

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shuvah Shorts ת"סב

September 25 - 26, 2020 - 8 Tishrei 5781 - Parshas Haazinu/Shabbos Shuvah

Light Candles by 6:41 - Havdalah 7:38

September 27 - 28, 2020 - 10 Tishrei 5781 - Yom Kippur

Light Candles by 6:38 - Havdalah 7:35

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week by Marilyn Edeson, Fred, Karen, and Jonah Edeson, Amy, Natalie Julia, and Taylor Jade Morrison on Morris Edeson's 80th birthday today and by David Mazel with Hakoras Hatov to President Trump and Jared Kushner for their efforts and successes to support the State of Israel and further the peace process.

Mazal Tov

- **Gabe & Zahava Bensimon** on Chananya becoming a Bar Mitzvah! Mazal Tov as well to the Zwilling, Bensimon and Broder families.
- **Debbie & Jacob Frenkel** on the birth of their first grandchild, Adira Hallel, to Tova & Chaim Frenkel of Atlanta, Georgia. Mazal Tov also to Uncles Menachem and Yosef and to Aunts Shoshana and Eliana.

Condolences

- **Cindy Bauman** on the passing of her brother, Allan Cooper. Cindy will observe Shiva until Yom Kippur. Cindy may be reached during Shiva by email at cindybauman18@gmail.com or by text at 301-613-8666.

Shabbos and Yom Kippur Schedule

Limited Minyanim are now taking place at YISE under Montgomery County's Phase 2 guidelines. All Minyanim require advance registration and confirmation. If you are interested in attending Minyanim and have not already registered, please go to <https://www.yise.org/minyan> If you are registered for a Minyan and are unable to attend at that time, please do not go to a different Minyan. If you have any questions, please contact minyan@yise.org

Shabbos

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 6:41
- Mincha: 6:50, 6:50 (Sephardi)

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 6:50, 9:00, 9:30, 8:45 (Sephardi)
- Mincha: 2:30, 5:00, 5:50 (Sephardi)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 7:38

Yom Kippur

Important notes for those registered for Minyanim on Yom Kippur:

- Bring your own Machzor
- Shacharis starts with Hamelech (Ashkenazi)/Borchu (Sephardi)
- Bring a surface to bow on in Mussaf

Sunday Night:

- Light Candles by 6:38, and not before Plag, 5:54
- Kol Nidrei: 6:40, 6:40 (Sephardi)

Monday:

- Shacharis: 6:45, 10:15, 8:40 (Sephardi)
- Mincha/Neilah: 2:30, 5:15, 4:45 (Sephardi)
- Yom Kippur ends: 7:35

COVID-19 Updates

- Advance registration for Minyanim is **required** and space is limited. Go to <https://www.yise.org/minyan> to register. If you have changes to your original registration form, please send an email to minyan@yise.org with details.
- During Tishrei, we will have some weekday Minyanim in the tent in addition to the Minyanim in the building. If you are interested, please contact minyan@yise.org
- All other activities at YISE are cancelled, including Youth Groups, Shiurim and special events.
- The Shul office is still open, but hours may vary.

Let us Daven to Hashem to keep all of us 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.

Weekday Shiurim

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

- **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-minute Shiur on the Parsha. Sunday through Friday 8:30 AM - **Zoom A**, will resume on Tuesday, September 29.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday, 7:30 PM - **Zoom A**, will resume on Tuesday, September 29.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), Sundays at 9:30 AM, will resume after Sukkos.
 - **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** Women's Navi Shiur, now studying Sefer Yehoshua, Wednesdays, **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 rbsilver@yise.org **Zoom B**.
 - **GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch and Learn for Men and Women** - Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM, will resume on September 27.
 - Unraveling the Navi with Rabbi Hillel Shaps, **Zoom C**.
 - **Rabbi Tuvia Grauman** - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, Sundays at 10:00 AM, **Zoom H**.
 - **Rabbi Yonatan Zakem's** Shiur for men & women, Pearls of Prayer, exploring the depth and meaning of our daily prayers. Sunday evenings, 7:40 PM, **Zoom G**, will resume after Sukkos.
 - **GWCK presents CLAS (Community Learning at Shomrai)** - 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM (except as noted). For more info. contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps, hshaps@gwckollel.org 347-869-9361, will resume after Sukkos.
 - **Semichat Chaver Program**, Tuesdays at 9:00 PM with Rabbi Silver. For more information, please contact Rabbi Binyamin Silver: rbsilver@yise.org or Rabbi Hillel Shaps: hshaps@gwckollel.org
 - **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiur on Daily Halachos for men & women, Tuesdays 9:15 AM, **Zoom F**.
 - **Rabbi Yitzchak Scher's Shiur for Men and Women**, Tuesdays, 1:30 PM - 2:15 PM, **Zoom K**.
 - **Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's** Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning Maseches Gittin on Wednesday evenings, 8:00 PM, will resume after Sukkos.
- Connection Details:** Go to <https://zoom.us/join/> and enter the meeting ID, or call 301-715-8592 and enter the meeting ID & password:
- Zoom A: ID: 416 963 9000, password 492019
Zoom B: ID: 784 431 8176
Zoom C: ID: 349 754 2180, password GWCK
Zoom D: ID: 746 455 2195, password GWCK
Zoom E: ID: 970 1398 4837, password 613
Zoom G: ID: 269 840 3648, password online Pearls, phone 621690
Zoom H: ID: 978 8156 7874, password RabbiHyatt
Zoom I: ID: 977 463 8680, password GWCK
Zoom J: ID: 539 496 3506, password ygwarz
Zoom K: ID: 713 7408 5130, password 045079

YISE Youth Announcements

Holiday Story Time - Join YISE Youth for a three part story time, with holiday stories about the Chagim. Part 3 - Thursday, October 1 at 5:30 PM on Zoom A. *See flyer for details.*

YISE Youth Jewish Music Dance Party with Lauren Balsam of Swag Cardio Kidz! Sunday, October 25, 5:00 PM - 5:45 PM. For girls K-5th grade. RSVP to bkugler@yise.org. *See flyer for details.*

YISE Programs and Listings

We welcome new members who were voted in at the last Board meeting: Marilyn & Morris Edeson, Goldie & Ben Fields, Ms. Julie Gittelman & Mr. Harry Hoshovsky, Janette & Dr. Jerry Rapp and Eliana & Merric Srour.

The 5781 Yizkor Guide was extremely successful this year. Due to a strong show of support from our members, the Guide nearly doubled its usual size. Many thanks to Rabbi Rosenbaum, Simi Franco, Manasseh Katz and Seth Katz for their tremendous efforts in helping to prepare the Guide. Thank you to Rabbi Sanford Shudnow for creating the beautiful cover design. Thank you also to all those who made contributions to the Yizkor Guide and found it to be a meaningful way of connecting to our dear YISE community during this isolating time. May all of us be Zocheh to be able to daven together again in Shul very soon, *Debbie and Marc Katz*.

Sukkah Share - Join the YISE Sukkah Share! Hosts sign up to lend their Sukkah when they are not using it. Guests sign up to borrow a Sukkah for a meal. Go to <https://wp.yise.org/sukkah> or *see flyer for details.*

Rabbi Koss's Monthly Jewish History class - now on Zoom! Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and the YISE Chessed Committee - Rabbi Koss will be speaking on a topic in Jewish history, Monday, October 5, from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM on Zoom. Meeting ID - 871 7697 8136, password 329598. For more information, contact Miriam Friedman at mfriedman2@yahoo.com

Aravot Sale - Bnei Akiva of Silver Spring is selling Aravot for Hoshana Rabba. Pickup Thursday, October 8, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM and Friday, October 9 at all Shacharis Minyanim. Pre-order at <https://wp.yise.org/aravot>

YISE Women's Learning Initiative presents pre-Simchas Torah Learning for Women - Monday night October 5 (Chol Hamoed Sukkos) at 8:00 PM, **Zoom A**. Speakers will be Mrs. Atara Rosenbaum, "Worshipping on Empty? Reaching Out to G-d on Sukkos in 2020", and Mrs. Rachel Kosowsky, "The Messages of Ma'aseh Bereishit". *See flyer for details.*

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, mkarlin@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

Mikvah Update - The Wallerstein Mikvah will not be available this year for use by men prior to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Thank you to all those who helped support MES through our recent virtual event. If you were unable to participate, please consider donating to our important work. In addition to covering our normal operating expenses, we have additional costs to keep the Mikvah secure and clean during the Covid-19 outbreak. To donate, please visit www.mikvahemunah.com

YGW Annual Selichos Shiur for Women - Motzei Shabbos, September 26, 9:15 PM - Mrs. Rosenbaum, 10:05 PM - Mrs. Teitelbaum. Zoom - Meeting ID: 813 9246 0378, passcode: Wfz0ry. For information contact Rabbi Katz, zkatz@yeshiva.edu

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, September 30, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM. See what Toastmasters is all about and find out how you can become a more confident communicator. Contact Manasseh Katz at yppr@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info. Zoom meeting ID: 986 546 841, password: 3671

Journey to Virtue: Self-Development through Jewish Study - Wednesdays, 8:00 PM on Zoom. Discover the great wisdom of the Jewish tradition to help you reach your full potential, enhance your relationships, and live life with greater meaning! Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps. The journey continues. Join any time! No cost. Zoom info and registration at linksgw.org/classes

Yom Tov Appeal Sustains Community Safety Net - The Franco Foundation needs your tax-deductible donations to meet increasing Yom Tov aid requests by individuals and families in our community unable to make ends meet and hurt by the COVID plague's impact on our local economy. The Foundation helps with life essentials like rent, mortgage, utilities and food. Over the years, the Franco Foundation has helped hundreds of families and individuals facing financial crisis and continues to do so with the help and commitment from our community. Mail donations to Allan Franco, 613 Bromley Street, or send through PayPal at thefrancofoundation@gmail.com

Silver Spring Eruv Association Annual Appeal - SSEA is now an IRS 501(c)(3) organization. Donations made directly to SSEA will now be tax deductible to the maximum extent permitted by law. Details of the appeal are on www.yise.org/eruv Donations may be made using the Eruv PayPal button on that page or by mail to SSEA, 707 Lambert Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20902.

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

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@slslaw.com to be added to the invite list. Sunday 7:00 AM, Monday - Thursday 9:00 PM, Friday 5:45 PM.

Zichron Menachem Hair Drive - Covid-19 caused us to cancel our usual drive, but this did not deter our wonderful donors. They just cut their braids at home. Starting in July, one of my amazing hairdressers, Susan Kwak, from Style Salon, cut hair once again. She told me that she would continue to offer free donation haircuts to anyone with 12 inches of hair or more. If you or anyone you know would like to donate hair, please call or text Nancy, at 301-452-7080. Don't hesitate to leave a message. Susan works Sundays and Tuesdays. You can pick your time. Thank you and Tizku L'Mitzvot!

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

Kemp Mill Village is providing friendly phone calls and limited deliveries during the pandemic. Call 1-833-KMV-20902 to request service or to volunteer. See kempmillvillage.org for more information.

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

Happy Birthday! Happy Anniversary!

Looking for a way to celebrate someone's upcoming birthday or anniversary? For an \$18 donation, you can include the name (birthday) or names (anniversary) in this section of the Shabbos Shorts. Please send the following information to office@yise.org - Sponsor name, Birthday or anniversary date, Name (birthday) or names (anniversary). The birthday or anniversary will be listed in the Shabbos Shorts based on the date of the event.

Dvar Torah Dedications/Sponsor a Shiur

During this difficult time, we pray to Hashem that the day that we can all come together again in Tefillah and Torah study in good health arrives speedily. Until that point, YISE continues to offer a number of different remote learning options. These options are now available for sponsorship on an individual Shiur or a daily basis. Our current limited ability to Daven with a Minyan and to say Kaddish is difficult and a challenge. However, sponsoring a Shiur or other Torah learning is a meaningful way to commemorate a Yahrzeit or honor a loved one. Sponsorships are also a great way to celebrate a Simcha or any other milestone, while helping YISE at a time when many of the Shul's other sources of revenue are not available.

1. The following individual Shiurim are available for sponsorship at \$18 (per day):

- Daily Morning (Sunday through Friday) Tehillim and Parsha Shiur
- Daily Evening (Sunday through Thursday) Tehillim and Halacha Shiur
- Rabbi Rosenbaum's Sunday Morning Mussar Study Group for Women
- Rabbi Rosenbaum's Tuesday or Friday Morning Gemara Shiur for Men
- Rabbi Rosenbaum's Wednesday Morning Nach Shiur
- Rabbi Rosenbaum's Wednesday Night Navi Shiur for Women
- Rabbi Grauman - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, Sunday Morning

2. Sponsorship of the Morning and Evening Tehillim and Parsha/Halacha Shiurim together is available for \$25.

3. The Pre-Shabbos Drasha video is available for sponsorship at \$54.

Please email office@yise.org to sponsor. Thank you for your support.

