



Yeshivat Har Etzion  
Newsletter for בוגרים of MTA

## News N' Shmooze

Welcome readers to the Pesach edition of the GushPanka!

As Pesach comes nearer, the zman seems to draw out. No matter how much you love the Yeshiva and learning, it just seems to be a never-ending haul till holidays. And one can't help wondering, when will I be free?

There are two main themes of Pesach; slavery, and freedom. On the very same night, we are meant to feel both. But how? How can we feel two completely opposite feelings at once?

Once simple answer given by the meforshim is, before we read the section of "Bechol Dor Vador" we feel enslaved, while afterwards, we feel like we are freed, and therefore end off magid with a bit of halel to thank Hashem.

However, this answer doesn't sit so well, as we know there are sections before "Bechol Dor Vador" which are happy / redemption themed too. Therefore I would like to give a different answer...

Not my own answer, but the answer of the 'Ba'al Ha'hagadah'. "Avadim Hayinu". This means that "we were slaves". We were always slaves, to G-d, "ki li Benei Yisrael Avadim, Avodai Hem". But we have been slaves to others too, making us slaves of slaves, but all along, we have belonged to Hashem. Therefore, even in the hard times, Hashem has been looking out for us; but equally so, in the "free times" we must remember we are servants of Hashem. And therefore, there is constantly a mix of slavery and freedom, because true freedom, is when we are serving Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

Therefore, while a good break is not only advisable but mandatory for anyone who wants to be able to apply themselves properly next zman, remember, true freedom is only when it is spent in the right things!

I wish everyone a Chag Kasher Vesameach, a great chofesh, and see you all back here soon!  
Leshana Haba'a Birushalayim!

## Shabbat Zachor and Purim

As usual, one of the biggest Shabbatot in the Yeshiva, if not THE BIGGEST, is 'Shabbat Zachor', the Shabbat before Purim. The Chadar Ochel was decorated by 'shiur alef' Israelis in a theme of rockets (possibly tillim, not sure why) and with the usual funny posters on the walls.

Kabbalat Shabbat was made extra special by the 'gush choir' made up of some of our very own, including one MTA and a few bogrim. They had been practising for over a month for the big event, and it showed!

Dinner was followed by a tish with the Ramim. Rav Amital Shlit"א was sorely missed when we got up to "Ve'taher Libenu", though it was sung by Rav Brin, and was still very meaningful. We wish Rav Amital a speedy Refuah Shelaima, and hope he will participate with us next year in good health!

### Inside this issue:

News N' Shmooze	1
Purim	2
Mazal Tov's	2
New Mta's	3
Dvar Torah	4
Fun Page	4
Contact us	5
Pictures	5

Mta and Bogrim together bought Rav Pini the aliya of "Kohen" in the traditional "annual auction", and the Bogrim together bought Mincha. The usual things were for sale, plus an addition this year, "a meal for 4 cooked by Rebbetzin Tova Lichtenstein"!

Lunch was made festive by the 'Shiur Daled' plays, mainly focusing this year on Rav Gordin's new "gush Fleece" idea, and Rav Medan vs. Rav Moshe issues, made more interesting by the fact that Rav Moshe was seated in the front row watching all of this!

Motzi Shabbat was Purim, a night filled with singing and dancing. After megilla and dancing in the beis, there was a BBQ / Mangal / Brie / Al Ha'esh, (however you want to put it), with meat and salads outside the Chadar Ochel to complement the ruach of the dancing inside. The dancing lasted till 3 in the morning, a reflection of the enthusiasm put in.

During Purim day, Rav Medan read the megilla as usual, and people went off to celebrate and eat their seudot with their Ramim.

## Mazal Tavs!!!

The GushPanka<sup>tm</sup> would like to wish all the best to the following talmidim leaving the Yeshiva to pursue other endeavours:

Amiel Rieger (03) who joined the IDF

Yossi Dinnin (04) who is studying 'law' in the IDF

Ben Wittenburg (04) who returned to Australia in anticipation of his forthcoming aliya!

