

Reflections

KOLLEL AVREICHIM

By Dr. Jonathan Ostroff

ג' אלול תשע"ט

The first time I walked into Kollel Avreichim was for *mincha* on Shabbos some weeks before Rosh Hashanah 1981. I had just moved into the area and was looking for a serious minyan and a good *chabura* with whom I could study Torah. I had not been satisfied with my experience at *shacharis*. On my way home, I saw someone ahead of me in a black hat and jacket, and I asked him if he knew where I might find my kind of minyan. "Try this place on Coldstream" he said, "*mincha* is at 7.00pm".

When I arrived for *mincha* I saw a rabbi with a welcoming face at the top of the stairs. It was Rabbi Dovid Sapirman who immediately greeted me and we started talking. I did not foresee that I would be davening and learning at this *makom* Torah for many years. Last Rosh Hashanah (2019) was my 38th at the Kollel. The Rosh Kollel, Harav Shlomo Eliyahu Miller, would be my *mesader kiddushin*. Harav Yaakov Hirschman would be the *sandek* at my son's *bris*. My son's *barmitzvah* and *aufruf* would be here, and my son-in-law and son would be *avreichim* in the Kollel.

Rabbi Sapirman told me that when he first saw me enter the Kollel he was sitting and learning in the Bais Midrash with his *chevrusa* Rabbi Meyer Yechiel Zoberman (my future daughter-in-law's great uncle). "You were on top of the stairs", I said. "No", he replied, "when I saw you enter, I closed my *sefer* and I told my *chevrusa* that 'I have work to do' and I went to greet you". Rabbi Sapirman and Rabbi Shlomo Noach Mandel had just started the Jewish Ed-

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A KOLLEL IS BORN

By Rabbi Baruch Weiss

'S*hehechiyanu, vekiyimanu, vehigianu lazeman hazeh!*' It is with tremendous excitement that we embark upon this new project of bringing some of the history and content of Kollel Avreichim (today called Kollel Toronto) to the community at large. At the same time, we are filled with a sense of fear and trepidation at this attempt to convey even a small portion of the messages of this remarkable institution. We therefore begin with a *tefillah* to the *Ribbono Shel Olam* that we be *zoche* to *mekadeish Shem Shomayim* through this publication.

The Kollel's Far Reaching Effects

One can safely say that there is not a single Torah institution in Toronto which has not been profoundly affected by the Kollel. While several institutions such as Minyan Avreichim (the Boat Shul), Beis Medrash Zichron Shneur, Yeshiva Nachalas Zvi, and JEP Ohr Somayach, have been created as direct outgrowths of the Kollel, the Kollel has had a hand in helping to cultivate and enhance every Cheder, Bais Yaakov, Yeshiva, and Kollel throughout the city. Many of the Kollel's alumni have gone on to join the faculties of the city's Mosdos HaTorah, and the Roshei HaKollel have continued to provide them with invaluable *hadracha* over the years. The Kollel has truly had a transformative influence on the city, infusing it with Torah and *yiras shomayim*, since its inception until this very day.

For those of us who have only been around for a few short decades, it is hard to imagine what life was really like fifty years ago. The presence of *yeshivos* and *kollelim* across the fruited plain is indeed our default frame of reference, as we know of no

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other reality. Not only are *yeshivos* and *kollelim* commonly found today in any significant Jewish community, but morning and evening learning programs are the accepted features of any established *shul*. While many younger individuals take such things for granted, it is important for us to realize that fifty years ago such fixtures were not commonplace. In order to appreciate how our communities have come to be permeated with such an enhanced level of *limud haTorah*, it is necessary to travel back in time and explore the history of Torah learning in our cities.

Toronto Circa 1970

While the Toronto of fifty years ago possessed a *kehillah* of sincere and devout *ovdei Hashem*, the concept of *battei medrash* filled with people poring over *Gemaros* on a regular weekday morning or evening was virtually unheard of. People were busy toiling for *parnassah*, and the *kehillas* did not have the requisite resources to galvanize *limud haTorah* on a large scale or on a high level. Additionally, the families who were interested in preserving the unique flavor and tradition which they had absorbed in their countries of origin, numbered only a few. The *chadorim* and *Bais Yaakovs* were, therefore at times, forced to combine the grades in order to fill their classes. The result was that most children of the *heimish* community chose not to return to Toronto after their marriage. It soon became clear that if *Yiddishkeit* was going to flourish in Toronto, something had to change.

