Celebrating a Life of Vision

The Yeshiva’s founder, Moshe Moskovics (known affectionately as “Moshko”), is turning 90 this year. It was Moshko who first envisioned Gush Etzion as a community with a yeshiva at its heart, and it was Moshko who turned to HaRav Amital zt”l in 1967 and asked him if he would be willing to become the first Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Har Etzion.

Moshko’s dramatic life story mirrors the history of the State of Israel. Born in Czechoslovakia in 1925, when he was still a child his family made aliya to Mandatory Palestine. In 1945, Moshko became a founding member of Kibbutz Massuot Yitzchak, one of the first settlements in Gush Etzion. In 1947, Moshko served as an emissary to Cyprus, where he aided clandestine immigration to Palestine.

With the fall of Gush Etzion in 1948, the surviving members of Massuot Yitzchak relocated to the Ashkelon area. Moshko was chosen to head the local regional council of Mercaz Shapira, a post which he held for many years, and where he played a pivotal role in the physical and spiritual absorption of the massive immigration to that area in the 80s and 90s.

In 1967, following the liberation of Gush Etzion, Moshko was a major force in the area’s rebirth and development. He created the concept of the communal settlement (“yishuv kehilati”), of which Alon Shevut is the prototype. Moshko also envisioned and founded the vibrant town of Efrat, and served as its first mayor.

But of all his myriad accomplishments, Moshko’s pride and joy was the establishment of Yeshivat Har Etzion, together with HaRav Yehuda Amital zt”l. “I see in the Yeshiva a combination of all the ideals for which our comrades fell in ’48,” Moshko explains.

In appreciation of his vision and long-term leadership, the Yeshiva organized a day-long tour of many of the major stations in Moshko’s life – the Yeshiva, Kibbutz Massuot Yitzchak, the educational institutions of Mercaz Shapira, Mikveh Yisrael agricultural school where Moshko studied, the site of the original Massuot Yitzchak, and Efrat. Moshko was accompanied on the tour by friends, family and Yeshiva staff.

Moshko said, “The tiyul reminded me of all the wonderful people I have worked with, and the important work that we were able to accomplish together.” Yoni Holzer, CEO of Yeshivat Har Etzion, added, “Moshko is truly a unique individual, a builder of the Jewish land and Jewish people who is able to take an abstract vision and make it real.”

Still going strong at 90, Moshko continues to take an active role in the management of his beloved Yeshiva. May HaShem grant him good health and happiness ad meah v’esrim!
**The Beit Midrash Report**

This year there are 460 students in the Beit Midrash, including 120 students in the Dr. William Major Overseas Students Program and 65 post-Hesder students. The incoming 47th machzor has 78 students, one of the largest groups in recent years. The entire Beit Midrash is learning Masechet Ketubot this year.

**Understanding the Masechet**

To complement the study of Masechet Ketubot this year, some of which deals with violent sexual crimes, the Yeshiva invited Yonina Fallenberg, Director of the Rape Crisis Center for Religious Women in Tel Aviv, to speak at the Yeshiva. She was moved by the invitation, noting that she normally speaks to communities after the fact, when there has been an incidence of sexual abuse. She was impressed that the Yeshiva understood that “the greatest Torah is that which is connected to reality.”

Rav Jonathan Ziring of the Kollel Gavoah, wrote up a description of Fallenberg’s talk, and Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein’s follow-up discussion, in an article for The Forward. Rav Ziring wrote that when learning Gemara “it’s easy to forget (especially when using the Hebrew terms) that ‘ones u-mefateh’ are not just legal categories, but traumatic events that affect real people...[the lectures] reminded us, the students at Yeshivat Har Etzion, that Torah must not remain in the abstract. Yeshivas must encourage students to connect our ancient Jewish texts to what’s actually going on around us. We must be able to understand how Torah relates to real life — even, or perhaps especially, when it comes to painful issues like rape and sexual assault. If we don’t, how will the Torah truly be Torat chayim, a Torah of life?”

Read more at: http://blogs.forward.com/forward-thinking/208361/its-time-for-yeshivas-to-fight-rape-culture/
Chanukah with Revava

Continuing its tradition of holding annual Chanukah study days in memory of Riva Koschitzky z”l, this year Revava dedicated the first two days of Chanukah to an in-depth examination of conversion in our time.

The lectures directly addressed the ongoing public debate in Israel around conversion, especially as it relates to the integration of non-Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Speakers represented a range of views and brought to the discussion a tremendous amount of scholarship and professional experience. The speakers, including rabbis who serve on conversion courts in Israel and abroad, provided talmidim and guest listeners with much insight into the halachic, philosophic and societal aspects of modern conversion.

Some of the many notable guest speakers were Rav Oren Duvdevani ‘90H, Rav of Moshav Sde Ilan and Av Beit Din for conversion in Mexico, Rav Eliyahu Birnbaum ‘76, Head of “Amiel”, Rav of “Shavai Yisrael” and a Dayan in conversion courts, Rav Moshe Louphier who heads the army’s conversion program, Professor Rami Rheiner ‘79H of Ben Gurion University, Professor Arye Edrei of Tel Aviv University, and Professor Benjamin Ish Shalom ‘71H, President of Beit Morasha.

Ger tzeder Aharon Kalderon inspired listeners with the story of his spiritual journey. Like a modern Avraham Avinu, Aharon went looking for “the first cause”. Born in a small town in Argentina devoid of Jews, his journey took him to a monastery, and then to Buenos Aires where he met his first Jews. As he described the experience: “I reached a point of tremendous inner turmoil. I could not sleep at night. I used to go on Shabbat to the shul and on Sunday to the cathedral. But when I saw Jews keeping the Shabbat, I realized that indeed os he le’olam – Shabbat is an eternal sign that the Jewish people have a permanent covenant with HaKadosh Baruch Hu.”

Chuck Davidson, father of Yair ‘14H and Akiva ‘10H, attended. He said, “As a conversion activist for more than five years, I believe the discourse started during the Revava Yemei Iyun is an important contribution to the development of a practical approach towards stemming the tenfold growth in Israel’s intermarriage rates since the fall of the Soviet Union. It is my hope that the Yeshiva will continue to play an important role in advancing the halachic discourse surrounding this challenging issue.”

VBM Launches New Website

The Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash (VBM) of Yeshivat Har Etzion was one of the earliest Torah presences on the web. Established in 1994, the VBM has built a loyal following of thousands of subscribers who receive in-depth Torah classes via audio and/or text. The VBM recently launched its new website, which provides an updated interface, more powerful search features and new content.