Thank you to this past week's Shiurim sponsors:

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Tehillim/Parsha and Halacha Shiur

- **Steve Kalin** in honor of Rabbi Rosenbaum's Chumash Shiur and great stories
- **Debbie Rogal and Jay Rogal** in honor of a Refuah Sheleima for Alyssa Kibler, Ariella Chaya bat Faigy Hench.
- **Judy & Rabbi Roy Rosenbaum** in honor of Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum's birthday, which was the 4th of Tishrei.

Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur

- **David Jaray** for a Refuah Sheleima for Rabbi Hyatt and in honor of Rabbi Grauman and all those who attend the shiur.
- **Chani and Jay Parness** in memory of parents and grandparents and a Refuah Sheleima for Rabbi Hyatt.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Erev Shabbos Drasha

- **Rochelle Dimont, Sahra & Yale Ginsburg & family, Yocheved & Jonathan Neuman & family, Chayim & Michele Dimont & Family** in Memory of Rabbi Avraham Mordechai Dimont whose Yahrzeit is the 9th of Tishrei.
- **Debby & Rabbi Barry Greengart** in commemoration of the Yahrzeit of Rabbi Greengart's father, Zvi ben Ben Tzion, Z"L, whose yahrzeit was the 29th of Elul.
- **Judy & Rabbi Roy Rosenbaum** in memory of Judy's mother, Leah Mann, Rachel Leah bas HaRav Eliyahu Chaim, Z"L.

| The Week Ahead | Sunday Sept. 27 Erev Yom Kippur | Monday September 28 Yom Kippur | Tuesday September 29 | Wednesday September 30 | Thursday October 1 | Friday October 2 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Limited Minyanim will take place at YISE next week, advance registration and confirmation required. You are encouraged to Daven at home at the same time as a Minyan at YISE. Shacharis: Sunday 6:30 AM/7:30 AM/8:45 AM, Tuesday through Friday 6:00 AM/7:00 AM/8:45 AM. Mincha and/or Maariv: Sunday 3:00 PM, Tuesday - Thursday: 6:40 PM | | | | | | |
| Halachic Times: Earliest Talis and Tefillin: 6:15 AM, Latest Krias Shma: 9:59 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:29 PM | | | | | | |

Next Shabbos/Sukkos

October 2 - 4, 2020 - 15 - 16 Tishrei 5781

Sukkos

Light Candles: Friday by: 6:30

Havdalah: Sunday 7:25

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, September 30 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: Closed Monday - Yom Kippur

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

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum

Yale Ginsburg - President

Simi Franco - Office Manager



YISE WOMEN'S LEARNING
INITIATIVE PRESENTS

Mrs. Atara Rosenbaum

Worshiping on Empty?

Reaching out to G-d on Sukkos in 2020

*pre-Simchas Torah
learning for women*

Mrs. Rachel Kosowsky

***The Messages
of Ma'aseh Bereishit***

Monday, October 5

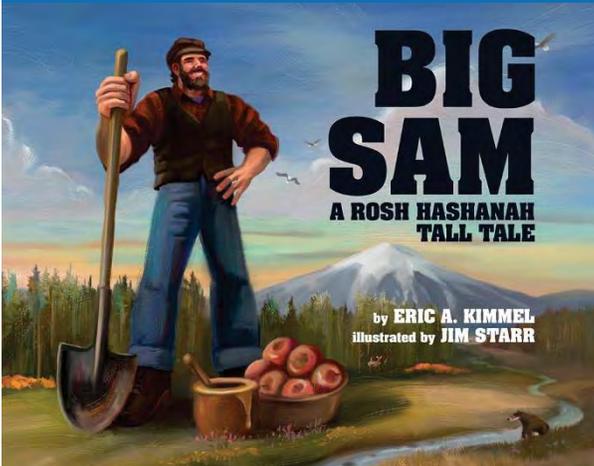
Chol Hamoed Sukkos 8:00PM

Zoom ID: 416 963 9000

Password: 492019

Call-in number: 301-715-8592

YISE YOUTH HOLIDAY STORY TIME



Join YISE Youth for a three part story time. We will be reading stories about the upcoming Chaggim on Zoom.

[Zoom Link](#)

Go to [Zoom.us](#)

Meeting ID: 416 963 9000

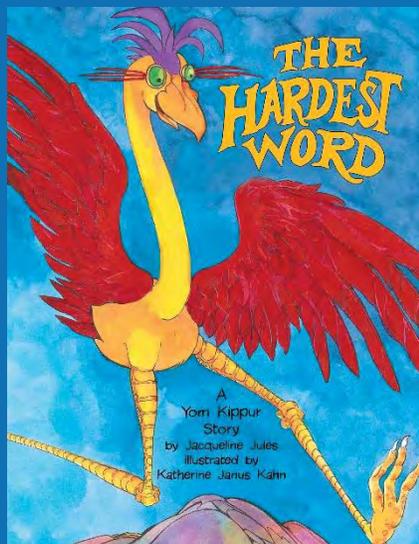
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Dates:

Rosh Hashanah

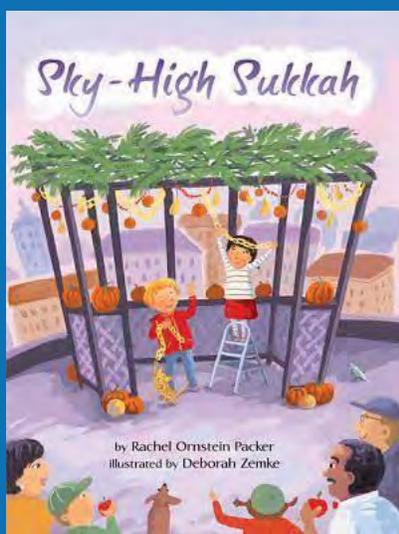
Big Sam:

September 17th @ 5:30pm



Yom Kippur

The Hardest Word: September 24th @ 5:30pm



Sukkot

Sky-High Sukkah

October 1st @ 5:30pm



COVID-19 SAFE

YISE SUKKAH SHARE

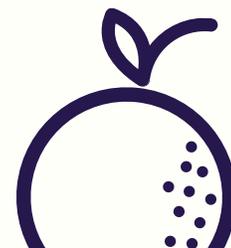
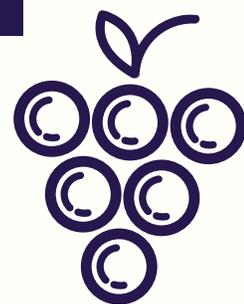
While we do not recommend that you have guests in your sukkah, we are creating a new program to 'lend' out your sukkah (when you're not using it). If there are any days or time slots that you will not be in your own sukkah, please consider signing up to lend it to others, through our 'Sukkah Share' program.

How to sign up:

For Hosts: Please fill out the Google Form at the link below. It will allow us to easily collect and organize data such as address, sukkah size, and availability. If you could please fill this out by next Saturday evening, 9/26/20. Here's the Form:

<https://wp.yise.org/sukkah-hosts>

For Guests: Once the hosts have given us their data, we will have a Google Sheet available, and you'll be able to choose from an array of locations and time slots. We anticipate launching the Google Sign-Up Sheet just after Yom Kippur.





BNEI AKIVA SILVER SPRING

ARAVOT SALE

Hoshana Rabba 5781

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8TH AT
7-8:30 PM**

**& FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9TH AT
ALL SHACHARIT MINYANIM**

Pre-order here:

<https://wp.yise.org/aravot>

YISE YOUTH JEWISH MUSIC DANCE PARTY
With Lauren Balsam of Swag Cardio Kidz!

Date: October 25th, 2020 5-5:45pm

Girls K-5th Grade

RSVP to bkugler@yise.org



Thank you to our Virtual High Holiday Seat and Appeal Generous Donors

Premium Gold Member Donation

Nancy and Bruce James

Premium Silver Member Donation

Elaine and Robert Leichter

Karen and Dr. Howie Schulman *in memory of David Kramer, z"l, and Sherrie Schulman, z"l, and Howie's parents and Karen's father*

Gloria and Arnie Sherman

Dr. Adele and Dr. George Berlin

Shulie and Ronnie Bergman

Dr. Farrell Bloch

Mickie and Josh Breitstein *in honor of the health of our children*

Harriet and Ernest Brodsky *in honor of Allie and Lidor Hayun and Melissa and Chad Miller and Family*

Naomi and Ori Carmel

Aliza and Gil Chlewicki *in loving memory of our fathers, Robert Sacknovitz and Meir Chlewicki, and with sincere hope for a speedy end to this mageifa*

Leah Cypess and Dr. Aaron Cypess

Marilyn and Morris Edeson

Rosalyn and Dr. Herman Efron

Melvin Farber

Marilyn and Jonathan Fine

Aliza Fink and Michael Zatman

Ezra Friedman

Simi and Sammy Franco *in memory of our parents, Luna N. Franco, Nathan S. Franco and Melvin Rottenberg, and in honor of our children and grandchildren*

Sharon Freundel

Faith Ginsburg *in memory of Gil Ginsburg, z"l*

Raphael Ginsburg

Faigy and Rabbi Tuvia Grauman *in honor of the members of YISE and the attendees of Rabbi Hyatt's shiur*

Debby and Rabbi Barry Greengart *in recognition and deep appreciation to Seth Katz for taking over Rabbi Greengart's former position of Chairman of the Ritual Committee*

Arlene Groner

Judith Halpern *in memory of beloved husband, Rabbi Jacob Halpern and beloved parents Alter David and Genendel Eisenstein and Rabbi Usher Yeshayahu and Chana Halpern*

Rosalie Handwerger

Shari and Rabbi Scott Hillman

Esther and David Hornestay

Dr. Dalia and Dr. Jesse Kahane

Linda and Dr. Michael Kaiser

Melanie and Sandy Karlin *in honor of our grandchildren and in memory of Sandy's parents, Charles and Katie Karlin*

Arlene and Dr. Irving Katz

Debbie and Dr. Marc Katz

Myrna Klavan

Hannah and Dr. Robert Klein

Marvin Konick

Ruthie and Bill Konick

Ellen and Larry Korb

Susan and Rabbi Saul Koss

Rona and Aaron Lerner

Arleeta and Rabbi Dr. Ivan Lerner

Bobbi and Jules Meisler

Lois and Sidney Meyers

Bev Morris and Art Boyars

Judy and Louis Morris

Dr. Eva Moses and Mr. Isaac Moses

Lee and Craig Oppenheim

Chani and Jay Parness

Hedy Peyser - *in memory of Rabbi Paul Peyser*

Barbara Price

Dinah Rokach

Atara and Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum

Judy and Rabbi Roy Rosenbaum *in honor of Atara and Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum*

Judy and Stuart Rosenthal

Diana and Dr. Leonard Ruchelman *may this year be a healthy and happy one for all*

Debi and Max Rudmann

Renee and Josh Seidemann

Dolores and Len Schwartz

Marina and Gregory Shmunis

Jane and Louis Shotkin

Rita and Kheder Shukur

Deborah and Stephen Silbiger

Lewis Sosnowik

Shaine Spolter

Dr. Lynn Trombka and Mr. Aron Trombka

Rita Umlas

Gila and Rabbi Myron Wakschlag Gila and Rabbi Myron Wakschlag in loving memory of parents:

Rabbi Jacob Halpern -- הרב יעקב ישראל בן הרב אשר ישעיהו

ר' אפרים פישל חיים בן ר' שמואל -- Mr. Fishel Wakschlag --

מרת שבע בת ר' יצחק אלימלך -- Mrs. Sheva Wakschlag --

Helene Zeltser and Family *in memory of Mel Zeltser, z"l*

Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah
via the Internet

Shabbat Shalom - Gmar Chatima Tova

Sponsored by David and Sarah Maslow
on the occasion of the yearzeit of David's mother,
Tovah bas Nissan, a"h, 9 Tishrei

Volume 26, Issue 46

Shabbat Shuva - Parashat Haazinu (Yom Kippur Issue Attached!)

5781 - B"H

Covenant and Conversation

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Let My Teaching Drop as Rain

In the glorious song with which Moses addresses the congregation, he invites the people to think of the Torah – their covenant with God – as if it were like the rain that waters the ground so that it brings forth its produce:

Let my teaching drop as rain,
My words descend like dew,
Like showers on new grass,
Like abundant rain on tender plants.

God's word is like rain in a dry land. It brings life. It makes things grow. There is much we can do of our own accord: we can plough the earth and plant the seeds. But in the end our success depends on something beyond our control. If no rain falls, there will be no harvest, whatever preparations we make. So it is with Israel. It must never be tempted into the hubris of saying: "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me".

The Sages, however, sensed something more in the analogy. This is how Sifrei puts it: Let my teaching drop as rain: Just as the rain is one thing, yet it falls on trees, enabling each to produce tasty fruit according to the kind of tree it is – the vine in its way, the olive tree in its way, and the date palm in its way – so the Torah is one, yet its words yield Scripture, Mishnah, laws, and lore. Like showers on new grass: Just as showers fall upon plants and make them grow, some green, some red, some black, some white, so the words of Torah produce teachers, worthy individuals, Sages, the righteous, and the pious.

