

theMOMENT

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LIVING HIGHER

At a historic *maamad* in Eretz Yisrael, more than a thousand roshei kollel from across Eretz Yisrael gathered for a full day to hear about strengthening their partnerships with their partners in America, those shuls that have the merit of assisting with the financial responsibility of corresponding kollelim as part of the Adopt-a-Kollel initiative.

Adopt-a-Kollel Director Rabbi Yaakov Bernfeld emphasized the *siyata d'Shmaya* that is apparent in the work of Adopt-a-Kollel, and highlighted a story that occurred just a few weeks earlier, with a rosh kollel and a member of his partner shul.

There is a rosh kollel in Eretz Yisrael who has a close relationship with his partner kehillah in America. One of the members of the shul, a businessman, asked the rosh kollel if he could learn with him once a week. The rosh kollel agreed, and the two developed a *chavrusashaft* that was uncompromising in its schedule. Neither one would easily miss their weekly session regardless of any inconvenience.

One week, however, the rosh kollel told his *chavrusa*, “I’m sorry, but I won’t be able to learn this week.”

The businessman was surprised. “Why not?”

The rosh kollel explained that a *yungerman* in his kollel had a newborn child who was born with congenital leukemia — a rare condition of leukemia developed in utero. Surgery was needed urgently but because of the rarity of the situation, the hospital lacked critical medication needed to enable the infant to tolerate the treatment.

This medication was not available anywhere in Eretz Yisrael. It would have to be obtained in America.

The doctors informed the family that they would not schedule the surgery until they knew that there was access to the medicine.

The rosh kollel — who cherished each member of his kollel like his own child — went to the hospital and spoke to the doctor.

“Please schedule the surgery for next week,” he said. “I promise I will have the medication by then.”

The doctor was skeptical. “When you have the medication,



Mishpacha

we will schedule the surgery. We can’t schedule it based on a promise.”

But the rosh kollel insisted. “I am telling you I will have it. Please schedule the surgery.”

The doctor finally agreed.

The rosh kollel shared with his *chavrusa* that he had no idea where he would find the medication, but he was going to travel to America immediately to try to locate it.

“And so, I’m sorry,” he said. “We won’t be able to learn this week.”

The businessman stopped him.

“Do you know what my business is?”

The rosh kollel didn’t.

“I deal with medications,” the businessman said. “I specifically sell this very medication. I can have it to you within 36 hours.”

Sure enough, within about 36 hours, the medication was in Eretz Yisrael, and the rosh kollel brought it to the hospital.

“The doctors and nurses could not believe it,” the rosh kollel described. “There was literally shrieking in the ward.”

And the rosh kollel was able to continue his *chavrusashaft* that week, as his partner in Torah partnered with him in saving a life as well. “The partnership is so much more than a financial relationship,” said Rabbi Bernfeld. “It’s a *ruchniyusdik* partnership, one that elevates the people on both ends of this beautiful arrangement.”