Rav Akiva Stefansky & The Reichmann Family

Two unique individuals who took stock of the situation were Rav Akiva Stefansky *z"l*, the legendary Menahel of Bais Yaakov, and R' Shmayahu Reichmann, *z"l*, the patriarch of the Reichmann family. According to a number of sources, the particular idea of a *kollel avreichim* comprised of young *talmidei chachomim* and their families, was proposed by Rav Akiva *z"l*, and R' Shmayahu supported the plan with tremendous enthusiasm. As R' Isaac Reichmann related, R' Shmayahu made it clear to his children that establishing a *makom Torah* to infuse the city with a renewed and enhanced dedication to the *dvar Hashem* was an absolute necessity. He therefore mobilized his sons and in particular, his son R' Moshe, *z"l*, to lead the initiative. With the guidance and insight of the Bais Yaakov Menahel, the Reichmann's got to work putting the plan into motion.

At the time, the idea of learning full-time was nowhere near as accepted and mainstream

as it is today. While it is common today when inquiring about a prospective *chosson* to ask where the boy is learning, back then it was more prevalent to ask what the young man was already doing for *parnassah*. It was, therefore, not surprising, that when R' Moshe called the first meeting to discuss the matter with a number of key individuals in the city, those assembled expressed bewilderment at the entire notion. One particularly sincere individual remarked "R' Moshe, I would like to help you with this project, as it seems very important. But first explain to me, what is a *kollel*?" Undeterred by the perceived lack of enthusiasm from the majority of those present, R' Moshe and his brothers went full steam ahead, as they recognized the importance of this venture for the future of the city's Torah development.

Beis Medrash Govoha

R' Moshe proceeded to be in touch with both Rav Shneur Kotler, *z"l*, Rosh Yeshivas Lakewood, and R' Dov Lesser, *z"l*, who was then in charge of finding placements for the Lakewood *talmidim*. With a discerning eye for talent, R' Dov chose Moreinu Rav Yaakov Michael Hirschman, one of the closest *talmidim* of Rav Ahron Kotler, as the right person to oversee such an endeavor. In turn, Rav Hirschman singled out Moreinu Rav Shlomo Miller as the up-and-coming talent which would help put Toronto on the map of world-wide Torah greatness. When the Mashgiach, Rav Nosson Wachtfogel, heard about the initiative, he was truly ecstatic, and encouraged the Roshei HaKollel to push forward with the plan. It should be noted, that the Toronto Kollel was the first out-of-town Kollel of its kind, and after its founding, a ripple-effect was caused, leading to *kollelim* being established in Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles, and numerous other major cities in North America. Eventually, Rav Nosson established Kollel International to help develop *kollelim* across the nation.

As Rabbi Hirschman recalls, Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky, *z"l*, was a true guiding light to them in those days, frequently providing them with advice and encouragement. In subsequent years, whenever Rav Yaakov would come to Toronto, he would always visit the Kollel.

The Chaburah

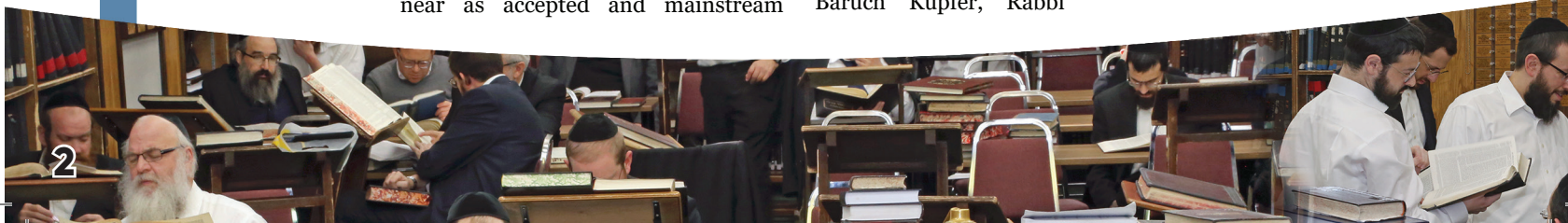
In order for the project to succeed, it was imperative that the *chaburah* of *yungeleit* be a cohesive group. Therefore, the Roshei HaKollel, together with the help of Rav Chaim Davis, identified a stellar roster of Lakewood *talmidim*, most of whom were learning together in Beis Medrash Govoha's Kodshim Chaburah. This group of *yungeleit* were primarily *talmidim* of Rav Elya Svei and Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky at the Yeshiva of Philadelphia with some being *talmidim* of Rav Shmuel Faivelson at the Yeshiva of St. Louis. They were: Rabbi Eliezer Rothstein, Rabbi Zvi Eisen, Rabbi Baruch Kupfer, Rabbi



R' Moshe Reichmann *zt"l*



Rav Akiva Stefansky *zt"l*



Zvi Horowitz, Rabbi Zvi Pruzansky, z"l, Rabbi Gershon Eisenberger, Rabbi Mendel Nojowitz, Rabbi Chaim Davis, and Rabbi Yisroel Mosesson, z"l. As Rabbi Hirschman recalls, each one of the *yungeleit* was an impressive *ben Torah* and *talmid chachom* in his own right, and they indeed went on to accomplish great things in the Torah world. Of particular note, Rav Chaim Davis went on to found the Yeshiva of Passaic together with Rav Meir Stern, and Rav Zvi Pruzansky, z"l, founded the Yeshiva of Stamford together with his brother R' Yossi, Rav Meir Hershkowitz and Rav Simcha Shustal.