There is only one Torah, yet it has multiple effects. It gives rise to different kinds of teaching, different sorts of virtue. Torah is sometimes seen by its critics as overly prescriptive, as if it sought to make everyone the same. The Midrash argues otherwise. The Torah is compared to rain precisely to emphasise that its most important effect is to make each of us grow into what we could become. We are not all the same, nor does Torah seek uniformity. As a famous Mishnah puts it: "When a human being makes many coins from the same mint, they are all the same. God makes everyone in the same image – His image – yet none is the same as another".

This emphasis on difference is a recurring theme in Judaism. For example, when Moses asks God to appoint his successor, he uses an unusual phrase: "May the Lord, God of the spirits of all humankind, appoint a man over the community". On this, Rashi comments: Why is this expression ("God of the spirits of all humankind") used? [Moses] said to Him: Lord of the universe, You know each person's character, and that no two people are alike. Therefore, appoint a leader for them who will bear with each person according to his disposition.

One of the fundamental requirements of a leader in Judaism is that he or she is able to respect the differences between human beings. This is a point emphasised by Maimonides in Guide for the

Perplexed: Man is, as you know, the highest form in creation, and he therefore includes the largest number of constituent elements. This is why the human race contains so great a variety of individuals that we cannot discover two persons exactly alike in any moral quality or in external appearance.... This great variety and the necessity of social life are essential elements in man's nature. But the well-being of society demands that there should be a leader able to regulate the actions of man. He must complete every shortcoming, remove every excess, and prescribe for the conduct of all, so that the natural variety should be counterbalanced by the uniformity of legislation, so that social order be well established.

The political problem as Maimonides sees it is how to regulate the affairs of human beings in such a way as to respect their individuality while not creating chaos. A similar point emerges from a surprising rabbinic teaching: "Our Rabbis taught: If one sees a crowd of Israelites, one says: Blessed Be He who discerns secrets – because the mind of each is different from that of another, just as the face of each is different from another".

We would have expected a blessing over a crowd to emphasise its size, its mass: human beings in their collectivity. A crowd is a group large enough for the individuality of the faces to be lost. Yet the blessing stresses the opposite – that each member of a crowd is still an individual with distinctive thoughts, hopes, fears, and aspirations.

The same was true for the relationship between the Sages. A Mishnah states: When R. Meir died, the composers of fables ceased. When Ben Azzai died, assiduous students ceased. When Ben Zoma died, the expositors ceased. When R. Akiva died, the glory of the Torah ceased. When R. Chanina died, men of deed ceased. When R. Yose Ketanta died, the pious men ceased. When R. Yochanan b. Zakai died, the lustre of wisdom ceased.... When Rabbi died, humility and the fear of sin ceased.

There was no single template of the Sage. Each had his own distinctive merits, his unique contribution to the collective heritage. In this respect, the Sages were merely continuing the tradition of the Torah itself. There is no single role model of the religious hero or heroine in Tanach. The patriarchs and matriarchs each had their own unmistakable character. Moses, Aaron, and Miriam each emerge as different personality types. Kings, Priests, and Prophets had different roles to play in Israelite society. Even among the Prophets, "No two prophesy in the same style," said the Sages. Elijah was zealous, Elisha gentle. Hosea speaks of love, Amos speaks of justice. Isaiah's visions are simpler and less opaque than those of Ezekiel.

The same applies to even to the revelation at Sinai itself. Each individual heard, in the same words, a different inflection: The voice of the Lord is with power: that is, according to the power of each individual, the young, the old, and the very small ones, each according to their power [of understanding]. God said to Israel, "Do not believe that there are many gods in heaven because you heard many voices. Know that I alone am the Lord your God."

According to Maharsha, there are 600,000 interpretations of Torah. Each individual is theoretically capable of a unique insight into its

meaning. The French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas commented: The Revelation has a particular way of producing meaning, which lies in its calling upon the unique within me. It is as if a multiplicity of persons...were the condition for the plenitude of "absolute truth," as if each person, by virtue of his own uniqueness, were able to guarantee the revelation of one unique aspect of the truth, so that some of its facets would never have been revealed if certain people had been absent from mankind.

Judaism, in short, emphasises the other side of the maxim *E pluribus unum* ("Out of the many, one"). It says: "Out of the One, many."

The miracle of creation is that unity in heaven produces diversity on earth. Torah is the rain that feeds this diversity, allowing each of us to become what only we can be.

The Person in the Parsha: R. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

Repression of the Sublime - A symposium at a major psychology conference was to be a discussion about memory and forgetfulness. But it turned out to be one of the most intense and instructive days that I have ever witnessed.

The first speaker began by insisting that the fact that we remember things is obvious. What requires explanation, he argued, is why we forget. We are hardwired to recall every event that occurs in our lives. The mechanisms of forgetfulness are a mystery and call for a program of scientific research.

The second speaker took a position diametrically opposed to the first. He believed that it is only natural that we forget. It is one of nature's wonders, he maintained, that we remember anything at all.

The third speaker took a middle of the road position. For him, the major challenge to the science of the psychology of memory was not why we remember. Or why we forget. Rather, it was why we remember certain things and forget others. And why we distort even those matters which we do remember, so that our memories are grossly inaccurate and unreliable.

It is the position of this third speaker that has kept my interest over the many years since that conference. Some have memories which are as accurate and as clear as the "flashbulb memories" that psychologists have studied as far back as World War II. For others, the memories have been partially, and sometimes substantially, repressed and can no longer be recalled. Their powerful and poignant emotional reactions have wrought havoc with the ability to accurately remember the events of that day.

Remembering and forgetting are major themes in our Jewish religious tradition. We are commanded, for example, to remember the Sabbath, to remember the lessons to be drawn from the life of Miriam, and not to forget the enmity of Amalek. In this week's Torah portion, Parshat Ha'azinu, there are at least two verses which relate to these themes. One reads, "Remember the days of yore, understand the years of generation after generation." and the other states, "You ignored the Rock who gave birth to you, and forgot God who brought you forth."

I have always been intrigued by the notion of forgetting God. Earlier in Deuteronomy, we were

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By Dr. Israel & Rebecca Rivkin, Edison, NJ,
on the yearzeit of Israel's father,
William Rivkin, a"h, (Refael Zeav ben Yisrael)
whose yearzeit is on Yom Kippur

admitted to be careful, lest “our hearts become haughty, and we forget the Lord our God.” I can understand agnostic disbelief, and I can empathize with those who have lost their faith, but I have always found it puzzling to contemplate forgetting God. Either one believes, or one does not believe, but how are we to understand forgetting Him?

Many years ago, I came across the writings of a psychologist named Robert Desoille, and it was in those writings that I’ve discovered a concept that helped me come to grips with the notion of forgetting God. Desoille coined the phrase “the repression of the sublime.” He argued that we have long been familiar with the idea that we repress urges and memories that are uncomfortable or unpleasant. We repress memories of tragedy, we repress impulses which are shameful, or forbidden. It can even be argued that this power of repression is a beneficial one to individuals and society. If individuals would not be able to forget tragedy and loss, they could potentially be forever emotionally paralyzed and unable to move on with their lives. A society whose members act on every hostile impulse, rather than repressing them would be a society which could not endure for very long.

It was Desoille’s insight that just as we repress negative memories, we also repress positive aspirations. We are afraid to excel. There is a pernicious aspect to us that fears superiority and avoids the full expression of our potential. This is especially true in the area of religion and spirituality, where we dare not express the full force of our faith and, in the process, limit our altruistic tendencies. Perhaps it is the dread of coming too close to the divine. Perhaps it is a false humility that prevents us from asserting our inner spirit. Or perhaps it is simply that we do not wish to appear “holier than thou” to our fellows.

However one understands the reasons for this phenomenon, for me, the concept of “repression of the sublime” explains the notion of forgetting God. It is as if we have faith in Him but do not have sufficient faith in ourselves to express our faith in Him, in our relationships, and life circumstances. We repress our sublime potential.

There are many impediments to thorough personal change and self-improvement. Desoille demands that we consider an impediment that never before occurred to us: we are afraid to actualize the inner spiritual potential that we all possess. We are naturally complacent, satisfied with a limited expression of our religious urges. We repress the sublime within us.

As we now have concluded the High Holidays and its truly sublime liturgy, we have allowed our spiritual emotions full range. We have dared to express the religious feelings which welled up within us during the moments of inspiration that we all surely experienced during this sacred season.

Now is the season during which our faith demands that we loosen the bonds of the repression which limits us, take the risks of more fully expressing our religious convictions, and thereby no longer be guilty of “forgetting the God who brought us forth.”

May we be successful in our efforts to free the sublime within us, to act courageously upon our religious convictions, and thereby merit the blessings of the Almighty for a happy and sweet new year.

Dvar Torah: Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

What’s the longest word in the Torah? There is only one ten letter word in the Torah, *uvmisharotecha* meaning ‘and in your kneading troughs’. It’s a description in the book of Shemot of the extent to which the plague of frogs affected the Egyptian nation, coming into all parts of their existence.

Now, what is the shortest word in the Torah? You might say ‘come on... there are many two letter

words: ‘al’, ‘el’, ‘kol’. But actually there is one single letter word. It’s in Devarim, chapter 32, verse 6. at the beginning of parshat Ha’azinu. Moshe, who is about to pass away, wants to give us a critically important message for our lives and he says: “Ha Lashem tigmalu zot” – “Is this how you’re repaying Hashem your God?” “Am naval vlo chacham” – “a vile nation that is not wise”.

Usually, we would say ‘HaLashem’, as one word, but if you have a look in the Torah – it is in bold and it is a separate word. And indeed the masoretic note in every Chumash indicates that this is a single lettered word. So why do we have this extraordinary phenomenon?

The theme is a most important one: how do we repay Hashem’s kindness? He has created us. He has created this word. He gives us of his chesed continuously – as a nation, as individuals and as families and keeps us going against the odds. And if we behave in a vile manner then it is ‘lo chacham’ – we are simply not being clever. I find this to be very special because the Torah could have said ‘you’re being foolish’ – but actually ‘lo chacham’ really means something important to us because as a people, we strive to be ‘chachamim’, we try our best to be wise. We study. We educate others. We utilise the information that we learn in order to enhance our lives and our environment. And here Moshe is telling us we’re not wise when we don’t respect the existence of Hashem and we don’t repay his kindness in an appropriate way.

Moshe Rabeinu wants us to know that there may be many paths to an appreciation of the existence and the greatness of the almighty. Of course we feel his presence emotionally, through great moments of spirituality, we feel his presence in our hearts. But ultimately, one must achieve an appreciation of the almighty through ‘chachma’ – ‘wisdom’. Some of the greatest minds, some of the most brilliant people in this world, know about the truth of the concept of a creator and the existence of Hashem and the truth of every single word, every letter, in our Torah.

Three times a day in the amidah prayer, we declare ‘ata chonein ladam da’at’ – ‘thank you God for giving us knowledge’. It is with that knowledge that we must thank Hashem for what he has done, is doing and will always do for us. And all of this we learn from the shortest word in the Torah.

OTS Dvar Torah [excerpt]

Thoughts on the connection between Shirat Haazinu and the High Holy Days - Yael Tawil

On Rosh Hashana, we want Hashem’s heavenly kingship to be revealed in our world, and on Yom Kippur, to elevate our world toward heaven. Shirat Haazinu is a testament to the eternal covenant between the nation and its Creator, and to the individual and his or her Maker. The song contains a description of all that befell the Jewish people in the past, and a description of the punishment of expulsion from the Land of Israel, the long diaspora, and finally, the promise of complete redemption. Moshe calls on the heavens and the Earth to be witnesses to the *tochecha*, the rebuke, and to the challenges and the vision of redemption.

We read the verses of Shirat Haazinu at the beginning of a new year, following a month of prayer and repentance. It is a time when each of us strives to return to ourselves and to our God, when we wish to make amends and act more righteously so that together, we can tread down a new and better path. “Give ear, O heavens, let me speak; Let the earth hear the words I utter!”

When we received the Torah on Mount Sinai, we learned the divergent approaches to speech and how the words of the Torah are to be conveyed...

Our sages offered various commentaries on the differences between hearing and listening. One of

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the commentaries relates to the different types of people that appear in this verse. The Baal Hasulam explains that listening, which implies a physical and philosophical proximity, is more suitable to *anshei hashamayim*, the “people of heaven”, who naturally deal with more spiritual matters, while hearing, which occurs when there is some distance between the two sides, is more appropriate for *anshei haaretz*, or those who deal with more mundane affairs.

According to the translators Onkelos and Yonatan ben Uziel, presumably, listening means complying, while hearing means understanding. As our sages tell us, “Hear – in any language that you can hear”.