Mark Meyerson (03) who is joining the workforce in Jerusalem

Robbie and Devora Tocker, who left back to Sydney

And all others who returned to their respective countries after their visit here to learn over the holidays.

The Gushpanka would also like to welcome back the following people:

Daniel Finburg (04) who is currently learning in the Yeshiva

Alex Tsykin (07) who is also currently studying in the Yeshiva

Jonathan Dyne (04) who has made Aliya

Ilan Buchbinder (07) who has also made Aliya

Gil Aronovitz (09) who is currently in the Yeshiva till he starts 'machal' later this year

Michael Berger (08) who is serving in the IDF



With much pleasure, the GushPanka would like to wish a hearty 'Mazal Tov' to the following past students on their marriages:

Itzik (honourary MTA 04 – 08) and Baila Haskel

Daniel (03) and Andy Kaplan

Seraphia (06) and Ariela Berrin

Josh (06) and Tali Wiseman

Benji (04) and Rikkie Levy



## Annual Dinner Hits Israel

Every year, Yeshivat Har Etzion has a dinner, usually in America for alumni of the Yeshiva, to raise money for the Yeshiva. This year however, the Yeshiva is tried out a second dinner that took place in Israel.

It was a success, with 600 participants enjoying special guest speakers, great food and entertainment while they dined in Benei Brak. For more information about next years' dinner, or to donate to the Yeshiva, please visit us on the web: [www.yhe/dinner.co.il](http://www.yhe/dinner.co.il).

Please note: all leftovers went to the talmidim, so we were glad for all who supported this event generously!

## MTA '2010' in the Gush

It seems not long ago, that I myself was saying goodbye to my family as I flew to Israel to start my shana alef MTA '09. Yet the wheel has turned a full revolution, and now the new MTA's are here. 14 new recruits; 8 Aussies and 6 Saf's, are slowly settling in to Yeshiva life.

## Did You Know:

- Corn-schnitzel has officially been returned to the dinner menu.
- Bogrim of MTA sponsored learning for a week in honour of Uriel OBM.
- The Yeshiva has put Menachot on its list of Gemarot for Kayitz zman.

After arriving in Israel close to a month and a half ago, the new MTA's enjoyed Opening Seminar in Yerushalayim, followed by a series of 3 shabbatonim. The first, the annual Gush "chutznik" shabbaton to Tzfat, filled with tiyullim of the ancient holy city, both by night and by day. The second shabbaton took place in Migdal Oz, to learn about the Gush Etzion region and the famous people who came from there. The other shbbaton was a choice of Benei Brak or Afula, organised by "Boet" and Mark Levy (mta 2000), both of which were as chesed shabbatonim to help out in Orphanages.

On Purim, MTA lead by Ricki Bornstein, gave out Mishloach Manot at Shaarei Tzedek Hospital in the morning, followed by a Purim Seuda organised by Benji Levy in his new house in Katamon.

As for IN the Yeshiva, the new MTA's seem to be settling in well, and have even been accused of being "nerds" by the Americans for coming without ripped jeans or spiked hair, but rather settling down quickly into their learning routines!

Gushpanka would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge their madrichim for kibbutz where they will be staying over Pesach; Greg Bank (also their madrich in the Gush), Brendon Stern, Shua Solomon (their MTA madrich) and Ilan Buchbinder. Elchanan Juravel will not be with them on Kibbutz, but is their other Madrich in the Yeshiva.

We wish them all much success in their upcoming year!

## ופרצת ימה וקדמה

### Kolel in South Africa

The Kollel in Johannesburg is also going strong, with the help of many Gush MTBogrim. The Kollel was the brainstorm of R Doron Podlashuk (mta96) who recently celebrated the brit of his son Tuviya. It is always a pleasure to see Gush guys returning to their countries and starting such amazing projects!

Also in South Africa, many Gush bogrim are writing articles for the "Benei buzz", a publication spanning the topics of Halacha, Tfilla, Pirkei Avot and Parsha. Kol Hakavod to all involved.

