

“הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְבַיֵּט בַּתּוֹרָה וּבוֹרֵא אֶת הָעוֹלָם”
“G-d gazes into the Torah and creates the world.”
(Bereshit Rabbah 1:1)

Intellectual

Spiritual

Israeli

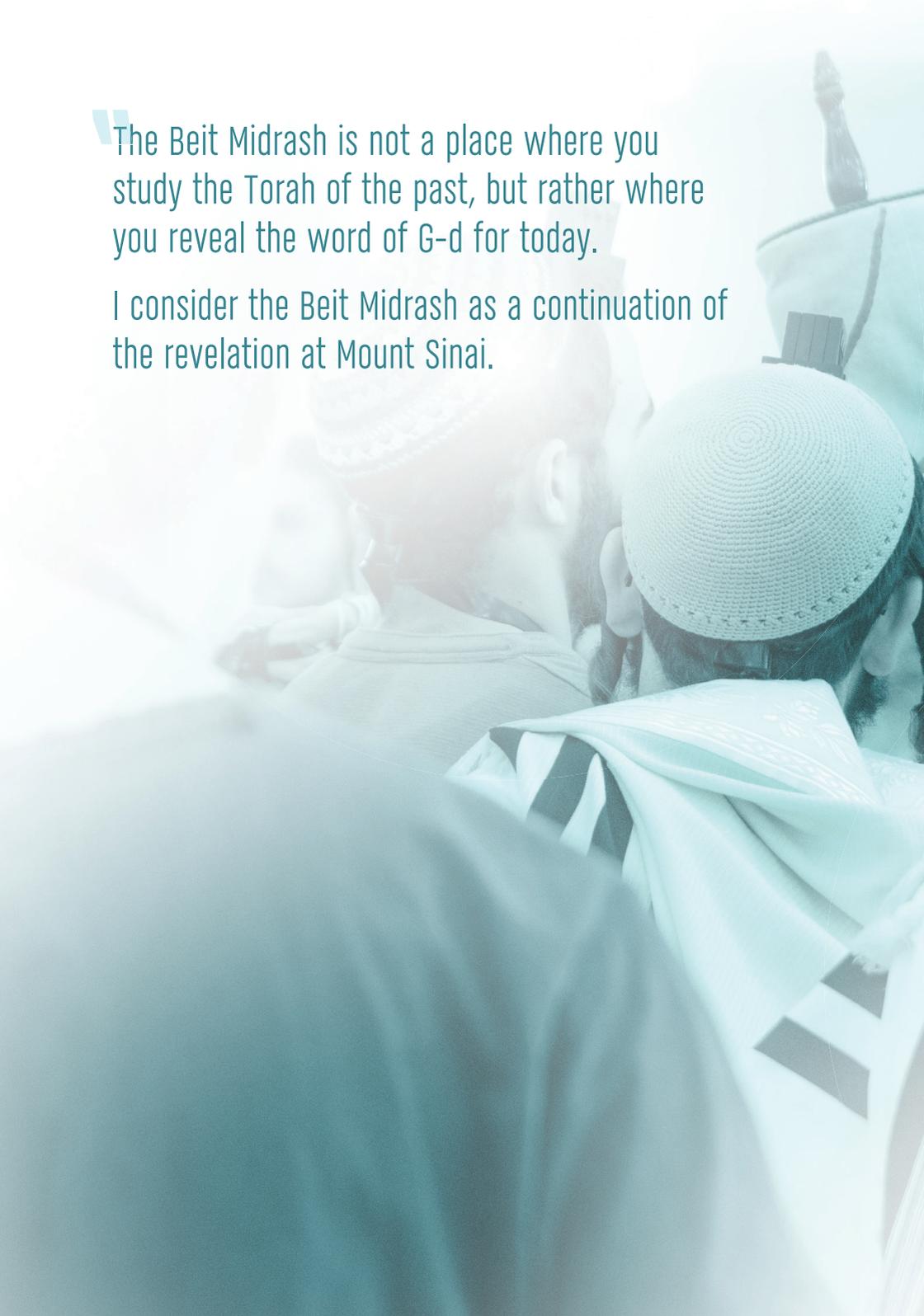


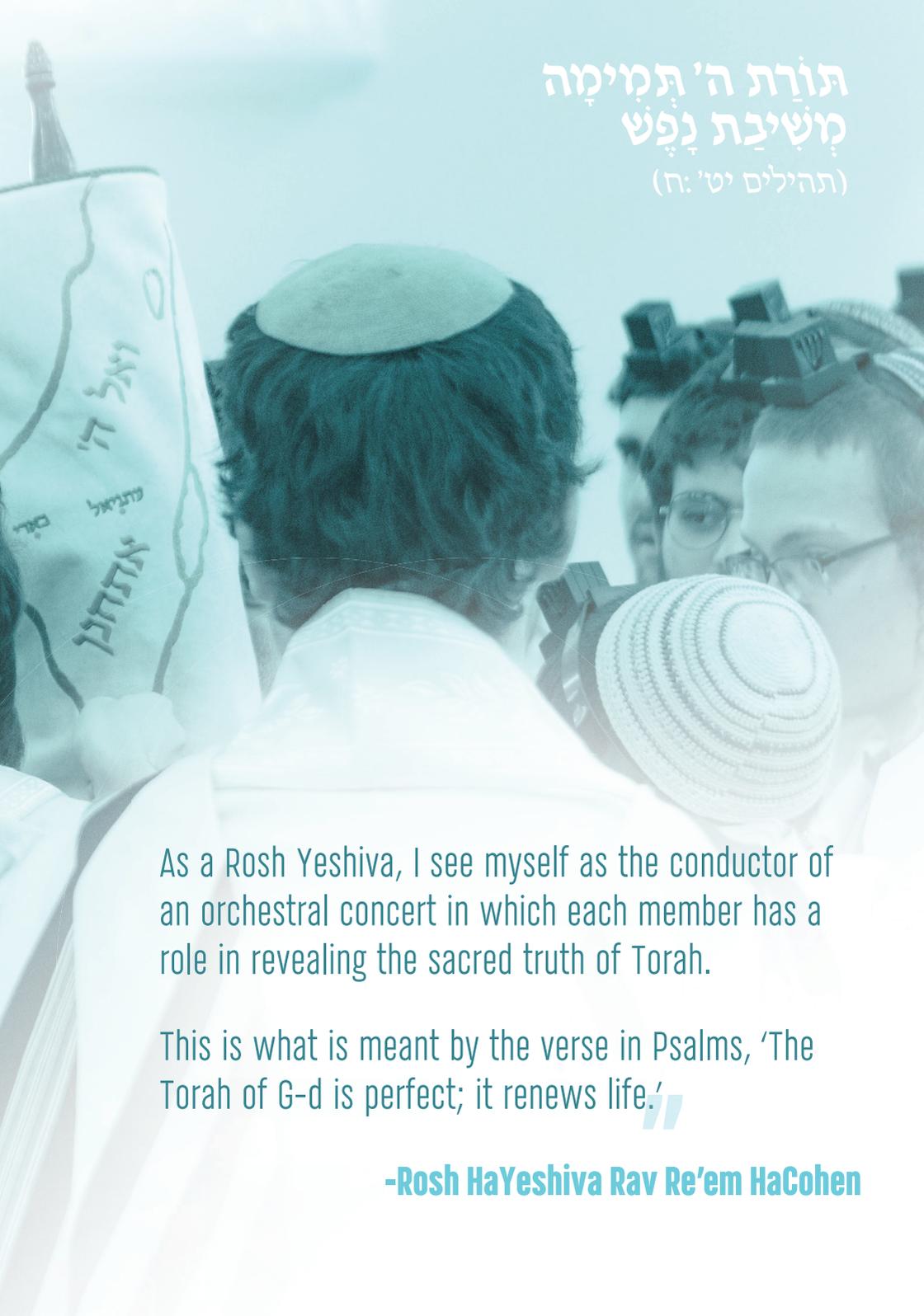
Yeshivat Otniel

Push your mind and elevate your soul

“The Beit Midrash is not a place where you study the Torah of the past, but rather where you reveal the word of G-d for today.

I consider the Beit Midrash as a continuation of the revelation at Mount Sinai.





תּוֹרַת ה' תְּמִימָה
מְשִׁיבַת נֶפֶשׁ
(תהילים יט': ח)

As a Rosh Yeshiva, I see myself as the conductor of an orchestral concert in which each member has a role in revealing the sacred truth of Torah.