Rabbi Nahman of Breslev explained that these were to approaches to the worship of Hashem. The first is the approach of the servant, a person who is required to obey his master’s orders, and the second is the approach of the son, one with privilege and proximity that gives him access to his father, so that he can understand the motives and rationales behind the orders he was given. “Whether as children... or as servants, our eyes are fixed on You.”

Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin suggests an idea that analyzes the connection between the opening verse of *shirat haazinu* and the holidays of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. Which of the holidays is heaven, and which is Earth?

In one sense, Rosh Hashana is heaven, and Yom Kippur is Earth. Most of the prayers during Rosh Hashana are about the kingship of heaven, about crowning Hashem in the *malchuyot* (kingships), *zichronot* (remembrances) and *shofrot* (*shofars*) sections of the Musaf amida. No confession service occurs, and sins are not mentioned. Yet during Yom Kippur, we deal with more mundane matters, and in the ten confessions we make, we mention anything that is prohibited, any confessions our mouths can pronounce.

In another sense, Yom Kippur is heaven, and Rosh Hashana is the Earth. On Yom Kippur, we are like the angels engaged in prayer before the Creator of the World. We don’t eat or drink, or attend to our other bodily needs. On Rosh Hashana, however, we are commanded as follows: “Go, eat choice foods and drink sweet drinks... for the day is holy to Hashem”

Rabbi Zevin sheds some light on the matter, explaining that both versions are correct. Both on Rosh Hashana and on Yom Kippur, we have *haazina hashamayim* (“hear, O heaven”) and *vatisma haaretz* (and the land shall hear). On Rosh Hashana, we bring heaven down to Earth, asking for the kingship of heaven to be revealed in our world: “rule over the entire world, with Your glory”. On Yom Kippur, we elevate our world to heaven and through our acts of repentance, “intentional sins are counted as merits”

This view has a personal dimension as well. The heaven and Earth reside within each and every one of us. Thoughts and logic are associated with heaven, while the acts we perform with our bodies are associated with the Earth. The connection between thought and deed must occur on two levels: from heaven to Earth (Rosh Hashana), and from the Earth to heaven (Yom Kippur). We mustn’t suffice with just good thoughts and profound intentions, if they don’t lead to any concrete action, and we mustn’t simply rejoice and strive to take action without any forethought. At the outset of this New Year, let us pray that it will be Hashem’s will that we will be able to connect heaven and Earth – to connect the spiritual and the material, the distant and the proximal, and our thoughts and heart-felt emotions with the deeds we perform. “May the year and its curses end; and may the new year begin, along with its blessings.”

Likutei Divrei Torah

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Yom Kippur Issue

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Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

How Yom Kippur Changes Us - To those who fully open themselves to it, Yom Kippur is a life-transforming experience. It tells us that God, who created the universe in love and forgiveness, reaches out to us in love and forgiveness, asking us to love and forgive others. God never asked us not to make mis-takes. All He asks is that we acknowledge our mistakes, learn from them, grow through them and make amends where we can. No religion has held such a high view of human possibility. The God who created us in His image gave us freedom. We are not tainted by original sin, destined to fail, caught in the grip of an evil only Divine grace can defeat. To the contrary, we have within us the power to choose life. Together we have the power to change the world. The following five concepts, all central to Yom Kippur, contain core Jewish values and ideas that mould us as Jews and human beings.

Shame and guilt Judaism is the world's greatest example of a guilt-and-repentance culture as opposed to the shame-and-honour culture of the ancient Greeks.

In a shame culture such as that of Greek tragedy, evil attaches to the person. It is a kind of indelible stain. There is no way back for one who has done a shameful deed. They become a pariah and the best they can hope for is to die in a noble cause. Conversely, in a guilt culture like that of Judaism, evil is an attribute of the act, not the agent. Even one who has done wrong has a sacred self that remains intact. They may have to undergo punishment. They certainly have to make amends. But there remains a core of worth that can never be lost. A guilt culture hates the sin, not the sinner. Repentance, rehabilitation and return are always possible.

A guilt culture is a culture of responsibility. We do not blame anyone else for the wrong we do. It is always tempting to blame others – it wasn't me, it was my parents, my upbringing, my friends, my genes, my social class, the media, the system, "them." That was what the first two humans did in the Garden of Eden. When challenged by God for eating the forbidden fruit, the man blamed the woman. The woman blamed the serpent. The result was paradise lost.

Blaming others for our failings is as old as humanity, but it is disastrous. It means that we define ourselves as victims. A culture of victimhood wins the compassion of others but at too high a cost. It incubates feelings of resentment, humiliation, grievance and grudge. It leads people to rage against the world instead of taking steps to mend it. Jews have suffered much, but Yom Kippur prevents us from ever defining ourselves as victims. As we confess our sins, we blame no one and take full responsibility for our actions. Knowing God will forgive us al-lows us to be completely honest with ourselves.

2. The growth mindset Yom Kippur also allows us to grow. We owe a debt to cognitive behavioural therapy for reminding us of a classic element of

Jewish faith: that when we change the way we think, we change the way we feel. And when we feel differently, we live differently. What we believe shapes what we become.

At the heart of teshuvah is the belief that we can change. We are not destined to be forever what we were. In the Torah we see Yehudah grow, from an envious brother prepared to sell Yosef as a slave, to a man with the conscience and courage to offer himself as a slave so that his brother Binyamin can go free. We know that some people relish a challenge and take risks, while others, no less gifted, play it safe and ultimately underachieve. Psychologists tell us that the crucial difference lies in whether you think of your ability as fixed or as something developed through effort and experience.

Teshuvah is essentially about effort and experience. It assumes we can grow. Teshuvah means I can take risks, knowing that I may fail but knowing that failure is not final. It means that if I get things wrong and make mistakes, God does not lose faith in me even though I may lose faith in myself. God believes in us, even if we do not. That alone is a life-changing fact if we fully open ourselves to its implications.

Teshuvah means that the past is not irredeemable. It means that from every mistake, I grow. There is no failure I experience that does not make me a deeper human being; no challenge I accept, however much I fall short, that does not develop in me strengths I would not otherwise have had. That is the first transformation of Yom Kippur: a renewed relationship with myself.

3. Our relationships with others The second transformation is a renewed relationship with others. We know that Yom Kippur atones only for sins between us and God, but that does not mean that these are the only sins for which we need to seek atonement. To the contrary: many, even most, of the sins we con-fess on Yom Kippur are about our relationships with other people. Throughout the prophetic and rabbinic literature, it is assumed that as we act to others, so God acts to us. Those who forgive are forgiven. Those who condemn are condemned.

The Ten Days of Repentance between Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur are a time when we try to mend relationships that have broken. It takes one kind of moral courage to apologise, another to forgive, but both may be necessary. Failure to heal relationships can split families, destroy marriages, ruin friendships and divide communities. That is not where God wants us to be. We are taught that after Sarah died, Avraham took back Hagar and Yishmael into his family, mending the rift that had occurred many years before.

Aharon, according to tradition, was loved by all the people because he was able to mend fractured friendships. Without a designated day, would we ever get around to mending our broken relationships? Often we do not tell people how they have hurt us because we do not want to look vulnerable and small-minded. In the opposite direction, sometimes we are reluctant to apologise because we feel so guilty that we do not want to expose our guilt.

4. Coming home The third transformation is a renewed relationship with God. On Yom Kippur, God is close. Jewish life is full of signals of transcendence, intimations of eternity. We encounter

God in three ways: through creation, revelation and redemption. Through creation: the more we understand of cosmology, the more we realise how improbable the universe is. The universe is too finely tuned for the emergence of stars, planets and life to have come into existence by chance. The more we understand of the sheer improbability of the existence of the universe, the emergence of life from inanimate matter, and the equally mysterious appearance of Homo sapiens, the only life-form capable of asking the question "Why?", the more the line from Tehillim rings true: "How numerous are Your works, Lord; You made them all in wisdom" (Tehillim 104:24).

Through revelation: the words of God as recorded in the Torah. There is nothing in history to compare to the fact that Jews spent a thousand years (from Moshe to the last of the Prophets) compiling a commentary to the Torah in the form of the prophetic, historical and wisdom books of Tanach, then another thousand years (from Malachi to the Talmud Bavli) compiling a commentary to the commentary in the form of the vast literature of the Oral Torah (Midrash, Mishnah and Gemara), then another thousand years (from the Geonim to the Achronim, the later authorities) writing commentaries to the commentary to the commentary.

And through history: many great thinkers, including Blaise Pascal and Leo Tolstoy, believed that Jewish history was the most compelling evidence of the existence of God. Sometimes God comes to us not as the conclusion of a line of reasoning but as a feeling, an intuition, a sensed presence, as we stand in the synagogue on this holy day – listening to our people's melodies, saying the words Jews have said from Barcelona to Bergen-Belsen to Bnei Brak, from Toledo to Treblinka to Tel Aviv – knowing that we are part of an immense story that has played itself out through the centuries and continents, the tempestuous yet ultimately hope-inspiring love story of a people in search of God, and God in search of a people. There has never been a drama remotely like this in its ups and downs, triumphs and tragedies, its songs of praise and lamentation, and we are part of it. For most of us it is not something we chose but a fate we were born into.

5. What chapter will we write in the Book of Life? On this day of days we are brutally candid: "Before I was formed I was unworthy, and now that I have been formed it is as if I had not been formed. I am dust while alive, how much more so when I am dead." Yet the same faith that in-spired those words also declared that we should see ourselves and the world as if equally poised between merit and guilt, and that our next act could tilt the balance, for my life and for the world (Rambam, Laws of Repentance 3:4). Judaism lives in this dialect between our smallness and our potential greatness. We may be dust, but within us are immortal longings.

Yom Kippur invites us to become better than we were, in the knowledge that we can be better than we are. That knowledge comes from God. If we are only

By Dr. Israel & Rebecca Rivkin, Edison, NJ,
on the yahrzeit of Israel's father,
William Rivkin, a"h, (Refael Zeav ben Yisrael)
whose yahrzeit is on Yom Kippur

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self-made, we live within the prison of our own limitations. The truly great human beings are those who have opened themselves to the inspiration of something greater than themselves.

Yom Kippur is about the humility that leads to greatness: our ability to say, over and over again, “Al cheit shechatanu”, “We have sinned”, and yet know that this is not said in self-pity, but rather, the prelude to greater achievement in the future, the way a champion in any sport, a maestro in any field, reviews his or her past mistakes as part of the preparation for the next challenge, the next rung to climb.

The power of Yom Kippur is that it brings us face to face with these truths. Through its words, music and devotions, through the way it focuses energies by depriving us of all the physical pleasures we normally associate with a Jewish festival, through the sheer driving passion of the liturgy with its hundred ways of saying sorry, it confronts us with the ultimate question: How will we live? Will we live a life that fully explores the capacity of the human mind to reach out to that which lies beyond it? Will we grow emotionally? Will we learn the arts of loyalty and love? Will we train our inner ear to hear the cry of the lonely and the poor? Will we live a life that makes a difference, bring-ing the world-that-is a little closer to the world-that-ought-to-be? Will we open our hearts and minds to God?

The most demanding day of the Jewish year, a day without food and drink, a day of prayer and penitence, confession and pleading, in which we accuse ourselves of every conceivable sin, still calls to Jews, touching us at the deepest level of our being. It is a day in which we run toward the open arms of God, weeping because we may have disappointed Him, or because sometimes we feel He has disappointed us, yet knowing that we need one another, for though God can create a universe, He cannot live within the human heart unless we let Him in.

It is a day not just of confession and forgiveness but of a profound liberation. Atonement means that we can begin again. We are not held captive by the past or by our failures. The Book of Life is open and God invites us – His hand guiding us the way a scribe guides the hand of those who write a letter in a Torah scroll – to write a new chapter in the story of our people, a chapter uniquely our own yet one that we cannot write on our own without being open to something vaster than we will ever fully understand. It is a day on which God invites us to greatness.

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

The climax of Yom Kippurim is its closing Ne'ilah prayer when the sun is beginning to set, when the day is beginning to wane and when we are nearing our last chance for the opportunity to receive God's loving forgiveness for the year. The excitement of these last moments is palpable within the synagogue. The prayers are at a much higher pitch and the voices are filled with intensity. During the periods of our national sovereignty, with the closing of the day, the holy Temple doors would close as well. Post Temple, with the setting sun, the very heavens, the pathway to the Divine Throne, and the gateway to God seems to be closing. “Don't lock me out” says the Jew during Ne'ilah. Don't close the doors or the gates in my face as long as there is still time, let me come in.

But there is another way of looking at this, a very opposite way. “Don't lock me in!” cries the Jew during Ne'ilah. Yes, I've been in the Temple, or I've been in the synagogue almost the entire day. I've truly felt God's presence and I've truly been warmed by His loving embrace. I feel God's divine and gracious acceptance and His total forgiveness. I've spent an entire twenty-five hours in His house, in

which I've seen the sweetness of the Lord and visited in His tent.

