

CONNECTIONS



Message from the Presidium

Dear Alumni,

לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו

A few weeks back, on ט' אלול we commemorated the second *yahrtzeit* of HaRav Michoel Weiner זצ"ל – Ner Michoel's inspiration and namesake. And in so doing, the Ner Michoel Alumni Association began its second year.

Ner Michoel's first year has been marked by enthusiasm, renewed connections and rapid growth. Ner Michoel has quickly established itself as a source of *harbotzas haTorah* and inspiration. As we enter our

second year we pray for further expansion, production and warm feelings.

In this issue of Connections you will read of inspiring individuals - such as our good friend Reb Yitzzy Fuchs. You will read of the committed committee in Monsey and the wonderful event which recently took place there, as well as about the development of the new and improved Ner Michoel website. You will also get a glimpse – from a “real-insider” – of what Tisha B'Av with the Rosh Yeshiva is all about.

We hope and pray that this be a year of קידוש שם שמים. May each one of us

rise to meet the challenges of his own individual circumstances. May we serve ה' with שמחה – each in his own way. And may we merit to see the vision of תיקון עולם במלכות ש-ד-י.

...And maybe Ner Michoel will play some small part in the process...

כתיבה וחתימה טובה.



David Sinowitz
Rabbi Daniel Sinowitz



Shmuli Weiner
Rabbi Shmuli Weiner

VIRTUAL HARBOTZAS TORAH

Ner Michoel's expanded website provides virtual access to a treasure trove of shiurim

Recent visitors to Toras Moshe's newly enhanced website will be highly pleased with its increased functionality and user-friendly design. Although the site now features updated photos, videos, Mazel Tov announcements and other news tidbits, its original purpose remains: a repository of *shiurim* from the Rosh Yeshiva and the *rebbeim*, which are easily accessible by alumni and others who wish to learn and be inspired by their Torah.

The website's upgrade is a project of Yeshivas Toras Moshe's Alumni Association, better known as Ner Michoel.



This is reflected in the site's web address, www.nermichael.org. Ner Michoel was established as a conduit for *talmidim* to continue their relationship with the Yeshiva and *rebbeim*, and its website is in line with Toras Moshe's philosophy that the best way to stay connected is through learning Torah.

Rabbi Eliyahu Yaari is a respected senior member of Toras Moshe's Kollel. His appreciation for the various *shiurim* presented in Yeshiva led him to record and amass what eventually developed into an impressive collection of tapes and later on, MP3s. Collaborating with the efforts and technical expertise of Shmuel Dovid Rosansky, also a Toras Moshe *talmid*, the website was originally created strictly to share these recorded *shiurim* with Toras Moshe *talmidim* and others.

Visitors to the site can browse for *shiurim* either by category or by *maggid shiur*, and there is a special menu highlighting the recently added *shiurim*. There is also a page with a feature for emailing the *maggidei shiur*. Many *talmidim* are already using the site

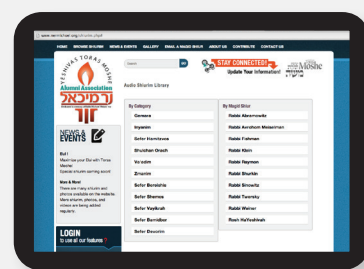
to email the *rebbeim* and discuss learning or other matters with them. This is especially

so with the younger *rebbeim* such as Rabbi Klein, whose communication with *talmidim* via email has been instrumental in fostering greater interest in his *shiurim* and *seforim*.

The website also featured a live webcast of *kinnos* on Tisha B'Av, as described on page 2 in this newsletter.

Talmidim in Yeshiva who have to leave for a few days in the middle of the *z'man* for a family member's wedding or the like, also utilize the website to stay current on the *shiurim* while they are away.

In the coming months, Ner Michoel's website will grow even further in quantity as well as in scope, providing *talmidim* with the ability to strengthen their bond of Torah with the Yeshiva.



