

April 17, 1971

Rabbi Norman Lamm
The Jewish Center
131 West 86th Street
New York, New York

Dear Rabbi Lamm,

Gesher's Seminar #2 ended last night and was, believe it or not, even more successful than #1. Despite the worst weather all winter, and the most rainy Pesach on record (it rained all or parts of every day, temperatures dropped into the 30's) Gesher pulled off another one. The truth is that due to the cold I was unable to be at Kfar Ezion most of the time (couldn't possibly expose the children to it) but from what I saw and heard it was a gem.

First let me provide you with some of the essential data and then I can relate a few 'human interest' stories which capture the essence of the experience.

There were 44 participants (of the 48 who registered - which astounded us, since flood warnings went out that morning on the radio, for the Kfar Ezion area), 6 madrichim (of whom four were from the Bet Sefer Sadeh, including Chanan, and two whom we brought ourselves) and Yakov Boyar supervising and organizing. The seminar began on Tuesday Chol Hamoed Pesach, and lasted five days, till Motzai Shabbat. The students were representatives of 12 schools from the Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Beersheba areas.

Human Interest:

1. On Wednesday I arrived at Kfar Ezion at 1:00 p.m. and had to wait an hour until the groups returned from their tour - to keep me company I had Rivie, a girl from Kfar Saba who directed our Yom Iyun there (Chaim must have discussed it with you). We took a stroll and in talking it became obvious that she came to the seminar specifically to "find" Judaism. She was only sorry that she could stay but one day - her father was in reserves and she hesitated to leave her mother alone for the last days of Pesach. When I asked how her parents were reacting to her new interest in "dat" she replied that her father told her, "I understand why I left dat and I also understand why you are returning to it." She called her mother on Thursday and asked to stay until Motzai Shabbat - and did.

2. Motzai Shabbat after Maariv, with the massait waiting to return the students to their homes, she asked Yakov to step outside for a moment. She said she had to tell him something...and burst into tears...

3. One of the boys told Yakov: "Do you remember that you explained, in Shma Kolenu one may add any prayer one privately felt? I added something before - that the massait should break down, that it should snow, anything, that we

should be stuck here for a few more days!"

4. One of the girls was leaving the shul with the Kfar Ezion siddur in her hand. Thinking that she was merely forgetful Yakov asked her to return it. "You don't understand," she said. "I've never held a siddur in all my life. This is the first. I've ever held in my hands - and used. I cannot give it up." She took it home with her.

We are proceeding with plans for five seminars at "Har Geshher" and one at Kfar Ezion during the summer months. It will cost us a good deal of money, but, either we do these things or forfeit our raison d'etre.



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Daniel Tropper
Geshher Foundation
Hassoreg 2
Jerusalem
Israel

Un aérogramme contenant un objet quelconque sera envoyé au tarif d'une lettre-avion.
An aérogramme containing any enclosure will be sent at airmail rate.

Best regards to the family.

Very truly yours,

Dan