Approximately six months after the Kollel was founded, R' Moishe Friedman and R' Yitzchok Buchinger who were both bochorim at the time, joined the Kollel's ranks.

The Board of Executives

In addition to the Reichmann family, several other people were particularly welcoming to the Kollel and were instrumental in helping it establish itself. The original Board of Executives included: R' Moshe Reichmann, z"l, R' Ahron Zvi Gestetner, R' Moshe Zolty, R' Harry Wolfe, z"l, R' Phillip Alter, z"l, R' Moshe Nussbaum, z"l, R' Samuel (Yecheil) Anisfeld, z"l, R' David D'Ancona, R' Benyomin Urman, z"l, R' Yechezkel Dovid Hendler, and R' Pinchas Feinstat, z"l. As Rabbi Miller recalls, these individuals were extremely helpful and offered the Kollel advice and support on many occasions. Another person who was helpful in those early years was Dr. Leibel Zoberman, who had come to know the Roshei HaKollel from his yearly trips to Lakewood to learn during his vacations.

Setting Up

The Roshei HaKollel made two trips to Toronto prior to their big move. They had the opportunity to meet with all of the city's Rabbonim and with many of the community leaders. As both of the Roshei HaKollel related, the community was very welcoming, to the point where a number of the Rabbonim offered to house the Kollel on their Shuls' premises free of charge. However, in the interests of preserving their autonomy they politely declined the invitations.

The first obstacle which the Kollel encountered was finding apartments for the *yungeleit* to rent. After a number of unsuccessful attempts, R' Moshe Reichmann suggested to two of the *yungeleit* to walk up and down the first few blocks of Lawrence Ave., east of Bathurst St., and see if any of the buildings were for

sale. Eventually, they came across 425 and 411 Lawrence Ave, which R' Moshe proceeded to purchase for the Kollel.

As R' Eliezer Rothstein recalls, R' Moshe Reichmann put R' Ahron Zvi Gestetner in charge of overseeing all of the families' household needs such as the procurement of fridges, freezers and washing equipment.

In order to facilitate the legal aspects of setting up a not-for-profit institution, the purchasing of the two apartment buildings and the leasing of the learning space, R' Moshe hired Mr. Phillip Alter, z"l, and Mr. Harry Wolfe, z"l, who, as experienced lawyers, executed their duties with true alacrity and dedication.



Sitting R-L Rav Mendel Nojowitz and Rav Gershon Eisenberger speaking to Mr. Jack Kasus. In the foreground is Rav Yaakov Michael Hirschman



Rav Shlomo Miller Shlita giving Shiur Klalli

The First Zman

The first *zman* was the winter *zman* just preceding 1971, which began after *Sukkos* on top of what is known to this day as Miriam's Judaica. Realizing how fragile and innovative their undertaking was, the *yungeleit* adhered to the *sedorim* with tremendous vigor. There was an intense *rischa d'oraisa* amongst the small group as they embarked upon learning *Maseches Sukka*.

Rav Yosef Wolfe, today of Lakewood, New Jersey, recalls being taken by his father Mr. Harry Wolfe, z"l, to the first *Kabbolas Shabbos* on top of Miriam's Judaica which was, in a sense, the inaugural moment of the Kollel. After a *shmuess* from Rav Shlomo Miller, R' Eliezer Rothstein davened *Kabbolas Shabbos*. R' Yosef additionally recalls taking part in a boy's summer learning program together with his classmate, Rav Yacov Felder, which was arranged by the Kollel just a few years later.

During the program, the boys would come and learn *b'chavrusa* and Rav Mendel Nojowitz would deliver a *shiur*.

Due to the Kollel's relatively small size, the responsibilities of *davening* for the *amud* and *leining krias haTorah* were divided up amongst the nine *yungeleit* and the two Roshei HaKollel. One of the first members of the community to join the Kollel for davening and learning on a regular basis was R' Yissochor Dov (Albert) Reichmann. R' Yissochor Dov would *daven* with the Kollel every morning together with his son

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Efraim and would return at night to learn *b'chavrusa* with Rav Gershon Eisenberger. Throughout the years, R' Yissochor Dov took an active and participatory role in the Kollel's growth, learning and davening with the Kollel and hosting the annual Purim parties and *Simchas beis hashoeivas*. Other individuals from the community who would frequent the Kollel on a regular basis included Dr. Feivel Weitz, R' Ahron Zvi Gestetner, R' Dovid D'Ancona, R' Shmuel Gellis, and R' Moshe Binyomin (Robert) Dohany.

