



Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh Newsletter

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Spotlight on Yeshiva: Eilat Trip

by Scott Ehrenberg, Shana Alef - RAMBAM Mesivta High School

Every year Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh takes its students on a three-day pre-Chanukah trip. After two months of rigorous learning since our Sukkot break, most of us needed a little bit of time off. The trip was planned as a time to relax from our intensive schedules, and more importantly, to bond as a yeshiva, as a true chevra. In all respects, the trip was a success.

We arrived in Eilat readily anticipating the first of three hikes. For a long two hours we trekked a trail we considered challenging; little did we know what lay ahead. At night we conquered a 10-meter high rope course and a paintball field littered with bright colors. After tight-roping with a harness and testing our marksmanship, we settled in for the night with new roommates. The night became an opportunity to bond with the remainder of the 120 Shana Alef students whom we hadn't yet gotten to know.

The following morning we braced ourselves for our most demanding task yet; a seven-hour rocky, treacherous hike on Har Shlomo, where we needed to use our hands to get up the near-vertical ascent. With our three liters of water and sun-shielding caps, we pushed our bodies to their limits. It was worth it. The summit afforded us an incredible view not only of the southern tip of Israel but of the borders with Jordan and Saudi Arabia as well. Fortunately, a vibrant night of bowling provided all the relief we needed after such an experience.

Two great hotel meals later, we left Eilat for good. After an hour stopover for a third hike, this time rewarding us with a view of Egypt, we found ourselves on the top deck of a boat, relaxing in the 80 degree sun. We soon found ourselves jumping into the Red Sea and climbing aboard banana-boats. We relaxed for several hours, then packed

up the bus and returned to the Old City.

What was most amazing about our three-day recess from yeshiva is that the learning never really stopped. On the buses to and from Eilat, many guys were found with their Mishnah Brurahs, mini-shas gemaras, and pocket mussar books. Rav Korn and Rav Dani Bader both offered shiurim before our bowling night, thus turning a hotel lobby into our temporary beit midrash. Chavrutot, kumsitzim, and independent learning, enriched our trip to Eilat; a great Kiddush Hashem to all who witnessed it. The Yeshiva thought we needed some time off from learning: we didn't stand for it.

Spotlight on Yeshiva: Meron Trip

This past weekend Rav Chizkiyah Nebenzahl took 30 of his students with him and his family to Meron. We left at 11:30 Thursday night, arriving in Meron in the very early hours of Friday morning. After stopping briefly to put down our bags, we went straight to the kever of Rav Shimon bar Yochei, where we davened maariv and followed with singing and dancing. We next went to the kever of Rav Yochanan Ha'Sandlar, a talmid of the Rashbi. It was dark and cold but nonetheless, we all gathered around and had a kumzits for an hour. Finally, at 4:30 am, we went back to the homes in which we were staying and went to sleep.

After only a few hours sleep, we davened and headed back on the bus for a trip to the Manara cliffs, where a ski lift took us to the peak of the mountain. The view from the cliffs was breathtaking; we were able to see the Chermon mountain range and the entire Galil. Once on top, we had another kumzits and then returned to the bus. Next on our itinerary was the kever of Rav Yonaton ben Uziel, where we recited the entire book of Tehilim. The last stop on Friday was the Ari mikvah in Tzfat. Even though it was extremely cold, it was an experience of a lifetime.

Shabbos started at 6:00 and we all went to the Rashbi's kever to daven Kabbalat Shabbat and maariv. Duvie Shapiro led a beautiful Carlebach Kabbalat Shabbat. It took an hour and a half to finish davening because we sang and danced with true joy and appreciation for where we were. After dinner we had an oneg with more incredible singing and finally went to sleep.

Shabbat morning we davened shacharit then had Kiddush. For musaf, torah reading and mincha we returned to the Rashbi's kever, after which we had lunch, which was full of more singing and excellent food. After lunch Rav Chizkiyah took those who wanted on a small tiyul to the kever of Shamai. Seudat Shlishit was very moving. We sang for two hours, listened to Rav Chizkiyah speak and ended our trip with maariv. Planning and orchestrating the trip was a lot of work, but thanks to the help of everyone who was there it was a wonderful success.

Spotlight on Yeshiva: Emunah Seminar

Second Annual Emuna Seminar

On Wednesday the Yeshiva held its second annual Emuna Seminar, a series of lectures tackling major questions regarding faith. The renowned lecturers spoke on topics ranging from evolution and science, Torah M'Sinai, to practical living as a Jew. There were also open Q&A sessions. As Harav Bina said "We don't claim to have all the answers - we are not a 'brainwash yeshiva', Baruch Hashem. But the main thing

is to ask the questions that are bothering you and engage in open discussion about them".

Correction / Hakorut Hatov

Credit for last week's Spotlight was inadvertently left out. It was written by Yaniv Lautman, Shana Alef.

Spotlight on Yeshiva: Yad Vashem Trip by Ami Bresler, Shana Alef, Melvin J. Berman Hebrew Academy

Linking the generations

Although this is not the first Holocaust museum I have been to, this experience differed from the rest. I have been to the Holocaust museum in Washington DC many times, and even to the old sections of Yad Vashem. But even with all of the prior knowledge I've collected, the new addition of Yad Vashem was jarring. I've heard many stories, seen countless photos, and listened to numerous testimonies, yet the presentation at Yad Vashem raised the experience to another level of awareness entirely.

The first thing I noticed at Yad Vashem was that, excluding the soft voice of the tour guide, there was a total absence of sound. You felt truly alone in the museum; with the tour guide seeming like a voice inside your mind, to be heard or ignored at will. Not only did the silence allow one to focus on the images and testimonies surrounding him, but also on the thoughts inside his own head.

Too often one enters a museum, absorbs, leaves, and then the emotions, lessons, and knowledge quickly seep out. However this time, it was different. The museum didn't start with Kristalnacht and end with the liberation; rather it preceded and outlived the Holocaust. It took one on a step-by-step journey, starting with European Jewry before the war, the tragedies of the war, and finishing with the Jewish state. As one enters the museum, the ground slowly slopes into the mountain, carrying you deeper and deeper into what feels like a tomb. After hours in a chilling concrete world, one exits onto a massive balcony overlooking Jerusalem. At this moment, flashes of the War of Independence and the Six Day War appear in one's mind, directly linking the Holocaust to the Jewish state.

The Jewish state's meaning has transcended from a Jewish home to a Jew's homes. Israel no longer feels like a homeland for the Jews, but a safe haven for each and every individual Jew. Before, the idea of aliyah appeared as an action to be taken when convenient. However, now that the link between oppression and aliyah has been forged, the ideals in aliyah are seen in a different light. No longer being dependent on convenience, the State of Israel has become a matter of necessity.

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Sincerely,

HaRav Aharon Bina, Netiv Aryeh
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh | Western Wall Plaza | One Hakotel Street | POB 32017 | Jerusalem | 91319 | Israel

