



DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

RABBI AVI BERMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OU ISRAEL
ABERMAN@OUISSRAEL.ORG

This past week I was in the United States and had the distinguished pleasure to once again spend a couple of days with my colleagues at the OU Senior Staff Retreat. The beauty of having everyone in leadership positions in one location from OU Kosher, JLIC, Yachad, OU Advocacy, Synagogue Initiatives, Community Initiatives, OU Research, Jewish Action Magazine, Israel Free Spirit, Daf Yomi, Impact Accelerator, OU Torah, Women's Initiative, The SPIRIT Initiative, Teach Coalition, NCSY, OU Press, the executive arm, IT, Fiscal, HR – every single division that makes up the OU, gathering together to learn and to share – was, *be'emet*, a true honor.

In just two days, I could see the incredible impact that the OU is having on the Jewish world. Not only in providing kosher food, but also in how the profits from *kashrut*, together with the generous donations of Jews from around the world, are being put to good use serving *Klal Yisrael*. New programs are being

created, new techniques are being developed, from maintaining *eruvim* in North America to building life-saving programs for teens in Israel. The length and breadth of the OU's work is truly remarkable.

At one of the sessions on the second day OU Israel was asked to present the Pearl and Harold Jacobs Zula Outreach Center. The Zula runs in the late hours of the night in Yerushalayim, opening its doors to teens at risk. While I have taken many guests to see the Zula first-hand, it is impossible to bring everyone. So this time we brought the Zula to America. Our Zula director, Oren Asulin, together with other members of the team, created a Zula experience at the retreat. It was powerful to watch leaders from across the OU sit together, listening to *divrei Torah* and the music, the singing, the guitar – the same atmosphere that normally fills the Zula in Yerushalayim – now filling a room in Parsippany, New Jersey. Rav Kook writes that when a person travels to *chutz la'aretz* with the goal of disseminating the Torah of *Eretz Yisrael*, he should carry a spiritual string with him from the Land in order to *linok*, to “nurse,” from its holiness even while abroad. I was able to see those words come alive before my eyes as we extended the spirit of Yerushalayim to our colleagues in America.

As I sat in the retreat, I could not help but think: it is not just about the programs themselves. It is mainly about the people behind them – the individuals working so hard with endless *mesirut nefesh* to ensure that the OU is providing the very best. And not only the staff, but their spouses, their children, their

לעילוי נשמת

הרב טוביה בן הרב אלעזר
ראובן ורוזה ציפה ז"ל

Dedicated in loving memory of
our dear husband, father,
grandfather & great-grandfather

Tuvia Muskin ז"ל
On his 3rd Yahrzeit - תשרי ה'תש"פ

*Muskin, Chamudot
and Wilk families*

families, all giving of themselves so that the Torah, the *hashkafa*, and the spirit of the OU can reach as many Jews as possible. This is not only about teens at risk, not only about English-speaking *olim* in Israel, not only about North America. It is about the entire spectrum of *Klal Yisrael*.

One thing that I found interesting during my time in America was that many people approached me with the same request - whether it was at the retreat, Shabbat lunch, or while out *davening*: “Rabbi Berman, how can we bring *Torah Tidbits* to North America?” To that I answer, listen North America is gigantic! Whether it is the different locations and different *zmanim*, distribution, how do we get Torah Tidbits from New York to Los Angeles - are we printing in each community or are we printing in one location and shipping nationwide? Even if we look at just the Tri-State Area, the geography when it comes to distribution is complex, and we haven't even begun to discuss the cost of printing in North America, which is higher than ever and approximately double what the printing costs are in Israel. *Bikitzur*, it is complex to say the least. I explained, however, that when I have a scheduled trip planned to speak in shuls and communities and my flight leaves after Wednesday, the day Torah Tidbits arrives from the printing house, I take 50+ copies with me, and without fail they disappear within minutes. Whether in shul or at a Shabbat table, people are eager to grab them because, *baruch Hashem*, Torah Tidbits is loved by all. There is no question that the Torah within *Torah Tidbits* is wanted beyond Israel and I am convinced that if we were able to find a way to make Torah Tidbits accessible in North America, people would take it in seconds.

