

Some Friendly Advice _

Fe
(home)

(A Rosh Hashanah Message)

On behalf of the faculties and administration, I am delighted to welcome you all--old students and new ones--to our undergraduate campuses. *Berukhim ha-ba'im!*

Your main function here is to grow--intellectually, Jewishly, academically, culturally. The program of Torah Umadda is a most demanding one, especially because it insists upon the integrity of each of the two poles and expects that you will commit your every effort to excelling in your studies. If you are merely smart, you will figure out all kinds of ways, legal or devious, to get out as soon as you can. But if you are wise, you will take full advantage of the remarkable resources of both Torah and Madda that you will find here at Yeshiva. There is no other place where you can have available for you such an array of distinguished *talmidei chakhamim* for your Jewish studies, and outstanding academic faculty for your college studies. Exploit this golden opportunity; do not neglect it!

But there is yet one other precious opportunity you have here for the next few years, and that is--the friends you will make, the networking of like-minded young Jews and Jewesses who are resolved to exploit the fantastic intellectual assets of Yeshiva and are determined to rebuild and enhance the Jewish world beyond the one they find before them now. Nourish these friendships well. In years to come you will reap the benefits of this kind of social and intellectual-ideological companionship.

Immediately before sounding the shofar, we recite the words of *Tehillim* (Ps.47:6)--*Alah Elokim bi'teruah*, which loosely translated means that God, as it were, is exalted at the sound of the *teruah* or straight blast of the shofar. Hasidim have an interesting interpretation of that verse. They say that *teruah* is derived from the word *reia*--both words from the root of *resh* and *ayin*--which means friend or friendship. (I have seen this in the name of R. Shelomo Leib of Lenchno and, a bit earlier, R. Shneur Zalman of Liady.) The love and loyalty amongst friends is important to the Almighty, and He is exalted when those who serve Him do so in fellowship and mutual love and esteem.

I hope that you will succeed not only in your studies but also in finding and holding on to these deep and mutually fruitful friendships, and that the spirit of camaraderie will indeed assist you in growing from *ve'ahavta le'reiakha kamokha* to *ve'ahavta et Hashem Elokekha*.

May you be inscribed *le'shanah tovah u-shenat chayyim ve'shalom*.

Norman Lamm