

# Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts ת"ד

November 6 - 7, 2020 - 13 Cheshvan 5781 - Parshas Vayeira

Light Candles by 4:43 - Havdalah 5:42

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week by

The Edeson & Stern Families and Friends in honor of Charles Blum's (Buddy) 91<sup>st</sup> Birthday Arleeta & Ivan Lerner in memory of Shmuel ben Dovid, Z"l (Sam Axelrod) on his 12<sup>th</sup> Yahrzeit Debbie and Jeffrey Weinstein in honor of the B'nos Mitzvah of their daughters, Lily and Hannah.

## Mazal Tov

- **Jennifer & Yitzhak Cohen** on the engagement of their son Max to Daria Karpova of Tel Aviv. Mazal Tov to grandmother Grace Weiner and to the entire Cohen family.
- **Nancy Karkowsky** and family on the marriage of her son, Rafi Karkowsky, to Alexandra Perloe, daughter of Paulette Jellinek and Sidney Perloe of Philadelphia, PA. The Chuppah and celebration took place on Sunday, October 25, in Philadelphia. May both families have the opportunity to share many Smachot together.
- **Dena & Avi Kotek** on the birth of a boy. Mazal Tov to the extended Kotek and Topper families.
- **Sarah & David Maslow** on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, Shalom Yeshaya Lebowitz, son of Aleeza & Rabbi Natanel Lebowitz of Ramat Bet Shemesh.
- **Sarah & David Maslow** on the Bat Mitzvah of their granddaughters Aderet and Tehila, daughters of their children Jonathan & Bat-Sheva Maslow of Riverdale, NY.
- **Jeff & Debbie Weinstein** on the B'nos Mitzvah of their daughters, Lily and Hannah. Mazal Tov also to all of the honorary Kemp Mill Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, and cousins.

## Condolences

- **Sol & Marcelle Chalom** on the passing of their nephew, Sammy Wahba. The funeral took place on Wednesday.
- **Robert Zak** on the passing of his mother, Elsie Zak, Aliza Basya bas Dov Hakohein. Robert is observing Shiva until Sunday morning. He may be reached during Shiva on Zoom, 8:00pm - 9:00pm on Motzei Shabbos, Meeting ID: 770 3369 1592 Passcode: Zak (online) or 684044 (call-in 301-715-8592), or by phone 646-238-0700. Mishnayos study signup at: <https://www.lzechernishmas.com/signup.php?id=8081>

## Shabbos 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](mailto:minyan@yise.org)

### Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 4:43
- Mincha: 4:50

If you Daven Kabbalos Shabbos prior to Shkia (5:01 PM), it is preferable to Daven Mincha prior to Plag (3:56 PM).

### Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00, 9:00, 9:30, 9:00 (Sephardi)
- Mincha: 2:00, 3:30, 4:00 (Sephardi)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 5:42

## 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**.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday, 7:30 PM - **Zoom A**, will not meet on Sunday.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), Sundays at 9:15 AM, **Zoom A**. Note special time for November 8.
  - **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 at 8:00 PM, **Zoom A**.
  - **GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch and Learn for Men and Women** - Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM
    - Unraveling the Navi with Rabbi Hillel Shaps, **Zoom B**.
  - **Rabbi Tuvia Grauman** - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, Sundays at 10:00 AM, **Zoom F**.
  - **Rabbi Yonatan Zakem's** Shiur for men & women, Pearls of Prayer, exploring the depth and meaning of our daily prayers. Sunday evenings, will resume on Chanukah.
  - **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](mailto:hshaps@gwckollel.org) 347-869-9361.
    - For Men & Women - **Zoom C** (except as noted):
      - Mondays: (for men only) Rabbi H. Shaps, On the Same Page Gemara, **Zoom B**.
      - Tuesdays: Rabbi Winter - Torah Topics
      - Wednesdays: Rabbi Grossman - Reading Responsa
      - Thursdays: Rabbi Grossman - Parshas Hashavua, 9:00 PM
    - For Women - **Zoom D**:
      - Mondays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Parsha Journeys
      - Tuesdays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Bereishis in-Depth
  - **Semichat Chaver Program**, Tuesdays at 9:00 PM with Rabbi Hillel Shaps. For more information, please contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps: [hshaps@gwckollel.org](mailto:hshaps@gwckollel.org)
  - **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiur on Daily Halachos for men & women, Tuesdays 9:15 AM, **Zoom E**.
  - **Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's** Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning Maseches Gittin on Wednesday evenings, 8:00 PM, **Zoom G**.
- 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: 349 754 2180, password GWCK  
Zoom C: ID: 746 455 2195, password GWCK  
Zoom D: ID: 601 853 4021, password Winter  
Zoom E: ID: 970 1398 4837, password 613  
Zoom F: ID: 978 8156 7874, password RabbiHyatt  
Zoom G: ID: 539 496 3506, password ygwarz



## YISE Youth Announcements

**Dor L'Dor is Back!** - It will be the usual Motzei Shabbos fun - Parasha, pizza, prizes and more - but this year virtual! Advance registration is required each week by Friday at 10:00 AM. Register at <https://yise.org/dor/dor> This Dor L'Dor is sponsored by Jay + Allison Marcus in memory of Jay's grandmother, Frances Marcus (חיה פריידא בת יעקב), Allison's grandfather, Frank Kramer, אפרים, and Jay's grandfather, Joseph HOCH יוסף בן ר' יעקב. If you have any questions or would like to sponsor, please contact Michael Shmoff at [mshimoff@yise.org](mailto:mshimoff@yise.org) See flyer for details.

**Mentalism Beyond Belief with David Jaison** - Motzei Shabbos, November 21, 7:30 PM on Zoom A. For middle and high school students. See flyer for details.

## COVID-19 Updates

- **Outdoor Minyan** - If you are interested in an outdoor Minyan without a tent, subject to weather conditions, please email Ari Elias-Bachrach at [outdoor@yise.org](mailto:outdoor@yise.org)
- 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](mailto:minyan@yise.org) with details.
- 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.

## 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](mailto: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 Chumash 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](mailto: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

- **Mr. Jacob Frenkel & Dr. Debra Frenkel** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of Jacob's mother, Sulamith Frenkel, Shulamit bas Reb Mordechai HaLevi, Z"L, on 16 MarCheshvan.
- **Nancy Karkowsky** and family on the marriage of her son, Rafi Karkowsky, to Alexandra Perloe, daughter of Paulette Jellinek and Sidney Perloe of Philadelphia, PA. The Chuppah and celebration took place on Sunday, October 25, in Philadelphia.
- **Hedy Peyser** in memory of her beloved husband, Rabbi Dr. Paul Peyser, Z"L.

### 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.

### Rabbi Rosenbaum's Wednesday Night Women's Chumash Shiur

- **Nancy Karkowsky** and family on the marriage of her son, Rafi Karkowsky, to Alexandra Perloe, daughter of Paulette Jellinek and Sidney Perloe of Philadelphia, PA. The Chuppah and celebration took place on Sunday, October 25 in Philadelphia.

### Rabbi Rosenbaum's Erev Shabbos Parsha Drasha

- **Halpern and Wakschlag families** to commemorate the 2<sup>nd</sup> Yahrzeit of our beloved husband, father, and grandfather, Rabbi Jacob Halpern, Harav Yaakov Yisrael ben Harav Usher Yeshaya, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of Cheshvan.
- **Debbie and Jeffrey Weinstein** in honor of the B'nos Mitzvah of their daughters, Lily and Hannah.

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah Presents

# DOR L'DOR

**ONLINE!**

**Family Chevrusah-Style Learning - The Same Usual Motzei Shabbos Fun, but This Year Virtual!**

- **Delicious Pizza - delivered to homes within Kemp Mill for children ages Pre-K - 6th grade**
- **Interactive online discussions**
- **Raffle of exciting prizes**

## 5781 Motzei Shabbos Times:

November 7 — 7:00 pm

November 14 — 7:00 pm

December 5 — 7:00 pm

December 19 — 7:00 pm

January 9 — 7:15 pm

January 30 — 7:30 pm

February 6 — 7:30 pm

February 20 — 7:45 pm

March 6 — 8:00pm

Register your family at  
<https://yise.org/dorldor>

Must register your children prior to  
each event by that Friday at 10am

To sponsor this program, please  
contact Michael Shimoff at  
[mshimoff@yise.org](mailto:mshimoff@yise.org)

