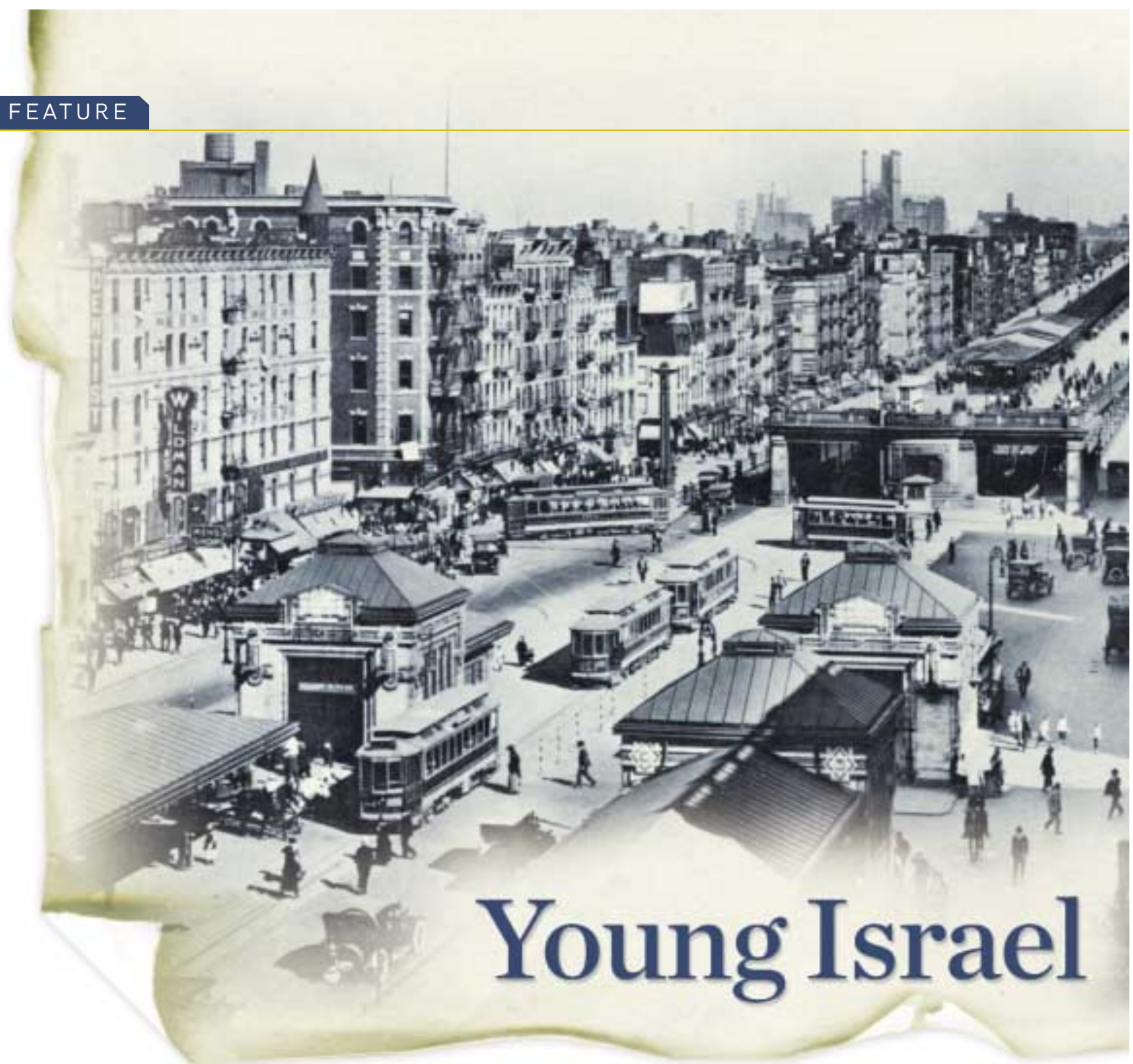


FEATURE



Marking Its Centennial Cel

BY BLIMIE BASCH

At the turn of the twentieth century, the future of American Jewry seemed bleak. The American Dream and secularism held far greater appeal for Jewish immigrants than the life of Torah-true Judaism that had been practiced by their ancestors for generations. Assimilation was the rule rather than the exception, and American Jewry was said to be on its way to extinction. In 1911, a few courageous individuals stepped forward into this spiritual desert and founded the Young Israel movement that helped to stem the tide of assimilation and intermarriage. Today, one hundred years and over two hundred synagogues later, we present reflections of Rabbi Pesach Lerner, its executive vice president, on the founding of the movement and its impact on the American Jewish scene.