As we talk about the complexity of printing in North America, I am reminded that



even in Israel, it is no small thing to bring *Torah Tidbits* to your hands for free each week. There is a team of writers and editors, a graphic designer who ensures accuracy, people checking ads and *zmanim*, another team overseeing printing, and a remarkable group of volunteers such as Toni Chernofsky and many more, who show up every Wednesday to package and distribute to communities across our beloved homeland. It is a tremendous amount of effort every

**May the Torah learned
from this TT be
in loving memory and לע"נ**

**Miriam Braver Lifshutz ע"ה
כ"ה אלול
on her 7th Yahrzeit**

**Greatly missed
by her children and grandchildren**

***Martin & Rhonda Lifshutz
and Family***

single week that has taken 32+ years to get to such a place where we can master such a task here in Israel. *Im ein kemach, ein Torah*. The Torah does not stand alone. Just as flour makes it possible to sustain life, so too the support, resources, and hard work of so many make it possible for *Torah Tidbits* to reach you each Shabbat for free. Something that always comes to my mind are comments from Torah Tidbits readers such as Ari Benchimol who I met in Los Angeles last Shabbat, who told me that he reads *Torah Tidbits* every single week, including my article to which I tested him on and he passed with flying colors and knowing the topic of each week. He said that the comfort of being able to walk into shul and pick up *Torah Tidbits*, printed, stapled, in color, ready for Shabbat, is something that North America simply does not have – and that we must find a way to bring it there. His words reminded me once again that what seems so simple to us in Israel is actually an extraordinary blessing that should never be taken for granted. And so we continue to publish faithfully here in Israel, and *b'ezrat Hashem* one day abroad as well, if *chas v'shalom* Mashiach has not already come.

So as Rosh Hashana approaches, I ask two things. First, if you know the person who

brings *Torah Tidbits* to your community, please take a moment to call or send a message and thank them. They deserve it. Second, I ask for your partnership in helping us carry the growing costs of producing this publication, so that the Torah that uplifts us every week can continue to reach every Jewish home in Israel and, *b'ezrat Hashem*, one day in North America. We are in the midst of an active campaign for *Torah Tidbits*, and there is truly no better time than the *Aseret Yemei Teshuva*, the Ten Days of Repentance, to take part in strengthening Torah. At this time of year when we all turn inward and ask Hashem for blessing, what greater *zechut* can there be than ensuring that Torah continues to be spread and shared with tens of thousands of Jews each Shabbat?

There is no better moment than now to express gratitude — to Hashem for the Torah that elevates us, and to the many people who work tirelessly to make sure it reaches us.

And so I bless each and every one of our readers, and all of *Klal Yisrael*, that this year we will hear only *besorot tovo*. May we merit to see our soldiers return safely after defeating the Jewish people's enemies, our hostages come home, our wounded soldiers and civilians a *refuah shleima*, and those who lost their homes see them rebuilt. May families be reunited with their loved ones. And may we be *zocheh* to welcome *Mashiach Tzidkeinu*, the rebuilding of the *Beit HaMikdash*, and the final redemption *bimheira beyameinu*.

Wishing you all an inspiring and uplifting Shabbat and a *gmara chatima tova*.



Rabbi Avi Berman
Executive Director, OU Israel
aberman@ouisrael.org

**May the Torah learned
from this issue of Torah Tidbits
be in loving memory of**

רבקה בת יוסף ע"ה

Rifka Edelstein a"h

**beloved wife, mother, grandmother
and great grandmother
on her 16th yearzeit - 25 Elul**

***The Rosner, Edelstein,
Sokoloff families***