

Alumni Reflections

Impact of Limud HaTorah

Life or Death?

By: Rabbi Yaakov Yosef Hutman

Then



Now



“This is the Torah: when a man dies in a tent, all who come into the tent and everything in the tent shall be impure for seven days.” [19:14]

From this seemingly benign verse that details the laws of impurity caused by a corpse, R’ Shimon ben Lakish derives a vital lesson for the living.

“How do we know that Torah only lasts within one who kills himself over it? Because it says, ‘this is the Torah: a man who dies in a tent...’” (Talmud Brachos 63b)

While this gemara seems to teach a nice lesson in dedication, it presents a problem. Elsewhere, the Torah says, “V’chai bahem, you should live by the words of the Torah.” (Vayikra (Lev.) 18:5)

Which one is it, asks the Chafetz Chaim: Is the Torah a source of life or something to die for?

The Chafetz Chaim answers in his inimitable way, with a story. There was once a business owner who took the “busy” of his business very seriously. He was always working: Morning, evening and night. Overburdened, he enlisted his wife’s support in the business as well until the two of them virtually did nothing more than work. This hectic and singularly focused lifestyle continued for many years until one sunny morning, sometime past middle-age the man looked in the mirror. What he saw scared him- it was faint, but he could clearly see the shadow of the angel of death peeking out from between his thinning gray hairs.

On the spot he resolved to devote the rest of his life to his real work- accruing the merchandise he would take with him into the next world. He left his house,

passed by his office, and headed straight for the Bais Medrash, and opened up a gemara. A few blessedly fulfilling hours later, his wife frantically burst into the room, “Where were you?!”

“The store is full of customers and I can’t possibly manage! Tell the books to wait!”

Seeing his wife’s desperation, he rushed to the store to help out. This pattern continued for a few days until the man decided it was time to have a talk with his wife.

“My dear wife, he began over a cup of steaming tea, let me ask you: If the angel of death came and told you that he was coming for me would you tell him to wait until the customers are gone?!”

Not waiting for a reply the man concluded, “Every morning, pretend I died and was thus unavailable. Would you then mind if I show up a few hours later?!”

This is R’ Shimon ben Lakish’s lesson to us. The Torah is our life- no doubt. But to really live a life of Torah sometimes we just have to play dead!

Have a good Shabbos.

Welcome!

We are pleased to welcome

Rabbi & Mrs. Yisroel & Dvora Zweig

to our community for Shabbos. Rabbi Zweig is an accomplished Torah scholar and is currently pursuing advanced studies in Beth Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, where he is well-regarded and respected. Mrs. Zweig (nee Shapiro) is a beloved teacher and mother to the Zweig’s six children. Rabbi Zweig will deliver the Pirkei Avos Shiur in Bais Yisroel before Mincha on Shabbos. The community is encouraged take the opportunity to meet the Zweigs.



**HaRav & Rebbetzen
Chaim Simcha Gibber,**
Rosh Kollel

**HaRav & Rebbetzen
Menachem Frank,**
Rosh Kollel, 2005-2011

**HaRav & Rebbetzen
Eliyahu Stern,**
Rosh Kollel, 2011-

Rabbi & Mrs. Shmaryahu Abramczyk
Rabbi & Mrs. Avrohom Berzansky
Rabbi & Mrs. Nussie Bitterman
Rabbi & Mrs. Levi Botnick
Rabbi & Mrs. Aryeh Cohen
Rabbi & Mrs. Adam Crystal
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Rabbi & Mrs. Hillel Engelson
Rabbi & Mrs. Pinchos Friedlander
Rabbi & Mrs. Chaim Tzvi Friedler
Rabbi & Mrs. Aryeh Geretz
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Rabbi & Mrs. Eliezer Lefkowitz
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Rabbi & Mrs. Avromi Mayer
Rabbi & Mrs. Menachem Mendel Pam
Rabbi & Mrs. Shloime Rothstein
Rabbi & Mrs. Zecharya Rubin
Rabbi & Mrs. Yochanan Schnell
Rabbi & Mrs. Avner Sela
Rabbi & Mrs. Dovid Silverberg
Rabbi and Mrs. Yakov Ephraim Skolnick
Rabbi & Mrs. Moshe Weinreb

**HaRav & Rebbetzen
Moshe Twvia Lief,**
Miyased HaKollel



MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY
KOLLEL

Alumni Profile

Rabbi and Mrs. Yaakov Yosef Hutman

Members of the Kollel: September 2000 - Summer 2005



Rina 11, Chaim 9, Devorah 5, Mordechai 2, Aryeh 6 months

Personal Reflection

We remember the Minneapolis Community fondly. It is such a Temimusdik, close-knit, and warm community (weather notwithstanding!). Everyone there is always willing to help their friends, neighbors, and colleagues.

We especially remember how the community members went out of their way to make us feel welcome when we first came. This wasn't just for us and the other Kollel families, they welcome every new family the same way! The Chashivus HaTorah displayed by the community is special as well. Even after I left the Kollel and started working in Minneapolis, I would get up early to learn before the 6:30 minyan. There was always a large chabura in the Beis Medrash starting their day off on the right foot. To this day I am still inspired and continue to get up an hour before Shacharis to learn. (Only now Shacharis is at seven.)

Highlights

- We left Minneapolis in June of 2007, after 7 wonderful years of growth, and moved to Lakewood.
- Our girls go to Tiferes Bais Yaakov (elementary) and Bais Yaakov High School (high school) and our son goes to Yeshivas Shaagas Aryeh.
- Rabbi Hutman- "I started working as a CPA while still in Minneapolis. Albert Miller got me my first job. Thank you! When I moved to Lakewood I worked for 3 years at a small firm outside of Lakewood, after which I opened up my own practice with my cousin. Our firm is called Hutman & Hutman, LLP. and we have many clients in Minneapolis. (not intended as a plug 😊)
- Mrs. Hutman currently runs a playgroup in our home.
- Our children ka"h are Shaindy 17, Shira 15, Dassy 13, Rina 11, Chaim 9, Devorah 5, Mordechai 2, Aryeh 6 months.

Keep in touch with the Hutmans

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