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Etzion Foundation
Yeshivat Har Etzion Annual Dinner
Sunday May 20, 2012
Yom Yerushalayim
Grand Hyatt Hotel, New York City

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Guests of Honor
Ben and Aviva Adler

Alumnus of the Year
Andrew Borodach ’87

Rabbinic Leadership Award
Rabbi Nasanayl ’92 and Tamar Braun
**Yeshiva News**

**Revava Chanuka Seminar**

The Revava 5772 Chanuka Study Days, dedicated in memory of Riva Koschitzky z”l, took place in the Yeshiva on December 21-22, with the participation of students and numerous alumni, on the topic of “Leadership and Vision.” Among the lecturers were Rosh Yeshiva HaRav Aharon Lichtenstein on the topic of “Leadership and Da’at,” and Rav Shraga Zalmanov, the Admor of Opola, on “Leadership of the Tzadik between Heaven and Earth.”

Two alumni who head large non-profit organizations in Israel discussed the challenges of creating social change: Shimon Siani ’82H, Director of Yedidim, which provides support to new immigrants and youth at risk, and Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon ’87H, Head of JobKatif, which provides employment to former residents of Gush Katif and northern Shomron.

In the area of educational leadership, Rav Sefi Sherman ’86H, Principal of the Reishit School in Tel Aviv, spoke about current educational challenges. Participating in a panel discussion on “The Rav and his Congregation,” were Har Etzion alumni Rav Dov Oron ’80H, Rav in Gnot Shomron; Rav Meir Nehorai ’85H, Rav of Massuot Yitzhak; and Rav Efraim Zik ’92H, currently the Head of Yeshivat Bnei Akiva High School in Ra’anana and formerly Rav in Lima, Peru.

Participating in another panel discussion on “Torah and Communal Leadership” were Rav David Bloch, Yeshivat Nehora and among the founders of the Nachal Chareidi; Rav Yitzchak Levy, former Minister and MK; and Dr. Yehuda Ben-Meir, former MK. The discussion was moderated by alumnus Dr. Kalman Neuman ’76H and Rav Ezra Bick provided concluding thoughts.

**Revava Tanakh Panel**

Students, rabbis and the community at large filled the Yeshiva auditorium on Wednesday, January 18, for a panel discussion on the question: “How did Shaul meet David? Different Exegetical Approaches.” Panel members were Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yaakov Medan, Rav Amnon Bazak and Rav Yisrael Rozen. Audio recordings are available on the Yeshiva’s Hebrew website.

**Darkaynu Program**

This year the Darkaynu Program for special needs students has seven participants: two returning students and five new students, from the U.S. and Jerusalem. The students have special shiurim tailored to their level and chavrutot in the Beit midrash with students from the Overseas Program. In addition to their studies, students volunteer in local frameworks: shelving books at the Yeshiva library, training a search-and-rescue dog for the Elazar security unit, cooking in the Neve Shmuel high school kitchen, and more. A staff of dedicated madrichim accompanies them throughout the day.

In an exciting next step for the program, this year three of the older Darkaynu students are living by themselves in a kollel apartment, where they cook for themselves and have even hosted Yeshiva students for Shabbat meals. These students also have longer working hours outside of the Yeshiva during the day, and re-join the Yeshiva for mincha, afternoon classes, Shabbatonim, and trips.

The program’s successes speak for themselves, and according to Program Director Avi Ganz, there are a record number of applicants for next year. The Darkaynu Program was recently featured in Mishpacha magazine and a link to the article can be found on the Yeshiva’s website.
Darkaynu on the Run

To raise funds to support its activities, Darkaynu organized a team of 50 runners who participated on its behalf in the Jerusalem Marathon on March 16. Alumnus Yoseph Shmidman ’82, who has a son Yitz in the Darkaynu program, ran the 10K together with his son Aaron, and Yitz walked the 10 kilometers with Darkaynu staff and other Darkaynu students. Together, the three raised $5400 for Darkaynu, money which will provide scholarships for special needs students to learn at YHE.

Yoseph explains, “Beyond the valuable learning experience and enhanced Jewish commitment it encourages, the Darkaynu program enables special needs students to gain independence and pursue personal growth on many levels. For my son Yitz, however, Darkaynu serves two additional critical functions. At the stage when his entire age group was off to yeshivot hesder, mechinot, sherut leumi and the army, Darkaynu presented a meaningful framework for Yitz to follow the same path as his peers, learning in yeshiva and volunteering in the army. In his case, though, it wasn’t just any yeshiva – it was Gush. And with his father, four uncles, four first cousins, and many other relatives (members of the Shmidman, Fredman, Koppel, and Weber families) all alumni of the yeshiva and its affiliated institutions, Yeshivat Har Etzion is not just a place of learning to Yitz; it is his spiritual home and his heritage, and the opportunity to forge his own link in this chain of התורה חוזרת לאכסניה שלה.”

V’Shavu Banim Le’Gevulam: New Program for MTA Alumni

In January, a new program called V’Shavu Banim Le’Gevulam was launched in Yeshiva. The two-week program is an opportunity for alumni of the Yeshiva’s MTA Program for students from South Africa, Australia and New Zealand to return to the Yeshiva during their summer break. Twenty MTA alumni came to participate in the program, which was run by Rav Pini Cohen ’94, who is himself a graduate of the MTA program. The program included a morning seder with in-depth Gemara learning, afternoon chugim with Ramim on contemporary halakhic and hashkaat issues, sichot with the Roshei Yeshiva and an optional seder erev. The program also included a panel discussion on leadership and community service, tiyulim, and a special Shabbat program.

