The coronavirus pandemic has disrupted the routines of the entire world, and countless people have been affected by illness and loss of life. The Yeshiva wishes all those who are ill a speedy recovery and continues to pray for the end of the pandemic. We hope and pray to the One Who Heals All that we will emerge physically and spiritually stronger from this challenge. Read on to find out how we are weathering the storm at Yeshiva.

COVID-19 Timeline

March 14: Yeshiva Closed for Second Time in its History

On Motzei Shabbat, March 14, the Roshei Yeshiva called all the talmidim to the Beit Midrash. There the talmidim were informed that the Ministry of Health, together with the Organization of Hesder Yeshivot, had decided to shut down all yeshivot effective immediately.

Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yakov Medan, who was a student in the Yeshiva’s first class in 1968 and has been a part of the Yeshiva ever since, said that it was a very sad day, as in the Yeshiva’s more than 50 years, the Yeshiva previously only shut down once, during a part of the Yom Kippur War when all the talmidim were called to emergency combat duty. After the sicha, all Israeli students returned to their homes, and many overseas students scrambled to find flights abroad, while a few chose to remain with family or friends in Israel. Not all overseas students found flights right away, so the Yeshiva kept its campus open for another 2 weeks to

YESHIVAT HAR ETZION REOPENS!

The Beit Midrash reopens with dividers, designed to keep talmidim in small groups known as “capsules” and minimize contact between groups.

Join us for the
ETZION FOUNDATION VIRTUAL "DINNER"

Wednesday, September 9
Honoring
Rav Ezra Bick
and marking the 25th Anniversary of
The Israel Koschitzky
Virtual Beit Midrash
Elissa and Michael Katz
Parents of the Year
Penina (Wein) ’10MO and
Rabbi Jacob 10’ Bernstein
Young Leadership Award

Our first ever online dinner with Roshei Yeshiva, Migdal Oz Rosh Beit Midrash and faculty will be an event to remember!

To register and donate now at thegushdinner.org
For more information please call (212) 732-4874 or email usoffice@haretzion.org
provide those students with dormitories and meals until their arrangements could be made.

Although the Yeshiva had to physically close its doors, the learning continued unabated. The Yeshiva’s YouTube channel continued to broadcast shiurim, and all regular shiurim and chugim continued online (see sidebar, and article on Beit Midrash Chai, p. 4).

April 20: Hesder Students Called to Duty

In the week after Pesach, while the Yeshiva campus was officially closed to talmidim, it was in fact open and buzzing with activity. That’s because the campus became an official army base. The IDF asked a small number of yeshivot for additional manpower to help deal with the crisis. The Yeshiva immediately responded positively and over 85 fourth and fifth year talmidim (who had already completed their regular army service) rejoined active service. These talmidim lived in the dorms, davened and ate breakfast in Yeshiva, then boarded buses to an army center where they arranged packages for the needy and dealt with other crises before returning to Yeshiva in the evening to eat dinner, have night seder, and partake in informal shiurim.

The Yeshiva is proud that the army requested this from our talmidim and even more proud that our Israeli talmidim jumped at the opportunity to contribute in this meaningful way. To get a feeling for their wonderful spirit, if you haven’t yet seen the video, go to the Yeshiva website to see a clip of our chayalim singing “Ani Ma’amin” after the siren on Yom HaShoah.

May 12: Yeshiva Reopens Amid Coronavirus Restrictions

On the morning of May 12, the Yeshiva was delighted to be able to re-open to Israeli students, and all overseas talmidim who were in the country. This required creating a comprehensive Pandemic Protocol, with all the details approved by the Ministry of Health (with whom the Yeshiva staff was in close contact). On May 12, students arrived, were sorted into “capsules,” and were able to immediately begin preparing for that afternoon’s Shiur Klali.

Under the protocol, the student body is divided into capsules of up to 26 talmidim. These capsules operate as self-contained groups. The Beit Midrash is divided into different sections by six-foot high partitions, and each capsule has its own classroom, dormitories, bathrooms, and eating areas. Every day, each talmid and staff member has to sign a health affidavit attesting to the fact that he is symptom free, has not come into contact with anyone who has tested positive, allows representatives of the Ministry March to July 2020

Long-distance Learning to Keep Everyone Growing

Even while everyone was forced to be physically distant, the Yeshiva made massive efforts to enable learning to continue straight through zman choref and zman kayitz. The shiurim and chugim were quickly moved to online formats, and apps were employed so that talmidim could engage in their regular chavrutot on a daily basis. This gave talmidim stuck at home some structure, and a framework in which to continue their religious and personal growth. Of course it was not always easy, as for the staff it sometimes meant giving chugim until midnight Israel time to be able to teach those in other time zones, and for the talmidim it meant finding a new level of self-control and commitment. While it is certainly easier to learn in the warm confines of the Yeshiva’s Beit Midrash, the Yeshiva met the challenge with aplomb.

Avi Roth ’18 said, “Having virtual learning with the Yeshiva has been a great experience. While I miss having the chevra and Rabbeim around me in the Beit Midrash, I feel that the learning with chavrutot and Ramim has not decreased in quality even by one iota. The virtual learning has so far been my ideal transition from Yeshiva life to life back in America by filling my time at home with the same Yeshiva learning and programs, synthesizing the two experiences.”

