

Hachnasas Sefer Torah for Yeshivas Noam HaTorah

By S. Berger

On 12 Adar I, Yeshivas Noam Hatorah held a *hachnasas sefer Torah* and *siyum haShas* in memory of *habachur* Moshe Baruch Lemberger, z"l, one of the leading *bachurim* in the yeshiva, who was *niftar* last year after a debilitating illness.

The event was attended by students, alumni and friends of the yeshiva, and was arranged with the help of the *niftar's* family.

Among the *Gedolei Hador*, *shlita*, who wrote letters in the *sefer Torah* were the Gerrer Rebbe, the Vizhnitzer Rebbe, the Sadigura Rebbe, Harav Shmuel Halevi Wosner, Harav Aharon Leib Steinman, Harav Chaim Kanievsky, Harav Michel Yehudah Lefkowitz, Harav Chaim Greineman and Harav Nissim Karelitz.

The writing of the final letters took place in the Lemberger home, after which the procession set out, with thousands dancing in honor of the Torah. Some of Bnei Brak's main streets were closed in honor of the occasion, and many of the city's residents joined in the *kiddush Shem Shamayim*.

When the procession reached the yeshiva on Harav Meltzer Street, the *Roshei Yeshiva* came out with the other *sifrei Torah* to greet the new *sefer* amid the lively singing of "Se'u She'arim." The dancing continued for quite some time, and the building was beautifully lit with colored lights. The *Mashgiach*, Harav Mordechai Bernstein, *shlita*, was honored with the recital of *LeDovid Mizmor* after the reading of the closing portion in the Torah.

The festive *seudas mitzvah* was held in the Ganei Hadekel Hall and was attended by many Rebbes and Rabbanim, Mayor

Rabbi Yissachar Frankenthal and Deputy Mayor Rabbi Yaakov Asher.

The event was emceed by Harav Chaim Meir Grossman, a former student of the yeshiva. He described the devotion of the staff, headed by the Rosh Yeshiva, Harav Menachem Mendel Shafran, *shlita*, and the *Mashgiach*, Harav Bernstein, *shlita*, as well as the yeshiva's administrator and founder, Rabbi Chaim Wolf.

Harav Aharon Leib Steinman, *shlita*, participated in the *seudah*, offering words of praise for the *Roshei Yeshiva* and the staff. Harav Steinman was honored with the *hadran*, after which he delivered words of *chizuk*, speaking about the *sechar* of those who toil in Torah.

The main address was delivered by Harav Shafran, *shlita*, who spoke at length about the deeper meaning of *limud haTorah* and the completion of *Shas*. He also spoke of Moshe Baruch Lemberger, z"l, who gave his life away for Torah and *mitzvos* despite his illness.

The Ashlag Rebbe, *shlita*, to whom the *bachur* had been close, spoke of his merit and stated that he was dedicated to Torah until his last moments. The *Mashgiach* then spoke about *limud haTorah* and the ascent of the soul.

The father of the *bachur* delivered an emotional address, thanking the staff and the *bachurim* for helping to arrange the *hachnasas sefer Torah* with such splendor and making it a *kiddush Shem Shamayim*.

The final address was given by Rabbi Chaim Wolf, who cited the *passuk* "Ve'atah kisvu lachem es hashirah hazos," which refers to writing a *sefer Torah*. Rabbi Wolf thanked the alumni for making the effort to attend the *hachnasas sefer Torah* and maintaining a connection with the yeshiva.



The Biggest Yeshiva Under One "Roof"

By B. Yissachar

Not long ago, the idea of children taking time out in the middle of Purim day to learn in a *beis medrash* would have sounded somewhat strange. But today, an eight-year-old who comes with his father to Yeshivas Mordechai Hatzaddik on Purim afternoon is only one of a very large group of youngsters all over the world.

Last year, just eight years after its establishment, Yeshivas Mordechai Hatzaddik numbered more than 55,000 children who learned in some 900 *batei medrash* in Eretz Yisrael alone. But YMH, "the biggest yeshiva in the world," extends far beyond Eretz Yisrael, reaching cities across the United States and Canada, South Africa, England, France, Argentina and even Tunis, with the total number of participants exceeding 85,000, *ka"h*.

As a direct spin-off of YMH, several yeshivos have instituted a brief *sefer* on Purim morning, before the boys go off to visit their *rebbeim*. And in several *batei medrash* hosting branches of YMH, the *ezras nashim* fills up with women who use this highly auspicious time to say *Tehillim* and offer *tefillos*.

Although Yeshivas Mordechai Hatzaddik is in session only one day of the year, preparations begin shortly after Sukkos. The unique, attractive prizes, which are a valuable motivational tool, are ordered even earlier.