But now, as the doors to His house are closing, I don't want to be locked in. After all, I began this penitential period with Rosh HaShanah, the day of God's kingship. The prayers on Rosh HaShanah taught me that God did not choose Israel to live with Him in splendid and glorious isolation; He chose Israel to be a “kingdom of priest-teachers and a holy nation” to bring the message of compassionate righteousness and moral justice as a blessing for all the families of the earth. We are meant to be a light unto the nations, a banner for all peoples.

It goes without saying that we need our moments of quiet contemplation, of anguished repentance and of personal outpouring to the God who gave us life and Torah. But the ultimate purpose of this day of divine fellowship is for us to be recharged to bring God's message to the world, a world crying out for God's Word of love, morality and peace. We must leave the ivory tower of Yom Kippur and descend into the madding and maddening crowd in the world all around us.

And so, just four days after Yom Kippur we go out into the Sukkah; indeed, walking home from the synagogue, one will be able to hear many people already beginning to build their family Sukkah. And the Sukkah is the next best thing to living within the bosom of nature, feeling at one with the world around you. The walls are usually flimsy and even see-through, and the vegetation- roof must enable you to see through the greens up above to the sky. We pray together with the four species- the citron, the palm branch, the myrtle and the willow which all grow near the refreshing waters of the earth- and we pray during this week not only for ourselves or for Israel, but for all seventy nations of the world. Indeed, we are Biblically mandated in Temple times to bring seventy bullocks during the week of Sukkot on behalf of all the nations of the world.

The Sukkah teaches us one more lesson, perhaps the most important of all. The major place for us to feel God and His divine presence – after the heavy dose of Yom Kippur – is not in a Temple or a synagogue, but is rather in our familial homes. In order to go out into the world, we must first go out into our family.

The homes we build need not be that large, that spacious, or that fancy. You don't need chandeliers in the bathroom in order to feel the warmth of your home. It can be an exceedingly simple dwelling place but it must have two critical ingredients. First and foremost it must be suffused with love, love of God, love of family and love of Torah. The meals must be permeated with gratitude and thanksgiving to the God who gave us food, with words of Torah and with the realization that it is ultimately not the walls of the home which provide our protection, but it is rather the grace of the God who gives us life. And the major guests in our home are not to be Hollywood idols or sports heroes. We should invite into our home the special Ushpizin guests: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph and David, Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, Rachel, Miriam, Devorah and Rut (as you can see, in my Sukkah we add Ushpizot!).

And you will remember that the Biblical reading for Rosh HaShanah, the anniversary of the creation of the world was not the story of the Creation; it was rather the story of the first Hebrew family, the family of Abraham. Yes, we have a mandate to teach and perfect the world. But at the same time, we must remember that the first and most real world for each of us is our own individual family. We must begin the new year of reaching out to the world with a renewed reaching out to our life's partners, our children and grandchildren- and then to our neighbors and larger community and then to include the other and the stranger as well.

Dvar Torah: Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

What is more important? Our lives or the performance of mitzvot? The answer, according to our sages, comes in the Torah reading from the afternoon of Yom Hakippurim. It comes from parshat Achrei-mot, in the book of Vayikra, where the Torah tells us “asher Ya'aseh otam hadam, v'chai bahem – you must perform mitzvot in order to live through them.” So chazal tell us that if, through the performance of a mitzvah, you might (God forbid) lose your life – life is sacred and must come first – with the exception of the three cardinal sins.

So here the Torah underlines for us the critical value of life and that is why, when it comes to considerations such as Shabbat, Yom Tov and Kashrut – life must always come first.

In the targum Unkulus, the Aramaic translation of the Torah, Unkulus translates the words “V'chai bahem” – to be “v'yachai bachon chaye alma” – “in order that you will live, through them, an eternal existence” Unkulus tells us that by performing mitzvot we will merit to live forever – the soul will continue to live well beyond our physical lives here on earth. Therefore “v'chai bahem,” according to Unkulus, is a statement which refers not to this world but rather to the world to come. And as a result, we learn that by committing ourselves to torah and mitzvot, with a healthy relationship between ourselves and our creator; and between ourselves and our fellow human beings we will be investing in eternal life.

The Chiddushei Harim comes up with a great peirush, something very different. He says “v'chai bahem” means: “get a life through them”. Through the performance of mitzvot, have an exciting, exhilarating and marvellous life. Mitzvot are not given to us in order to dampen our spirit, to make life difficult – sure enough they are challenging and not always easy – but ultimately, they enhance the experience. They give us meaning. They give us a sense of fulfilment. They add simcha, true joy, to our very existence.

Over Yom Hakippurim we will be praying to God, “Zochreinu L'chaim” – “remember us for life”. So let us bear in mind these three peirushim.

First, when it comes to the fast of Yom Kippur we need to look after our lives. If there is even the tiniest hint that by fasting we could be endangering ourselves, we must eat.

Second, let's remember the peirush of Unkulus, calling upon us to be committed to the performance of mitzvot, in order please God, to invest in “chaye alma” – “everlasting life”.

And third, let's not forget that beautiful peirush of the Chiddushei Harim, whereby, through the performance of mitzvot, we will be investing in a life of great excitement, of novelty, of wonderful meaning and fulfilment.

V'chai bahem – thanks to the torah and mitzvot we can have the best of lives in this world, May Hashem indeed answer all of our prayers and bless us with a wonderful, new, happy and fulfilling year ahead, I wish you all Shabbat shalom and chatima tova.

The Reciprocity of Teshuva by Dr. Erica Brown

The 19th century commentator, Rabbi Meir Leibush ben Yehiel Michel Wisser (the Malbim), points out that Zechariah marks the end of the prophetic period. There will be no future prophets to recommend that Jews turn away from wrongdoing and turn to their Maker. This is why they will have to take their own first steps: “From this point forward, they will have to try on their own to achieve repentance.” Because the only thing we can control is our own behavior, we have to decide if we are going to turn towards someone in forgiveness and contrition or turn away. As the Malbim points out to us in a prophet-less generation, that is our challenging work. [Excerpt - for the full article, see the full version of LDT.]

This *Shabbat* is known as "*Shabbat Shuvah*," after the first word of the *Haftarah* -- "*Shuvah*" / "Return" -- which calls the Jewish People to repentance. But how does repentance work? asks R' Yosef Albo z"l (Spain; 1380-1444). After a person has committed a sinful act, what good are regret and confession, which do not undo the act? Can regret and confession bring back the person who was murdered or sanctify the *Shabbat* that was violated?

He explains: What makes person's actions worthy of praise or condemnation is that they result from *Bechirah* / Free Will, meaning both that the person chooses to perform the action and he wants that action to be performed. Thus, for example, a person who performs an act under duress is not held responsible for it. True, he chose to perform the action rather than suffer the pain or other negative consequences of refusing; however, he did not want the action to be performed.

Thus, R' Albo concludes, when a person repents due to his love of *Hashem* and truly regrets the sinful acts that he committed, he eliminates part of what made him culpable in the first place. Specifically, he indicates that his prior acts were a mistake; in fact, he did not want them to be performed. As such, he no longer deserves to be punished for those acts. (*Sefer Ha'ikarim* IV 27)

R' Mordechai Brif z"l (late 19th century rabbi of Lunno, Belarus) explains further: *Rambam z"l* writes that, deep down, every Jew wants to do the right thing. Thus, for example, there are circumstances in which a *Bet Din* may coerce a man to give a *Get* / divorce document, even though *Halachah* requires a *Get* to be given voluntarily. It is only due to the influence of the *Yetzer Ha'ra* that a Jew fails to do the right thing. When a person succeeds in freeing himself from that influence, the sinful act he performed is attributed to the *Yetzer Ha'ra*, not to the person who performed it. He is forgiven. (*Chakal Tapuchim: Drush* 4:25, 28)

Teshuvah During the Aseret Yemei Teshuvah

Rambam z"l (1135-1204) writes: "Just as a person's sins and merits are weighed at the time of his death, so the sins of every human being and his merits are weighed every single year on the *Yom Tov* of *Rosh Hashanah*. Whoever is found to be a *Tzaddik* is sealed for life. Whoever is found to be a *Rasha* is sealed for death. The *Beinoni* is given time until *Yom Kippur*. If he repents, he is sealed for life, and if not, he is sealed for death.

(*Mishneh Torah: Hilchot Teshuvah* 3:3)

R' Yitzchak Blazer z"l (1837-1907; one of the three primary students of R' Yisrael Salanter, founder of the *Mussar* movement; rabbi of St. Petersburg, Russia, because of which he is known as R' Itzele Peterburger) writes: *Rambam* appears to understand the term "*Tzaddik*" as referring to a person who has done more *Mitzvot* than *Aveirot* / sins and a "*Rasha*" to be a person who has done more *Aveirot* than *Mitzvot*. Thus, a *Beinoni* must be someone whose *Mitzvot* and *Aveirot* are exactly balanced. If so, asks R' Itzele, why is his judgment dependent on *Teshuvah*? Why can't he just perform another *Mitzvah* or two and thereby be judged a *Tzaddik*?

He explains: When *Hashem* makes Himself "accessible" to accept man's repentance, as He does during the *Aseret Yemei Teshuvah* / Ten Days of Repentance, and a person does not avail himself of that opportunity, that sin is so great that it outweighs any extra *Mitzvot* that a person might do. Thus, only *Teshuvah* can get the *Beinoni* sealed in the Book of the Living.

R' Itzele continues: The work *Reishit Chochmah* [R' Eliyahu de Vidas (1518-1592; *Eretz Yisrael*)] explains this with a parable. A band of thieves was caught and thrown in prison. Over time, they dug a tunnel and escaped. However, one member of their group chose to stay behind in the cell. When the king discovered the escape, he said to that one prisoner, "You fool! You could have escaped!" So, too, *Hashem* exclaims, "*Teshuvah* is before you, yet you are not returning!" [In another version of this parable, the king punishes the thief who did not escape because, by remaining behind, the thief showed that he did not fear the king's ability to punish him. So, too, when people do not repent, they show a lack of awe of *Hashem*.]

(*Kochvei Ohr: Ma'amar* 5)

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“Were they wise they would comprehend this, they would discern it from their end [literally, ‘to their end’].” (32:29)

R’ Simcha Zissel Ziv z”l (1824-1898; the “Alter of Kelm”) writes: It is the nature of “regular” people to admire that which rich people admire, to draw close that which rich people draw close, and to distance that which rich people distance. In contrast, they are not moved to love that which the King of the world loves--*i.e.*, “Awe of Hashem [which] is His treasure” (*Yeshayah* 33:6)--or to hate what He hates--for example, smooth talking and haughtiness; may Hashem save us from these things. This is all the result of man’s ignorance of his obligation to apply his mind to figure out what his obligations are. This is what our verse speaks about: “Were they wise, they would comprehend this”--*i.e.*, they would apply their minds to find ways to comprehend; “they would discern to their end”--they would worry about the ultimate day of judgment.

The *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 153a) relates that Rabbi Eliezer told his students, “Repent one day before you die.” They asked him, “Does man know when he will die?” He replied, “Then repent every day!” The *Alter* asks: Rabbi Eliezer’s students were great people, among them Rabbi Akiva. Did they really need the answer to be spelled out for them? Yes, because we all know we can die any day, G-d forbid, but we don’t think about it. Rabbi Eliezer’s message was that man must think about the fact that he will die, for this will spur him to repent and to seek an understanding of his obligations in this world. Knowledge does not lead to action, writes the *Alter*. Only thinking leads to action!

The *Alter* continues: Notably, man has no trouble worrying about far-fetched risks to his property, and he never stops making plans to protect his material assets. However, he doesn’t apply the same level of concern to his spiritual assets. This, the *Alter* writes, is proof that there is reward and punishment for man’s actions. G-d made it challenging for us to focus on our spiritual gains and losses in order that we may deserve reward for doing so. Our Sages say that man must serve Hashem with his *Yetzer Ha’tov* and his *Yetzer Ha’ra*. How so? Man must ask himself: Why has my *Yetzer Ha’ra* taken hold of me so strongly? It must be so that Hashem can reward me for overcoming it. (*Sefer Ha’katan*)

“Take words with you and return to Hashem.” (*Hoshea* 14:3 – from the *Haftarah*)

R’ Chaim of Volozhin z”l (Belarus; 1749-1821) writes: When a student hears a Torah teaching or *Mussar* lesson from his teacher, he cannot understand it immediately. He must delve into it to grasp its depth. “Take the words with you!” says the prophet. Take them home and reflect on them rather than thinking you understand them immediately.