Avi Roth ’18
of Health to evaluate him, and will go into quarantine if required. In addition, everyone’s temperature is taken daily. Surface areas are cleaned regularly, masks are worn in most areas, and all food is eaten on disposable plates with disposable cutlery.

The Yeshiva continued to learn tractate Bava Batra, as it had been learning all year long, but upon reopening the Roshei Yeshiva decided to also learn tractate Ta’anit, as it deals with how to pray for salvation during a plague, an appropriate topic for the circumstances.

While we obviously do not want to run the Yeshiva this way indefinitely, we are pleased that we have found a way to re-open the Yeshiva and have the experience to know that, if necessary, we are equipped to function during an outbreak. Whatever the future brings, we are planning to open for Elul Zman and will make whatever accommodations are necessary to ensure the physical safety of our students and all of Am Yisrael.

Other COVID-19 Innovations at Yeshiva

Leadership Programming

There’s always a silver lining. The virtual learning put into place to deal with Covid-19 also allowed the Yeshiva to have more special event programming, which kept things interesting for talmidim.

Each week our talmidim took part in a Zoom session in which Rav Moshe Taragin interviewed a notable alumnus or other special personality. Talmidim had sessions with Dr. Ari Greenspan ’81, who presented slides on the discovery of tekhelet that he was a part of, Michael Eisenberg ’89 speaking on how his experiences in Yeshiva and relationship with the Roshei Yeshiva zt”l influenced his work in venture capital, Rav Dr. Ari Zivotofsky ’80, who spoke on “Bechira Chofshit and Modern Neuroscience,” and former MK Rav Yehudah Glick ’83H, Director of the Shalom Jerusalem Foundation, who spoke on his work fighting for comprehensive freedom and civil rights for all. There was also a session with former YU President Richard Joel, speaking about the late Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm z”l, and Dayan Rav Asher Weiss, giving chizzuk and answering questions about how to relate to the coronavirus situation. An additional feature of the new programming were multiple sessions of Jewish Philosophy Q&A with YHE senior rebbe Rav Ezra Bick.

Videos of these sessions are available on the Yeshiva’s YouTube channel.
With much of the world under lockdown, the demand for high-quality Torah shiurim in Hebrew and English rose dramatically. In response, the Yeshiva’s online presence expanded greatly. The Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash and Yeshiva YouTube channel made hundreds of hours of Torah learning available to the general public. In the first month of coronavirus, the YouTube channel gained over 1000 new subscribers, and more than 10,000 hours of shiurim were viewed. The shiurim continue to be uploaded and livestreamed now. Some recent highlights include:

- A Friday afternoon “Kabbalat Shabbat” service with words of Torah and inspiration from Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yakov Medan and music by famed klezmer artist and Alon Shevut resident Moussa Berlin.
- The end-of-zman mishmar took place on Zoom and it included a late night tish with Rosh Yeshiva Rav Baruch Gigi, along with the singing of Odeh Lakel with the musical accompaniment of Yoni Genuth ’91H.
- Before the seventh day of Pesach there was a Shirat HaYam tish with Rav Shlomo Brin, Moussa Berlin, Rami Yanai ’70H, and Reuven Gafni ’92H.
- A Yom iyun in memory of Rosh Yeshiva HaRav Aharon Lichtenstein zt”l featured shiurim in English by Rosh Yeshiva Rav Moshe Lichtenstein, Rav Moshe Taragin, and Rav Yair Kahn.
- A pre-Shavuot Yom Iyun featured shiurim by Rosh Yeshiva Rav Moshe Lichtenstein, Rav Moshe Taragin, Rav Ezra Bick, and Rav Mordechai Friedman.
- A 4-part series with Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yakov Medan with overseas talmidim and alumni on “Who We Are: The Making of the Gush.”

Check out the video recordings of all these shiurim on the Yeshiva’s YouTube channel.

The Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash recently celebrated its 25th anniversary. The website will shortly be undergoing a major upgrade. The thousands of shiurim already on the current site needed to be tagged and sorted for the new platform, and we are grateful to the dozens of alumni who helped out by reading and listening to hundreds of shiurim.

In the meantime there are constantly new shiurim being added, including series by Rabbi Yitzchak Etshalom ’83 on “Amos and Hoshea: Before the Earthquake,” Rav Tzvi Sinensky ’98 on Shir HaShirim, Rav Aviad Tabory ’90H on “1000 Years of Jewish History in Halacha,” Rav David Brofsky ’90 on “Laws of Conversion and Circumcision,” and more.

Explore the VBM and register for online classes at www.vbm-torah.org
Mini-Seminar on Mental Health

Mental health is a topic that doesn’t get discussed in many yeshivot. In fact, Dr. Jacob Freedman, a psychiatrist who is a popular speaker and columnist who recently spoke in the Yeshiva, said that he once visited another Beit Midrash where the Rosh Yeshiva told him, “Mental health is a very important topic, but this is a high-quality Yeshiva and so it’s not really an important topic here.” Dr. Freedman responded, “With all due respect, I look around your Beit Midrash and I see at least five of my patients.” He commended Har Etzion for recently dedicating 2 afternoons to a mini-seminar on mental health and addiction.