The Lower East Side of Manhattan in the early 1900s, with a view of the Williamsburg Bridge.

living, the majority believed, they needed to sever all ties with the Old Country and its religious lifestyle. In their eagerness to shed stereotypical “greenhorn” status, they embraced American culture by shedding their traditional dress; men shaved their beards and married women uncovered their hair. And for an estimated 95 percent of Eastern European immigrants, Shabbos was sacrificed on the altar of the American Dream.

The newly arrived Jews looked up to the assimilated German Jews who had immigrated in the 1830s and 1840s and achieved great success. Many, like Joseph B. Bloomingdale, founder of the eponymous department store; Nathan Straus and his brothers, founders of the renowned Macy’s; Jacob Schiff, the railroad financier; and Robert Lehman, the banker, started out as pushcart peddlers and rose to become kings of the retail and banking industries.

This trend slowly evolved into a new brand of Judaism. “Gefilte-fish Jews” were American Jews who had succeeded in integrating into American culture and were perhaps proud of their Jewishness, but in name only. Their practice of Judaism was usually limited to shul attendance on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, for *Yizkor*, bar mitzvahs, or to recite *Kaddish*, and serving “ethnic” foods, like bagels and lox at family gatherings, or matzah balls and gefilte fish on Pesach. Whatever connection they had to Judaism waned with the passing of time.

In 1894, the venerable leader of world Jewry at the time, the Chofetz Chaim, *zt”l*, among other *Gedolim*, discouraged many

Eastern European Jews who consulted them from emigrating to America, as they felt that the open and permissive American culture would pose too great a risk.

At the time of the mass Jewish immigration to America in the 1880s, over 90 percent of the two hundred synagogues in the United States were Reform and hardly different in ritual from American Protestant churches. America’s assimilated Jews were ashamed of their greenhorn brethren and quickly sought to modernize them by creating institutions such as the Educational Alliance, YMHAs (Young Men’s Hebrew Association), Jewish hospitals, and Jewish federations whose stated aims were to assist the immigrants but whose clandestine goals were to mainstream them into secular American society.

New immigrants also had to contend with effective Yiddish-speaking socialists who attempted to eradicate “outdated” religious observances from their lives. These groups sponsored Jewish-themed events that were totally anti-Torah, such as Yom Kippur Balls and Friday-night Yiddish theater productions. These activities insidiously snared multitudes of young Jewish immigrants and speedily secularized them. There were very few devout, yeshivah-educated Rabbanim in America then to guide their congregations or teach Torah Judaism to the next generation.

New-World Orthodoxy

A handful of young men raised as American Jews realized that remaining

celebration

Yom Kippur Balls And Gefilte Fish Jews

Eighty percent of the 2,500,000 Eastern European Jews who arrived on American shores between 1890 and 1914 settled on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. They quickly learned that the streets were not paved with the legendary gold that had inspired them to emigrate. To eke out a

true to the Jewish faith did not have to clash with integration into American society. One such individual was twenty-seven-year-old Benjamin Koenigsberg, z"l, an established attorney who had arrived in America from Galicia in 1889 at the age of five, attended Public School 160 and Yeshivas Etz Chaim (the forerunner of Yeshiva University), and graduated City College in 1904. These like-minded young men, under the guidance of Dr. Judah L. Magnes, z"l, and Dr. Israel Friedlander, z"l, formed the core of what would evolve into the Young Israel movement.

Dr. Magnes recognized that the children of European immigrants who completely dissociated from their Old World parents, who were an embarrassment to them,

were struggling at the same time to find meaning in American society. In Magnes's opinion, what they needed was an "interpretation and presentation of Judaism which shall overcome the formalism and sterility of old-time [religion] and shall yet avoid the extremes and extravagances of modern Reform."