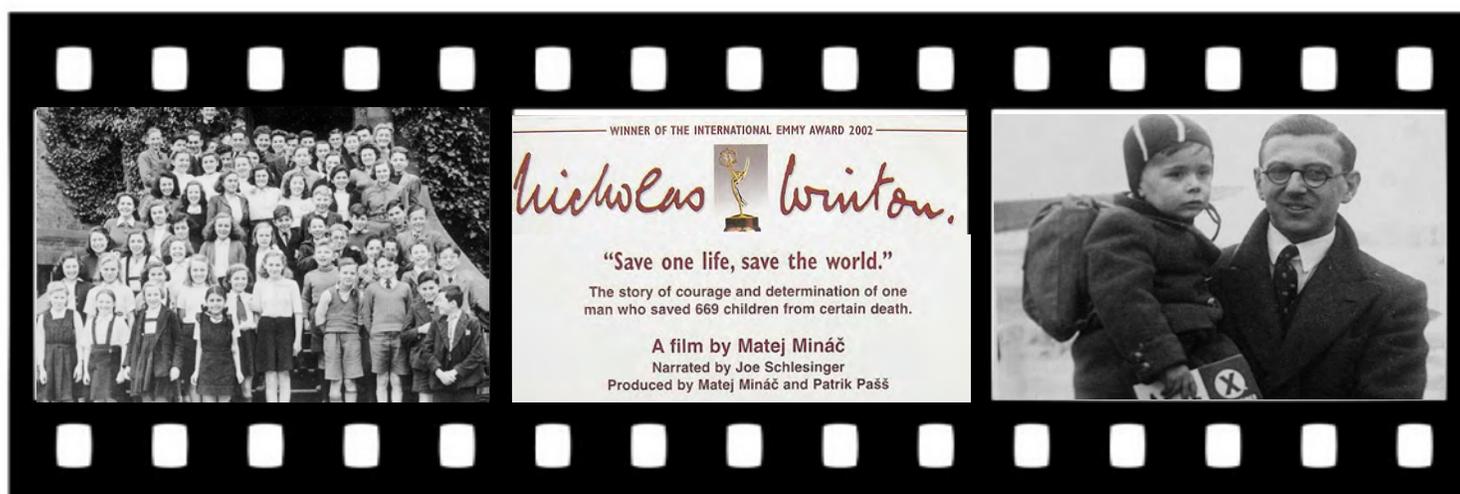


In commemoration of Kristallnacht  
Kemp Mill Synagogue and Young Israel Shomrai Emunah present

# Children Saved from the Nazis: The Story of Sir Nicholas Winton

With courage and determination, Sir Winton saved 669 Jewish children  
from certain death in the aftermath of Kristallnacht. \*

\*On Kristallnacht, November 9-10, 1938, Nazis in Germany, Austria and Sudetenland torched synagogues, vandalized Jewish homes, schools and businesses and killed close to 100 Jews.



## Sunday, November 8, 2020

7:00pm Virtual Video Presentation

8:05 pm Post-Video Discussion by our Rabbis

***“The Impact of our Actions in the Face of Challenges”***

***Featuring Rabbi Rosenbaum and Rabbi Weinberg***

*Zoom ID: 655 813 1022 Password: 365636*

"Children Saved from the Nazis" will be close-captioned.  
There will be an ASL interpreter for the post-video discussion.

# Unity in the Community in Difficult Times

Join the Greater Washington community for words of inspiration with

**Rabbi Paysach Krohn**

**Sunday, November 15th at 8:30 pm**



Sponsored by:

Am HaTorah Congregation

Berman Hebrew Academy

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Kehillas Ohr HaTorah

Kemp Mill Synagogue

Ohev Sholom Talmud Torah of Olney

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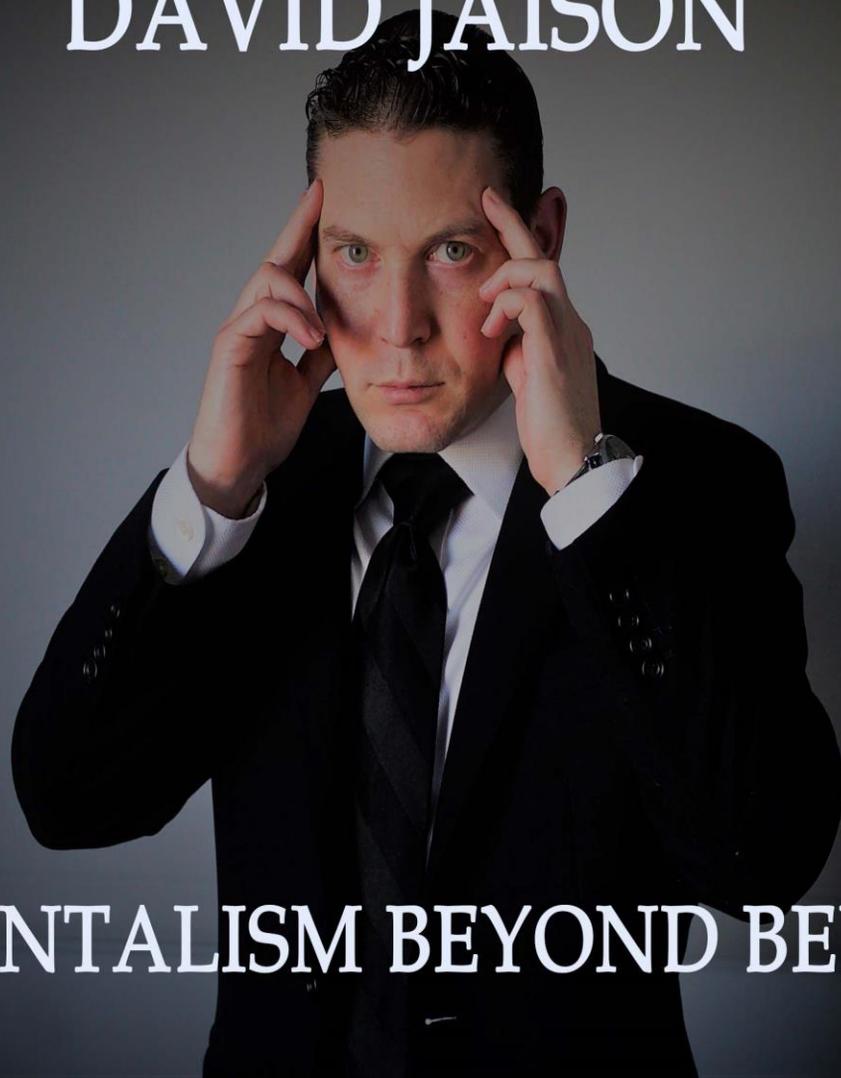
Young Israel Potomac

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah

**Zoom ID: 964 8488 1332, Passcode: 613613**

YISE/KMS Youth Departments present

DAVID JAISON



MENTALISM BEYOND BELIEF™

Who: Middle and High School Students

When: November 21<sup>st</sup> @ 7:30pm

Where: zoom.us

Meeting ID: 416 963 9000

Passcode: 492019



# ***Understanding Vaccines: The Process and the Promise***

Vaccines have mitigated or helped eradicate infectious scourges. They save millions of lives each year. We require a well-functioning public health system to create, license, distribute, monitor and evaluate vaccines and oversee this complex effort. Join our expert panel to learn about this timely and essential topic

- **How do scientists develop vaccines and how do they work?**
- **What advice can a pediatrician give about vaccines?**
- **What key lessons can we learn from successful vaccination programs?**
- **How does halacha (Jewish law) look at vaccination?**

## ***Speakers:***

- Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum, *Young Israel Shomrai Emunah*
- Jonathan Schneck, *Professor, MD, John Hopkins University*
- Lynn Trombka, MD, *pEDIatrician, Kaiser Permanente; and*
- Eliot Fishman, Ph.D, *Senior Director, Health Policy, Families USA*

**Sunday, November 22**  
**10:45 a.m. – Noon**

**Zoom ID: 416 963 9000**

**Password: 492019**

**Dial-in-number: 301-715-8592**

Organized by Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and Young Israel Shomrai Emunah; co-sponsored by Kemp Mill Synagogue, Silver Spring Jewish Center, Kehilas Ohr Hatorah of Silver Spring, South East Hebrew Congregation, and Chabad of Silver Spring.



# Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah  
via the Internet

In Memory of Beloved Father, Jacob (Jack) M. Morris, a"h,  
Yitzchak ben Shaya Ve Malka - 16 MarCheshvan  
Who left his home in Kiev, Russia to come to Pittsburgh, PA  
From the goodness of Hashem he met his beloved Evelyn G. Butler Morris, a"h  
Elayne Mayerfeld, Burton Morris, Beverly Morris

Volume 27, Issue 3

Shabbat Parashat Lech Lecha

5781 - B"H

## Covenant and Conversation: R. Jonathan Sacks

**The Courage not to Conform** - Leaders lead. That does not mean to say that they do not follow. But what they follow is different from what most people follow. They don't conform for the sake of conforming. They don't do what others do merely because others are doing it. They follow an inner voice, a call. They have a vision, not of what is, but of what might be. They think outside the box. They march to a different tune.

Never was this more dramatically signalled than in the first words of God to Abraham, the words that set Jewish history in motion: "Leave your land, your birthplace and your father's house and go to the land that I will show you."

