



THE ALUMNI PERSPECTIVE

by Daniel Robinson



In the past few weeks I have not done anything that special. I have simply been working on maintaining the progress I achieved at Orayta. As many of you may be aware, that is no easy task. I will admit that I did go through a difficult phase, during which I was slack in certain areas. But I realized this issue, and worked on it. I began to push myself a little bit more in *davening*, and whenever possible, to try to get into a *Torah* discussion.

There were two major occurrences that put things into perspective, which gave me hope to build my strength in the future. The first instance was at my College orientation where I was the token Jew. I had to deal with the fact that when they offered me to sign up for kosher meals, they did not have a clue what it meant for food to be kosher, or what it meant for it to be sufficient on a nutrition level. In other words my first lunch was a packet of tuna. This was eventually corrected when I talked to someone, and managed to get the rest of my meals to contain tuna, *and* fruit! (Yum) This was my meal for two days. But really, the biggest thing was the example I needed to set, and the questions I needed to answer. I felt prepared for this, and I feel I did a pretty good job. Additionally, I felt that as part of my example, I needed to make sure that I said all the prayers I am supposed to say. I feel this orientation gave me a chance to grow and improve my discipline.

The other big occurrence was last night, when I learned about the application downloads for the iPod touch that I had for several weeks already. One of the applications that I immediately downloaded was all of *Tanach* with an English translation. This five dollar purchase allows me to walk around anywhere with the *Torah* in the palm of my hand. I also downloaded a Hebrew calendar and a *siddur*. Such options have given me more hope for the future; that I can find ways to push myself towards growth, and to make a difference - especially when I will be one of only a few observant Jews on campus. I feel (not that I felt otherwise before), that I *can* make a difference. I have simply been reassured that I can handle the task before me.