

# ” - ר' ניסן תשע”ח

by C.B. Weinfeld

“Not very long ago, the maximum I was able to learn was for one hour — and only with a chavrusa.”

Sholom Weisberg, a beloved talmid at Yeshiva Shaarei Torah, then paused. 700 pairs of eyes looked back at him, with empathy and understanding. They'd been there, done that, and knew exactly what it felt like.

Sholom savored the moment, and continued to the punch line. “Today I can learn for hours, on my own, and I barely feel the time passing by. Do you know why? Because Abaye and Rava are my chavrusos.”

“Learning alone used to be like learning with a chavrusa who speaks a foreign language. But now, with the Vhaarev Na program, through chazara, chazara, and more chazara, the gemara is speaking my language! I'm learning with a live chavrusa, with the tana'im and amora'im of the gemara.”

These words could have been echoed by every one of the 700 bochurim, who had just completed a three-hour seder retzufos on their first day of bain hazmanim at a special celebration at the Valley Terrace Hall in Monsey.

**Today I can learn for hours, on my own, and I barely feel the time passing by.**

The bochurim, traveling from Los Angeles, Toronto, Detroit and Miami, along with a large representation from Lakewood, Brooklyn and Monsey, hailed from 31 different yeshivos, but they all shared one transformative milestone. They were all part of the Vhaarev Na program, a revolution that has transformed their limud HaTorah, their very essence, from yeshiva bochurim who learn because there is no other choice, to bnei Torah who love to learn.

The retzufos seder was awe-inspiring. Watching hundreds of bochurim from across the US and Canada, from various backgrounds, learning in harmony, their voices soaring with passion and geshmak—it was obvious that these boys weren't merely

‘counting the minutes,’ but ‘living’ the minutes, engrossed in the masechtos that they owned, through hours of chazara, chazara, and more chazara.

The success of the Vhaarev Na program, which gives bochurim the opportunity to own their masechta through repeated chazara and ‘klorhkeit’ speaks for itself.

“You can see the difference between a bochur on the Vhaarev Na program in a very short time,” attested one prominent magid shiur, who has seen bochurim metamorphasize into metzuyonim, boys who learn because they want to learn—because it speaks to their minds, their hearts, and their souls.

After a rousing three hour seder, the bochurim heard a stirring address by Rav Eliezer Breitowitz, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva Darchei Torah of Toronto, sharing his awe of what he had just witnessed. Rav Breitowitz, who accompanied forty of his bochurim, gave the assembled his passionate brocha that they continue to learn and grow.

Rabbi David Nakash of YDE related the humorous story of a baby camel, who asks his mother about his long, spindly legs, unwieldy hump, and thick eyebrows. The mother patiently explains that the legs help them navigate the desert; the hump is where they store nutrients to keep them nourished; and the lashes prevent the desert sand from harming their eyes. To which the baby camel said, “Mommy, what's it all worth? We're not in the desert. We're in a zoo!”

Likewise, Rabbi Nakash expressed with passion, “We are each given special gifts, enabling us to learn and grow, to reach unimaginable heights. Yet at times we are locked in a ‘zoo’ of our own making, unable to use our kochos hanefesh, our growth stunted. The Vhaarev Na program unlocks our potential with the fire of Torah, making our learning vibrant and alive.”

This was followed by a siyum by Eli Schreiber, who was mesayem his masechta for the 36th time.

The ‘omein yehei sh'mei rabbah,’ following the siyum echoed off the rafters!

The boys, hungry yet satiated with inspiration, came into the ballroom for 45 minutes of ‘derhoibene’ dancing, led by R' Boruch Levine, Yochi Briskman, and Eitan Katz, who played a new V'haarev Na song especially composed for this event.

The boys danced and sang with fervor as they held their gemaras aloft, cradling them with the love of someone who has truly made limud haTorah a part of their soul. There was no alcohol, no selfies, no distractions—only the Torah and the lomdei Torah, united, as one.



