

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts ת"ש

March 27 - 28, 2020 - 3 Nissan 5780 - Parshas Vayikra
Light Candles by 7:09 - Havdalah 8:09

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week by Rosalyn Bramson on the 4th Yahrzeit of Arnold Bramson, Z"l, Alexander Ziskind ben Yehuda Leib HaLevi.

Mazal Tov

- **Rebecca & Elias-Bachrach** on the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Aliza, and on her completing Mishnah Seder Moed. We will, B'ezrat Hashem, be able to celebrate these accomplishments soon.
- **Hedy Peyser** on the engagement of her granddaughter, Ariana Brody, to Jonathan Silverman, son of Adrian & Lenny Silverman. Ariana's parents are Shoshana Peyser-Brody & Robert Brody.

COVID-19 Updates

Note the following temporary changes to YISE events. Additional information will be sent by email and posted on www.yise.org as the situation evolves.

- All public activities at YISE are cancelled, including Minyanim, Youth Groups, Shiurim and special events.
- A number of YISE and community Shiurim are taking place at their usual times via teleconference or an online system such as Zoom.
- Additional teleconference and online Shiurim have been added to help people connect to each other during this time.
- Sale of Chometz will be handled online and by phone. Details will be sent via email and posted on www.yise.org
- The Shul office is still open, but hours may vary.
- Please continue to be vigilant regarding matters of personal hygiene as previously advised. If you are unwell, please do not enter the Shul or other public places. We urge you to adhere to all medical advice you may receive regarding self-quarantine.

Let us Daven to Hashem to keep us all in good health and to return our lives to normal as soon as possible. In protecting each other as we navigate this unfolding situation, may we grow stronger as individuals and as a community.

Shabbos Schedule

Note that Davening times are listed for reference so that people may Daven at the same time as others. There are no Minyanim at YISE at this time.

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 7:09, and not before Plag, 6:09
- Mincha: Ashkenazi: 7:10 Sephardi: 7:00 Nusach Sefard: 7:00
If you Daven Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv prior to Shkia (7:27 PM), it is preferable to Daven Mincha prior to Plag (6:09 PM).

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: Ashkenazi: 7:00, 8:00, 8:45, 9:15 Youth: 9:15
 Sephardi: 7:45 Nusach Sefard: 7:00
- Mincha:
 Ashkenazi: 2:30, 5:00, 7:05 Sephardi: 6:50 Nusach Sefard: 7:05
- Shabbos ends: 8:09

Weekday Shiurim

Options for remote learning are listed below. For the latest list, go to <https://wp.yise.org/remote-learning-schedule/>

- **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), Sundays at 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**.
- **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Gemara Shiur for Men, Tuesdays and Fridays, 6:00 AM, **Zoom A**.
- **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Nach Shiur, Wednesdays at 11:00 AM, **Zoom A**.
- **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Chumash Shiur for Women, Wednesdays at 8:00 PM, **Zoom A**.
- **Rabbi Silver's** Parsha Shiur for men & women, a mix of Halacha and Aggada. Tuesdays at 7:30 PM. For more details, contact rsilver@yise.org **conference call A**.
- **Rabbi Silver's** Community Tehillim and Emunah Shiur, Thursdays at 9:00 PM, **Zoom C**.
- **GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch and Learn for Men** - Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM
 - Unraveling the Navi with Rabbi Hillel Shaps, **Zoom D**.
- **GWCK presents CLAS (Community Learning at Shomrai)** - 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM. For more info. contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps, hshaps@gwckollel.org 347-869-9361.
 - For Men & Women - **Zoom E**:
 - Mondays: Rabbi E. Gayer - A to Z of Jewish Living
 - Tuesdays: Rabbi Winter - Torah Topics
 - Wednesdays: Rabbi Grossman - Reading Responsa
 - Thursdays: Rabbi Grossman - Parshas Hashavua
 - For Women - **Zoom F**:
 - Mondays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Tehillim: An in-depth analysis
 - Tuesdays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Bereishis in-Depth
- **Semichat Chaver Program**, Tuesdays at 9:00 PM with Rabbi Silver in the Large Social Hall. For more information, please contact Rabbi Binyamin Silver: rsilver@yise.org or Rabbi Hillel Shaps: hshaps@gwckollel.org - **Zoom B**.
- **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiur on Daily Halachos for men & women, Tuesdays 9:15 AM, **conference call B**.

Connection Details:

For Zoom, go to <https://zoom.us/join/> and enter the meeting ID, or call in using the listed number:

- Zoom A: ID: 416 963 9000, phone 301-715-8592
- Zoom B: ID: 226 175 681, phone 929-205-6099, password 044308
- Zoom C: ID: 230 274 007, phone 929-205-6099, password 079192
- Zoom D: ID: 349 754 2180, phone 301-715-8592
- Zoom E: ID: 746 455 2195, phone 301-715-8592
- Zoom F: ID: 601 853 4021, phone 301-715-8592
- Conference call A: Dial in: 480-660-5302 PIN: 565-527
- Conference call B: Dial in: 717-275-8940 PIN: 345-0663

YISE Programs and Listings

We welcome new members who were voted in at the last Board meeting: Esti & Avi Furman, Emma & Aaron Lash, Yoni Levine and Tali & Aryeh Lichtman.

YISE Youth Matzah Baking with Morah Suri - Sunday, March 29, 11:00 AM, **Zoom A** listed above. *See flyer for details.*

Pre-Pesach Class with Rabbi Rosenbaum - Sunday, March 29, 8:00 PM, **Zoom A** listed above.

Conversations in Coping - Join 3 of our esteemed local therapists for practical skills on maintaining sanity during coronavirus, online, **Zoom A** listed above. Monday, March 30, 9:00 PM, Wednesday, April 1, 9:00 PM and Monday, April 13, 8:00 PM. *See flyer for details.*

Camp Shomrai 2020 is open for registration! Programs for campers entering 2-year-old Preschool through 9th grade. Camp Dates: Monday, June 29 - Thursday, August 13. Register online at <https://campshomrai.campapplications.com> For more information contact Sarah Dollman at camp@yise.org

YISE Programs and Listings

Shomrai Preschool 2020-2021 - Online registration is now open for children ages 2 to 5 years old with customizable extended care options from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM. Visit preschool.yise.org or email preschool@yise.org for more information or to schedule a tour. Ask about our special, deeply reduced tuition for incoming 2-year-olds!

Helping Hands Across Kemp Mill is a part of YISE's Chessed Committee. The program helps members undergoing serious medical crises. We are always looking for volunteers to help. To be a part of this program by helping with meals, visitation, shopping, childcare, etc., contact: Melanie Karlin, 301-681-4740, mskarlin@gmail.com or Miriam Friedman, 301-754-1517, mfriedman2@yahoo.com

The Rachel Bassan Horwitz Fund is used for medical needs in our area, elsewhere in the US, and in Israel. In order to continue this much needed medical fund your financial help is needed! Tax deductible contributions may be made payable to: YISE Charity SPECIAL Fund, c/o Norma Burdett, 11720 Lovejoy St., Silver Spring, MD 20902. Earmark: Bassan Fund. For more info: Norma Burdett, 301-593-5964 or Pearl Bassan, 301-649-3137.

Shiurim from Rabbi Gedaliah Anemer, ZT"l, are available at <http://audio.yise.org>

Community Programs & Listings

Remote Night Shiurim from YGW - Sunday 8:30 PM - 9:15 PM, Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blate; Monday/Wednesday 9:00 PM - 9:30 PM, Rabbi Ahron Lopiansky; Tuesday/Thursday 9:00 PM - 9:30 PM, Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold. Register at https://zoom.us/webinar/register/1715843153121/WN_n6jNGqUpTpCN6ikCabUutA

Free Webinars on Federal Jobs - Presented by Kathryn Troutman of Resume Place:

- "Federal Resume Writing in the Outline Format" - Tuesday, March 31, register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/98818214941>
- "Writing Your Outline Format Federal Resume," with Kathryn Troutman, Friday, April 3, 12 Noon - 12:45 PM. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/100970591758>

Daf Yomi Shiur currently meets online via a WebEx video conference. There is still room for a few more participants. Anyone interested may email Judd Lifschitz at lifschitz@srlslaw.com to be added to the invite list. Sunday 7:00 AM, Monday - Thursday 9:00 PM, Friday 5:45 PM.