This is what is meant by the verse in Psalms, 'The Torah of G-d is perfect; it renews life.'

-Rosh HaYeshiva Rav Re'em HaCohen

About Yeshivat Otniel

Yeshivat Otniel is a renowned Israeli Religious Zionist yeshiva, distinguished for its high-caliber Torah study, emphasizing both depth and breadth. Blending rigorous Talmudic learning with philosophy and mysticism, the yeshiva fosters an environment of intellectual exploration and spiritual growth. Our curriculum - made up of mornings and evenings studying Gemara and afternoons of elective courses and personal learning - sharpens students' analytical skills and develops a profound connection to G-d and Torah.

Yeshivat Otniel is one of Israel's largest Hesder Yeshivot with over 300 students. Around 65 students join the Yeshiva each year out of high school, most return after their army service, and around 25 students stay to study for Semicha. In addition to the students who learn in the Beit Midrash, Otniel's impact far transcends its walls through a robust online presence of shiurim and podcasts and the Yeshiva's publishing house *Gilui* (literally: Revelation).

Our English Speakers Program enables a successful integration into the Yeshiva while providing specialized classes, experiences, guidance, and community.

Our Vision

G-d is revealed anew each and every day and in each and every individual. Founded on this belief, Yeshivat Otniel strives to serve as a meeting point between Heaven and Earth.

Just like the sunset in which the world bursts into color when night and day meet, our Beit Midrash radiates its unique light as it brings into harmony past and present, the intellectual and the spiritual, learning and doing.

Past and Present G-d's word was revealed at Har Sinai, and it is the unique perspectives brought by each of its students that brings about its flowering, its living continuous revelation. We study with reverence and deference to the wisdom of Torah scholars throughout the generations, and we listen intently to the insights of the present moment. We see ourselves as a continuation of the story of the Jewish people as we turn our attention to the world in which we live and the challenges it presents today.

The Intellectual and the Spiritual Just like a bird needs both of its wings to take flight, it is our belief that full Avodat Hashem requires a partnership between thought and emotion. Rigorous intellectual study in the Beit Midrash is informed by singing, dancing, and meditation, and one's inner world is shaped by the ideas they study. Brought into harmony, both the Torah and the individual soar to new horizons.

Learning and Doing The Torah calls us both to study and to act. In our learning, we hear and reveal G-d's word, and in our doing of the mitzvot, we partner with G-d in creating and repairing the world. Our thorough Torah study enriches our observance of Halacha. We believe in a balance between service of G-d within the Beit Midrash and without - both during and after their time within our walls, our talmidim live lives of service to our People, and our Hesder students serve in the IDF to protect Eretz Yisrael and Am Yisrael.

Our Yeshiva formally refers to itself as a Beit Vaad, a term from Pirkei Avot that refers to a house of meeting for debate amongst scholars. This is our vision. Our talmidim are not passive recipients; through humility, rigor, and deeply refined listening, each student is an active participant in the revelation of G-d's word through our Torah and the living of a holy life that follows - in the union of Heaven and Earth.

Some Elements of the Yeshiva

Talmud Study. The pulsating heart of our Beit Midrash is the study of Talmud, for it is in its pages and commentaries that one hears the Torah's insights into every element of existence and is in turn invited to express

their unique creativity. Our analysis of the Psukim, Midrashim, Mishna, Gemara, Rishonim, and Achronim works to organize the different opinions and glean their Halachik and theological implications. Our approach to iyun (in-depth study) is rooted in classical Talmudic methodologies, utilizes tools from the academic study of Talmud such as the chronological development of ideas and literary theories, and invites the existential insights of each individual learner. [For an English article by one of our Rebeyim, Rav Yakov Nagen, that discusses Talmud learning and Otniel's approach, please google "Challenges for Emerging Talmudic Methodologies."]

A Wide Range of Voices and of Classes. Otniel is truly a Beit Vaad, a place of meeting for an array of voices and perspectives. All those who live a life of Torah and Yirat Shamayim are invited to bring their opinion to the debates within our walls. This diversity of thought is reflected in our large staff of Rabbis - with widely varying approaches to learning and areas of expertise - and their classes that span the entire Torah spectrum - from Tanach to Mishna to Talmud to Halacha to Jewish Philosophy to Kaballah to Chassidut.