The original group was formed in October 1911 at a meeting held in Mr. Koenigsberg's office, and called themselves the Hebrew Circle. They met in several venues around the Lower East Side, including Koenigsberg's law office, to discuss how they could promote traditional Jewish ideas and values. The consensus was that they would organize a series of Friday-night lectures in English to encourage young Jewish men and women to identify with their heritage.

There were many obstacles to this newfangled idea. The predominant issue was that speaking English in an Orthodox synagogue was akin to blasphemy. At a further meeting held on December 28, 1912, its founders named the group the Young Israel Forum. The Pike Street Shul agreed to host the lectures if they were repeated in Yiddish on Shabbos morning.

The first lecture was delivered on

January 10, 1913. It was so successful that news reports from that time estimated that some five thousand people attended. The shul was filled to the rafters, and mounted police were called in to control the crowd. A newspaper reported, "The movement is not Orthodox or Reform. It is not Zionistic or socialistic. It intends to awaken Jewish young men and women to their responsibilities as Jews in whatever form these responsibilities are conceived."



Benjamin Koenigsberg

At the same time, another group with a similar ideology was reaching out to American Jewish youth. The typical American *shtiebel* or *landsmannschaft* shul in the early 1900s was a noisy replica of an Eastern European *shtiebel*. To young American Jews, it

was a strange, unfriendly place where they could not understand the Yiddish spoken or participate in the services because their young age and clean-shaven faces precluded them from getting an *aliyah* or *davening* for the *amud*. As observers rather than participants, they were less interested in going to shul than in heeding the lure of the street.

A group of these Young Israel Forum men, most of whom were about seventeen, formed a youth *minyan* at which they sang parts of the *davening* and allowed other participants a chance to *daven* for the *amud*. It was met with such enthusiasm that within a few months the *minyan* had to move to accommodate the many participants. It was dubbed the Model Synagogue.

In 1917, Dr. Friedlander convinced the senior and junior groups, which shared some leaders and congregants, to merge and form the Young Israel Synagogue. In 1918 Young Israel had 335 members. A year later the numbers had nearly doubled, and new branches were soon formed throughout the tristate area — in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Each operated independently until 1922, when a number of them joined to form the



Council of Young Israel.

At that time there were eighteen branches with a total membership of close to five thousand. The Young Israel charter was passed by the New York State Legislature and made Orthodox synagogue standards, including *mechitzos* and *shomer Shabbos* officers, mandatory. President Moses H. Hoenig, z"l, proudly proclaimed that any shul that wanted to call itself Young Israel had to prove that it was run "in accordance with the principles of Orthodox Judaism."

Admission, *aliyos*, and attendance at shul programs were all free of charge so that everyone could participate. Young Israel also initiated a back-to-the-synagogue campaign to attract young men and women to services and enable them to connect with the decorum and spirituality of a *mikdash me'at*.



Young Israel buildings of yore.

Many old-time activists and *Gedolei Torah* in America had strong connections to the Young Israel movement, Rabbi Lerner points out. The father of Harav Aharon Schechter, *shlita*, *Rosh Yeshivah* of Yeshivas Rabbi Chaim Berlin, was NCYI national vice president, and his mother was president of the Women's Association; Harav Mordechai Gifter and Harav Avigdor Miller, *zecher tzaddikim livrachah*, at one time were Young Israel Rabbanim; Harav Avraham Pam and Harav Yaakov Weinberg, *zecher tzaddikim livrachah*, were involved in Young Israel; Harav Aharon Kotler, Harav Moshe Feinstein, and Harav Yoshe Ber Soloveitchik, *zecher tzaddikim livrachah*, came to the early Young Israel dinners because they believed it was important. Lieutenant Meyer Birnbaum was a Young Israel member. Other institutions grew out of Young Israel shuls, such as the Hebrew Academy of Cleveland, which was founded by Young Israel community families.

In short, Young Israel created the infrastructure on which the post-Holocaust European Orthodox community could build.

More Than a Synagogue

While Young Israel is synonymous with synagogues, it is actually an activist movement that has fought and continues to fight many battles for *Klal Yisrael*. Many community social norms that we take for granted were victories that Young Israel had to struggle to achieve in the early years.

Rabbi Lerner explains, "Young Israel introduced the organized shul model that is found across America. They initiated English *drashos*, organized *davening* with singing, and the fact that anyone could get *aliyos* irrespective of their background or financial status.