The new interface has a modern, up-to-date look that is visually appealing and easy to use. Rav Ezra Bick, Rosh Yeshiva of the Virtual Beit Midrash says: “The new VBM is the largest repository of quality Torah shiurim on the web. More than ever, it is a window for every Jew into the Beit Midrash.”

The new search capacities of the site enable the user to search thousands of classes on the site by keyword, topic or lecturer. The new VBM has also become more interactive by enabling comments, and the option to send the lecturer a question about the class.

Perhaps the most exciting addition to the new VBM platform is the inclusion of entire books which were until now only available in print. Sefarim of Rosh Yeshiva HaRav Aharon Lichtenstein, Yeshiva Ram Rav Daniel Wolf and Rosh Yeshiva HaRav Yehuda Amital z”l can now be viewed online and downloaded from the site in their entirety – for free. Hundreds of audio cassettes of the classes of HaRav Aharon Lichtenstein are being converted to digital format and will soon be uploaded to the site as well.

Special thanks are due to a small group of tech-savvy Yeshiva alumni and friends, who volunteered time and effort to help direct the creation of the new site.

For veteran users and for those who have yet to try the Virtual Beit Midrash, now is the time to enjoy this amazing resource, whether for a daily dvar Torah or an ongoing course: http://etzion.org.il/en
Serving in the IDF is a challenging experience in many ways. Students go from the supportive religious environment of their families and yeshivot to a 24/7 secular environment. In addition, the demands and responsibilities placed upon the soldiers can be heavy. The Yeshiva’s Ramim and Roshei Yeshiva visit the students regularly, providing support and encouragement, and maintaining the rav-talmid connection.

In November, Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yaakov Medan visited Har Etzion students serving in the Combat Intelligence Collection Corps, tasked with collecting combat-related intelligence and maintaining observation networks. All visits to soldiers are coordinated through IDF Command. Interestingly, when the commanding officer received a request from Rav Medan to visit the Yeshiva’s students, he asked that the Rosh Yeshiva speak not only to the Hesder students but to the entire battalion. Rav Medan spoke about “Yaakov Avinu – Between Truth and Falsehood.” Rav Medan commented, “When our students serve in the army, their brothers-in-arms become our students as well.”

Daniel Gofine of Toronto came to Yeshiva in 2011, returned for Shana Bet and then joined the IDF in March of his second year, as a Machal Hesder soldier in the Givati Brigade. He served in Yehuda, Shomron and on the Gazan border. He is now continuing his studies at Yeshiva University.

Daniel says, ”The Yeshiva played an integral role in my decision to join the army, and continued to guide me as I served. While studying in the Beit Midrash alongside Israeli Hesder students, I was inspired by my peers and chavrutot who were serving in the army, and made me feel responsible to contribute to our State as well.”

“I had a really positive experience while I was in the army. I loved meeting people from all over the world and feeling a deep sense of connection and commitment to the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

Doing my part to keep Israel’s civilians safe was an incredibly rewarding and fulfilling experience, and something that I look back on very fondly.”

“The supportive environment of the Yeshiva, including the encouragement, advice, and assistance of the faculty, made my army experience rich and rewarding. I especially want to thank my Shiur Aleph Ram, Rav Mordechai Friedman, who helped me come to a decision about enlisting, as well as Rav Rhein and Eli Weber, who provided support and guidance when I needed it.”
An Innovative New Hesder Track

Yeshivat Har Etzion continues to be among the most innovative Hesder Yeshivot, working with students to meet their changing needs without compromising on the outstanding Torah education it offers. In this instance, the Yeshiva has created an all-new Hesder track to fit the times.

In today’s dati leumi world, many yeshiva students are interested in serving in the army for a full three years, like the majority of Israeli soldiers. In addition, a steadily growing number of religious soldiers would like to become officers, which requires a commitment to at least four years of army service.

In the past, a Hesder student who chose to extend his army service beyond the 16 months mandated by the Hesder system would have no choice but to drop out of Hesder. Once a soldier dropped out of Hesder, there was no framework for the Yeshiva to maintain contact and support the former student during the course of his service. The new track offers a solution for students like this. The Yeshiva has formalized with the army a groundbreaking three-year service option for Hesder students.

In the new track, students will benefit from two full years of intensive Torah study, together with their peers. Following the first two years of study, the entire class will enter the army together as a group. Those who choose to remain in the army for a full three years will continue to be considered Hesder students by both the army and the Yeshiva. Following their service, extended service students will be invited to return to the yeshiva for a final year of study.

Rav Shlomo Brin, Yeshiva Chairman Elect, explains some of the thinking behind this important change: “Our community educates to serving our people. While the Yeshiva feels that the classic Hesder arrangement remains the best option for most of our incoming students, we respect the desire to serve even more time in the army. By creating a track for longer service, we have opened the door for a number of dedicated students who might not otherwise learn in Yeshiva and have the opportunity to develop religiously. The new track will enable them to benefit from at least two years in the intensive learning environment of Yeshivat Har Etzion, and from the support of our educational staff throughout their army service.”

VIP Visits

Rabbi Hershel Schachter, Rosh Yeshiva at Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS), Yeshiva University gave a shiur to Har Etzion talmidim on Sunday, Nov. 16 and also spent Shabbat Parshat Toldot at the Yeshiva.

Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein addressed students at Yeshiva on Motzei Shabbat Chayei Sarah (Nov. 15). He spoke about current events and answered questions from the audience.

Rabbi Mordechai Willig, the Rabbi Dr. Sol Roth Professor of Talmud and Contemporary Halacha at RIETS, Yeshiva University, visited the Yeshiva in November.
Preserving History

In anticipation of the Yeshiva's fiftieth anniversary in 2018, the Yeshiva is upgrading and expanding its archive of historic photos, documents etc. The plan is to make the archive available to the general public at a dedicated center on the Yeshiva's campus, as well as via the Yeshiva's website.

Chief Librarian Aharon Bejell '75, who has assumed the additional position of Director of the new archive, explains, "We want the content to be accessible for generations to come, so that they too will be aware of the Torah and spiritual energy which motivates our Beit Midrash and has made its mark on the State of Israel and on Jewish communities worldwide."