A Personalized Curriculum. Each student who enters Yeshiva is on their own personal journey of Avodat Hashem. Each student arrives with their own goals for learning, their specific set of skills, their personal interests and questions. After the first weeks in Yeshiva in which we encourage our students to try out as many classes as possible, we work with each student to chart their goals and craft a personal schedule

with a mix of the Yeshiva's Hebrew classes, English classes, chevrotot, and personal learning time in the Beit Midrash.

Avodat Hashem Beyond the Mind. We hear and connect to G-d in ways that transcend verbal rational articulation. Otniel strives to foster in its students avenues of connection to Hashem beyond intellectual study. Our tefillot are famous both for their slow meditative nature as well as their joyous singing and dancing. We prepare ourselves for Maariv each night in dance, offer classes that teach and explore niggunim, and regularly have late night Hitvaaduyot (gathering of singing and Divrei Torah). Multiple times a year we head out to nature, and an annual highlight is our Beit Midrash for Creativity in which students are invited to create and share art of all forms.

Immersion in a Rural Israeli Environment. Students who choose to study in Otniel grow immensely from integrating fully into an Israeli Yeshiva - learning Torah and experiencing life from a new perspective. While the Yeshiva is only a 75 minute bus ride from Jerusalem, our students have the opportunity to live in a small warm rural community and enjoy the insights that come from serenity, focus, and the daily sunsets that flood the Beit Midrash with golden light.



Yeshivat Otniel's English Speakers Program

Our Mission

The Torah of Otniel may be the exact language of Torah that English speaking students are looking for, but it is taught in a spoken language that is not their mother tongue and within a foreign cultural context. It is the goal of our program to enable the successful integration of English speakers as they fully immerse themselves in an Israeli Yeshiva. Further, the Yeshiva yearns to develop its Torah through the insights of students from English speaking communities who offer different perspectives and grapple with their own questions.

Who is the program for?

Our program is for highly motivated students with a desire to deeply immerse themselves in the world of Torah in an intellectual and spiritual way and to do so in an Israeli environment. As the majority of the students' classes and chevrotot will be in Hebrew, success in Otniel requires a high level of Hebrew in addition to a strong foundation in studying Torah, specifically the Gemara and its commentaries.

A Community Within a Community

Part of the power of learning in Otniel is being within a huge Beit Midrash, feeling the electricity of so many engaged in fervorous study, learning amongst true giants of Torah. The goal of the English Speakers Program is to create a home within the larger Yeshiva in which English Speaking students can feel totally comfortable to speak their own language, to talk about shared experiences, and to discuss questions and topics that may be unique to

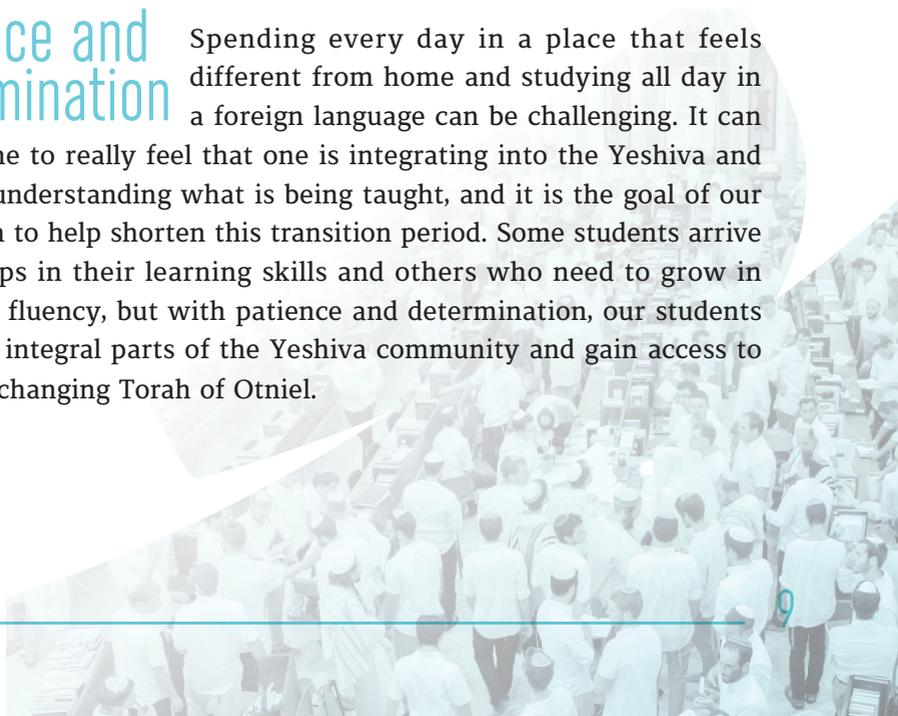
them. This takes the form of one or two daily classes in English, weekly gatherings with the English speaking Rebeyim, trips throughout the year, and simply having one another with whom to hang out. Even as the students integrate deeply within the Israelis Yeshiva community, it is these comfortable familiar interactions that ensure vitality and successful immersion.