Rav Pini Cohen said, “It was tremendously motivating to see that the message of the Yeshiva resonates far beyond the one or two years of initial learning, and that alumni choose to come back to the Yeshiva to spend their summer holidays immersed in Torah study.” According to participant Jonty Tuchten ’09, it was “a truly energizing and re-invigorating experience. What a great feeling it was to be back at our home away from home! After just a couple of minutes of walking around we felt as if we had never left. The familiar faces of the rabbanim and fellow students created a wonderful feeling. From the thought-provoking and diverse shiurim to the va’adim and tishes – every part of the program was tailor-made to ensure we had the most in-depth and uplifting experience possible in 2 weeks. On behalf of everyone on V’Shavu Banim, I would like to thank every single person who made the program happen.”

Summer Study Days in Tanakh

Take part in this renowned learning experience!

July 22-26, 2012 (3-7 Menachem Av)
Including 25 lectures in English
Tanakh-based tours on July 11 (21 Tammuz)
For more info: www.herzog.ac.il
New MTA Group

A new crop of MTA students recently arrived in Yeshiva from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Welcome!

Volunteering

Every week, students of Yeshivat Har Etzion volunteer in more than 20 different venues, such as Shalva, an afternoon framework for children with special needs, Simcha La’Yeled for children with cancer, Yad Sarah, which helps people with a wide variety of medical issues, Big Brother Program, Keren Yishai association for the blind, and more. In the photo above, students cheer up the sick at Shaarei Zedek hospital.

The Finish Line

During the course of the year, many talmedim are zoche to make siyumim and invite their friends and teachers to share in the simcha, viewed as both an individual accomplishment and a Yeshiva-wide celebration. Rav Daniel Rhein comments, “These siyumim show how much can be accomplished in a short period of time and they also inspire and encourage other talmedim.”

President Joel Visit

Har Etzion was honored to host President of Yeshiva University Richard Joel. Following shacharit, President Joel joined the Overseas Students for a festive breakfast, where he delivered a dvar Torah and shared some thoughts on education and aliya. Afterwards, he continued on to visit the Midrasha students at Migdal Oz, where he spoke as well. Richard and Esther Joel are the parents of alumna Kira ’08MO.

Shabbat Iruach

Shabbat Iruach is an annual Yeshiva tradition, in which the Israeli hesdernikim invite overseas students to their homes for Shabbat. In the photo above, Yinon Levy, a second-year Hesder student, welcomes Isaac Shulman, Yossi Friedman and Shua Katz.

Back in Yeshiva

Rav Naftali Reichner of the first machzor of the Yeshiva, father of six and grandfather to many more, has returned to learn in the Beit Midrash mornings. He hopes this will become a trend. “We alumni of the early years of the Yeshiva are now at a stage in life when we can come back to study in the Beit Midrash where we began our studies. I am enjoying every minute.”

New YHE Soldiers

YHE talmedim receive their berets after finishing their training. Pictured: Yoni Adler ’09 (center) with friends Ariel Brounstein ’06H and Yishai Schimmel ’08.

Pictured: Rav Naftali has a chevruta with first year student Baruch Susman, son of Rabbi Yehuda ’81 and Louisa Susman, and Rav Reichner’s former talmid in Neve Shmuel high school in Efrat.
A TRIBUTE TO DR. MEYER BRAYER

In appreciation of over four decades of dedicated service to Yeshivat Har Etzion

Meyer Brayer was born in Shtefanesht, Romania in 1925, the son of a rabbi. He was educated in the local yeshiva until the age of 14, when the family was evicted and sent to another town to work as forced laborers for the duration of WWII. In Romania, Meyer Brayer was active in the religious youth movement, Bnei Akiva, and after the war, in 1946, he made aliya to Kibbutz Be’erot Yitzchak. It was at Be’erot Yitzchak that Dr. Brayer first met HaRav Amital, and his wedding took place there, and who gave a bi-weekly shiur at the kibbutz on Sefer HaKuzari. Dr. Brayer remained at Be’erot Yitzchak until 1955 and then spent several years in New York before returning to Israel to live in Jerusalem.

In New York, Dr. Brayer served as principal of the Hebrew Institute of Long Island and earned an M.A. and Ph.D. from Yeshiva University in Biblical Literature. Upon his return to Israel, he taught at Machon Gold and Beit Midrash L’Torah (BMT). His concern for, and interest in, his students enhanced their feelings toward the Torah they studied and their attachment to Eretz Yisrael.

When Dr. Brayer heard about the new Yeshiva being established in Gush Etzion, he immediately wanted to become involved. He met with HaRav Moshe Moskovic of Yeshivat Har Etzion and Chairman of the Board of the Yeshiva, says, “This is a fitting opportunity to again emphasize before the thousands of Har Etzion alumni and their families how privileged we have been to have him as part of the Yeshiva from the very beginning and was among those who formulated the dream of establishing a magnificent Yeshiva in Gush Etzion. I extend to him a special and hearty Yashar Koach for decades of work with the overseas students and for strengthening their connection with the Yeshiva family throughout the years. We wish him much good health, longevity and nachat from his family!”

