

## Bnos Agudath Israel Packages Purim Cheer

BY MRS. CHANI KURTZ

Purim in a nursing home can be a lonely experience indeed. In an effort to alleviate some of that loneliness and encourage our girls to recognize that they can make a difference, Bnos Agudath Israel of America is conducting its annual *mishloach manos* campaign. In a beautiful display of *achdus* and *chessed*, high school girls from fifteen Bais Yaakov high schools in Brooklyn, Queens and Far Rockaway spent Sunday afternoon, March 2 assembling

*mishloach manos* packages with sugar-free *hamantashen* and chocolates — and having a great time in the process. The packages will be distributed in twenty nursing homes, letting the residents know that Purim is on its way and allowing a bit of Purim cheer to enhance their days.

Kudos to the Agudist Benevolent Society, which sponsored the program, and to the participating schools.

“Fun-filled activities in a Torah environment — that’s always been the hallmark of

Bnos,” says Mrs. Chana Baila Hass, national director of Bnos Agudath Israel. “With so many different schools participating, the event was fun for the girls, proof that *chessed* and good times go together, and proof that even a high school girl can really help others. And to the seniors, that bit of caring makes all the difference.”

Bnos Bikur Cholim is the *chessed* arm of Bnos Agudath Israel. High school girls make regular visits to seniors in nursing homes and to the homebound.

## Yeshivas Mordechai Hatzaddik’s ‘Purim Formula’



BY ESTHER PERKAL

This Purim, join 60,000 boys as they unite for one glorious hour of *limud haTorah* at Yeshivas Mordechai Hatzaddik.

Since the times of the *Megillah*, when “the King stretched out His golden scepter [to Queen Esther] and asked, ‘What is your request? And it shall be granted,’” Purim has been marked as the most auspicious day in the year, when the gates of Heaven open wide to admit the *tefillos* of *Klal Yisrael* and *yeshuos* are rained down upon them.

When Haman’s evil plot to destroy the Jews was publicized throughout the land, Mordechai Hatzaddik promptly assembled a mighty army to combat the enemy. Not an army of formidable warriors or military heroes, but *Tziv’os Hashem* — a corps of young, innocent children. Though the dreadful verdict had already been signed and sealed, Mordechai knew that, if anything, *tefillos* and Torah of pure *Yiddishe kinder-*

*lach* possessed the force to override it.

In contrast to the appalling *yeridas hadoros* manifest in each generation, the Chofetz Chaim asserted, “There is only one thing that is unspoiled by *yeridas hadoros*, and that is the power of *tinokos shel beis rabban*,” whose merits of Torah and *tefillos*, especially when unified, sustain our world.

*Klal Yisrael* has a special formula: three golden keys with power to unleash a bounty of salvation in the world: Purim, *tinokos shel beis rabban*, and *achdus*. Multiply that by 60,000!

This Purim, the three keys are in your hands. All you have to do is turn the keys to unlock the gates of *Shamayim*. Don’t let the day pass you by. Harness the combined forces of Purim and *achdus* of 60,000 *tinokos shel beis rabban* to plead your case before the *Kisei Hakavod*.

For more information and to sponsor a branch of Yeshivas Mordechai Hatzaddik call: 718-301-9795, or email: [ymh@avotubanim.com](mailto:ymh@avotubanim.com).

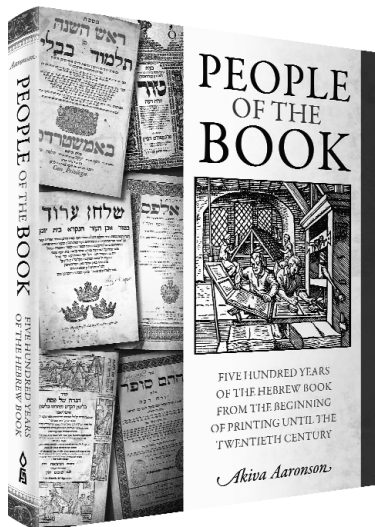
## Book Review

REVIEWED BY RABBI BEREL WEIN

*People of the Book* is the name of a beautifully illustrated and well-researched volume authored by Rabbi Akiva Aaronson and published and distributed by Feldheim Publishers.

From the original invention of the wheel, until the current world of personal computers and smartphones, the invention and development of the printing press remains one of the signal events of human creativity. The printing press changed the progress of human civilization, politics and thought as did no other technical creation until our time. The printing press allowed universal education, tolerance of different thoughts and programs, and for the dissemination of knowledge to the masses. No longer would knowledge and literacy remain the exclusive province of the elite. The printing press liberated the masses and provided many with the necessary impetus to pursue the goal of a literate, intelligent, and knowledgeable society. Its contribution to general world civilization cannot be overrated and its enormous influence has not waned in the more than five-and-a-half centuries since Gutenberg created the first primitive but practical printing press.

If all this is true regarding the general world, it is doubly true regarding the Jewish world. Perhaps no segment of humanity has exploited the printing press as enthusiastically and positively as has Jewish society, and especially Jewish Torah scholarship. Within a centu-



### *People of the Book*

By Akiva Aaronson

ry of printing’s invention there was veritably an explosion of great works in Torah, Jewish philosophy and halachic writings. The printing press made great works of Torah accessible to Jews wherever they lived and, to a great extent, no matter what station in life they occupied. It was also seen as a lucrative business and the history of both Jewish and non-Jewish printers obtaining exclusive rights for printing Torah works is a long and, sometimes, not too pleasant story.

Much of the format of the basic books of Judaism as they now appear to us in print follows exactly the original format set down by the early printers of Jewish and Torah works. The printers were the ones who originated what the pages of the Talmud should look like and to a certain extent even decided which commentaries would be included on that page or in the back of the volume. Since the printers were human, copyist errors naturally crept into the volumes. It has been an unending task of Jewish scholarship

throughout the ages to try to eliminate, as much as is humanly possible, these errors in the printing process, and this effort to arrive at a correct text continues until this very day. Much creativity, aesthetic feeling and varied font design highlighted the history of Jewish printing. The Jewish printer saw himself as part of the eternal chain of Jewish scholarship, and many times was himself a scholar of note as well as an artisan of talent.

The above history is detailed for us in this wonderful *sefer* entitled *People of the Book*. It is a fascinating read, and even though it is certainly accurate and not a piece of fiction, it nevertheless reads almost as being a fairy tale. The author has faithfully rendered for the reader the story of Jewish printers and Jewish printing. Upon completion, the reader will be in awe of what has transpired and will now have a deep realization of how this invented human technology has changed irrevocably the Jewish world for all time.

The illustrations in the book are magnificent and show the depth of research that the author devoted in constructing this volume. The book is large in size as befits its subject matter and yet friendly to the touch, and enormously pleasing to the eye. I believe that every Jewish home should contain this book in its library or on its coffee table and that it should be read and reread. It is a testimony to the eternity of Torah and to the genius of the Jewish people in encouraging and spreading the word of G-d among the people of Israel and across the world in general.