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, April 1, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM. See what Toastmasters is all about and find out how you can become a more confident communicator & leader. Contact Manasseh Katz at vpm@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info. or go to www.kempmilltoastmasters.com for the latest information including online meeting details.

Partners in Tefillah matches people with others in need of similar assistance from Hashem. The feedback we have received so far has been amazing. You, too, can Daven for someone else in the community and have them daven for you. May Hashem answer all your prayers. Please visit www.yadyehuda.org/partners-in-tefillah to learn more and to sign up.

Community Helping Community: Yad Yehuda's COVID-19 Crisis Relief - During this crisis, previously financially stable households in our community are already experiencing financial challenges. Yad Yehuda is receiving many more assistance requests than usual. With Pesach coming soon, we expect that to increase. Community financial donations are critical now. Please make an additional donation to Yad Yehuda today to help us address this unforeseen need at www.yadyehuda.org/donate A COVID-19 Telephone Assistance Hotline is now available at 301-494-1010, Sunday - Thursday 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM, Friday 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM. When you call, one of our dedicated Yad Yehuda volunteers will answer questions and help connect you with resources in the Jewish community and the area at large. If the volunteer is unable to answer your issue or question, they will, Y"Y, ensure that someone gets back to you in a timely manner. Our friendly volunteers are there to help and will do so with the utmost discretion and privacy. Please visit www.yadyehuda.org/covid19 for additional and updated information.

Capital Kosher Pantry: Annual Chometz-Be-Gone Drive - As you clean your home for Pesach, please donate unwanted Chometz to the Capital Kosher Pantry. Food should be shelf-stable, in sealed containers, well within the sell-by date and have kosher certification. Please deposit food in our collection bins located outside KMS, YISE and the Woodside Shul; in Shalom Kosher and Moti's Market; and outside our Pantry at 1910 University Blvd West. All bins are checked daily. Please do not bring any Chometz after April 7.

The Franco Foundation - Helping the community from within the community. The Foundation helps our community's needy all year long, and distributes more around Pesach to cover additional expenses. It is distributing assistance through Shalom scrip as well as financial assistance. If you know of a family or individual that requires assistance for Pesach or is in a financial bind, please contact the Foundation at its email address, below. Your suggestion will remain anonymous. Please send your generous tax-deductible donation to: The Franco Foundation/613 Bromley Street/Silver Spring, MD 20902, or through PayPal, at thefrancofoundation@gmail.com

Daily Halacha Program from Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold - Receive one every day in your inbox. Visit dvarhalacha.com and click "Sign Up."

Kemp Mill Village volunteers are now offering services to Village members, including rides for appointments, shopping, and visits to friends and family, help with household tasks, and prescription deliveries. Call the toll free number 1-833-KMV-20902 to request member services or to volunteer.

Silver Spring Gemachim - For a complete list: www.gemachexchange.com

The Week Ahead	Sunday March 29	Monday March 30	Tuesday March 31	Wednesday April 1	Thursday April 2	Friday April 3
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No Minyanim will take place at YISE next week. You are encouraged to Daven at home at your regular Minyan time. Mincha was scheduled for March 29 - April 2 at 7:15 PM (Ashkenazi)/7:10 PM (Sephardi). In addition to Shiurim listed above, conference calls are scheduled with Rabbi Rosenbaum for Tehillim and a 15-minute Shiur on the Parsha in the mornings (Sunday 9:00 AM, Monday through Friday 8:30 AM) and for Tehillim and a 15-minute Shiur on Hilchos Pesach in the evenings (Sunday through Thursday, 7:30 PM) using Zoom A listed above.

Halachic Times: Earliest Talis and Tefillin: 6:04 AM, Latest Krias Shma: 9:59 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:45 PM

Upcoming Events

Sunday, March 29	YISE Youth Matzah Baking, 11:00 AM
Sunday, March 29	Pre-Pesach Class with Rabbi Rosenbaum, 8:00 PM

Next Shabbos

April 3 - 4, 2020 - 10 Nissan 5780

Parshas Tzav/Shabbos HaGadol

Light Candles: Friday by 7:16 Havdalah: 8:16

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, April 1 at 12:00 Noon

Submit items for the Shabbos Shorts to: announce@yise.org

Office Phone: 301-593-4465 Office Fax: 301-593-2330

Eruv line: 301-593-5561 E-Mail: office@yise.org

Website: www.yise.org

Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Friday: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum Sammy Franco - President

Rabbi Binyamin Silver - Asst. Rabbi Simi Franco - Office Manager



WISE YOUTH Matzah Baking with Morah Suri

**WITH A DVAR TORAH FROM
RABBI ROSENBAUM**

**WHAT YOU WILL NEED:
MIXING BOWL, SPOON, FORK
1 1/2 CUPS FLOUR
2/3 CUP WATER
OVEN
PARENTAL SUPERVISION**

**SUNDAY 3/29 11AM
ZOOM ID: 416 963 9000**

CONVERSATIONS IN COPING: 3 SEPARATE SESSIONS

**JOIN 3 OF OUR ESTEEMED
LOCAL THERAPISTS
FOR PRACTICAL SKILLS
ON MAINTAINING SANITY
DURING CORONAVIRUS**



Young Israel Shomrai Emunah



MANAGING ANXIETY IN CHALLENGING TIMES
DR. RACHEL RAVIN, PH.D, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST
MONDAY 3/30 -- 9PM



**ANXIETY, SELF-CARE, AND USING COVID-19 TO ENHANCE OUR
RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS**
DR. EMILY FRIEDMAN, PSY.D, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST
WEDNESDAY 4/1 -- 9PM



**CORONA, CATASTROPHIZING, CAPPUCCINO, COPING AND
HAKADOSH BARUCH HU: SOME THOUGHTS FROM A PSYCHOLOGIST**
DR. HOWIE SCHULMAN, PH.D, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST
MONDAY 4/13 -- 8PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/4169639000>

Meeting ID: 416 963 9000

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,4169639000# US (New York)

No pin necessary

OPEN TO THE COMMUNITY

Please email questions in advance to: Esteesilver13@gmail.com

This week, we begin the book of the Torah devoted to the laws of *Korbanot* / sacrificial offerings. The *Gemara* (*Menachot* 110a) derives from verses such as, "This is the Torah of the *Olah* / burnt-offering" (*Vayikra* 6:2); "This is the Torah of the *Minchah* / meal-offering" (6:7); and similar verses, that: "If one studies the Torah section dealing with the *Korban Olah* or the *Korban Minchah* or another *Korban*, the Torah views it as if he brought that offering." [Until here from the *Gemara*]

R' Yitzchak Arama z"l (Spain; died 1494) explains: Of course, one must perform each *Mitzvah* even if he does not know its reason. In such a case, his intention should be to fulfill the will of G-d, and, in that merit, he will be among those who "enter the King's palace."

However, continues R' Arama, those who can delve into the reasons for the *Mitzvot* will derive an added benefit. For them, a *Mitzvah* will continue to serve its purpose even after active performance of the commandment has concluded. For example, he writes, the Torah commands us to help our enemies load their donkeys [or, in modern terms, to help an enemy load groceries into his car]. The reason for this *Mitzvah*, our Sages teach, is that such an act helps eliminate our feelings of hatred toward the beneficiary. In a literal sense, this *Mitzvah* can be performed only when the enemy's donkey needs loading. However, knowing the *Mitzvah's* message, *i.e.*, that eliminating hatred is something the Torah values, enables a person to work toward that goal in other ways as well.