Alumnus Stuie Hershkowitz ’75 recalls, “Dr. Brayer, in his quiet way, and always with a smile, was a key element in the Yeshiva’s success. His ability to make people proud to contribute to the Yeshiva and to make them feel part of the Yeshiva family, is what made him so effective in providing the ‘kemach’ element to the Yeshiva, and as we all know – ‘im ein kemach ein Torah’. His special talent is in making everyone feel special; he has a personal warmth which one feels immediately upon meeting him.

“The Yeshiva has known many financial ups and downs over the years, and invariably the Yeshiva turned to Reb Meyer to do his magic and raise funds so sorely needed. Somehow, he would always find a way to meet the Yeshiva’s needs in a quiet and humble manner. His fine character perfectly reflects the Yeshiva’s values – midot tovat always come before all else.”

The Yeshiva will sorely miss one of the giants who helped build it into what it is today. We wish Dr. Meyer Brayer all the best, and hope that he will be zoche to enjoy his retirement for many years to come.
HERZOG COLLEGE

Special Teachers for Special Education

The need for quality male special education teachers in the religious school system in Israel is acute. In recent decades, there has been a marked increase in the number of special needs students, both in separate classes and among those mainstreamed into regular classes.

Three years ago, Herzog College opened a Special Education Department, with separate divisions for male and female students. There are currently over 60 students in the male division and school principals are constantly calling, requesting Herzog-trained graduates for their schools. Of those graduating this year, some are already working part-time, parallel to their studies.

In the first year of the program, students are required to take introductory courses in Educational, Developmental and Cognitive Psychology, Physiology, Philosophy and Sociology of Special Education. They also learn didactic diagnostic tools in the areas of reading, writing and math, and remedial approaches and methodology. The students visit six different special education settings over the course of the year, and hear guest lectures by prominent personalities in the field. During the second and third years of study, students choose their area of specialization and begin their supervised fieldwork in relevant settings.

The department, coordinated by Sarit Nachshon, boasts a faculty of 35 lecturers, and a staff of 23 pedagogic mentors who supervise students’ fieldwork. Even after graduation, Herzog College maintains close contact with the new teachers for a number of years through periodic meetings and seminars, most intensely in their first year of teaching.

Among the first group of graduates this June are Shmuel Koppel and Avichai Perl. Looking back over the past three years, they have high praise for the program, citing the advanced academic level, the excellent teachers and a lot of individual attention. They appreciate the fact that the curriculum includes exposure to the full gamut of areas under the rubric of special education, including physical, cognitive and sensory disabilities, and qualifies them to teach students aged 6 to 21.

Shmuel, from Efrat, studied in the Hesder programs in Holon and Otniel, and served in the Paratroopers Unit in the IDF. Through his activities as a madrich in the Ezra youth movement, he realized that he enjoyed working with children and was able to connect with them easily. He joined the program during his last year of Hesder. He has also studied gardening therapy at David Yellin College, and plans to work in informal education.

Avichai grew up in Petach Tikva, studied in the Hesder Yeshiva in Netivot, and served in the Duchifat Unit in the IDF. Now married, he travels from Netivot to Alon Shevut in order to pursue his dream of studying special education. He had already completed a year of study in Herzog College when the Special Education Department opened and he transferred into the program. He plans to teach children with learning disabilities.

With well-trained, capable and enthusiastic young men like these, the future for special needs children and youth in the religious sector in Israel is looking much brighter.

Herzog College Expands Migdal Oz Campus

The new wing recently added to the women’s campus at Migdal Oz includes four classrooms, a kitchenette and lounge to serve students of the M.Ed. programs in Tanakh and Jewish Thought. Soon after Pesach, another building on campus is expected to be completed – a day care center for children of the Midrasha and College students.
Tuesday Learning Program

On Tuesdays, the Beit Midrash opens its doors to alumnae and the community at large. Shiurim in Tanakh, Jewish Thought and a Gemara/Halakha shiur, are taught by Head of the Beit Midrash Esti Rozenberg, Malka Puterkovsky, and Carmit Feintuch. Over 50 women from Gush Etzion, Jerusalem, and the Shomron participate in the program.

Le’Chaneich B’Oz

A new program for female educators aims to provide professional development, enhance skills, enrich knowledge and serve as a forum for group discussion. The program focuses on topics such as beit midrash-style versus frontal teaching, culture and post-modern society, promoting religious development in young adults, improving skills for one-on-one discussions and group discussions, and creating a “safe zone” for open discussion in the classroom. The program is run by Carmit Feintuch and meets during the week at the Migdal Oz campus. There are currently 18 participants, four of whom are alumnae of the Beit Midrash. Special thanks to Kalman ’91 and Jordana Schoor for their vision and partnership in this unique program.

Learning Mishna

Mazal Tov to the Chaburat Mishnayot on their siyum of the first order of mishna, Seder Zera’im. The Chaburat Mishnayot is a group of students who learn two perakim of mishnayot a day with the goal of finishing all of mishnayot by the end of the year.