The Yeshiva invites alumni to donate relevant photos, videos, audio recordings, documents and other artifacts to the archive, as well as personal memories or testimonies. To donate materials, or to volunteer in collecting and organizing materials, please contact Aharon Bejell at yhe.archive@gmail.com

Culinary Capers

The Darkaynu program for special needs students always includes cooking classes as part of the students' training in life skills. This year, though, the class is on fire! Chef Hillel Wasserman, an American olim who works in the Yeshiva kitchen, is running the weekly class and has turned it into a theater festival. Each week, Chef Hillel dresses according to a theme or in the costume of a country (such as Mexico, Italy or China) and then teaches the students how to whip up some dishes from that country's heritage or the day's theme. The American evening had a baseball theme. Hillel dressed up like a catcher and the group made hotdogs and french fries together. Needless to say, the Darkaynu students love the class and can't wait to get cooking every week. Bon Appetit!
**OVERSEAS EVENTS**

**Australia**

**Rav Amnon Bazak** was invited by the Mizrachi Organization of Melbourne to visit Australia in November. Over the course of the visit, Rav Bazak spoke in synagogues and other community frameworks in Perth, Sydney and Melbourne. He met with many alumni, including Israeli students who are in Australia as participants in the Torah MiTzion Kollel. Rav Bazak was moved to see that alumni of the Yeshiva hold key roles throughout the community. He commented, "I hope that this visit will help to further deepen the connection between the Yeshiva and its alumni in Australia and between the Yeshiva and the Jewish communities of Australia, and that, with God’s help, the connection will continue to grow."

**England**

Rosh Yeshiva **Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein** and **Rav Mordechai Friedman** spent an intense few days in England on November 27th-29th. In the short time they were in London, they spoke at 18 events, including addressing the Jewish students’ group at Cambridge, the Midrasha for Women at the London School of Jewish Studies, the Hendon Beit Midrash and six different shuls. The weekend was capped on Motzei Shabbat by the first-ever Yeshivat Har Etzion alumni fundraising dinner, held in honor of Rav Friedman, with guest speaker **Rabbi Chaim Kanterovitz** ’93H, Rabbi of Borehamwood and Elstree Synagogue.

On Sunday morning **Jacob and Vered Schimmel**, parents of Gush alumni **Yoni** ’07, **Yishai** ’08, **Itai** ’11 and **Netanel** ’13, hosted a breakfast reception in their home in honor of Rav Mosheh and Rav Mordechai’s visit to London.

For Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein and Rav Mordechai Friedman the trip was a wonderful opportunity to reconnect face-to-face with their *talmidim* in the UK. As Rav Mordechai said, "It was very moving for me to see how strongly our students identify with the derech and mission of the Yeshiva. They demonstrated this commitment both by attending *shiurim* and by showing their financial support as well."
On the first night of Selichot, Motzei Shabbat Sept 20th, Ma’ayanot High School for Girls hosted the 6th Annual Migdal Oz Erev Shira v’Hitoreirut. The event was attended by about 180 women who came to reconnect, sing and infuse themselves with the spirit of the coming Yamim Nora’im.

The singing portion of the evening was followed by an inspirational shiur “The Place of Humility in Our Teshuva Process” given by Mrs. Shayna Goldberg, a former Ma’ayanot teacher and Bergen County Yoetzet Halacha who now teaches Tanach and Halacha at Migdal Oz. The beautiful recitation of Selichot that followed was led by Har Etzion alumnus Adin Goldstein ’12.

Thank you to sponsors Rena and Jerry Barta, Penina and Jacob Bernstein, Shoshana and Ayol Samuels, Rivi and Avi Katz, Faye and David Landes, Rabbi Yaakov Yaacov and Abby Lerner, Yocheved and Nathan Lindenbaum, Guita and Steven Wilf, and Gila Leiter and James Lavin (whose sponsorship was in honor of the yahrzeit of Gila’s mother, Esther Leiter z”l).

Recent Migdal Oz alumnae greatly enjoyed a Shabbaton at Congregation Rinat Yisrael in Teaneck, NJ, which featured a Friday night tish at the home of Simcha and Barbara Hochman, parents of Ayelet ’11MO, and Seudah Shlishit at the home of Ora and Jay Forman, parents of Tamar ’12MO. There were about 45 girls at the meals and several more joined the tish and Seudah Shlishit. On Motzei Shabbat there was a get-together with 26 post-collegiate bogrot at the Mt. Sinai Jewish Center in Washington Heights. On Sunday evening, Esti and Racheli met with parents of current Migdal Oz students at the Teaneck home of Dassi and Joey Silverman, parents of Yonina ’14MO.

Racheli Schmell summarizes, "Each year, spending time with the bogrot in America inspires me. The annual Shabbaton is a great opportunity to reconnect with our students and learn of all their incredible accomplishments."

On December 7, Connie and Alan Kadish, parents of Naomi ’13MO, hosted a dessert reception for Migdal Oz at their home, with Beit Midrash Head Esti Rosenberg and Har Etzion Rosh Yeshiva Rav Baruch Gigi.
The Yeshiva’s Annual Shabbaton took place this year on Parshat VaYeshev (Dec. 12-13) at the Young Israel of Woodmere with Rav Baruch Gigi, Rav Danny Rhein and Head of Overseas Program Eli Weber. It was attended by over 50 alumni who welcomed the opportunity to reconnect with the Yeshiva. Rav Gigi quoted the parsha, in which Yehuda describes Yaakov’s connection to Yoseph by saying, “nafsho keshura b’nafsho” – his soul was tied to his soul – and remarked that this phrase perfectly expresses the relationship between the Yeshiva and its alumni.

The Shabbaton was followed by a Motzei Shabbat meeting with current Gush parents at the home of Nathan ’78 and Yocheved Lindenbaum.

In September, Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein was in North America for a few days. He was asked to deliver the annual Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov lecture in memory of Dov Rubinstein z”l, grandfather of Ilan Rubinstein ’96. Rav Mosheh spoke on the topic of “An Orthodox Approach to Biblical Criticism”. Rabbi Dr. Seth Grauer ’97, Head of Bnei Akiva Schools in Toronto, described the event: “It was a true privilege for us to host Rav Lichtenstein, whose approach to biblical criticism was both fascinating and engaging.”
This year, the Beit Midrash proudly welcomed its largest group of talmidot ever, 135 young women who have decided to dedicate their year to studying Torah at the Stella K. Abraham Beit Midrash for Women Migdal Oz. Among these 135 women are 31 overseas students (bnot chul) from the US and Canada, who are completely integrated with their Israeli peers. This year, there are also 5 Shana Bet Bnot Chul, young women who are returning from abroad for a second year of study in the Beit Midrash. Shana Aleph is learning Masechet Brachot this year, and Shana Bet is learning Bava Metzia.

