

How good and pleasant it is for brothers to be "together"

תורה אה אלה ואה נעים שבתאחים ב"ח"י

B'YACHAD

TOGETHER

THE ELECTRONIC
ALUMNI NEWSLETTER
OF OHR SOMAYACH



Prepared by Ohr Somayach Institutions

22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103, Jerusalem 91180, Israel

Tel: 972-2-810315 Fax: 972-2-812890 Internet: ohr@jer1.co.il

Issue #2

Chanukah 5755

Greetings from Rabbi Pindrus

Keeping in touch with former talmidim is both a responsibility and a privilege. Responsibility -- because we owe it to you to see how you are meeting the challenge of life after the Yeshiva and to offer you whatever guidance and encouragement we can. Privilege -- because there is no greater *nachas* in the world than seeing those in whom you have invested a part of your life paying off such wonderful dividend in their own lives.

You certainly remember the old Gemara rule of 'Lo te'hei shemiah gedola mere'iah' -- 'Hearing can never be as great as seeing'. This spells out the difference between simply hearing from your former Rabbeim in a 'Yachad' electronic newsletter and seeing one of them in your own community. I have enjoyed the privilege of meeting many of you in person during my visits to the States and I look forward to meeting many more. It is my hope that the Alumni Beis Medrash in Brooklyn which we established a few years ago can be of service to those of you living in the New York area.

Those who wish to arrange for a personal meeting during my next visit should contact Dovid Silverman at 718-259-5111 and leave a message asking for an appointment.

Reb Gedalia Orentlicher z"l

The entire Ohr Somayach Family mourns the tragic passing of one of its most outstanding alumni, **Reb Gedalia Zvi Orentlicher**, on Rosh Chodesh Kislev at the age of 40.

Reb Gedalia started at Ohr Somayach in the late seventies and went on to learn in Kollel Meshech Chochmo, The Mirrer Yeshiva and most recently in the distinguished Kollel in Beersheba.

Many alumni will remember the classes he gave in Aramaic Grammar to help new students become familiar with the language of the Gemara.

Public *hespedim* held in Jerusalem and Beersheba, featured Rav Aaron Feldman, Rav Moshe Shapiro and Rav Mendel Weinbach, who paid tribute to the exceptional high level of Torah scholarship achieved by Gedalia and held him up as a model of dedication to Torah and the service of Hashem.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The first issue of Yachad seems to have been favorably received judging by the growth in subscription and by the feedback we've been getting from afar and near. We hope to see this togetherness experience grow and flourish.

Messages from Alumni

Tzvi Axelman- ('74 - '77)

I am currently living in Baltimore. I have 5 children (be'h), ages 11-1½, 3 boys and two girls. I work as a clinical social worker during the day at a community mental health center. I am writing a Sefer Torah at night (my second one) and am in safrus for about 10 years. I am also the Ba'al Koreh at the Glen Avenue Shul here and sometimes teach Bar-Mitzvah lessons. I will also be running a support group for children of divorce for the Jewish Family Services. (Do I sound Bored?)

Yaakov Menken- (JLE '85, Monsey '88)

After several years of study in Ohr Somayach Monsey and the Lakewood and Mirrer Yeshivos, I returned to the US. to launch a new outreach organization for college students, Project Genesis.

On a more personal note, I married Tova Rosenfeld on Rosh Chodesh Elul of last year, and we live in Victoria Gardens in Monsey (which is home to many young Ohr Somayach families in the US). I invite all local alumni to the Daf Yomi shiur that I give in the Blueberry Hill Shul at 6 a.m. each morning.

[Rabbi Menken heads Project Genesis which in addition to campus programming and weekly Divrei Torah, provides an extensive program in Jewish education via the Internet -- with on-line shiurim in Mesilas Yesharim, Mishna Brura, Hilchos Loshon Hora, Sefer Mishlei, and most recently Pirkei Avos with the Maharal's Perush. For more information write to genesis@israel.nysernet.org]

Yitzchak Zvi Freeman- ('84 - '90)

I received the 'Yachad' newsletter and was very pleased to do so. I look forward to receiving many more. It will perform a very valuable service in keeping us in touch -- both in terms of the valuable resource former talmidim can be for each other, and in terms of moral for those of us out 'in the field', for the field can be a lonely place, and every little bit of chizuk helps, in every way.

You may like to know that I am now the proud father of bli ayin hora four lovely sons; the youngest, *Isroel Yona*, was born rev Shavuos.