KINNOS

WITH THE ROSH YESHIVA

Providing Talmidim & Alumni with the Proper Tisha B'Av Perspective

As many Toras Moshe *talmidim* are aware, Tisha B'Av in Yeshiva is a meaningful and introspective experience. Saying *kinnos* in Toras Moshe means sitting in the Bais Medrash from after the morning Krias HaTorah until Mincha, most of which is spent listening the Rosh Yeshiva explaining and offering insights on selected *kinnos*.

Indeed, a large number of *talmidim* have been coming back to Yeshiva for *kinnos* year after year, some for thirty consecutive years. Recognizing how much their participation helps them internalize the significance of Tisha B'Av, these discerning Toras Moshe alumni say they wouldn't forgo it for anything.

For most of the duration of *kinnos*, the Rosh Yeshiva speaks, elaborating on carefully chosen selections. He generally gives preference to the compositions of Rebbe Elazar HaKalir, but will also focus on those written by Rishonim, elaborating on each one in great detail.

This method of going through the *kinnos* is, in fact, not new at all. It actually dates back to a time before Toras Moshe existed. During the Rosh Yeshiva's years in Los Angeles, he would elaborate on *kinnos* for four to five hours. Close family members feel that after the Pesach Seder, the most inspirational time of the year to be in the insightful presence of the Rosh Yeshiva is Tisha B'av.

In the Rosh Yeshiva's view, the focus on Churban is essential in bringing out the concept of Churban Hakedushah, the spiritual decline of our nation's intrinsic spirituality that continues to plague



every generation since the destruction of the Bais Hamikdash. As the well-known Yerushalmi states, each generation that does not merit the rebuilding of the Bais Hamikdash is considered to have had the actual Churban happen in its time. It is our duty, then, to study and comprehend our current situation and how this Churban Hakedushah manifests itself in our day to day *nisyonos* during the other 364 days of the year. Once we gain somewhat of an understanding of this concept, we can go ahead and try to reverse it with *binyan hamikdosh*, "rebuilding" what we lost by correcting the faults that stand in the way of our natural state of holiness.

Thanks to the efforts of the dedicated Ner Michael Alumni Association, who responded to the popular demand that the *kinnos* session be shared via live webcast online, 120 people viewed it in real time, with many others still watching the recorded version later on.



"Rebuilding what we lost by correcting the faults that stand in the way of our natural state of holiness."



The rich and meaningful *chinuch* and *mesorah* that Toras Moshe implants in its alumni continues to pulsate long after they leave Yeshiva. *Talmidim* are continuously looking for ways to enhance their relationship with the Yeshiva, as well as their *rebbeim*, and friends from their formative years.

What better way could there be to stay connected than *limud haTorah*, and in that spirit, alumni from the Monsey-Passaic area gathered on Sunday, July 28th for a Yom Iyun, a morning dedicated to learning in the Toras Moshe spirit.

The event took place at Congregation Knesses Yisroel (Rabbi Schabes' *shul*), and was superbly orchestrated by Rabbi Jay Kosowsky, Rabbi Zev Flaumenhaft, Rabbi Binyomin Plotzker and Rabbi Daniel Cohen. At 9:30 AM, coffee and light refreshments were served, followed an hour of *hachana*, preparation for the *shiur* with *chavrusas*, starting at ten o'clock. This was followed by *shiur* from the Rosh HaYeshiva *shlit"a*, who graciously took time from his busy schedule to present his *chiddushim* on the *sugya* of *tekios al seder haBerachos* and related topics.

"The truly beautiful thing about the Yom Iyun," Rabbi Kosowsky offers, "is the way it

encompasses the two basic elements of what Toras Moshe stands for. Firstly, *limud haTorah*, and secondly, incorporating in one's learning the relationship that you have with your *rebbei*. So that's what everyone was doing on that Sunday; there was nothing else going on."