Chanuka

The Shabbat before Chanuka was geared towards preparing for the holiday. At a Friday night tish, students spoke about the varied aspects of light and the madrichot gave chaburot on the concept of giving thanks. In addition to candle lighting every night, there was a Chanuka celebration one evening that included a festive dinner, choir performance, exchange of presents, music and dancing. Every morning, there was heartfelt Hallel in the Beit Midrash accompanied by beautiful singing.

Chanuka Seminar

The annual two-day Chanuka Seminar focused on the relationship between religious and secular Jews in Israel. The program included many interesting and thought-provoking speakers, presenting different models and challenging the audience to incorporate the relevant values into their lives. Distinguished speakers included Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yaakov Medan, MK Tzipi Hotovely, Rav Yuval Cherlow, Rav Re’em Hacohen, Rav Benny Lau and Dr. Micha Goodman. Contributions to this program were made in memory of Maudi Katz z”l by friends and family.

Defending Israel

Students from overseas continue to participate in Stand With Us, the Israel advocacy training program which holds sessions in Migdal Oz on Sunday mornings.

American Culture Night

This was a special evening organized by students from the U.S., in which they shared with their Israeli counterparts who they are and where they come from. The evening began with an “American-style” supper featuring mac ’n cheese, and a short slide show of the overseas girls during their high school years and at various landmarks. Dinner was followed by sessions on Camp and Youth Groups, Schools, Shuls and Community, Politics, and Culture. Afterwards, Shayna Goldberg, who recently made aliyah to Alon Shevut with her family, spoke about her decision to move to Israel, followed by small discussion groups on various dilemmas faced by the American students – aliyah, choice of college, etc. Dessert was, of course, apple pie. The evening was a big hit and laid the groundwork for further discussion and mutual understanding between Americans and Israelis in the beit midrash.
A festive Melave Malka was held for Gush alumni on Motzai Shabbat, Nov. 12 at Congregation Rinat Yisrael in Teaneck, NJ with Rosh Yeshiva HaRav Aharon Lichtenstein and Director of Overseas Program Eli Weber ’81. Rav Lichtenstein shared words of Torah, answered questions and had an opportunity to speak one-on-one with many alumni in attendance. The cross-generational representation among alumni added to the good spirit and success of the program.

On Sunday morning, Rav Lichtenstein gave a shiur on “Minhag Yisrael: On the Nature and Scope of Custom in Jewish Law” at Congregation Netivot Shalom in Teaneck, NJ, which is led by alumnus Rabbi Nati Helfgot ’81.

On Monday, alumni gathered for a lunch-and-learn with Rav Lichtenstein on the topic: “God of Heaven and God of Earth”, hosted by Terry Novetsky ’80 at Kaye Scholer.

Over 45 alumnae attended a beautiful and spiritually uplifting Shabbaton in Teaneck on Nov 11-12, Parshat VaYera. The young women were thrilled to be with Head of the Beit Midrash Esti Rozenberg, Overseas Administrator Miriam Coren (on shlichut in Philadelphia this year) and with so many friends. They sang their way through Shabbat – which included a lovely Shabbat dinner at Congregation Keter Torah; a beautiful tish at the home of Kelilia Kahane ’09MO; tefilla, a shiur and lunch at Congregation Rinat Yisrael; and a wonderful seuda shlishit and sicha at the home of Tehila Brander ’10MO. The alumnae enjoyed the opportunity to reunite with friends, reminisce, chat about their lives post-Israel, learn together and from Esti, and of course – sing!!

On Motzai Shabbat, Deni Kolatch ’04MO hosted an intimate melave malka which provided an opportunity for post-college Migdal Oz alumnae to get together and spend some quality time with each other, Esti Rozenberg and Miriam Coren.
Mothers and Sons in Sefer Bereishit: An Inter-generational Dialogue

Following the annual Migdal Oz Shabbaton, alumnae, parents and supporters of Migdal Oz enjoyed a discussion with Dr. Tovah Lichtenstein and Esti Rozenberg on parent-child relationships in Sefer Bereishit, at a Sunday brunch graciously hosted by Laurence and Daniela Schreiber (parents of Raquel ‘10MO). Greetings were delivered by Etzion Foundation’s Development Associate Sharon Rifkind and alumna Ilana Barta ‘09MO. The participants were delighted to be able to learn from two such distinguished presenters and everyone enjoyed the opportunity to socialize and connect over a lovely brunch which preceded the program. A recording of the discussion is available on the Yeshiva’s website.

Rav Lichtenstein and Dr. Lichtenstein continued on to Chicago where they participated in a dinner hosted by Bethia Straus and Paul Quintas (parents of Joseph ‘10) to raise funds for the Yeshiva and Migdal Oz. Supporters were treated to a wonderful dinner at their beautiful home where they heard from Rabbi Menachem Linzer ’95, Principal at Hillel Torah North Suburban Day School, who shared words of Torah and spoke about the positive impact that Yeshivat Har Etzion had on himself and his rabbinic career.

The dinner was followed by a panel discussion with Rav Aharon Lichtenstein and Dr. Tovah Lichtenstein, led by Rabbi Leonard Matanky, Dean of the Ida Crown Jewish Academy and father of Yaakov ’99 z”l, Yitzi ’05, and Avi ’08. The topic was “Tradition and Change in the Torah World – A Religious and Social Perspective.” A delectable dessert reception capped the evening.