The Israeli students include young women both before and after National Service, as well as a new group, called the Garin Tzva’i, that will be going to the army together – read more on that below.

The second class of the Advanced Scholars Program in Talmud and Halacha also took their seats in the Beit Midrash this year. The group is comprised of nine women from across the country who are studying Masechet Bava Metzia and Hilchot Shabbat, under the guidance of YHE Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein, Rav Dr. Judah Goldberg, and Dr. Michal Tikochinsky. Meanwhile, last year’s graduates are already teaching in a number of prominent educational institutions across Israel, spreading the Har Etzion message as far as Zichron Yaakov in the North and Yeruchum in the South.

Zman Elul in the Beit Midrash was jam-packed with exciting events and inspirational learning. With the start of selichot, hundreds of women descended upon the Beit Midrash nightly, as the sounds of teshuva could be heard echoing from the building until 3 AM. Each night of selichot was preceded by a guest speaker, and the students heard from many wonderful teachers, including Rav Benny Lau, Rav Dr. Yonatan Grossman, Rav Yitzchak Levi, and halachic expert Malka Puterkovsky. The Zman culminated with Yom Kippur, when the Beit Midrash hosted approximately 600 women (and 60 men) for a spiritual and inspirational tefilla.

- The morning after Yom Kippur, the overseas students set out on a trip to the Golan. They spent three days exploring the region, hiking by the Jilaboon stream, wading through Nachal Kibbutzim, and enjoying an evening in Teveriya. They returned to the Beit Midrash after Sukkot with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

Shabbat Kibbutz

This year, the Beit Midrash planned a joint Shabbat with Kibbutz Migdal Oz, which enabled the talmidot to get better acquainted with the community within which they live and learn. They davened in the local shul and heard a shiur by Rav Ori Samet, the kibbutz rabbi. The talmidot ate Shabbat meals with kibbutz families, and there was a tish in the Beit Midrash on leil Shabbat in which Beit Midrash staff, talmidot and kibbutz members shared songs and words of Torah.
Welcoming Back Alumnae

As the Beit Midrash welcomed in the new year, it also welcomed the start of a new learning program for alumnae. This new program, spearheaded by Rav Avishai Schreiber, Ram in the Beit Midrash, offers two days of learning a week, focused on Masechet Shabbat. This initiative provides an opportunity for our alumnae to remain a part of the Beit Midrash and to successfully integrate Torah into their everyday lives. With seventeen alumnae registered, it is a pleasure to see so many familiar faces in the Beit Midrash.

Talya Neuman ’08MO, who spent three years in the Beit Midrash and is now a social worker and mother, enthusiastically returns to the Beit Midrash twice a week. She says, “To integrate Torah twice a week, to come back to the Beit Midrash and learn Torah from an older, more mature perspective, coming from the outside world of work and family – is like coming home.”

Big Sister/Little Sister Program

Each year, the number of overseas students who decide to declare aliyah and make Israel their home increases. Now that the total number of overseas alumnae in Israel is nearing 100, the Beit Midrash has decided to implement a support system for the new immigrants. The Big Sister/Little Sister program pairs up young new olot with older, more experienced alumnae olot. The “big sister” is there to answer any questions her “little sister” might have about the absorption process (or the bureaucracy), to host her for shabbatot, and to simply be a friendly face who’s there to help the young olah feel at home.

The program was founded by Tikva Shore ’09MO, Madricha and Director of English Communications and Social Media at Migdal Oz. She says, “We hope that this program will help forge meaningful bonds and friendships, and create a lasting connection to the Beit Midrash, both for older and younger alumnae.”

Chanukah Yemei Iyun

This year’s annual Chanukah seminar focused on “Kedusha, Adama Ve’Makom” (On Sanctity, Land and Location). The topic was chosen as a result of the current controversy which surrounds Har HaBayit. The three intensive days focused on the concept of kedusha from many different angles, asking questions such as: What makes something holy? To what lengths is one willing to go for something they believe is holy? Is Eretz Yisrael inherently holy? What is the place of the Beit HaMikdash in our daily lives? The diverse group of speakers, including Rav Yehuda Gilad ’75H of Yeshivat Maaleh Gilboa, Rav Yuval Cherlow ’75H of Yeshivat Orot Shaul, and Rav Yisrael Ariel, Director of the Temple Institute, each presented his own unique perspective.

Esti Rosenberg said, “It is amazing to see such a large group of women sitting for three days and delving into such a large, important topic, willing to learn and asking such meaningful questions.”

Yom Iyun on Tzuk Eitan and Current Conflicts in Israel

On November 24, the Beit Midrash sponsored a seminar day offering perspectives on the past summer’s battles in Gaza and subsequent acts of violence and terror. The distinguished list of speakers included Racheli Shprecher-Fraenkel, the mother of Naftali hy”d, who was abducted.
and murdered prior to Operation Protective Edge, Rav Rafi Perez, Chief Rabbi of the IDF, and Rav Dov Zinger, Rosh Yeshiva at Mekor Chaim Yeshiva High School, where Naftali Fraenkel hy’d and Gil-ad Sha’er hy’d were students.

Garin Tzva’i

Last year, the Beit Midrash founded its first Army Garin, a group made up of 21 women who decided to spend a year learning Torah before joining the IDF. Thanks to the Beit Midrash, these women were able to go through the conscription process together, and many of them joined the same units. The garin acts as a religious support system throughout their army service, much like the Hesder yeshiva system supports its talmidim. The young women are visited regularly by members of the Beit Midrash staff, and they spend several shabbatot together in the Beit Midrash, comparing experiences and supporting each other in their respective fields of service. The incoming second Garin Tzva’i has 28 talmidot and, because it fills an important need, the program is expected to continue growing in the future.

Hadar ’13MO, currently serving in the IDF Education Corps, relates, “The transition from the Beit Midrash to the army is extremely difficult. You have just experienced something that is so different, so special... and then suddenly you need to work, to focus on the job in front of you. When the Ramim from Migdal Oz visit, it jogs your memory, and reminds you of who you are and where you came from--it keeps you connected to the learning, to the amazing experience that is the Beit Midrash is.”

