



October 26, 2012

י' חשוון תשע"ג

פרשת לך לך

Candle Lighting 6:24 PM

Rabbi Binyomin Luban  
Rabbi Yisroel Y. Niman  
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ראשי הישיבה

Dvar Torah -Stay Focused

by Rabbi Mordechai Palgon, Rosh HaYeshiva

Issue 1

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The פסוק states: וישמע אברם כי נשבה אחיו וירק את חניכיו ילידי ביתו שמונה עשר ושלוש מאות (יד). "And heard that his brother (לוט) was held captive and he armed his 318 students born in his house."

The גמרא in נדרים (32a) explains that when the פסוק states that אברם armed his battalion of 318, it means that he fortified them with precious stones and gems, lest they became distracted in war, in order that they could remain focused on the מצוה of saving לוט.

The question arises: These disciples were the great תלמידים of אברהם אבינו. According to one interpretation, it was his אליעזר (which is the גמטריא of 318). אברהם say that all of the Torah that אברהם knew was transferred to אליעזר! Surely, אברהם אבינו's students, and particularly אליעזר, could be trusted to stay focused on the מצוה of הצלת נפשות! Why was אברהם so worried that they would be distracted by the desire for the spoils of war?

We must conclude that even if אברהם had not

Dvar Halacha - Saying ברכת התורה by Zev Sugerman, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

One must say ברכת התורה before learning any חומש, משנה, מדרש, or גמרא. According to many ראשונים, this ברכה is actually required מדאורייתא. However, there are different opinions as to what type of learning requires saying the ברכה. Everyone agrees that if one is speaking words of תורה, a ברכה is required since that is actually learning תורה. According to the מחבר, if one is writing words of תורה, for example writing a ספר, he is required to make a ברכה. The משנה ברורה limits the requirement of making ברכת התורה in the case of writing to a situation where one has the intention of learning. If, however, one is only transcribing or translating words of תורה with no intention of learning, then no ברכה is required. There are אחרונים, though,


given them any money in advance of the war, they would not be suspected to take any spoils until the war was over. However, they would have been placed in a situation of major turmoil. אברהם understood that the mental energy expended to withstand this נסיון would have caused a slight distraction from the מצוה at hand. This lapse could spell disaster and keep them from totally concentrating on saving לוט, especially with all the gleam and glitter sparkling in front of them. This is why he stuffed their pockets with gems.

Many of us, much like אברהם אבינו's disciples, are committed to our current lives with tremendous מסירת נפש. We put forth great efforts to raise our children and grandchildren התורה על פי דרך התורה. Yet, as we see from this episode with אברהם, it is very easy for us to become distracted. The יצר הרע will accept even a slight decline from the high standards and convictions we committed to uphold on יום כיפור.

Let's revitalize our excitement and התלהבות to go about our עבודה with pure נפש. We will fulfill the lofty goals we set out to accomplish, and provide tremendous merit and זכויות for ourselves, our children, and all of ישראל.

Good Shabbos

who hold that writing is no different than having thoughts of תורה and therefore would never require a ברכה. The משנה ברורה suggests speaking out the words that one is writing in order to reach the requirement for saying a ברכה.

  
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## The Weekly Quiz

Q: When was אבנר's brother סימון born?

Answers or ideas for future questions may be submitted in writing to the Spotlight office or emailed to [Quiz@ytcteam.org](mailto:Quiz@ytcteam.org)

The first correct answer submitted will be announced in the next Spotlight. You need not be a student to participate. Hatzlochah!

## The YTC Basketball Team



## YTC Welcomes New Faculty by Akiva Nemetsky, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

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This year Yeshiva Toras Chaim has introduced a wealth of new faculty members in both the Judaic and Secular studies areas. New faces include Rabbi Strassfeld, Dr. Brown, Mr. Corbelle, and Mr. Schwartz.

Coming to us from the "Mother-ship" that is Queens, New York is Rabbi Strassfeld,



Toras Chaim's new ninth grade Rebbe. He is charged with

equipping the newest Toras Chaim students with many of the skills they will use for a lifetime. The range of Judaic subjects includes Chumash, Parsha, Navi, Bekiyus, and of course, Gemorah B'Iyun. When asked to describe his experience in Toras Chaim thus far, Rabbi Strassfeld quite pointedly responded, "Awesome."

Yeshiva Toras Chaim is constantly striving to better its academic curriculum and in doing so has added three teachers to the Secular Studies Department. Quite the catch, Dr. Brown has committed his life to the pursuit of academic excellence both as a student and as an instructor. Over the course of his academic career,



Professional Writing and Comparative Literature, and a PhD. in Hispanic Studies. Needless to say, Dr. Brown is very qualified for this position, and the Yeshiva is excited to welcome him.

Mr. Corbelle is a lecturer at Barry University, where he teaches Developmental English to college freshmen. There, he works with many students for whom English is their second language. This experience



has given him the expertise as a classroom instructor who must clearly explain the purpose and objectives of the lessons to be learned. Additionally, Mr. Corbelle serves as a writing tutor at Barry University, working with students to help them improve their writing, and to present their point of view without compromise. Mr. Corbelle

graduated from the University of South Florida with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a minor in History. He is also a published poet.

The fourth edition this year to the YTC family is Mr. Schwartz. Mr. Schwartz, originally from New Jersey, has a



Master of Arts in both special and general education. A former professional drummer, excitement

follows Mr. Schwartz both inside and outside the classroom walls. Just this past week, in fact, Mr. Schwartz joined the YTC band in performing for the *Rosh Chodesh* breakfast. Mr. Schwartz teaches ninth and twelfth grade history, and we are all happy to welcome him.

As the amount of new faces seen in Yeshiva Toras Chaim increases, so does its academic excellence. With these new faculty members on board, there is no doubt that the educational standard of Yeshiva Toras Chaim has been raised.

## Rosh Chodesh Breakfast by Meir E. Mittel, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade

Ein simcha kisimchas haTorah! Last week was YTC's first Rosh Chodesh party of the year, and it was awesome indeed. It kicked off with a most delectable breakfast featuring, pancakes and bagels with cream cheese. While enjoying the breakfast, we were zoche to an inspirational, mussardik speech by none other than the founder of Yeshiva Toras Chaim; HaRav Bention Chait, Shlit"va. All of the students learned a lot from the speech, found it very interesting, and especially appreciated Rabbi Chait's hilarious ending joke.

The breakfast was topped off with Krispy Kreme doughnuts, and then the PARTY started! The Yeshiva's VERY OWN high-school band started rockin' out some energizing tunes and the Rabbaim and talmidim started to dance. There were geshmak circles, cool dances, and some slick moves by Toras Chaim's new Rebbe; Rabbi Strassfeld. Even Mr. Richardson and Mr. O'toole joined the fun. Simcha-filled dancing lasted for an hour and a half. That is until... a kumzits started! The lights were dimmed,

the bochrin were sitting in a circle and a most memorable kumzitz was enjoyed by all. But all wonderful things must come to an end. So after the kumzitz, we all went back to class, but the geshmack memories of the 1st Rosh Chodesh party of the year were permanently etched into our minds.



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