- Continued in box inside -

Thirty Days Before Pesach

Rabbeinu Asher z"l (1250-1327; Germany and Spain; one of the three pillars of *Halachah* on whose works the *Shulchan Aruch* is based) writes: Trust in *Hashem* with all your heart and believe in His *Hashgachah Peratit* / Divine Providence [explained *below*]. In this way, you will fulfill in your heart the complete *Yichud* / Oneness [also explained *below*], *i.e.*, when you believe that His Eyes roam the entire world, watching all the ways of man and examining man's heart and man's thoughts. On the other hand, one who does not believe (*Shmot* 20:2), "He is the One who has taken you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery," also does not believe (*ibid.*), "I am Hashem, your *Elokim*." That person has not made a complete *Yichud*. This is the uniqueness of *Yisrael* over all other nations, and this is the foundation of the entire Torah. (Orchot Chaim No. 26)

R' David Cohen *shlita* (*Rosh Yeshiva* of the Chevron Yeshiva in Yerushalayim) explains: Rabbeinu Asher is teaching that the *Mitzvah* of believing in the *Yichud* / Oneness of *Hashem*, the *Mitzvah* found in the first verse of the *Aseret Ha'dibrot*, has two parts: believing in *Hashem's* existence and believing in His *Hashgachah Peratit* / Divine Providence. *Hashgachah Peratit* means that *Hashem's* Eyes roam the entire world, watching all the ways of man and examining man's heart and man's thoughts, and that He conducts the world in accordance with man's actions, giving each person positive or negative consequences as appropriate. [The latter follows logically from the fact that He is watching, since He must be doing so for a reason.] One's *Emunah* / faith is incomplete unless it includes both matters. If one believes that *Hashem* exists but does not believe in *Hashgachah Peratit*, his *Emunah* is incomplete. From where do we learn that *Hashem* watches man's actions and reacts accordingly? From the events of the Exodus. (*Mizmor Le'David* I p.153)

Hamaayan / The Torah Spring

10815 Meadowhill Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901 / 301-593-2272

Send e-mail to: TheTorahSpring@gmail.com

Back issues at: www.TheTorahSpring.org

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Sponsored by Nathan and Rikki Lewin in memory of her father,
Harav Elyahu Moshe ben Yitzchak Dov Gordon a"h

Rabbi and Mrs. Barry Greengart
on the *yahrzeit* of his mother, Yuta bat Yosef a"h

“If the sin that he committed becomes known to him, he shall bring as his offering a she-goat . . .

“If he shall bring a sheep as his offering for a sin-offering, he shall bring a female, unblemished.” (4:28, 32)

R' Yitzchak Menachem Weinberg *shlita* (Tolna Rebbe in Yerushalayim) writes: This is the only context in the Torah in which a goat is mentioned before a sheep. From this, we can learn a very profound lesson.

The *Gemara* (*Sotah* 32a) teaches: Why did our Sages establish the silent recitation of *Shemoneh Esrei*? In order not to embarrass sinners. [*Rashi z”l*: So no one will hear others confess their sins.] From where did the Sages learn to do this? From the fact that the Torah does not distinguish between the *Olah* / burnt-offering and *Chatat* / sin-offering. [*Rashi*: Both are slaughtered north of the altar in the *Bet Hamikdash*, such that an onlooker cannot tell whether any individual Jew is bringing an *Olah*, which is a voluntary offering, or a *Chatat*, which is a sin offering.]

The *Tolna Rebbe* explains: *Hashem* has compassion on sinners so that they need not be embarrassed. As noted, when a sinner comes to the *Bet Hamikdash*, bystanders cannot tell that he is bringing a *Chatat*. Sadly, he writes, people would talk if they knew. Aside from the embarrassment this would cause, it is likely that the person’s children would have trouble being accepted into schools and *Yeshivot* and, ultimately, would have difficulties with *Shidduchim*. [As should be clear, the *Tolna Rebbe* is bemoaning certain attitudes that are widespread today.] Therefore, the Torah has compassion and allows a sinner to bring a sheep as a *Chatat*, further allowing him to blend in with those bringing voluntary *Olot*.

On the other hand, continues the *Tolna Rebbe*, the Torah permits one to bring a goat (which cannot be brought as an *Olah*) as a *Chatat*. A penitent might want the embarrassment that would accompany bringing a goat, feeling that the humiliation will bring atonement for his sin. Indeed, the Torah mentions a goat-*Chatat* before a sheep-*Chatat* to emphasize the greater level of atonement that results from the former choice, precisely because the one who brings a goat accepts the accompanying humiliation.

The *Tolna Rebbe* adds: The *Midrash Tanna D’vei Eliyahu* (ch.18) teaches: Know that a lowly and humble spirit is more pleasing to G-d than all the *Korbanot* in the Torah, as it is written (*Tehilim* 51:19), “The sacrifices G-d desires are a broken spirit; a heart broken and humbled.” Thus, our Sages said: If one offers an *Olah*, he is rewarded for an *Olah*. If one offers a *Minchah*, he is rewarded for a *Minchah*. A *Shelamim* -- he is rewarded for a *Shelamim*. But, if one is humble, the Torah equates it with bringing all the sacrifices, for the verse does not say, “The sacrifice (singular) of G-d,” but rather, “The sacrifices . . .” [Until here from *Midrash Tanna D’vei Eliyahu*] (Chamin B’Motza’ei Shabbat: Vayikra 2)

“He called to Moshe, and Hashem spoke to him from the Ohel Mo’ed / Tent of Meeting, saying.” (1:1)

At the end of last week’s *Parashah*, we read (*Shmot* 40:35), “Moshe could not enter the *Ohel Mo’ed*, for the cloud rested upon it, and the glory of *Hashem* filled the *Mishkan*/ Tabernacle.”

R’ Shlomo Kluger z”l (1785-1869; rabbi of Brody, Galicia) asks: What was the purpose of placing the cloud over the *Mishkan* preventing Moshe from entering, only to then call Moshe into the cloud? If *Hashem* had not blocked entry into the *Mishkan* with a cloud, He would not have needed to invite Moshe inside!

R’ Kluger explains: *Hashem* did this because Moshe felt bad that he had not donated anything to the *Mishkan*. By blocking entry to the *Mishkan* and then allowing only Moshe inside, *Hashem* demonstrated how beloved Moshe was to Him. This explains, as well, why our verse notes that *Hashem* spoke to Moshe “from the *Ohel Mo’ed*.” It means that *Hashem* spoke to Moshe because of Moshe’s feelings about the *Ohel Mo’ed*.

(Chochmat Ha’Torah: Vayikra p.84)

“Speak to Bnei Yisrael and say to them, ‘When a person among you brings an offering to Hashem . . .’” (1:2)

Midrash Rabbah comments: “Thus it is written (*Yirmiyah* 31:19), ‘Ephraim, My most precious son . . . whenever I speak *Bo* / of him . . .”

What is this *Midrash* teaching? R’ Eliezer Dan Ralbag z”l (1832-1895; Yerushalayim) explains: The offering spoken of in our verse is a *Korban Olah* / burnt offering, which even a non-Jew may bring to the *Bet Hamikdash*. Why, then, does our verse say, “Speak to *Bnei Yisrael*” -- to the exclusion of gentiles?

The *Midrash* answers, explains R’ Ralbag: *Bnei Yisrael* are *Hashem*’s most precious son. Therefore, says *Hashem*, “Whenever I speak, *Bo*” -- I speak of him and to him, even though the *Halachah* in question is relevant to non-Jews as well. (Damesek Eliezer)

– Continued from front page –

In this sense, R’ Arama writes, the sacrificial service has not been lost to us. True, actual *Korbanot* are not being offered when we have no *Bet Hamikdash*. Nevertheless, King David writes (*Tehilim* 51:19), “The sacrifices G-d desires are a broken spirit; a heart broken and humbled.” When a person remembers the *Korbanot*, he can subdue himself before G-d in all areas, just as he would do when bringing a sacrificial offering. This is what the *Gemara* means when it says that learning about the *Korbanot* is like offering them -- both activities can have the same beneficial effect. (*Akeidat Yitzchak*: *Sha’ar* 51)

Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah
via the Internet

Sponsored by Dr. Israel and Rebecca Rivkin, Edison, NJ,
in memory of their mothers,
Rebbitzin Yehudis Bulka, a"th, and Ida Rivkin, a"th,
whose yahrzeits are 2 and 7 Nisan

Volume 26, Issue 23

Shabbat Parashat Vayikra

5780 - B"H

Covenant and Conversation: R. Jonathan Sacks

The Pursuit of Meaning - The American Declaration of Independence speaks of the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Recently, following the pioneering work of Martin Seligman, founder of Positive Psychology, there have been hundreds of books published on happiness. Yet there is something more fundamental still to the sense of a life well-lived, namely, meaning. The two seem similar. It's easy to suppose that people who find meaning are happy, and people who are happy have found meaning. But the two are not the same, nor do they always overlap.

