



## A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

by Ilan Cohn



As *Zman Kayitz* comes to a close, we look at everything and everyone in wonder. Things are different, yet strangely the same; mind-boggling, yet stunningly clear; confusing, yet incredibly uplifting. We take a look back and figure out how this has all happened. It's like looking at pictures of the same child at eight and at eighteen. He is the same person, but strikingly different.

On the first day of *Yeshiva* we were high school graduates, confused and curious about our place in the world. Since then, we have not only grown in our learning and our textual skills, but as people, we have matured into ever-growing Jews. We have acquired a new perspective on life; and the ability to relate to each other, those different than us, ourselves, and *Hashem*. The average Jew, secular or religious (whatever that means), is no longer just a faceless person walking down the street, but a divine manifestation of *Hashem* in this world, with his own unique perspective and ability to give to this world. *Mitzvot* are no longer a burden put on our lives, but an opportunity to connect to a higher purpose and happiness. Our *beit midrash* is no longer a half-renovated room with no windows, light fixtures, or books; but a warm, fertile environment for our development as adults and as Jews.

As Rav Binny is wont to say, "It's no big deal to be spiritual in *Yeshiva* in the Old City of Jerusalem, you can't help it." There is always a possibility that any growth attained this year could dissipate and slip away, and it's our job to take what has been offered us this year, nurture it, and continue with our growth once we are outside of the *Yeshiva* environment. On the other hand, it would be easy to decide to completely alter ourselves, disconnect from our lives before *Yeshiva*, and cut off our ties with the world we used to be a part of. The true acid test of how much we have taken from this year will be how much of our growth we take back with us to our homes, our universities, and our relationships. To take our growth, both spiritual and personal, out of the greenhouse of *Torah*, back into our lives outside of *Yeshiva*, now that would be an accomplishment. Good luck to us all!

---

*Ilan attended High School at the Ida Crown Jewish Academy in Chicago. He was the Captain of the Wrestling Team and the Editor in Chief of the High School Yearbook. Ilan is also a member of the National Honor Society. Following Orayta, he will be studying in the Honors Engineering Program in the University of Illinois at Urbana*

*Champaign.*

*His favourite part of Orayta is: "How no question is out of bounds. The Rebbeim seek to answer all of our questions and don't try to skirt around any issues. Also, the amount of serious study devoted to a number of Torah subjects is phenomenal. Its great how everyone is accepted no matter of their background or views. We all try to grow together."*