And lastly, a mazal tov to the new chairman of Benei in South Africa, Adam Merkal (MTA 05). Good luck with your new job.

And of course it wouldn't be fair not to mention, a yeyasher koach to Tim Rezas (MTA 06) who is currently acting as chairman of Benei in Australia. Keep up the good work!

### Kolel in Sydney

The new Sydney Kollel headed by Rav Blackman and Rabbi Danny Eisenburg, is now up and running. The community seems to be responding well to it, and are especially enjoying the presence of 2 of our very own, Aron Potter and Joe Wolfson (both Alter Gushnikim), who have been learning there for the past two months, and will be returning to Israel after Pesach. Sydney is also looking forward to its first set of Torah Mitzion "Hesder Boys" potentially 'shiur vav' Israeli's from the Gush. We hope the Kollel only continues to grow!

### Inspirational Quote

The Matza on the first night of Pesach is called the "Food of Faith". On the second night, it is called the "Food of Healing". When healing brings faith, then clearly there has been illness. When faith brings healing, there is no illness to start with.

(adapted from "Sefer Hayom Yom")

## D'var Torah, by Rav Amital Shlita"h

"In order that you will tell your children and your children's children of that which I performed in Egypt, and of the signs that I showed them, that you may know that I am God." (Shemot 10:2)

Rashi and the Ramban explain the phrase, "I performed in Egypt" (hit'alalti be-Mitzrayim), as meaning, "I played with Egypt," i.e. I toyed with them. Thus, the verse defines two things which a person must tell his children: a. how God "played" with the Egyptians, and b. the signs and wonders that God performed in Egypt, demonstrating His power.

But what does this phrase "God "played" with the Egyptians" mean?

Also, why did Moshe have to constantly run backwards and forwards between Hashem and Pharaoh begging Pharaoh to let the Jewish people go, even during the later 5 plagues, where Hashem hardened Pharaoh's heart anyway?

The answer to all of this, is that while the Jews leaving Egypt was an important goal, it wasn't the only thing Hashem wanted to achieve through Yetziat Mitzrayim. Hashem also wanted to show Pharaoh, the man who thought of himself as a God, "The river is mine, and I have made it for myself" (Yechezkel 29:3)", that He was in total control, and not Pharaoh. By hardening Pharaoh's heart in an instance which was clearly negligible, even though Moshe was giving him an easy escape (to simply let the Jews go), Hashem was toying with him, to show him who was really in control.

This was an important lesson that was also learned from the exodus. It is not mentioned at the Seder since it is not connected to the salvation of Am Yisrael, but it is important in its own right. We learn from this that a person who degenerates morally can deteriorate from the level of a human to the level of an automaton. He may perform illogical actions and lose control of his own conduct; in fact, his free choice has been removed from him. This is both a consequence of his immoral behavior and attitudes, as well as a punishment for them. Only conscious moral improvement can prevent this eventuality.

(This sicha was adapted from the VBM)

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## The Fun Page



The Gushpanka is working on making this section better, and appologises for this temporary inconvenience.

## Contact Us

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For halachic queries (to be passed on to a Ram of your choice), nostalgia and if you just simply want to be in touch:  
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Remember: this publication is about you as Bogrim as much as it is about the Yeshiva. Therefore we would love you to send in articles, stories, mazal tovs, or anything else of interest to be published in the next Gush-Panka.

The Ramim are always interested in hearing from you, what you are learning, or just “what’s up?” so please do e-mail them

Also, please keep in mind that your halachic questions can be presented to any of the Ramim in Yeshiva that your heart desires (or any number of Ramim), so please don’t hesitate to put forward your questions!

### Don't forget...

Visit the VBM @ [www.etzion.org.il/vbm](http://www.etzion.org.il/vbm) for further insights

For a daily Torah Podcast, from Yeshiva:

[www.kimitzion.org](http://www.kimitzion.org)

For a short D'var Torah updated daily:

[www.vbm-torah.org/salt.htm](http://www.vbm-torah.org/salt.htm)

This edition was edited by Rav Pini Cohen and Moshi Broner.

## Pictures

