well. The Sforino (*Bamidbar* 8:2) describes beautifully how the Menorah represents the unity of the Jewish people. He details how the lights on either side of the central branch of the menorah face the middle light. Each side represents a different segment of the community: the lights on the right side personify those who are constantly involved in Torah study, and the lights on the left side represent those who are involved in building the world. Both groups of lights face the middle light—the light of Hashem—unified by this common goal, and as the Sforino writes, “between all of them His purpose is fulfilled.” Hence, the Menorah represents the same message of unity that the *korbanos* of the *Nesiim* communicated. The menorah of Chanukah spreads this light even further. We know that the elementary mitzvah of Chanukah lighting is “*ner ish ubeiso*” — one candle for a man and his household. This mitzvah is one that relates to the household, not just individual people, but to the entire unified family. It is this light of unity in our homes that we radiate out into the streets and alleys, from our doorways to the entire community. Perhaps this is why the *Magen Avraham* (introduction to O.C. 670) cites a custom for poor children to collect tzedakah on Chanukah, as we are all one family and we care for each other in this spirit of unity. This truly is the mantra of Aharon Hakohen, and serves as a fitting consolation.

A second approach to this matter is rooted in another aspect of the *korbanos Hanesiim*: the unique spirit of volunteerism that permeated these offerings. The Midrash notes that these *korbanos* were “*nedavos*,” voluntary gifts to Hashem. These offerings represented a sense of *ahavas Hashem* that motivated their actions. This, too, is an attribute that characterizes Aharon Hakohen, the father of all Kohanim, who are noted for their *ahavas Hashem*.

*continued on page 8*

## The Fires of Chanukah and Havdalah

Rabbi Kenneth Brander

Dean, Center for the Jewish Future  
 Founding Dean, Boca Raton Judaic  
 Fellows Program 1997-2005



**U**lla said: Two amoraim in the West disagree about [the interpretation] of this Tannaic dispute, and they are R' Yose bar Avin and R' Yose bar Zevida. One of them said that Beit Shammai's reason for requiring a continual decrease from eight lights to one is so that the various kindlings correspond to the number of days yet to come, and Beit Hillel's reason for requiring a continual increase from one light to eight is so that the various kindlings correspond to the number of days already passed. And one of them said that Beit Shammai's reason for requiring a continual decrease from eight lights to one is so that the various kindlings correspond to the bull [sacrifices] of the Sukkot festival, and Beit Hillel's reason for the continual increase from one light to eight is the principle that in sacred matters we elevate, and do not lower, the degree of sanctity, *uma'alin bakodesh v'ein moridin* (Shabbat 21b).

Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel offer differing views on the kindling of the Chanukah lights. The second explanation, that the decreasing number of Chanukah lights is in some way connected to the sacrifices of Sukkot seems perplexing. After all, what is the connection between the lights of Chanukah and the sacrifices of Sukkot?

In order to explore this issue, we must recognize that this disagreement between Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel is not limited to the fires of Chanukah but also emerges when discussing the bracha recited over the lighting of the havdalah candle.

*Beit Shammai says: the text of the [havdalah] blessing over the flame is "Blessed are you Hashem, our God, King of the Universe who created illumination on the [original] fire," sh'bara ma'or ha'esh. Beit Hillel says: "Blessed are You... who creates the illuminations of the many fires", borei m'orei ha'esh.*

Fire is a unique creation. Adam and Chava were shown by God how to extract fire from nature (*Bereishit Rabba*, chap. 12). It was the first piece

of matter to be created in partnership between God and humankind. The Talmud's explanation (in *Shabbat* 21b) that Beit Shammai compares the candles to the sacrifices on Sukkot while Beit Hillel explains that one increases in holiness serves to connect these two issues, Chanukah and havdalah, as one conceptual argument between the two schools of thought.

When we recite havdalah after Shabbat, we are celebrating our reentry into the creative role we play in society. Havdalah is a call to all of our senses to engage, reminding us of the responsibility we have as God's partner in completing the creative process. Rabbi Soloveitchik explains that the Rambam (*Mishneh Torah*, *Shabbat* 29:1) highlights that the institution of kiddush is recited twice every Shabbat. The first time, on Friday night, with kiddush sanctifying the Shabbat as the day of rest, and the second time as we sanctify the week, on motzei Shabbat through the institution of havdalah.

Both Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel recognize that the *esh* of Chanukah and havdalah represents humankind's ability to affect society, to dispel the darkness in the world around us. For Beit Shammai the concern of what can occur to man as the social player is frightening. Perhaps he/she will not affect change but will rather become part of the darkness. Therefore Beit Shammai suggests that anytime fire, the original creative act of humankind and God, is used as a paradigmatic example of our engagement, this concern must be highlighted. For Beit Shammai, when lighting the Chanukah lights, the model must be the sacrifices of Sukkot, for on Sukkot we offer sacrifices for the 70 nations of the world, decreasing the amount daily, concluding with one sacrifice celebrating the unique relationship between God and *Knesset Yisrael*. Similarly with havdalah, the key concern is to remind us that our creativity must always be

linked to God. Therefore, Beit Shammai suggests that on motzei Shabbat, we recite a bracha that heralds back to that original creative experience, to remind us of the original rendezvous between God and humankind. Hence, according to Beit Shammai, the bracha celebrates fire in the singular past tense, retreating to this original experience.

Beit Hillel does not disagree with the concerns of Beit Shammai but suggests that when *esh* is used as part of the *ma'seh mitzvah*, we must use it to focus on the potential of humankind in our various creative endeavors. On Chanukah, we ascend in holiness, recognizing that we are never to retreat but must continue to add light in all our efforts to impact society. On motzei Shabbat, at the moment that we reengage with our creative talents, our focus must not be to withdraw to that original creative experience but rather, *m'orei haEish*—our capacity to create new lights and new energy in the world.

It is through this lens that we are able to understand the location in which the story of Chanukah appears in the Talmud, in the tractate of *Shabbat*.

*What is [the reason for] Chanukah? For our rabbis taught: On the 25 of Kislev [commence] the days of Chanukah, which are eight... (Shabbat 21b).*

Why did the rabbis choose the tractate of *Shabbat* to introduce the holiday of Chanukah? One would have thought that the tractate of *Megillah*, which discusses the other rabbinic holidays, would have been a more legitimate location for the placement of the laws and story of Chanukah. Rabbi Soloveitchik explains that while the experiences of Chanukah and Shabbat are distinct from each other, existentially they complement one another. Chanukah's holiday experience symbolizes taking the light found in the Jewish home and allowing it to radiate in the public thoroughfare. All of the laws regarding the menorah's location and time of lighting are predicated on the pedestrian's ability to see its illumination in the public thoroughfare. Chanukah celebrates the Jews' responsibility to be involved as an agent of change in society.

Yet this goal is only achievable when there is also the Shabbat experience. Shabbat is celebrated through the retreat from the public arena of life. Carrying objects between the private and the public domain is forbidden; so is carrying any object four *amot* in the public domain. The experience of Shabbat is primarily found within the privacy of the home. It is the Shabbat experience which strengthens our home, our personal spiritual epicenter. Introducing the festival of Chanukah in

*continued on page 8*

## The Fires of Chanukah and Havdalah

continued from page 7

the middle of Tractate *Shabbat* is a recognition that our national aspiration, that of perfecting the public thoroughfare, is only achievable when the private arena is reinforced. Conversely, when the Shabbat experience creates a permanent mindset—a withdrawal from the world community, an isolationist mindset—it becomes an obstacle to achieving the Divine agenda of *tikkun olam*, the purpose of the Chosen People.

The Center for the Jewish Future is at its core the celebration of the above ideals. Our mission is to convene the energies of Yeshiva University and RIETS to help shape, enrich and inspire the contemporary Jewish community: Our foci are three:

**Inspiring students to play leadership roles:** Over the past year, 1000 students participated in service learning programs. Most recently, through the Blanche Schreiber Torah Tours over Simchat Torah, we sent 420 students to 80 communities throughout North America and the United Kingdom. This summer 20 of our students ran summer programs for the teenagers of Yerucham and Dimona, development towns in Israel's south. These teenagers, who would have otherwise been on the street, grew in their own self esteem, were involved in intense English classes and saw Orthodox students who were not specifically involved in a kiruv agenda but were nevertheless wonderful role models of what it is to be an engaged observant Jew. This summer communities hosted summer kollelim in which over

70 of our students engaged with hundreds. In all of our programs the message we communicate to our students is their ability to be living lights, their ability to create positive energy in the Jewish world and society around us.