Gedaliah Friedenberg- (JLE '91, 92-93)

I have just completed one year of learning at Ohr Somayach's yeshiva in Monsey, New York. The Monsey Yeshiva broke ground on their new Beis Medrash on October 30th under the guidance of HaRav Avraham Pam, the Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshivas Torah Vodaas.

Anyone interested in visiting Ohr Somayach -- Monsey can contact me at gedaliah@panix.com.

NEWS FROM HERE & THERE

New Ohr Somayach E-mail contacts around the world

In addition to our Jerusalem E-mail address we have recently expanded our address list to include the following world wide contacts:

New York	Rabbi Zalman Corlin	RZCorlin@aol.com
Chicago	Rabbi Yehuda Albin	OrSomayach@aol.com
Toronto	Rabbi Avram Rothman	avram.rothman@canrem.com
London	Rabbi Rashi Simon	jleuk@demon.co.uk
Johannesburg	Rabbi Larry Shain	Ohr.Somyach@digitec.co.za
Jerusalem	Rabbi Moshe Newman	ohr@jer1.co.il

Staff Appointments

Recently joining the Ohr Somayach staff is alumnus Aron Rosenberg, who is our new Outreach Coordinator in North America. Aron, who studied here for a number of years before returning to the States and starting a family, was the star of the legendary Purim play of 1987 "Shteiger Fellow" as well as other O.S productions.

Aron is busy getting in touch with Introductory Program alumni and helping them maintain what they had gained at Ohr Somayach. He is also helping to organize an upcoming Week of Jewish Learning at Ohr Somayach Monsey open to all Introductory Alumni during the week of December 22 - 29 including Shabbos. If you're interested (or know of anyone else who might be interested), call Aron at 914-352-1004.

New Publications

Rabbi Dr. Akiva Tatz has published a new book *Reb Simcha Speaks* -- insights on life and Torah by Rav Simcha Wasserman zt"l who was so well known to Ohr Somayach students through the years as a teacher and mentor. It is well known that Reb Simcha regarded us as his own children, and this book will fill a small part of the gap left by his passing. *Reb Simcha Speaks* is published by Artscroll.

Simchas & Announcements

Shai Israel (Monsey '90) is getting married (B"H) on December 26th to Elain Oppenheim of Birmingham, N.Y. The *chatuna* will be in Birmingham.

Mazel Tov to Rabbi Larry Shain and to Rabbi Chaim Harris on their sons' Bar Mitzva celebrations.

To Rabbi Eliyahu Gitman: Mazel Tov on the birth of a son.

Our sincere condolences to Rabbi Reuven Lauffer on the passing of his father z"l. May Hashem comfort you among the mourners of Zion and Yerushalayim.

Topic of the Month

'MIRACLES'

So many miracles are performed for us every day of which we're not even aware. (Zohar-Vayikra 21)

- How do we define a miracle?
- Why were open miracles historically necessary?
- What are examples of miracles we experience today?
- Nature vs. Open Miracles -- In which are the workings of Hashem in the world more manifest?

Select quotations that may shed some light on this topic:

- *Greater is the miracle performed for the ill than the miracle performed for Chanania , Mishael and Azaria.* (Nedarim 51a)
- *It is impossible for the world [to exist] without miracles and without wonders.* (Medrash Shocher Tov-Tehillim 106)
- *Through the great open miracles, one comes to acknowledge the hidden miracles which constitute the foundation of the whole Torah...(Ramban, Shemos 13:16)*
- *It is the greatest chesed (kindness) that Hashem hides Himself for man's benefit [so that he will possess free will and merit reward]... This is the essence of the dictum 'Olam Chesed Yibaneh' -- 'The world is built on chesed'. Thus, the hidden [workings of Hashem] magnify the manifestation of chesed to an infinite degree so that concealment itself is transformed to revelation.* (Michtav MeEliyahu vol.3 p.271)

We'd appreciate your sharing with us other sources or your own thoughts and experiences relating to this topic.

Follow-up on topic of the Month

'AREIVUS'

Sharing responsibility with your fellow Jew.

Did you know that every Jew is a guarantor for all the *mitzvos* obligating every other Jew?

The Gemara (Sotah 37b) calculates this number -- taking into account the 48 covenants entered into upon accepting each *mitzva* -- which can sum up to many billions of *mitzvos*!

This *areivus*, though, is limited to those who are able influence others but desist from doing so. (Shvuos 39b)