Happiness is largely a matter of satisfying needs and wants. Meaning, by contrast, is about a sense of purpose in life, especially by making positive contributions to the lives of others. Happiness is largely about how you feel in the present. Meaning is about how you judge your life as a whole: past, present and future.

Happiness is associated with taking, meaning with giving. Individuals who suffer stress, worry or anxiety are not happy, but they may be living lives rich with meaning. Past misfortunes reduce present happiness, but people often connect such moments with the discovery of meaning. Furthermore, happiness is not unique to humans. Animals also experience contentment when their wants and needs are satisfied. But meaning is a distinctively human phenomenon. It has to do not with nature but with culture. It is not about what happens to us, but about how we interpret what happens to us. There can be happiness without meaning, and there can be meaning in the absence of happiness, even in the midst of darkness and pain.

In a fascinating article in *The Atlantic*, 'There's more to life than being happy', Emily Smith argued that the pursuit of happiness can result in a relatively shallow, self-absorbed, even selfish life. What makes the pursuit of meaning different is that it is about the search for something larger than the self.

No one did more to put the question of meaning into modern discourse than the late Viktor Frankl. In the three years he spent in Auschwitz, Frankl survived and helped others to survive by inspiring them to discover a purpose in life even in the midst of hell on earth. It was there that he formulated the ideas he later turned into a new type of psychotherapy based on "man's search for meaning". His book of that title, written in the course of nine days in 1946, has sold more than ten million copies throughout the world, and ranks as one of the most influential works of the twentieth century.

Frankl knew that in the camps, those who lost the will to live died. He tells of how he helped two individuals to find a reason to survive. One, a woman, had a child waiting for her in another country. Another had written the first volumes of a series of travel books, and there were others yet to write. Both therefore had a reason to live.

Frankl used to say that the way to find meaning was not to ask what we want from life. Instead we should ask what life wants from us. We are each, he said, unique: in our gifts, our abilities, our skills and talents, and in the circumstances of our life. For each of us, then, there is a task only we can do. This does not mean that we are better than others. But if we believe we are here for a reason, then there is a *tikkun*, a mending, only we can perform, a fragment of light only we can redeem, an act of kindness or

courage, generosity or hospitality, even a word of encouragement or a smile, only we can perform, because we are here, in this place, at this time, facing this person at this moment in their lives.

"Life is a task", he used to say, and added, "The religious man differs from the apparently irreligious man only by experiencing his existence not simply as a task, but as a mission." He or she is aware of being summoned, called, by a Source. "For thousands of years that source has been called God."

That is the significance of the word that gives our parsha, and the third book of the Torah, its name: Vayikra, "And He called." The precise meaning of this opening verse is difficult to understand. Literally translated it reads: "And He called to Moses, and God spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying ..." The first phrase seems to be redundant. If we are told that God spoke to Moses, why say in addition, "And He called"? Rashi explains as follows: And He called to Moses: Every [time God communicated with Moses, whether signalled by the expression] "And He spoke", or "and He said", or "and He commanded", it was always preceded by [God] calling [to Moses by name]. "Calling" is an expression of endearment. It is the expression employed by the ministering angels, as it says, "And one called to the other..."

Vayikra, Rashi is telling us, means to be called to a task in love. This is the source of one of the key ideas of Western thought, namely the concept of a vocation or a calling, that is, the choice of a career or way of life not just because you want to do it, or because it offers certain benefits, but because you feel summoned to it. You feel this is your meaning and mission in life. This is what you were placed on earth to do.

There are many such calls in Tanach. There was the call Abraham received, telling to leave his land and family. There was the call to Moses at the burning bush. There was the one experienced by Isaiah when he saw in a mystical vision God enthroned and surrounded by angels: Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

One of the most touching is the story of the young Samuel, dedicated by his mother Hannah to serve in the sanctuary at Shiloh where he acted as an assistant to Eli the priest. In bed at night he heard a voice calling his name. He assumed it was Eli. He ran to see what he wanted but Eli told him he had not called. This happened a second time and then a third, and by then Eli realised that it was God calling the child. He told Samuel that the next time the voice called his name, he should reply, 'Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening.' It did not occur to the child that it might be God summoning him to a mission, but it was. Thus began his career as a prophet, judge and anointer of Israel's first two kings, Saul and David.

When we see a wrong to be righted, a sickness to be healed, a need to be met, and we feel it speaking to us, that is when we come as close as we can in a post-prophetic age to hearing Vayikra, God's call. And why does the word appear here, at the beginning of the third and central book of the Torah? Because the book of Vayikra is about sacrifices, and a vocation is about sacrifices. We are willing to make sacrifices when we feel they are part of the task we are called on to do.

From the perspective of eternity we may sometimes be overwhelmed by a sense of our own insignificance. We are no more than a wave in the ocean, a grain of sand on the sea shore, a speck of dust on the surface of infinity. Yet we are here because God wanted us to be, because there is a task He wants us to perform. The search for meaning is the quest for this task.

Each of us is unique. Even genetically identical twins are different. There are things only we can do, we who are what we are, in this time, this place and these circumstances. For each of us God has a task: work to perform, a kindness to show, a gift to give, love to share, loneliness to ease, pain to heal, or broken lives to help mend. Discerning that task, hearing Vayikra, God's call, is one of the great spiritual challenges for each of us.

How do we know what it is? Some years ago, in *To Heal a Fractured World*, I offered this as a guide, and it still seems to me to make sense: Where what we want to do meets what needs to be done, that is where God wants us to be.

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Rabbi Hershel Schachter

The Correct Behavior When Dealing with Danger

Many have the mistaken impression that the Jewish religion places much emphasis on death and respect for the dead; after all, we recite kaddish, yizkor, observe shiva, and yahrzeit, etc. This is a gross misunderstanding. The respect that we show for the dead is a carryover from the respect that we show for the living. The Gemorah tells us that whenever there is a conflict between *kovod ha'chayim* and *kovod ha'meisim*, *kovod ha'chayim* takes precedence. When the *chevra kadisha* brings in the aron at a funeral, everyone stands up. People mistakenly think that we stand up out of respect for the niftar, but in many cases we never stood up for him when he was alive, so why should we stand up for him now that he passed away? The Bartenurah explains that we are not standing up out of respect for the niftar but rather out of respect for the members of the *chevra kadisha* who are presently involved in the fulfillment of a *mitzvah*. The respect for the living is based on the premise that all human beings were created *b'tzelem Elokim*. When the Torah requires us to demonstrate *kovod ha'meis*, it means that even after the person passed away and no longer has *tzelem Elokim*, i.e. a *neshama*, we still have to act respectfully towards the body because it used to have a *tzelem Elokim*.

Of the 613 *mitzvos*, one of the most important is the *mitzvah* of *v'chai bohem v'lo sh'yomus bohem*. Not only does the halacha require that if there is a *sofek sakanah* we must violate almost all of the *mitzvos* in the Torah to save a life, but we are also required to do so even if there is only a *s'fek s'feika*, a remote possibility. The Gemorah adds that even if the likelihood is that by violating *Shabbos* or whatever other *aveira* we most probably will not be saving anyone's life, we still do not abstain from the action due to that likelihood (*rove - majority*).