**Build, cultivate and support communities and their leadership:** This year we placed close to 100 rabbis and 48 rabbinic interns. Many in pulpits, as educators and administrators, and some in outreach positions. However, our responsibility does not end with placement. We continue to cultivate and support our alumni and communities. Over 125 rabbis have participated in our Yarchei Kallah. We have engaged in a formal mentoring program between 19 new rabbis with 12 senior rabbinic personalities. In the month of November and December 30 communities will gather with their rabbis and key lay leaders to explore ways in which they can learn to use their boards more effectively, inspire volunteers and strategically plan in these troubled economic times. All of this represents our ability to convene the energies of Yeshiva University to offer our community professionals and lay leaders the tools to create and strengthen communities to empower and support their constituents. These continuing educational opportunities allow our talmidim and alumni to be modern Maccabees, enabling them to create the spirit of Shabbat and Chanukah in the public and private thoroughfares of their communities.

### Create a Global movement that promotes the values of RIETS and Yeshiva University:

Katz YU Torah with its two million monthly hits, our Arbesfeld Kollel and Midreshet Yom Rishon, and Holiday To-Go Series represent the ideal of sharing the Torah of YU with the larger community. The new spiritual lights that we kindle include our recent establishment of three new kollelim and outreach centers in the United States: the establishment of the Yeshiva University Torah Mitzion Chicago Kollel, The South Florida Center for Jewish Life, the Jewish Study Network in which we are active partners in the San Francisco area, and our continued relationship with the Dallas community kollel. These initiatives allow our students to participate in wonderful spiritual incubators. The kollelim are nurtured by this collaborations of ideals found in Shabbat and Chanukah. They enable our students to keep growing in learning – continuing to experience the energy of Shabbat, while simultaneously giving them the opportunity to share their Torah and the Torah of our Yeshiva with the larger Jewish community, developing the energy of Chanukah.

As Jews, we are charged with the mission of bringing our light to the world. Following the teaching of Beit Hillel, we joyously confront the challenge of sharing our light in both the private and the public arenas through merging the spirit of Shabbat and the spirit of Chanukah. ■

## Chomer L'Drush

### Aharon's Chanukah: Ahavas Yisrael and Ahavas Hashem

continued from page 6

*Kohanim* are members of the family of Levi, who immediately answered Moshe's clarion call after the *Chet HaEgel*. The Gemara describes *Kohanim* as "*Zerizim*" (*Pesachim* 59b), as their love for Hashem and His mitzvos propels them to serve with alacrity. Perhaps Aharon felt disappointed that he too was not given an opportunity to express his *ahavas Hashem* and his desire to volunteer *korbanos*.

Here also, we can understand how the gift of the Chanukah menorah served as an appropriate consolation. The entire essence of the mitzvah of *hadlakas nerot Chanukah* is one of *ahavas Hashem* and volunteerism, as we will illuminate.

When the Gemara (*Shabbos* 21b) describes the mitzvah of *nerot Chanukah*, it provides three strata of

fulfillment: the basic *kiyum*, *mehadrin* and *mehadrin min hamehadrin*. This framework of various levels of *kiyum* (that exist beyond standard *hiddur mitzvah*) is unique in halacha. What is even more fascinating is that the Shulchan Aruch, when citing this halacha (O.C. 671:2) only records the level of *mehadrin min hamehadrin*. This demonstrates that the spirit of *mehadrin*, and the *ahavas Hashem* that it demonstrates, is essential to the mitzvah of *nerot Chanukah*. This understanding resolves the question of the *P'nei Yehoshua* (*Shabbos* 21b), who wonders why the original miracle of pure oil was needed at all if we know that "*tumah hutra b'tzibbur*" and the *Chashmonaim* could have used impure oil? The *Chashmonaim* were teaching us this lesson of *mehadrin*, of not relying on the

minimum requirement (of *tumah hutra b'tzibbur*) if it was possible to achieve a greater fulfillment. They wanted to be like the *Nesiiim*, like their ancestor Aharon Hakohen, and go beyond what was required of them. This notion, explains the *Beis Halevi* (*Al HaTorah, Drush Chanukah*), is why the *Chashmonaim* did not just create very thin wicks in order to sustain the small amount of oil, because: "The principle of the miracle was only for *hiddur mitzvah*."

These two qualities of Aharon Hakohen and the *Nesiiim*—unity and volunteerism—are key elements of the mitzvah of Chanukah. They can serve as an inspiration to all of us as we illuminate our lives with greater *ahavas Yisrael* and *ahavas Hashem*. ■



## Time to Light

Rabbi Shmuel Marcus  
Rosh Kollel, Yeshiva University - DRS Kollel

The Gemara in *Shabbos* (21b) tells us the mitzvah to light Chanukah candles begins “from when the sun sets” (*mishetishka hachama*). Rishonim differ with regard to the exact interpretation of this phrase, a dispute that directly impacts upon the practical ramifications of this Halacha. The Rambam (*Hilchos Chanukah* 4:5) rules that one must light at sunset (*im shekiasa*), not before and not later. This appears to be the understanding of the Vilna Gaon as well (*Biur Hagra Orach Chaim* 261:2), and Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach stated that the longstanding tradition of Yerushalayim follows this approach (see Eliyahu Goldberg, *Piskei Shemuos*, 84). The Brisker Rav checked the accuracy of his clock annually before Chanukah to ensure he would light precisely at sunset (Ibid.).

The Shulchan Aruch (*Orach Chaim* 672:1) writes that one lights at the end of the sunset process (*im sof shekiasa*), a phrase the *Magen Avraham* and the *Bach* understand as referring to nightfall (*tzeis hakochavim*).

This opinion appears earlier in the *Mordechai* (*Hagahos Mordechai* #455) who reasons that lighting beforehand accomplishes very little as the sun’s rays continue to provide ample light outside even after sunset until the dark of nightfall. The *Mordechai* further notes that the time between the start of sunset and nightfall is equivalent to four *mil* (commonly understood to be either 72 or 90 minutes as calculated in Israel on the equinox). This definition of nightfall accords with Rabbeinu Tam (cited in *Tosfos Shabbos* 35a sv. *trei*) and in fact, the Shulchan Aruch himself follows Rabbeinu Tam in this regard (*Orach Chaim* 261:2).

The Mishna Berurah (672:1), however, cites a number of Rishonim who present a third interpretation of the Gemara. They define *mishetishka hachama* as the completion of the first stage of sunset—3 ¼ *mil* after the beginning of sunset. Assuming an 18 minute *mil*, this means one lights at 58 ½ minutes after sunset.

Based on this analysis, Rabbi Dovid Bar Chaim argues in his *Kuntres Zeman Hadlakas Ner Chanukah* that there is no basis to light at nightfall as defined by the Vilna Gaon (approximately 25 minutes after sunset in New York City). Either one lights at sunset, or at nightfall as defined by Rabbeinu Tam, or at the slightly earlier time of 58 ½ minutes after sunset. In response, Rav Soriah Deblitzki (cited in Rav Eliyahu Schlesinger’s *Eila Hem Moadai* p. 67), justifies this practice as well, suggesting that once we define *mishetishka hachama* as nightfall, that definition can be used to refer to halachic nightfall even as defined by the Vilna Gaon.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (*Igros Moshe, Orach Chaim* 4:101) writes that one should ideally light 10 minutes after sunset but the candles should burn until at least one half hour after nightfall. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv also states that some light approximately 10 minutes after sunset to ensure we do not light before the actual halachic sunset (cited in *Piskei Shemuos* p. 85). The Chazon Ish lit his menorah approximately 20 minutes after sunset and explained that any earlier would be ineffective as there would still be ample light outside (*Piskei Shemuos* p. 86).

The obvious exception to this rule is Friday during Chanukah when one cannot light at sunset or later because it is Shabbos. The Shulchan Aruch therefore tells us (679:1) that we light Chanukah candles before lighting the Shabbos candles provided that it is already after *plag haminchah*. One must be sure to add enough oil to allow the candles to burn until at least one half hour after nightfall (*Mishan Berurah* 679:2). In addition, the Mishna Berurah recommends davening mincha before lighting the menorah if possible. ■



# The Marcos and Adina Katz YUTorah.org

A Project of Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future

**Daily Shiur • Daf Yomi • Parshat HaShavua • Halacha • History • Machshava • and much more!**

Over 20,000 shiurim and articles and growing every day. All materials available for download completely free. Subscribe to a podcast or e-mail subscription of your favorite speaker or series. There’s something for everyone on the largest web site for Jewish learning online.

