

The Military Yeshiva Academy of Israel

BNEI DAVID ELI

Pesach 5772 Bulletin Nissan 2012



Open your hand and provide for the needs of all ח"י "Chai" life

We have begun construction on Bnei David's new kitchen and dining hall! For the past 24 years, since the mechina was founded, our kitchen staff and students have been cooking in a small kitchen and eating in a dining hall that has been expanded over the years but is too small to accommodate our current enrollment. The kitchen, which started out preparing meals for the 70 students in our first program, now feeds 450 students. The advanced yeshiva students eat in a caravan on the other side of the campus, and each day have to carry their food a considerable distance.

The new kitchen will be built on a high standard and there will be dining areas for the mechina, the advanced yeshiva and the post-army program students. This project has been designed by architects Irwin Sadan and Shira Drori of Platin architects, advised by a team of professional consultants. The building will be about 16,000 square feet in size and has an estimated cost of \$3 million, including the kitchen equipment. We are at the

height of a campaign to raise the necessary funds. We have so far raised over a third of this sum and invite you to partner with us and to help us provide for the needs of our students. All donations large and small will be gratefully accepted, and there are many options for honoring or commemorating loved ones. For additional details just scan the adjacent QR code or write to Lior at : lior@bneidavid.org.

"Open your hand" and donate ח"י \$18/180/1,800/18,000/180,000 and help us raise the remaining \$1.8 million for the kitchen-dining hall. ■

New!

The Bnei David Haggadah
A Song of Ascents
 Pesach Haggadah with commentary
By Rabbi Eliezer Sadan

To order your copy
972-2-9407888
sale@bneidavid.org

The Paradox of Freedom

One of the modern-day questions of Pesach is, "What was the point of being liberated from Egypt only to become slaves of God?" The answer is simple and striking: **A Jew's greatest pleasure and ultimate freedom consists in this very bond of servitude to Hashem Yitbarach.** Being free means following one's own inner defining essence. And the essence of a human being is the Divine image in which he was created. The Hebrew for "image" is *Tzelem*, which is related to *Tzel* which means *shadow* or *imitation*. The Creator gave mankind a unique and marvelous gift: the ability to be Godlike by imitating His actions. As Chazal put it, "Just as He is compassionate, so too, should you be compassionate; just as He does acts of lovingkindness, so too, should you do acts of lovingkindness." Freedom par excellence means doing solely what Hakadosh Baruch Hu commands. There is no greater pleasure than obedience to His will, since our self-fulfillment consists of that very servitude. We choose to do His will: that is what makes us who we are, and makes our lives meaningful.

From "A Song of Ascents" – Commentary on the Haggadah, by Rabbi Eliezer Sadan

May you have
 a vibrant
 & uplifting
 Pesach!



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Chanukah

Chanukah candles at Masada

Late one evening during Chanukah, after a special day of learning about this festival, Bnei David's mechina students boarded buses and traveled south toward Masada. The buses stopped about 6 miles from this historic site and the students continued their journey on foot, including carrying one another on stretchers part of the way. Rabbi Sadan joined the marchers and helped carry one of the stretchers, accompanied by singing that raised everyone's spirits and energy level. When they reached the foot of the rampart built by the Romans nearly 2,000 years ago during the siege of Masada, the students watched a sound-and-light show about the rise and fall of Herod's fortress, and



as the sun rose the students climbed to the top of the mountain and to the ancient synagogue there, where they prayed Shacharit, sang Hallel and read from the Torah. ■



Directing the focus of religious Zionism – Part 2

About six years ago Rabbi Sadan published the first booklet on focusing the efforts of religious Zionism. This publication followed the expulsion from Gush Katif and called on the religious Zionist public (the crocheted kippa public) to assume more responsibility and be a partner in the State of Israel's civilian and defense endeavors. Rabbi Sadan, who has been talking about the importance of religious soldiers rising through the officers ranks in the Israel Defense Forces, called for similar increased involvement in the public service and Israeli government systems.



and shortcomings. Rabbi Sadan then discusses such issues as the violence against the IDF, the religious takeover of the army – really? and the principle of leadership by example. This booklet is currently being translated into English. ■



Looking, listening and learning – Bnei David on the Internet

In the past year we have invested considerably in spreading Bnei David's Torah philosophy via the Internet. Thanks to assistance from our alumni, we purchased a computer system and cameras for producing, editing and uploading high quality videos of Torah lectures. Three permanent cameras have been installed in the Beit Midrash and the classrooms, and there is a mobile camera for use at all the lectures. Each week dozens of lectures in Hebrew are uploaded to the Internet and the viewer response has been very positive. Bnei David also has a Facebook page, where students and alumni can share ideas. ■



Bnei David Institutions is launching a new program that will start after Pesach in the Post-army Beit Midrash and is aimed at attracting young men who are nearing the end of their army service, to return to the Beit Midrash and reconnect with the world of Torah study. The program will combine yeshiva studies with a university entrance exam preparation course, such that discharged soldiers embarking on academic studies can get the best of both worlds and acclimatize to civilian pursuits in the best possible way. ■

Recently Rabbi Sadan published a second booklet, which has been distributed in close to 100,000 copies all over the country. This booklet contains Rabbi Sadan's thoughts on all the issues that have entered the public discourse in the past few months. He starts with the basic principles of our worldview regarding Israel, the establishment of the state as part of the process of the beginning or our redemption; the importance of our unity as one people, despite differences of opinion; mutual respect, Israeli democracy, and Israel's many advantages



Bnei David and the Chasidic World in Bnei Berak and in Eli

Each year Bnei David's mechina students spend a Shabbat as guests in Bnei Berak, for a taste of the Chasidic world, and this year was no exception. Lectures in Chasidic philosophy are held in our Beit Midrash and we have a Chasidic literature bookcase so that the students can learn the depth of the Torah world in all its variety. Still, nothing can match the personal experience of a Shabbat in the Bnei Berak atmosphere.

