

# תקע בשופר גדול BIG NEWS COMING SOON!!!

## AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH **HARAV AVROHOM EISEN, SHLIT" A, THE POZNA ROV**

By: Ari Hirsch / Jewish Vues

*Hagaon Harav Avrohom Eisen, shlit" a, the Pozna Rov, is the Morah Dasrah of the Bais Hamedrash Levush Haora-Pozna (the Pozna Shul) in Flatbush and the founder of the Shas Yiden Kollelim Network. Two weeks ago, Ari Hirsch from the Jewish Vues had the honor and privilege to meet with the Rav upstate in his bungalow in Woodbourne, to discuss many different topics including a very big announcement about Shas Yiden.*

*Harav Avrohom Halevi Eisen, the Pozna Rov, shlit" a, had a vision to revitalize the approach and method to study Talmud Bavli. Furthermore, it became clear that many rabbonim who are poskim do not have Shas at their 'fingertips', nor know it by heart, So, in 2008 with 25 avreichim in Bet Shemesh, he set out to tackle the difficult task of instituting the learning of the entire Talmud Bavli (Shas) in the course of one year. Only 6 of the avreichim were able to keep up, and continued to form the foundation of 'Shas Yiden' – and to be able to master the entire Shas by heart.*





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## SCOFFERS

With such a lofty goal, to have avreichim complete the learning of Shas annually, there were many detractors. There is no yeshiva or kollel that demands this from their avreichim, they declared. Rav Eisen recalls: "people laughed behind my back and teased me to my face. Even a couple of family members said the following: "You are mevazeh the family - get off your high horse. How could you? How can one finish Shas in a year? It's not shayach."

"However, the Gedolei Yisroel, the ones who truly know Shas through and through, encouraged me to persevere.

Baruch Hashem, with His help I did it." At one of the Shas Yiden siyumim, the Sanzer Rebbe declared: "Since the creation of Talmud Bavli, there has never existed such a Torah institution where all the avreichim know Shas baal peh."

## A SHAS YID

The term Shas Yid has been used for centuries to describe erudite talmidei chachomim who mastered the entire Shas. Here at Shas Yiden, the cadre has grown to include 112 avreichim geonim! They are responsible to learn 45 blatt of gemara each day, from Sunday to



Thursday, and 20 blatt a day on Friday and Shabbos--including all Rashi's and Tosafos, with the aim of knowing it by heart. The program also requires them to learn on Yom Tov and erev Yom Tov. Simply, there are no days off the study-load at Shas Yiden, even for simchos. They have no bein hazemanim (vacation time - e.g. in summer)! However, they each receive a double stipend check for Tishrei and Nisan.

In total, the avreichim geonim are each required to learn at least 13,555 blatt per year. This includes quadruple review of each daf. The avreichim geonim are farhered monthly on 225 blatt, mid-year on about 1300 blatt, and yearly on the 2711 daf of Shas by gedolei Torah. At the most recent farher, the examiners were Maranan Hagaonim Harav Yitzchak Shaul Kanievsky, shlit"a, (son of the late Sar Hatorah Maran Harav Chaim zt"l) and Harav Nissan Kaplan, shlit"al, Rosh Yeshiva Daas Aharon.

However, the avreichim geonim don't stop with Talmud Bavli. Rav Eisen noted that "they keep adding more and more . . . They're doing Yerushalmi and Rishonim on their own.

## HASMODA OF SHAS YIDEN

They also learn with tremendous hasmodah (diligence) and focus. Rav Eisen recalled an avreich, one of the

top geonim in the Bet Shemesh kollel.



As a youngster in yeshiva, he hadn't really "opened" a gemara until he was 14-years-old! And then there was great excitement at the Belz yeshiva - a gemora competition was to be held. Somehow, he got 'turned on' to learning and never looked back. Now,



it was Shabbos and he was studying for the Shas Yiden mid-year farher, written and oral, on over 1300 blatt to be held the next day - Sunday! After the Shabbos day seudah, he went to the nearby Belzer shtiebel, sat down and poured over the Shas in intense chazora. He remained there through mincha, shalosh seudos and maariv. On motzo'ai shabbos, his wife came with their two kids to the shtiebel with wine, besamim and a candle - and he made Havdalah. She also brought him a change of clothing. She went back home and he stayed through the entire night. He only left the shtiebel just before 1:00 pm on Sunday when he went to the farher. It was only after the farher that he returned home to take a nap before he sat to complete his learning for that Sunday!