"As the movement grew, it continued to be proactive on many fronts. Young Israel challenged many obstructions to religious practice, like giving tests in colleges on Shabbos and not allowing yarmulkes in the workplace. They had an employment agency for *shomrei Shabbos* at a time when

A Foundation to Build On

Rabbi Pesach Lerner is the current executive vice president of the National Council of Young Israel (NCYI), a position he has held for two decades. He describes how he became involved in the national Young Israel.

"I grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, and my family was an integral part of Young Israel of Cleveland. My parents met within the Young Israel community. My father was a multi-term president of Young Israel of Cleveland, as well as NCYI regional vice president. My father was often at meetings related to the shul or the Jewish day school. I saw concern for the *klal* in action in my home. I was a *talmid* and *musmach* of Yeshivas Ner Yisroel in Baltimore and was close to its president and *menahel*, Rav Naftali Neuberger, *z"l*. In 1991 I received a call from Rabbi Neuberger..."

It seems that Mr. Chaim Kaminetzky, then president of NCYI, had been invited to lunch by Rabbi Moshe Sherer, *z"l*, of Agudath Israel of America. In the course of the conversation, Mr. Kaminetzky mentioned to Rabbi Sherer that he was looking for an assistant to the executive vice president. Rabbi Sherer shared this information with Rabbi Neuberger, who called Rabbi Lerner and said, "Pesach, this is for you."

Before accepting his position at Young Israel, Rabbi Lerner consulted with many people, one of them a renowned Chassidic Rebbe who was a Holocaust survivor and with whom he was close. "[The Rebbe] told me, 'Grab it. If it wasn't for Young Israel, there would have been no foundation our community could have built on.' Young Israel played a major role in saving a substantial part of *Klal Yisrael*."

working on Shabbos was deemed necessary; Young Israel challenged anything that challenged Torah. They made *Yiddishkeit* more applicable to the new generation.

“Young Israel wasn’t only shuls, *mikva’os*, and after-public-school Talmud Torahs; it educated and brought the philosophy into America that Shabbos, kashrus, and *halachah* belong in a modern world. They handed out books on Judaism and kosher food to Jewish soldiers during World War I. They were at the forefront of nearly every major battle and initiative [for *Yiddishkeit*]. It was an educational challenge to teach American Jewry about *taharas hamishpachah*, and they published books and arranged lectures [to teach these vital *halachos*]. Young Israel was in Albany fighting for kashrus at a time when the ability to practice kosher *shechitah* in New York State was being challenged.

“They spearheaded kosher kitchens on college campuses at the request of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, *zy”a*. They couldn’t fight the influences on the college campuses, but they could facilitate. Instead of having Jewish college students eating kosher in the college cafeteria at the same table as non-Jewish friends eating *treif*, they had Jews eating together at a kosher dining club on campus.”

Rabbi Lerner continues, “You could say that Young Israel was the first *kiruv* organization before [outreach] was in vogue. They were the first *askanim*. They pushed for Shabbos leave and kosher food in the military. The world has changed, and what Young Israel has fought for is the accepted norm today.

“Eretz Yisrael has always been part of our mandate. In 1948, when Israel was fighting for her survival, Young Israel collected the guns and rifles of Jewish World War II veterans and shipped them to Israel from our offices on West 16th Street in Manhattan. They had a non-Jew teaching Morse code in *Gemara niggun* to the young men who were going to Israel to help fight, so that uninvited guests would presume it was a class in Talmud.”



Rabbi Pesach Lerner (R) visiting with Harav Aharon Leib Steinman, *shlita*, (L) on Pollard’s behalf.

A Bren for Klal Yisrael

Over the course of a hundred years, there have been many who shaped the movement and who thereby had an effect on *Klal Yisrael*. Rabbi Lerner says, “Many people did many things; they were all *baalei batim* with jobs, but they had a *bren* to accomplish for *Klal Yisrael*.”

In addition to the organization’s founders, many dynamic members of Young Israel, such as Mr. Moses Hoenig, *z”l*, and Mr. Irving Bunim, *z”l*, the legendary *askan*, contributed greatly to the American Jewish community. Harold Jacobs, *z”l*, a former president of Young Israel, was a respected educator in New York City and was able to make great strides in the educational arena vis-a-vis the Orthodox Jewish community.

