

## Letter from the Rosh HaYeshiva, HaRav Aharon Bina, Shlit"a

*Menachem Av 5768*

Recently, I received a call from one of the alumni. He said, "Rav Bina, I want to thank you for spending a week with us at Camp HASC." Surprised by the phone call, I asked why my presence was so important to him. He explained that "while we work very hard here, literally 24/7, the campers, for the most part, are unable to thank us. Your words of appreciation gave us tremendous chizuk, not to mention the great amount of time you spent speaking with so many of us."

Parenthetically, this unexpected expression of appreciation reminded me about the thanks due to the staff of Netiv Aryeh for their hard work and devotion to the students. I would venture to say that the Rebbeim devote at least as much time to our students as they do to their own families. Unfortunately, they do not always receive words of thanks. Indeed, many students do not even appreciate their efforts. This lesson is particularly poignant for the week we now find ourselves in, the week in which both Batei Mikdash were destroyed. Chazal teach us that in every generation in which the Beit HaMikdash is not rebuilt, it is as if that generation destroyed it themselves (Yerushalmi Yoma perek 1). I believe that part of the tshuva we can do to help rebuild the Beit HaMikdash is to show our appreciation and express gratitude towards one another.

My trip was for one purpose only - to spend time in Camp HASC. I did not go around collecting money, nor did I recruit new students. I started every day of my visit at camp HASC's Shacharit minyan, the rest of the time speaking with bochurim there, and finished every day at HASC's Maariv minyan, often staying until 1:00 AM. My wife Malke gave a shiur to fifty young women on the Sfat Emet. Additionally, I want to thank the young men who came to learn Ohr HaChaim with me.

One of our greatest sources of pride for Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh in recent years is the large number of students who go to work in Camp HASC. They fulfill the simple meaning of the words: "olam chesed yibane" "the world is built on kindness" (Tehillim 89:3). I must say that I would never be able to undertake the work that these people are doing. I am truly impressed by their messirut nefesh.

At a certain point, I came up with the idea of our Yeshiva establishing a connection with Camp HASC. If I am not mistaken, HaRav Amos Shlit"a and HaRav Podolsky zt"l helped to create and define this connection. I would like to make special mention of the outstanding work of the head staff of Camp HASC - to name but a few: HaRav Yehuda Mishel, Avi Sacks, Avi Pollak,

and Michal Porath-Zibman. They, as well as the many other young men and women there, work with incredible mesirut nefesh to create an atmosphere of true simcha for the campers. I would like to thank them for giving us permission to host a melave malka with the participation of more than one hundred and seventy of our students. I would also like to add special thanks to my hosts Shelli and Harvey Dachs in whose bungalow I stayed. I must say that I feel at home in their house as I do in my own.

This was a very special week for me and my wife. It was a week of pure chizuk. Many times I have been asked what gives me the strength to begin a new year. Seeing the fruits of our labor at Camp HASC is what keeps me going. Indeed, seeing our students filled with yirat Shamayim and so involved in chesed is what keeps me going.

The Shl"ta writes that a day without chesed cannot be considered a day. How fortunate are we to have merited these talmidim. In the zechut of their mitzvah, may we merit a good year! We should all be written for a Shana Tova le'altar lechayim tovim uleshalom, and may we all be inscribed in the books of tzaddikim and tzidkaniyot.