Yes, the avreichim geonim waste no time: "If they come home and supper isn't ready, it's no problem, because they always have a gemara in their pocket." Even when partaking in the yearly siyum, where there is food, music, and dancing like on Simchas Torah, the avreichim geonim can be spotted learning their daily gemara between courses.

## DEDICATION OF SHAS YIDEN WIVES AND THEIR FAMILIES

As can be seen from the above, much of the success of the Shas Yiden avreichim geonim is due to their wives - true N'shos Chayil. They share equal



Maran Harav Chaim Kanievsky, Nasi Shas Yiden

All who support Shas Yiden will merit olam hazeh and olam habo, and will acquire Torah and great wealth



"WHEN YOU ENTER YISSACHAR-ZEVULUN PACTS WITH SHAS YIDEN, YOU ARE HELPING TO STRENGTHEN TALMIDEI HACHAMIM WHO WILL ILLUMINE THE EYES OF AM YISRAEL IN TORAH V'YIRAH"

Maran Hagaon, The Rishon Lezion, Harav Yitzchak Yosef, shlit" a



commitment to their husbands' learning as they shoulder the responsibility of the home and the children. Not many families can take the daily pressure, and there is daily pressure, when the father is absent in the world of learning Torah constantly. The children also show incredible forbearance that 'Tatty' is not readily available. Even at a young age, they show an understanding that he is learning the Holy Torah.

As a token of respect and appreciation of their commitment, at the annual grand Siyum Hashas each of these ladies is presented with a gift, a personal letter from Rav Eisen and a cash-filled envelope.



## GEDOLEI TORAH

One of Rav Eisen's goals with Shas Yiden was to obtain the involvement and approbation of Gedolei Torah, particularly across Eretz Yisroel. "Since its inception, Gedolei Torah were invited to farher the Shas Yiden avreichim geonim and to attend the siyumim. The dais turned out to be a veritable Who's Who of the Gedolei Torah. They each participated in the Torah excitement and were lavish in their praise of the prowess of the avreichim geonim."

Four years ago, Maran Harav Gershon Edelstein zt"l, spoke and declared 'b'rabbim' that "this is the real derech halimud." Interestingly, gedolei hador have grandchildren and great grandchildren among the Shas Yiden avreichim geonim. These include: Rav Gershon Edelstein, zt"l, Rabbi Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi shlita, Sar Hatrorah, Maran Harav Chaim Kanievsky, zt"l, the Steipler Gaon, zt"l, and the Sanzer Rebbe, shlit"a, has a grandson in the London Shas Yiden Kollel.

A few years ago, Shas Yiden had a bachur—a child prodigy who completed Shas by age 14, Harav Hagaon Yehuda Schwimmer, shlit"a. He was presented to Rav Chaim at one of the farhers conducted for the Shas Yiden in his home (an annual event). Rav Chaim welcomed the young man with the broadest smile - he had first completed Shas for his barmitzvah!

Some years ago, the Dushinsky Rebbe asked Rav Eisen, "What in the world did you do that you were zoche to build

Shas Yiden?" Rav Eisen says "I started thinking and the only thing I could think of was that I was michabeid my parents - a day never passed that I didn't call my parents in Montreal - to this very day."

## THE BIG ANNOUNCEMENT - A SHAS YIDEN KOLLEL IN NEW YORK!

Rav Eisen is convinced that the brocha given by Rav Chaim Kanievsky zt"l, has brought about the Shas Yiden success and growth. Rav Eisen notes. "Rav Chaim was a very, very quiet person, a man of very few words. He had requested that I open a second Shas Yiden kollel in Bnei Brak, which I agreed to do. At that same time, I had been asked about opening a kollel in Yerushalayim. So, I asked Rav Chaim what he suggested. He literally jumped out of his seat and said, "Make another, and another - make 10 kollelim!" We are about to open our seventh kollel, here in Flatbush, Brooklyn."

Currently, there are 102 avreichim geonim in six Shas Yiden locations -- Yerushalayim, Bnei Brak, Beit Shemesh, Beitar, Kiryat Sefer, and in London, UK. Now, with 10 new avreichim geonim, who have been thoroughly tested, the incredible Shas Yiden will number 112. A number of congregations are vying to have Shas Yiden use their Beis Medrash facilities.