# Musmakhim in the Limelight: Spreading the Light Through Community Kollelim



One observes that the focus of *Al Hanisim* greatly differs from the message of the Talmudic text *mai Chanukah*. While the latter exclusively relates the miracle of the oil, the former only addresses the military victory. Rabbi Baruch Halevi Epstein (*Baruch She'amar* pp. 145-146) discusses this question, which really pertains to Chanukah in general. He writes:

*“Why does Al Hanisim only deal with the miracle of the military victory and not the miracle of the oil? In Pirkei Avot (5:5) we read about ten daily miracles in the precincts of the Beit Hamikdash. The Talmud (Yoma 21b) mentions additional miracles to the ten listed. Why are these not listed in the Mishnah in Avot? The rabbis concluded that only the very public miracles were used in Pirkei Avot. We can apply the same rationale to Al Hanisim. Its authors focused on the military victory since it was more of a public miracle. The miracle of the oil was not known and witnessed by as many people, so it was removed. Why does the Talmud ignore the miracle of the military victory? Because, notes Rabbi Epstein, it is natural for Hashem to side with the underdog, as stated in Kohelet (ch. 3). The purpose of the Syrian decrees was to cause the Jews to forget the Torah. So the Talmud, which was written for scholars, stresses the continuity of Torah. But for the layman, the war was an easier concept to grasp.”*

The Aruch Hashulchan advances that Chanukah possesses elements that focus upon those *sh'kudim b'koteli beit Hamedrash* and, at the same time, those unlettered as well. Chanukah, it follows, is a festival dedicated simultaneously to *chizuk krovim* and *kiruv r'chokim*. We are mandated to open our windows and share the light that illuminates our lives. But we must be mindful to guard that which enters our home. The *chidush* of the *Bnei Yissoschor* - that we use oil for the mitzvah of *nerot Chanukah* since by nature it does not commingle with other liquids—also brings to the fore a theme of Chanukah.

There can be no more appropriate time than Chanukah to focus on our Yeshiva's formal endeavors of *kiruv* and *chizuk* in the tri-state area and especially beyond. The bulk of this publication focuses on those initiatives.

For this particular feature however, we identified three *musmakhim* who have graduated kollel initiatives, yet continue to be a part of them. **Rabbi Shaanan Gelman** '06R (RSG) was a kollel fellow in the Boca Raton Judaic Fellows Program, and accepted the position as rabbi of Kehillat Chovevei Tzion in Skokie, IL. In that capacity, he plays a major role in the newly-inaugurated Yeshiva University-Torah Mitzion Chicago Community Kollel. **Rabbi Maury Grebenau** '04R (RMG) spent two years as a fellow in the Community Kollel of Dallas. He then accepted teaching positions in the community and has remained in Dallas, teaching in the local Jewish schools. **Rabbi Joshua Strulowitz** '05R (RJS) served as program director and co-founder of Panim, a college outreach program, while studying at RIETS. Upon receiving semikhah, he joined TORCH, Torah Outreach Resource Center of Houston. Since 2005 he has served as rabbi of Congregation Adath Israel in San Francisco, and was integral in helping place RIETS fellows in the Jewish Study Network-San Francisco. The perspectives these young rabbonim possess make for a fascinating discussion of the dual nature of Chanukah and the goals of these communal initiatives.

### **CHAVRUSA: For you, what were your personal and professional goals in kollel? Did you accomplish your goals?**

**RJS:** My goals were to gain experience working in the Jewish community. My eventual goal was to enter the shul rabbinate, especially in a shul that was in community building mode. I wanted the opportunity to learn seriously for a few more years, while at the same time learning the ropes and getting comfortable in the role of teacher. I wanted to grow into the role without the immediate pressure and responsibility of being a shul rabbi. I also wanted to learn how an American Jewish community operates. To that point I had limited exposure to the different institutions that make up a Jewish community. My two years in the Houston kollel were invaluable to my professional growth, and I feel that I accomplished many of my desired goals.

**RSG:** With my mind set on going into the rabbinate, naturally I toyed with the idea of beginning my career as an assistant rabbi or a rabbinic intern.



Rabbi Shaanan Gelman

These opportunities would have provided me with ample training, but not the same variety and freedom as the kollel experience. I joined the Boca Raton Community Kollel with three primary objectives: to gain professional mentorship and pastoral training, to develop my teaching skills in

a wide array of venues, from high level education to entry level outreach work, and to be able to continue my Torah studies all at the same time. My goals were ambitious and at most times possible to achieve. Notwithstanding, the greatest challenge I faced was to be able to maintain the same level of dedication to personal growth while dedicating half of my time to the community. Ultimately, though, as I have discovered, the rabbinate presents the same exact challenges.

**RMG:** I was looking to transition from full-time learning into full-time teaching. Being involved in two different schools and a shul, in conjunction with the kollel, honed my time management skills and gave me a broad understanding of Jewish community. The Community Kollel of Dallas was structured to allow us to teach in the morning and then have a full seder of learning in the afternoon, which allowed me a significant portion of the day dedicated to my own learning and growth while also gaining classroom experience. The opportunity to teach on both the high school and middle school level, as well as give classes in the shul to

adults, all while still having a full seder of my own personal learning, was very important to me.

### **CHAVRUSA: Based on your experiences, what are some of the ingredients that make a successful community kollel?**

**RMG:** On the macro level, I think there needs to be a focus on communication amongst the kollelim. The challenges, programming ideas, and other aspect of the kollelim are shared issues. The other major issue would be that of recruitment and finding ways to facilitate, and even encourage, young *musmakhim* to participate in the kollelim. The kollel initiative should be an opportunity to gain experience and transition into a full-time position.

**RSG:** Provide the kollel rabbis with the freedom and the trust to be able to create their own “portfolios”. Young *musmakhim* join kollelim for many different reasons. It is advantageous to the entire institution if the rabbis function in a capacity that is akin to their natural calling.

**RJS:** From day one in San Francisco, I made it a priority to help bring a kollel to San Francisco. Every kollel is different, and every community is different. I think one of the most important things is for the kollel to clearly state what its goals are. To whom are they reaching out? Is it school based? Shul based? Outreach based? Too often people are scared of kollelim because they’re afraid that they will begin to take over existing institutions or create unnecessary competition. It’s very important that the kollel develops strong relationships and builds trust with existing institutions, and makes sure that it finds an untapped niche in the community to which it can claim ownership.



Rabbi Maury Grebenau

### **CHAVRUSA: What do you think the priorities of YU kollelim should be?**

**RSG:** Partnerships with local schools and local synagogues are essential toward the recognition and success of a community kollel.

**RJS:** It’s hard to fit kollelim into a box, because there are so many different types of kollelim based on the makeup of the community. I think some common priorities are to make sure that learning within the kollel is strong and that the kollel members serve as proper role models in the community. It can be difficult for the kollel members to be able to see themselves as role models. YU has a number of talented students who are well educated and worldly. In many ways YU is uniquely positioned to be influential in the world of kiruv. There does not need to be one type of kollel. YU can offer kollelim to help strengthen day schools and Modern Orthodox communities and, at the same time, work with unaffiliated Jews. The difficult part will be choosing in which communities kollelim should be inaugurated.

**RMG:** The goals and priorities of each kollel can, and probably should be, different but they must be made clear to candidates for the kollel and to the community at large. The structure and focus of the kollel members should clearly reflect the ideals of that community and kollel.

### **CHAVRUSA: What are your hopes for the community kollel in your city?**

**RMG:** The Community Kollel of Dallas has brought in a number of couples who have chosen to remain in Dallas either as full-time educators or in some capacity in the shul. I would hope that the kollel continues to draw vibrant YU *musmakhim* who will continue to enhance the level of Torah in the schools as well as the shul. There are many people who are interested in learning more about their Judaism and enriching their lives. A kollel can be instrumental in providing these types of opportunities. My hope is that the kollel in Dallas continues to be a place where Torah is presented in an animated way which remains true to our traditions.

**RJS:** In San Francisco we are looking for the kollel to do a little bit of everything. To work with the community and work together in building the community’s infrastructure. However, my main hope is that they will be able to reach out to the vast numbers of unaffiliated Jews in San

Francisco, and work towards connecting them in closer ways to *Yiddishkeit*. Plus, just having four young, frum, passionate couples living in our community will do wonders.

**RSG:** I hope to see the kollel distinguish itself as the premier institution for high-level Torah study and at the same time become the natural feeder for the next generation of Chicago’s educators and community leadership.