In addition to Dr. Freedman, talmidim heard from Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski, a world-renowned expert on addiction, Noah Omri Levin, an award-winning digital marketer, who spoke to the talmidim about how he and his colleagues in the tech world use their skills to attract and hold onto our attention, and Brad Salzman, LCSW, who spoke about his work helping those with internet addiction.

The audio recordings of these lectures are available on KMTT.

Siyum HaShas

The completion of the 13th cycle of Daf Yomi was a cause for celebration in Jewish communities around the world. In Yeshivat Har Etzion all the talmidim and staff took part in a festive siyum lunch, with short sichot by Rav Udi Shwartz ’02H, an alumnus serving in the IDF rabbinate who still gives the Hebrew Daf Yomi shiur in Yeshiva in his “spare” time each day, Rosh Yeshiva Rav Baruch Gigi, and Rav Yair Kahn. The lively dancing at the event was accompanied by renowned klezmer musician Moussa Berlin.
Yeshiva Album

Students from The Dr. William Major Overseas Program on a Tanach tiyul to the Jordan River with Rav Menachem Leibtag

Yeshiva librarian and chief archivist Aharon Bejell ’75 presenting digitized recordings of shiurim of Rav Binyamin Tabory z”l to his wife Naomi and son Rav Aviad ’90H

Zak Josefsberg ’16MTA, one of the alumni who returned as part of Shavu Banim (see next page), making a Siyum HaShas in front of his rebbeim, including Rosh Yeshiva Rav Baruch Gigi and Rav Pini Cohen

New MTA class of 2020 who arrived in Yeshiva in Shevat

Even before coronavirus, our talmidim were always able to take advantage of the beautiful expanse of the Yeshiva’s campus. Here, Rav Tzvi Chaim Kaye and his talmidim enjoy an outdoor shiur on March 11.


Col. Richard Kemp CBE with Eli Weber, Director of the Overseas Program, and talmidim after speaking about his efforts advocating for the IDF and the State of Israel
Visitors to Yeshiva

Hesder classes of 1996 and 1997 in Yeshiva on Shabbat Parashat Beshalach

Hesder class of 1973 in Yeshiva on Shabbat Parashat Yitro

Avraham Sosnowik '16, Etan Soclof '16, and Benjie Goykadosh '16 in the Beit Midrash as part of the Yoni Jesner z”l program

Etzion board member Gavri Butler ’99 and family visiting Yeshiva in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of his son, Isaac

Udi Dror of the Defense and Society Department at the Ministry of Defense, and Moshe Tzin, its Director, visiting the Yeshiva and meeting with Roshei Yeshiva, Yeshiva Staff, and representatives of the talmidim and the Kollel

Shavu Banim

For the ninth year in a row, the Yeshiva ran the Shavu Banim program which enables MTA alumni from Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand to return to the Yeshiva for two weeks in January, during their summer break, to learn Torah and spiritually recharge before starting another year in university and in their communities back home. Many of the program participants extended their stay for longer, taking advantage of the opportunity to spend time in the Beit Midrash and with their rabbeim.

Hesder

On March 8, our third year Hesder talmidim had their pin ceremony to mark completion of part of their training in the IDF Field Intelligence unit

On June 29, several talmidim celebrated their completion of the IDF Commander’s Course, including overseas talmid Uriya Durani ’17, left
On January 3-4, Rav Menachem Leibtag was the scholar-in-residence in Chashmonaim.

On January 16, Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein gave a shiur at the Ohel Yona Menachem Shul in Beit Shemesh on “Paying for Damages.”

On January 18, Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein gave a shiur in Hoshaya on “Miriam’s Character.”

Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yakov Medan giving a shiur at the Chorev Shul in Yerushalayim on “Yael and Sisera” on February 5

On February 8, a book launch event took place at Kehillat Nitzanim in Yerushalayim to mark the publication of “The Oral Law: The Rabbinic Contribution to Torah sheBa’al Peh” (Maggid Books) by R’ Chaim H. Schimmel, who is also the grandfather of Yeshiva talmidim Yoni ’07, Yishai ’08, Binyamin ’08, Elizur ’10, Itai ’10, Netanel ’13, and Mounish ’19 Schimmel. Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein and Dayan HaRav Asher Weiss spoke at the book launch event.

On February 27, a book launch event took place for “Nitzchuni Banai” by Rav Amnon Bazak at the Ramban Shul in Yerushalayim, with opening remarks by the shul’s new rabbi, Rav Itiel Oron ’95H. A second event scheduled for March 26 in Givat Shmuel with Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein and Rav Eliezer Melamed. Rosh Yeshiva of Har Bracha, was postponed due to coronavirus.

March 2 was election day in Israel, and the Yeshiva opened its doors to alumni to take advantage of the day off with shiurim by Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yakov Medan and Rav Ezra Bick. Rav Medan also spoke in the evening at the Mishkan Michael Shul in Raanana.