(*Ruach Chaim* 3:1)

“Give [me your] ear, heavens, and I will speak; and may the earth hear the words of my mouth.” (32:1)

A well-known *Midrash* notes that the prophet Yeshayah used the same words that Moshe Rabbeinu used, but in a different order. He said (*Yeshayah* 1:2), “Hear, heavens, and give [me your] ear, earth, for Hashem has spoken.” The *Midrash* says: Moshe, who was closer to the heavens, said “give me your ear” to the heavens, while he told the earth to hear, as if from a distance. Yeshayah, who was closer to the earth, reversed the order. [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R’ Yitzchak Isaac Chaver z”l (1789-1852; rabbi of Suvalk, Lithuania, and a prolific author in all areas of Torah study) explains: Man’s relationship with Hashem has two components: Torah study and *Mitzvah* performance. Torah, which is spiritual, parallels the heavens, which are relatively abstract to us. *Mitzvot*, in contrast, are physical, for it is only on this earth, and with items that we find on earth, that they can be performed. Because our relationship with Hashem has these two distinct aspects, R’ Chaver writes, Moshe Rabbeinu chose two “witnesses” -- specifically, these two witnesses -- to the covenant with the Jewish People.

He continues: *Bnei Yisrael* in the desert lived a completely spiritual life. To the extent that they had physical needs (food, water, shelter, clothing), those were taken care of miraculously. They had no property or business dealings. In short, they were closer to an abstract, spiritual Torah than to practical *Mitzvah* observance. That is what the *Midrash* means when it explains that Moshe used words that imply that the heavens are closer. Yeshayah, in contrast, lived during the First Temple Period, when the Jewish People lived a practical existence close to the earth.

(*Si’ach Yitzchak: B’inyan Bet Nunin* § 4)

“The blemish is His children’s . . .” (32:5)

R’ Yitzchak Arieli z”l (1896-1974; *Mashgiach* of Yeshivat Merkaz Harav; author of *Enayim La’mishpat*) writes: The long exile, the loss of a homeland, being deprived of both *Eretz Yisrael* and the *Bet Hamikdash*, have caused the Jewish People to be damaged both materially and spiritually. Living among the gentile nations and learning from their actions and undesirable character traits has hurt the Jewish People inwardly. However, only the “surface” of our “insides” has been affected. The essence of the Jewish People cannot be damaged. As the *Gemara* (*Kiddushin* 36a) teaches: “No matter what, we are called His sons.” The blemish referred to in our verse is only a temporary blemish. We are still the children of the Patriarchs.

(*Haggadah Shel Pesach Shirat Ha’geulah* p.11)

The Torah reading on *Yom Kippur* morning describes the *Avodah* / Temple service that the *Kohen Gadol* performed on the Day of Atonement--most notably, his entering the *Kodesh Ha'kodashim* / Holy of Holies. Likewise, reading about the *Avodah* is one of the highlights of the *Chazzan's* repetition of *Mussaf* on *Yom Kippur*.

The *Gemara* (*Rosh Hashanah* 26a) states that since blowing the *Shofar* on *Rosh Hashanah* brings atonement, it is as if it was sounded inside the *Kodesh Ha'kodashim*. R' Yisrael Lipkin z"l (1810-1883; "R' Yisrael Salanter"; founder of the *Mussar* movement) adds that when a person hears the *Shofar*, he remembers that he is being judged, and he is like the *Kohen Gadol* entering the Holy of Holies.

Why all this fuss about the *Kohen Gadol's* entering the Holy of Holies? asks R' Srayah Deblitzki z"l (1926-2018; Bnei Brak, Israel). Does the *Kohen Gadol* offer sublime prayers for the Jewish People while he is in the inner sanctum? No! He does not utter even one word of prayer. Rather, he burns the *Ketoret* / incense offering and leaves as quickly as possible! But, *Ketoret* was offered on the Temple altar every day, including on *Yom Kippur*. What is so special about the *Ketoret* offered in the *Kodesh Ha'kodashim*, and what are we meant to learn from it?

R' Deblitzki explains: The *Kohen Gadol's* offering *Ketoret* in the *Kodesh Ha'kodashim* is meant to teach us not to be satisfied with our routine service of *Hashem*. Yes, *Ketoret* is offered on the altar every day, but we should not be satisfied with that; we should seek a higher level of service. In the same way, we should we seek to raise every aspect of our Divine service to a higher level. That, too, was the *Shofar's* call on *Rosh Hashanah*: Wake up! Snap out of your routine! (*Ani L'dodi: L'nefesh Tidreshenu* p.290)

After Yom Kippur . . .

R' Shlomo Wolbe z"l (1914-2005) writes: It is well known that the most dangerous part of a spacecraft's flight is reentry into the earth's atmosphere. If the craft does not enter the atmosphere at precisely the correct angle, it is very likely to burn up.

So, too, the most critical part of our *Yom Kippur* observance is our reentry into everyday life. Each of us becomes elevated on *Yom Kippur* to the best of his or her ability. Everyone comes closer to a life filled with spirituality. Hopefully, everyone thinks loftier thoughts on *Yom Kippur* than he thinks all year long. But *Yom Kippur* is not meant to be a day that stands in isolation. We are meant to take something from *Yom Kippur* that will positively affect our *avodah* / Divine service throughout the coming year. It may be that we strengthen our *avodah*, raise our *avodah* to a new level, or abandon some of our previous sins, but something of *Yom Kippur* must live on when the Holy Day ends. When we reenter the atmosphere of the mundane world after *Yom Kippur*, we must approach that atmosphere at the correct angle. This means not running away from *Shul* and from the Day itself, as a child escapes from class the instant the recess bell rings, for, if we do, then whatever we have gained on *Yom Kippur* will "burn up" on reentry.

This warning does not apply to *Yom Kippur* alone. The *Gemara* relates that pious men would prepare for one hour before praying and also would remain in *shul* for an hour after *davening*. Why? Because if we hurry to take off our *tefilin* and leave *shul* immediately after *Shemoneh Esrei*, we throw away some or all of the inspiration that we gained from praying. [Although we are not accustomed to remaining in *shul* for a full hour after the weekday *Shemoneh Esrei*, calmly reciting the various prayers that precede the final *kaddish* serves the same purpose.] This also applies to how we leave *Shabbat*--are we eager to throw it off, or do we allow the holiness of *Shabbat* to linger?

(*Ma'amarei Yemei Ratzon* p.105)

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On the Importance of Appeasing Those We Have Hurt

Our Sages teach that one cannot achieve atonement unless he appeases those against whom he has sinned. Some say that one cannot achieve atonement even for his sins against G-d unless he has properly atoned for his sins against man and received forgiveness. *(Kaf Ha'Chaim 606:3)*

Why? Because atoning for only some sins is like immersing only part of one's body in a *Mikvah*. Obviously, one does not attain purity by doing so. *(Mussar Ha'Mishnah)*

R' Avraham Halevi Horowitz z"l (16th century; father of the *Shelah Hakadosh*) observes:

The obligation to ask forgiveness from those we have offended does not mean doing what is commonly done, *i.e.*, that shortly before *Kol Nidrei*, one approaches his friends and asks their forgiveness. Inevitably, the friend responds, "You didn't do anything for which I have to forgive you." Then, these two friends forgive each other, something that was not necessary at all, since they were always dear to each other and would never wish each other harm.

In contrast, R' Horowitz continues, enemies tend not to ask forgiveness from one another. Rather, each one says, "If he were interested in peace, he would come to me." A wise man, however, recognizes that the true sign of strength is humility, and he would take the initiative to appease his enemy, even if his enemy is in the wrong. *(Emek Berachah)*

R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach z"l writes: Requesting general forgiveness for all sins that one has committed against another is effective only for minor offenses. [If one committed a more serious offense, he must specify it when he requests forgiveness.] *(Quoted in Halichot Shlomo: Mo'adim p.44)*

If one who has sinned against you does not come to you to seek forgiveness, you should make yourself available to him so that he might ask forgiveness. *(Mateh Ephraim)*

Because Yom Kippur does not atone until one appeases his neighbor, one should be certain to recite the following prayer (part of *Tefilah Zakkah*) which is printed in many *Machzorim*:

"I extend complete forgiveness to everyone who has sinned against me, whether physically or financially, or who has gossiped about me or even slandered me; so, too, anyone who has injured me, whether physically or financially, and for any sins between man and his neighbor--except for money that I wish to claim and that I can recover in accordance with halachah, and except for someone who sins against me and says, 'I will sin against him and he will forgive me'--except for these, I grant complete forgiveness, and may no person be punished on my account.

"And just as I forgive everyone, so may You (*Hashem*) grant me favor in every person's eyes so that he will grant me complete forgiveness."

"For sins we committed before You with the *Yetzer Ha'ra* / evil inclination." (From the *Yom Kippur Vidui* / Confession)

Many ask: Are not all sins committed as a result of the *Yetzer Ha'ra's* influence?

R' Yeshayah Halevi Horowitz z"l (the *Shelah Hakadosh*; rabbi of Prague and Yerushalayim; died 1630) explains: Since *Hashem* is good, and He created the world for His honor, why did he create the *Yetzer Ha'ra*, which seemingly is not good, and which detracts from His honor? *Hashem* did so in order that we may be challenged by the *Yetzer Ha'ra* and may vanquish it, and thus earn eternal reward. It follows that, when a person gives in to the *Yetzer Ha'ra*, he actually is misusing that Creation, for *Hashem* never intended a person to succumb to the *Yetzer Ha'ra*. The *Yetzer Ha'ra* actually is good, for it gives us opportunities to earn reward, and we turn it into something bad. It is that which we confess here.

The *Shelah* adds: This is the meaning of the phrase in *Selichot* and the *Yom Kippur* prayers (in the paragraph beginning "סִרְנוּ מִמַּצּוֹתַיְךָ"), "You are righteous in all that has come upon us, for You have acted truthfully, while we have caused wickedness." *Hashem* has acted "truthfully" towards us, *i.e.*, He has given us the opportunity to attain the truth and earn eternity, but we have turned the *Yetzer Ha'ra* to evil purposes.

In addition, this line of the *Vidui* confesses those sins which we never committed, but which we wished we could have—for example, thinking to oneself, "If I could, I would take revenge on so-and-so," or, "If I had the money to pay for it, I would commit such-and-such sin." *(Sha'ar Ha'otiot: Yud, Yetzer Ha'tov)*

Another explanation:

R' Yosef Stadthagen z"l (German rabbi; died 1715) writes: In this line of the *Vidui*, we confess that we performed *Mitzvot* without the appropriate level of joy. The Torah (*Devarim* 28:47) warns that terrible punishments await us "because you did not serve *Hashem*, your *Elokim*, with gladness and goodness of heart." Knowing this, how could one take the risk of performing a *Mitzvah* without joy? Indeed, reason says that if one is going to perform the *Mitzvah* anyway, he may as well perform it properly and completely, *i.e.*, joyously! It can only be because of the *Yetzer Ha'ra* that we perform *Mitzvot* without joy. *(Divrei Zikaron p.53)*

"If one repents out of *Yir'ah* / fear of G-d, his intentional sins are counted as unintentional sins. If one repents out of *Ahavah* / love of G-d, his intentional sins are counted as merits." (Paraphrased from *Yoma* 86b)

R' Mordechai Brif z"l (late 19th century rabbi of Lunno, Belarus) explains: If one repents out of fear, he does not regret the sins he committed; he merely fears punishment. If he could be certain that he would not be punished, he would have no regrets at all. Thus, he does not deserve complete atonement.

In contrast, when one repents out of love, he regrets that he put distance between himself and *Hashem*, and he would gladly accept punishment if that would repair his damaged relationship with G-d. Thus, he deserves to have his sins forgiven completely. Moreover, it turns out that his sins ultimately inspired him to come closer to *Hashem*; therefore, they are counted as merits.

(Chakal Tapuchim: Drush 4:16)

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GOVERNMENT APPROVES: LOCKDOWN AS OF FRIDAY (Arutz-7 9/24/20)

The government on Thursday morning approved a full lockdown from Friday until after the holiday of Simchat Torah.

According to the outline decided upon at the Coronavirus Cabinet meeting earlier, the labor market will be significantly reduced except for vital workers. Prayers and demonstrations will also be held in capsules of up to 20 people, at a distance of up to a kilometer from their homes.

Prayers on Yom Kippur will be permitted inside the synagogues under restrictions. It was further determined that in the middle of the closure there will be an assessment of the situation in which it will be decided how to act after Simchat Torah.

The proposal will be submitted for final approval in the Knesset plenum later on Thursday. The Ministries of Finance, the Prime Minister, the National Security Council and other bodies will determine an outline regarding the public sector.

In addition, the government has approved the possibility of declaring a special state of emergency due to the coronavirus pandemic, which includes a clause restricting the demonstrations to the permitted distance of exit from one's home. The approved wording states that it will be possible to impose a fine on a demonstrator who does not maintain a distance of two meters.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu said at the start of the meeting, "We are required to impose a full lockdown for two weeks - from next Friday until the end of Simchat Torah. Then we will continue with two weeks of lockdown, I hope with fewer restrictions."

Finance Minister Yisrael Katz voted against a full lockdown, saying, "Measures to curb the disease could be promoted without fatally damaging factories and businesses in the private sector, which do not receive customers and follow the instructions of the Ministry of Health very carefully. The economic resilience of the State of Israel is part of the national resilience and must be maintained."

