

Harav Moshe Hillel Hirsch, *Shlita*, Visits His Adopt-a-Kollel Corporate Partner



A partial view of the crowd during the visit of Harav Moshe Hillel Hirsch, *shlita*, *Rosh Yeshivah* of the Slabodka yeshivah in Bnei Brak, to Madison Title.



Rav Hirsch looking at a book containing a list of all the Adopt-a-Kollel partnerships.

MATSYAHU LAZAR

“When a *kollel* wife is able to give each child in her large family an eighth of a chicken *lichvod Shabbos* as opposed to a twelfth of a chicken; when a father is able to buy a suit for his son so that the son doesn’t have to wear pants that are too short; when a father can give his daughter the few *shekelim* she needs to enjoy the class trip with her friends – this elevates the entire family. This saves the children from becoming embittered and elevates the father’s learning. You can make the difference between a family feeling deprived and a family feeling happy! This is why I came here to thank you personally,” said Harav Moshe Hillel Hirsch, *shlita*, *Rosh Yeshivah*, Slabodka Yeshivah in Bnei Brak.

Those heartfelt words of Rav Hirsch were said at a remarkable *maamad* as he visited and addressed his Adopt-a-Kollel corporate partner, Madison Title, located in Lakewood, NJ.

Adopt-a-Kollel Corporate is the newest, fastest-growing division of the Adopt-a-Kollel family, where *frum*-owned businesses undertake to adopt their very own *kollel*. These partnerships elevate the mundane, uniting the ownership with the employees in a joint spiritual undertaking that has the most enriching, positive impact on the business.

One of the businesses that joined Adopt-a-Kollel Corporate soon after its inception was Madison Title of Lakewood. The partnership was unique in the sense that it started from the bottom up. The employees understood on their own that their company, one of the most successful in the industry, with a refined spiritual environment that is the conduit for so much *parnassah* in the community, was the perfect match, for even further elevation and enrichment in *ruchmityus*, through a partnership with a *kollel*.

Hashem shined His *brachah* on them and they merited to partner with one of the *Gedolei Hador*, Harav Moshe Hillel Hirsch and his *kollel*, the Slabodka Kollel.

The *Machlokes* Between Yitzchok and Rivka

As Rav Hirsch stepped out of the car and crossed the threshold of Madison, one could see a spring in his step, despite his grueling schedule that would be enough to exhaust even a person much younger. He was energized and it was clear that he had tremendous *nachas* and was moved as throngs of employees gathered in the large conference room and its environs to hear him speak.

Looking out at the many employees with the eyes of a loving grandfather, he embarked on what was akin to a *shiur klali*, a beautiful *hashkafah shiur* on the ideal of Adopt-a-Kollel and what the organization has accomplished and is accomplishing on behalf of *Klal Yisrael*.

He said, “Yitzchok Avinu and Rivka Imeinu had a *machlokes* regarding the role that their children would play in the future of *Klal Yisrael*. Yitzchok wanted Esav to be the supporter of Torah. Yitzchok Avinu maintained that Yaakov should be able to completely consecrate his life to *kedushah*, while Esav would take care of the monetary support that Yaakov would need.

“Rivka Imeinu, however, disagreed. She felt that Esav was not sufficiently worthy and therefore negated the partnership.”

“Why?” Rav Hillel asked, “What could be better than Yaakov sitting and learning completely involved in *kedushah* while being supported by Esav?”

The Importance of a Solid Beginning

Rav Hillel explained Rivka’s opposition to the arrangement by quoting a well-known *Tosafos* in *Maseches*

Chagigah. The *Gemara* there talks about Elisha ben Avuya, the *Tanna* who went on to become a *kofer* and was later called “Acher.” The *Tanna* Rabi Meir, his *talmid*, retained a relationship with Acher even after he left.

Acher once asked Rabi Meir to explain the *passuk* “*tov acharis davar m’reishiso* — the end of a matter is better than its beginning.” Rabi Meir explained that sometimes things that happen later in life are better than what happens earlier in life. *Talmidim* or children end up more successful at the end than they were at the beginning. Acher, however, disagreed with that *pshat*. He said that Rabi Akiva, Rabi Meir’s own *Rebbi*, explained that the end of something is dependent on its beginning.

Acher said, “I am the prime example of this. At my *bris*, my father, who was a wealthy man, invited the entire city to the celebration. They were eating, drinking and rejoicing. Meanwhile, Rabi Eliezer and Rabi Yehoshua were also there and they were sitting in a corner totally immersed in Torah. A fire came down from Heaven and surrounded them.

“My father became scared the fire would burn the house, but they calmed him saying, ‘This was a spiritual fire caused by the *kedushah* of learning Torah.’ My father exclaimed, ‘If that is the power of Torah I want this baby to be consecrated for learning Torah.’”

“The reason my father wanted me to learn, however, was not *l’shem Shamayim*. It was for the pomp, for the honor of learning Torah. Because his motive was not completely *l’shem Shamayim* I ended up becoming what I became. The end depends on how good the beginning was...”

Rav Hillel explained, “Rivka did not want Esav to support Torah because she understood that his motivation would never be pure. If the motivation wouldn’t be pure, then the *acharis*, the end result, would be lacking. It was Rivka’s opinion that

prevailed, because Torah needs to be supported with purity too!”

The Secret to Adopt-a-Kollel’s Success

With great emotion, Rav Hillel continued, “When I think of the unique idea of Adopt-a-Kollel, I think it has that special quality of *reishiso*, it is pure right from the beginning. It is a movement that was founded with a tremendous amount of *l’shem Shamayim*. No individual gets *kavod* from the organization. Also, it is comprised of the collective participation of many people, small contributions and large ones are equal. Everyone gives what they can give.

“That is why Adopt-a-Kollel is so successful! That is why the amount that the *kollelim* receive makes such a difference. The extra money that the *avreichim* receive from an Adopt-a-Kollel partnership often makes the difference between living in such poverty that one can’t live a normal life and one’s children, *chas v’shalom*, become resentful as a result, versus living in poverty but living a normal life and at least being able to afford absolute necessities.

“Certainly, when the father is able to afford these vital necessities, the quality of his Torah learning is exponentially greater because he has peace of mind and *simchah* that he wouldn’t have otherwise.”

“Adopt-a-Kollel has proven to be the ultimate embodiment of *‘tov acharis davar m’reishiso*,” Rav Hillel concluded.

He then gave a heartfelt *brachah* to Madison’s leadership and all of their employees, that in the *zechus* of their truly altruistic support of Torah, Hashem should bless them with *brachah*, *hatzlachah*, *nachas* and *parnassah*.

As each member of the company filed past the *Rosh Yeshivah*, the feeling of deep connection that characterizes an Adopt-a-Kollel partnership permeated the room.