A New Gemara Shiur

This year, the Beit Midrash is excited to announce a new, challenging iyun Gemara shiur for talmidot interested in learning more intensively. The shiur, which is in addition to regular morning seder, is taught by Har Etzion Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein and by Rav Koby Gigi (son of Har Etzion Rosh Yeshiva Rav Baruch Gigi), and is focused on Masechet Sanhedrin. The women have approximately nine extra hours of intensive study throughout the week.

Shana Bet student Penina Warburg ’13MO explains, “The combination of long chevruta periods and thought-provoking shiurim is allowing me to truly hone my iyun skills, particularly when it comes to reading Rishonim thoroughly and examining how their explanations compare to each other and to the plain meaning (pshat) of the text.”

Volunteering in Memory of Barkai Shor

Barkai Shor z”l of Jerusalem was killed this past summer while fighting in Tzuk Eitan (Operation Protective Edge). To honor his memory, his friends and community initiated a project, named Mivtza Abu Yoyo – a week in which everyone would do small acts of chesed in Barkai’s memory. Barkai was known in his community for his constant kindness, never hesitating to help out a friend in need. As part of this initiative, the entire Beit Midrash spent a morning volunteering in various places, including an old age home, a center for packaging food for the needy, memorial site Givat Oz Ve’Gaon, and a hospital. Yehi zichro baruch.
There’s a long waiting list to get into Malka Puterkovsky’s Gemara shiur in Migdal Oz. No one in the class, which has been going strong for four years now, is leaving. Who is Malka and why is her shiur so popular?

Malka Puterkovsky was one of the first women to teach halacha and Gemara at an advanced level in Israel. As a child, her father learned Gemara with her and it was her favorite subject in Pelech High School. Later on, she got a BA in Talmud from Bar-Ilan University and an MA from Tel Aviv University. She taught in her alma mater, Pelech, for many years, headed the Beit Midrash in Midreshet Lindenbaum for 11 years, and for the past few years has been teaching Torah across Israel, in institutions of women’s learning as well as numerous forums for secular Jews. She is on the boards and steering committees of various influential organizations such as Forum Takana, Mavoi Satum, Ma’agalei Tzedek and the Ma’ale Film School, as well as a member of the Ministry of Health’s “Health Basket” committee which determines which treatments and medications will be available to Israeli citizens via their health funds. Malka recently published Mehalechet beDarcah, a sefer of pesikot halacha on a wide range of topics related to modern life, based on questions that have been posed to her.

None of these impressive biographical facts convey what a lively, engaging and down-to-earth teacher Malka is. She has a pure, enthusiastic love of learning that one cannot remain indifferent to.

Malka’s class is unique in Migdal Oz in that it’s specifically geared to women who are not part of the Beit Midrash. Malka credits Head of the Beit Midrash Esti Rosenberg with inviting her to teach in the Beit Midrash and giving her the freedom to design her ideal framework. The class of 37 women includes doctors, lawyers, psychologists and other professionals. Some are bogrot, others are women in their 40’s, 50’s and 60’s who wanted to learn Gemara in a serious way for the first time in their lives. The students’ dedication is especially impressive because despite the fact that they are busy, professional women, often with large families, they devote an entire Wednesday morning, 8 am to 1 pm, to Torah study every week. Dr. Naomi Shapira, for example, gets up at 5 am in Karnei Shomron to make it on time.

Dr. Naomi Baum of Efrat, a senior psychologist who specializes in the treatment of trauma, recently underwent her own trauma but didn’t miss a class. “When I had cancer two years ago,” she relates, “I came to class every week, often the day after my chemo treatment. It kept me going. Malka is a fabulous teacher. She’s funny, enthusiastic, deeply caring and very organized – she always knows where she’s headed. She’s an extraordinary font of knowledge, and really unpacked the halachic process for me.”

“And she’s deeply human. At one point, I wanted to talk to her about the meaning of illness in Judaism, how the rabbis understood notions of suffering and punishment. Malka actually came to my house and learned with me for an hour and a half, and that was deeply helpful and healing for me.”
Malka’s enthusiasm for learning has clearly infected her class. “It’s amazing to me how quickly this class became a unified group that just wants to learn more and more. Sometimes I have to beg them to take a break and eat something!” Malka laughs. “We started easy with Masechet Ta’anit, which the women approached with both intellectual and spiritual vigor. We were learning this during a drought year, and an ongoing conversation soon developed about the drought, what it might be saying to us, and what they might do to improve Israeli society in light of this divine message. We then moved on to Sanhedrin, Gittin, and now Bava Kama. It’s an ever-deepening experience, which I look forward to every week.”

Malka adds, “I see these women as emissaries of the Har Etzion message of openness and engagement with the world, combined with commitment to Torah. I feel very connected here to the Torah of HaRav Lichtenstein shlit’a and HaRav Amital zt”l—it’s not Torah with derech eretz, but Torah that is derech eretz, that takes into account raising a family, being part of a couple, caring for elderly parents, and generally being ‘meurav im habriot’.”

### Marriages
- Lisa Dredze ’03MO and Yuval Hava
- Mindy Feldman ’04MO and Eric Hecht
- Alana Ebin ’05MO and Jonah Waissman
- Sarit Bendavid ’07MO and Jared Anstandig
- Penina Twersky ’07MO and Rabi Ellis ’05
- Aviva Goldstein ’08MO and Ben Wallick
- Ilana Barta ’09MO and Akiva Fund ’09H
- Zehava Gale ’09MO and Binyamin Treister
- Kelila Kahane ’09MO and Tuvia Tendler
- Talia Allen ’10MO and Reuven Kirshner
- Esther Klapholz ’10MO and Yehuda Cohn ’08
- Chaya Kanarfogel ’11MO and Adin Rayman ’11
- Rachel Weintraub ’12MO and Eli Rappaport

### Births
- Livia Levine ’02MO and Noah Moline, Netzach Yisrael
- Talia Stechler ’03MO and Isaac Dayan, Mordechai Aharon
- Dena Katz ’04 MO and Avi Block, Ayala Shalva Sara
- Fran Tanner ’07MO and Rafi Miller, Tehillah Hannah
- Dani Lent ’07MO and Yoni ’05 Halpern, Eshel Maayan
- Leah Greenstein ’08MO and Avi Grumet, Noa Hadar

### Aliya
- Ricki (Notis) Dardashti ’08MO
- Sara Sofer ’09MO
- Michal Fromowitz ’12MO
- Tehilah Fruchter ’12MO
- Michal Weissberg ’13MO

### Achievements
Reina Potaznik ’03MO was honored with the Herbert Harwitt Community Builder Award at the Mt. Sinai Jewish Center’s annual dinner this past June. In September she began a new position as the dance educator at East Village Community School, a pre-K through 5th grade NYC public school.
Rav Dr. Yehuda Brandes Appointed Dean

Herzog College welcomes new dean Rav Yehuda Brandes, PhD. Rav Brandes is an alumni of the College and has taught for many years in the College’s Talmud, Philosophy and Education Departments. "I come to this new position with tremendous respect for the accomplishments of the institution. One of the most extraordinary things about the college has been its ability to continue to grow and change while maintaining a caring, warm atmosphere. Both as a student and as a lecturer, Herzog College is simply a wonderful place to be, to learn and to teach."

