

From the HEART



JUNE 2006 / TAMMUZ 5766

NO. 3

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THE MITZVAH TO WRITE A SEFER TORAH

Rabbi Yaakov Rapoport – Rosh HaYeshiva

The Rambam in *Hilchos Sefer Torah* (7:1) rules: “It is positive commandment incumbent on each and every Jew to write for himself a *Sefer Torah*. Even if a person has inherited a *Sefer Torah* he still has to write his own *Sefer Torah*. If he does not know how to write a *Sefer Torah* he must arrange that someone who does know should write it for him. Anyone who corrects a *Sefer Torah*, even if he only corrects one letter in the *Sefer Torah*, is considered to have written an entire *Sefer Torah*.”

The *Minchas Chinuch* (*Mitzvah* 613) comments that based on the Rambam’s ruling that if one inherits a *Sefer Torah* he has not fulfilled the *Mitzvah* of writing a *Sefer Torah*. One can assume that the Rambam maintains that so too if one purchased a written *Sefer Torah* he would not fulfill the *Mitzvah* of writing a *Sefer Torah* because seemingly there is no logical reason to differentiate between inheriting a *Sefer Torah* and purchasing a *Sefer Torah*. *Minchas Chinuch* adds that this is also apparent from the very language of the Rambam who does not suggest that someone who does not know how to write a *Sefer Torah* has the option of purchasing!

However the *Achronim* point out that the *Minchas Chinuch*’s understanding of the Rambam seemingly contradicts that which the Rambam himself writes in his *Sefer Hamitzvos* (*Mitzvas Aseh* 19) “If a person cannot write a *Sefer Torah* he should purchase one or hire someone to write a *Sefer Torah* for him”

One could perhaps explain the *Minchas Chinuch*’s understanding of the Rambam’s rulings in reference to purchasing a *Sefer Torah* in the following manner. A thorough reading of the *Chinuch*’s understanding of the com-

mandment to write a *Sefer Torah* (as explained by the *Chinuch* in *Mitzvah* 613) results in the following conclusion: The *Chinuch* is of the opinion that the *Mitzvah* to write a *Sefer Torah* is for two functions: 1) Every individual should have in his possession a *Sefer Torah* as a text to study. 2) It is important to increase the number of *Torah* scrolls that exist in the world.

If we accept the *Chinuch*’s hypothesis of the dual function of the *Mitzvah* to write a *Sefer Torah* it would appear that if one inherited or purchased an existing *Sefer Torah* he has fulfilled the first function of the *Mitzvah* to write a *Sefer Torah* for in the final analysis he now has in his possession a text that he can study but he has not fulfilled the second function because he has not increased the number of *Torah* scrolls existing in the world.

However it would appear that there is a way in which a person can purchase a *Sefer Torah* and yet also fulfill the second function of the *Mitzvah* to write a *Sefer Torah* i.e. to increase the number of *Torah* scrolls in the world and that would be if he purchased a *Sefer Torah* from someone who writes *Sifrey Torah* professionally to sell them for in such a situation the writer is not selling his personal *Sefer Torah* but is selling a *Sefer Torah* that was written to be sold (*Shaarey Teshuvah* Y.D. 270:).

If we assume that the Rambam in *Sefer Hamitzvos* who writes that if a person cannot write a *Sefer Torah* he should purchase one is referring to purchasing a *Sefer Torah* which was written to be sold then this will not constitute a contradiction to the ruling of the Rambam in *Hilchos Sefer Torah* where the Rambam is referring to purchasing a *Sefer Torah* from someone who had his own personal *Sefer Torah* which is no different from inheriting a *Sefer Torah*.

From the desk of the Executive Director

Dear Friends, Parents, and Alumni,

On behalf of the yeshiva I hope that you all had a happy and restful Pesach. For those of you who attended the Yeshiva's first annual dinner I am sure that you are all still talking about it like we are in yeshiva. It was most certainly a night to remember. It was gratifying to see all of our hard work over the past few months, not to mention the past few years, paid off. We are still getting e-mails and phone calls about how the dinner made a lasting impression of our yeshiva on the many people who attended and we thank you.