The students met with the leaders of our generation in this city of Torah and heard Chasidic tales interwoven with philosophy, from the most renowned Chasidic lecturers. On Erev Shabbat after the meal, the students visited the "Tish" at the Nadvorna Chasidic court, where they had the honor of seeing the

late Admor Yaakov Yisachar Ber Rosenbaum, of blessed memory, at one of the last Tishim he led. On Motzei Shabbat at the Melave Malka the students danced with Rabbi Sadan and Rabbi Levinstein, our friend Mr. Moti Zisser and the Admor from Pittsburg, who came especially from his home in Ashdod and delivered a fascinating lecture.

On the Friday night of the Shabbat before Purim, Rabbi Sadan led a Tish for all the students at Bnei David Institutions - the mechina, the Advanced Yeshiva and the Post-army Beit Midrash. The Tish was held around a long central table surrounded by hundreds of students, singing and listening to words of Torah, with the customary Yerushalmi kugel served close to midnight. ■



Rabbis Sadan and Levinstein discuss national unity with President Shimon Peres

Following the sabotage of IDF equipment and angry outbursts against soldiers in December, Israeli President Shimon Peres invited leading rabbis to a unity meeting at the President's House. "We were very happy to hear that fundamentally, we are in full agreement that the most important strategic measure for Israel is to maintain unity from within,

especially given the reality of so many enemies from without," Rabbi Sadan told the president. "The Jewish people's resilience is contingent upon its ability to hold a respectful dialogue, even when there are differences of opinion. We must ensure not only that the disagreement does not foment violence, but also not hatred, and that the discourse retains mutual respect." ■



Celebrating a complete reading of the Maharal's books

Shlomi Fenster, a career army soldier and graduate of Bnei David's class of 2006 recently returned to Bnei David to celebrate his completion of reading the Maharal of Prague. Many yeshiva students these days hold celebrations for completing a learning cycle of all 63 tractates of the Mishna, but a complete reading of all the Maharal's writings is a very rare and special occurrence. This was a truly exciting event. Shlomi expounded one of the Maharal's ideas and Rabbi Sadan spoke animatedly about the centrality of the Maharal's writings to the building of our worldview and praised Shlomi on his diligence. ■



Teacher training students visit Tel Aviv

Last month Bnei David's teacher training program students went to Israel's "city that never stops," for a guided tour of the outreach work that never stops. The students visited the Jewish Home open house program in Jaffa, a beautiful place with a breathtaking view of the sea, and heard about the programs from the director, Gili Choter. Next, Eran Yunger, who heads the core group of Torah observant families in Ramat Aviv told the students about the efforts to strengthen the Jewish identity in the city. The students also chatted with secular youth who have developed a stronger connection to their Judaism thanks to the outreach programs. ■



Zionism straight from South Africa

This year two students from South Africa joined the mechina – one from Capetown and the other for Johannesburg. Gavriel and Josh speak Hebrew well and are fitting in nicely with the rest of the students at Bnei David. Josh came to Bnei David at the beginning of the year, following six months at Yeshivat Har Etzion. He made Aliyah and came to study at Bnei David in preparation for his army service. Gavriel is a new immigrant who came to Bnei David just three days after arriving in Israel in Kislev. He joined the students on the trip to Masada and said the prayer of thanksgiving for a safe journey during the service at the fortress's ancient synagogue. Two weeks later, he participated in a week of arms training, so that he can join the guard duty roster



Pre-induction bicycle trip

Over 50 students from the Class of 2011 will don their IDF uniforms this month. In their final weeks at Bnei David they cycled between fields abloom with spring flowers near Be'eri, and Rabbi Sadan joined them to enjoy the fresh air and exercise. ■

at Bnei David's campus. Gavriel's parents have been members of the Bnei David family of friends for many years and recently assisted with the publication of a booklet on psychological and spiritual preparation for army service. Gavriel will no doubt read this booklet before his induction next year. ■



The blessing of rain and dew

This winter Israel has been blessed with copious rain, and we owe a debt of thanks to the Master of the Universe for showering us with His abundance. Bnei David students hiked down to the base of the hill on which Eli is built, and marveled at the swift flowing waters of Shilo brook, which is bone dry nearly 99% of the year. If you are planning a trip to Israel for Pesach, we invite you to join us on one of the Chol Hamoed tours we are planning, to enjoy the flowers, the springs and the beautiful landscape. ■

USA
Bnei David-Eli C/O
One Israel Fund,
1175 West Broadway
Suite 10, Hewlett
NY 11557

Canada
The Mizrahi
Organization of Canada
Israel Resident
Committee Remittance,
296 Wilson Ave.
North York, ONT. M3H 1S8

England
Friends of Bnei David
75 Maygrove Road
West Hampstead London
NW6 2EG

Panama
Friend of Bnei David
Ezra Cohen
Edificio Maturin Local 11,
Jose A. Bazan Ave.
Colon Free Zone,
Tel: 446-5556

Israel
Bnei David- Eli,
The Military Yeshiva
Academy of Israel
Eli D.N. Ephraim 44828, Israel,
info@bneidavid.org
www.bneidavid.org

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