Each Young Israel rabbi and branch shaped its own community, and some even had a global impact. Many current leaders are the students of Rabbi Bernard Weinberger of the former Young Israel of Williamsburg, Brooklyn. The father of Rabbi Neil Winkler of Young Israel of Fort Lee, New Jersey, was involved in a Young Israel branch in the Bronx where he taught *davening* and *leining*, and not

only kept many young men in the fold but also brought many boys back to *Yiddishkeit*.

Rabbi Shalom Rubin, *z”l*, of Young Israel of Pelham Parkway was involved in government affairs. Rabbi David Hill, an NCYI national president who played a large role in protecting the kosher meat industry in America, placed Young Israel in the forefront of the movement to assist Soviet Jewry.

There are so many inspiring stories of individuals who have had an impact through Young Israel, Rabbi Lerner says, that “they could fill an entire book.” And such a book is due out before Chanukah.

The typical Young Israel Jew felt a burning desire to assist other Jews. “I remember, growing up in Cleveland, my mother would be getting calls Friday afternoon to host college kids for Shabbos. Young Israel branches had committees reaching out to nearby colleges and military bases. Originally it was the Young Israel communities that secured funding for day schools, shuls, and *mikva’os* from local federations because they had ongoing relationships within the greater [Jewish] community.”

Young Israel Today

Over the course of a century, the face of American Jewry has changed, and the Young Israel movement and its rabbinate have also changed.

“Young Israel today,” says Rabbi Lerner, “is still a shul movement and an activist movement. Today, the Young Israel rabbinate represents all the great yeshivos, like Lakewood and Ner Yisroel....

“While originally the Young Israel rabbi was a *posek* who required mostly pastoral skills, today a rabbi must be involved with the youth, with fundraising, and he is for the most part a guidance counselor. He’s responsible for kashrus, *chinuch*, and many Torah institutions in smaller communities, and sometimes works with the *vaadim* and federations of larger communities in these respects.

“There is a lot of counseling in areas that a hundred years ago no one would’ve imagined. Economics have changed; many shuls don’t employ full-time rabbis. The Young Israel rabbi needs to be heavily involved in fostering relationships and [in the growth of] his *baalei batim* in Torah and *avodah*.

“Today, Young Israel can have conversations with *Hamodia*, with Modern Orthodox [newspapers], and with the secular media because we have a mission and we’ve earned their respect. We are sensitive to individual needs and have shuls and connections across the entire spectrum of world Jewry. There are Young Israel shuls [whose members’] children [are] enrolled in Yeshiva University, while some Young Israel members go to the Skverer Rebbe’s *tisch* on Motzoei Pesach; others host IDF generals for Shabbos; and most branches offer a *Daf Yomi shiur* among their other *shiurim*. Some shuls serve *chalav Yisrael* exclusively, and some serve [*chalav stam*]. They are all kosher *al pi halachah*, with differing levels of sensitivity depending on the shul and the rabbi.

“Many [shuls] have mostly *baalei teshuvah*, to the credit of the rabbi. In Young Israel today, you can come in with a *kippah serugah*, a black hat, a *shtreimel*, no hat, or no *kippah*, and get a *shalom*

aleichem and a hot meal.

“Community needs have changed. Today there [is a plethora of] shuls, schools, kashrus committees and *mikva’os*, *kollelim*, and *kiruv* organizations. The greater community of Israel needs lots of activism; there are social challenges of the sandwich generation, of faltering marriages and the internet — new challenges of the twenty-first century. We need to make *Yiddishkeit* relevant now with programs to make it vibrant.”

Fighting for Justice

Young Israel has been at the forefront of many advocacy battles for Orthodox Jewry. As one NCYI *Viewpoint* magazine article says, “Young Israel has not been afraid to stand alone, when necessary, against the rest of the organizational establishment, to defend Torah principles. It has also been willing to condemn White House policies, and even Israeli government policies, when they appeared to endanger the safety and security of the Jewish people. And whenever the Jewish community has stood united in a worthy cause, Young Israel has always been willing to cooperate in doing its share, and more.”