Torah Specifically for English Speaking Students

The Torah of Otniel is taught at a very high level, and most students (Israelis included) gain deepest access to the Torah being taught with systems of support. Courses will be taught in English to bolster students' technical skills and their understanding of methodologies and concepts. Additionally, new classes will be taught that are aimed at making the Torah of Otniel maximally relevant to the lived experience and questions of students from an English Speaking culture.

Patience and Determination

Spending every day in a place that feels different from home and studying all day in a foreign language can be challenging. It can take time to really feel that one is integrating into the Yeshiva and deeply understanding what is being taught, and it is the goal of our program to help shorten this transition period. Some students arrive with gaps in their learning skills and others who need to grow in Hebrew fluency, but with patience and determination, our students become integral parts of the Yeshiva community and gain access to the life changing Torah of Otniel.



Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

<p>16:45 - 17:45 Tanya of Chabad R Ptachya</p>	<p>16:00 - 17:00 Rav Kook's Orot HaKodesh Gimmel Rav Benny Kalmanzon *Shiur Bet</p>	<p>16:00 - 16:30 Avodat Hashem Rav Re'em HaCohen</p> <p>16:30 - 17:30 Fixing our Character Traits according to Torot of the Soul Rav Elchanan Cherlow *Shiur Aleph</p>	<p>16:00 - 16:30 Avodat Hashem Rav Re'em HaCohen</p> <p>16:00 - 17:00 Beit Midrash for the Times Rav Amnon Dokow *Shiur Daled and older</p> <p>17:00 - 18:00 Philosophy of Iyun Rav Pdaya Nagar *Shiur Bet and older</p>	<p>6:30 - 7:00 Spiritual Prep for Tefilla Rav Avi Luriya</p>	<p>7:30 - Shacharit 9:00 - 10:30 Tractate Kodshim Rav Re'em HaCohen</p>
<p>7:00 - Shacharit Halacha - Rav Re'em HaCohen 8:45 - Breakfast</p>					
<p>9:15 - Opening Lesson for Morning Seder Chevruta Study of Gemara B'Iyun (in-depth)</p>					
<p>12:00 - Gemara B'Iyun Shiur</p>					
<p>13:15 - Lunch Official Break until 15:30</p>					
<p>13:45 - Daf Yomi - Rav Amnon Dokow 13:45 - Yerushalmi - Rav Re'em HaCohen</p>					
<p>15:30 - Mincha 15:45 - 16:00 - Study for the Halacha Program</p>					
<p>17:00 - 18:00 Torah and the Ancient East Dr. Yossi Farjun *Shiur Daled and older</p>	<p>15:45 - 17:00 Halacha Program Shiur</p> <p>17:00 - 18:00 Pathways to G-d Rav Amnon Dokow *Shiur Aleph</p>				
<p>11:30 - 12:30 Chassidut in Parshat HaShavua R Nadav Reichma</p>					