Why? Because people do conform. They adopt the standards and absorb the culture of the time and place in which they live - "your land." At a deeper level, they are influenced by friends and neighbours - "your birthplace." More deeply still they are shaped by their parents, and the family in which they grew up - "your father's house."

I want you, says God to Abraham, to be different. Not for the sake of being different, but for the sake of starting something new: a religion that will not worship power and the symbols of power - for that is what idols really were and are. I want you, said God, to "teach your children and your household afterward to follow the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just".

To be a Jew is to be willing to challenge the prevailing consensus when, as so often happens, nations slip into worshipping the old gods. They did so in Europe throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century. That was the age of nationalism: the pursuit of power in the name of the nation-state that led to two world wars and tens of millions of deaths. It is the age we are living in now as North Korea acquires and Iran pursues nuclear weapons so that they can impose their ambitions by force. It is what is happening today throughout much of the Middle East and Africa as nations descend into violence and into what Hobbes called "the war of every man against every man."

We make a mistake when we think of idols in terms of their physical appearance - statues, figurines, icons. In that sense they belong to the ancient times we have long outgrown. The way to think of idols is in terms of what they represent. They symbolise power. That is what Ra was for the Egyptians, Baal for the Canaanites, Chemosh for the Moabites, Zeus for the Greeks, and what missiles and bombs are for terrorists and rogue states today.

Power allows us to rule over others without their consent. As the Greek historian Thucydides put it: "The strong do what they wish and the weak suffer what they must." Judaism is a sustained critique of power. That is the conclusion I have reached after a lifetime of studying our sacred texts. It is about how a nation can be formed on the basis of shared commitment and collective responsibility. It is about how to construct a society that honours the human person as the image and likeness of God. It is about a vision, never fully realised but never abandoned, of a world based on justice and compassion, in which "They will neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea".

Abraham is without doubt the most influential person who ever lived. Today he is claimed as the spiritual ancestor of 2.3 billion Christians, 1.8 billion Muslims and 14 million Jews, more than half the people alive today. Yet he ruled no empire, commanded no great army, performed no miracles and proclaimed no prophecy. He is the supreme example in all of history of influence without power.

Why? Because he was prepared to be different. As the Sages say, he was called ha-ivri, "the Hebrew," because "all the world was on one side (be-ever ehad) and he was on the other". Leadership, as every leader knows, can be lonely. Yet you continue to do what you have to do because you know that the majority is not always right and conventional wisdom is not always wise. Dead fish go with the flow. Live fish swim against the current. So it is with conscience and courage. So it is with the children of Abraham. They are prepared to challenge the idols of the age.

After the Holocaust, some social scientists were haunted by the question of why so many people were prepared, whether by active participation or silent consent, to go along with a regime that was committing one of the great crimes against humanity. One key experiment was conducted by Solomon Asch. He assembled a group of people, asking them to perform a series of simple cognitive tasks. They were shown two cards, one with a line on it, the other with three lines of different lengths, and asked which was the same size as the line on the first. Unbeknown to one participant, all the others had been briefed by Asch to give the correct answer for the first few cards, and then to answer incorrectly for most of the rest. On a significant number of occasions the experimental subject gave an answer he could see was the wrong, because everyone else had done so. Such is the power of the pressure to conform: it can lead us to say what we know is untrue.

More frightening still was the Stanford experiment carried out in the early 1970s by Philip Zimbardo. The participants were randomly assigned roles as guards or prisoners in a mock prison. Within days the students cast as guards were behaving abusively, some of them subjecting the "prisoners" to psychological torture. The students cast as prisoners put up with this passively, even siding with the guards against those who resisted. The experiment was called off after six days, by which time even Zimbardo had found himself drawn into the artificial reality he had created. The pressure to conform to assigned roles is strong enough to lead people into doing what they know is wrong.

That is why Abraham, at the start of his mission, was told to leave "his land, his birthplace and his father's house," to free himself from the pressure to conform. Leaders must be prepared not to follow the consensus. One of the great writers on leadership, Warren Bennis, writes: "By the time we reach puberty, the world has shaped us to a greater extent than we realise. Our family, friends, and society in general have told us - by word and example - how to be. But people begin to become leaders at that moment when they decide for themselves how to be."

One reason why Jews have become, out of all proportion to their numbers, leaders in almost every sphere of human endeavour, is precisely this

willingness to be different. Throughout the centuries, Jews have been the most striking example of a group that refused to assimilate to the dominant culture or convert to the dominant faith.

One other finding of Solomon Asch is worth noting. He noted that when just one other person was willing to support the individual who could see that the others were giving the wrong answer, it gave him the strength to stand up against the consensus. That is why, however small their numbers, Jews created communities. It is hard to lead alone, far less hard to lead in the company of others even if you are a minority.

Judaism is the counter-voice in the conversation of humankind. As Jews, we do not follow the majority merely because it is the majority. In age after age, century after century, Jews were prepared to do what the poet Robert Frost immortalised:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,  
I took the one less travelled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

It is what makes a nation of leaders.

## Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"The Lord said to Abram: 'Get out of your country, and from your homeland, and from your father's home, to the land that I will show you.'" Abraham's father, Terah, is often perceived as a primitive symbol of an outmoded religion, from whom his iconoclast, revolutionary son broke away to adhere to a new faith that would ultimately redeem the world. "Get out of your father's home," says God to the newly-penitent Abraham.

But what if there is another way of looking at Terah, more in accord with the actual words of the Torah? What if it was Terah who had discovered God first—rendering Abraham less a trailblazer and more a faithful follower? Perhaps Abraham was not so much a rebellious son as he was a respectful son, who continued and built upon the road laid out for him by his father?

After all, there is every reason to believe that when God tells Abraham to go forth from his country, his birthplace, to a land that God will reveal, God is communicating to a man who was already aware of Him, and of a mind-set that was most probably based on a religious perspective first learned at home.

Terah himself was at one time an idolater, but may have turned to the One God while Abraham was yet a very young lad, or even before Abraham was born. I suspect that a subtle clue testifying to the correctness of this position is to be found in an enigmatic verse:

"Terah took his son, Abram; his grandson Lot, the son of Haran; and his daughter-in-law, Sarai, the wife of his son Abram; and they set out together from Ur of the Chaldeans for the land of Canaan; but when they had come as far as Haran, they settled there. The days of Terah came to 205 years; and Terah died in Haran."

Why does Terah set out for Canaan, the very place where Abraham himself ends up at the relatively advanced age of seventy-five at the behest of the call from God? Could Abraham have been completing the journey his father had begun decades earlier?

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<http://torah.saadia.info>

And what was special about Canaan? Why would Terah have wished to journey there, and why does the Torah believe the journey significant enough to mention Terah's effort to arrive at that destination?

Further on in this portion, Abraham (then Abram) wages a successful war against four despotic kings in order to save his nephew Lot, who along with others had been taken captive by them. Malkizedek, the King of Shalem ("Jeru" = city, "Shalem" = peace) and a priest of God on High, recognizes the justice of Abram's battle against tyranny, and greets the victor with bread and wine, offering the benediction: "Blessed be Abram to God on High, Maker of heaven and earth, and blessed be God on High, Who delivered your enemies into your hand."

Abram then gives Malkizedek, whom he clearly respects, a tribute of one tenth of his spoils. The city of Shalem (Jerusalem) was the capital city of Canaan—and this is the first time it is mentioned in the Bible. Malkizedek literally means "the King of Righteousness", and Jerusalem is biblically known as the "City of Righteousness." From whence did this Malkizedek, apparently older than Abram, hear of God on High (Kel Elyon)?

Nahmanides maintains that from the very beginning of the world, the monotheistic traditions of Adam and Noah were preserved in only one place in the world—Jerusalem. Its king, Shem, son of Noah, also known as Malkizedek, was a priest to God-on-High. If this is the case, it is plausible that Terah was someone who had come to believe in this One God even in the spiritual wilds of Ur of the Chaldeans—and therefore set out for Canaan, the land of monotheism, where he wished to raise his family.

Terah may even have had personal contact with Malkizedek, who greets the son of his friend with religious words of encouragement to the victor of a religious battle in which right triumphed over might, a victory of the God of ethical monotheism. Like so many contemporary Jews who set out for Israel, Terah had to stop half way and didn't quite make it. But all along God was waiting for Terah's son to embrace the opportunity to continue where his father had left off.

The common view of Terah has Abraham defying his father's way of life as he creates his own path, becoming in effect a model for many modern day ba'alei teshuva (penitents) who attempt to radically break away from non-believing parents, rejecting everything from their past.

According to the understanding we have suggested here, however, Abraham is actually following in his father's footsteps, building on the foundation built by his father, redefining his father's way of life, and for the first time in history, paving the way for himself and others to move up the spiritual ladder by not only continuing, but also advancing.