On March 3, Rav Michael Edrei gave a shiur about Purim in Chashmonaim.
US

- On January 31-February 1, Rav Dovid Gottlieb was the scholar-in-residence at Green Road Synagogue in Beachwood, OH.
- On February 5, Rav Mordechai Friedman gave a shiur on “Kos Shel Bracha” at the home of Eli ’85 and Cheryl Sanders in Brookline, MA.

- On February 7-8, Rav Dovid Gottlieb was the scholar-in-residence at the Young Israel of New Rochelle, NY.
- Rav Moshe Taragin was the scholar-in-residence at Kemp Mill Synagogue in Silver Spring, MD.

- On February 14-15, Rav Moshe Taragin was the scholar-in-residence at Arzei Darom in Teaneck, NJ.
- On February 28-29, Rav Moshe Taragin was the scholar-in-residence at Congregation Ohav Emeth in Highland Park, NJ.
- On March 6-7, Rav Menachem Leibtag was the scholar-in-residence at Lower Merion Synagogue, PA. During the week he gave shiurim in Boro Park, NY, Teaneck and Highland Park, NJ, and in Hollywood, FL, as well as a shiur to alumni at Princeton and NYU. There were more shiurim planned but his trip was cut short due to coronavirus.

- Rav Yair Kahn travelled to the US from February 10-19 to give shiurim to alumni of the Yeshiva and Migdal Oz in college campuses on the East Coast. He gave shiurim at Queens, Rutgers, Harvard, Brandeis, Yale, Maryland, Johns Hopkins, Penn, Princeton, YU, Stern, Columbia and NYU. On Shabbat he was the scholar-in-residence at Keneseth Beth Israel in Richmond, VA.

UK

On January 31-February 1, Rav Mordechai Friedman spent Shabbat in London, speaking at Alei Tzion and Magen Avot.

Australia

Rabbi Marcus Rosenberg ’10MTA is a rebbi in the Leibler Yavneh high school in Melbourne. This year he taught a class on Sefer Devarim based on the shiurim and website of Rav Menachem Leibtag. This June, when Marcus requested that Rav Leibtag send them a video congratulating them on their siyum, Rav Leibtag agreed to do one step better—he joined them live via zoom. The students’ excitement at the surprise “celebrity” appearance was palpable. The session ended with a Q&A in which many students had the opportunity to ask him some of their most challenging questions. Marcus said, “The students were extremely fortunate to hear from Rav Menachem Leibtag to mark the conclusion of their study of Sefer Devarim. The students had learned many of Rav Leibtag’s insights into the Sefer as part of their learning and were especially excited to hear from the expert himself. Thank you Rav Leibtag!” We wish them continued success in their studies.
The Gwendolyn Straus Advanced Talmud Program at Migdal Oz

On the heels of the success of the Advanced Talmud Program established seven years ago, we have now enhanced the program with additional days of study, curriculum enrichment and a halachic track. An elite cadre of women who have completed 6 years of advanced Talmud study and have a proven record of excellence have been selected to continue on to a revolutionary track of Mitkadmat — up to an additional two years of advanced learning (for a total of up to 8 years of study). Graduates will have the skills and learning experience required to serve in important communal and educational positions, such as heads of Torah study institutions and heads of high school Talmud departments. The Gwendolyn Straus Advanced Talmud Program is the most advanced program both in Israel and overseas enabling women to engage in Gemara learning at the highest level for several years.

Mrs. Gwendolyn Straus z”l was a pioneer in the advancement of Jewish education, especially of Jewish education for women, and an exemplar of chesed and valiant service for the Jewish community. Her granddaughter, Julia Straus Baruch ’10MO is a proud alumna. The leadership of Yeshivat Har Etzion and Migdal Oz are honored that Joyce and Daniel Straus have dedicated the program in memory of Mrs. Straus.

Rabbanit Esti Rosenberg, Rosh Beit Midrash at Migdal Oz, and Rabbanit Michal Tikochinski, Head of the Halacha Program at Migdal Oz, and Yashar koach to all the women who completed the Daf Yomi cycle and hatzlacha rabba to all those joining for the 14th cycle!

Saluting the Kolatch Family

Yeshivat Har Etzion and Migdal Oz salutes and thanks Mindy and Jonathan Kolatch, parents of Deni ’04MO, Joey ’09, and Noah ’09, for dedi- cating the newly planned dorm wing at Migdal Oz that will provide housing for the advanced students and faculty of Migdal Oz. The new dorms are critical to the intellectual and spiritual growth of the students and imperative for the continued growth and impact of Migdal Oz.

Rosh Beit Midrash Rabbanit Esti Rosenberg said, “We are deeply indebted to the Straus and Kolatch families for their many years of partnership and for raising the bar for women’s learning and leadership.”