As the academic year is coming to a close we are full speed ahead with enrollment for the upcoming year. I can report, that our new applications are up 65% this year compared to May 2005. This is due to Rabbi Lopian's increased pinpointed recruiting efforts combined with the yeshiva's gaining popularity amongst American students this year.

We are looking forward to an increased student body for Elul Zman.

On the financial scene, we have seen a drop in donations since the beginning of 2006. Although we do not have an exact reason for why this is happening we would appreciate your support of our Parnes HaYom program and our upcoming mailer of the dinner video, which the yeshiva went to great lengths and costs to produce for the benefit of our supporters, alumni, and their families.

I would like to remind everyone that we are always open to new suggestions and ideas on how to increase our fundraising abilities and student body. Please remember that my e-mail is always open at office@levaryeh.com and I try to respond to everyone's e-mails within 24 hours.

With best wishes for a happy and healthy summer,
Rabbi Yoni Strimber

THE THREE WEEKS

RABBI DOVID ROTENBERG

It is with great reluctance I took upon myself the project of writing an article about the “three weeks” months in advance of that period. The very idea of even thinking about it as a season in our yearly calendar I find problematic. Must I relate to the 9th of Av as part of my reality? Is it just a bothersome period of time, a hurdle to overcome before my anticipated summer vacation?

Halacha views it as a *moed*, as an appointed time of eternal meaning. Let us try somewhat to appreciate this point. In the Gemara *Baba Basra* the following episode is described:

Rabbi Yehoshua criticized a large segment of people who abstained from meat and wine as a constant act of mourning over the destruction of the second *Beis HaMikdosh*. Rabbi Yehoshua asked them why they took upon themselves such a severe observance. They reasoned that it is impossible to bring oneself to partake in meat and wine if we are no longer able to make such offerings in the *Beis HaMikdosh*. Rabbi Yehoshua countered, we should abstain from bread and water for their corresponding offerings have also ceased to exist? Rabbi Yehoshua reasoned that although it was incumbent upon us to relate constantly to the *Beis HaMikdosh*'s destruction such acts must not be balanced with the public's ability to consistently fulfill such observance. He cited, for example, the law to leave unpainted part of your wall facing the doorway. Further observances can be found in the *Shulchan Oruch*, *Orach Chaim*, Chapter 560.

What we see from the above story is that for the generation following the *Beis HaMikdosh* destruction, the loss was a very real thing. They so missed it's presence that they could not bring themselves to partake of meat and wine. Where do we find ourselves in this reality?

In the above Gemara the *Rashbam* presents the source of our observance based on the *pasuk*: *Sisu atoh mesos kol hamisablim aleha*. That those who mourn Yerushalayim's loss will merit to rejoice in its ultimate happiness.

What is the connection between mourning and rejoicing and ultimately the *moed* of *Tisha b'Av* and its uniqueness in time? The

serpent induced Chava to eat from the “Tree of Knowledge” against *Hashem*'s command. As a punishment *Hashem* said, “That you will eat the dust of the earth”. Observing this you might ask, why is this a punishment the serpent's food is immediately at his disposal? The answer is that *Hashem*'s relationship with the serpent it is that if I can't be bothered with your existence take some scraps and be off! The serpent has his sustenance but he is cut off from any loving relationship with his Creator.

Rav Nachman Bulman ז”ל stated that the aspect of *moed* in *Tisha b'Av* is that *Hashem* has not allowed us to be lost for all eternity by continuing in our wayward ways. He vented His displeasure upon the wood and stones of a possible meaningless edifice, G-d forbid. The alternative would be either the physical destruction of the Jewish people or the loss of its soul amongst the nations of the world.

Tisha b'Av reminds us of the eternal love G-d has for *Klal Yisroel*. The reality of the destruction has to “spring start” us to rectify our ways concerning our commitment to serving G-d and “baseless love” for our fellow Jew balancing our shortcomings of baseless hatred. *Tisha B'Av* conveys to us G-d's “long suffering” our exile awaiting our eventual return through the mending of our ways.