#### **The Person in the Parsha: R. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb**

**Walking With and Walking Before** - When I was still a pulpit rabbi back in Baltimore, I would meet with a group of teenagers from time to time. The agenda was open-ended, and my goal was to encourage the group to share their feelings and attitudes freely. One of the favorite topics chosen by the kids was their school curriculum and what they found wrong with it.

I learned many things from this group of adolescents, whose critique of the curricula of the schools they attended was sharp and accurate. I particularly remember the outburst of one exceptionally creative young man. Let us call him Josh.

He was a student in a very academically oriented high school which put its major emphasis upon textual study. "What am I supposed to do with my creativity", he asked. "Where is there room in the school for me to express my artistic talents?"

I was hard-pressed to come up with an answer for Josh's pained query. All I could say was that he was personally experiencing a tension which pervades the history of our religious faith. It is the tension between conformity to the rules and regulations of our sacred texts versus the natural and powerful human need for creative expression and innovation.

Our religion reveres tradition and continuity. Attempts to question tradition and to stake out new spiritual turf have been typically viewed in our history as heresy and rebellion. Is there no room for creative novelty in our faith?

I think that there is room for such creativity, and I think that it is none other than Abraham himself who is the first example in the Torah of innovative ingenuity, within the context of religious service.

In this week's Torah portion, Lech Lecha, we find God Himself describing Abraham as one who "walks before Me", "hit halech lefanai...". Our sages contrast this description of Abraham with an earlier description of Noah, to be found in last week's Torah portion. There we read, "Noah walked with God", "et haElokim". Noah walked with God, whereas Abraham walked before Him.

Noah walked with God and required Divine support to live his religious life. He was not able to walk before God. He could not take the initiative and strike out on his own. He needed to be certain of God's will before he could act.

Abraham, on the other hand, walked before God. He stepped out on his own and risked acting independently and creatively. He was confident in his own religious judgment and did not require God's prior approval for all of his actions. Indeed, he dared to challenge God's own judgment.

Thus, we never find Noah speaking out in defense of his generation, nor does he pray for their salvation. Abraham, on the contrary, forcefully defends sinful Sodom and Gomorrah and prays even for his adversaries.

Of Moses too, it can be said that he walked before God. He broke the tablets on his own initiative, and, according to our sages, added a day to God's own timetable for giving the Torah. In both cases, we are told that the Lord congratulated him for his bold creative actions.

I remember reading an anecdote about Rav Kook, the first chief Rabbi of the Holy Land, which illustrates his preference for the creative genius over the person who just conforms. Rav Kook once had to decide a halachic issue by resolving a disagreement between two great Talmudic authorities. The dispute was between the author of Darchei Teshuvah, a monumental anthology of halachic dicta, and the Maharsham, who authored many volumes in response to questions arising from the circumstances of new technological inventions.

Rav Kook decided in favor of the Maharsham over the Darchei Teshuva. He argued that whereas the latter was a gaon me'asef, a genius at recording the opinions of others, the former was a gaon yotzer, an inventive genius. The creative authority trumped the expert anthologist.

One of the areas of psychology which has always fascinated me has been the research on the phenomenon of human creativity. One line of that research suggests that there are two modes of thought of which we are all capable, although some of us are better at one and some are better at the other.

There are those of us who are convergent thinkers. Our ideas connect and ultimately merge with the ideas of our predecessors and peers. Others think divergently, and their ideas veer from earlier norms and carve out new paths and different solutions.

The contrast between Abraham and Noah suggests that although Abraham was the model of ultimate

## Likutei Divrei Torah

obedience to God's will, he nevertheless was capable of divergent thinking. He was able to walk before God. Noah, however, could only think convergently and, figuratively speaking, needed to hold God's hand.

It is important that we realize that creativity is not at odds with spirituality and with faithful adherence to meticulous religious observance. We must not be afraid of our own powers of creative thinking.

The realization that there is a place for creativity in the worship of the Almighty is especially essential for those who are responsible for the curricula of our educational institutions. They must be on guard never to stifle the wonderful creative impulses which typify youth. They must cultivate those impulses and allow for their expression within our tradition. And we must allow for the development of contemporary Abrahams, and not be satisfied to raise a generation of mere Noahs.

### **Dvar Torah: Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis**

#### **Did you know that Sheva Brachot are in the Parasha of Lech Lecha?**

Immediately after Hashem commands Avram and Sarai to uproot themselves from the land of Mesopotamia in order to make Aliyah 'el ha'aretz asher areka' – to the land which Hashem will show them. Hashem follows up by giving seven blessings to Avram; 'Ve'escha L'goi gadol' – and I will make you into a great nation, 'v'avarechecha' – and I will bless you, 'Veagadla Shmecha' – and I will make your name great, 'v'heye bracha' – and you will be a blessing, 'V'avarcha mevarachecha' – I will bless those who bless you, 'umcallecha a'or' – and I will curse those who curse you. And the seventh blessing is 'v'nivrechu vecha kol mishpachot ha'adama' – and may every family on earth be blessed thanks to the impact you will have on them.

Such wonderful blessings! And actually these seven blessings match the sentiments that accompany our good wishes to every bride and groom for whom we recite 'sheva brachot' under the 'chupa' and during the first seven days of their marriage. We want them to be blessed by Hashem, we want them to have a positive impact on their surroundings. We want Hashem to be with them always and to prevent others from standing in the way of their success.

There is a further strong comparison. You see the term 'lech lecha' appears twice in the bible, once in our parsha of Lech Lecha and the second, fascinatingly, in a week's time, when we will read in Parashat Va'eira, 'v'lech lecha el erez hamoria' – uproot yourself, make an Aliyah, to the land of Moriah and that's where the akeida (the binding of Isaac) took place.

What Hashem wanted to say to Avram was that it is not good enough just to make a physical Aliyah to the Holy Land. Within the Holy Land you need to make a subsequent spiritual Aliyah to Moriah – which according to our tradition stands for 'she'misham yozeit chora'ah l'yisrael' – 'from there instruction emerges for the people of Israel'. As it says in the verse 'ki metzion tezei torah' the torah comes forth from Zion' which is Moriah/Jerusalem.

Similarly we would like to inspire every bride and groom to embark on a double Lech Lecha. First of all may God bless them that they should reach the promised land of their dreams and that in their marriage they will not only bond together physically but to have a spiritual Aliyah, leading to a meaningful and fulfilled life of engagement with our torah and with our roots.

So what we find, quite unexpectedly, is that already in the Parasha of Lech Lecha, as soon as there was a couple on earth who recognised the truth of the one living God, not only did Hashem give them his blessing, he provided the key for them to be a blessing for everyone on earth.

At the beginning of this week's *Parashah*, Avraham welcomes his guests with the words (18:4), "Let *Me'at* / a little water be brought . . ." Why did he offer his guests only "a little" water?

Similarly, in next week's *Parashah*, when Eliezer goes in search of a wife for Yitzchak, he says (24:17): "Let me sip, if you please, *Me'at* / a water from your jug." Again, why "a little"?

R' Chaim Shorin z"l (mid-1800s; rabbi of Khaslavitch, Belarus) explains: In *Tanach*, the term "*Mayim Rabim*" / "many waters" is used in reference to idolatrous nations (*Tehilim* 144:7) and the *Yetzer Ha'ra* (*Shir Hashirim* 8:7). These are called "many" because they turn man away from the "One" G-d. Similarly, we find that Esav's small family is referred to as (*Bereishit* 36:6), "*Nafshot* / the souls (plural) of his house," while Yaakov's larger family is called (*Shmot* 1:5), "seventy *Nefesh* / soul (singular)." Yaakov's family is one because of their shared belief in the One. Indeed, about the Jewish People it says (*Devarim* 7:7), "You are the *Me'at* / the few."

Avraham believed that his guests were idolators who worshiped the dust on their feet (see *Rashi* to 18:4), so he told them, "Let a little water be brought and wash your feet." He meant: Wash away your false beliefs and accept the Oneness of G-d alluded to by "*Me'at*" / "a little," not a multiplicity of beliefs or ideas. Notably, the *Gematria* of the Hebrew phrase, "Let a little water be brought" equals the *Gematria* of "*Shechinah*" / the Divine Presence. (*Divrei Chaim*)

## Tefilah

This year, we will iy"H devote this space to discussing various aspects of our prayers. This week's *Parashah* is the first that mentions prayer expressly--specifically, Avraham's prayer for S'dom. Of the day after that prayer, we read (19:27): "Avraham arose early in the morning to the place where he had stood before Hashem," indicating that he returned to the place where he had prayed previously. Based on this verse, the *Gemara* (*Berachot* 6b) says: "If one establishes a fixed place for prayer, the *Elokim* of Avraham will come to his aid. And, when he passes away, they will say, 'So humble! So pious! A student of Avraham Avinu!'" [Until here from the *Gemara*]

Why is it praiseworthy to have a fixed place for prayer? R' Yosef Paznowsky z"l (1875-1942; a wood merchant in Pabianice, Poland who authored a multi-volume Torah commentary and other works) explains that praying, studying Torah, or performing a *Mitzvah* in a particular location imparts holiness to that location; therefore, it makes sense to pray in that location again. By the same token, committing a sin in a particular place imparts impurity to that place. That, he writes, is why our Sages say that complete repentance for a sin can only be achieved by withstanding the same temptation at the same location, for that drives away the impurity that was created initially. (*Pardes Yosef*)

Why is having a fixed place for prayer a sign of humility? R' Ahron Lopiansky *shlita* (*Rosh Hayeshiva* of the Yeshiva of Greater Washington) explains: Being humble means recognizing that one is but a tool to carry out *Hashem's* Will, that one's entire purpose is to serve *Hashem*. An agent who distributes \$5 million of other people's money to charity doesn't brag about how much money he gave; likewise, a humble person doesn't become haughty from being *Hashem's* agent.