### **CHAVRUSA: What can YU and RIETS do to further promote kollelim and to help Jewish communities outside the tri-state area?**

**RMG:** A kollel can’t function without vibrant bnei Torah who are interested in making an impact outside of the tri-state area. The process of going “out of town” to one of the kollelim needs to be user friendly and easily fit into the *semikhah* process. The challenge is to encourage young graduates, and perhaps even *semikhah* students in their last year, to join kollelim, without compromising their own learning. RIETS can also be an important bridge in terms of prospective kollel members in the beis midrash and the administration of a kollel. Those organizing kollelim need to be informed about what they should be doing to attract the talent they are looking for.

**RJS:** I completely agree with Rabbi Grebenau. I think the most important thing is exposure. So few YU students know what it means to be in an out-of-town community, and the benefits of living in one. And I’m speaking about ba’alei batim as much as the RIETS students. As much as communities need rabbanim, they need talented and educated lay people, who can do so much for a community. To create a program where YU students would live in communities for a few years after graduation would be tremendous. I think that programs like the Aaron and Blanch Schreiber Torah Tours is a great start. Finding more and more ways to expose YU students to communities and to bring in community leaders to talk to students about their communities would be tremendously helpful.

**RSG:** Continue to function as a supporting and governing body, providing constant programming ideas and scholars, while at the same time, enable the development of individual kollelim based on their own unique circumstances, remembering that no two communities are identical. ■

### About the contributors

Born in Buffalo, NY and reared in the Bronx, **Rabbi Shaanan Gelman** earned a BS in computer science at Yeshiva College and Semikhah from RIETS. He spent three years studying in Israel, two at Yeshivat Hakotel and one at the Gruss Institute in Bayit Vegan. He was a kollel fellow in the Boca Raton Community Kollel, where he served as spiritual leader of the Elinore Lome Explanatory Service as well as held the Gimmelstob Chair in Education at the local Jewish federation. In 2006 he was hired as the inaugural rabbi of Kehillat Chovevei Tzion in Skokie, IL which has witnessed significant growth—from approximately 60 to 130 families. He is an active member of the Chicago Rabbinical Council as well as serving on the board of the Associated Talmud Torahs of Chicago. He and his wife Tziporah are the parents of Zerachya, Avraham, and Dalia.

**Rabbi Maury Grebenau** graduated from Yeshiva College, RIETS and the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration. He served as a fellow in the Dallas kollel for two years where he taught in Akiba Academy's middle school and the Yavneh Academy of Dallas High School. He also ran adult educational programming, gave shiurim and learned one-on-one with community members. Upon comple-

tion of his kollel tenure, he remained in Dallas and is currently in his second year as full-time faculty in the high school where he teaches Judaic studies, math, and handles Israel guidance for the boys. He is married to Malka (Meier). They have a one-and-a-half year old daughter Bayla.

**Rabbi Joshua Strulowitz** was raised in North Miami Beach, FL and graduated from Hillel Community Day School. He attended Yeshivat Reishit Yerushalayim in Jerusalem, and was graduated cum laude from Yeshiva College with a BA in Economics and received an award for excellence in Talmudic studies. While at YU he was program director and co-founder of Panim, a college outreach program. He then spent two years at YU's Gruss Institute in Jerusalem. He continued on to TORCH, a community kollel in Houston, TX where he taught numerous classes throughout the community including at NASA's Johnson Space Center. In September 2005 he began his post as rabbi of Congregation Adath Israel in the Sunset District of San Francisco, where he has helped revitalize and grow the community. In 2007, he worked with Yeshiva University and the Jewish Study Network to bring to San Francisco the Jewish Study Network-San Francisco, a community kollel of four couples. Rabbi Strulowitz and his wife Bethany have three young daughters.



Rabbi Josh Strulowitz

## The Community Kollel and American Jewish Life

By Rabbi Dr. Adam S. Ferziger

For the past five years I have been observing the emergence of the community kollel as a significant institution for disseminating Torah knowledge and strengthening Jewish identity within American Jewish life. Unlike its institutional predecessors, the community kollel is not geared solely toward enhancing the Torah scholarship of its core group of fellows. Rather, it is an Orthodox framework that is also dedicated to enriching the religious lives of other Jews within its geographic surroundings. Indeed, since the late 1980s it has evolved into an effective tool for attracting individuals toward increased Jewish learning that has traversed boundaries of denomination and affiliation.

While historical forerunners for the community kollel can be identified within turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup>-century Eastern Europe, the form that it has taken today has its roots in the early 1970s. The first kollels in America were founded during the 1940s by immigrants who were products of the Lithuanian yeshivas. They were often secluded physically from

the greater Jewish community, and were intended to allow advanced students to develop their Talmudic acumen without being exposed to the complexities of the world outside the yeshiva enclave. From a socio-ideological perspective, moreover, they served to cultivate a large cadre of individuals who were committed to Torah study and—unlike the “modernists”—did not idealize integration into the broader culture.

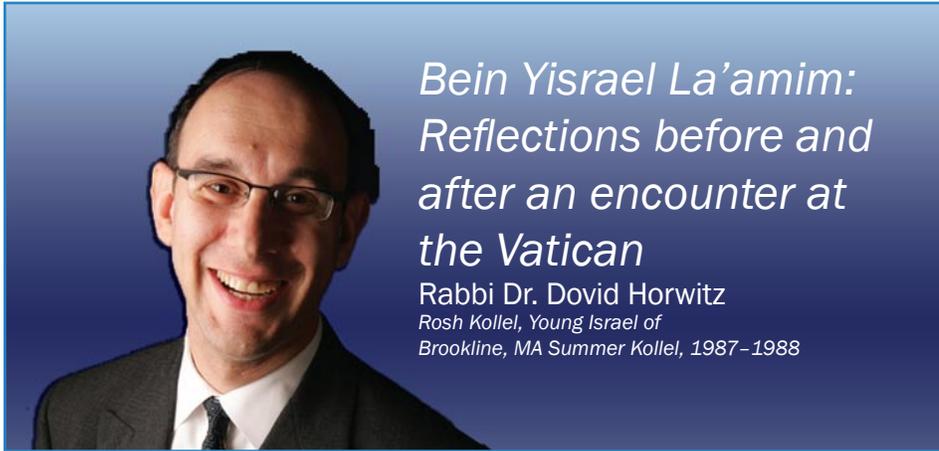
The early 1970s witnessed a new stage in the development of the kollel in America. The concept was expanded to include institutions whose express goal was to interact with the local Jewish surroundings and to consequently have a more direct influence upon them. “Community kollels” were established in neighborhoods that possessed a critical mass of observant Jews and existent Orthodox synagogues, but lacked a strong presence of learned individuals who were committed to rigorous halakhic observance. The aim was for a core group of advanced yeshiva students and their families to



settle in such locales in order to raise communal interest in Torah study and over time engender a transformation in the nature of local Orthodox Jewish life. Notable examples of such a model are the community kollels in Toronto, Chicago and Los Angeles.

A new era in the emergence of the American community kollel was inaugurated in the late 1980s,

*continued on page 16*



## Bein Yisrael La'amim: Reflections before and after an encounter at the Vatican

Rabbi Dr. Dovid Horwitz

Rosh Kollel, Young Israel of  
Brookline, MA Summer Kollel, 1987-1988

In 1986, Pinchas Peli published an article in *Ha-Doar'* about *Maran Ha-Rav* Joseph B. Soloveitchik, z"l, entitled "*Bein Brisk le-Boston*." Among the striking comments therein was an account of the conversation he had with the Rav and his wife in the mid 1960s, in which they attested that as a result of their childhood experiences (in Eastern Europe), they were both still filled with fear whenever they would encounter a priest (even in America). Today's young (Jewish) generation in America, the Rav continued, do not possess this instinctive aversion, and it is doubtful if it can ever be restored.

As a boy growing up in the late 1960s and 1970s in Queens, N.Y., and attending the YCQ (Yeshiva of Central Queens) elementary school, I certainly did not possess any fear of priests, be they Catholic or any other Christian denomination. Although my mother quite firmly instilled into my consciousness that I was and would forever be a proud Orthodox (and not Conservative or Reform) Jew, I possessed no hostility towards Catholics as such, whether as lay people or even as religious figures. Of course, in "real life," I had absolutely no contact with Catholics of any kind. (And in the course of my life, that fact really hasn't changed.) The only exception to this was a Mrs. Fitzpatrick, a retired ex-nurse (half Italian, half Irish, she told me) who lived all alone, and whom everyone on my mostly *frum* block in Kew Gardens Hills (except for my mother) shunned.