Hadran

This past January, Jews around the world celebrated the siyum of the 13th cycle of the Daf Yomi. Hadran, an organization that advances Talmud study for women, held a siyum event for women at Binyanei Hauma in Yerushalayim. Educators of the highest caliber spoke at the event, and naturally that included Rabbanit Esti Rosenberg, Rosh Beit Midrash at Migdal Oz, and Rabbanit Michal Tikochinski at Hadran Siyum HaShas for women.
Migdal Oz Online

The need for quality Torah shiurim online was compounded during the coronavirus lockdown. The staff at Migdal Oz also stepped up with shiurim available on the Yeshiva’s YouTube channel, including special programming for Yom HaZikaron and Yom Ha’atzmaut, and a pre-Shavuot Yom Iyun.

Derachemah

Women and Mitzvot is the new online initiative of Yeshivat Har Etzion in partnership with the Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash and the Stella K. Abraham Beit Midrash for Women at Migdal Oz. Their Facebook page recently featured an interview with Rabbi Don Cantor ’08. Don and his wife Leora are the co-directors of the OU-JLIC at Johns Hopkins University. The following is an excerpt of that interview.

What do you love to learn, and why? Everything! It’s so hard to highlight one thing. Since my wife, Leora, and I arrived on campus, our students have challenged us to think deeply and differently about Tanach. The depth and complexity of the characters, the nuance and passion of midrashic comments, and the humanity dripping from every word is incredible.

What halachic issues are on your mind these days? We are fortunate to have two couples who are currently attending Johns Hopkins getting married this summer! So, I’ve been thinking a lot about halacha surrounding weddings as well as niddah and hair covering (for which there is some wonderful material on Derachemah!) and how they relate to a healthy relationship and shalom bayit.

What do you like the most about Derachemah? Derachemah has such important material on the foundational elements of living a Jewish life. Articles address practical topics with real substance and halachic complexity, while retaining clarity both in the writing style as well as the web design. The “In Brief,” “In Depth,” and “Sources” tabs are brilliant. I am so appreciative that there is a website to which I feel comfortable directing students with the confidence that they will get real substantive Torah discussion on topics that are relevant, and in a medium that is relatable and accessible to all levels.

To see more of what’s available on Derachemah, go to womenandmitzvot.org, follow it on Facebook and Instagram @derachemah, and seek out the Kol Derachemah podcast on all major platforms.

Bat Mitzvah Day

On January 2, 40 alumni of the Yeshiva brought their Bat Mitzvah aged daughters or granddaughters to the Yeshiva and Migdal Oz for a day of learning and fun. Highlights included a scavenger hunt in the Yeshiva library, and meeting and hearing talks from Rosh Beit Midrash Rabbanit Esti Rosenberg and Rosh Yeshiva Rav Baruch Gigi. The event coincided with the Yeshiva’s Siyum HaShas celebration, so the alumni were able to join in that celebration as well.

Births

Michal (Novetsky) ’07MO and Avigdor Chudnovsky, Roni Ayala
Bracha (Lamm) ’11MO and Akiva Berger, Hallel
Tova (Katsman) ’14MO and Avi Gamoran, Ayala Hadar
Hodaya (Wecker) ’17MO and Yishai Yifrach, Pele

Simon Jackson ’91 and daughter Chedva learning in the Migdal Oz Beit Midrash on Bat Mitzvah Day

Participants in the Bat Mitzvah Day on a scavenger hunt in the Yeshiva library
The Oral Torah has framed the world of halacha for thousands of years. Serious Torah scholars spend the majority of their study on the Oral Torah. But usually overlooked are some fundamental questions, such as the origin of the Oral Torah, its relationship between the Midrash and peshat, and why they sometimes seem to contradict each other. This volume deals with these and other questions thoroughly, in clear and orderly language.

This sefer reviews more than twenty biblical commentaries, explaining the unique approach of each parshan. Through accessible text and concrete examples, it provides a solid foundation for the study of each commentary. The chapters in this book were originally presented as shiurim on the Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash.

In this haggadah, a wide-ranging contemporary commentary is merged with original and thought-provoking artwork. Together, they bring to life one of the haggadah’s predominant themes, the passage from destruction to hope. It will add meaning to your Seder, enhance your family discussions, and beautify your Pesach table.

The technological world is evolving before our eyes at an accelerated pace, and we are facing new social, cultural, economic, and leadership challenges. This requires a special kind of leadership that combines sobriety, planning, values, and humility. Fortunately, Sefer Shemot tells the story of the greatest leader in the history of the Jewish people and humanity, and it contains the information that can help each of us become Moses. Lessons are learned from his leadership, the mishkan, the lack of water in the desert, and the laws of Shabbat.

The book of Judges describes the struggles of the disparate tribes of Israel to overcome external enemies – as well as their internal differences – in order to become a nation. It highlights the difficult transition from a nomadic life to a settled, agrarian society. It introduces us to the tribes’ colossal challenge in responding to pervasive moral and cultural values that were incompatible with their exalted mission as a people. Judges, therefore, is a book of enduring relevance today. As each successive judge falls farther from the ideal of good governance, an urgent question takes shape: How can the downward spiral be halted? Chapters in this book were originally shiurim on the Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash.