Rav Lichtenstein addressed students at Hillel Torah North Suburban Day School the next morning, where he was warmly received by students and faculty alike.
January

An alumni Shabbaton took place on Jan. 7, Parshat VaYechi, with Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein and Rav Daniel Rhein at Congregation Rinat Yisrael in Teaneck, NJ. Alumni participated in a dinner hosted by Elie ’83 and Miriam Berman (parents of Shai ’10), followed by a tish. The following day there was lunch at the shul, and over 60 alumni and parents joined together for seuda shlishit and a sicha. According to Gush alum Adam Freilich ’10, “The shabbaton was really an enjoyable opportunity to reunite and catch up with our rebeim and other alumni. A lot happens in life after yeshiva and it’s very helpful to stay connected to the yeshiva network.” The event concluded with a lovely Melave Malka in NYC, hosted by Jonathan ’02 and Shari Lauer.

Shiur & Breakfast: Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein spoke on the topic of “Leadership in Times of Crisis: Moshe Rabbeinu in Egypt,” on Sunday, January 8th at the Fifth Avenue Synagogue in NYC.

“Together, we shared meals, songs, stories, and divrei Torah. It was wonderful having Rav Rhein come, see and experience a regular Shabbat at Penn, and we really appreciated and enjoyed Rav Rhein bringing a slice of Yeshiva to campus.” Adam Pershan ’08 adds, “Rav Rhein’s visit was welcomed and appreciated by the large group of bogrim here at Penn. We had Shabbat dinner on Friday night in the dormitory (Rodin College House), and lunch in Hillel the next day. It was great to catch up, and it was really nice to see him.”

December

Parents of current students in Migdal Oz enjoyed an informal meeting with Esti Rozenberg, Head of the Beit Midrash, on Sunday Dec. 11 at the home of Barbara and Simcha Hochman (parents of Ayelet ’11MO) in Teaneck, NJ. In addition to hearing an update from Esti about this year’s program, parents also had time to speak with her about their daughters and to ask questions.

Some forty Yeshiva alumni, as well as the broader Columbia community, spent Shabbat Parshat VaYeshev (Dec. 16-17) with Rav Mordechai Friedman at Columbia University. Rav Friedman gave shiurim, participated in the meals and was available for personal meetings. One of the participants noted, “It was a great opportunity to catch up with Rav Mordechai and fellow alumni, and to spend an enjoyable and meaningful Shabbat together.”

Mazal tov to Rosh HaYeshiva Rav Aharon Lichtenstein and to Rabbi Julius and Mrs. Dottie Berman, President of the Etzion Foundation, on being Guests of Honor at the Yeshiva University dinner in November 2011.
ALUMNI ACTIVITIES IN ISRAEL

- The 6th Bar Mitzvah Program took place in the winter and was attended by 40 alumni and their sons.

- An alumni Shabbaton took place on Parshat VaYera (November 12) for alumni who began their studies in 1984-85. It was attended by 70 alumni and their families – close to 300 people. A highlight of the Shabbat was a discussion with Yeshiva staff on the topic of “Social Protest and the Religious Community”, with various speakers discussing the economic, legal, halakhic and social aspects of this timely and complex topic in Israel today.

- At Lincoln Square Synagogue, sixty Migdal Oz alumnae, their families, and women from the community came together for a Brunch-and-Learn. Dr. Ziegler spoke on the topic of “Paradise Regained: The Return to Gan Eden in Shir HaShirim”.

- Lunch-and-Learn at Kaye Scholer on the topic “Eliyahu: Prophet of Doom or Consolation?”

- Alumni and alumnae, as well as other students, participated in a Pizza-and-Learn at Columbia University

- Stern College was happy to host Dr. Ziegler who spoke on “Mizmor 145: Two Ways to Praise God”

- Three series of shiurim have taken place in Ra’anana this year: one by Rav Amnon Bazak before Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, one by Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein on “Educational Topics in the Book of Bereishit”, and another by Rav Menachem Leibtag on Parshat HaShavua in Sefer Shemot. A shiur was also given in Ra’anana by Rosh Yeshiva Rav Baruch Gigi before Purim in the home of Doni and Dorit Mayerfeld, parents of Ariel, a current talmid.

Details of upcoming alumni events can be found on the Yeshiva’s Hebrew website.
MEMPHIS CONNECTIONS

Yeshivat Har Etzion, now teaching Torah for close to 45 years, has alumni in almost every Jewish community in the world, actively contributing to the quality of Jewish life in their respective communities. Memphis, Tennessee is just one example among many. With a rabbi, two school principals, a Kollel MiTzion member and more, YHE alumni are making their mark on one of the oldest Jewish communities in the American South.

An Innovative Rabbi

One such alumnus is Rabbi Joel Finkelstein ‘81, Rabbi of Anshei Sphard-Beth El Emeth Congregation. A New York native, Rabbi Finkelstein has become well-known in Memphis as an innovative spiritual leader. He created the “Boutique Shabbat”, at which congregants can choose from one of eight workshops, instead of the weekly sermon. He has led numerous bnei mitzva to create original plays, booklets, videos and presentations in Israel. He developed “Speak Hebrew Memphis!” a program to encourage spoken Hebrew. And since 2009, Rabbi Finkelstein has hosted the weekly program “Ten Minutes for Torah,” a webcast and audio cast about parshat hashava which has thousands of listeners.