When Bnei Yisroel were traveling in the midbar for 40 years, the weather conditions were such that there was a slight *sakanah* in performing *bris milah*. Most

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of the sh'votim did not fulfill the mitzvah except for sheivet Levi. They had an Orthodox rabbi among them, i.e. Moshe Rabbeinu. Why didn't all the shevatim ask him what to about this sofek sakanah? If it is a real sofek sakanah he should not have permitted sheivet Levi to perform the mitzvah despite their pietistic protests, and if the sofek sakanah was so insignificant that it simply should have been dismissed, why didn't he insist that all the shevatim perform the mitzvah of milah?

The Gemorah tells us that the answer is to be found in Tehillim, "Shomer p'soyim Hashem." Whenever there is a slight sofek sakanah that is nowhere near fifty-fifty, the halacha declares that it depends on the attitude of the patient. If the patient whose life is at risk (or the parent of the patient who is responsible for his well-being) is personally not nervous about the danger, then the halacha does not consider it a sofek sakanah; we apply "Shomer p'soyim Hashem." But if the patient whose life is at risk is nervous and concerned about the sofek sakanah, then the halacha requires us to act based on, "V'chai bohem v'lo sh'yomus bohem", and the sofek sakanah takes precedence over almost all of the mitzvos of the Torah. Shevet Levi had bitachon, and therefore were not concerned, and therefore for their children it was not considered a sofek sakanah, but with respect to the other shevatim who were concerned it was in fact a sofek sakanah, so every shevet was acting k'din.

However, if one individual is not concerned, but the nature of the sakanah is such that everyone is interdependent and the individual who personally is not nervous may possibly spread a disease to others who are concerned about its spread, then the concept of Shomer p'soyim Hashem does not apply. The individual who is not concerned does not have the right to determine for the others who are concerned that there is no sakanah for them.

The Rakanti relates that one of Ba'alei Ha'tosfos was deathly sick before Yom Kippur and the doctors warned him that if he fasts he will certainly die but if he eats on Yom Kippur there is a slim chance that he may survive. He decided to fast, and of course he died. All of the Ba'alei Ha'tosfos were upset over his decision and felt that he went against the halacha.

If a terrorist threatens to kill me unless I violate one of the mitzvos of the Torah, the halacha usually is that pikuach nefesh takes precedence over most of the mitzvos in the Torah. What if an individual wants to put up a fight knowing that he may well lose his life but thinks that by being moser nefesh he will fulfill the mitzvah of kiddush Hashem? This matter was a famous dispute amongst the Rishonim. The Rambam's opinion is that one may not volunteer to give up his life al kiddush Hashem when not required by halacha because this is tantamount to suicide. Many other Rishonim disagreed with the Rambam. However, if there is no terrorist pressuring me to violate my religion, but there is merely a dangerous situation of sickness then all of the Ba'alei Ha'tosfos agreed with the Rambam that it would not constitute a midas chassidus to ignore the sakanah.

In determining what is a sakanah and what is not, the practice of the Tanoim always was to follow the doctors of their generation. Every so often the Rambam would take a stand on a medical issue against what it says in the Gemorah and the Chasam Sofer explains that the Rambam was a doctor and he did exactly as the Tanoim did, namely, to follow the doctors of his generation. The Shulchan Aruch also says explicitly that we follow the doctors of our generation even in contradiction to the medicine recommended in the Gemorah. We should certainly do the same as the Rambam and the Shulchan Aruch and follow the doctors of our generation in determining what is considered a sakanah and what is not considered a sakanah.

Some well-meaning individuals have blown out of halachic proportion the significance of tefillah b'tzibur and talmud Torah b'rabim and have opted to ignore the sofek sakanah presented by the corona virus when in conflict with these two most important mitzvos. We live in a generation where many b'nei Torah tend to exaggerate the significance of Torah and tefillah. Although their intention is certainly l'shaim Shomayim, we must all keep in mind that when exaggerating shailos, one may not rely on an exaggeration.

All exaggerations by definition are sheker - a misrepresentation of the truth of the Torah. Rav Chaim Volozhiner signs off quite a few of his teshuvos saying, "Keil Emes, Nosan lanu Toras Emes, u'bilti el ho'emes einenu - the true God gave us the true Torah, and we only look for the truth." Any exaggeration in the area of Torah and halacha is clearly a misrepresentation of our religion. The commentaries on Shulchan Aruch refer to the comments of the Maharshal in his sefer Yam Shel Shlomo (Bava Kamma 38a) that to misrepresent a law of the Torah constitutes an aveira related to avodah zarah and as such would be subject to the principle of yeihoreig v'al ya'avur.

With respect to a sofek sakanah the halacha clearly requires that we go extremely l'chumrah. Especially religious Jews, who know that they are charged with a mission in life, should certainly be extremely machmir on matters of sofek sakanah.

Although every word of a poem appears in the dictionary, the poet conveys an idea by putting the words in a certain order. So too, different people can have the same ideas and the same principles, but if you put them in a different arrangement you have changed the whole understanding if each one of the principles. Once you exaggerate the significance of any particular mitzvah, you have misrepresented the whole picture of kol haTorah kula.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"He [God] called to Moses, and the Lord spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting saying..." So opens the third book of the Pentateuch, the book known as Torat Kohanim, the book of the priest-ministers of the Divine Sanctuary, the guardians of the rituals connecting Israel to God. Indeed, this book in Hebrew is, like the others, called by its opening word, Vayikra.

And herein lies a problem. Each of the other four books is called by its opening words, but in those instances the opening words have great significance.

Bereishit [Genesis] is the beginning, the moment in which God called the world-creation into being; Shemot [Exodus], the names of the family members who came down to Egypt, and the exile-slavery experience which transformed them from a family into a nation with a national mission of universal freedom; Bamidbar [Numbers], the desert sojourn of a newly freed people who had to learn the responsibilities of managing a nation-state before entering their promised homeland; and Devarim [Deuteronomy], the farewell words and legacy of Moses, the agent of Hashem.

But what is the significance of Vayikra – God "calling out" to Moses, as the name for a Biblical book? Did not God call out to Moses from the time that he came onto the scene of Jewish history? And why is it specifically this time that Moses chose to express his modesty, the word is spelled with a small alef, as if to record that God merely "chanced upon him" (Vayiker), but had not specifically called out to him? I believe that the answer lies in the very strange concluding words of the last portion of the Book of Exodus, towards the end of Pekudei: "The cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. Moses could not enter

Likutei Divrei Torah

the Tent of Meeting, for the cloud rested upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle..."

We saw in last week's commentary the majestic words of the Ramban (Nahmanides), explaining how the Book of Exodus concludes the Jewish exile with the glory of the Lord resting upon – and filling – the Tabernacle. Was it not Moses who asked God to reveal His glory to him? Was Moses not the supreme individual in human history who came closer to the Divine than anyone else, who "spoke to God face to face," whose active intellect actually kissed the active intellect of the Shechina? Then why is Moses forbidden from entering the Tent of Meeting? Moses should have entered straightaway, precisely because the glory of God was then filling the Tabernacle!

Apparently, the Bible is teaching a crucial lesson about Divine Service: God wants human beings to strive to come close to God, but not too close. God demands even from Moses a measured distance between Himself (as it were) and human beings. We must serve Him, but not beyond that which He commands us to do. In Divine Service, we dare not go beyond the laws He ordains that we perform.

There is no "beyond the requirements of the law" in the realm of the laws between humans and God.

God understands the thin line between kadosh and kadesh: Divine service and diabolical suicide bombers, fealty to the King of all Kings and fanatic sacrifice to Moloch. Hence not only does our Bible record the commands God gave to Moses regarding the construction of every aspect of the Divine Sanctuary (Truma and Tetzaveh) but it painstakingly informs us again and again in Vayakhel and Pekudei that those orders were carried out exactly as they had been commanded, no less and no more: "Moses did according to everything that the Lord had commanded, so did he do"

This is why, further on God metes out a stringent death penalty upon Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, when they bring before the Lord a "strange fire which they had not been commanded to bring" in the midst of national fervor of exultant song. Moses even explains this tragic occurrence by saying, "of this did the Lord speak, saying 'I will be sanctified by those who come [too] close to Me.'" Too close to God can be more dangerous than too distant from Him, if over-zealous Fanaticism is what measured Divine service turns into!