Sample Hebrew Class Schedule

<p>18:00 - 19:15 Analysis of Tehillim Dr. Yossi Farjun</p> <p>18:00 Essays in Chassidut R Ptachya *Shiur Daled and older</p>	<p>17:00 - 18:00 The Chassidic Movement Rav Benny Kalmanzon *Shiur Aleph</p> <p>17:15 - 18:15 Nation, Society, and Land - The Nationalism of Rav Kook Rav Amnon Dokov *Shiur Bet</p>	<p>18:00 - 19:00 The Chassidic Movement Rav Benny Kalmanzon *Shiur Hey</p> <p>18:15 - 19:15 Spiritual Service of G-d Rav Yakov Nagen *Shiur Bet</p>	<p>16:45 - 17:45 The Ramchal's 138 Openings Rav Re'em HaCohen *Shiur Hey</p> <p>17:00 - 18:00 The Couplehood of Man and Woman Rav Nerya Mantzur *Shiur Bet</p> <p>18:00 - 18:45 Rav Kook's Orot HaTorah Rav Nerya Mantzur *Shiur Aleph</p>	<p>17:00 - 18:00 Topics in Rav Kook Rav Matanya Sternberg *Shiur Bet</p> <p>17:00 - 18:00 Rambam's Guide to the Perplexed Rav Shai Ginzi *Shiur Aleph</p> <p>18:00 - 19:15 Rambam's Guide to the Perplexed Rav Shai Ginzi *Shiur Bet and older</p> <p>18:00 - 19:15 The Voice of Prophecy Rav Tomor Bukoza *Shiur Bet and older</p>	<p>17:00 - 18:00 Introduction to Torot of the Soul and Army Preparation Rav Elchanan Cherlow *Shiur Bet</p>
<p>19:15 - Dinner 19:50 - Dancing 20:00 - Arvit</p>					
<p>20:15 - 22:30 - Night Seder - Chevruot in Gemara Bekiut (study with a focus on breadth)</p>					
<p>Chaburot (small study groups) with Kollel students</p>	<p>Shiurim at the Rabbis' Houses</p>	<p>Hitvaadut (gathering of singing and Divrei Torah)</p> <p>Rav Avi Luria - every other week</p>	<p>22:30 - Shoresh (Rav Re'em's Philosophy of Torah) for Shiur Bet</p> <p>23:15 - Shoresh for Shiur Aleph</p> <p>23:00 - 00:15 Niggun and Torah on the Parsha Rav Elchanan Cherlow</p>		

Sample List of Classes in English

Sunday

English Speakers
Program Gathering

The Lights of Rav
Kook

Monday

Gemara
Methodology and
Concepts

Selected Topics in
Avodat Hashem
- from the Torah
to the Talmud to
the Chassidim to
Philosophers

Tuesday

Introduction to
Kabbalah and
Mysticism

Wednesday

Gemara
Methodology and
Concepts

Torah and
Philosophy in the
thought of Rav
Shagar

Thursday

An English Re-
delivery of Shiur
Klali

Otniel Ideas and
Student Q&A

Friday



Yeshivat Otniel Leadership



Rav Re'em
HaCohen
Rosh Yeshiva

Rav Re'em has been Rosh Yeshiva and the Rav of the Otniel community for over 30 years, and is widely considered one of

the Gdolei Hador. Renowned for his sharp, precise, and creative analysis, he sets a tone of learning Torah vigorously with the aspiration of hearing G-d's will anew. He has published an array of books in Talmudic insights (5 volumes thus far published of *Shiurei HaRev Re'em* - Talmudic Lessons), halachic responsa (5 volumes thus far published of *Shu"t Bidei HaAron* - Poles of the Ark: Topical Halachic Responsa), and Jewish thought (among them *He'eh'lem VeGilui* - The Hidden and the Revealed), and is a public figure working towards elevating and unifying the Jewish People.



Rav Elchanan
Cherlow
Rosh Yeshiva

After years in the Yeshiva as a student and then a Ra"m, Rav Elchanan was recently appointed Rosh Yeshiva, and he brings a youthful energy

as the Yeshiva strives to both deepen and grow with a new generation. His lessons often focus on how the Torah speaks directly to the soul, and his pedagogical philosophy emphasises the importance of every Rabbi seeing the personal journey of each of their students. He has an MA in Educational Psychology and ran a private clinic alongside his teaching before his recent appointment as Rosh Yeshiva.



Rav Benny Kalmanzon President

Rav Benny was the founding Rosh Yeshiva of Otniel and recently transitioned to President of the Yeshiva. He built the Yeshiva on a vision wherein the students do not

come to be told what to think but where they think for themselves and where deep learning and spirituality are not at odds but complementary. He is a scholar of art, literature, philosophy, and Holocaust studies, and incorporates all of these into the Chassidut classes that he still teaches in the Yeshiva.



