



# Kol HaTalmidim

THE VOICE OF THE STUDENTS

Texas Torah Institute  
Mesivta Emes L'Yaakov

Winter 2020



## THERE IS NO SHORTCUT

Over the past several weeks, we've been leining the parshiyos of Sefer Bereishis. The stories of our Avos and Imahos (patriarchs and matriarchs). The family that began with Avraham Avinu, and eventually became the Am Hanivchar, Hashem's chosen nation. These were people of such greatness that even now, thousands of years later, we still mention their zechusim to arouse Hashem's mercy.

One can't help wondering, what was the secret of their historic success? How did these people become such spiritual giants? Was it simply that they were born destined for greatness? Was their path just so qualitatively different from ours as to be irrelevant to us? Or can we still learn from their ways and follow in their footsteps? How *did* Avraham Avinu become Avraham Avinu?

The Medrash in Parshas Vayera deals with this exact question. Immediately after the Akeida, the passuk says וישב אברהם אל נערייו ("And Avraham returned..."). Noting the omission of Yitzchok from the story of the return trip, the Medrash asks, "and where was Yitzchok?" We know they went to the akeida together, so why was only Avraham returning?

The Medrash answers with a mashal. There was a woman who earned her living with her spindle, making fabric. Her business was very successful, and she ended up amassing a great fortune. Looking back on her accomplishments, she commented "all my success has come from my spindle. This spindle will be my business forever, so success will stay with

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## VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE

FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Informative presentations

Q&A with current students and parents

Fun surprise activity for 8<sup>th</sup> graders



Monday Dec 21, 2020  
7:45pm CST

For more info or to register, contact Mrs. S. Broderick at 214-587-9776 or sbroderick@texastorah.org

me always!” The woman is a parable for Avraham. After his legendary accomplishment at the akeida, Avraham realized what he had achieved, and he reflected on it. His conclusion was: “all my success has come to me because I studied Torah. I want this success for my son.” And so, he immediately sent Yitzchok to learn in yeshiva. That’s why Yitzchok was absent for the return trip. He had already left to learn in the Yeshiva of Shem and Ever.

This Medrash gives us a glimpse into Avraham’s own thoughts, at the pinnacle of his spiritual success. He had just overcome his tenth and most difficult test. An act that we recall to this very day as a zechus for our entire nation. How did he reach such an incredible level? His own answer is at once simple and astonishing: He reached this success through the most basic and fundamental method. He studied Torah. He wanted his son to have this success—so he sent his son to Yeshiva. There is no mystical and unattainable path. There is also no quick trick that catapults a person to instant greatness. The path to greatness—the ONLY path to greatness—lies in studying Torah and finding within it one’s own personal path to fulfilling his potential. By toiling in Torah study and kiyum hamitzvos every person can realize their highest levels of potential.

This timeless, powerful message is one the yeshiva tries to instill in every talmid. We CAN achieve greatness. But *there is no shortcut!* Through the fundamentals of toiling in Torah study and working on self-development through Mussar, everyone has the opportunity to tap into his own incredible reservoir of potential and, by fulfilling that potential, become a true Eved Hashem.



## AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR

**YITZIE YUROWITZ, 9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

This year my summer plans were turned completely upside down, but I found a way to keep this summer fun. My original plans were to go to a sleepaway camp in New York called Camp Munk which usually is the highlight of my

year. Camp is the best because I get off of school and spend my time playing sports and spending time with my friends. These two months are the only time that I have to spend with my camp friends every year and this year I didn’t get my usual fun time.

The Covid-19 pandemic closed the camp and I was “forced” to spend the summer with my family. We went to Galveston, TX and Breckenridge, CO and had a great time. In Galveston, we spent time at the beach and we finally got out of our house after five months of being stuck at home with nothing to do because of the pandemic.

Later in the summer we went to Breckenridge and also had a great time. That is, until in the middle of the night we started hearing excessive honking from outside. We thought that we just had super annoying neighbors who kept making a ruckus all night long. The next morning my father went outside to our car and found two dark, big, and black eyes staring right at him. We called 911 immediately and the sheriff came, unlocked the car, and let the bear go free in the wild.