This is why both the Ramban and the Ramban interpret the commandment par excellence in interpersonal human relationships, "You shall do what is right and good", to necessitate going beyond the legal requirements, to make certain that you not act like a "scoundrel within the confines of the law," whereas in the area of Divine-human relationships, you dare not take the law into your own hands; our legal authorities are concerned lest your motivation be yuhara, excessive pride before God, religious "one-upmanship, which too early may overtake the sober humility of the all-too eager zealot."

Thus Vayikra, the book which features our religious devotion to the Lord, opens with Moses's reluctance to enter the Tabernacle of the Lord unless he is actually summoned to do so by God. His humility is even more in evidence when he records only in miniature the final letter alef in the word Vayikra, as if to say that perhaps the call he had received by God was more by accident than by design.

Indeed, the Midrash teaches that the small amount of unused ink which should have been utilized on the regular-sized alef of the Torah, was placed by God on Moses's forehead; that ink of humility is what provided Moses's face with the translucent glow with which he descended from Mount Sinai.

The light of glory suffused Moses entire being, the truest rays of splendor which express the sanctity beyond deeds and beyond words.

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NETANYAHU ANNOUNCES TOTAL LOCKDOWN, PLEAS WITH ISRAELIS TO STAY HOME (Israel Hayom 3/25/20)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced on Wednesday a nationwide lockdown in order to fight the coronavirus pandemic in Israel, saying the unprecedented steps that limited Israelis' movement were necessary because of the "real fear among health professionals that the number of deaths will increase dramatically in the coming days."

"My fellow Israelis, you are familiar with the saying that saving one life is like saving the entire world, but there is a corollary: If you infect one person, it is like you have infected the entire world," Netanyahu said in his televised address. "These steps have been adopted by countries all over the world but they are not enough, because the number of infected [in Israel] has been tripling every three days, and we may very well end up with thousands of patients being gravely ill," he continued.

Under the new restrictions, which came into effect on Wednesday, people have to stay within 100 yards of their homes; all leisure activities and sporting events are barred; public transportation is suspended, taxis are only allowed to fare one passenger, and companies still operating would be required to check their employees' temperature before letting them enter the building.

Essential services such as supermarkets, pharmacies, and access to medical care would not be limited, the Prime Minister's Office explained. Restaurants are allowed to make deliveries to customers who order food.

Netanyahu warned that more restrictions may be announced if the current lockdown fails to slow the rate of infection. "Stay at home. The virus does not discriminate; we have to show self-discipline because if you don't protect yourselves, a calamity will take place."

NETANYAHU, GANTZ RESTART EMERGENCY UNITY TALKS (JPost 3/25/20)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Blue and White leader Benny Gantz spoke by phone on Thursday night and then ordered their coalition negotiating teams to meet on Thursday to try to form a unity government.

Representatives of both sides have been speaking secretly but now the talks will become more official. In a statement released simultaneously by Likud and Blue and White, they cited the coronavirus and President Reuven Rivlin's calls for unity.

"I appeal to you from here, leaders of the main parties, to find a way to present a shared leadership, a responsible leadership, for Israeli society in its time of crisis," Rivlin said. "I know how short the distance is between you. Each side must understand the other's red lines and to be flexible on them, on the understanding that we have – we simply do not have – an alternative." Both Likud and Blue and White vigorously denied a Channel 13 report on Wednesday night that the Likud had agreed to give the Justice Ministry to Blue and White in a national unity government led by Netanyahu.

The report said that progress was made toward a unity government in negotiations that took place on Wednesday and that both parties agreed that the next justice minister could be Blue and White MK Chili Tropper, who is the MK closest to Blue and White leader Benny Gantz.

Blue and White called the report "a fairy tale" and Likud called it "not true."

"The political situation is quite simple," a source close to Gantz said on Wednesday night. "The only possibilities are an emergency unity government and us supporting the government from outside for six months during the crisis over the coronavirus and then either a government or elections. All the rest is nonsense."

Likud said it was not interested in Blue and White supporting the government from outside and not taking responsibility while the Likud takes blame.

EDELSTEIN RESIGNS AS KNESSET SPEAKER (YNet 3/25/20)

Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein resigned from his post on Wednesday after being ordered by the High Court of Justice to convene the parliament to hold a vote on his replacement.

Edelstein, a member of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's ruling Likud party, found himself under extreme scrutiny after he suspended parliamentary activities, preventing the newly elected legislature from choosing a new speaker and forming the Arrangements Committee, one of the most vital Knesset committees without which the parliament cannot operate.

"The High Court of Justice is burying the Knesset," he said at the start of a special plenum session. "The High Court's decision is not based on the law, but on a partisan and extreme interpretation. The High Court decision contradicts the Knesset's bylaws," he added.

"As someone who has paid a heavy personal cost, including years of imprisonment and hard labor, for the right to live in Israel, no explanation is needed as to how much I love the State of Israel and the people of Israel."

The speaker has adjourned the Knesset until next Monday following his speech, drawing ire of the Blue & White MKs, who said they intend to appeal against the decision to the High Court.

The resignation is set to go into effect on Thursday.

Edelstein's announcement took place as hundreds of people waving Israeli and black flags, protested outside the Knesset building. Some were holding banners that said, "Saving Democracy" and "Edelstein is a bully."

The move effectively ends any hope of a unity government being formed as

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Blue & White prepares to replace the speaker with a member of their own party, a condition which the Likud members find unacceptable.

Likud MK Miki Zohar called on Netanyahu to withdraw any proposals for a unity government he has tabled for Benny Gantz's party.

"We knew what was going to happen, the Joint List acted in order to create chaos in Israel and that's what it did - led Edelstein to resign," Zohar told Ynet.

The High Court's ruling came after a hearing on Sunday following a petition from civil rights groups demanding the Knesset resume its full activities even amid restrictions imposed because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The suspension of the Knesset was allegedly done to prevent the Blue & White from advancing a bill that would stop any premier with a criminal indictment from continuing to serve.

Netanyahu is due to go on trial on charges of fraud, bribery and breach of trust in three corruption cases. The trial's opening hearing was set to start last week but had been postponed due to the coronavirus outbreak.

HIGH COURT APPOINTS TEMPORARY KNESSET SPEAKER TO ELECT REPLACEMENT (Ha'aretz 3/26/20)

The High Court ruled Thursday overnight that chairman of the Labor Party Amir Peretz will be appointed as the interim Knesset Speaker and will lead the plenary to elect a permanent speaker on Friday, to replace the newly resigned Yuli Edelstein.

The judges ruled that Peretz would have the authority of the Knesset speaker but "a limited and defined authority," and that he can convene the plenary session Thursday to elect a permanent Knesset speaker. Peretz will not be able to exercise other powers of the Speaker except those instructed by the High Court.

In the ruling, Supreme Court President Justice Esther Hayut attacked Edelstein, saying he had committed "an unprecedented violation of the rule of law." Hayut had strongly criticized Edelstein's decision to lock the plenary contrary to the court's decision.

Hayut said that Edelstein's decision could lead to civilians not obeying government orders regarding the coronavirus. "If this is how a person of authority behaves, why should the citizen behave otherwise? ... Especially during these difficult days when we are dealing with the outbreak of the coronavirus epidemic, and citizens are required to comply with the unprecedented provisions and restrictions imposed by emergency regulations."

Earlier, the High Court debated a petition to accuse Edelstein of dishonoring the court, after he resigned on Wednesday, delaying the election of a permanent speaker, contrary to the court's ruling that a new Speaker will be selected by Wednesday midnight.

At the beginning of the session, Knesset Legal Advisor Eyal Yinon announced that he no longer represents the resigned Knesset Speaker. Edelstein requested to inform the court that he was satisfied with the testimonies he had so far given to the Court.