Rabbi Finkelstein proudly describes hosting Rosh Yeshiva Rav Moshe Lichtenstein, Rav Moshe Taragin and Rav Moshe Aberman in Memphis. His shul mission to Israel visited the Yeshiva three years ago and another visit is planned for November. “I haven’t been a talmit in Yeshiva in many years, and yet, it remains my spiritual base,” Rabbi Finkelstein explains.

Margolin Hebrew Academy / Feinstone Yeshiva of the South

The Dean of this central institution of southern Modern Orthodoxy is alumnus Rabbi Gil Perl ‘96. “There is no question that my experiences at Yeshivat Har Etzion profoundly impacted the various life decisions which have led me to Memphis and to the leadership of the Margolin Hebrew Academy,” states Rabbi Perl. “Time and again, the Roshei Yeshiva and rabbe’im emphasized the responsibility that we, as Har Etzion alumni, have to assume positions of communal leadership. It was in yeshiva that I first experienced the power and exhilaration of teaching, through the Moreh Le-Golah program of Herzog College, which gave me both the skills and the confidence to teach…

“The atmosphere of openness and diversity with regard to learning also deeply affected me. We were encouraged to find the area of Torah learning which spoke most to us and to pursue it passionately. That encouragement led me to explore the works of the Netziv while in Yeshiva and, several years later, to pursue a PhD on the Netziv at Harvard. Most of all, however, it was the connection and relationship with my rabbe’im at yeshiva that had the longest and greatest impact on my development. To this day, I treasure those relationships.”

Rabbi Uriel Lubetski ’91 is the Upper School Principal at the Margolin Hebrew Academy. He says, “Yeshivat Har Etzion has remained a part of my life since I was a teenager. Whether it was participating in shabbatonim, visiting the Yeshiva every year, attending the dinner, or joining various activities, I always maintained contact. Living in Memphis has made it difficult to physically link up with Yeshiva activities. However, the Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash and the Yeshiva’s various publications have connected me in other meaningful ways. As I read the Yeshiva’s shiurim online to find the area of Torah learning which spoke most to us and to pursue it passionately. That encouragement led me to explore the works of the Netziv while in Yeshiva and, several years later, to pursue or contemplate a passage from one of the various publications, I feel as if I’m still in Yeshiva, listening intently to Rav Aharon Lichtenstein’s deep shiur, Rav Medan’s novel interpretation of a Tanakh
story, or Rav Leibtag’s theme for the individual chumashim. Most importantly, the Yeshiva’s hashkafa of profound intellectual learning, sincere care for the individual, and living a balanced life on the basis of Torah values continues to inspire and guide me.”

The Beat Goes On

And the Har Etzion-Memphis connection continues. Currently, the Beit Midrash has three Memphis talmidim – Jonathan Tavin in Shana Aleph, Ariel Cooper in Shana Bet and Meir Samberg in the Hesder program. Cooper shares, “In many ways, Memphis’ diverse, resilient community led me to seek a yeshiva which confronts the entirety of religious Orthodox life, imbues its students with a strong sense of communal responsibility, and allows each student to mature independently at his own pace. However, it was Gush’s devotion to demanding, rigorous learning and probing intellectual honesty that was most appealing to me. Many pleasant surprises have made the Gush experience even more wonderful, namely, the extraordinary Tanakh curriculum, the belonging to an Israeli institution and community, and the many role models roaming the halls. Next year I hope to be able to bring the ethos of Gush back home to Memphis.”

Majesty and Humility:
The Thought of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik

by Rav Reuven Ziegler ’86
Editor-in-Chief of Yeshivat Har Etzion’s Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash, and Director of Research and Archives of the Toras HoRav Foundation
Volume 3 in The Rabbi Soloveitchik Library, edited by Rabbi Dr. Jacob J. Schacter
Published by Maimonides School, OU Press and Urim Publications

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, zt”l, was not only one of the outstanding Talmudists and religious leaders of the 20th century, but also one of its most creative and seminal Jewish thinkers. This comprehensive study analyzes Rav Soloveitchik’s writings in an accessible and engaging manner, thereby uncovering the depth, majesty and fascination of his thought.

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ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS

Rabbi Zeev Schwartz ’85, executive director of Rosh Yehudi and Orot TV
Adam Segal ’88, Principal of Yesodei Hatorah College, Melbourne, Australia
Dr. Avi Shmidman ’92 delivered a lecture entitled “Intertextual Appropriations in the Redemption Requests of Yehudah Halevi” at the Sixth Medieval Hebrew Poetry Colloquium, which took place at Ruhr-Universität in Bochum, Germany, July 2011
Jonathan Nathan ’93, promoted to Senior Counsel at Meitar Liquornik Geva & Leshem Brandwein Law Offices in Ramat Gan, Israel
Rabbi Dr. Barry Kislowicz ’95 is the new Head of the Fuchs Mizrachi School serving the greater Cleveland area
Rabbi Uzi Beer ’98, Assistant Principal, Judaic Studies, Yeshivat Noam Elementary School, Paramus, NJ
Meir Perez ’01, completed his Ph.D. in biomedical engineering
Mattii Borowski ’02 and Motti Blum ’06 are both members of the informal Jewish education team at Mount Scopus Memorial College in Melbourne, Australia
Rabbi Akiva Fleischmann ’05PC, received Semicha from YU
Dr. Yisrael Strous ’98K and Rabbi Dr. Ari Zivotofsky ’80 have apparently disproved the claim that the process of stunning animals before slaughter is humane and minimizes their suffering. Compulsory pre-stunning, which makes kosher shechita impossible, is being advocated in many European countries. The “stunning bill”, which was passed in the lower house of the Dutch Parliament, was recently delayed in the upper house due to much lobbying – including academic input such as the Strous-Zivotofsky research. More details on the Yeshiva website.