Shiurim on *Maseches Sukka* were given by Rav Shlomo Miller every second week, with the other two weeks alternating between Rav Yaakov Michoel Hirschman and one of the *yungeleit*.

Rav Chaim Davis recalled an interesting anecdote which occurred not long after the Kollel's arrival. Upon exiting the

building, the young men in their suits and black hats caught the attention of a group of youngsters who were idling at the corner. The group was a colorful bunch, many sporting long hair down to their shoulders. Approaching the *yungeleit*, the boys inquired who they were and what they were doing on top of the Judaica store. The *yungeleit* responded that they "were learning Torah."

"Torah? What's that?" the boys asked.

"Come up and we'll show you," the *yungeleit* replied. Thus began a legacy of outreach which involved learning with these boys during *bein hasedorim* and eventually sending each and every one of them to top yeshivos, such as Telz, Denver, Mikdash Melech in Brooklyn, and Sh'or Yoshuv in Far Rockaway. A large number of this group went on to become accomplished *talmidei chachomim*, some going into *chinuch* and others into *rabbonus*. It should be noted that R' Issac Lowy was instrumental in encouraging these boys to stay connected with the

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TOIVELLING IN LAKES, RIVERS & OCEANS

Based on a shiur from Rabbi Yaakov Michoel Fleischman
from the Memacharas Hashabbos Program
Prepared for print by Rabbi Baruch Weiss



There are two types of bodies of water that may be used for the immersion of both vessels and people who are *tamei*. One such place, referred to as *mikva*, is a hole filled with accumulated rainwater. The second type of immersion area, referred to as a *maayan*, is a body of water which generates its own supply of water from an underground source.

Chazal teach us that a *mikva* can only purify that which enters it while its waters are contained (*ashboren*). Any outflow of water from the *mikva* would render the *mikva* invalid. A *maayan* on the other hand, can be *mitaheir* even when it is flowing (*zochalin*).

Based on these *halachos*, we can understand the following *Gemara* (*Nedarim* 40a). **"Ravin said in the name of Rav: Mithra b'maarava sahada rabba Prass; When it rains in the west (Eretz Yisrael), the Euphrates (in Babylonia) bears great witness."** The *Ran* explains, that when the Euphrates would swell it would be due to an abundance of rain in Eretz Yisrael, and it would therefore become invalid for *tevilla*. This was because its flowing water (*zochalin*) was not produced from the inner depths of the Euphrates itself, but rather was supplied from Eretz Yisrael's rainwater.

Thus, the Euphrates was considered a *mikva* rather than a *maayan* and when it had flowing water, it was rendered invalid for *tevilla*.

The *Gemara* continues that this statement of Rav is at odds with the opinion of Shmuel who said that a river is **always primarily filled from its own source**, being that for every *tefach* of rainwater that it absorbs, two *tefachim* of water are produced from its own depths.

Interestingly, the *Gemara* notes that this last statement of Shmuel actually conflicts with a different statement of Shmuel, wherein he remarked **that flowing water is only fit for tevilla if it resembles the Euphrates in Tishrei**, when there is no concern that it is primarily supplied by rain or snow.

The *Gemara* continues that this latter opinion of Shmuel was the opinion of his father, Avuha D'Shmuel, who would only allow his daughters to immerse in the flowing rivers in *Tishrei*.

Rabbeinu Tam (quoted in the *Rosh* hilchos mikvaos siman yud) *paskened* like the former statement of Shmuel, that flowing rivers are never suspect of being primarily supplied from other sources because for every *tefach* of rainwater that falls, two corre-

sponding *tefachim* are produced by the river itself. He therefore *paskened* that one may always use a river for *tevilla*.

The Maharam M'Ruttenberg (also quoted in the aforementioned *Rosh*) disagrees and maintains that inasmuch as the *Gemara* says that the statements of Shmuel seem to contradict each other, it would seem that even though Shmuel held that rivers are primarily supplied from their own depths, he still made a *gezeirah* not to rely on such an assumption.

The *Rashba*, *Ran*, & *Raavad* qualify, that the prohibition of being *toivel* in flowing rivers when there has been an excess of rainwater, is only in areas which are only covered when the river swells. However, in areas which are always covered by the river, it would still be permissible to be *toivel* even while it is flowing.

The third opinion amongst the *Rishonim* is that of the *Rambam* (9;13) who holds that flowing rivers are disqualified for *tevilla* the entire year due to the fear that they have been supplied from other sources. The *Rambam* explains that during *Tishrei*, Avuha D'Shmuel erected barriers in the river which stopped its flow, thus rendering it a contained body of water (*ashboren*).