The rikudim were followed by a lavish fleishig meal, during which Rabbi Dovid Newman, the architect of the V'haarev Na program, addressed the crowd, welcoming the distinguished Roshei Yeshiva and Rabbonim, along with the over 700 bochurim, mentioning each of their yeshivos by name. As each yeshiva's name was announced, the bochurim of that yeshiva erupted into spontaneous applause.

Rabbi Newman elaborated on the unifying factor that brought everyone together, asking, “What are we celebrating? Why a simchas haTorah?” To which he replied, “In order to feel genuine simcha and ahavas Hatorah, we need to taste real mesikas haTorah. This can only be attained if the shakla vtarya is flowing and clear. It requires lots of mesiras nefesh for constant chazara. Yet, we live in a society that screams take it easy, relax, don't work so hard. It is this chashivus, ameilus, and mesiras nefesh for chazara that brings us all together. This is what we are celebrating!”

Rabbi Newman mentioned live examples of mesiras nefesh, declaring, “there is one bochur here who sat in the dentist's chair, undergoing a root canal—reviewing two blatt of his masechta in his mind. An example of chashivus haTorah is another bochur in the audience, whose suitcase with his belongings was stolen on his way to yeshiva — he went in pursuit, ‘my gemara! my gemara!’ — that was all he cared about. It wasn't just his gemara, it was a part of himself!”

And as for ameilus baTorah, Rabbi Newman spoke about two bochurim seated there, who had gone together on a flight to Eretz Yisroel. When the plane took off they opened their gemaras to daf beis, and continued to review together until the plane landed some eleven hours later, saying “hadran alach masechta Sukkah!”

“I am more nispoel from the fact that they were “able” to learn eleven hours straight, than from the fact that they actually did. This is testimony to the countless hours of chazara beforehand, which made the gemara so clear and geshmak, enabling them to chazer 55 consecutive blatt.”

Rabbi Newman then made a mind-boggling cheshbon that really brought the point home, as he calculated, “Let's assume that of the 700 bochurim seated here, each bochur learned since Elul an average of 35 blatt, and reviewed it an average of ten times. If you multiply that by seven hundred, there is a total of 245,000 blatt of gemara being celebrated!”

Dovi Adler then spoke about how Vhaarev Na transformed his life. Now he learns many consecutive hours each day, including Shabbos and bein hazmanim, not because he has to — but because he wants to. Once a masechta becomes your best friend, all distractions and pastimes fall away.

Rav Ephraim Wachsman, Rosh Yeshivas Me'or Yitzchok, held the audience spellbound as he depicted the simcha he and

they felt, the radiant smiles and true inner joy that pulsated throughout the auditorium.

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As Rav Wachsman explained, “Pesach is z'man cheiraseinu, the time of our freedom, as Klal Yisroel moved from being slaves of Pharaoh to being avdei Hashem. One can ask, ‘what is the difference? We are still slaves, albeit to another master.’”

Though it may seem similar, the two are worlds apart.

As the Rosh Yeshiva stressed, “An ovid Hashem feels true freedom, the freedom to soar, to attain great heights, to realize his deepest potential in limud haTorah. And that, dear bochurim, is the simcha you are feeling tonight, without any alcohol, without any external ‘shtick’ because it comes from deep within your neshamos. Ki heim chayeinu — you don't just say it. You mean it, because it's real.”

After benching, the boys stood up and began swaying, arm in arm, as R' Boruch Levine, Yochi Briskman and Eitan Katz led the olam in a moving kumzits that lasted for two hours.

Rabbi Chaim Nossan Segal, Director of Community Development for Torah Umesorah, addressed the crowd in his inimitable manner, his words permeating their hearts and souls. “Thanks to your limud haTorah, your mesiras nefesh, I can be successful in opening a day school in Kalamazoo, Michigan,” he boomed. “You are true heroes, true royalty.”

At the close of the event, every bochur filled out a kabbalah card, committing to review a specific amount, ranging from a few minutes to several hours, an amud to several dafim every single day of bain hazmanim.

And that, indeed, is something to celebrate about. Not only at the simchas haTorah, but for eternity. For more information, please visit vhaarevna.com or email vhaarevna@gmail.com.

# "שבת התורה"



KUMZITS



סדר רצופות



נגיל ונשיש בזאת התורה