"My first goal as dean is to preserve the character of this special institution. As Hakadosh Baruch Hu said to Adam upon placing him in the world, ‘be careful not to do any harm.’ At the same time, it is my job, together with the rest of the staff, to continue to ‘work and protect it’, to continue to develop the College in the upcoming years."

Indeed, Herzog College is in a constant process of growth, both in terms of the number of students and the breadth of departments and subjects. In recent years, Herzog is even attracting students from outside its natural national-religious base, such as from the haredi sector.

Rav Brandes is an accomplished academic and scholar who lectured in the Talmud Department of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem before taking a teaching post at Herzog College. Although he has published six books and numerous academic articles, he sees himself primarily as an educator. His extensive experience as a high-school teacher and principal at Himmelfarb High School in Jerusalem shapes his vision as a teacher of teachers.

"The students of today, and even more so those of tomorrow, are flooded by information, images and ideas on many varying levels. They are exposed to an open market of ideas and values. In this chaos, it is even more important that we help our students to develop themselves as Jews who are grounded in values, in commitment to Torah, and to the Jewish people and have the ability to engage in genuine dialogue with the culture around us."

Gevanim

Herzog College is famous for producing high-quality teachers for religious schools. A less-known program at Herzog, called Gevanim, trains Jewish Studies teachers for Israel’s secular schools with the ability to teach Torah in an open, non-coercive manner.

The Gevanim Program is a two-year program for qualifying third and fourth year education students at Herzog. Interested applicants must undergo an additional admissions process, and do field work in both religious and non-religious schools.

Yuval Olivestone is a graduate of Gevanim who teaches Tanach and Jewish Thought at the ORT school in Holon, and recently became the middle school principal. Olivestone, who has 650 students under his care, speaks with passion about his mission and his love for his students. "When I first came to the school, the students organized a protest against me. They saw my kippa and reacted with fear and even a bit of hostility. Today, many of those same students ask me to officiate at their weddings."

"I aim to create a space for the students to engage in real dialogue about human values and Jewish values. The children and the teachers are hungry for this. We have created a beit midrash room in the school, complete with sifrei kodesh. The room has tables at which students face each other, as opposed to the regular classroom desks that only face front. The message that students receive from this arrangement is that Torah is not about being lectured to. Rather, Torah opens up space for dialogue, for meaningful discussion about things that matter. We give each class time in the beit midrash and they look forward to it with anticipation. The goal is not only to teach Judaism, but to get the teachers and students talking Judaism together."

"Everything I am doing now grows out of my time at Herzog College. First of all, being able to study and discuss issues with a group of peers who share similar goals helped develop my educational thinking in a deep way. From my teachers I learned many things, and perhaps most important – not to be afraid to open up large or difficult issues in the classroom."
Hola Rabino!

Alumnus Rabbi Ben-Tzion Spitz recently left Alon Shevut to become Chief Rabbi of Uruguay. He mediates disputes and acts as an arbitrator if necessary. He is the public face of the Jewish community, and is interviewed on radio and TV whenever the press is looking for the Jewish perspective on current events.

With a community of some 20,000 Jews under his care, one would think that keeping these institutional wheels turning would occupy all of Rabbi Spitz’s focus. Yet Rabbi Spitz endeavors to take the wider communal view. When asked to describe the main goal of his three-year stint in the post, he speaks of working for a greater sense of cooperation and respect between the disparate groups that make up the Uruguay Jewish community.

Rabbi Spitz emphasizes the ways in which his training at Yeshivat Har Etzion shaped his perspective and prepared him for his current role: “I think that the Har Etzion example and the model of having rabbis and a leadership that had different political and ideological views, but still managed to work together to create a vibrant, energetic and positive community was profoundly inspiring for me. At Har Etzion there is a fundamental value of respect for the other person, regardless of his ideology and beliefs, that is unfortunately not always present in community affairs. Also, after living in Alon Shevut, in proximity to the Yeshiva for for 17 years, I think I managed to hear and learn from almost all of the rabbe’im and to hear a broad spectrum of views, sometimes contradictory, but always respectful. The gamut of personalities and the combined knowledge of the rabbe’im is beyond encyclopedic and runs into so many different areas that just having had exposure to so many different entry points into Jewish knowledge has given me a large tool kit to interact with a wide range of people.”

The Spitz family sees the challenging move to Uruguay as an adventure. Rabbi Spitz is fluent in Spanish from his early childhood years in Rio de Janeiro, but his wife Tamara learned Spanish from scratch and is now an active teacher and community leader. While directing Jewish Studies for one of the two Jewish schools in Montevideo, training the Hebrew Studies teachers, giving shiurim in the community, teaching taharat mishpacha to brides, and acting as the driving force behind a host of communal activities, she still continues to give her weekly Daf Yomi shiur to women in Alon Shevut via Skype.

The older three Spitz children remained in Israel, including their son Eitan who is in the Hesder program at Har Etzion (see photo on p. 4, top right), while their four younger children have jumped into a new language and culture. Living and going to school in the “Orthodox but not observant” community of Montevideo, Uruguay’s capital, has certainly been a new experience after growing up in Alon Shevut.

The family plans to return to Israel in 2015 and Rabbi Spitz is already concerned about the long-term future of his flock. As the most recent in a long chain of temporary Chief Rabbis, he believes strongly in the need to develop local religious leadership. In response to this need Rabbi Spitz has begun to train a group of 10 future leaders in the in-depth study of halacha. Thinking far beyond the end of his term, Rabbi Spitz hopes that he is training the future Chief Rabbi of Uruguay.
Shiurim

- **Rav Ezra Bick** and **Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein** spoke at a pre-selichot event at Beit Knesset Ohel Yonah Menachem in Beit Shemesh.