Prayer is a way to recognize that we have nothing, that we are dependent on *Hashem* to fill our voids--our needs for wisdom, health, sustenance, etc. By designating a "place" to pray, we can reflect on a void waiting to be filled, which is what a "place" is. The people of S'dom failed to humble themselves, so S'dom ceased to be a place. When Avraham prayed for them, he did so at his fixed place of prayer. It may seem ironic that Avraham prayed so brazenly while emphasizing that he was "dust and ashes," but it was exactly that humility that enabled him to pray. (Heard from R' Lopiansky, 17 *Cheshvan* 5780; *Yeshurun* Vol. III p.507)

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**“Elokim has heeded the cry of the youth [Yishmael] in his present state.” (21:17)**

*Rashi z”l* explains: He shall be judged according to his actions now, and not according to what he may do in future. The angels said: “Master of the Universe, for one whose descendants will kill your children through thirst [at the time of the destruction of the Temple] will You provide a well?” *Hashem* asked them, “What is he now, righteous or wicked?” They replied, “Righteous.” *Hashem* said to them, “I will judge him according to his present deeds.” [Until here from *Rashi*]

R’ Srayah Deblitzki z”l (1926-2018; Bnei Brak, Israel) explains: *Hashem* knows the future, but He chooses not to take that knowledge into account when judging a person. However, if the person being judged is already planning future wickedness, *Hashem* does take that into account.

R’ Deblitzki adds: It would seem that a person does not need to have positive thoughts in order to be judged favorably, as long as he does not have negative thoughts. This would explain our custom of adopting stringencies for the duration of the Ten Days of Repentance--for example, eating only Jewish-baked bread. Even though we have no plans to continue practicing this stringency after the High Holidays, our neutral thoughts combined with our positive action contribute to being judged favorably.

(*Ani L’dodi: L’nefesh Tidreshenu* p.218)

**“I shall surely bless you and greatly increase your offering like the stars of the heavens and like the sand on Sefat Ha’yam / the seashore.” (22:7)**

R’ Chaim Yaakov Safran z”l (1892-1969; *Komarno Rebbe* in New York) asks: What is the significance of Avraham’s descendants being as numerous as the sand “on the seashore,” as opposed to any other sand?

He explains: When Pharaoh related his dreams to Yosef, he said (*Bereishit* 41:17), “In my dream, behold! -- I was standing upon *Sefat* / the bank of the River.” But, when Yosef recalled this event, he said (*Tehilim* 81:6), “I heard ‘*Sefat*’ [literally, in that context, ‘a language’] that was unknown to me”--that is, Yosef did not believe that Pharaoh had dreamt about a riverbank. Why? Because the prophet says (*Yeshayah* 57:20), “The wicked will be driven like the sea.” The waves of the sea represent the desires that sweep the wicked along in their wake, while the sand on the seashore/riverbank represents the restraint that those who observe the Torah practice when confronted by those waves. In our verse, Avraham is promised that his descendants would have this trait, one that Yosef knew was foreign to Pharaoh.

The *Komarno Rebbe* adds that this is the symbolism in praying at a riverbank on *Rosh Hashanah*.  
(*Pri Chaim: Moadim* p. 90)

**“Hashem appeared to him in the plains of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance of the tent in the heat of the day.” (18:1)**

*Rashi z”l* writes: [*Hashem* came] *L’vaker* / to visit the sick. Rabbi Chama the son of Chanina said: It was the third day after his circumcision and *Hashem* came and inquired into the state of his health. [Until here from *Rashi*]

R’ Daniel Feldman *shlita* (rabbi in Teaneck, N.J.) writes: Many commentaries write that the correct translation of “*L’vaker*” -- which has the same root as the first word of “*Bikur Cholim*” -- is not “visiting” but, rather, “checking into.” This supports the view that the *Mitzvah* of *Bikur Cholim* is not fulfilled by just visiting, but by looking into the patient’s needs and seeing how one can help. Here, for example, *Hashem* came to see what Avraham needed, and He saw that Avraham needed guests to whom he could provide hospitality.

At the same time, R’ Feldman notes, *Rambam z”l* ends his description of the *Mitzvah* of *Bikur Cholim* with the word “*V’yotzei*” / “And he leaves.” As much as a visitor believes he is helping the ill, part of the *Mitzvah* is, apparently, knowing when to leave.  
(*Divine Footsteps* p.45-46)



**“For we are about to destroy this place, for their outcry has become great before Hashem; so Hashem has sent us to destroy it.” (19:13)**

*Midrash Rabbah* teaches: Because the angels revealed *Hashem*’s secrets, they were not allowed to return to His inner sanctum for 138 years. [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R’ Chaim Zaichyk z”l (1906-1989; *Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshivat Bet Yosef-Novardok in Buchach, Poland; later in Israel) asks: Were the angels not sent to destroy S’dom; thus, would it not become public very soon why they were there? Moreover, did it not serve the evil people of S’dom right to hear about their fate and “twist in the wind” a bit before they were destroyed?

He explains: *Hashem* dispenses reward and punishment in precise measures, as He determines fits the good or bad deed that was done. For the people of S’dom, He determined that the suffering they would experience when their city was actually destroyed was all they deserved; apparently, they did not deserve the extra suffering of knowing their end was near. (If that knowledge would have caused them to repent, that would be a different story, but *Hashem* knew that was not the case.) Likewise, for Lot and his family, the actual fright they would experience at the moment of escaping S’dom was sufficient to atone for their sins; they also did not deserve the extra worry that the angels caused them. Therefore, the angels had no business revealing what their mission in S’dom was.

(*Ohr Chadash: Chanukah-Purim* p.7)

# ISRAEL REPORT

To provide greater exposure to primary Israeli news sources and opinions in order to become better informed on the issues, and to gain a better understanding of the wide range of perspectives that exist in Israeli society and politics.

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## MINISTERS CUT CORONAVIRUS-FINE HIKE BY HALF AFTER PRESSURE FROM ULTRA-ORTHODOX (YNet 11/3/20)

Ministers voted on Tuesday to raise fines for opening educational institutions in violation of health regulations from NIS 5,000 to NIS 10,000 - half the sum approved by the Coronavirus Cabinet - after ultra-Orthodox lawmakers protested.

As part of the measures to curb the spread of coronavirus, the entire education system has been shut down in all sectors, apart from preschools and elementary schools.

During a meeting of the Ministerial Committee for Legislation, Shas and United Torah Judaism (UTJ) ministers insisted that the increased penalty singled out their community since most violations of health directives have been recorded in ultra-Orthodox institutions.

Several MKs, egged on by United Torah Judaism co-leader Moshe Gafni, have threatened on Monday their parties will break with the coalition and vote against the bill in Knesset.

Ministers also agreed that the NIS-5,000 fine for opening businesses and holding mass gatherings, such as parties, conferences, ceremonies, festivals, and shows in violation of health regulations will be increased to NIS 10,000 instead of NIS 20,000 as proposed originally.

The Health Ministry reported Tuesday evening that 513 new cases of coronavirus have been diagnosed since midnight, putting Israel's total caseload at 316,411.

The death toll from the pathogen rose to 2,592.

Out of the 9,890 patients currently battling the disease, 392 are in serious condition, among them 171 patients on ventilators.

With 25,026 tests conducted by Tuesday evening, the national infection rate remained relatively low at 2.04%.

## UN RESOLUTION: CALL TEMPLE MOUNT SOLELY BY ITS MUSLIM NAME (Arutz-7 11/5/20)

A United Nations General Assembly committee on Wednesday adopted a resolution that referred to Jerusalem's Temple Mount solely by its Muslim name of Haram al-Sharif, the UN Watch NGO reported.

The Temple Mount resolution was one of seven resolutions passed by the General Assembly that single out or condemn Israel, with zero on the entire rest of the world.

One of the other texts approved on Wednesday condemns Israel for "repressive measures" against Syrian citizens in the Golan Heights, another renews the mandate of the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), while another renews the mandate of the UN's "special committee to investigate Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories."

Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, Gilad Erdan, presented arguments against the anti-Israel resolutions, calling them outdated and maintaining they do nothing but perpetuate the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In his remarks, Erdan highlighted why the UN has continually failed to solve the conflict.

"One of the biggest reasons for the UN's failure in ending the conflict is its continued support of UNRWA," he said. "Simply put, UNRWA's very existence makes the Israeli-Palestinian conflict unsolvable, and I don't intend to allow business as usual anymore."

Erdan pointed out how UNRWA uses its schools to spread hatred and antisemitism, inciting Palestinian children to violence, promoting terrorism

and questioning Israel's right to exist.

The Israeli Ambassador also criticized the UN's refusal to refer to Judaism's holiest site as the Temple Mount, saying that by using only the sacred esplanade's Islamic name was an "audacious attempt to rewrite history" and erase the centuries old Jewish connection to Jerusalem.

"As Minister of Public Security, I ensured that all religions had access to Jerusalem's holy sites," said Erdan. "During my term, the number of Jews visiting the Temple Mount each year more than tripled. No resolution passed here will stop that process. No resolution passed here will change the eternal connection between the Jewish people and the holiest site of our faith - the Temple Mount."

## COURT DENIES PETITION BY RABIN'S ASSASSIN TO ATTEND SON'S BAR MITZVAH (Israel Hayom 11/4/20)

The Beersheba Administrative Court on Wednesday denied a petition by Yigal Amir, who is 1995 assassinated then-prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, for a leave.

Amir asked the court to allow him to attend his son's bar mitzvah this Friday. The petition was filed as an appeal, as the warden of Eshel Prison, where Amir is serving a life sentence, denied his request.

Amir's lawyer said the ruling was "devoid any concrete reason that indicates he [Amir] may pose a threat to anyone if granted leave."

## FORMER MK: IF TRUMP LOSES, I WILL LIGHT SHABBAT CANDLES (Arutz-7 11/5/20)

Former MK Shelly Yechimovich, who currently hosts a daily radio show on Reshet Bet public radio, hopes that Donald Trump will lose the US presidential election.

If Trump loses, Yechimovich pledged she would light Shabbat candles this coming Friday night.

"My relationship with God is one-sided. I do not believe in him, but in times of extraordinary distress I ask him for things in case he exists. Every time I have

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asked, he was not petty, and he responded," she wrote on Twitter on Wednesday.

"So God, I'm asking again. Rid us of Trump. And this time, if that happens, I promise that I will light Shabbat candles for the first and only time this week," the former MK added.

Not all readers liked Yechimovich's remarks and some of them attacked her over them. One of them wrote, "I will light Hanukkah candles, Shabbat candles, and memorial candles if God frees us from the punishment of hearing and reading the exhausting musings of Shelly Yechimovich."

### **JERUSALEM CABLE CAR EXCAVATION WORK TO BEGIN IN NEXT FEW DAYS** (Times of Israel 11/4/20)

Excavation works will start within two weeks to prepare for construction of the controversial cable car planned to connect West Jerusalem with the Old City, even though the High Court has not yet ruled on a petition to scrap the project.

On Thursday, project director Shmulik Tzabari met with stakeholders on Mount Zion to explain that works to move infrastructure would soon commence at the parking lot adjacent to the Shulhan David event hall, which is currently undergoing renovation.

Existing infrastructure such as water, sewage and telecommunications systems will need to be removed.

Also last week, the Jerusalem Development Authority (JDA), which is responsible for implementing the cable car project, won approval from the Agriculture Ministry's Forest Commissioner's Unit to remove trees along the cable car's route.

Emek Shaveh, a not-for-profit organization that strives to prevent politicization of archaeology in Israel and has been leading the campaign against the project, appealed through its lawyer to the forest commissioner to freeze any tree-related action until the High Court has ruled.

The cable car, for which the government has already budgeted NIS 200 million (\$55.2 million), is planned to stretch from the First Station cultural complex in the south of the city to the Old City's Dung Gate, which is the closest entrance to the Western Wall, Judaism's most venerated prayer site. Mount Zion will host the only station along the way. A maintenance depot is to be built in the neighborhood of Abu Tor.

The project's backers insist that this will be a tourist attraction and will help relieve traffic gridlock caused mainly by tour buses.

But the plan's critics say the cable car will turn Jerusalem's most precious historic vistas into a theme park. An analysis of traffic data released in July appears to undermine the other major claim made for the cable car — that it will relieve traffic congestion along the Old City walls. The analysis suggests that an increase in shuttles would be a better, faster, and cheaper way of ferrying tourists from southern Jerusalem to the Dung Gate.

In July, in a last-ditch attempt to stop the project, opponents petitioned the High Court. The court responded by ordering the government and all the other bodies involved to detail the "factual basis" on which the cable car meets the wording of the planning law — whether it really will "serve as a tourist attraction" and "make a real contribution to tourism in the area."

The government has submitted an 81-page document reiterating its arguments, to which the petitioners may respond by November 22.

The JDA did not answer questions on the matter, but instead issued a statement saying it would "carry out out necessary activities in line with an approved plan and the legal proceedings underway."

### **PA MUST COMPENSATE FAMILY OF TERRORIST ATTACK VICTIMS** (YNet 11/3/20)

The Jerusalem District Court ruled on Monday that the Palestinian Authority must pay NIS 13 million in compensation to the family of Tzipi and Gadi Shemesh, who were killed in a suicide bombing in the capital in 2002.

The ruling came after a precedence was set two years ago holding the PA directly responsible for the act of terror that killed the the couple and their unborn twins.

The attack took place in March 2002 in central Jerusalem. The couple were walking down Jerusalem's King George street as suicide bomber Muhammad Hashika activated his explosive belt. The resulting explosion killed Tzipi on the spot and mortally wounded her husband who was taken to the hospital where he died a few hours later.

The attack also killed Yitzhak Cohen, a father of six from the city of Modiin, and wounded 80 others.

"This evening we finally have closure after many years of struggles in court," said Shahar and Shoval, the slain couple's daughters. "From the first moment what was most important to us is that justice be served."

"We wanted to say thank you to the judicial system for the ruling and the justice served... Our goal has always been to show that we can stand up to terrorist organizations. To show them we are strong in the face of what has happened to us."

The verdict comes sixteen years after the family first filed the lawsuit against the Palestinian Authority and the PLO. The suit claimed that the perpetrators of the attack were members of a Palestinian terrorist organizations that acted as a result of the PA's policy which allowed the killing of innocent Israeli civilians.

The Palestinian Authority on its part, argued that the family's claims are general and irrelevant, and that the questions they raise are complex historical questions that should not be deliberated in a court of law.

The ruling was based on the opinion of Lt. Col. (Res.) Alon Eviatar, a Palestinian expert and former Arab adviser to the Coordinator of Operations in the Territories.

According to Eviatar, the terrorist who perpetrated the attack, Muhammad Hashika, was arrested by the Palestinian Authority and released specifically to carry out the attack at the request of Abd al-Karim Avis, an officer in the PA's general intelligence apparatus.

Moreover, the materials used to make the explosive device were taken from the office of the PA's head of General Intelligence Service Tawfiq Tirawi, who paid an aide to drive the terrorist to the scene of the attack.

Fatah official Hussein a-Sheikh, now the minister in charge of relations with Israel, was also found complicit in the attack, after he gave the terrorist and others involved money and hand grenades.

In recent years, several lawsuits were filed by families of terror victims against the PA over attacks carried out during the second intifada.

Three years ago, a district court ruled that the Palestinian Authority must compensate the Ben Shalom family, who lost their parents Sharon and Yaniv Ben Shalom, in a shooting attack on Route 443, for the sum of NIS 62 million. The court determined that the PA failed to stop the attack.

In another case, the Supreme Court ruled that the Palestinian Authority would compensate the family of Amos Mantin, who was killed in a terrorist attack in Baqa al-Gharbiya in 2003. He was shot dead by a boy who was attending a PA sponsored training camp.

### **WHAT WERE THE MOST POPULAR BABY NAMES IN ISRAEL IN 2019?** (JPost 11/4/20)

David, Tamar, Muhammad and Maryam were the most popular names given to babies in Israel in 2019, according to data released by the Central Bureau of Statistics on Tuesday.

Muhammad was the most popular name for babies in Israel, and among Muslim Israelis specifically, with 2,598. Nevertheless, last year marked another drop in the number of babies given the name.

Maryam was the favorite name for Muslim girls with 541.

Among Christian Israelis, the top five names for boys were Charbel, Elias, Joud, Majed and Josef. The top five names for girls were Marya, Mila, Tia, Lin and Jouri.

Among Israeli Druze, the most popular names for boys were Adam, Ian, Joud, Sulaiman and Amir. Among girls, the most popular were Jouri, Lin and Mila.

Names given to both boys and girls included Ariel, Omer, Noam, Ori, Elya and Hallel among Jewish Israelis, and Nur, Joud and Malik among Muslim

Israelis.