After the *shiur*, everyone had the opportunity to speak with the Rosh Yeshiva individually for a few moments. "Those brief moments are truly amazing," Rabbi Kosowsky explains, "They indicate to the *talmid* that just as the Rosh Yeshiva is 'right there on the spot' in whichever *sugya* in Gemara he might want

to discuss, so too he's right there with him in the personal *sugya* of the *talmid's* life. The conversation continues seamlessly from wherever it left off at the last encounter, with the Rosh HaYeshiva clearly attuned to even the minutest details, no matter how much time has passed since they last spoke. There's no vagueness, he's up to date and understands the dynamics of each *talmid* providing sagacious guidance as per his individual circumstances.

Beyond the one-on-one counseling and *hadracha*, just listening to a *shiur* from such an *adam gadol* reenergizes the *talmidim* and recharges their spiritual batteries in a way that is really special."





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ALUMNUS PROFILE

REB YITZY FUCHS



Innovative Inspiration

Aderes Hatorah Summer Experience is a camp geared to American Mesivta *bochurim* which has just completed its fourth successful season. For four weeks, the boys are treated to the ultimate tour of Eretz Yisroel while being instilled with a genuine love for Eretz Yisroel, Am Yisroel, and *yiddishkeit* – which are the primary goals of this project.

The inspiration behind the Aderes Summer Experience is Mr. Yitzchok Fuchs, a distinguished Toras Moshe alumnus. Reb Yitzy, as he is fondly known, is a Vice President at Goldman Sachs and an *askan* involved in many aspects of community affairs whose dynamic passion and knowledge of Eretz Yisroel is legendary. His sincere love for Eretz Yisroel is deeply ingrained and is exemplified in his interaction with the boys.

The program intentionally begins right before Tisha B'Av to allow the boys to experience mourning over the Churban in a most meaningful way and reflect back on it during the trips and experiences that follow. Straight from the airport, they proceed to Har Hatzofim to tear *k'riyah* over the *Makom HaMikdash*. At Kever Rachel, even the most reserved *bochurim* are moved to sing *Kol B'Rama* hand over shoulder and dance together, with the words "*V'Shavu Vonim L'Gvulum*" taking on new meaning. Under the skilled, learned guidance of Reb Yitzy and his qualified staff of *madrichim*, they comb thorough nooks and crannies of hallowed cities such as Yerushalayim, Chevron, and Tzfas. They hike, jeep, tour, and swim the length and breadth of Eretz HaKodesh. The boys leave with a clear understanding that while they reside in *chutz la'aretz*, Eretz Yisroel is truly their home.

"We just came back from Bnei Brak, where we spent those precious moments with Rav Ahron Leib Shteinman shlit"a. I can't believe that the summer is almost over. Just a few short weeks ago, we were saying Eichah, mourning over the Churban at one of the gates to Har HaBayis, just a few feet from where the Bais HaMikdash stood! So close yet so far away...it was the most meaningful Tisha B'Av of my life! Vasikin in Me'aras Hamachpela, dancing Kabbolas Shabbos at the Kosel, davening and singing at Kever Rachel, these are all memories I'll never forget. The trips and hikes – from the north to south, we covered the entire Eretz Yisroel. Your knowledge of Eretz Yisroel is incredible, but even more so is your love of transmitting your passion to others..."

From a grateful *bochur's* letter to Reb Yitzy Fuchs

Reb Yitzy, who was instrumental in starting Project YES and mentors teenagers in his home community of Flatbush as well as in Lakewood, attributes his lifelong passion for Eretz Yisroel and working with kids to his alma mater. "I came to Toras Moshe at age seventeen, and that's where I developed into what I am. On Shabbos, and during my free time I really developed my familiarity with Yerushalayim and other parts of the country. The Rosh Yeshiva and *rebbeim* ignited my passion for Eretz Hakodesh, forging a personal *kesher* that carries on to this day."

Mr. Fuchs' special brand of innovative inspiration extends itself beyond his formal capacities. The Fuchs' home is an "open house" where all sorts of *bochurim*, both in and out of a *yeshiva* framework, feel comfortable in its warm embrace and nurturing environment. Reb Yitzy's multi-faceted personality and productive accomplishments are a true source of pride to Yeshivas Toras Moshe.