CHIEF RABBI OF ISRAEL HINTS WILL SUPPORT PRAYER BAN ON YOM KIPPUR (YNet 9/23/20)

Israel's Chief Rabbi David Lau on Wednesday hinted he will support the closure of synagogues on Yom Kippur if health officials were to decide "it's the right thing to do".

The religious community in Israel has criticized any attempt to close places of worship or ban public prayers, vowing to disobey the health orders if the government shuts synagogues during the Jewish High Holidays.

Only on Tuesday, Lau told Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu the religious public will not obey the guidelines until similar restrictions are imposed on demonstrations.

However, his latest comments indicate he will support the closure of synagogues "if medical officials decide this is the right thing to do, greatly reduces risk and saves lives".

"The problem is that the public will not obey the rules if the closure is not total, and in other places there will be gatherings that will not be enforced," he added.

In the meantime, Netanyahu is set to push for the tightening of the newly implemented nationwide lockdown during a coronavirus cabinet meeting later on Wednesday and is even mulling declaring the state of emergency.

The prime minister is set to demand a broader closure, immediate and significant tightening of restrictions and shuttering of additional sectors of the

economy, including Ben Gurion Airport.

MAJORITY OF ISRAELIS DO NOT PLAN TO GO TO SYNAGOGUE ON YOM KIPPUR – SURVEY (JPost 9/23/20)

The majority of Israelis do not plan to go to synagogue on Yom Kippur amid the coronavirus outbreak and national lockdown, marking a rise of 22% compared to last year, according to a survey by the Israel Democracy Institute (IDI).

The percentage of Israelis planning to go only to hear the shofar at the end of the day, only parts of the prayers or who weren't sure dropped this year compared to last year.

While the percentage of Israelis planning to go to synagogue has dropped in all sectors of religious observance, the majority of religiously observant Israelis still plan to attend services, at the very least to hear the shofar.

The survey also found that only about 29% of Israelis believe that demonstrations should be allowed during the national lockdown.

While the majority of Israelis who voted for the Labor-Gesher-Meretz list in the last elections feel that demonstrations should be allowed during the national lockdown, the majority of Israelis who voted for other parties do not agree.

Some 45% of Blue and White voters and 42% of Joint List voters feel that the demonstrations should continue, while only 14% of Likud voters and only 2% of Yamina voters feel the same.

The coronavirus cabinet met on Wednesday to discuss implementing a series of stricter regulations as part of the ongoing national lockdown, with the possibility of closing synagogues and placing limitations on protests being discussed.

Trust in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's handling of the coronavirus crisis has declined in recent months, with only 27% of Israelis expressing trust in the prime minister in the most recent survey by IDI. The sharpest decline was seen among haredi (ultra-Orthodox) Jews, especially those who

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voted for the United Torah Judaism Party, falling from 63% in August to 40.5% in September.

The majority of Israelis still trust coronavirus commissioner Prof. Ronni Gamzu's handling of the crisis, although the percentage fell by about 8% compared with August.

Less than half of Jewish-Israelis and less than a third of Arab-Israelis believe that Israeli society will be able to recover from the coronavirus crisis, according to the IDI survey.

While most Israelis believed that the coronavirus regulations were appropriate in the first wave of infection in April, only about a third of Israelis now believe that the regulations are appropriate, while the other two-thirds believe that they are either too strict or too lenient.

While a majority of the Israeli public and a large majority of Jewish-Israelis believe that the signing of peace accords trumps handling the coronavirus crisis, only 34% of Arab-Israelis believe the same.

The survey is the 12th in a series released by the IDI during the coronavirus crisis.

'ANOTHER NORMALIZATION ACCORD COMING VERY SOON' (Israel Hayom 9/24/20)

United States Ambassador to the United Nations Kelly Craft said Wednesday that another Arab country is poised to announce a normalization agreement with Israel.

In an interview with Al-Arabiya, Craft hedged that the announcement was mere days away.

A potential third Israel-Arab accord will follow the recent normalization between Israel and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. Since the three signed the Abraham Accord, there has been speculation that the next state to normalize relations with Israel could be Oman or Sudan.

HONDURAS HOPES TO MOVE ISRAEL EMBASSY TO JERUSALEM BY END OF YEAR (YNet 9/21/20)

Honduras hopes to move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv by the end of 2020, Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Sunday.

"To strengthen our strategic alliance, we spoke to arrange the opening of the embassies in Tegucigalpa and Jerusalem, respectively," Hernandez wrote on Twitter. "We hope to take this historic step before the end of the year, as long as the pandemic allows it."

The Central American nation has signaled in the past that it may move its embassy to Jerusalem. Netanyahu said the intention was to open and inaugurate their embassies before the end of the year. Israel currently has no embassy in Honduras but opened a diplomatic office there last month.

Only two countries - the United States and Guatemala - have already opened embassies in Jerusalem. The Honduran statement followed announcements by U.S. President Donald Trump and Netanyahu this month who said Kosovo and Serbia would also open embassies in Jerusalem.

The status of Jerusalem has been one of the thorniest issues in the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Palestinians want East Jerusalem, captured by Israel from Jordan in the 1967 Six-Day War, as the capital of a future state. Israel regards all of the city as its capital, including the eastern sector over which it extended its sovereignty after 1967.

POLL: LIKUD - 29 SEATS, YAMINA - 21 (Arutz-7 9/22/20)

A poll published tonight, Wednesday, on Channel 12 indicates that if an election were to take place today, the Likud would be the largest party in Israel with 29 seats.

The Yamina party wins 21 seats in the poll, Yesh Atid-Telem gets 17 seats, the Joint List 15 seats and Blue and White drops to only 9 seats.

The Shas faction wins 9 seats, Yisrael Beytenu gets 8 seats, United Torah

Judaism 7 seats and the Meretz party gets 5 seats.

Labor, Jewish Home, Geshet and Derech Eretz does not pass the electoral threshold, according to the poll.

Divided into blocs, the Right gets 66 seats, the Left-Arabs 46 and Yisrael Beytenu 8.

The poll was conducted by the MIDGAM Institute headed by Mano Geva among a representative sample of the entire population of Israel aged 18 and over including 512 respondents, with a sampling error of + 4.4%. Data was collected on September 23.

ISRAEL TO SELL \$30B IN NATURAL GAS TO EGYPT, JORDAN (Israel Hayom 9/23/20)

Israel will sell natural gas to Egypt and Jordan as part of a deal estimated at \$30 billion, Energy Minister Dr. Yuval Steinitz said Tuesday.

Steinitz was one of seven energy ministers to launch the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum via video conference at an event organized by Cairo, the seat of the forum's headquarters.

Ambassadors from forum members Italy, Greece, Jordan, Israel, Cyprus, and the Palestinian Authority, tuned in from Cairo.

The ambassadors of three other countries interested in joining the forum - France as a member state and the United States and the European Union - also participated.

The EMGF was established by Steinitz and Egyptian Energy Minister Tarek el-Molla as an informal grouping after Israel and Egypt discovered offshore natural gas fields.

Tuesday's ceremony marked the formal evolution of the forum into an internationally recognized entity. The forum is also expected to include various companies and interest groups that will participate in technical meetings on energy.

The joint statement by the forum's members said the EMGF "aims to serve as a platform that brings together gas producers, consumers, and transit countries to create a shared vision and establish a structured systematic policy dialogue on natural gas, leading to the development of a sustainable regional gas market and unlocking the full gas resource potential in the region for the benefit and welfare of its people."

It also seeks to serve as a counterforce to Russia, Lebanon and Turkey's aspirations in terms of the regional energy sphere.

"The blessed gas finds bring regional cooperation with Arab and European countries, the first of its kind in history, including contracts to export \$30 billion of blue-and-white gas to Jordan and Egypt, and that's only the beginning," Steinitz said in a statement.

BEIT SHEMESH TO OBSCURE WOMEN'S FIRST NAMES ON STREET SIGNS (JPost 9/23/20)

The Beit Shemesh city council decided on Wednesday to leave women's first names off new street signs in the new neighborhood of Neveh Shamir as part of a deal between secular and haredi council members.

Originally, the plan for the new neighborhood was to name the streets after haredi figures and subjects, but the plan later changed to include Sarah Aaronsohn and Anne Frank, although their first names will only be written in small print on the signs.

The new neighborhood is being built for the general public, not just the haredi public, but haredi representatives make up a majority on the city council leading to the decision to make the first names of Aaronsohn and Frank less visible.

"The neighborhoods of Ramat Beit Shemesh Hei and Neveh Shamir are for the general public. I was glad to hear that the street names in the neighborhood would be changed to the 'Zionist-Israeli' names but if, God forbid, as a compromise they avoid choosing street names with names of women the issue will be very serious," said Gadi Damari, a resident of Beit Shemesh.

"Just as we don't set street names in haredi neighborhoods, the haredim should do their best not to interfere in the names of our streets."

NAFTALI BENNETT: THESE ARE THE ACTIONS I WOULD HAVE TAKEN THIS EVENING AS PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL (IMRA 9/22/20)

1. Inform everyone tonight that until the end of the closure that there are no demonstrations and no prayer services. Crush the plague. There is no special consideration for any sector.
2. Already tomorrow (via Zoom) convene a national coalition of the Chief Rabbi of Israel, the Chief Kadi, the leaders of the left, the leaders of the right, the leaders of the ultra-Orthodox, the leaders of the Arabs, all the news editors in Israel, all influencers of public opinion with a clear national demand: everyone wears masks all the time and no gatherings.
3. Promote the concept of "mask instead of closure". If everyone wears masks we will defeat COVID-19 within 5-6 weeks. Operate a powerful national information campaign under in the management of ONE element in the system.
4. Instruct the Minister of Education to prepare THIS TIME SERIOUSLY the education system for operation without "Israbluff". With the advice of a coalition of education and epidemiology experts. Capsules are capsules.
5. Instruct the Projector to reach a capacity of 100,000 COVID-19 tests by October 15th. This is done by introducing more private companies such as My Heritage, using the Weizmann Institute and implementing pooling. (See the next section).
6. Set for the Projector the goal of implementing the pooling method (aggregation of 10-20 samples for one test analysis, so that testing capacity is increased by a factor of ten) across the system by October 15th, to allow unlimited daily test results in Israel (about a million). The method is used successfully in the United States, Germany, China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore, Portugal and elsewhere.
- At the same time, order for the scientists at the Weizmann Institute to implement their efficient "Weizmann 2.0" method. In short, make testing a timely, inexpensive and accessible resource for all.
7. Immediately implement wastewater monitoring technology for early detection of COVID-19 eruptions. This is a wonderful Israeli technology, which is not used in Israel (!).
8. Set a target for the recruitment of 2,500 epidemiological researchers based on dismissed El Al selectors, unemployed travel agents, tour guides, unemployed in the cultural and entertainment fields. Establish 5-6 national call centers to go into operation.
9. Immediately launch a national serological survey to map out who has already been infected, areas of infection and more. (Israel has purchased millions of serological kits).
10. Instead of relying on the GSS locating method that sends hundreds of thousands of people to frustrating false isolations, map out the movements of those verified to have COVID-19 via the epidemiological investigations so that people are sent into isolation only on the basis of the data from the epidemiological investigations carried out by the epidemiological researchers.
11. Anyone sent for isolation undergoes a COVID-19 test within 24 hours and another after 48 hours in order to release them from isolation if the test comes out negative twice. This allows millions of people to return quickly to normal functioning.
12. Establish a group of about 3,000 "isolation assistants" who are a kind of "client manager" for people in isolation: to take care of their needs, medications, food and any necessary relief. This arrangement exists in many places in the world and helps people not to be afraid to go into isolation.
13. Immediately pass legislation that imposes sanctions on anyone caught without a mask inside offices and in enclosed spaces. Recruit 15,000 unemployed to become COVID-19 inspectors.
14. Operate the "Magen Avot Plus" program, which conducts a weekly check-up of all the elderly who are in nursing homes and organized institutions and

of the staff which takes care of them.

15. Assign to the Ministry of Health the task of increasing the capacity for COVID-19 inpatient treatment from 800 to 1,200 by the beginning of November, and by 1,600 by 31 December. This is done through rapid training, creating field hospitals dedicated to COVID-19 in the north, center and south. It is unacceptable that from March until now the capacity has remained 800 patients.

16. Prepare by next week a clear plan to exit the quarantine. Target: Crushing COVID-19.

17. Instruct the Minister of Finance to present an all encompassing plan for small businesses, along with a national plan for professional training in high-end fields within three weeks. According to the plan, unemployment benefits and sickness benefits will be channeled into training provided via the private sector. Care is taken especially for the older unemployed.

18. Establish the practice of engaging in direct dialogue with the public every two days, answering all questions and without trying to present a rosy picture. Alongside this take to the field with surprise visits, twice a week, to understand the true situation on the ground.

19. Appoint someone "responsible for learning from the world" who is in continuous contact with countries which have been successful in dealing with COVID-19 to bring insights and lessons from them for immediate implementation.