The newspapers and books I read, movies and television shows that I watched and my absorption of Modern Orthodox Jewish American culture of the time all served to reinforce the notion that although Christians in general and Catholics in particular were not Jewish and not part of "us," they were not, *per se*, "bad." When I saw the film "The Sound of Music," I watched the singing nuns who gave Julie Andrews moral support. And when I saw "Fiddler on the Roof," I noticed an entire group of nuns who

had come to see the Broadway show as well. Babe Ruth's Catholicism was prominently displayed in my favorite book, Bob Considine's "The Babe Ruth Story", and the narrative included moving depictions of figures such as Brother Mathias, who tried to make sure that the Babe would not permanently end up on the wrong side of the tracks and instead would remain a good Catholic. In fact, when I began to realize that America was primarily a WASP country, I decided that in the political context, *davka* Catholics and Jews in America had something in common. I loved the fact that John F. Kennedy was able to succeed where Al Smith had failed and had become the United States' first Catholic president. I fervently hoped that a Jewish president would eventually follow, and the Catholic example lent credence to the possibility that some day it might actually happen. When I learned that Italy, like Ireland, was an overwhelmingly Catholic country, I realized that many of my favorite ballplayers, such as Joe Pepitone, and movie actors, such as Lou Costello, were also Catholic. Even the hilarious Yankee broadcaster Phil "the Scooter" Rizzutto and the Indy 500 champion Mario Andretti were Italian-American Catholics!

When I visited my grandparents' house in North Williamsburg, Brooklyn, and the conversation eventually turned to politics (as it often seemed to do), it appeared that the local politicians favored by my grandfather, the rabbi of a local shul in the area, were almost all Catholic. Mario Procaccino, John Marchi, Mario Biaggi, anyone but the despised New York City Mayor John V. Lindsay, were all obviously Catholic. (I had long recognized that the marker of an Italian name was the vowel at the end.) As the late 60's turned into the early and mid-70's and discussions of Vietnam turned to arguments about Watergate, it seemed that some relatives of mine held a viewpoint later to be depicted in Jonathan Rieder's book "*Canarsie: the Jews*

and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism", and held that white Catholics could be perceived as allies of Jews.<sup>2</sup> In any event, the particular vicissitudes of New York City politics did not serve to cause me to obtain negative feelings about Catholics.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Moliere's comedy "Le bourgeois Gentilhomme" satirized the pretensions of a Monsieur Jordain, and in one of the funniest jokes of the play, he discovers that he has "been speaking prose his entire life, and didn't even know it!" I can carry his humorous conceit further. By the time I was in sixth grade in YCQ and started to learn more Gemara and Dinim, I also was starting to hear more about differences within the community of Orthodox Jews. I realized that not just a practical but a theoretical worldview distinguished those who, like my mother, accepted R. Moshe Feinstein's z"l's lenient position regarding halav stam in America and others, such as my Telz Yeshiva connected cousins from Cleveland, who did not. I also began to learn various Talmudic passages regarding idolaters. For my part, I was instinctively inclined to *poseq* like R. Menachem Ha-Meiri, who famously distinguished between the idolaters of Talmudic times and the Christians of his time and place, that is, 14<sup>th</sup> century Perpignan, in southern France. Moreover, I applied his *shitah* to 20<sup>th</sup>-century New York; I just didn't know that I was doing it!

There was one glaring exception to the benign attitude that I had absorbed, however, and that was the Pope. The first Pope I remember was Pope Paul VI. A year and a half after the Six Day War, in December 1968, Israel conducted a bombing raid in Lebanon and the Pope criticized Israel's behavior. "How dare the Pope criticize Israel!" exclaimed Mar Katz, my third grade Hebrew teacher at YCQ. "The Pope did nothing during the Holocaust, when six-and-a-half-million Jews were killed!" My mother would often criticize the Pope and the Vatican hierarchy as well. "Why won't the Pope simply recognize the State of Israel? Why won't he allow us to keep Jerusalem and the Kotel? Why does he constantly talk about the internationalization of Jerusalem?"

Primarily, I understood this not as a religious condemnation, but a political/national one. Even if the *reason* for the Vatican's stance was the Roman Catholic theological position as understood by the Pope, the *consequence* meant that the Vatican was simply in line with countries such as the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc, which had broken relations with Israel after the Six Day War, and the Arab countries, which were all aligned against Israel. The Jews have a right, as expressed in Tanach and in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the Balfour Declaration, to a state, and only *resha'im* would deny it to us. *Le-ma'aseh*, Pope Paul in my

mother's eyes (and my own) was another Aleksey Kosygin, the leader of the Soviet Union, who also directed sentiments against the State of Israel. Even the charge of moral hypocrisy that I inferred (how *dare* the Pope present himself as a moral leader when he can't *fahrginn* us Israel) seemed to be not so much an attack against the religious tenets of Catholicism but as an illustration of a severe and fatal moral, ethical flaw. At a certain point, however, as I began to learn more and more about the Crusades, the Inquisition, horrible crimes and horrendous false accusations that both uneducated people and prominent officials of the Church had hurled against the Jews over the years, I realized that the attacks against the Pope that I had heard were fundamentally exclamations of pain at the entire history of the attitude of the Catholic Church *vis-a-vis* the Jews. I still sharply distinguished, nonetheless, between the present day situation and "back then" in Europe. But when I heard the mention of "the Pope," it often seemed that the speaker, through the mere mention of his name, was transported back in time, to a period in which the Jews could not even take the existence of their lives for granted.

In my high school years at MTA, when I started to "get into learning" and especially in a camp I attended that was connected to the Telz Yeshiva, I came more and more in contact with other *frum* Jews whose entire world view, as it pertained to such issues as "how does one look at non-Jews," was vastly different than my own. I began to realize that many people did not share my intuitive assumptions at all. They certainly did not assume the Meiri's position. (At one point during my high school years I discovered the gloss in the Vilna edition of Bava Kamma that cited the Meiri's point that the Talmudic prescriptions against idolaters don't apply today. "Well, well, the Meiri 'discovered America!'")

During those years, I also wondered if the fact that historically, Polish Catholics might have been "worse" regarding the Jews than Italian Catholics had any ramifications today. My rudimentary knowledge of the Khmelnytsky massacres, and more fundamentally, the Holocaust, however, was balanced against my identification with the Eastern European "captive nations" held in the late 1970's under Leonid Brezhnev's thumb. Even here, my interest in contemporary politics acted as a brake against that tendency to "attack goyim" as well. The Poles (the people, but not the government!) should be applauded, I thought, for trying as best they could under rough conditions as a satellite of the Soviet Union. I was impressed by the election of the "Polish Pope" in 1978, and cheered Lech Walesa and the Solidarity movement.

When I served as the rabbinic advisor to the Yeshiva University honors group travelling in Italy this past summer, and I met numerous Italian Catholics in Italy, all these memories came back to me. In this vein, I would like to share one vignette, concerning an event that took place at the Vatican Museums. (I ruled that the group could enter the museum but *not* the Sistine Chapel.)

**"For my part, I was instinctively inclined to *poseq* like R. Menachem Ha-Meiri, who famously distinguished between the idolaters of Talmudic times and the Christians of his time and place ... Moreover, I applied his *shitah* to 20<sup>th</sup> century New York."**

I have long realized that "museum guides" often don't know much more than the material on the index cards they have only partially memorized. (My favorite story on that score is the art museum guide in Chicago, who, when told that Marc Chagall was born in Vitebsk, replied, "Wrong! He was born in Russia!") At the Vatican Museums, we dutifully began to put on our earphones, so we could listen to the guide. She started by saying, "Shut down your cell phones! Having cell-phones on when you don't need to is bad for the environment and this destruction is the real Holocaust, worse than any other!"

*What?* I had just heard something bizarre, but I just ignored it. I noticed some of the members of the group also had a quizzical expression on their faces. Then, she mentioned something (I don't recall exactly) about the Jews in Italy at the time of the Roman Empire, and how the Christian message of salvation was an attempt to provide real eternal life for everyone. *What was going on here*, I wondered. *We're supposed to be hearing a historical lecture! She obviously realizes we're Jews! Does she feel on "obligation" to remind us of our "blindness?"* A few minutes later, she started to talk about gravestones and catacombs. She mentioned that the figure of the swastika can be found on several of them. But then she continued. "The swastika really is a symbol of life—not of death! All civilizations have symbols that can be used

for life or for death. Jews also have symbols of death. The swastika is really for life."