The names Yosef, Adam and Amir were shared by both Jewish and Druze babies. Lian, Alin and Mor were shared by Jewish, Muslim and Druze babies. The name Moshe was most common among the lowest socioeconomic sector, while David was common in sectors two through four. Lavi was most common among sectors five through eight, and Eitan was most common among the ninth sector.

Sarah was most common among socioeconomic sectors one and two, Noa was most common among the third sector, Adele was most common in sectors four and five, and Maya was most common in six through nine.

### **STORMY WEATHER CAUSES WIDESPREAD FLOODING IN ISRAEL'S SOUTH** (YNet 4/11/20)

Stormy weather on Wednesday morning caused widespread flooding in southern Israel as wintry weather expected to continue in the coming days.

The coastal city of Ashdod appeared to have taken the biggest hit with major flooding in several neighborhoods that saw cars submerged in water. Officials said since 8am, over 35 millimeters of rain hit the southern city.

Local fire department officials said they have been called to assist residents trapped inside their vehicles.

In one incident, divers were called to look for residents trapped in a flooded basement of a residential building.

A local commander said the Fire Department is prepared for any eventuality and has increased its on duty deployment in advance. "We ask the public to follow instructions and ask four-wheelers to stay away from the flooded area in order to save both lives and property."

The city's coronavirus testing site has also been inundated by rain and roads have been blocked for traffic.

The Ashdod Municipality said in a statement that for the safety of commuters, the city has blocked off traffic in some streets. "We suggest drivers use the WAZE App to see the best routes to take. This is a winter weather system and requires public vigilance."

In addition, flooding was also reported in the central city of Yavne, while in the Haredi city of Bnei Brak a sink hole has reportedly appeared on one of the main streets, blocking the area for cars.

### **ISRAEL'S MEAT-TECH 3D RAISES \$7 MILLION** (Israel Hayom 11/4/20)

Meat-Tech 3D has raised \$7 million in a recent round of funding, the Israeli research and development company announced on Tuesday.

An alternative meat company, Meat-Tech is developing a proprietary bioprinter to deposit layers of cells in structured meat, often referred to as "clean" or "cultured" meat, without animal slaughter.

Among those leading the round were Psagot Provident and Pension Funds, along with private investors.

Noting the global protein alternatives market was showing "great momentum, Psagot's Vice President of Investments Gat Megiddo said the investment in Meat-Tech "aligns with our investment strategy focusing on high impact companies, companies which we believe have great economic potential, as well as a potentially huge contribution to the environment."

### **AN ISRAELI HOOPS STAR IN THE LONE STAR STATE** (JPost 11/4/20)

Ben-Gurion Airport has been quite desolate over the last eight months since the outbreak of the coronavirus. This emptiness was especially noticeable in August, a month in which the travel hub is usually packed with tourists and Israelis on vacation. However, it seemed that the joy of the Vigoda family from the community of Omar near Beersheba managed to fill it again.

This summer, Amit Vigoda said goodbye to his family in Israel and flew to the US to fulfill a lifelong dream. The nearly 18-year-old will be playing wheelchair basketball at Arlington University of Texas, where he will also study business administration.

The college which Vigoda is attending is considered a top-notch facility in disabled basketball and competes in the National Wheelchair Basketball Association. Founded in 1949, the NWBA is composed of 181 wheelchair

basketball teams within twenty-two conferences and consists of men's and women's, intercollegiate and youth teams throughout the United States and Canada.

Over the years, many players have left Arlington and gone on to start in the professional league in Europe, which has been Vigoda's goal since he was little.

What playing hoops has done for Vigoda's life is highlighted in a recent video he uploaded to Facebook, in which he discussed fitness and explained how the sport of basketball has given him a sense of belonging. He also has spent a lot of time teaching others to participate with a wheelchair, which is not a simple matter at all.

Vigoda, the youngest of three siblings, was born with a congenital non-connection problem of the tibia. At the age of 11, after undergoing several surgeries to try to repair the bone, he underwent amputation of his leg and has since moved around with a prosthetic leg.

"When Amit came out of the surgery, I swore he would be no different from the other children, and Amit fought to make it happen," said his mother, Zimra, to Shavvim, a website and forum designed to help people with disabilities integrate into media and communication.

Vigoda started playing basketball at a young age in the United States, where he lived for a time with his family, and when he came to Israel he started playing at the ILAN Sports Center in Ramat Gan.

"Today I declare victory in the name of mothers and fathers, uncles and aunts, foster parents and any other adult who raised a child who for some reason had difficulty in the education system," Zimra wrote a few months ago in an online post she posted.

To her, the admission of her son to Arlington University is the end of a 17-year journey – "a sometimes-frightening journey, through four education systems, in four cities and two continents."

"I just want to strengthen you, the adults who are raising a child, and dealing with a system in which anything but the mainstream is considered outcast," Zimra continued. "Today I thank the helpers and try to forgive those who have hindered [things] along the way. Do not give up and always believe in your child. Come out safe and sound again – we all encourage you."

During his time at ILAN Ramat Gan, Vigoda scored an average of 25 points per game. Lior Dror, the team's coach, says that Amit is an inspiration to the young children at the club.

"I have no doubt that he will succeed in the United States," stated Dror unequivocally. "The perseverance he had in coming to Ramat Gan four times a week is phenomenal. It shows his dedication. Already at the age of 12, I discovered him through an article made about him when he lived in the USA. I told the family that when they returned to Israel, I wanted him to play for me and it paid off. I have no doubt that he will be among the great players who will be recognized in Israel and around the world."

The coach of the Israeli wheelchair basketball national team, Ariel Otolengi, also congratulated Vigoda on the next stage in his sporting career.

"I'm happy for any of our basketball players to play abroad, both in Europe and the US," said Otolengi. "I congratulate Amit, our reserve player, on the fact that he will play in the United States, but also on the fact that he will study there. Studying in a different setting and training in a new and unfamiliar setting will only do him good. I'm sure Amit will enjoy the American experience, and his college friends will enjoy him. In my estimation, this will be a tremendous, constructive and rewarding experience for Amit."

Last week, an online video of Vigoda went viral in which he made a one-handed half-court shot from his wheelchair. If the young hoops phenom's career maintains its current trajectory, there will be plenty more highlights and memorable moments as Vigoda's basketball journey continues to take flight.

### **NORMALIZATIONS WITH ISRAEL BRING NEW CHALLENGE FOR PALESTINIANS** (Ido Zolkovitz, JPost 11/4/20)

From the onset of the political process between the Palestinian Authority and Israel, the Palestinians have worked to create a broad Arab front to support

their position and have asked the Arab world not to normalize relations with Israel until a permanent agreement is reached between the parties to establish a Palestinian state.

The entry of some Arab states into a process of accelerated normalization with Israel has led to the collapse of the PA's concept of negotiations. The current round of reconciliation talks between Fatah and Hamas can be understood against the background of the regional changes that have resulted from Israel's agreements with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

For more than a decade, there has been a mostly unsuccessful dialogue among the various Palestinian factions to unify their political system, which has been divided since June 2006, and Fatah and Hamas presently face a significant crisis of confidence. The current attempts at reconciliation, however, have different characteristics than past attempts. This time, the contacts between Fatah and Hamas are taking place when the Palestinian national movement is at one of its low points, as countries in the Arab world are turning their backs on it, and when it needs to rethink its overall strategy moving forward.

This political crisis occurs while Fatah and Hamas leadership are in a transition phase. Power struggles over the succession of PA President Mahmoud Abbas embroil Fatah, while Hamas is undergoing an election process intended to determine the leader of the movement for the next four years. As part of this process, there are power struggles between Hamas leadership in Gaza and its leaders abroad.

The reconciliation talks between Fatah and Hamas that have been taking place in Turkey, considered a member of the regional axis opposing Israel and a Hamas sponsor, reveal the extent of the crisis facing the Palestinian Authority, which suspects its traditional friends in the Middle East of turning their backs on it. The death in September of Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah – Kuwait's leader since 2006, who was in charge of Kuwait's foreign relations for some 50 years – is a symbolic illustration of the sense of loneliness felt by Palestinians due to Gulf abandonment. Al-Sabah famously repaired the relations between Kuwait and the PLO following the crisis of the first Gulf War in which PLO chairman Yasser Arafat sided with Saddam Hussein.

The younger generation that is taking over the reins of leadership in the Gulf states does not share the commitment of its parents' generation to the Palestinian issue. The younger generation chose to abandon the "Three No's" of the Khartoum Conference of 1967 (no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with Israel) in favor of establishing civil and economic peace with the State of Israel. This peace also includes political and security elements, which create ample space for the Gulf states to maneuver regionally, particularly against Iranian threats of regional destabilization.