- Also in preparation for selichot and the Yamim Nora’im, **Rav Mosheh Taragin** and **Rav Yaakov Medan** spoke in Modiin, while **Rav Baruch Gigi** and **Rosh Beit Midrash Esti Rosenberg** spoke in Ra’anana.


- In November, Beit Knesset Niggunei Chaim in Petach Tikva held a book launch for **Torat Etzion** (the Hebrew version of **Torah MiEtzion**) and Rav Yaakov Medan’s new book **Ki Karov Eilecha**. The evening featured a panel discussion on family life in Sefer Bereishit with **Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein**, **Rav Yaakov Medan** and **Rav Benny Lehman**, moderated by **Rav Ezra Bick**.

**Bar Mitzvah Day**

About 50 bar-mitzvah aged boys came to the Yeshiva with their fathers for the recent Yom Bar Mitzvah.

**Yom Bogrim**

For the third year, the Yeshiva sponsored a day of learning for alumni during the **Aseret Yemei Teshuva**. In addition to the usual topics of Teshuva and Sukkot, this year the alumni had the opportunity to delve into the topic of **shmittah** from both a philosophical and a practical halachic perspective. Some 150 alumni took time off from work to take part in this special day of learning.

**Eli Clark** ’84 said, “The Yom Limud brought together all of the best aspects of the Gush experience – old friends, stellar shiurim, and contemporary relevance. It is inspiring to see how the Yeshiva has grown and changed, but at the same time has preserved so many of the things that define and distinguish it.”

Pictured: Oren Katz ’88H with his thirteen-year-old son **Dvir** and older son **Nadav**, who is currently studying in Yeshiva. Nadav recalls that he decided he wanted to learn in the Yeshiva when he first visited on a Bar Mitzvah Day with his father some six years ago.
ALUMNI NEWS

Marriages
Monty Steckler ‘96 and Ionit Cohen
Jonathan Frank ’02 and Rachel Schultz
Menachem Freedman ’04 and Elana Wenner
Rafi Ellis ’05 and Penina Twersky ’07MO
David Isser ‘05 and Pola Blitz
David Fried ’06 and Molly Katancik
David Gordon ’07 and Liora Snape
Raanan Loew ’07 and Nava Karol
Daniel Rabin ’07 and Gila Honigsberg
Yehuda Cohn ’08 and Esther Klapholz ’10MO
Ron Nahshon ’08 and Sara Schild
Akiva Fund ’09H and Ilana Barta ’09MO
Adin Rayman ’11 and Chaya Kanarfogel ’11MO
Mazal tov to Rav Yair and Hadassa Kahn upon the marriage of their daughter Shani to Ido Sofer
Mazal tov to Rav Menachem and Thea Leibtag upon the marriage of their daughter Aviva to Adiel Weitz

Births
Dani ’89 and Shifra Bendheim, Sophie Bracha
David ’89 and Tunie Schorr, Tamar Esther
Doni ’94 and Ayelet-Chen Wadler, Tamah Noa
Aharon ’95 and Avigail Charnov, Daphna Nechama
Michael ’95 and Rena Siev, Hillel
Samuel ’96 and Liat Jackman, Rivka Hodaya
Rabbi Elie ’96 and Avital Weissman, Yair Zion
Yakov ’97 and Estee Fleischmann, Avner Mordechai Gershon
Avidan ’97 and Devorah Freedman, Amihud Tzvi Netzach
Aviyoel ’99 and Pirchit Sokol, Hadas Bracha
Adam ’99 and Miriam Steiner, Jonah (Alexander Yona)
Zev ’00 and Na’amit Nagel, Leela Bracha
Rabbi Jay ’00 and Sharon Weinstein, Talia Esther
Alex ’01 and Jennifer Chester, Yaakov (Koby) Zidan
Yitzi ’01 and Rahel Ehrenberg, Aderet Liat
Chaim ’01 and Lisa Schramm, David Eliezer
Ez ’01 and Sorah Shaffren, Temima Devora
Simon ’01 and Gabrielle Stern, Netanel Yitzchak Eliezer
Avi ’01 and Daniella Ziskind, Hannah Rose (Chana Reize)
Mordechai ’02H and Yardanna Koppel, Ariel Pinchas
Noam ’02 and Aviva Lockshin, Abigail Celia
Donny ’02 and Arielle Rosenberg, Adiva Rivka
Simeon ’02 and Elana Siegel, Asher Herbert
Aaron ’03 and Abi Djanogly, Yoni
Noam ’04 and Yael Horowitz, Ziva
Rabbi Benji ’04 and Renana Levy, Yehuda Leib
Akiva ’05 and Talia Fleischmann, Adriel Yisrael
Yoni ’05 and Dani Lent ’07MO Halpern, Eshel Maayan
Tal ’05 and Alana Kohn, Efrain Yedidya
Meir ’05 and Shani Gordon, Chana Shifra
Ariel ’06 and Rivky Diamond, Menucha Nechama
Yitzi ’06 and Aviva Matanky, Yaakov Levi
Netanel ’07 and Yael Block, Shlomo Simcha
Ezra ’08 and Ma’ayan Seligsohn, Ronen Shalom
Ryan ’12 and Yael Levin, Adira Chana
Zalman ’84 and Gila Levine, bat mitzvah of Leebby
Lawrence ’85 and Nehama Teitelman, bat mitzvah of Atara
Dorron ’86 and Cindy Kline, bat mitzvah of Hallel
David ’87 and Bibsi Zuckerbrot, bar mitzvah of Moshe Shmuel
David ’89 and Tzoni Schorr, bat mitzvah of Rika Ariel
Jacob ’91 and Tanya Saier, bar mitzvah of Yonatan Michal
Rabbi Nasaneyl ’92 and Tamar Braun, bar mitzvah of Ariel
David ’92 and Shira Greenstone, bat mitzvah of Leora
Ari ’92 and Shira Shmidman, bar mitzvah of Immanuel
Eric ’93PC and Erica Halivni (Weisberg), bar mitzvah of Nachshon
Dov ’94 and Shoshana Glickman, bar mitzvah of Idan
Doni ’94 and Ayelet-Chen Wadler, bat mitzvah of Achinoam Hadas
Menachem ’95 and Devora Linzer, bat mitzvah of Meira
Elie ’96 and Avital Weissman, bat mitzvah of Tiferet Rachel
Mazal Tov to Rav Pini and Michal Cohen upon the bar mitzvah of their daughter Ilana

Bar & Bat Mitzvahs
Nathaniel ’76 and Julie Berman, bat mitzvah of Kaia Batsheva
Howard ’82 and Marcy Oster, bar mitzvah of Yonatan

Got news? Update us online at www.haretzion.org
Nathaniel Berman ‘76 received a PhD in Jewish Studies from University College London. His dissertation was titled “Improper Twins”: The Ambivalent “Other Side” in the Zohar and Kabbalistic Tradition.