Gedolei Yisrael have been lavish in their

encouragement of YMH. Harav Chaim Kanievsky, *shlita*, asserted that one who gives to YMH makes sure *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* has *nachas* from His children, and that in return he will have *nachas* from his own.

Hashem is very close to us on Purim, and when that closeness joins forces with the *zechus* of learning, it generates phenomenal potential for *tefillos* to be answered. It would take many pages to share all the stories of long-awaited *shidduchim*, babies born after years of childlessness, *parnassah* windfalls and *chinuch* breakthroughs that have occurred as a result of people's involvement in YMH.

One story involved Y.B., who stopped Rabbi Naftali Falk on the street and exclaimed, "Last year I gave a donation to YMH for two specific *yeshuos*. One was for a child — and *baruch Hashem*, you see our baby, who is now one month old. The other was for a *yeshuah* in my *parnassah*. A business deal had gone into a deadlock and a great sum of money was at stake. Right after Purim, a window of opportunity opened up and the deal sped through, with profits many times what I originally expected. A double Purim miracle!"

While we cannot promise anyone a *yeshuah*, taking part in the support of this unique program of Torah learning certainly opens the doors for our *tefillos*. It is a golden opportunity to pour out our hearts to *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* so that the waves of the children's learning can carry our *tefillos* along to their destination.



The Vizhnitzer Rebbe, *shlita*, writing a letter in the *sefer Torah*.

Young Israel Launches Eye Squad to Help Distressed Students in Israel

By Aaron Troodler

The National Council of Young Israel announced this month the launching of the Eye Squad, an initiative designed to assist the 7,000 North American post-high school students who spend a year studying in Israel. The Eye Squad provides a confidential, independent 24-hour hotline for students experiencing any type of distress.

The phone number to reach the Eye Squad in Israel is *9111, which can be dialed from any phone throughout Israel around the clock (including on Shabbos if there is an emergency). Parents and others in the United States and Canada can reach the Eye Squad in Israel by dialing toll-free (866) 550-4EYE.

The Eye Squad is under the auspices of

the Council of Young Israel Rabbis in Israel and is provided in conjunction with the National Council of Young Israel and the Jewish Agency for Israel. The founder and director of the Eye Squad is Rabbi Aaron S. Tirschwell, National Council of Young Israel's director of Israel operations, whose work with Jewish communities and young adults spans the globe.

Tirschwell noted that a host of crises threaten the one- or two-year period that approximately 7,000 North American young men and women spend in Israel, studying Torah and enriching their spirituality.

"We are talking about young men and women who are experiencing living away from their home for the first time," said Tirschwell. "The conservative estimate is

that approximately 10 percent of these students suffer from some sort of psychological or emotional issue, including eating disorders and alcohol and [substance] use and abuse... This is a staggering number of young adults who are at risk and who desperately need help."

While a number of education-based programs in Israel have a dorm counselor, a rabbinic figure (*mashgiach* or Rosh Yeshiva), or even a therapist whom students can approach for guidance, a student with issues will not automatically turn to a person in an official capacity for fear of being dismissed from the program. In addition, counselors and rabbinic figures are not necessarily trained to identify or address issues of concern.

Tirschwell said that Eye Squad members will be able to "stabilize" a client in terms of his or her immediate distress and discuss the available options, such as counseling or rehabilitation, in order to confront the issue in a logical, realistic manner.

"Members of the Eye Squad engage a young adult to communicate that he or she is not alone, and that there is a non-judgmental, impartial person who exists outside the school or program who will listen, empathize and give constructive advice," continued Tirschwell.

According to Tirschwell, young adults in

distress will be encouraged to call the Eye Squad themselves for information and intervention, but roommates, friends and even teachers are encouraged to use the hotline if they think something is wrong with a student. Tirschwell said that the largest number of calls is expected from parents who are concerned that something is "just not right" with their son or daughter.

The Eye Squad team members are all North American *olim* who have had significant experience counseling teens in Israel, the United States and Canada. Regularly scheduled meetings and training workshops set up by Eye Squad will enable them to hone their skills, learn from experts in the field, and ensure adequate follow-up with those who contact them. Therapists, social workers, mental health professionals and drop-in centers throughout Israel serve as the Eye Squad's partners for those requiring longer-term intervention.

The National Council of Young Israel is an Orthodox Jewish movement with over 150 synagogue branches in the United States and Canada and over 60 synagogue branches in Israel. NCYI provides religious, educational, social and communal programming for all its member synagogues and their 25,000 affiliated families.