Death almost always catches us unprepared, and when it does come upon us, there is usually very little time to study the halachot of burial and mourning. Even a person who has previously studied the laws of mourning may need a quick refresher. This book is a guide to the entire process of mourning — death, funeral, burial, shiva, aveilut, kaddish and yahrtzeit — and is replete with charts and tables that briefly summarize all the relevant laws.
ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS

YESHIVAT HAR ETZION wishes a hearty mazal tov to its alumni receiving semikhah at the YESHIVA UNIVERSITY/RIETS

Chag HaSemikhah

Shai Berman ’10
Jacob Bernstein ’10
Josh Botwinick ’09
Yehuda Chinskey ’12
Ariel Diamond ’06
Shlomo Friedman ’11
Yosie Friedman ’11
Chaim Goldberg ’11
Aminadav Grossman ’09
Dr. Shamai Grossman ’81
Yehoshua Katz ’11
Judah Kerbel ’13
Chaim Metzger ’10
Dovi Nadel ’10
David Nagarpowers ’10
Avigdor Rosensweig ’09
Aron Rubin ’07MTA
Robbie Schrier ’10
Isaac Shulman ’11
Jonah Sieger ’12
Binyamin Weinreich ’09
Yadin Yadin
Itamar Rosensweig ’06

- Jeff Wandel ’71 assisted in publishing the memoir of his mother, Marlit Berger Wandel, “Nourished By Faith: Survival & Rebirth,” her personal tale of survival of the Holocaust. Those interested in a copy can contact him through the Yeshiva office.

- Ezra Chwat ’79 and Rav Hillel Novetsky ’86 published an online scientific version of the entire Rif, based on manuscripts and thousands of Cairo geniza fragments.

- Rabbi Nati ’81 and Rachel Helfgot received the Sema Heller z”l award from Congregation Netivot Shalom.

- Rabbi Gidon Rothstein ’82 published a novel “The Making of the Messiah, 2048” with Targum Press, the sequel to his first novel, “Murderer in the Mikdash.”

- Rabbi Dr. Josh Joseph ’88 became the EVP & COO of the Orthodox Union.

- Jonathan Gruenhut ’95 has started writing piyutim for Yom Ha’atzmaut and is eager to share them with any fellow lovers of piyut.

- Aaron Koller ’95 published “Unbinding Isaac: The Significance of the Akedah for Modern Jewish Thought” (JPS/University of Nebraska Press).

- Daniel Mark ’98 is the Senior Fellow at the Religious Freedom Institute’s North American Action Team, Affiliated Scholar at the American Bible Society’s Faith and Discovery Learning Center, and Faculty Fellow at Villanova University’s Eleanor H. McCullen Center for Law, Religion and Public Policy.

- Rav Yehonadav Drory ’99H became the Rav of the Yishuv of Shilo, replacing the retiring Rav Elchanan Bin-Nun ’68H.

- Abe Mezrich ’00 published "Between the Mountain and the Land is the Lesson: Poetic Midrash on Sacred Community" (Ben Yehuda Press).

- Rabbi Yoni Schwartz ’00 became the Assistant Principal of Yeshiva Toras Chaim in North Miami Beach, FL.

- Dr. Yossi Farkas ’02, Rabbi Joe Wolfson ’04, Dr. Eitan Fleischman ’09, and Yosef Roth ’11 were all named to the “36 Under 36” by New York’s Jewish Week newspaper.

- Asher Fredman ’02 published a study with the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs entitled “The Battle Over BDS: Trends, Lessons & Future Trajectories” based on his 10+ years of experience with Israel’s fight.

- Rabbi David Perkel ’04PC published an index and guide to the Netziv’s commentary on the Torah. Those interested in a copy can contact him through the Yeshiva office.

- Rabbi Shlomo Zuckier ’05 received a PhD with distinction from Yale’s Religious Studies program.

- Yair Rosenberg ’06 put out an album of his musical compositions entitled Az Yashir. He is joined on the album by Abbaleh Savitt ’06 and Arun Viswanath ’08.

- Arun Viswanath ’08 translated and published the official Yiddish translation of “Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone.”

- Rabbi Jonah Sieger ’12 got his MS from Azrieli and will be the 4th grade rebbi at Yavneh Academy in Teaneck, NJ.

- Ari Bar-Shain ’14 became the Coordinator of Overseas Students (Rakaz Bnei Chul) at Yeshivat Har Etzion.

- CJ Glickman ’16 was the 2020 valedictorian at Yeshiva University.