## FAST FACTS:

**Name:** Rabbi Avrohom Halevi Eisen, the Pozna Rav

**Born in:** Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh

**Left Eretz Yisrael:** Parents moved to Montreal, Canada after the Six-Day war.

**Married:** in New York in 1984

**Yichus:** Rav Eisen is a direct descendant of the Levush, Rav Mordechai Yoffe (1530-1612). His father was Rav Yakov Eisen of Montreal from a well-known family of rabbonim and dayanim. In Yerushalayim, the Eisen name is linked to the Old Yishuv, where Rav Eisen's grandfather, Rav Shalom Eisen zt"l, was a respected posek and talmid chochom.

**Yeshivas growing up:** From the Rav's bar mitzvah to chasuna by Rav Avraham Yosef Rosenblum zt"l he learned at Yeshiva Shaarei Yosher. After the chasuna, his Rosh Yeshiva sent him to learn by Rav Shmuel Berenbaum zt"l in the Mir Yeshiva.

### Received Smicha from:

Rav Avraham Yosef Rosenblum, zt"l, the Rosh Yeshiva of Shaarei Yosher

**Name of Flatbush Shul that the rav is the Morah Dasrah of:** Bais Hamedrash Levush Haora - Pozna

**Shul location:** 2422 Avenue I, Brooklyn, NY

**Years as the Mora D'asra at Bais Hamedrash Levush Haora: 10 years**  
**Number of families currently in the shul, Bais Hamedrash Levush Haora:** approximately 300

**Shas Yiden began in:** 2008, just beginning its fifteenth year.

### Branches of Shas Yiden:

Five kollelim in Eretz Yisroel- Yerushalayim, Beit Shemesh, Beitar, Bnei Brak and Kiryat Sefer. One in London. One opening in the United States in Flatbush after Sukkos.

### Number of avreichim geonim at Shas Yiden:

Currently, 102. When the Flatbush branch opens, there will be iy"h 112.

### Daily program of Shas Yiden:

Iyun Shas - 1 daf b'iyun with Rishonim per a special regimen

Shinun Shas - 4/5 daf in a chaburah in pilpul and iyun

Chazoras Hashas - 3 daf in bekius and chazora, outside program hours

To master the information and to know it all by heart there must be constant review. Each of the nine daily folios is then reviewed an average of 4 times each day - a total of **45 daf a day and 20 on Shabbos and Yom Tov translate into 13,555 daf a year by each avreich!**

### Shas Yiden Siyumim :

The monthly test covers 2-8 masechtos, and a siyum on all the masechtos covered is celebrated every other Rosh Chodesh. These siyumim are attended by Gedolim, Rosh Yeshivas, Dayanim and Rabbanim who well appreciate the many personal sacrifices involved in the quest to become Shas Yiden.

**Next Siyum:** Ches Kislev



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### AT THE POZNA SHUL

"If you want to help people as a Rav, it's a real opportunity. You can't imagine the stories that happen in a shul," Rav Eisen says. "I have 250-300 mispallelim on Shabbos and Yom Tov. We have all kinds of people - hats, no hats, white shirts, pink shirts, blue shirts, I don't care about that. Hashem also doesn't care."

We are now expanding and also building a mikvah: "Two days before he passed away, Rabbi Zecharia Wallerstein, who had a Yissachar-Zevulun pact with Shas Yiden, called me. He davened in my shul. He said 'I heard you're expanding the shul, I want to ask you please, please to make a mikvah - a place of Tahara.'" I told that it was in the plans. "I want to give you a pledge for that mikvah," he said. He made a generous pledge, but when he understood the total cost, he increased his pledge five-fold.

The response of our kehilla members to the needs of the shul and to tzedakah requests is quite remarkable - they are true baalei tzedakah va'chesed."

### THE LESSON OF SHAS YIDEN FOR US ALL

In Rav Eisen's own words, "The biggest lesson of Shas Yiden is that if Avrohom Eisen, who was a regular guy (I wasn't even a Rav of a shul yet) can start a project like Shas Yiden, so can anyone else. My blood is not redder than yours. Every person in this world has the koach to succeed in whatever he wants. In fact, the Rambam states that each one of us could be like Moshe Rabbeinu. You just have to have the ratzon. "Ratzon" in Hebrew can mean have the will, or it can come from the word Ratz (to run). When you want something, you run. If there was a million dollars at the end of the block, you'd run. Everybody has kochos hanefesh to accomplish amazing things," said Rav Eisen.