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ucation Program, and they worked out of the Kollel. This is an example of how the Kollel has maintained an interesting balance. On the one hand, it is an advanced institute of Talmudic study. On the other hand, it is a magnet for Toronto Jewry from all walks of life that continues to have a major influence on the growth of Torah in Toronto.

I once asked Rav Yaakov Hirschman how the Kollel was started. The Jewish community of Toronto has always been warm and hospitable. Some 50 years ago, R. Moshe Reichmann zt”l wanted to see more growth of Torah in our city. Then, the very idea of a Kollel was a great novelty and also a risk. Rav Hirschman was approached and with the financial support of R. Moshe Reichman and the blessing and support of Harav Schneur Kotler, Harav Yaakov Kamenetsky, Harav Elya Svei and many others, the decision was made to open a Kollel in Toronto.

This was to be a major new undertaking and innovation that would set the standard for the *olam Hatorah*. Rabbi Gedaliah Felder and Rabbi Avroham Price (may their memory be for a blessing) and other *rabbanim* in Toronto welcomed this bold new initiative. This was the community we joined. The Roshei Kollel have guided us in our major life decisions. With the sage advice of Rav Hirschman, my wife was able to complete medical school without having to work on Shabbos or Yom Tov. (This was in the days before there was religious accommodation). Rav Hirschman and Rav Miller have frequently provided us with *halachic* advice for the medical treatment of patients including care on Shabbos and Yom Tov, life-cycle, end of life questions and many other such issues.

What inspired me and keeps me inspired? For Rav Shlomo Miller, the most precious entity in the *briah* (creation) is a *Talmid Chacham*. “People” he says “are impressed by numbers”. There are 5 million

Jews in America but only 500,000 are *frum*. But in Mitzrayim there was one man who was the equal of 600,000 – Moshe Rabbenu. A *ben-Torah* is of great value. The more a person learns Torah, *qua* himself, the more internal value he attains. He becomes a different person. It changes his whole essence. What is the *tachlis* of a Kollel? It is not to produce *melamdin* or *rab-*



Harav Shlomo Miller Shlita with Dr. Jonathan Ostroff

banim. The main purpose is to produce *Talmidei Chachamim*. *Emese Talmidei Chachamim*. Once there are *Talmidei Chachamim* many benefits follow naturally – *melamdin*, *magidei shiur*, *rabbanim*, *poskim*. And when one looks around, many *rabbanim*, *magidei shiur* and *poskim* in Toronto studied in the Kollel. Torah learning increases a person’s intrinsic value and gives Hashem tremendous *nachas*. A person who pulls himself away from his problems and he sits in front of the Torah and he is *medavek sichlo* to the Torah – thereby becomes a *shtick* Torah.

About science, Rav Shlomo Miller once told me that we are *talmidei ha’Gra*. Which means that mathematics and science are an important *handmaiden* to Torah; but this also means that there is a limit to its reach. And one of those limitations is the inability of science to deal with origins – the origin of the universe and the origin of life manifesting enormous intricate complexi-

ty and signs of wisdom. Thus the creation week described in the first chapter of the Torah establishes the truth that the origin of the universe is a *meta-natural* phenomenon (we did not come about, as scientists believe, through unguided *natural* processes that did not have us in mind). The natural scientific operation of the universe only begins with that first Shabbos of Creation. Thus

we say “I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, may His name be blessed, created and supervises all creations (שֶׁהַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרֵךְ שָׁמוֹ) (הוא בּוֹרָא וּמַנְהִיג). He is a בּוֹרָא in the creation week and after that He is also a מַנְהִיג. This had an important impact on the science wars that erupted about ten years ago, and also on my own thinking on this important matter.

The following are some examples where I was able to participate in a small measure in the Rosh Kollel’s analyses. In the issue of whether a stove may be adjusted in Shabbos mode on Yom Tov, Rav Miller sought

to understand the electronic circuitry of the stove down to the transistor level. When the issue was whether the *Murex trunculus* (a type of sea snail) is the *chilazon* from which the ancient blue dye (*techeilis*) was made, Rav Miller visited the factory and ordered his own chemical experiments on the purported dye. With the calculation of sunset and sunrise and other *zmanim*, Rav Miller sought to understand spherical trigonometry for the astronomical calculations. In all these cases, the science had to be understood before the vast array of *shas* and *poskim* could be brought to bear on *halacha l’maaseh*. All these activities inspired and advanced my own appreciation of *Toras Hashem*.

My family and I are grateful to the Roshei Kollel, the *chavrei* Kollel and the greater Kollel community for the warm and gracious home they have provided to us; and for their guidance in every aspect of our lives.

TOIVELLING IN LAKES, RIVERS & OCEANS

The *Shulchan Aruch* (YD; 201;2) follows the opinion of the *Rambam* that one may only be *toivel* in rivers after erecting barriers to stem the flow and render the water contained. The *Rema* concurs that this is the proper ruling, however, he adds that one may rely on the aforementioned opinion of Rabbeinu Tam when there is no available *mikva* in the area.