After the bear left, we went to assess the damage and we saw that the bear ate our whole entire car down to the bare metal. We ultimately had to get a new car but we will never forget about the story of the bear and the summer of 2020.

## DORM LIFE AT TTI

**AHRON SCHECTER, 9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

My name is Ahron Schecter and this is my first time dorming. I would like to give the outside world a glimpse into my world.

At 7:25 AM the dorm counselor goes around waking people up for Shacharis. However, nobody actually wakes up until 7:35. When you finally do get up, you fall off the top bunk, landing hard on the tile floor below. As you limp to the bathroom you stub your toe on the chair your roommate left in middle of the room late last night. You brush your teeth like a zombie, making guttural noises as morning greetings to your fellow dormers. You then put on your shirt backwards because you’re so tired from reading until 3 AM the night before. You then go through an 11 hour day of school which mentally and physically drains you of any energy you might have possessed.

Supper is surprisingly good for a dorm school, but you have

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### MICHAEL DEKHKANOV

9<sup>th</sup> 📍 Cedarhurst, NY

Hobbies: Sports

Why I came to TTI: My older brother had a great year at TTI last year

What I love about TTI: Both the rabbeim and teachers help you out whenever you need



### EPHRAIM GARGIR

9<sup>th</sup> 📍 Plano, TX

Hobbies: Basketball & Singing

Why I came to TTI: TTI is my local yeshiva

What I love about TTI: The caring rabbis and the basketball program



### NAFTALI KAUFMAN

9<sup>th</sup> 📍 Dallas, TX

Hobbies: Fishing & Football

Why I came to TTI: I knew the guys from beforehand

What I love about TTI : Caring rabbeim, the caring guys, and Chef Tony



### HESHY KENIGSBERG

9<sup>th</sup> 📍 Dallas, TX

Hobbies: Cooking & Reading

Why I came to TTI: I heard great things about TTI from many people

What I love about TTI: The teachers are great and there is a good balance between hard work and breaks



### YAAKOV KOSTER

10<sup>th</sup> 📍 Kew Gardens, NY

Hobbies: Sports, Music, Games

Why I came to TTI: I heard good things about TTI from a former student

What I love about TTI: The dinners, Mr. Ferrante, and night seder



### YEHUDA MANDEL

12<sup>th</sup> 📍 Flatbush, NY

Hobbies: Playing Guitar & Basketball

Why I came to TTI: My Rabbi recommended TTI to me

What I love about TTI : Warm rabbis, friendly guys, and the basketball league



# A FOCUS ON OUR NEW STUDENTS

### CHAIM MELTZER

9<sup>th</sup> 📍 Dallas, TX

Hobbies: Basketball, Piano, Skiing

Why I came to TTI: Because I live 2 blocks away :)

What I love about TTI: TTI is a great yeshiva and I have many friends here



### NISSIM MIZRAHI

12<sup>th</sup> 📍 Mexico City, MX

Hobbies: Piano, Skateboarding, Sports, Learning Torah

Why I came to TTI: To learn Torah on a higher level and gain tools for life

What I love about TTI: The yeshiva emphasizes learning Torah



### BENJAMIN POSNER

9<sup>th</sup> 📍 Dallas, TX

Hobbies: Computers

Why I came to TTI: So I could improve my limudei kodesh skills and have great friends

What I love about TTI : Everything :)



### TZVI RINGELHEIM

9<sup>th</sup> 📍 Dallas, TX

Hobbies: Basketball & Football

Why I came to TTI: My older cousin went to TTI last year and loved it

What I love about TTI: The warm environment, the food, & the canteen



### YOSEF SARRAGOSSI

9<sup>th</sup> 📍 Monsey, NY

Hobbies: Basketball & Football

Why I came to TTI: My family heard a lot of nice things about the yeshiva

What I love about TTI: Great dorm trips, friendly guys, helpful teachers



### AHRON SCHECTER

9<sup>th</sup> 📍 Baltimore, MD

Hobbies: Sports & Games

Why I came to TTI: I heard great things about the rabbeim and the overall atmosphere

What I love about TTI : The guys, the rabbeim, and the warm atmosphere



### GEDALIA USHER

10<sup>th</sup> 📍 Lawrence, NY

Hobbies: Long Boarding

Why I came to TTI: My parents heard really great things about TTI, and I really like the Dallas weather!