Yinon offered the court two options – in neither of which Edelstein is accused of dishonoring. According to the first, the court "will contain the event of the breach of order," and on Sunday the Knesset will convene and will be headed by a veteran member, who will take Edelstein's place in office. When asked why he did not seek to extend the validity of the order in the first place, Yinon said he thought his application would be considered "impudent" at that time.

The second option proposed by Yinon which he expressed his support for, is for the court to only give Edelstein the specific authority to convene the Knesset - and not his role as speaker - and transfer it to another Knesset veteran. In this case, Peretz will be empowered to do so even if Edelstein reverses his resignation.

In his resignation speech, Edelstein charged that "the High Court's decision undercuts the foundations of democracy." According to Knesset protocols,

Edelstein's resignation will come into effect in 48 hours.

"I'm not interested in being in contempt of the court. Respect the dictates of my conscience," Edelstein said. "My replacement will be able to do as they please in 48 hours."

Earlier, Attorney General Avichai Mendelblit said that Edelstein's submission of his resignation "does not allow him to refrain from complying with the ruling" that he hold a vote on his replacement. Yinon said, however, that without special instructions from the High Court, the Knesset would not be able to convene.

Yinon had told the High Court earlier that a plan that would authorize the Knesset Arrangements Committee to hold a vote on a new speaker on Wednesday could not be adopted, as it violates Knesset protocol. The interim speaker, he added, could only begin his or her term on Friday.

By resigning, Edelstein achieves two things: First, in the battle over the independence of the Knesset, he will not be allowing the justices to set the Knesset's agenda. Secondly, by resigning, he shortens the amount of time that the center-left bloc headed by Benny Gantz has to pass legislation that would bar Netanyahu from serving as prime minister while under indictment before Gantz's current mandate to form a government expires.

COGAT DELIVERS 3,000 CORONAVIRUS TEST KITS, 50,000 MASKS TO PA (JPost 3/25/20)

The Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) reported on Wednesday that over 3,000 coronavirus test-kits and 50,000 masks were delivered to the Palestinian Authority's health system to offer residents aid in the fight against the coronavirus.

The medical gear was donated by the World Health Organization for the use of medical teams working in the PA's territories in the West Bank. COGAT coordinated the entry of the kits and equipment from Jordan through the Allenby Bridge Crossing.

"Once more COGAT is cooperating closely with the World Health Organization to make assistance possible in the Palestinian Authority's struggle against the coronavirus outbreak," Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, Major General Kamil Abu Rukun. "I commend the teamwork of the international organizations in this important shared endeavor, I wish steady good health to all the residents of the region, and I hope that we will continue to work together in the fight to halt the spread of this dangerous virus."

The Palestinian Authority has reported 64 total confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus. One Palestinian has died after being infected.

ISRAEL SET TO EXTEND WINTER TIME BY A MONTH TO FIGHT CORONAVIRUS (YNet 3/22/20)

Israel is set to extend winter time, which was due to end this week, by at least a month to stop the public from wandering the streets and prevent further spread of coronavirus.

Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit on Sunday approved a request made by the Interior Ministry to include the extension of standard time into the state of emergency orders currently in place due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Government ICT Authority (Information and communications technology), however, said they oppose the move since the passage between daylight saving time and winter time is built into the operating systems of most computers and smart phones and cannot be updated before the clock is moved later this week.

Interior Minister Aryeh Deri on Saturday evening apparently spoke with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Health Minister Yaakov Litzman and Defense Minister Naftali Bennett and informed them of his intention to delay the daylight saving time.

The Interior Ministry believes the extension of winter time will prevent people from congregating and adhere strictly to the Health Ministry's guidelines meant to stop the spread of the new virus.

ISRAELI RESEARCHERS ANNOUNCE NEW, FASTER TESTING METHOD FOR COVID-19 (Israel Hayom 3/22/20)

Researchers at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology and the Rambam Medical Center in Haifa have successfully tested a new method, called "pooling," that they claim will dramatically increase the country's ability to test for COVID-19. Because the method enables simultaneous testing of dozens of samples, its implementation will greatly accelerate the rate of COVID-19 testing and detection, according to the researchers.

COVID-19 testing in Israel is currently focusing on symptomatic individuals because the current rate of testing – about 1,200 a day – does not allow for monitoring of asymptomatic carriers in the population, though such monitoring is vital to curb the epidemic.

To confirm the presence of COVID-19 virus in a sample, researchers must detect the virus's unique genetic sequence. The test takes several hours, so testing individual samples thus generates a bottleneck.

According to Dr. Yuval Gefen, head of the Rambam Clinical Microbiology Laboratory, "Today, we receive approximately 200 COVID-19 test samples a day, and each sample undergoes individual examination. According to the new pooling approach we have currently tested, molecular testing can be performed on a 'combined sample,' taken from 32 or 64 patients. This way we can significantly accelerate the testing rate. Only in those rare cases where the joint sample is found to be positive will we conduct an individual test for each of the specific samples."

Professor Roy Kishony, who heads the research group in the Technion's Faculty of Biology, said that while the new method involves some logistical challenges, it will "greatly increase" the rate of sample testing, which in turn will help "flatten the infection curve."

According to Technion President Professor Uri Sivan, the experimental verification of this new testing method, which ordinarily would have taken months, was completed in under four days.

"This experiment conducted by Technion and Rambam researchers is complex, and under normal circumstances would take months. This is a remarkable example of the mobilization of an outstanding team in a time of crisis.

The initial experiment was completed in less than four days. This achievement emphasizes the importance of the close relationship between Technion and Rambam and between medicine and engineering. Technion researchers have been enlisted in the war against the coronavirus and this is one of the many activities currently underway at Technion to combat the spread of the disease," he said.

SUPREME COURT DENIES REQUEST TO DELAY PASSOVER DUE TO CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK (JPost 3/23/20)

Israel's Supreme Court denied a request on Sunday to declare a Hebrew leap year in order to delay the Passover holiday due to the coronavirus outbreak, according to Israel business daily Calcalist.

In a Hebrew leap year, an extra month, referred to as Adar II, is added to the calendar. In ancient times, a leap year was declared if the Hebrew month of Nisan, when Passover takes place, would deviate too far from the spring equinox, if the barley crops were ripening late or if the fruit trees were not blossoming yet. Other issues, such as infrastructure work needed before the pilgrimage to Jerusalem or travel issues affecting the pilgrimage, could also warrant a leap year. Eventually, the Hebrew calendar was calculated and fixed by Hillel, a 4th century Jewish scholar, through mathematical calculations and the courts ceased to declare and calculate new months.

Yedidiah Efraim Meshulami made the request for a Hebrew leap year because of what he called the "side effects" of the coronavirus outbreak. Many Jews fear that the Passover seder this year will take place during a lock down situation and it may be more difficult to obtain the necessary food and supplies for the seder. Meshulami believed that a leap year declaration could help avoid that situation, according to Calcalist.

The Supreme Court denied the request, saying that there is no legal mechanism for declaring a leap year due to an emergency and that the court was not at the level of the Sanhedrin, the highest level court in Jewish law, and therefore did not have the authority to make such a decision.

According to Jewish law, decisions on the calendar can only be made by rabbis who have "semicha," authority granted to them by another rabbi who received authority from another in a chain reaching back to Moses, according to Maimonides. The chain was broken sometime after the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, meaning that rabbis today may not have the authority to make such decisions.

The Supreme Court noted it seemed to them that, even according to Jewish religious law, the claims of the petitioner had no basis.

ORTHODOX SEPHARDIC RABBIS GREENLIGHT VIDEO CONFERENCE SEDERS IN STUNNING RULING (Ha'aretz 3/25/20)

In a startling ruling, a group of prominent Sephardic rabbis in Israel has permitted the use of Zoom videoconferencing at the upcoming Passover seder so that families can convene virtually without violating restrictions on gatherings mandated by the coronavirus pandemic. The rabbis who issued the ruling, among them the spiritual leaders of several towns and communities in Israel, are all Orthodox.

