



Some Words from the Rosh Yeshiva

The Rambam opens his Hilchos Teshuvah with the laws of Vidui **verbal confession** stating that anyone who violates one of the Mitzvos of the Torah is obligated to say Vidui when he repents. (It is noteworthy that Rambam does not consider Teshuvah itself to be a Mitzvah; only the Vidui which concludes the Teshuvah process is counted as one of the 613 commandments.) In the Rambam's formulation, the Vidui is more than an admission of guilt. The Vidui must also contain an expression of regret (Charata) and an expression of resolve not to repeat the sin (Kabbala L'haba). In other words, Vidui is a verbalization of the entire Teshuvah process.

Why is this necessary? Why must Teshuvah be put into words?
Why can't Teshuvah simply be a state of mind?

One possibility is that words are more firm than mere thoughts which are often vague and cloudy. Putting the Teshuvah steps into words makes the repentance solid. There may be however another idea behind this mandated verbalization:

The Rambam writes that the Vidui must be said "Before Hashem". To put it differently, in Vidui we are communicating with Hashem. (Perhaps it is for this reason that on Yom Kippur the Vidui is inserted into the silent Amidah. Prayer too, as the Rambam explains in Hilchos Tefillah, must be said "Before Hashem". While engaged in the one, we are in the necessary state of mind for the other.)

Teshuvah without Vidui can cut Hashem out of the picture entirely. You see, the very concept of sin can be understood without reference to a Supreme Being. A person can sin against himself by contravening his most deeply held principles or by failing to achieve his own potential. Teshuvah then would just be another form of self-improvement akin to stress reduction, time management, or goal-setting. By requiring that the penitent speak to Hashem, he is forced to acknowledge that sin is first and foremost a violation of a relationship with the Divine Other. A damaged relationship cannot be repaired unilaterally; the guilty party must face the other and speak words of apology and appeasement. This is the meaning of Vidui.

Perhaps this explains the apparent redundancy in the opening line of the special Haftarah for this Shabbos Shuva (Hoshea 14:2-3), "Return, Israel, to Hashem, your Lord, for you have stumbled in your sins. Take for yourself words and return to Hashem..." Why is the admonition to return repeated?

The initial return refers to the process of Teshuvah; regret for the past and resolve for the future themselves constitute a return to Hashem in the sense that the person has returned to compliance with the Divine Command. The "taking of words" is a reference to the words of Vidui (see Shaarei Teshuvah, Part 1 on his discussion of the Fifteenth Fundamental of Teshuvah). This is a return of a different kind. Here the penitent returns to face Hashem in addressing the words of Vidui to Him.

In the Hebrew, the two "returns" are expressed differently. The first is "Ad Hashem"; the second is "El Hashem". While both "Ad" and "El" are translated as "to", there is a subtle difference in connotation. By way of illustration: A person traveling to a border but not crossing can be said to have traveled "to" the border. Here the Hebrew "Ad" would be more appropriately used in the sense of "up to". A person traveling to New York and entering the city would be said to have traveled "El". Thus, in speaking of the approach of one person to another – or to Hashem – "El" would imply a greater closeness than "Ad".

It is only in Vidui that this higher level is attained.

An Interview with Jacob Pillemer (2018)

Thanks so much for taking the time to be interviewed, to start, what years were you in Darchei?

Of course, my pleasure. I was in Darchei from 2014-2018

Do you have funny stories or memories from those years?

Sure. Generally, summers at Camp Stern were always a highlight. The Shabbos's, trips and just spending time with the guys made for some amazing memories. There was also a trip we took in Grade 12 to Ottawa where we went skiing on the canal.

We all dressed up for a Purim Shpeil we never actually made but I got some random guy to sing Lomin Machin Kiddush. We also had a fun little bonfire after grade 9, will never forget that.

Which Yeshivas and Universities did you attend after Darchei?

I went to Mercaz for Yeshiva and then went to TTEC/SUNY to get my undergrad.

Did you feel that Darchei prepared you well for those experiences?

Absolutely. Being in school until 8 and learning to sit through a long morning seder definitely helped prepare me for the Yeshiva Schedule.

What are you up to now?

I am currently working on getting my CPA while working in the accounting department at H & R Reit.

Any recommendation or advice for younger Alumni who are just beginning the post-yeshiva phase of their life?

Do what makes you happy, it will help you stay motivated and if you have that and a drive to be successful you'll be ok.

Wise words, thanks again for taking the time to get interviewed and have a **Kesiva VeChasima Tova!**

My pleasure, you too!