Rabbi Lerner further explains, “Nineteen years ago we began the battle to have Jonathan Pollard released from prison. Young Israel leaders were there first, and today the greater Jewish community understands this life sentence is not justifiable. We were the first to get involved with Shalom Rubashkin and dragged everyone in with us. Today, we see [his trial] was unfair and tainted from the beginning. We have been active on behalf of Israeli soldiers missing in action. It was to the NCYI that Gilad Shalit’s father, Noam Shalit, turned almost five years ago on his first visit to America.

“The beauty of it is ... we can fight battles to do what’s right, like speak out



Rabbi Lerner consulting with Harav Chaim Kanievsky, *shlita*.

against the Gaza expulsion — we were one of the first. We ask a *she’eilah* about what is right to do, what’s proper, and we do what needs to be done. We don’t make a move without asking proper halachic authorities.

“Today, 70 percent of former Gush Katif residents don’t have adequate housing, and over 50 percent don’t have suitable jobs. We still deal with them on a consistent basis. For example, we have collected and distributed over one million dollars’ worth of food to them for the *chagim*; we raised money for five years for former residents of Gush Katif living in dilapidated caravans that look worse than the old Catskills bungalows. Their cupboards are bare. They have *shalom bayis* issues and no jobs or money. I met with five people who had six heart attacks among them since the expulsion.

“We just dedicated the 200th *sefer Torah* to the IDF, and at the 100th anniversary dinner we presented the chief rabbi of the IDF with the 201st. We have an arrangement with El Al to allow for *sifrei Torah* to travel on board planes with *kavod*.

Young Israel Donates 200th Sefer Torah to IDF

BY A. PE'ER, HAMODIA MILITARY CORRESPONDENT

A FESTIVE CEREMONY WAS HELD TO MARK THE DEDICATION of a *sefer Torah* to the Sirkin Army Base in Israel, the 200th *sefer Torah* donated by Young Israel of America to the IDF. The ceremony was attended by Young Israel President Shlomo Mostofsky, IDF Chief Rabbi Rafi Peretz, senior officers, and Young Israel Executive Vice President Rabbi Pesach Lerner, who delivered a message on behalf of the organization.

Chief of General Staff Benny Ganz told *Hamodia*, "I salute Young Israel ... for the 200th *sefer Torah*. Today there isn't a base or army facility along the borders that does not have a *sefer Torah* from Young Israel. We appreciate everything Young Israel does to enable Israeli soldiers to *daven* in shuls with *sifrei Torah* throughout the year."

Lieutenant Colonel Rabbi Yitzchak ben Yosef, chaplain of the IDF ground forces, praised Young Israel's decision to donate the *sefer Torah* to the largest base still lacking one. "We have more and more young people observing Torah and *mitzvos* on this base. Due to its size, we opened another shul and needed another *sefer Torah* urgently. We have many soldiers who return from operations and night shifts on Monday and Thursday who come to hear *krias haTorah* during *Minchah* instead of *Shacharis*, when they were on duty."

Rabbi Lerner, the driving force and dominant figure behind the campaign to collect *sifrei Torah* for IDF bases, told *Hamodia* that the fundraising campaign began eleven years ago, during a spate of clashes with the Palestinians.

"Rabbi Yedya Atlas, a military chaplain, approached me and told me about a terrible case in which a soldier was sent to a base to bring a *sefer Torah* to another base that didn't have one. On the way, he was killed by enemy fire. We resolved to do something to change the situation. Each base with a shul must have its own *sefer Torah*."

"I went to Israel and met with the military rabbinate and IDF commanders. I learned that many bases and facilities, especially on the borders, had no *sefer Torah*, and soldiers *davened* without one, even on Shabbos. I raised the matter before the Young Israel board, and together we began collecting *sifrei Torah* and donating them to military bases.

"At first we hoped to gather thirty, maybe forty *sifrei Torah*. I figured even if we somehow obtained sixty, it would be extraordinary. Today, as we induct the 200th *sefer Torah*, it is an exceptional accomplishment, both for me personally and for Young Israel and the many donors."

Rabbi Atlas came to the Sirkin event and danced with the Torah with the unbounded joy of childhood. "I can't believe what has happened since then. Young Israel has effected a revolution in the IDF."