The *Rema* further qualifies, that rivers that only flow after an abundance of rain (*neharos ha'mechazvim*) but at all other times are totally still, would be disqualified for *tevilla* while they are flowing even according to Rabbeinu Tam. (Similarly, outgrowths of rivers which only appear after an abundance of rain are likewise unfit for *tevilla*.)

However, the entire discussion thus far is limited to rivers. The *Shulchan Aruch* (YD;

201; 5) writes that large bodies of water such as seas and oceans, are acceptable for *tevilla* even if they are *zochalin*, being that there is never a concern that the added rainwater is more than the water produced by their own depths.

However, it is the opinion of the *Shach* (YD; 201; 11), that even in large bodies of water like seas and oceans, if the shoreline expands due to an addition of rainwater, that extended area would be unfit for *tevilla*.

Moreinu Rav Shlomo Miller explained that these stringent *piskei halacha* of the Mechaber and the *Rema* in accordance with the *Rambam*, are only with regards to *tevilas nashim* which involves a *chiyuv kareis*. Regarding *tevilas keilim*, however, which is only a *mitzvas asei*, there is much more room to rely on the opinion of Rabbeinu Tam.

Land-locked lakes are considered contained and are therefore *kasher lechatchila* to be used for *tevilla*. Larger lakes such as Lake Simcoe and Lake Ontario, are *halachically* considered to be seas. However, being that they flow freely into other bodies of water they are considered *zochalin*, and according to the opinion of the aforementioned *Shach* there may be a concern that the shoreline might become extended after a rainfall. Accordingly, if someone wanted to immerse a vessel in an ocean, sea, or larger lake (especially after a large rainfall) it would be suggestable that they first venture several meters into the ocean.

Smaller bodies of water like the Don and Humber rivers, could potentially present an issue of having more rainwater than their own water and therefore, *lechatchila* one should

A KOLLEL IS BORN CONTINUED

Kollel and a large part of their growth is due to his influence.

Towards the end of the first *zman*, the Lakewood Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Shneur Kotler came for a visit. Rav Shneur delivered a *shmuess* during which he quoted the *Shev Shmaytsa's Hakdama* wherein the *Shmaytsa* writes that the *neshamos* of Klal Yisroel were sent down to this world in order to allow them to function as fountains which constantly generate new life and rejuvenate themselves through learning Torah and serving Hashem. Conversely, up in *shomayim*, *neshamos* are limited to receiving *shefa* similar to a pit or a *mikva*. This *shmuess* inspired Rav Chaim Davis to publish a *koveitz* of *Chiddushei Torah* written by the *yungeleit* on *Maseches Sukka*, titled "*HaMaayan* (The Fountain)." The Kollel continues to produce a *koveitz* by this name every few years.

An Overflowing Cup

When contemplating the Kollel's overwhelming influence on the community, one is struck by an unusual paradox. While various *kollelim* around the world direct the main focus of their activities to the pursuit of providing education and outreach to their host communities, the official mantra of Kollel Avreichim has been different. Kollel Avreichim's 'mission' is to provide a space where the sole focus is intense Torah learning, a bastion of undiluted Torah greatness. One might wonder, therefore, how it has been possible for the Kollel to have affected the broader community in such profound ways?

As I ponder this question, I am reminded of the aforementioned words of the *Shmaytsa* as well as the famous words of the Vilna Gaon which were related by the Dubner Maggid. The Gaon stated, that the most effective way for an entity to be an influence on its surroundings, is for it to resemble an overflowing cup. When such an entity, be it a person or an institution, constantly strives to pour into itself again and again, the inevitable result will be that everything in its proximity will be affected by its growth. By contrast, when even a full cup pours from itself into another, it will end up becoming empty, thus losing its capacity to have an impactful influence.

As someone who no longer learns full time with the Kollel, I can personally attest to the inestimable benefits of stopping in and taking even a few moments to learn in the proximity of the Roshei HaKollel and the *yungeleit*. I urge each and every one of you to come in and bask in the outpourings of Torah wealth which emanate from our city's overflowing cup.

Special thanks to the Roshei HaKollel,

R' Chaim Davis, R' Eliezer Rothstein, R' Isaac Reichmann, R' Ahron Tzvi Gestetner, R' Moishe Friedman, & R' Nosson Hoffman who generously contributed their time to help with the development of this article.