Michael Eisenberg ’89 was named by Popular Mechanics one of the “Twelve Most Influential People in Technology You’ve Never Heard Of” for his role in high tech development. Read more about it at www.popularmechanics.com

Benjy Singer ’95, who made aliyah from London in 2005, runs a social media portal called My Shteiblech that brings together Facebook Pages and Groups, Twitter (@myshteiblech) and a weekly newsletter (http://eepurl.com/CcIAH) to inform both Anglos and Israelis of shiurim and social events going on in the Jerusalem and Tel Aviv areas. He is also in the process of launching a new website called israelk.org, which will focus on “turning Israel into your kehilla”.

Benjy elaborates, “Social media and the internet have revolutionized Torah learning and Jewish identity. But now, more than ever, having a sense of community, belonging and connection is key to maintaining and developing one’s Avodat Hashem and Bein Adam Le’Chavero. I work professionally in blogging, social media and marketing, so IsraelK and My Shteiblech are a natural extension of my work, as well as an enjoyable hobby.” For more information, write to benjysinger@hotmail.com.

Asher Orkaby ’02 recently received a PhD from Harvard University in International and Middle East History. He is currently pursuing a postdoctoral fellowship at the Crown Center for Middle East Studies at Brandeis University.

Rafi Ellis ’05
Michi Hayman ’07, Givat Shmuel
Doron Luder ’07, Jerusalem
Meir Dardashti ’08
Yishai Katsch ’08, Givat Shmuel
Josh Nehrer ’09, Rechovot
Alex Huberman ’11
Arie Schwartz ’12, Haifa

Condolences
To Rav Aaron Adler ’72 on the loss of his father, David Adler z”l
Michael Kosofsky ’82 on the loss of his mother, Billie (Rachel) Kosofsky z”l
To Roger ’83 and Daniel ’89 Spitzer on the loss of their father, Zwi Spitzer z”l
To Justin Goldberg ’99 on the loss of his mother, Joyce Goldberg z”l

We are deeply saddened by the passing of alumnus Yitz Kurtz ’78 z”l. Condolences to his wife Debbie and the entire family.
The Yeshiva joins in the mourning of the Soloveitchik, Lichtenstein, Twersky, and Rosenblatt families on the horrific murder of Rav Moshe Twersky hy’d

Alumni Shabbaton

On Shabbat Parshat VaYetzei, the Yeshiva hosted alumni who began learning in Yeshiva in the years 1998-2000.

During the current reunion cycle, each class comes together for a reunion Shabbat in the Yeshiva once every five years.
The Shabbat gave the alumni a chance to catch up with each other, hear shiurim from the Roshei Yeshiva and enjoy the special Yeshivat Har Etzion atmosphere.
To make your tax-exempt donation, please contact any of our offices:

**Israel Office** | Yeshivat Har Etzion
Alon Shevut, Gush Etzion, ISRAEL 90433, Tel. 02-993-7300, office@etzion.org.il

**United States Office** | The Etzion Foundation
111 Galway Place, Suite 203, Teaneck NJ 07666 USA
Tel. 212-732- GUSH (4874) Fax. 201-833-0833, usoffice@haretzion.org

**Canada Office** | Attn: Inika Blackman
Pollack, Kravitz Teitelbaum, 2000 McGill College Avenue, Suite 1460, Montreal, PQ H3A3H3 CANADA
Tel. 514-905-1373, pollack@bellnet.ca

**England Office**
25 Broughton Avenue, London N3 3ES, ENGLAND, Tel. 020-8346-0201, rav@aleitzion.co.uk


---

**Medieval Commentary in the Modern Era: The Enduring Value of Classical Parshanut**

By Rabbi Yaakov Blau

Rabbi Yaakov Blau ‘88 advocates for Tanach study to be an integral component of serious Talmud Torah, and demonstrates the sugya approach for reviving the classical commentaries of Ramban, Ibn Ezra, Targum, and Radak.

**Torat Etzion – Bereishit** (Hebrew), YHE Press and Maggid Press

By Har Etzion Staff

This Hebrew volume, which parallels the English-language *Torah MiEtzion*, is an anthology of essays on *parshat hashavua* by a distinguished group of Har Etzion scholars who collectively demonstrate the distinctive Har Etzion approach of creative *pshat*.

**Rav Kook: Mystic in a Time of Revolution**,

Yale University Press

By Yehudah Mirsky

A powerfully original thinker, Rav Kook combined strict traditionalism and an embrace of modernity, Orthodoxy and tolerance, piety and audacity, scholasticism and ecstasy, and passionate nationalism with profound universalism. This biography by Mirsky ’78 is the first to appear in English in more than half a century. It clears away widespread misunderstandings of Rav Kook’s ideas and provides fresh insights into his personality and worldview.

**Ki Karov Eilecha** (Hebrew), Yediot Aharonot Press

By Rav Yaakov Medan

Rav Medan leads the reader on a fascinating journey into Sefer Bereishit, often drawing on his encyclopedic knowledge of both Tanach and rabbinic writings to reveal a surprising back story that illuminates the familiar events of Sefer Bereishit.


By Rav Shlomo M. Brody

Rav Brody ‘01 presents over 130 of the most controversial topics in Jewish law today. Based on the author’s “Ask the Rabbi” column in The Jerusalem Post, the book’s essays cite sources and scholars from across the ideological spectrum in an effort to increase respect for the diversity of voices that comprise authentic halachic dialogue.

**Hilchot Tefilla** (Hebrew), Mossad Harav Kook Publishing

By Rav David Brofsky

This book, based on a VBM course on *tefilla* given by Rav Brofsky ’90, offers a complete overview of the laws of prayer, developing each topic from the sources in the Talmud through the Rishonim, Achronim, and modern halachic decisors. The *sefer* traces the laws of prayer as they apply throughout the day, from the *netilat yadayim* of the morning to the *keriat shema* of bedtime.