*What was that all about? This is becoming insane!* I finally spoke up and said something along the following lines. "The Jews didn't kill six million people, but the Nazis who wore swastikas on their uniforms *did!* They put Jewish men, women and children into ovens and burned them to death! For the Jews that were killed, the swastika of the Nazi murderers certainly was a symbol of death! What are you talking about?"

The tour guide (some tour this was turning out to be!) immediately responded, "I'm not prejudiced against Jews! Why, my family cried when the maid in our relatives' house was taken away."

Luckily, Professor John Hogan, who accompanied us on our tour, convinced the guide to "take another group" as "we could manage by ourselves." We concluded the rest of the tour of the Vatican *sans* earphones, and *sans* the obnoxious tour guide.

Following our return to New York, I reflected upon the incident. The accumulation of all those gratuitous comments certainly made it reasonable to construe the tour guide's comments as anti-Semitic. She simply seemed to have a compulsion to make nasty remarks to the obviously Jewish group she had the misfortune to lead, remarks that she surely knew would be offensive. On the other hand, she seemed genuinely unlike any other non-Jew we met and talked to in Italy. In fact, the general impression I received of the population in Italy was that of people who were formally Catholic but not substantively religious, although this was perhaps a result of previous reading about Italians and an assumption that what I saw fortified what I had read. But at the end of the day, the only anti-Semite we encountered on the tour was connected to the Vatican, and by way of association, to the Pope. I wondered if she was in any sense a personally religious Catholic. I had no way of knowing, but somehow, it seemed fitting that *davka* in the Vatican, the home of the Pope, someone would make malicious comments to a group of Jews regarding the swastika and regarding "other, 'real' holocausts."

Yet in an unexpected way, the "tour guide from hell" seemed to confirm the distinction that I absorbed from my mother between contemporary Americans who happen to be Catholic and "the Pope." We thank God that we live in the United States of America, where anti-Semitism is rare, and is not a real factor in our lives. We must never forget, however, that even today, 40-plus years after Vatican II, there are still some people that will simply resent Jews, in the final analysis, because we are still here. Some of

them, at least, are connected to the Catholic Church (although we can certainly hope that their number is diminishing). And there is no getting around the fact that the world center of Catholicism, the home of the Pope, is the Vatican. But we, the Jewish people, are still here, after the Crusades, after the Inquisition, after the Holocaust, and we stand proud! And we pray for the complete fulfillment of the prophecy

of Ezekiel, that there shall be even more Jews in the future, all worshipping God in the land of Israel:

*Thus said the L-RD God: Moreover, in this I will respond to the House of Israel and act for their sake: I will multiply their people like sheep. As Jerusalem is filled with sacrificial sheep during her festivals, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. And they shall know that I am the L-RD (Ezekiel 36:37-38). ■*

## Footnotes

1. *Ha-Do'ar*, Vol. LXX, #36, 1 Elul 5747 (Sept, 1986), pp. 3-7. (The article, of course, was written in Hebrew. The relevant passage can be found on the bottom of p. 6.)
2. Jonathan Rieder, "Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn against Liberalism" (Cambridge, Mass., 1985).

## The Community Kollel and American Jewish Life

*continued from page 13*

when "kiruv" or "outreach" kollels were founded by graduates of the Lithuanian-style yeshivas with the express purpose of addressing nonobservant and unaffiliated North American Jews. Not long after, in 1994, another community kollel initiative known as Torah MiTzion (Torah from Zion, henceforth TMZ) was founded through a partnership between American Modern Orthodox communities and Israeli religious Zionist yeshivas. Groups of Israeli yeshiva graduates were brought to American locales for one or two years, together with a more seasoned Israeli Talmud instructor, to buttress the efforts of the local rabbinical and educational staffs. In 1997, Rabbi Kenneth Brander opened a Modern Orthodox community kollel in Boca Raton which was staffed primarily by RIETS graduates. This was YU's first involvement in the community kollel movement and serves as a model for some of the more recent initiatives being advanced by its Center for the Jewish Future (CJF).

This third stage is marked by a proliferation in numbers. In the course of this expansion, additional sub-types of community kollels have spun-off that integrate aspects of both the kiruv kollel and TMZ, and respond to some of the deficiencies that have been identified in each.

In accounting for the emergence of the new community kollels, attention should be paid to the influence of both internal developments within American Judaism, as well as broader themes in American society in general and specifically American religion. The increase since the 1980s in collective confidence, economic strength and manpower of the Haredi (non-hasidic yeshiva world) wing of American Orthodoxy, has allowed for a lowering of the defense walls that were set up in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to neu-

tralize any possible contamination that might come from intense involvement with nonobservant Jews. Concurrently, heightened concern by almost all Jewish parties over the dramatic rise of intermarriage rates among North American Jews has led to greater receptivity to any efforts to stem radical assimilation that has transcended denominational lines. The new community kollels, which emphasize individual intellectual interaction and development, have arisen as well in light of an American context that has been characterized as suffering from a "bowling alone" syndrome that focuses on the self rather than collective involvement, while simultaneously celebrated as a "generation of seekers" on a continual quest for spiritual meaning. A certain degree of affinity can also be identified between the new community kollels that offer an alternative to the large community synagogue center and the increasing trend toward "small group" worship within American religion as an alternative to the mega-house of worship culture of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

There are three areas that distinguish the community kollel from other banner institutions within Jewish life and illustrate its unique potential for addressing the intellectual and spiritual proclivities of contemporary Jewry. First, as opposed to a formal school or yeshiva that demands a great deal of infrastructure to function, the initial "start-up" costs and bureaucratic hurdles entailed in establishing a kollel are relatively low. Second, unlike the synagogue that is anchored by collective prayer and ritual, community kollels concentrate on study and the personal development of the individual. Finally, due to its cohesive staff and informal nature, it has the flexibility to adjust quickly to the ever-evolving environments of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Community kollels influence their surroundings both by increasing the numbers of local Jews who are involved directly in Torah study and introducing them to a cadre of young and idealistic families that are devoted to Jewish continuity and values. The communities who sponsor such kollels stand the opportunity to enrich the overall quality of their Jewish environments and possibly add quality manpower to their local institutions as well. For such scenarios to come to fruition, however, it is imperative that they see the kollels as long-term investments and create appropriate vehicles for sustaining and evaluating them.

The families who choose to dedicate themselves for a few years to such environments are treated to a unique opportunity. They are able to continue their own religious/intellectual developments, and in parallel hone their skills as disseminators of Torah, and explore the possible environments in which their abilities can best be utilized. YU is to be applauded for promoting the establishment of community kollels that are manned by its graduates. It is hoped they will serve as effective vehicles for inculcating the vitality and dynamism that have characterized YU over the last few years within the broader American Modern Orthodox spectrum. ■

*Rabbi Dr. Adam S. Ferziger (YC, BRGS, RIETS, 5750-1990) is the Gwendolyn and Joseph Straus Fellow and vice chairman of the Graduate Program in Contemporary Jewry, at Bar-Ilan University. He is the author, among others, of "Exclusion and Hierarchy: Orthodoxy, Nonobservance and the Emergence of Modern Jewish Identity" (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005). Since 2003, he has published numerous studies that address the development of the American community kollel.*

## We gratefully acknowledge those who participate in the RIETS CJF Kollel Initiatives around North America

YU Torah Mitzion Kollel of Chicago • Jewish Study Network, San Francisco • DRS Kollel, Woodmere, NY • Jewish Center Kollel, New York, NY • South Florida Center for Jewish Leadership and Learning • RAMAZ (Men's and Women's Program), New York, NY • The Frisch School (Men's and Women's Program), Paramus, NJ

### Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future Department of Community Initiatives.