If you have any relevant memories, observations, stories, or anecdotes about the history of the Kollel which would help us with subsequent editions, please email them together with your contact details to reflections@kollel.com



Standing: Rav Shlomo Miller speaking in learning with Rabbis Tzvi Pruzansky and Eliezer Rothstein.
Sitting: Rav Yaakov Michael Hirschman and Mr. Philip Alter

seek out a proper *mikva* in accordance with the *Rambam*, *Shulchan Aruch*, and *Rema*. If there are no other *mikvaos* available, one could be *someich* on Rabbeinu Tam, nevertheless, a proper *chumrah* would be to seek a spot in the river which is consistently covered at all times throughout the year in accordance with the aforementioned opinion of the Ran. Small creeks that occasionally dry up, are not acceptable for *tevilla* even according to Rabbeinu Tam.

Regarding *tevillas nashim* in such bodies of water, Moreinu Rav Shlomo Miller wrote a letter a number of years ago to R' Moshe Alon, z"l. In the letter, the Rosh Kollel pointed out a number of pertinent points some of which are as follows: The *Shulchan Aruch* (YD; 198; 33) writes that one should not be *toivel* in a body of water whose ground is mud or dirt,

due to the concern of a *chatzitzta*. The *Shach* writes, however, that most of the areas with which we are familiar have dirt which does not stick to a person and thus do not constitute a problem. However, the *Noda B'Yehuda* points out, even according to the *Shach*, when the floor is dirt or mud one must raise his or her feet while immersing (something which is not required in a regular *mikva*) which is often difficult to do. To wear slippers would not be a solution, as one may not stand on something which is *mekabel tumaah* while being *toivel*. To wear plastic slippers which are not *mekabel tumaah* would not help, as the act of *tevilla* is supposed to be done while one is not wearing any clothing. Standing upon the slippers would depend upon how secure one's footing is, as the halacha is that one may not stand upon a small *kli* while being

toivel where there is the fear of losing one's balance. Additionally, the *Shulchan Aruch* writes that if one is afraid of being seen, they may, in their haste come to be *toivel* improperly. Moreinu Rav Shlomo Miller pointed out that in outdoor bodies of water there is ample reason to assume that one will feel nervous, being that it is dark, cold, and not easy to wade deep enough before being *toivel*. It is also not easy to ensure that the area will be properly lit up so another person can watch over her *tevilla* as is required by *halacha*. In conclusion, we see that such bodies of water are not considered a *lechatchila* option for *tevillas nashim* and should only be used after the consultation with a Rav.

ALUMINUM AND SELF-ASSEMBLE KEILIM

Based on a shiur given By Rav Shmuel Heller
from the Memacharas Hashabbos Program
Prepared for print by Rabbi Baruch Weiss



The *possuk* in Parshas Mattos states: "**Ach es hazahav ve'es hakasef es hanechoshes es habarzel es habdil ve'es haofares... Ach b'mei nidda yischata; Only the gold and silver, the copper, the iron, the tin, and the lead... but it shall be purified with the sprinkling waters (Bamidbar 31:22).**"

It is from this *possuk* that we learn the *mitzvah d'oraisa* of *Tevillas Keilim* for metal, food-related utensils which are obtained from a non-Jew.

Aluminum Keilim

With the advent of aluminum *keilim*, the following question was posed to Rav Moshe Feinstein, zt"l (*Igros Moshe* YD III: 22): Are vessels made out of metals which are not mentioned in the aforementioned *possuk*, such as aluminum, obligated in *tevilla m'dioraisa*? Rav Moshe answered definitively, that Hashem created all materials and chose to only list certain metals in the *possuk*. Therefore, only the metals listed in the aforementioned *posuk* require *tevilla m'dioraisa*.

Rav Moshe does rule, however, that such *keilim* are still obligated in *tevilla m'drabbonon*, due to their similarity to the metal *keilim* delineated.

The *Tiferes Yisroel*, in his introduction to

Seder Taharos, appearing to argue with Rav Moshe's opinion, suggests that all metal *keilim* are obligated in *tevilla m'dioraisa* with the aforementioned *possuk* merely referencing the most commonly available *keilim* at the time of *matan Torah*.

We would like to suggest a proof to Rav Moshe's opinion gleaned from the words of *Rashi* in *Maseches Rosh Hashana* (19b). *Rashi* writes that the reason a glass vessel is not *tamei d'oraisa* the *tumah* of *kli matchis* (usually translated as the *tumaah* of metal vessels), is a result of the fact that it is not listed in the aforementioned *possuk*. Now, one would have thought, that *Rashi* would simply say that the reason a glass vessel does not have the *tumaah* of *kli matchis* is because it is glass, not metal. The *Rashash* therefore explains that according to *Rashi*, glass *keilim* do in fact fall into the category of *kli matchis*, as the word *matchis* connotes merely the melting of the material to form it into a *kli*, which would include glass as well. Therefore, the only reason why a glass *kli* would be exempt from the *halachos* of *tumaas kli matchis* is due to the fact that it is not mentioned explicitly in the *possuk*. This clearly fits with the reasoning of the *Igros Moshe* regarding aluminum and other metals which are indeed *klei matchis*, but are

not subject to the *tumaah* of the *possuk*, being that they were left out.

