

# MESIVTA'S MESSAGE

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## THOUGHTS *on the* OMER

RABBI GERSHON ROCKOVE

The בני ישראל tells us that when the בני ישראל left מצרים, they were informed that they would receive the תורה in 50 days. 50 days seemed like an impossibly long time to wait, so בני ישראל began to count the days that passed. With each passing day, they were a bit closer to the much anticipated קבלת התורה. In the words of the מדרש:

"וישראל מרוב חיבה היו מונין בכל יום ויום... שהיה נראה בעיניהם כזמן ערוך מתוך חיבתן הגדולה"

The מדרש concludes that this became the basis of ספירת העומר for future generations. ספירת העומר is a time for us to reinforce our appreciation of the תורה. By acting as if we cannot wait to receive the תורה, we begin to feel that urgency. We can build on those feelings by reflecting upon the beauty of a life of מצות and תורה.

The ספירת העומר that surround קרבנות also hint to this. ספירה begins with the bringing

of the קרבן עומר, which is made from barley, animal food. ספירת העומר concludes with us bringing the שתי הלחם, which is made from wheat, human food. The ערוך השלחן explains that the תורה is teaching us that without the תורה, we are little more than sophisticated animals. But through קבלת התורה, we rise to the exalted status of human beings - humans that can serve ה', and cling to him - in this world and the world to come.

The בעל עקידה takes this one step further. He explains that understanding the gift of תורה is also a prerequisite for קבלת התורה. In the כי מי שאינו בא אל הלימוד's words: בתורת רעב וצמא אין לו שום תועלת - someone only properly gains and understands תורה when he hungers and thirsts for it.

May we be זוכה to cultivate our passion, love and yearning for the תורה and merit a complete קבלת התורה.

## SPARKS *of* MUSSAR

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### The Alter of Novhardok

On one of his trips, R' Yosef Yozel stayed at an inn with a distinguished Moscovite. On erev Shabbos R' Yosef Yozel borrowed a clothes brush from him to clean his clothes for Shabbos, but before he could return it the man left for shul. Motzoei Shabbos, when R' Yosef Yozel returned from shul, the Moscovite had already left for home. R' Yosef Yozel was very distressed that he had not returned the object to its owner and always wondered how he could find the man and return the brush.

Seven years later, R' Yosef Yozel encountered another Moscovite on a train and inquired if he knew the owner of the brush. Upon learning that they lived in the same neighborhood, R' Yosef Yozel happily gave the traveler the brush to return to its owner.

## FEATURED TORAH *Message*

ARON MAZER 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

The pasuk says לאִתְּקוּם וְלֹא־תִטְרֹף אֶת־בְּנֵי עַמֶּיךָ לָאֵלֹהִים, "You should not take revenge, you should not bear a grudge against your people, love your fellow as yourself, I am Hashem." There are several mitzvos in this pasuk: the negative commandments about not taking revenge and carrying grudges, and the positive commandment to love every Jew. Is there a connection between these mitzvos

found all in one pasuk?

Rav Dovid Feinstein zt"l answers that this pasuk is teaching us how our לחבירו relationships should be. You cannot avoid revenge and grudges if you don't love every Jew, because if he did something bad to you, he is taking advantage of you and you will be upset and retain hard feelings. But when you love a person, you will realize that although he may

have done something hurtful to you or refused to do something for you, you won't bear a grudge or take revenge.

Rav Dovid Feinstein zt"l compares this to the energy and effort people often invest in taking care of their relatives. Even though they may be very needy, we don't resent taking care of them, because we love them. This is the perspective we should have regarding every Jew.

# RECENT *Happenings*

GAVIN KORNBUM 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

I could feel the excitement building as we left yeshiva at 2 am this past Motzaei Shabbos, heading to Chicago. After 16 weeks of learning during the retzifus program, almost 50 talmidim earned the grand prize of a trip to Chicago. Rabbi Biron pulled out all the stops during our amazing trip. We arrived at the Chicago Kollel just in time to daven Shacharis. We then heard a shmuess from Rabbi Zucker, the Rosh Kollel, on the importance of Kavod HaTorah.

We then headed to Emma's for an amazing breakfast - I got a lox and egg omelet. Next on the agenda was a trip to the Chicago Chesed Fund for a tour of their massive facility where they provide everything you could imagine to those in need. They had rooms with furniture, appliances, all the dry goods you could imagine, 6 walk-in freezers for storing meat, clothing, games, school supplies, and even seforim. It was so amazing to hear about all the good they do. Then we had a tremendous opportunity to meet the dayan, Rav Shmuel Fuerst, and we got to ask a whole bunch of questions regarding halachos and

hashkafos for life. It was a truly eye-opening experience.

After meeting with Rav Fuerst, we went to Hillel Torah for a basketball game against Skokie Yeshiva, which was a lot of fun. The excitement in the room was palpable and the game was very close. After that we went across the lawn for pizza and met with an alumnus of the yeshiva. After davening mincha, we stayed to learn a tremendous retzifus seder.

After seder we went to Evita Argentinian Steakhouse for dinner. We had amazing steaks and got to meet the chef, who turns out to be a native of Chesterfield! He told us he used to live right near Baxter and Clarkson, which is where our yeshiva is located. Then dessert was incredible!

During dinner, a few of the talmidim and the rebbeim spoke about the amazing program and how it affected them. It was very inspiring to hear everyone's success stories. Then we got back on the bus to head home. The trip was a smashing success, especially since we didn't run into any Cubs fans. All in all it was one of the best trips I have been on with yeshiva, and the most action-packed 24 hours I've ever had.



| SUNDAY  | MONDAY                        | TUESDAY                                  | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY | SHABBOS |
|---|-------------------------------|--|-----------|------------|--------|---------|
| Women's Mussar Siyum - All Women Invited! (See details above) 8 | Men's Basketball @ MTI Gym 9  | Women's Orchos Tzaddikim 10              | 11        | 12         | 7:46PM | 13      |
| Women's Iggeres Haramban 15                                     | Men's Basketball @ MTI Gym 16 | Women's Orchos Tzaddikim 17              | 18        | LAG BAOMER | 7:52PM | 21      |
| Women's Iggeres Haramban 22                                     | Men's Basketball @ MTI Gym 23 | Women's Orchos Tzaddikim 24              | 25        | 26         | 7:58PM | 28      |
| Women's Iggeres Haramban 29                                     | Men's Basketball @ MTI Gym 30 | ROSH CHODESH Women's Orchos Tzaddikim 31 | 1         | 2          | 8:03PM | 3       |
|   |                               |  |           |            |        | 4       |

**SAVE THE DATE!**

*Annual Dinner*

**JUNE 12, 2022**

**Aryeh Freylicher, Realtor**

Cell: 314.387.0888  
Office: 888.220.0988  
aryehfrey@gmail.com

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5 min *Ahavas Chesed* with Rabbi Shmuel Wasser

To receive recordings after each shiur, scan QR code