What I love about TTI: I love the Shabbos meals and onegs



### YOSEPH VINEGAR

12<sup>th</sup> 📍 Vancouver, BC

Hobbies: Singing, Writing, Learning New Languages

Why I came to TTI: I was acquainted with Rabbi Pacht from beforehand

What I love about TTI: I like the bochurim and my room feels like home :)



### YITZIE YUROWITZ

9<sup>th</sup> 📍 Dallas, TX

Hobbies: Basketball, Hockey, Hiking

Why I came to TTI: TTI is the best yeshiva in the world

What I love about TTI : The teachers, rabbeim, and students care for you, watch out for you, and they're always there to give you a hand whenever you're feeling down



to fend off the locals for your portion. You then return to the dorm to take turns playing ping pong and Madden until lights out. As a 9th grader, that time comes at the shockingly early hour of 11 PM. Your (browserless) phone is then taken away from you to help you get a good night's sleep. (But as I mentioned, they don't take away your books). You wake up and hit "repeat" until you get a break once a month.

...Ok, maybe that's a bit exaggerated. Ok, maybe more than a bit, but it does feel that way sometimes. The truth is: TTI is a really great place: from comradery with the guys, the welcoming atmosphere, and the great rebbeim. Fun ping pong tournaments and Sunday trips liven things up and the day to day relaxation you feel when coming back from a day of yeshiva is bliss. Overall, I feel that coming to TTI was a great choice!



## SUKKAH SQUAD 2020

### ZACHARY EVANS, 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

As a senior at Texas Torah Institute, I had the unique opportunity to help out the community and raise money for my class' senior trip. Between Yom Kippur and Succos my classmates & I went all around Dallas and Plano helping people put together their sukkahs. For some we built the entire Sukkah, for others we helped with just the schach or decorations. It was a lot of hard work, but it was all worth it, as I feel it was a big help to the community.

We sent out emails and messages that we were available to put up Sukkahs for free. That's a hard deal to pass up and many community members booked a "Sukkah set up" with our masked crew. Tips and donations could be given at the discretion of our clients.

From our end, we were not disappointed! Everybody gave what they could, and we were able to procure a decent amount of money towards our year end senior trip. We look forward to this trip for the entire year (and some of us for all of high-school)! It is a fun and enjoyable experience that we can all spend together—likely for the last time as a class.

Our Sukkah Squad work was also rewarding because of the chesed we were able to do. I think it is important for everybody, and especially yeshiva bochorim, to get involved in the community by doing acts of kindness. Not only is it helpful to the recipients, it is also great for us, as doing so improves our overall character and makes better people. On top of that, it just feels really good to help people out. Speaking from experience, I don't think there is a feeling like the one you get from just being kind and helpful to someone in need.

Although the work was hard, it was never boring, as we were faced with many different "Sukkah situations": from pop-ups to lattice sukkahs, and from paneled to wooden "from-scratch" sukkahs, we covered the gamut of sukkahs. For a few people, it was even more important that we built their sukkahs due to their unique circumstances. One person was an older single person living alone who could not have possibly put their sukkah up on their own. Another person had very recently moved into the community and didn't even have a sukkah for us to build! No Sukkah? No problem! My classmates went over there on a Friday afternoon and spent almost the whole day building their sukkah from scratch (literally! all they had were wooden beams and nails).

All in all I think it was a great project for many different reasons and from multiple perspectives. I would like to say that I would do it again next year, but I'm really hoping I won't be a TTI senior then!



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Check out our newly updated website  
at [TexasTorah.org](https://www.TexasTorah.org)