20. Prepare Ben Gurion Airport for the entry and exit of passengers via quick COVID-19 tests at the airport and a clear procedure for entry and exit from the country.

SALE OF F-35S TO UAE WAS MISSED OPPORTUNITY FOR ISRAEL (Eitan Ben Eliyahu, YNet 9/20/20)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insists he did not approve the sale of F-35 fighter jets to the United Arab Emirates as part of the normalization agreement signed Tuesday.

Furthermore, the statement from the Prime Minister's Office on the issue clearly states: "The peace agreement with the UAE does not include any clause of this kind..."

Following Netanyahu's denial, the New York Times cited U.S. officials confirming without a doubt that the sale of F-35 to the UAE - which was first revealed by Ynet's own Nahum Barnea - is indeed part of the normalization agreement with the Gulf state.

For decades, Washington and Jerusalem coordinated all arm deals to Middle Eastern countries, and this time was no different. The U.S. informed Israel of the F-35 deal, giving the prime minister a chance to object.

In the past, Israel managed to stop arm sales to other countries, or at least demand changes to the weapons systems included, so that any potential threat to Israel's security would be greatly reduced.

This was the case when the U.S. sold F-15 fighter jets to Saudi Arabia and F-16 fighter jets to Egypt - and also when the Americans previously supplied weapons systems to the UAE, including the controversial sale of state-of-the-art unmanned aircraft.

When Israel supplied weapons systems to countries in which the United States has political interest, including the UAE, the deals were subject to prior, explicit approval from Washington.

Israel has never carried out an arms deal that did not receive approval from the White House.

A U.S. veto of such deals between Israel and other countries or Israel raising reservations before America sold advanced technology to Middle Eastern countries are not moves that stem solely from concerns such weapons could eventually be directed against either nation.

There are in fact a number of reasons, such as the danger that certain technology could fall into the hands of a third and possibly hostile party; the implications of such sales for the balance of military power in the region; and sometimes simply in order to get the upper hand in the commercial sector.

There have been numerous occasions when the U.S. blocked the Israeli sale of technology or weapons systems to other countries in order to prevent competition and give an economic edge to American-based companies.

Since the U.S. committed certain countries to a treaty prohibiting the sale of unconventional weapons, it has actively blocked all sale of long-range weapons systems that could potentially carry unconventional payloads.

The prime minister's stubborn insistence that he neither knew of nor approved the sale of F-35 jets to the UAE showed he was missing the point.

Netanyahu cannot claim he didn't know or didn't approve the deal, nor can he say the deal wasn't part of the initial agreement to normalize relations between Israel and the UAE.

Netanyahu should have insisted on certain conditions before Israel would agree to the sale. These conditions should have been determined by Israel's defense establishment, but they were kept in the dark by the prime minister and were never consulted.

Had Netanyahu asked the defense experts, he would have been in position to insist on maintaining Israel's military superiority before agreeing to the normalization agreement.

He would also have received a renewed, written commitment from the Trump administration to maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge, which was enshrined in law by Congress in 2017.

He could also have even received a boost in the U.S. defense aid to Israel and access to superior new military technology.

Netanyahu was wrong to pretend the sale of F-35s to the UAE was not happening. He failed in his obligation to include the defense establishment in the discussion and has endangered Israel's future security.

PRAYER? PROTEST? WHAT SORT OF STATE DOES ISRAEL WANT TO BE? (Herb Keinon, JPost 9/23/20)

Since even before Israel's inception, Zionists have grappled with a question that goes to the very core of the country's existence: What is it, or what should it be? Is it a Jewish state? A democratic state? A Jewish-democratic state, or a democratic-Jewish state?

What takes, or should take, precedence: the Jewish nature of the State of Israel, or its democratic nature?

It's a question of identity over which the fathers of Zionism pondered at length, that politicians have debated for decades, and that youth group counselors have used to trigger late-night conversations around campfires with their charges for generations.

The question has long been on Israel's public agenda. Whether there should be public bus transportation on Shabbat; whether Israel should extend its sovereignty to Judea and Samaria; whether civil marriages should be allowed, are all questions that touch on this cardinal matter.

Who thought that a matter so lofty might be resolved not in an ivory tower, the Supreme Court, or in the Knesset, but rather in a governmental body established to deal with a worldwide pandemic? Yet here we are.

On the surface, the question that the coronavirus cabinet dealt with on Wednesday regarding tightening the current lockdown seemed rather pedestrian and localized: Should weekly protests against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu be curtailed to stem the spread of the virus? Should synagogues be closed on Yom Kippur for the same purpose? Or should both be done?

But the protest vs prayer decision here will have more far-reaching ramifications than just how to flatten the coronavirus curve; it will have ramifications that go to the very core of Israel's identity.

If demonstrations, where thousands of people gather close together every week to protest against Netanyahu, are allowed – but synagogues are closed on Yom Kippur – then the state is saying that the democratic value of the right to demonstrate takes precedence over the Jewish value of prayer.

But if prayer inside synagogues is allowed while protests are banned, then the state is saying that Jewish values trump all others.

Some will argue that freedom of worship is also a democratic value, and others will maintain that protest is a decidedly Jewish value as well. But the real question here is the democratic right to protest vs the Jewish right to pray. In the Jewish-democratic State of Israel, which has the right of way?

"We are a Jewish and democratic government, and for me Judaism is first and most important," said Shas head Arye Deri. "If the government decides 'no' to praying on Yom Kippur and 'yes' to demonstrations, I do not know that I can stay in such a non-Jewish government."

Others argue the exact opposite: that if the government decides to allow Yom Kippur prayer but to ban protests, then ministers who wave the banner of democracy should feel uncomfortable remaining in a nondemocratic government.

Israel has tried gallantly over the years to avoid being forced to choose one value over the other, to accommodate both, to walk a tightrope between the two, saying Israel is – and can be – both Jewish and democratic, and that these two values need not be mutually exclusive.

This policy of skirting the issue over the years, though not flawless, has a great deal of logic to it: avoid having to decide one way or the other so as not to please one part of the population, while alienating another.

And then out of nowhere, the coronavirus comes along and drops this question squarely on the state's doorstep – when you least expect it, when the country is dealing with all kinds of other crises, when no one is looking.

Judging from the past experience dealing with these types of issues, the government will try to avoid a clear-cut decision on the matter. In this case, that means lumping the anti-Netanyahu protests and prayer in the same basket, something that may be offensive to those who see prayer as that which has sustained the Jewish people for millennia, something that cannot be said about the anti-Netanyahu protests on Saturday nights.

But if the state wants to avoid coming down clearly on either side of the Jewish vs democratic debate, if protests are permitted, synagogue prayer should be permitted as well. If one is banned, the other must be banned, too. If prayer is restricted to small groups of up to 20 outside, then similar restrictions should be clamped on demonstrations.

To those who say that in cases of preserving lives, people need not pray in a minyan and can do so individually, one can respond that people can also demonstrate outside their homes individually.

Just as there is more than one way to pray – and that if the times demand it, the synagogue can be replaced – then so, too, there is more than one way to protest.

Nowhere is it written that the only way to express one's displeasure at the government is through protests bringing thousands of people together each Saturday night near Balfour Road in Jerusalem.

Israel, wisely, has chosen over the years to refrain from choosing and making an unequivocal decision on the Jewish vs democratic debate, thereby making a statement that it sees itself as both. It is important that this policy outlive the coronavirus as well.





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SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

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The Greatest Gift

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

Parshas Haazinu is a song Moshe sings about Hashem, praising His majesty and His special relationship with the Jewish people. In the very beginning of the song, the verse states, "As I call out the Name of Hashem, declare the greatness of our Lord" (32:3). This verse is puzzling. As the entire song is a declaration of Hashem's greatness, what exactly was Moshe asking the people to add? Furthermore, why should Moshe's calling out Hashem's Name trigger the nation's declaration of Hashem's greatness?

Perhaps Moshe intended to give the Jewish people a message. They should realize that they always have the ability to call out to Hashem. When the Jewish people hear Moshe call out the Name of Hashem, they should understand that they too can raise themselves spiritually by connecting with Him. This precious gift, the opportunity to bond with the Divine, is one of the greatest kindnesses that Hashem has bestowed upon His people. This is what Moshe meant that they should declare Hashem's greatness - to praise Him for the gift of prayer.

A story is told about a king who was displeased with the behavior of one of his sons. After several warnings to improve, the king had no choice but to banish him from the castle. Before the prince left the palace, the king handed him a tiny sealed box. "Take this, my son," he said. "Although you are banished from the palace, this box may help you in times of dire need." The prince took the box and left. For a few years, the prince managed to survive without needing to open the sealed box and to use the riches it contained. One day, however, he was in such a desperate situation that he had no choice but to open the box. He expected to find it filled with diamonds, but, to his surprise, it contained a piece of paper folded over many times. He read the paper and burst into tears. It was a letter from the king allowing the banished prince to enter the palace and present any request directly to the king. That letter was a more precious gift than the finest jewels.

Prayer is our special "letter," allowing us to present our requests directly to the King. As we stand before Hashem this Yom Kippur, with the gates of heaven wide open, let us utilize this special gift to connect with Hashem and return to Him wholeheartedly.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos and a G'mar Chasima Tova!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Even though during the year we daven quietly, on Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur we daven loudly, and there is no need to be concerned that this will confuse other people because they have Machzorim to daven from. (Orach Chaim 582, 9)

Someone other than the Shaliach Tzibur should blow the Shofar, in order that the Shaliach Tzibur should not get confused with the words of the davening... (Orach Chaim 585, 4)

If he is davening from a Machzor or siddur the Shaliach Tzibur can blow the Shofar, and does not need to be concerned about getting confused. (Mishneh Berurah 14)

Why with regards to davening loudly does the Shulchan Aruch assume that everyone davens from a Machzor, while in regards to the Shaliach Tzibur the Shulchan Aruch does not assume that?

Parsha Riddle

How many Shabboses are named for their Haftorah? Which ones?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How is it possible that the one who blows Shofar does not fulfill his obligation, while those who hear the Shofar from him fulfill their obligation?

Answer: 1) If the blower does not want to fulfill his obligation, he does not fulfill his obligation, while the ones listening do fulfill their obligation. 2) If the mouth of the shofar is in a cave, those outside do not fulfill their obligation because they are only hearing the echo of the shofar. However, those inside are hearing the sound of the shofar and do fulfill their obligation.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parshas Haazinu (32:7), Hashem commands: "Remember the days of yore, understand the years of generation after generation. Ask your father and he will relate it to you, your elders and they will tell you." While this verse is often invoked in support of the study of history, the halachic tradition is actually somewhat equivocal on whether the study of history is generally even permitted.

The Rambam includes under the category of works that have no purpose or benefit "chronicles of history," and condemns their study as mere waste of time. (Introduction of the Rambam to Perek Cheilek) Similarly, the Shulchan Aruch rules that it is prohibited to read "books of wars", since this constitutes "the session of scorners" (moshav leitzim). More generally, the Shulchan Aruch seems to assert a sharp dichotomy within non-Torah literature: "books of wisdom (chochmah)" are permitted during the week, and there is a dispute over whether they may be read on Shabbos, whereas all other literature is certainly prohibited on Shabbos, and even during the week due to the aforementioned concern of moshav leitzim and additional problems. (OC 307:16-17)

It is difficult to know whether this stark distinction is really to be taken at face value. R. Simcha Bunim Cohen rules that "History is not considered an area of 'wisdom.' Thus, it is categorically forbidden to read secular history works on Shabbos. ... [I]t is forbidden to read all secular material on Shabbos ... this includes secular history books ... and certainly, fictional novels." (The Shabbos Home, pp. 57-58) Similarly, the authors of Orchos Shabbos (vol. 2 p. 391) assume that history and "the science of commerce" are not considered "wisdom", although they are unsure about economics. Even R. Cohen and these authors, however, do not (explicitly) rule that such works fall into the category of moshav leitzim and are prohibited during the week. Perhaps there are actually three categories of literature: works of "wisdom", which may be read during the week and according to some opinions, even on Shabbos; works of "serious" history and fiction, which are prohibited according to all opinions on Shabbos, but permitted during the week; and "frivolous" literature, which is prohibited even during the week. (Cf. R. Yair Hoffman, Reading Secular Books on Shabbos, and see R. Chaim Ozer Grodzenski's introduction to Dor Yesharim)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am for the morning.
2. I am for an aliya.
3. I "ascribe greatness."
4. Ahava Raba works.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am not a shoe.
2. I have 7 (or 8) of the 13.
3. I am number five.
4. Closing time.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Shofar sounds (I am for one day this year, I am four, but really three, I am a crying memorial, I am your lawyer)

#2 Rosh Hashana (I am an inauguration, I am a court case, Tu B'shevat is similar to me. I make you taste many foods.)

The raffle has been postponed until after the shuls are reopened. We are still accepting entries to the raffle.

All children 13 and under who answer a "Who Am I?" correctly will be entered into a raffle to **WIN a Claw Machine Arcade Game**



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