The Beat Goes On

And the Har Etzion-Memphis connection continues. Currently, the Beit Midrash has three Memphis talmidim – Jonathan Tavin in Shana Aleph, Ariel Cooper in Shana Bet and Meir Samberg in the Hesder program. Cooper shares, “In many ways, Memphis’ diverse, resilient community led me to seek a yeshiva which confronts the entirety of religious Orthodox life, imbues its students with a strong sense of communal responsibility, and allows each student to mature independently at his own pace. However, it was Gush’s devotion to demanding, rigorous learning and probing intellectual honesty that was most appealing to me. Many pleasant surprises have made the Gush experience even more wonderful, namely, the extraordinary Tanakh curriculum, the belonging to an Israeli institution and community, and the many role models roaming the halls. Next year I hope to be able to bring the ethos of Gush back home to Memphis.”

Majesty and Humility:
The Thought of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik

by Rav Reuven Ziegler ’86
Editor-in-Chief of Yeshivat Har Etzion’s Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash, and Director of Research and Archives of the Toras HoRav Foundation
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ALUMNI NEWS

Marriages
Alon Chazan ’99 and Yonit Levi
Dovid Davies ’01 and Rickie Jacobson
Sammy Shapiro ’03 and Debby Goldschmiedt
Joe Scherban ’04 and Jessica Kestenbaum
Avi Miller ’04 and Leila Grossman
Avi Rabinovich ’05 and Aliza Schwartz
Yehoshua Rabinowitz ’05 and Erit Sterling
Tzvi Cohen ’05 and Alex Kuritz
Joe Scherban ’04 and Jessica Kestenbaum
Avi Miller ’04 and Leila Grossman
Avi Rabinovich ’05 and Aliza Schwartz
Yehoshua Rabinowitz ’05 and Erit Sterling
Tzvi Cohen ’05 and Alex Kuritz
Josh Caplin ’05 and Tamara Baum
Alex Berman ’06 and Miriam Trent
Ian Lurie ’08 and Sharona Mayer
Josh Pomerance ’08 and Michelle Hart

Births
Moshe ’88 and Chanie Jacobs, Zev Yisrael Yona, Beit Shemesh
Kalman ’91 and Jordana Schoor, Tanya Nicole, Modiin
Rafi ’94 and Jordana Epstein, Yaakov Avichai, Alon Shevut
Jonny ’94 and Aimee Hass, Yitzchak Elazar, Toronto, Canada
Benji Shiller ’94 and Atara Miller, Eliraz Maayan, Riverdale, NY
Dani ’95 and Nina Bieler, Ezra Yehuda Lev, Teaneck, NJ
Reuven ’95 and Nehama Weiser, Talya Devora, Efrat
Eliav ’95 and Adi Silverman, Yehudit Raizel, Jerusalem
Shmuel ’95 and Talya Bloom, Uriel Menashe, Ramat Beit Shemesh
Menachem ’98 and Abby Lazar, Elnatan Shalom, Riverdale, NY
Uzi ’98 and Rachel Beer, Liana Bracha, Springfield, NY
J.J. ’98 and Tamar Brandler, Ayla Rachaela, Bronx, NY
Dov ’99 and Aura Rosenblatt, Moshe Kol, Los Angeles, CA
Ariel ’99 and Tirza Bayewitz, Shmuel Mordechai, Teaneck, NJ
Josh Schainker ’01 and Mira Lipsky, Zev Fishel (Zeki), Teaneck, NJ
Hillel ’01 and Melanie Mirvis, Tamara Zehava, London, England
Danny ’01 and Malka Popper, Tzvi Amichai (Ami), NYC
Danny ’01 and Riki Friedman, Livia Gabriella, Sydney, Australia
Yehoshua ’01 and Yocheved Lindenbaum, Aderet Tehilla, Bronx, NY
Ari ’01 and Daniela Ziskind, Yehuda Eliezer, Cherry Hill, NJ
Michael ’02 and Liora Stein, Anaelle Bracha Meira, Riverdale, NY
Reuven ’02 and Shira Herskovitz, Ayala Bracha, Alon Shevut
Dale ’02 and Batya Schaffer, Netanel Shlomo, Givat Shmuel
Donny ’02 and Arielle Rosenberg, Gabriella Leah, Riverdale, NY
Leron ’02 and Sarah Bernstein, Eliana Shira, Efrat
Yisroel (Srully) ’03 and Yael Cohen, Raizel Leah (Rayli), Chicago, IL
Doron ’03 and Dina Luder, Neriya Mahalalet, London, England
Josh ’04 and Lani Berman, Yaakov Uriel, Alon Shevut
Jonny ’04 and Rachael Granby, Nava, Modiin
Robbie ’04 and Devorah Tockar, Yehoshua, Sydney, Australia
Akiva ’05PC and Talia Fleischmann, Reia Zenia, NYC
Sam ’06PC and Chanala Iser, Chaim Yehoshua Baruch, Baltimore, MD
Noam ’07 and Shifty ’06MO Friedman, Avital Hodaya, NYC
David ’07K and Sara Wolkenfeld, Sophie Jane (Tzofia Yasha), Princeton, NJ
Yisraei ’09PC and Ilana Rappaport, Gavriel, Kochav Hashachar
Alex ’09PC and Nechama ’07MO Greenberg, Maayan Channah, Jerusalem
Ryan ’12K and Yael Levin, Netanel Mordechai, Alon Shevut

