

Agra D'Pirka *Siyum* on *Koheles* Celebrates 200 *Shiurim*

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Close to 100 people attended a morning *siyum* at Knesses Bais Avigdor in Flatbush on Rosh Chodesh Sivan. The *siyum* celebrated the learning of close to 200 *shiurim* on *Sefer Koheles* with extensive *Midrashim*. These *shiurim* were given by Harav Aharon Kahn, *Mara d'Asra* of Knesses Bais Avigdor and guiding force behind Agra D'Pirka. Up to 100 participants joined the *shiurim*, many of which were given virtually due to the pandemic.

Despite the challenges of learning by phone, the *Koheles shiur* was very well-attended, a testament to the dedication of the participants as well as the brilliant and masterful presentation of the *Maggid Shiur*.

The *siyum* marked the completion of the learning of *Sefer Koheles*. But it also heralded a new phase for Agra D'Pirka. The program, which was held virtually during the past 15 months, is once again opening up to in-person learning. In fact, many of those who were present at the *siyum* were attending a *simchah* for the very first time since March of last year. The sense of camaraderie at the event was clearly palpable.

The *siyum* also paid tribute to Rav Kahn who, together with the program's founder, Reb Ezra Klein, is the pioneer who established Agra D'Pirka and turned it into a major force of Torah learning in many communities. It was the Rav's determination and vision that helped transform the dream into reality.

Those who attended the *siyum* were gifted with a USB flash drive filled with the *Koheles shiurim*. They also received the second and third volumes of an Agra d'Pirka *sefer* on *Koheles*. A plaque was presented to Rav Kahn expressing gratitude for his outstanding leadership and his insightful *shiurim*.

"Every Agra d'Pirka *siyum* is a major milestone for the entire Agra d'Pirka family," said Reb Chaim Fuhrer, program coordinator. "It was a personal *simchah* and a privilege for me to participate in this particular *limud*, which showcased Rav Kahn's erudition and creativity."

"*Shehecheyanu v'kiyimanu v'higiyanu lazman hazeh*," said Reb Ezra, who pointed out that Rav Kahn had already given 758 *shiurim* on *Sefer Mishlei* and now has given almost 200 *shiurim* on *Koheles*.

"We're celebrating close to a thousand *shiurim*," said Reb Ezra. "Each one filled with the depth and profundity that Rav Kahn brings to every *shiur*."

The *siyum* was dedicated to the 45 *korbanos* who perished in Meron just a few short weeks ago. It was also dedicated as an *aliyah* to the *neshamah* of the grandfather-in-law of Reb Ezra, Reb Shlomo Yehuda ben Michoel, who was killed by the Nazis in Slovakia exactly 77 years ago on that very day. "This event," said Reb Ezra, "is a celebration of the destruction of evil as manifested by the Nazis."

A *shiur's* success depends not only on the *Maggid Shiur* but also on those who are participating. Their energy, their enthusiasm, and their diligence are what propels the *shiur* to greatness. "This has to be recognized," said Reb Ezra. "The kinetic energy, the electricity that goes back and forth between the Rav and the *olam*, is vital. When someone is *darshaning*, it gives a *chiyus* to the *Maggid Shiur*, it gives him a charge. You came through, up to 100 people every single day, listening with *hislahavus* and dedication."

Reb Ezra praised Rav Kahn for being an exemplary Rav and also a *Rebbi* "who teaches us the *derech hayashar*, how we should behave, *daven*, learn, talk to our family, and how to act like a normal person. Every Monday and Wednesday, the Rav uses the holy *sifrei Tanach* to put together this tapestry of the *derech hayashar*. It's an incredible time to have such a *shiur*."

Rav Kahn spoke about the *sefarim* that were published on the *Koheles shiurim*, calling them "an unbelievable *otzar*. You can turn to any page and you'll learn something and you'll appreciate it."

Rav Kahn said that the trillions of stars in the cosmos are all part of a vast universe that shows the greatness of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*. But each star is also a world unto itself. "Otherwise," he said, "it's just a collection."

Similarly, he pointed out that *Sefer Bamidbar* begins with a counting of *Klal Yisrael* and continues with the description of the *tafkidim* of the *Leviim*. "At the end of that," he notes, "there's the *parashah* of the *Nesiim*. Every single *korban* was identical in its material aspect. And yet, the reason each *Nasi's korban* is repeated is because each *Nasi* brought the *koach* of that *shevet* and infused it into the *korban*. So, although each *korban* is the same and each *shevet* has the same commitment to the *Ribbono shel Olam*, the Torah and the *kedushas haMishkan*, at the same time each *korban* is mentioned individually because each *shevet* is an individual."

Rav Kahn likened that to the Agra d'Pirka movement, which is growing by leaps and bounds in so many communities, yet is made up of individu-



Harav Aharon Kahn reciting the *Hadran*.



A partial view of the Agra D'Pirka *Koheles siyum*.

als, each of whom contributes to the program in his own way.

"This became a national phenomenon," said Rav Kahn. "Yet each and every person who joins is a world unto himself. We can talk about how many *shiurim* and how many *blatt* and how many pages. We've learned thousands and thousands of words of Torah. We were *mekayem* millions of *mitzvos*. And that's not a small thing."

He spoke passionately about the need for *ahavas Yisrael*. "The pandemic made a *churban* of *ahavas Yisrael*," he said. "It's so easy to find fault in others. But our *tafkid* is to take care of others. *Koheles* is all about 'how do I fix myself?' It's never about what's wrong with the other fellow. We should be busy fixing ourselves and improving ourselves and enlightening ourselves. We have to focus on repairing ourselves and understanding what our responsibilities are. The rest will happen automatically. The minute we

start resenting and accusing, it's the end. If we want to bring Moshiach, this is the secret."

While the *sefer* of *Koheles* was successfully completed, the learning of Torah continues nonstop. Rav Kahn's *shiur* began learning *Sefer Tehillim* immediately after Shavuot. The *shiur* focuses on *kapitlach* that are prominent in *tefillah* and begins with the learning of 10 *shiurim* just on *Kapitel Vav* (6).

"I'm looking forward to learning *Tehillim* with all of you," said Rav Kahn. "We'll be doing great things together."

Agra d'Pirka locations include Flatbush, Boro Park, Queens, Lakewood, Miami Beach, Williamsburg, Baltimore, Monsey, West Palm Beach, and most recently Boca Raton. For more information about Agra d'Pirka, please call (718) 490-9392 or visit agradpirka.org.