

PHILADELPHIA

Philadelphia Community Kollel Hosts Elevate II

On *Shabbos Parashas Behar-Bechukosai*, the Philadelphia Kollel hosted their annual Albert and Freda Kraftsow Shabbos of Inspiration — Elevate II. The Shabbos featured guest speakers Rabbi Daniel Glatstein, Rav of Kehillas Maggid Haraia in Cedarhurst; Rabbi Shay Tahan, *Rosh Kollel* of Kollel Shaarei Ezra and *Rosh Beit Horaha*; and Rabbi and Mrs. Chaim and Chana Biberfeld, *mechanchim* in Yeshiva of Greater Washington.

“People were really elevated,” remarked Rabbi Yoel Zeffren, Associate *Rosh Kollel*. “It was a celebration of Torah learning in preparation for Shavuos. *Baruch Hashem*, the speakers were all very effective and well-received, and helped us meet our goal of raising our appreciation for *limud haTorah* and the privilege of receiving the Torah.”

The Shabbos of Inspiration consisted of a packed schedule, with 20 different events geared to a wide range of demographics within the Philadelphia community, including *baalei battim*, young professionals, *kollel yungeleit*, women, boys, girls, etc.

“That fact that a lot of thought went into customizing the sessions added a lot of value to the programming,” commented Rabbi Zeffren. “The community really responded. Furthermore, one of the big elements was that people wanted to resume public and social interactions after 14 months of isolation. The bulk of the community is now vaccinated, so this was one of the first opportunities we had for people to get together and interact without fear.”

Programming began with a short *seider*, followed by introductory remarks from Rabbi Glatstein and a beautiful *Kabbalas Shabbos*. A well attended *Leil Shabbos seudah* was held in a large tent, with an address from Rabbi Glatstein on “The World of Torah Judaism: A Global Tour: Sephardim, Ashkenazim, and Everyone in Between.” Rabbi Glatstein warmly shared anecdotes from his travels around

the world, guiding tours in the ancient Jewish communities of Europe and the Middle East.

Other highlights of the weekend included a *drashah* prior to *Mussaf* from Rabbi Glatstein on “Countdown to Shavuos: Make the Next Eight Days Count”; a *dvar Torah* during a *kiddush* from Rabbi Chaim Biberfeld on “What Is Man’s True Value?”; and a workshop for girls in grades five through eight, with Mrs. Chana Biberfeld, in which she led a discussion on “Am I Important? Find the Answer in *Sefiras HaOmer* and *Megillas Rus*.”

After *davening*, the several Sephardi members of the community had the opportunity to enjoy a *seudah* together with Rabbi Tahan.

On Shabbos afternoon, there was a keynote address for women on “Who Holds the Keys to the Universe?” by Rabbi Glatstein; a Shabbos afternoon *shiur* for men from Rabbi Tahan on “A Timeline for *Mattan Torah*”; a *seudah shelishis* for young professionals with Rabbi Glatstein on “Three Things that Prevent You From Enjoying Your Learning”; and a Motzoei Shabbos *kumzitz* for men, at which Rabbi Glatstein shared spell-binding stories from the fascinating life of his grandfather, Rabbi Mordechai Glatstein, *zt”l*, a Holocaust survivor who was recently *niftar* at the age of 105.

On Sunday morning, Rabbi Tahan gave a *halachah shiur* on “Online Commerce on Shabbos and Yom Tov,” and Mrs. Biberfeld led a *chinuch* forum for *mechanchos* on “*K’ish Echad B’lev Echad*: Creating a Learning Community.” Later in the morning, Rabbi Chaim Biberfeld led a *chinuch* forum for fathers on “Five *Chinuch* Essentials.”

On Sunday afternoon, Rabbi Glatstein led a visit to the *kever* of Rabbi Isaac Leiser, one of the early Rabbanim in the United States, who was fiercely opposed to unauthentic Judaism, and fought for the continuance of *shemiras Torah u’mitzvos*. He is buried in one of the three early Mikveh Israel cemeteries in Philadelphia.

The culmination of the weekend was a keynote address, the



Rabbi Shay Tahan delivering a *shiur* on Sunday morning for the Shabbos of Inspiration at the Philadelphia Community Kollel.



Rabbi Daniel Glatstein delivering opening words prior to the Shabbos of Inspiration at the Philadelphia Community Kollel.



At the Motzoei Shabbos bonfire and *kumzitz* of the Shabbos of Inspiration at the Philadelphia Community Kollel.

David E. Epstein, *z”l*, Memorial Lecture, in which Rabbi Glatstein spoke on “The Mystery and Majesty of *Chag HaShavuos*,” highlighting the sweetness of Torah and the privilege to be able to learn Torah,

and describing how Torah transforms a person.

The address capped off a most elevating Shabbos for the entire community, which was an exciting *his’chadshus* and inspiration in anticipation of *Mattan Torah*.