For marriages of children and births of grandchildren, please see our website: www.haretzion.org

NEW BOOKS BY HAR ETZION COMMUNITY
Mazal Tov to HaRav Aharon and Dr. Tovah Lichtenstein on the birth of twin great-grandchildren

Bar/Bat Mitzva
Tani Finkelstein (Rabbi Joel ’82 and Bluma), Memphis, TN
Michael Suna (David ’83 and Susan), Alon Shvut
Ayelet Berkowitz (Laurence ’84 and Michelle), Beit Shemesh
Hillel Erez Bayme (Michael ’85 and Shira), Beit Shemesh
Elan Giatt (David ’85 and Michal), Beit Shemesh
Yosef Gluch (Ariel ’86 and Devorah), Beit Shemesh
Liora Marsden (Julian ’87 and Dawn), Beit Shemesh
Joe Shapiro (Gavriel ’87 and Devorah), Oakland, CA
Osher Zuckerbrot (David ’87 and Bibsi), Beit Shemesh
Elisha Segal (Adam ’88 and Nehama), Melbourne, Australia
Eytan Pluznick (Jerome ’88 and Michal), Zurich, Switzerland
Doron Eisen (David ’88 and Sara), Beit Shemesh
Alyssa Emma Silvera (Hillel ’91 and Saritte), Cedarhurst, NY
Talya Sarah Lisker (Jay ’92 and Gita), Jamaica Estates, NY
Adina Sara Asenthal (David ’92 and Rahel Berkovits), Jerusalem
Mazal Tov to Rav Herzl and Esti Rozenberg on the bar mitzva of Yehiel, and to grandparents HaRav Aharon and Dr. Tovah Lichtenstein and the entire family.

Aliya
Tani ’86 and Tamar Benovitz, Jerusalem
Daniel Goykhman ’10–’11, in Yeshiva
Stephan (Shimi) Marcus’11PC, in Yeshiva

Condolences
To Judah Isaacs ’82 on the untimely passing of his wife, Beth z”l, and to their children Uri, Gavi, Eitan and Chana and the entire family.
To David Harbater ’84 on the loss of his mother, Mrs. Sylvia (Harbater) Cohen z”l
To Eliezer (Josh) Friedman ’93 on the loss of his mother, Lynette Friedman z”l
To Neil ’97 and Tova Kirshner on the tragic loss of their son, Reuven z”l
To Simon ’00 and Michael ’03 Klinger on the loss of their father, Ashley Klinger z”l
To Ruti Medan, wife of Rav Yaakov Medan, on the tragic loss of her brother, Elchanan Shmueli z”l

To Rav Danny Rhein, Menahel Ruchani, on the loss of his mother, Mrs. Edith Rhein z”l
To Uri Mintzer ’73H, Dani Mintzer ’76H and Dr. Michal Lichtenstein on the loss of their father, R’ Yisrael Eliyahu Mintzer z”l

The year listed indicates the commencement of study

For details, please see our website: www.haretzion.org.il
In addition to the numerous Har Etzion alumni serving as lawyers throughout Israel and overseas, there is an impressive list of YHE alumni who are serving as judges in regional courts in Israel: David Mintz '78H, Alon Infeld '83H and Ram Winograd '85H were appointed this past year. Other regional judges are: Daniel Teperberg '70H, Aharon Mishnayot '79H, Refael Yaakobi '81H, Naftali Shilo '85H, Shlomo Friedlander '80H and Alexander Ron '83. Noam Solberg '85 was recently sworn in as a judge in Israel’s Supreme Court. Congratulations to Noam and his wife Meira, YHE librarian. Justice Solberg recently spoke at the Yeshiva about “Self-Defense in Law and Halakha.”

Four Generations
Four generations of the Berman family recently celebrated a Brit Mila at Yeshiva. In the picture at right, baby Yaakov Uriel is pictured with parents Josh ’04, currently in Kollel, and Lani Berman, grandparents Zev and Judy Berman, and great-grandparents Rabbi Julius and Dottie Berman, President of the Etzion Foundation. Mazal Tov to the entire family!

Josh and Lani turned the Pidyon HaBen of their son into a learning experience for the Yeshiva’s talmidim. The Pidyon was preceded by a shiur from Rav Pini Cohen on the halakhot and background of Pidyon HaBen and the Pidyon itself was accompanied by step-by-step explanations. “The event was spiritual, educational and uplifting,” according to Eli Weber, Director of the Overseas Program.