Self-Assemble Utensils

The *halacha* (*Shulchan Aruch* YD:120) is that if a person buys a vessel from a non-Jew the vessel requires *tevilla*. The same vessel bought from a Jew does not require *tevilla*. If it is bought from a non-Jew, broken, and then fixed by a Jew, it does not require *tevilla*, because when broken it loses its status of a vessel. However, this is only the case if it is broken in a manner that requires expert repair. If, however, it is broken in a way that even a non-expert can fix it, it never loses its status as a *kli* and still requires *tevilla*.

In general, the *halachos* regarding *keilim* discussed in the *Shulchan Aruch* all presume that the vessels were assembled in the possession of the original owner. It would seem logical to suggest that if a Jew were to buy the pieces of a vessel (which had never previously been assembled) from a non-Jew and then assemble them for the very first time, they would not require *tevilla*. Therefore, we would like to suggest that a brand-new blender and other similar utensils which are purchased in pieces and then assembled by a Jewish owner, would possibly not be obligated in *tevilla*.

This concept is paralleled in *Hilchos Shab-*

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bos. In *Siman* 317, the *Mechaber paskens* that if a person's shoelaces fall out on Shabbos, it is permissible for him to thread them back into the shoes and there is no problem of *tikkun manna* (fixing a vessel). However, the Magen Avraham notes that if the shoes were brand new and had never had shoelaces before, it would be forbidden to lace the shoelaces through the holes on Shabbos, as doing so would render the shoes usable for the very first time.

Similarly, the *Gemara* in *Maseches Shabbos* 47a refers to the act of 'returning' a certain type of a loose portable bed (*mita shel tarsiyim*) which used to be assembled, dismantled, and re-assembled. The act of 'returning' the bed refers to reassembling it after it had been dismantled. The *Rishonim* deduce from the fact that the *Gemara* only permits the 'returning' of the bed [on Shabbos], that it would only be permitted to reassemble it on Shabbos if it had already been previously assembled.

On the other hand, the argument can be made, that some vessels, even when only assembled after entering the possession of a Jew, are indeed obligated in *tevilla*. This argument is based on a *Pri Megadim* in *Hilchos Pesach* (*Siman* 451: 6). The *Gemara* discusses a case where a vessel of a non-Jew was given to a Jew as collateral for a loan. The *Gemara* states that even

though a lender does acquire collateral for certain *halachic* matters, a vessel given as a collateral is not considered his possession to obligate it in *tevilla*. *Tosfos* and other *Rishonim* state, that conversely, if a Jewish borrower gives his vessel to his non-Jewish lender for collateral, he would not need to *toivel* the *kli* upon receiving it in return. This is because when it comes to *tevilas keilim*, the need to be *toivel* is determined by whether people view the vessel as belonging to the non-Jew or not. This concept is referred to as '*Sheim haAkum alav*'.

Taking this concept a step further, the *Pri Megadim* says, that even if an object only became a *kli* in the possession of a Jew, if it is still clear that the vessel originated and came from a non-Jew, it would require *tevilla* as this is deemed '*Sheim haAkum alav*'. The *Pri Megadim* offers the following two examples:

The first is where a Jew purchases a sheet of metal from a non-Jew and designates it as a plate for eating. Even though it only took on the status of a *kli* in the possession of the Jew, it still requires *tevilla*, as it has *sheim haAkum alav*.

The second case is a where a Jew bought a piece of metal from a non-Jew and then poked holes in it in order to use it to grate the *Marror*. In such a case, the *Pri Megadim* has a *safeik* about whether it would be obligated in *tevilla*.

On the one hand, it became a *kli* in the possession of the Jew. On the other hand, one can still discern the fact that this piece of metal originated from a non-Jew, as it has not been changed in a drastic way. Therefore, the *Pri Megadim paskens* that such a grater should be *toiveled* without a *bracha*.

Based on this concept, it would seem that even self-assemble blenders which are purchased in pieces and assembled for the first time in the possession of a Jew should require *tevilla*, being that it is clear that they came from a non-Jewish company.

In order to satisfy this concern, it may be advisable for a person to first assemble the blender, thus making it a *kli* and obligating it in *tevilla*. The reasoning behind this is that before it was assembled it was never a *kli* and was therefore never obligated in *tevilla*. Once it has been assembled, it becomes a *kli*, and its status of *sheim haAkum alav* makes it obligated in *tevilla*. One may then take it apart and *toivel* it in pieces. However, this *chumrah* is not mentioned anywhere, which may indicate that we do not *pasken* like this *Pri Megadim*. Indeed, Moreinu Rav Shlomo Miller does not hold that it is necessary assemble the vessel before *tevilla*.

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