**Rabbi Kenneth Brander** Dean • **Rabbi Aaron Leibowitz** Director • **Phil Moskowitz** Program Manager

### Roshei Kollel

**Rabbi Reuven Brand** Chicago • **Rabbi Avi Leibowitz** San Francisco  
**Rabbi Shmuel Marcus** DRS • **Rabbi Yehuda Willig** Jewish Center

### Executive Directors

**Phil Karesh** Chicago • **Rabbi Shaye Guttenberg** San Francisco • **Rabbi David Gutterman** South Florida

### Kollel Fellows

**Esti Arfe** RAMAZ • **Rabbi Noah Baron** Chicago • **Rabbi Avi Billet** South Florida • **Michael Borenstein** Frisch • **Rabbi Mendel Breitstein** Chicago • **Yocheved Brody** RAMAZ • **Joshua Brown** Jewish Center • **Noach Chesis** Jewish Center • **Rabbi Joshua Flug** South Florida • **Daniel Fridman** Jewish Center • **Rabbi Yaakov Gibber** South Florida • **Zev Goldberg** Jewish Center • **Ezra Goldschmidt** DRS • **Saul Haimoff** RAMAZ • **Marc Herman** Jewish Center • **Yishai Hughes** RAMAZ • **Rabbi Aaron Leibtag** Chicago • **Mira Leifer** Frisch • **Darren Levin** Frisch • **Josh Marder** San Francisco • **Yoni Posnick** DRS • **David Pri Chen** Chicago • **Yosef Schwartz** Chicago • **Aaron Segal** Chicago • **Michael Shteiglitz** Chicago • **Jonathan Spier** Frisch • **Irit Sterling** Frisch • **Efrayim Unterman** Frisch • **Tzvi Urkowitz** RAMAZ • **Ira Wallach** Chicago • **Chezky Wasser** DRS • **Dave Weinberg** DRS • **Zvi Weiss** Jewish Center • **Matan Wexler** RAMAZ • **Moshe Winograd** DRS • **Simcha Willig** Jewish Center • **Ephraim Zlotnick** DRS

We also proudly salute the more than 80 Yeshiva University faculty and students who participated in the successful summer kollelim across North America this past summer. Chicago Summer Kollel • Denver Summer Kollel • Edmonton Summer Kollel • LA Summer Kollel • Passaic Summer Kollel • Teaneck Summer Kollel and Women's Beit Midrash Program • Toronto Summer Kollel



Publications

**Rabbi Dr. Bernhard Rosenberg '74R** has published a revised and expanded edition of his book "Public Speaking: A Guide for Study (2008). The new edition contains chapters on motivation and leadership as well as interview techniques. Dr. Rosenberg is teaching Communication at Sy Syms School of Business.

**Rabbi Dr. Charles A. Spirn '51R** on the publication of his book "Prayer in the Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau."

**Rabbi Dr. Bernhard Rosenberg '74R** lead and appeared in a post-show discussion of "The Quarrel," a play by David Brandes and **Rabbi Joseph Telushkin '73R**.

**Rabbi Mitchell Wohlberg '68R** on the publication of his book, "Pulpit Power: Meaningful Sermons on Religion & Politics ... and Life."

"Melting Pot: Embarking on Israel's Seventh Decade with Spiritual and Savory Servings" by Dafi Forer Kremer features some rabbinic alumni as contributors, such as: **Rabbi Hershel Billet '74R**; **Rabbi Chaim Brovender '65R**; **Rabbi Yehoshua Fass '98R**; **Rabbi Elazar Muskin '81R** and **Rabbi Dr. Shlomo Riskin '63R**. President Richard M. Joel of Yeshiva University is also a featured essayist.

Mazal Tov

**Rabbi Dr. Howard '03R and Naomi Apfel** on the marriage of their daughter Avigail to Baruch Zvi, son of Rabbi Hanoach and Aidel Teller, of Jerusalem.

**Rabbi Sol '78R and Nicole Appleman** on the birth of their grandson, Aryeh Moshe Brandler.

RIETS Student **Yoni and Elana Ausebel** on birth of their daughter, Meira Rivkah.

**Rosh Yeshiva Rabbi Assaf '97R and Leora Bednarsh** on the birth of their son, Yechiel Yaakov.

**Rabbi Richard '78R and Lois Bieler** on the marriage of their daughter Aviva to Yair Oppenheim.

**Rabbi Dovid '01R and Michal Bistricher** on the birth of their son, Ezra Yehuda.

**Rabbi Yaakov '96R and Sarah Blau** on the birth of their daughter, Meira Tova. Mazal tov to grandparents **RIETS Mashgiach Ruchani Rabbi Yosef '61R and Dr. Rivka Blau**.

RIETS student **Chaim and Leora Blumenthal** on the birth of their son, Elimelech.

**Rabbi Aaron '59R and Pearl Borow** on the marriage of their grandsons — Chaim Zimmerman to Zivia Nudell and Uri Zimmerman to Dina Levy.

**Rabbi Reuven '04R and Shira Boshnack** upon the birth of their daughter, Nechama.

RIETS student **Yitzchak and Adina Brand** on the birth of their son, Yehuda.

**Rabbi Nasanayl '00R and Tamar Braun** on the birth of twins, Talia Chana and Shai Adin.

**Rabbi Chaim '82R and Susie Casper** on the marriage of their son Eliezer to Deanna Frazin of Buffalo Grove/Skokie, IL.

**Rabbi Erez '08R and Debra David** on the birth of their daughter, Bracha.

**Rabbi Asher and Melissa Dordek** on the birth of their daughter, Sophiya.

**Rabbi Chaim '00R and Aliza Eisenstein** on the birth of their son, Shlomo Zalman. Rabbi Eisenstein is a magid shiur at the Gruss Kollel.

**Rabbi Shaul Epstein '07R** on his marriage to Sara Libby Robinson.

RIETS student **David Federgrun** on his marriage to Tispy Degani.

**Rabbi Yaacov '06R and Aliza Feit** on the birth of their son, Akiva Menachem.

**Rabbi Baruch '84R and Alissa Felberman** on the marriage of their daughter Zahava to Chaim Solomon of Har Nof.

**Rabbi Daniel '98R and Leah Feldman** on the birth of their daughter, Miriam Menuchah. And to the grandparents, **Rabbi Mordechai '72R and Shayndel Feuerstein**.

**Rabbi Mordy '05R and Limor Friedman** upon the birth of their son, Yedidya Ariel.

**Rabbi Menachem '73R and Soroh Genack** upon the marriage of their son Yitzi to Shoshana Adler.

**Rabbi Sheldon '71R and Zelda Goldsmith** in honor of the birth of their granddaughter, Shoshana Rochel, born to Yael and Raphael Treitel and also the birth of their grandson, Yechiel Meir Goldsmith, born to Shaya and Laya Goldsmith.

**Rabbi Simcha '62R and Marge Green** on the marriage of their granddaughter Eliana Judas to Boaz Meyersdorf in June.

**Rabbi Yonah '06R and Chava Gross** of Phoenix, AZ on the birth of their son, Tuvia Aharon.

**Rabbi Dr. Joel Hecker '90R and Dr. Frani Pollack** on the birth of their son, Hanina Ro'i, in December 2007.

RIETS student **David and Ariella Hellman** on the birth of their son, Tuvia Elisha.

**Rabbi William '55R and Sylvia Herskowitz**, on the bar mitzvah of their grandson David Herskowitz and on the marriage of their grandson Ari Katz to Shari Sperling.

RIETS student **Yair Hinden** on his marriage to Talia Wiesen of Teaneck.

**Rabbi Howard '92R and Malca Jachter** on the birth of their son, Hillel.

**Rabbi Alan '76R and Sandy Kalinsky** upon the birth of their granddaughter, Shira Nechama, to their children **Rabbi Yosef '03R and Elisheva Kalinsky**; on the birth of a granddaughter, Shayna Rina, to Eli and Elissa Slomnicki; and on the marriage of their daughter Michal, to Yoni Frankel of Teaneck, NJ.

**Rabbi Martin '75R and Yaffa Katz** on the marriage of their daughter, Chevie, to Moshe Friedman of Baltimore, MD. Also to Chevie's grandparents, **Rabbi Dr. E. Yechiel '55R and Natalie Simon**.

**Rabbi Aryeh '05R and Estee Lightstone** on the birth of their son, Akiva Yisrael.

**Rabbi Elie '07R and Rebecca Mischel** on the birth of their daughter, Esther Emunah.

**Rabbi Moshe '75R and Vivian Neiss** on the marriage of their son Jeremy to Alison Leventhal of Harrison, NY.

**Rabbi Eli '04R and Zemira Ozarowski** on the birth of their daughter Ahuva Shoshana in Yerushalayim.

**Rabbi Gary '68R and Ann Pollack** on the birth of twin granddaughters, Meira Raina and Leah Neuman, born to Heshy and Liba Neuman.

**Rabbi Dani '03R and Ayala Rockoff** on the birth of their son, Shimon Yaakov "Shai."

**Rabbi Bernard '59R and Evelyn Rothman** on the birth of a granddaughter born to their children, Avraham and Miriam Rothman.

RIETS student **Benji and Aliza (Brand) Rubin** on the birth of their daughter, Meira Genende.