There are those of us who find themselves involved in the day to day responsibility and benefits of earning a living. We must realize that our lives are incomplete without the spiritual resource and impetus of the *Beis Hamikdosh*. The lament of “*U'mipnei Chateinu, Galinu M'artzienu...*” must be a fervent yearning and not mindless lip service!

People who have the privilege to “dwell in the four *amos* of Torah” should appreciate that as long as the *Makom HaMikdash* remains desolate we cannot fulfill “*Ki MiTzion Taizei Sorah...*” The spirit of Divine service and clarity of Torah permeated the confines of the *Beis Hamikdosh*. This essence endowed *Klal Yisroel* with a greater understanding of the Torah and encouraged them to attain greater heights in – *d'veikus* – to *Hashem*.

שיבנה בית המקדש במהרה בימינו ותן חלקינו בתורתך.

YESHIVAS LEV ARYEH *First Annual Dinner*



March 20, 2006, the 20th of Adar 5756, will be a day not to be forgotten in the illustrious history of Yeshivas Lev Aryeh. This was the day that the Yeshiva's first annual dinner was held. Rabbis Lopian, Rapoport, and Strimber were busy working up until the final moments together with Rabbi Ari Ginian, our dinner coordinator, to ensure that every last detail was refined; they wanted to make sure that everything would go perfect. Just like clockwork, the dinner guests began entering the hall situated at the Young Israel of Avenue K in Brooklyn, NY.

Those who arrived on time were treated to a lavish smorgasbord in the cocktail room accompanied by light dinner music in the background. The *Hanhola* had the exciting opportunity to mingle amongst the many friends, parents, and alumni that showed up en masse to partake in this special evening.

After the Mashgiach shlit'a davened Maariv for the *tzibbur* all were invited upstairs to the main ballroom. The ballroom was elegantly decorated for this special evening. There were journals and special edition bencher booklets placed on all the tables. As the over 225 guests took their seats the Rosh HaYeshiva, followed by Mr. Akiva Wagschal, the Master of Ceremonies for the evening, welcomed everyone

to this historic event. The program then swiftly continued with the introductions and short words of our honorees Rabbi Shmuel Strickman and Rabbi Efraim Siegfried. Before our final honoree, Reb Aryeh Dov Garfunkel, spoke all were treated to a surprise video introduction by Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Vilensky, a dear friend to our yeshiva and Aryeh Dov. Following the video Aryeh Dov, Alumnus of the Year, "brought down the house" as he recalled the first years of Yeshivas Lev Aryeh, his words were heartwarming and cherished by all.

The dinner program ended with a fascinating 10-minute video presentation about the yeshiva that was projected on two large screens in the ballroom. The crowd gazed on in amazement, each one thinking to themselves, "WOW, look how far the yeshiva has come!"

The guests were then presented a mouth-watering prime rib dinner followed by dessert. *Baruch Hashem*, the whole program went according to schedule, and even though our guests were delighted (and surprised) that we ended by 9:30, many lingered around to catch up with their Rebbeim and friends.

We hope that next year will be even more of a success with your continued support!





Mazel Tov!

The yeshiva would like to wish a Mazel Tov to the following people:

*Rabbi and Mrs. Yaakov Rapoport on the birth of a grandson.
Rabbi and Mrs. Baruch Levi Fivelson on the marriage of their daughter.*

*Avri Rabinowitz on his wedding
Yoni Colman on his engagement
Yehuda Grunhut on his engagement
Chaim Both on his engagement
David Belsky on his engagement
Shmuel Beider on his engagement
Yitzky Wolf on his engagement
Joseph Levin on his wedding
Yaakov Mordechai Hershkowitz on his engagement*

Rabbi and Mrs. Yanky Hershkowitz on the birth of a baby girl

*To Mr. and Mrs. Chezkie Eider on the establishment
of his new construction business EidCo
May they grow m'Chayil L'chayil*

*To Rabbi and Mrs. Akiva Wagschal &
Dr. and Mrs. Alan Rabinowitz
on the birth of their granddaughter Bat Zion to
Mr. and Mrs. Yoni Wagschal*

STAY CONNECTED!