An Interview with Mr Fedewicz

Hi Professor, long time no speak. Thank so much for taking the time to answer some questions for the Alumni Interview. My pleasure, ask away!

When did you begin your teaching career, and when was your first-year teaching at Darchei Torah? I started teaching in 1972 and began my career at Darchei in 2004.

What inspired you to become a science teacher, and what did you enjoy most about your career? I didn't like research. My wife was a teacher at the time and she convinced me to 'step across to the dark side' - it was a great move.



How did you engage your students in science, and what teaching methods did you find to be most effective?

Most of my teachers were socratic, science labs were discovery based. I was a bit of a ham, my style evolved over time into a 1/3 socratic lesson followed by 1/3 directed practice followed by a 1/3 self and group practice time. All the time I filled class with as much humour and show that I could, just to make class fun.

In what ways did teaching in Darchei differ from teaching in the public school system? Because Darchei had two educational streams running during the day – one orientated towards Hebrew studies and the other orientated towards the provision of the Ministry mandated educational program - that made it a busy and educationally crowded day for students. I tried to provide as much time to self/group work as I could to get the best out of my students. I removed the labour of copying down notes by providing printed copies and devoted that time to practice and labs.

Tell us a story or two from your time at Darchei. When Darchei was down at Dufferin & Eglington – there was a Tim Hortons 2 minutes away from the school. My senior physics class was small and it was the last period of the day. Roberto agreed and the students enjoyed having a lesson taught – then going up to Timmy's for our work period. The rule was – 'get your work done, have a cup of Joe and no goofing off' or it would end the arrangement. The best class I ever had. In my final year at Darchei, the lab was built and I made sure that we got every student a lab coat and a 'Lab book.' It made the lab 'official' and set a formal atmosphere. The equipment I asked for allowed us not only to follow formal lab procedure and complete formal lab write-ups, but it was done in such a fashion that it focussed on how a university style format would lab would run. Students calculated %-efficiencies and if they were not happy – they repeated the labwork. The best prep for university that a student could get. I was proud of the boys in that class – they also put on a good show for parents night.

If you had to sum-up your time at Darchei in one line, what would it be? An interesting discovery of how private schools worked, interspersed with memorable times with some really special students while experiencing the evolution of what I would call a really good school.

What do you think are the most pressing challenges facing high school education today, and how can they be addressed? In tight economic times funding schools becomes a harder proposition. Increasing violence in schools will have many negative impacts on how schools function. Changing demographics as well as changing intellectual abilities coupled with economic pressures will bring greater stress on educational systems. If I had solutions to overcome these problems, I'd run for office.

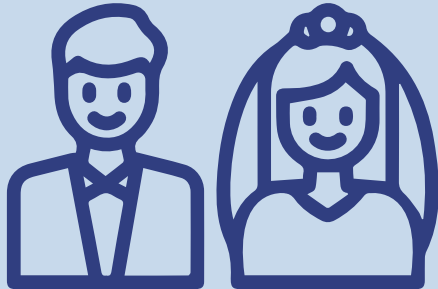
What advice would you give to someone starting out in education today, and how can they prepare for a successful career as a science teacher?

Do the best you can . . . be the best you can be . . .
Find several good mentors who will shine light along your path, and the rest is up to you.

How is Henrietta doing? Now now, Henrietta has passed away.

Thank you so much for your time and more importantly for all you did for Darchei during your time here!

Mazel Tov!



To the Newlyweds

Yehuda Lichenstein (2018) & Zara Berman
Josh Rais (2019) & Biba Atara Benquesus
Josh Gozlan (2019) & Sara Starnis
Dovvy Somogyi (2018) & Maya Levy
Coby Stopnicki (2017) & Esti Schreiber
Shlomie Ingber (2019) & Kayla Jakobovic
Aaron Korobkin (2013) & Maytal Belisowski
Binyamin Black (2018) & Maya Milevsky
Shmuel Sanders (2019) & Kayla Wachsman



**To the
Baby Girls**

Eli (2015) & Elisheva Berglas
Aaron (2016) & Naomi Nacson
Yehuda (2014) & Adina Rosenberg
Daniel (2016) & Sara Suttner



**To the
Baby Boys**

Avi Chaim (2007) & Shiffy Plonka
Aryeh (2009) & Shira Rosen
Shlomo (2015) & Adina Gottesman
Yaakov (2016) & Aviva Kammer
Shmuel Aaron (2014) & Lea Harari
Tzvi (2011) & Ariella Cohen
Daniel (2010) & Nomi Belzberg
Yehoshua (2016) & Yael Weiss
Rafi (2015) & Meira Bienenstock

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