**Rabbi Menachem '78R and Rina Schrader** on the birth of a grandson in Yerushalayim.

**Rabbi Yerachmiel and Sheera Seplowitz** on the marriage of their daughter Malka to Gavriel Rudin of Passaic, NJ.

**Rabbi Aaron and Danielle Shapiro** on birth of their daughter.

**Rabbi Moshe '98R and Atara Silverstein** on the birth of their son, Shabsai Yehuda.

**Rabbi Dr. E. Yechiel '55R and Natalie Simon** on the birth of a grandson, Avrumi Katz, to their children Bina and Yitzi Katz of Jerusalem.

**Rabbi Yitzchak '56R and Fay Sladowsky** on the birth of a great grandson, Akiva Menachem, to their grandchildren Leby and Eli Weissman.

**Rabbi Yitzchak '56R and Fay Sladowsky** on the birth of their great grandson, Yehoshua Menachem, to their grandchildren, **Rabbi Gary '08R and Leba Guttenberg**. Also to great-uncles **Rabbi Shlomoh '80R and Sherry Krupka** and **Rabbi Moshe '87R and Chashi Krupka** as well as the uncle, RIETS Student **Shaye and Dina Guttenberg**.

**Rabbi Adam '02R and Talya Starr** on the birth of their son, Adin Avraham.

**Rabbi Raymond Sultan '06R** on his marriage to Ora Klein of Oceanside, NJ.

**Rabbi Fabian '52R and Ruth Schonfeld** (grandparents) and **Rabbi Ephraim '76R and Aidel Buchwald** (parents) on the marriage of Shira Schonfeld (daughter of Yael and Perry Schonfeld) to Naftali Buchwald.

**Rabbi Lawrence '93R and Nehama Teitelman** on the birth of twins, Temima Etta and Binyamin.

RIETS student **Yehuda and Ilana Turetsky** on the birth of their son, Chaim Moshe.

**Rabbi Neil '83R and Laura Turk** on the marriage of their son Yitzy to Talia Goldberg.

RIETS student **Jay and Sharon Weinstein** on the birth of their son, Ayal Gershon.

**Rabbi Nathan and Leah Weiss** on the birth of a great grandson. Also on the marriage of their grandson, Avraham Yaakov Sherer to Meira Lerner of Ramat Beit Shemesh.

**Rabbi Yaakov '02R and Tova Werblowsky** on the birth of their son, Eliyahu Mayer.

**Rabbi Howard '77R and Annette Wolk** on the birth of a granddaughter, Miriam Avigayil to their children, **Rabbi Akiva and Rachel Wolk**.

**Rabbi Joel '86R and Donna Zeff**, Rosh Yeshiva and dean of Yeshivat Torat Yosef - Hamivtar of Ohr Torah Stone Institutions in Israel, on the birth of identical twin grandsons, Eyal and Adi.

**Rabbi Mordecai '62R and Charlotte Zeitz** on the birth of a granddaughter Tikvah Malkah in Bet Shemesh, Israel, born to their children Aviva and Joey Sabet.

Rabbis Meyer Fendel, Sholom Gold, **Macy Gordon '56R, James Gordon '48R, Yeshaya Heisler '46R**, and Nachman Kahana on being honored as founders of the Council of Young Israel Rabbis (CYIR) in Jerusalem. In addition to the founders, Rabbi Simcha Krauss, **Rabbi Chanoch Yeres '80R**, and Dr. Lorell Blass will be honored for their leadership of CYIR programs that have become the hallmark of its activities.

## Condolences

**Rabbi Aharon '58R and Lolet Batt** on the loss of their grandson Yonadav Haim Hirshfeld, 19, of Kochav Hashahar in the Yeshiva Mercaz Harav terrorist attack.

The Cohen family on the loss of **Rabbi Eugene Cohen '42R**.

**Rabbi Dovid Gottlieb '01R** of Baltimore, MD on the loss of his grandmother.

**Rabbi Joel Grossman '83R** on the loss of his mother, Ruth Grossman.

**Rabbi Yaakov Heisler '43R, Rabbi Yeshaya Heisler '46R**, and Reuven "Ruby" Heisler on the loss of their sister, Dorothy Ciment.

**Rabbi Herbert Horowitz '68R** on the loss of his wife, Rita.

**The Ivry family** on the loss of E. Billi Ivry. Ms. Ivry, the first woman to be elected as a member of the Yeshiva University Board of Trustees, passed away at the age of 102. Ms. Ivry established the Rivka Ivry Student Center/Bet Kneset and the Israel Isaac Ivry Beit Midrash at the Jerome and Geraldine Schottenstein Residence Hall on the Wilf Campus. She recently dedicated a special wall in the Lea and Leon Eisenberg Beit Midrash at Stern College. At RIETS, a kollel fellowship was established both in her name and in the names of her parents, Rebecca & Israel Isaac Ivry.

**Rabbi Lowell Kronick '70R** on the loss of his father, Julius Kronick.

**Rabbi Yoni Mozeson '80R** on the loss of his father, **Rabbi Leon Mozeson '47R**.

The Rose family on the loss of **Rabbi Dr. Issac B. Rose '42R**.

Elizabeth Small on the loss of her husband, **Rabbi Leon Feldman '48R**, former member of the graduate faculty at Yeshiva University.

## RIETS-CJF Augment Kollel Initiatives

*continued from page 5*

Manhattan, and summer kollelim in seven communities across North America.

Now in its sixth year, the Dallas Community Kollel, in partnership with Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future, remains committed to teaching Torah to the broader Dallas community. Under the leadership of Rabbi Ari Perl '00R, Rabbi of Congregation Shaare Tefilla, and RIETS musmakim Rabbi Jay Weinstein '08R and Rabbi Joe Hirsch '07R, the Kollel is uniquely positioned to focus its work on reinforcing and enriching the Torah Umadda affiliated communities of the Shaarei Tefillah community, the parent and student body of Yavneh Academy, and, in partnership with the local federation and other local Jewish agencies, promoting Jewish literacy and education among the unaffiliated community.

Locally, CJF - RIETS administer school kollelim in Ramaz, the Frisch School and DRS. Rabbi Shmuel Marcus serves as Rosh Kollel at the D.R.S. kollel, Rabbi Jay Goldmintz '81R mentors the fellows at the RAMAZ kollel and Mrs. Shainy Zudick, a principal at the Frisch school, who serves as the educational mentor for the Frisch kollel fellows. The goal of these kollelim is to expose high school students to the enthusiasm and warmth of RIETS students and to provide RIETS students with meaningful exposure to Jewish education. YU students serve as ambassadors embedded within New York's leading Yeshiva high schools. They have the opportunity to serve as role models for the high school students and are viewed by the schools' administration and faculty as an integral part of the educational and spiritual growth of the students. In turn, the YU students are mentored by leading figures in Jewish education and have the opportunity to experience education hands-on.

In addition, CJF and RIETS operate a kollel in the Jewish Center. Students in the Jewish Center kollel follow the Katz kollel curriculum under the guidance of Rabbi Hershel Schachter '67R and Jewish Center Rosh Kollel Rabbi Yehuda Willig '06R. The kollel fellows at the Jewish Center serve on the rabbinic staff of the synagogue, receive personal attention which helps nurture them as young talmidei chachamim, and deliver chaburot.

In addition, students involved in school kollelim have the ability to fulfil their Azrieli student-teaching credits and receive fourth-year shimush from RIETS.

## Summer Kollelim

This summer, more than 70 Yeshiva University undergraduate and RIETS students and YU rabbinic faculty brought the spirit and values of YU to communities across North America through its seven distinctive summer kollel programs. Created in partnership with local rabbis and lay leaders, the kollelim enriched communities through a variety of exciting classes and educational programming, while developing the leadership and teaching skills of kollel participants. The kollelim, which took place in Los Angeles, Chicago, Denver, Passaic, Teaneck, Toronto and Edmonton, Canada, also proved a valuable opportunity for its members to harness their creativity under the guidance and mentorship of Roshei Kollel, CJF staff, and expert rabbis. The communities benefit by experiencing the vast resources of Yeshiva University in their own back yard.

## Toronto

Looking forward, CJF and RIETS are excited to expand their vision of a "yeshiva without walls" with the September 2009 launch of a new full-time kollel in Toronto, Canada. Having recently seen an influx of YU programming, the Toronto community has rallied around the idea for a kollel, and under the leadership of Mr. Mo Lidsky, national director of Canadian operations of Yeshiva University, and president of the Canadian Board, Mr. Eli Rubinstein, over \$2.5 million dollars has already been raised to support the full time kollel. Recruitment for the kollel will begin in December followed by a complete kollel launch in September 2009.