The ruling has not been endorsed by Israel's chief rabbis or the Orthodox religious establishment. Indeed, Shmuel Eliyahu, the chief rabbi of Safed and a member of the Chief Rabbinate Council (perhaps best known for his vicious remarks about Israel's Arab minority) called the ruling "a grave error" that would "destroy the spirit of the seder night."

According to the ruling, videoconferencing during the seder will be permissible on a one-time basis this year so long as computers are turned on and everything is set up before the holiday sets in. Jewish religious law, or halakha, does not permit the use of electricity on Shabbat – a restriction that includes operating computers and other forms of technology. This ban on electricity use applies to the Jewish holidays as well, including Passover, though Sephardic rabbis tend to be more lenient than their Ashkenazi counterparts when it comes to this restriction, as they are on many others.

The ruling was issued in response to a query about whether the video technology could be used to allow elderly people to partake in the annual Passover ritual – the most important family event on the annual Jewish calendar. Individuals over age 70 in Israel have been urged to refrain from contact with their children and grandchildren because they are more susceptible to the coronavirus.

"Passover is a special holiday, especially the night of the reading of the Hagaddah, which is seen by all as a special event, a treaty between God and Israel," the rabbis wrote in their ruling. "It would also seem that the young children of Israel, were it not for their connection to their grandfather and grandmother, would not gather around the seder table, and only the connection to the grandparent causes them to take part in the mitzvah of the Hagaddah reading and eating matzah. And in this generation, it is very important that children pay attention to their elders."

Another justification for making this year an exception to the rule, the rabbis wrote, was "to remove sadness from adults and the elderly, to give them motivation to continue fighting for their lives, and to prevent them from succumbing to depression, which might cause them to despair of life."

The ruling was signed by 14 rabbis, all members of the Moroccan Jewish community in Israel. The most prominent signatory was Rabbi Eliyahu Abergel, the former chief judge of the rabbinical court in Jerusalem. They are all members of a group called Igud Chachmei Hamaarav ("Association of the Wise of the West").

THE REAL THREAT OF ISRAELI CIVIL WAR (Ron Ben Yishai, YNet 3/25/20)

As Israelis grapple with the two major events currently upon us - the corona-

virus pandemic and the ongoing political stalemate - another major crisis is emerging.

As emotions run high the danger of violence increases. Anarchy might break out, with Israelis disregarding government directives and public unrest on a large scale or worse, we may see the eruption of a civil war.

The threat is exacerbated by the continuously eroding public trust in the government and its leader and the growing extremism and deepening rift between the right-wing, religious bloc and the center-left and Arabs.

Political demonstrations have already begun, with the center-left Israelis protesting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's political maneuverings and his supporters, in turn, protesting the moves by the "anyone but Bibi" camp.

We can expect to see a rise in the level of violence in such demonstrations, deteriorating into increasing verbal and physical attacks and even the use of weapons.

Such incidents will put us firmly on the path to civil war.

History warns us such a nightmare can easily be upon us. It was just 37 years ago when Peace Now activist Emil Grunzweig was murdered at an anti-government demonstration in Jerusalem.

In 1983, protesters marched against the First Lebanon War, demanding Prime Minister Menachem Begin to adopt the conclusions of the commission of inquiry into his government's policies and Israel's responsibility for the massacre perpetrated by the Christian militias in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Beirut.

The demonstrators demanded the firing of then-defense minister Ariel Sharon who was found responsible for some of the war's mishaps.

A group of right-wingers congregated on the side of the road leading to the Prime Minister's Office. Among them was far-right activist Yona Avrushmi, who was holding a hand grenade acquired from a member of the IDF.

Avrushmi hurled the grenade into the crowd of demonstrators, killing Grünzweig and wounding seven others. Ironically, the wounded included Netanyahu ally Yuval Steinitz, who since then crossed the lines to become a vehement right-winger.

At his trial, Avrushmi claimed to have been affected by toxic incitement during his IDF service that suggested the left was preventing Begin and his government from winning the war.

Grunzweig's murder shocked people on both sides of the political divide. After initially blaming one another, both camps were careful not to compound the situation further, understanding Israeli society was on a slippery slope.

Still, the event indicates the speed and ease with which anger and frustration can turn to violence.

In our short history, we have come dangerously close to civil war a few times. From the earliest days of Independence when the underground movements were dismantled and Irgun ship Altalena came under fire off the coast of Tel Aviv as it was carrying troops and arms for the militia, through the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by a far-right activist at a 1995 peace rally, and during the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip settlements in 2005.

Basic unity among Israelis and the understanding that a compromise must be found, and the existence of external threats prevented further deterioration.

But now moderation and responsibility and unity have all been compromised. The external enemy is a microscopic virus but those on the left see a real threat in the attacks on democracy and the rule of law that the right is perpetrating.

Both camps are entrenched in their positions, strengthened only by their mutual hatred.

BRING BACK THIS FORMER JUSTICE MINISTER. SHE CAN HELP SAVE ISRAEL (Sami Peretz, Ha'aretz 3/24/20)

The resource that Israel will need most in the next few months is the public's trust in all government institutions: the cabinet, the Knesset, the courts and local governments. Without this trust it will be impossible to win the public's

cooperation with the harsh restrictions on movement and we won't be able to repair the destruction that the coronavirus is wreaking on the Israeli economy.

Somehow the virus arrived in the midst of a severe crisis of democracy, as if it had come to test the resistance of the government's immune system against anarchy.

This situation highlights the decisive role of Benny Gantz's Kahol Lavan party. It may enjoy the backing of 61 of the Knesset's 120 members, letting it advance issues such as the election of a new speaker, but a few of its members have ruled out forming a government with the support of the Joint List of Arab parties. If this option is taken off the table, two bad options remain: a unity government or a fourth straight general election.

Given the present circumstances, an election would be worse, and it's doubtful one can be held at the peak of the coronavirus crisis. This leaves a unity government. Gantz's campaign promise was that his party would not join a government under a prime minister who has been indicted.

The impression is that this promise is cracking. It's a real ethical problem, but the bigger difficulty is that the indicted prime minister is operating the legal system via a justice minister who from his very first day on the job has come out against it.

The fact that many people are already living in peace with the harsh attacks by Justice Minister Amir Ohana against the legal system under his authority attests to the weakness of the country's immune system. It's possible to imagine the panic if the health minister had attacked the health system and undermined the public's faith in it, or if the defense minister had said the army isn't such a great army after all.

This puts Kahol Lavan in a position to make a historic decision: whether to enter a unity government to stop this dangerous drift. A fear has stolen into our hearts that the calls by Tourism Minister Yariv Levin and Ohana not to obey the rulings of the High Court of Justice were intended to create a platform for Kahol Lavan to enter a unity government.

Their menu has two options: a unity government headed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu or anarchy. As far as Gantz is concerned, it's better to control both the rudder and the brakes of a unity government. At this time, the most important asset for protecting democracy is the justice ministry portfolio.

Gantz must demand the justice portfolio before others such as foreign affairs and defense, which are more prestigious but are less important for democracy. This is the only way to allow Gantz to violate his campaign promise not to serve under Netanyahu. The prime minister and his emissaries have created the impression that the justice minister has the authority to get involved in criminal cases and frame people.

But legally, and rightly so, the justice minister is forbidden to intervene in cases, thus someone with a reputation for honesty should be appointed. For example, former Justice Minister Tzipi Livni would guarantee that this portfolio would not be used to take revenge. She would guarantee that the justice minister would back the legal system and not take part in the unbridled attacks on the law enforcement system – which might worsen as Netanyahu's corruption trial progresses.

Netanyahu wants an obedient justice minister who will help him handle his own affairs, put the legal system on the defensive and damage the public's trust in it. Kahol Lavan must prevent this. There are no visible differences between Kahol Lavan and Likud on security, diplomatic or economic issues. If there are differences in the way they view democracy, watchdogs and the immunity of the law enforcement system, these differences must be reflected in the coalition agreements.

This is a fundamental condition for establishing a unity government, and another even more fundamental condition to address the large health and economic crises the country is going through. Kahol Lavan's control over the justice portfolio won't guarantee the proper functioning of a unity government, but without it, failure is guaranteed.