Would you like to be on the yeshiva mailing list to receive yeshiva news, alumni simchas, etc.? Please e-mail us with your e-mail address at office@levaryeh.com

Include your simcha news!

NEW LIBRARY HALL DONATED

SHA'AR RUBIN



With much joy the yeshiva has inaugurated our new library hall donated to us by **Rabbi and Mrs. Sheldon Goldsmith** of New York, NY in memory of his father **Rabbi Yechiel Meir Goldsmith, obm.** Rabbi and Mrs. Goldsmith were the first ones to give the loving push to the Rosh HaYeshiva and Mashgiach to begin constructing the new yeshiva building by their generous donation. Throughout the years this incredible couple has been there to support the yeshiva and its Hanhola physically and emotionally. We wish them many happy years in the future and much nachas from all of their children and grandchildren.

We would like to thank **Mr. and Mrs. Jeremy Lopian** for their generous donation of the main corridor to the yeshiva. This donation was made in memory of his grandparents **Mr. and Mrs. Rubin** of Hendon, London, England

We would also like to thank **Mr. and Mrs. Shabsi Klein** for their donation of two bookcases to the Yeshiva Beis HaMedresh.

We would like to thank **Mr. Yitzy Wolf and Mr. and Mrs. Moshe Ruby** for their generous dinner donations that due to technical reasons were not recognized at the time the journal went to press.

NEW! Yeshivas Lev Aryeh UK registered Charity

With great thanks to **Rabbi Simon Fogal**, alumnus of our yeshiva, we are proud to announce the creation of **Friends of Lev Aryeh Yeshiva**. Our registered charity, #1112047 was registered with the Central Register of Charities maintained by the Charity Commission for England and Wales on November 14, 2005. The England office has recently opened up a bank account and "standing order agreement" (EFT) that allows us to now issue our British supporters the ability to receive a tax-deduction for their contributions just as our American

contributors have enjoyed for years. Our UK mailing address is **Friends of Lev Aryeh c/o Rabbi Simon Fogal, 5 Linksway, Prestwich, Manchester, M25 0JP**. If you or someone you know of are interested in creating a standing order to allow them to donate to Lev Aryeh on a regular basis please e-mail us at office@levaryeh.com or send a request to the UK office. All British donations should now please be sent to the address above. We are looking forward to the opportunity to exchange British Pounds into Israeli Shekels.

W A N T E D

A Donor For the Yeshiva's First Yahrzeit Board

If you are interested in this rare opportunity please contact Rabbi Strimber at 443-992-4660

We would like to thank the following that have donated to our Parnas Yomi Campaign

MR. AND MRS. SUMNER GREENBERG OF QUINCY, MASS.
*who donated 3 days of learning in beloved memory of their parents
Mr. and Mrs Leo Greenberg and Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Close
9 – 10 – 11 Iyar 5766*

OPPORTUNITY TO HONOR LOVED ONES



The yeshiva has introduced a new *PARNES YOMI* program for those wishing to honor or memorialize love ones. The purpose of a *PARNES YOMI* is to provide a merit to those that are honored through the learning that will take place in the *Beis Medrash* on that particular day, week, or even month. The donor's name will be placed by the front door of the building along with those that are being honored or memorialized. The cost to sponsor the learning which takes place in the *Beis Medrash* on that day is as follows:

Day \$180 - Week \$1000 - Month \$4000

The donation could be paid in payments or in one lump sum via credit card or postdated checks. Please contact our office for more information 443-992-4660. Or simply mail, fax, or e-mail the slip provided below. *Please keep in mind that all donations are tax-exempt.*

I WOULD LIKE TO DONATE:

A day of learning for \$180 each day One week of learning for \$1000 One Month of learning for \$4000

Please Charge: Visa Amex MasterCard Discover

Name on Card: _____

Card No: _____ Exp. _____ / _____

My Signature: _____ Date: _____ / _____

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Enclosed is my check of \$ _____ made payable to Lev Aryeh.

Look in your mailbox for your complementary copy of the
LEV ARYEH PRESENTATION VIDEO
that was shown at the dinner!