- Judah Lesser ’18 and Batya Teitz ’15MO became the co-heads of the University of Maryland eiruv committee.
Marriages
Moshe Feldman ’89 and Ellen Cohl
Rav Josh Yuter ’95 and Estie Rosenblum
David Khaski ’04 and Lillian Rishty
Noam Mirvis ’05 and former Migdal Oz madricha Tikva Shore ’09MO
Aaron Shapiro ’07 and Mirit Gendelman
Jacob Chefitz ’08 and Arielle Stein
Joseph Benedyk ’12 and Gabi Parry
Ariel Mintz ’12 and Ashley Stern
Ben Sapo ’12MTA and Carmella Rubin
Josh Kaufman ’13 and Mairav Linzer
Josh Schilowitz ’13 and Deena Fuchs
Ben Atwood ’14 and Rachel Rosenberg
Ari Bar-Shain ’14 and Noa Bergwerk ’17MO
Isaac Dayan ’14 and Susan Kasavi
Netanel Rosen ’14 and Devorah Roselaar
Doron Snoyman ’14MTA and Lishai Steinman
Josh Weissman ’14 and Sarah Grzebinski
Cobi Nadel ’15 and Ayelet Reiss ’15MO
Noam Annenberg ’16 and Chana Minkus
Aaron Chazen ’16MTA and Hannah Swartz
Tani Kay ’16 and Shanan Markowitz
Evan Kominsky ’16PC and Becca Kraut

Births
Gili ’91 and Chaya Houpt, Yannai Azriel
Dr. Aryeh ’99 and Dr. Penina Dienstag, Hallel Moriah
Ezra ’99 and Chana Schneck, Itan Yisrael
Dr. Yonatan ’99 and Shira Wiesen, Leba Emunah
Rabbi Oran ’99 and Chani Zweiter, Ashira Miriam
Zev ’00 and Naamit Nagel, Yaakov Elimelech
David Adelsberg ’01 and Jocelyn London, Ora Chaya
Rabbi Gideon ’01 and Aliza Black, Asher Yosef
Josh ’01 and Miri Schainker, Shmuel Noach
Noam ’01 and Nomi Schneck, Shachar Chaim
Simon ’01 and Gabrielle Stern, Yehuda Simcha
Avi ’01MTA and Daniella Ziskind, Nava Tehilla
Ariel ’02 and Rachel ’05MO Tepperman, Carmel Raz
Rabbi Dr. Shlomo ’02 and Michal Wadler, Yanai
Dr. Yonah ’03 and Jana Krakowsky, Dax (Peretz)
Dani ’03 and Sarah Landman, Moshe Yitzchak
Doron ’03 and Dina Luder, Aderet Emuna
Yoni ’03 and Rachel Ratzersdorger, Mordechai Yehuda
Jordan ’03 and Sarah Reimer, Ronen Ayal
Daniel ’04MTA and Eden Fienberg, Netanel Mordechai
Nadav ’04 and Shifra Steindler, Sapir
Dr. Daniel ’06 and Yael Bierstone, Binyamin Dov Saadya
Rabbi Tuvia ’06 and Miriam Brander, Lielle Adira
David ’06PC and Molly Fried, Saadia Chaim
Ariel ’06MTA and Alana Hersh, Refaely Israel
Abbaleh ’06 and Simona Savitt, Yosef Matan
Josh ’06MTA and Talya Wiseman, Boaz Shaya Peretz
Yoni ’07 and Yehudit Brander, Eliezer Zev
David ’07 and Miriam Baigel, Gavriel Ezra
Yishai ’07 and Penina Katsch, Noam Aviv
Daniel ’07MTA and Racheli Winer, Roni
Rabbi Adam ’08 and Zeeva ’08MO Ariel, Sapir
Yehuda ’08 and Esther ’10MO Cohn, Adina Lital
Avi ’08 and Sara Matanky, Yaakov Shalom
Gavriel ’08 and Sarah Metzger, Asher Eliezer
Josh ’08 and Michelle Pomerance, Yaron Raphael
Rav Aron Dov ’08H and Hadar Wasser, Rivka Tzippora
Ethan ’09 and Yael Geneme, Amalia Binah
Rav Aminadav ’09 and Rachel ’10MO Grossman, Nitzan Tzivya
Ariel ’10 and Gabriela ’12MO Goldschlag, Michal Yonna
Yitz ’10 and Daphi Landes, Yehonaton Zev
Jonathan ’10 and Jordana Schmidt-Swartz, Chaim Yitzchak
Yakir ’11 and Rebecca Forman, Uriel Gershon
Chaim ’11 and Ronit Goldberg, David Uriel
Benjy ’11 and Ariella Goldman, Nina Yokira
Gavi Dov ’11 and Talia Hochszteine, Yael Emunah
Rav Ryan ’11K and Yaakov Levin, Elisheva Tova
Joey ’12 and Eliana Adler, Perry Chaya
Former madrich bnei chul Yoni ’12 and Avigail Nouriel, Elan Yehoshua
Avraham ’12 and Shira Wein, Esther Leeba
Elad ’14MTA and Ilana Eshel, Yishai Coleman
Rabbi Michael ’14K and Dorit Kohn, Liora Eli
Moshe ’16K and Dr. Shayna Bernstein, Shilo Aryeh
Ben ’16K and Ellie Menora, Ayelet Rachel
Eli ’17K and Avital Gastwirth, Yocheved Ayala