English Speakers Program Staff



Rav Alex Haffetz
Ra"m and Program
Director

Rav Alex grew up in Houston, Texas, and made aliyah after studying philosophy at the University of

Pennsylvania. He then spent seven years in Otniel deeply immersing himself in its unique Torah, teaching Gemara and Philosophy, and studying for Semicha from the Israeli Rabbinate. Rav Alex has 15 years of experience teaching English speaking students in summer camp, high school, and yeshiva, and he deeply believes that the ideas of Otniel are what many English speaking Jews' souls are searching for. Rav Alex has brought the skills he learned from his work as the Assistant Director of the Yeshivat Ma'ale Gilboa Overseas Program back to his Torah home in Otniel in order to enable the successful integration of English speaking students into the Yeshiva. He is also currently completing an MA in philosophy at Tel Aviv University focusing on language as the revelatory foundation of reality.



Rav Netzach
Sapir
Ra"m

Rav Netzach grew up in Berkeley, California, and made aliyah after high school directly into Otniel's Hesder Program. After completing his BA at

Shalem College in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, he returned to Otniel where he studied for Semicha from the Israeli Rabbinate while simultaneously teaching in the Hesder program. After receiving a teacher's certificate from Herzog College and completing the Ohr Torah Stone Strauss-Amiel rabbinic and emissary training program, Rav Netzach spent 3 years in San Diego serving as the Rav of SCY High School and the Youth Director at Congregation Adat Yeshurun. Rav Netzach lives in Otniel with his wife and four children.



Zach Katz

Program Coordinator

Zach is a graduate of Yeshivat Otniel, where he learned for two and a half years and served in the IDF through the Hesder track. Now coordinating the English Speakers Program,

he draws on his own journey to support international students and new immigrants as they navigate cultural adjustments and bureaucratic hurdles. His goal is to ensure a smooth, transformative experience for each student. Zach holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and business and is completing a master's in neuroscience at Ben Gurion University. He also works at Light and Vessels Inc., a startup developing educational tools to help people navigate the challenges they may face in life.



Rav Yakov Nagen

Rav Yakov was born in Manhattan, New York, and received his BA, MA in Jewish Thought, and Semicha from Yeshiva University before making aliyah, studying at Yeshivat Har Etzion, and earning a PhD in Jewish Thought

from Hebrew University. After 30 years as a Ra"m in Otniel, Rav Yakov has transitioned to focusing on his groundbreaking work as Director of the Ohr Torah Stone Blickle Institute for Interfaith Dialogue and Beit Midrash for Judaism and Humanity. Rav Yakov has published seven books, two of which have been translated into English: *The Soul of the Mishnah* and *Be, Become, Bless*. Our students will be blessed to learn weekly with Rav Yakov in English.





“I think there are two driving forces that give our Beit Midrash a special flavor.

On one hand there is a stress on the spiritual aspects of Judaism - the study of Chassidut and Kabbalah and how that is translated into music, tefillah, and meditation.



And on the other hand there is an openness to all forms of learning - both from within the Beit Midrash and from the academic world.

Putting these things together allows us to be critical in the spiritual and spiritual in the critical. //

-Rav Yakov Nagen

If you yearn to serve G-d through Torah and Tefillah, through analysis and contemplation, through listening to the melody of creation,

If you are interested in growing in Torah - from Tanach to Talmud, from Halacha to Emunah, from Chassidut to Philosophy,

If you aspire to learn Torah as its been learned for centuries while engaging with the questions of today,

If you intend to be a contributing voice to the debates of the Beit Midrash,

If your soul connects to G-d through Tefillah, through niggunim, through creativity,

If you are looking to immerse yourself in an Israeli environment,

If you are looking for an intellectual spiritual Israeli Yeshiva,

Come learn at Yeshivat Otniel



 Yeshivat Otniel
WebSite



 Torah from
Yeshivat Otniel
WhatsApp Group

To learn more about the Yeshiva or discuss if Otniel may be the right next Beit Midrash for you, please contact Rav Alex Haffetz at:

RavAlexOtniel@gmail.com