

FOOD for THOUGHT

MASECHTA IN A NIGHT

BY R' YITZCHOK HISIGER

Leil shishi. It was Thursday night at Bais Medrash Mayan Hatorah of Lakewood. The *rosh yeshiva*, Rav Avrohom Mordechai Newman, asked his *bochurim* to pledge *chazarah* of *dafim* of *Gemara* over *Shabbos*.

"One *blatt* four times," said one *bochur*.

"Three *blatt*," said another.

Three and four *dafim* were the average pledges.

Then a voice called out, "*Maseches Sukkah*."

As others looked on in surprise, another *bochur* also committed to *chazer* the entire *Maseches Sukkah* over *Shabbos*.

And then a third *bochur* joined the first two, committing as well to complete the *masechta*.

Rav Newman was skeptical. Was it actually possible for these *bochurim* to learn 55 *blatt* – from *daf bais* to *daf mem vov* – in one day, especially over a short *Shabbos*?

Avrumi Wadler, Yehoshua Roth and Mordechai Sugarman ate a hurried *seudah* in *yeshiva* and were in the *bais medrash* by 6 p.m. Friday evening. They covered the clock with a *tallis*, as they were going to be *lemaalah min hazeman*. They started on *daf bais*, taking turns saying the *Gemara* without uttering a word

of *sichas chullin*, until they finished the *masechta* at 3 a.m. Avrumi and Mordechai went to sleep, but Yehoshua felt that he didn't know the fifth *perek* so well, so he continued learning for another three hours, until 6 p.m.

Two *bochurim* put in 9 hours and another 12 hours of *limud haTorah b'retzifus*.

So could it be done?

These three showed that, indeed, it could.



(L-R) Yehoshua Roth, Mordechai Sugarman and Avrumi Wadler.