Rabbi Peretz also spoke, praising Young Israel and its activists — in America and Israel. He noted that Young Israel plays a large role in the *mishloach manos* packages and the *chagim* vouchers that soldiers receive.

The 200th *sefer Torah* was donated in memory of Reuven Davidman, z"l, who passed away about a year ago and was one of the

leaders of the Young Israel IDF *sefer Torah* project. Incidentally, his grandson serves at the Sirkin base, and his son, Lenny, spoke on behalf of the family, conveying how important this project was to his father.

Reuven (Ruvi) Davidman, a Yeshiva University alumnus, was involved in many community initiatives after making *aliyah* in 1971. In 1976, he established the Young Israel movement in Israel and served as its president and treasurer.

The 200th *sefer Torah* that the Young Israel movement donated was written at the beginning of the last century in Romania. Some of the local Jews managed to hide it during the Holocaust, and when the community was wiped out, it was smuggled out of the country. Daniel Meyer, director of IYIM, the International Young Israel Movement-Israel region, persuaded those who had it to donate it to the IDF project.

"Two hundred is not the end," Rabbi Lerner said. "We are working on the next few *sifrei Torah* and will continue to do so as long as the IDF needs them."

Amit Davidman, a grandson of Ruvy Davidman, z"l, who is currently serving at the Sirkin army base, dancing with the 200th *sefer Torah*, that was donated in his grandfather's memory.





Passover campaign to benefit former residents of Gush Katif, 2008.



Over one million dollars of food has been distributed to the former residents of Gush Katif before the *chagim*.

We are out there on behalf of Eretz Yisrael.

“About a year ago, I was at a private meeting with Harav Aharon Leib Steinman, *shlita*, regarding a certain *klal* matter, and he told me, ‘Do it and do it right, and tell them I authorized it.’”

The Quintessential Young Israel Jew

Throughout our conversation, Rabbi Lerner has been passionate in his description of the qualities of the typical Young Israel Jew, whose heart is as great as *Klal Yisrael*, whose mandate of Torah Judaism does not allow him to back down in the face of dissenters, and who cannot rest if there is an unfinished task. In the personal anecdotes he recounts as executive vice president, Rabbi Lerner himself comes across as the archetype of a Young Israel Jew.

“There are two facets [to our goal]: one

is service to Young Israel, and one is service to *Klal Yisrael*. When you make rabbinic placements and see the success, the *derech erez* and love between the shul and the rabbi, you sit back and *shep nachas* and know the work you’ve done has had a purpose. ... At the end of the day, when you lecture on programming, planning, and fundraising ideas, which people institute and they work, when you see more *shalom*, learning, and [growth], it feels good.

“One year during the Pesach food distribution, a driver called me with a story. We had handed out chicken, fish, eggs, meat, and *shemurah matzah*. Somebody came over to thank the driver. Then he said thank you a second time for the grape juice and explained, ‘Until now I had only enough money for a small grape-juice bottle just for me, and there

would be water in my wife’s and seven children’s *kosos*. After each *kos* I would pour a drop from my grape juice into their water to give it the appearance of wine — but now, with your gift, they will all have grape juice for the *mitzvah* of *arba kosos*, so thank you especially for the grape juice.’ Can you even imagine such a situation?”

Rabbi Lerner’s voice is thick with emotion as he recounts these woeful tales. “This year we handed out \$125,000 worth of food before Rosh Hashanah. ... One woman called me from Nitzan. Her husband commutes two hours each way to work by hitching. They don’t even have funds for a bus pass. She said, ‘You did something for me that as a mother I will never forget. For the first time in years, because of the food you gave me, I was able to invite my ten- and eleven-year-old daughters into the kitchen to help me prepare for Shabbos and Yom Tov. Until now, we had maybe a can of gefilte fish.’ We were both crying,” recalls Rabbi Lerner.

“When our Israeli office workers and volunteers walk into an army base on Purim to hand out *mishloach manos*, they show them the triangle, the NCYI logo, on a Torah that was donated to the IDF. ...

“Young Israel is all that, at least for me. You see a problem, research the *halachah* and *hashkafah*, and do what is right, without looking over your shoulder. It’s our mandate from one hundred years ago.” ■

Sources for historical information: NCYI archives and Viewpoint Magazine.