However, despite forging closer ties with Israel, the Gulf states have not entirely abandoned the Palestinian issue. The UAE stipulated the cancellation of Israeli annexation plans as a condition for signing the Abraham Accords. Saudi Arabia, the largest and most important of the Gulf states, which spearheaded the Arab Peace Initiative in 2002 on the basis of a two-state solution, is gradually increasing its engagement with Israel, but continues to insist upon a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict before full normalization can proceed.

As these dramatic changes take place in the region, the Palestinian leadership has dropped its guard. Had it not been for the normalization measures between Israel and the Gulf states, we would not have seen the renewed efforts at reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas. In light of regional developments, the factions feel obligated to show Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip that they are trying to provide a national and political solution to the many domestic and foreign problems facing Palestinian society.

The rapprochement between Fatah and Hamas, which is being sponsored by Turkey-Qatar-Iran axis, does not come naturally to the PA's leadership. Abbas is hoping that a change of administration in the US on November 3

will allow him to break free from the dialogue with Hamas in order to rekindle the peace process. This would be done under the auspices of a new American leadership, based on a new peace plan crafted in the mold of the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative.

Against the background of the changes that have already taken place in the region, the leadership of the PA understands the Arab world is no longer waiting for its approval to forge agreements with Israel. This is a moment of truth for the old guard of the PLO. They must decide whether to return to the negotiating table with Israel and work to realize the two-state vision, or whether to allow for the continuation of the status quo. Choosing to preserve the status quo could end in the complete erosion of the scant legitimacy that the PA possesses and lead to the rise of Hamas as the dominant faction in the Palestinian national movement at the expense of Fatah.

This is not in Israel's interest. Instead, the Israeli government would be well served to foster a new diplomatic horizon for the Palestinians and to advance the two-state solution. In so doing, it would help strengthen the moderates in the Palestinian arena and not the extremists.

**THERE IS NO 'NORMAL LIFE' WITH CORONAVIRUS** (Sarit Rosenblum, YNet 11/1/20)

The second wave of coronavirus hitting Europe and the closures of varying scopes now being imposed teach us that even in countries with leaderships unburdened by corruption and with populations that tend to be more disciplined than Israelis, the pathogen is a tough adversary to beat.

This of course does not diminish Israel's responsibility for the mess in which we found ourselves in September, caused by the government's hasty and reckless exit from the first lockdown; nor does it ease the blame that Israelis share in brushing off the danger.

But the rise in cases in countries like Germany, the Czech Republic, Italy and even Sweden – all countries viewed as having a clear policy in place to fight the virus – is proof that COVID-19 remains rampant and may not be controllable at all.

The recent resurgence around the world and the rise in cases despite careful mitigation demands that we rethink the assumption that we can maintain a degree of normalcy while living alongside coronavirus.

In a reality in which any mundane activity – such as going to work or meeting family and friends – can cause contagion, it is hard to see how regular economic activity can be restored and how we ourselves can resume our normal lives.

As long as most of the population is not immune to the virus, we cannot allow hundreds of thousands of students back in school without mass contagion occurring.

Hotels cannot open their doors to guests, industry cannot return and commerce cannot expect to continue uninterrupted for any length of time when the spread is surging and hospitals are once again facing the threat of being overrun, the latter ultimately leading to an inevitable third lockdown.

In this global emergency, talk of reopening economies is unrealistic. It is time to stop fooling the public into believing we will all soon be back to normal.

We must all prepare to function under a different and painful reality, in which we must determine which services and economic activity are vital and therefore must be kept open at all costs.

We should incentivize businesses that allow employees to work remotely, and suspend all other functions until a vaccine is readily available for everyone.

We must all come to terms with the realization that lockdowns are not an indication of failure, but rather a necessary and effective measure to slow the spread of the virus.

Rather than investing money and efforts in the health of an economy that must remain shut, the government must provide funding and real and effective support to businesses and individuals.

The damage that would be caused to the economy is clear, but those in power should at least try to mitigate the danger to the very lives of their citizens.



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

**Presented by Rabbi Menachem Winter, Rosh Kollel**  
**From our archives**

Parshas Vayeira begins with the narrative of Avraham the Patriarch convalescing from his recent circumcision at the advanced age of ninety-nine. G-d appears to Avraham in the spirit of the Mitzvah to visit the infirm and to show honor to Avraham for the great Mitzvah of Milah (circumcision) that he undertook. Avraham observes three men who appear to be Arab travelers approaching. Undeterred by his recent operation or the scorching heat, Avraham excuses himself from G-d's presence and runs to the wayfarers to greet them and extend an offer of hospitality. The Torah continues to record in great detail the compassionate and kindhearted care with which Avraham tended to the journeymen, and the lavish feast he provided for them. Indeed, the Rabbis teach us that Avraham was the paradigm of loving kindness, a characteristic that was a spiritual legacy ultimately bequeathed to his progeny.

The Talmud (Shabbos 127a) deduces from the narrative of Avraham excusing himself from G-d's presence that "extending hospitality is greater than receiving the Divine Presence." This Talmudic passage is extremely perplexing. We can readily understand that it is a great Mitzvah to provide for someone in need. But how is it possible that this deed transcends the experience of prophecy inherent in receiving G-d's presence?

Rav Shach of blessed memory explains the passage as follows. Prophecy transports a person to a realm where he or she is considered to be standing before the Almighty. When we emulate G-d by modeling his conduct, however, we are considered to be "clinging" to G-d Himself. G-d acts with loving kindness, compassion, and mercy, and Avraham was following His example. Through acting in G-d's beneficent ways we are able to embrace G-d in a fashion that surpasses even prophecy.

Let us immerse ourselves in the lessons of Avraham our Patriarch and conduct ourselves with kindness and compassion to those near and far. Doing so will place us in the most coveted of places - G-d's wonderful embrace.

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**And Avrohom raised his eyes and saw – and behold a ram! – caught in the thicket... (22, 13)**

*It (the ram) was created for this purpose during the Six Days of Creation. (Rashi)*

*An old animal is not valid for being a korban. (Tosfos Yoma 65b)*

Since the ram was 2,089 years old, how could it be brought as a korban?

### Parsha Riddle

**Which mitzvah is greater than greeting Hashem?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

**How old was Avraham when he went to Eretz Yisroel for the first time?**

**Answer: 70 (Seder Olam)**

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

*In Parashas Vayeira, Sarah sees Hagar's son Yishmael "mocking," and she demands that Avraham expel them from their household. Avraham was "greatly distressed" by this, but Hashem told him to heed Sarah's demand, and he obeyed. (21:9-14)*

*R. Yaakov b. Asher explains that Sarah was punished for her expulsion of Hagar and Yishmael by the enslavement of her children, the Jewish people, in Egypt, from where they would eventually have to be expelled by Pharaoh (in reaction to the plague of the first-born – Shemos 11:1). He apparently understands that despite Hashem's endorsement of Sarah's demand, her conduct nevertheless contained an element of wrongdoing, for which she was punished. This can be understood in terms of an idea of R. Chaim Shmuelevitz that sinning against one's fellow man is like putting one's hand into a fire: negative consequences for the sinner are a law of nature, and his good intentions are utterly irrelevant. (This is the straightforward reading of Sichos Mussar #76, but see R. Avigdor Nebenzahl's Ani L'Dodi V'Dodi Li pp. 180-82 for a less radical explanation of his teacher's idea.)*

*A similar idea can perhaps be found in the Talmudic account of the preparation of the High Priest for the Yom Kippur service. The Mishnah relates that the elders would make the High Priest swear that he would not deviate from their instructions, and that he and they would then separately weep. The Talmud explains that he was offended at being suspected of being a Sadducee (who disagreed with the Pharisees on the correct manner of performing the service), and they were distressed over the possibility of having suspected a blameless individual. (Yoma 18b-19b) It was obviously necessary to suspect High Priests of that era of being Sadducees, and yet the elders wept at having suspected someone who was actually innocent!*

*There is even one instance where we find an act to be considered both righteous and sinful simultaneously even when no wrong to one's fellow man is involved. The Tosafos (Taanis 11a s.v. Amar Shmuel) explain the position of the Talmudic sage Shmuel regarding voluntary fasting to be that it is both a mitzvah and an aveirah: voluntary abstemiousness is an aveirah, but it is also a mitzvah, and on balance, the mitzvah is greater than the aveirah. This concept is certainly difficult to understand.*

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I was for day eight.
2. I am the second of the three.
3. I am named for laughter.
4. My brother tried to kill me.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. I happened on Purim.
2. I happened to cities.
3. I happened to the letter Nun.
4. Pick up your esrog...

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 A day** (For us I begin at night, I usually have two dozen, This week (for them) I will have more, A hook differentiates between me and the sea.

**#2 Bris Bein Habesarim (Covenant Between the Parts** (I am cut in half, I caused sleep, I revealed, I attracted birds.)

*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**



Visit [gwckollel.org](http://gwckollel.org) to submit your answers.

**Answer as many as you can. Each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chances of winning!**

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