H = Hesder MO = Migdal Oz PC=post-college MTA = Midreshet Torah v’Avoda K = Kollel • The year indicates the commencement of study
Bar/Bat Mitzvahs
Rabbi Lawrence '85 and Nehama Teitelman, Temima
Aharon '90 and Sandra Galer, Maya
Eitan '93 and Sylvia Franklin, Ezra Simcha
Yossie '95 and Yael Bloch, Hananel Aharon
Rav Ari '95 and Aviva Heller, Yosef Yitzchak
Adrian '97MTA and Gabi Treger, Maayan Rachel
Rabbi David '98 and Yael Goldfisch, Netanel
Jarred '98 and Joanne Myers, Hadar
Josh '98 and Sara Shifra Wunder, Shoshana Nesya
Ezra '99 and Chana Schneck, Avi and Adina
Gavri '99 and Shani Butler, Isaac
Jamie '00 and Naomi Feinmesser, Yael Nechama
Noam '01 and Nomi Schneck, Maayan

Aliya
Rabbi Scot '77 and Esther Berman
Shmuel Hart '17

Condolences
To Stuie Hershkowitz '75 on the loss of his father, Marvin Hershkowitz z”l
To Jeffrey Ungar '75 on the loss of his father, Victor Ungar z”l
To Etzion board member Avi Katz '76 on the loss of his mother, Judith Katz z”l
To Don Respler '77 on the loss of his brother, Mordechai Respler z”l
To David Shames '77 and Ari Shames '86 on the loss of their mother, Marylin (Gullie) Shames z”l
To Irv Chiott '79 on the loss of his father, Harold Chiott z”l
To David Arbesfeld '82 on the loss of his father, Rabbi Hyman Arbesfeld z”l
To Gershon Segal '82, Michael Segal '89, and Rav Dr. Aaron Segal '99 on the loss of their father, Dr. Robert Segal z”l
To Avi Feder '83 and David Feder '84 on the loss of their mother, Naomi Feder z”l
To Rav David Milston '83 on the loss of his mother, Rivka Milston z”l
To Rav Michael Hattin '85 on the loss of his sister, Lisa Garman z”l
To Baruch Colton '86 on the loss of his father, Harvey Colton z”l
To Yosi Kossowsky '86 and Yehuda Kossowsky ‘91 on the loss of their father, Rabbi Dr. Zalman Kossowsky z”l
To Rav Dr. Asher Meir '86 on the loss of his mother, Maxine Leff Myers z”l
To Mitch Benuck ‘87 on the loss of his father, Myron Benuck z”) To Yisrael Friedman ‘87 on the loss of his father, Yitzchak Friedman z”l
To Michael Simons ’88 on the loss of his father, Leon Simons z”l
To Hillel Deutsch '97 on the loss of his father, Gary Deutsch z”l
To David Hain '97 on the loss of his brother, Donny Hain z”l
To Avi Robinson ‘97, Yechezkel Robinson ‘01, and Sarah Robinson ‘11MO on the loss of their father, Morris Robinson z”l
To Rabbi Yehuda Chanales ‘98 and Avi Chanales ‘07 on the loss of their mother, Suri Chanales z”l
To Rabbi Danny Eisenberg ’98MTA on the loss of his father, Mark Eisenberg z”l
To Jeremy Levy '00 and Gideon Levy '05 on the loss of their father, Yechezkel Levy z”l
To Saul Kaplan '01MTA and Rabbi Daniel Kaplan ’03MTA on the loss of their father, Ronnie Kaplan z”l
To Eli Lopian '01 on the loss of his mother, Eve Lopian z”l
To Migdal Oz Ram Rav Netanel Buchs '02H on the loss of his father, Aryeh Buchs z”l
To Daniel Friedman '02 on the loss of his father, Ernest Friedman z”l
To Yossi Szpigiel ’10 on the loss of his father, Harvey Szpigiel z”l
We regret to inform you of the passing of Max (Michael) Factor '88 z”l, son to Hillel and Evette, husband to Miri, father, and brother of Aharon (Jeremy) Factor ’86
We regret to inform you of the passing of Brad Gerszt ’93 z”l, son to David, husband of Lindsay, and brother to Trevor and Nina
We regret to inform you of the passing of Saadya Yehoshua Ehrenpreis z”l, a student from 2006-2010 in the Ohr Torah Stone Darkaynu program housed at the Yeshiva

Got news? Update us online at www.haretzion.org
Bold Horizons Capital Campaign Construction Update

Despite setbacks due to coronavirus, construction continues on the Yeshiva’s new wing of dorms, and the structural skeleton is nearly complete. More than half of the exterior is now covered in stucco and Jerusalem stone. Interior walls were completed, though there is more to do in terms of windows, flooring, electrical work, painting, and furniture.

- The architectural plans have been approved for the new dorm building at Migdal Oz, and we are in the process of securing building permits.
- The land has been leveled for the Amital Center for Jewish Learning and Leadership.

Leadership. Deep castings have been placed in the ground. The foundation is near completion and the skeleton is in the process of being erected.

- The patio outside the Yeshiva dining room has been dug out and is ready to be converted into an auxiliary dining room.
- The renovations of the Yeshiva kitchen have begun. The skeleton of the kitchen expansion is complete, replete with new storage rooms and food packing spaces. New entrances for raw materials and new exits for cooked foods are being built. The flooring and installation of the refrigeration and freezing rooms are nearing completion. New ovens and heating equipment have been purchased.

To make your tax-exempt donation, please contact any of our offices:

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