

# Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts <sup>ת"ס</sup>

January 15 - 16, 2021 - 3 Shevat 5781 - Parshas Vaera

Light Candles by 4:52 - Havdalah 5:55

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week in honor of Elaine Taragin in appreciation of her gracious and expert repair of the gartelech and mantles of the Shul's Sifrei Torah, by a friend of YISE and in honor of Ed/Dad/Opa Zurndorfer's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday by his loving family.

## Mazal Tov

- **Esther & Alan Baldinger** on the birth of a granddaughter, Ahuva Perel, born to Yiscah & Rabbi Ezra Baldinger. Mazal Tov to grandparents Sorah Rivkah & David Goodman, and to the entire Baldinger and Goodman extended families.
- **Rachel & Michael Harris** on the birth of a grandson, Gavriel Zev, son of Ayala & Isaac Pearl. Mazal Tov to the big brother, great-grandparents, aunts, uncle and extended family.
- **Marla & Marty Teichman** on the birth of two great-granddaughters. Parents are Shira & Binyomin Schuck and Esther & Meyer Meth. Mazal Tov to the grandparents Rande & Manny Goldberger and Debra & Reuven Meth.

## 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 4:52
  - Mincha: 5:00, 4:55 (Sephardi)
- If you Daven Kabbalos Shabbos prior to Shkia (5:10 PM), it is preferable to Daven Mincha prior to Plag (4:09 PM).

### Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:20, 9:00, 9:30, 8:30 (Sephardi)
- Mincha: 2:30, 4:00, 4:00 (Sephardi)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 5:55

## COVID-19 Updates

- **Outdoor Minyan** - If you are interested in a Shabbos morning 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.
- 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.

## Camp Shomrai

Camp Shomrai is back for another fun-filled summer with programming for children in preschool through ninth grade! Camp runs from July 5th through August 13th. For more information or to register online, visit our website at <https://Campshomrai.org>

## 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 not meet this week on Wednesday and Thursday.
  - **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 this week Tuesday through Thursday.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), Sundays at 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Gemara Shiur for Men, Tuesdays and Fridays, 6:00 AM, **Zoom A**.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Nach Shiur, Wednesdays at 11:00 AM, **Zoom A**, will resume on January 27.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Women's Navi Shiur, now studying Sefer Yehoshua, Wednesdays at 8:00 PM, **Zoom A**, will resume on January 27.
  - **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 at 7:30 PM, **Zoom I**, will resume on January 24.
  - **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 Yitzchak Scher's** Shiur for Men and Women, Tuesdays, 1:30 PM, "A Second Look-Stories in the Torah from a Deeper Perspective", **Zoom H**.
  - **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 ygarwar  
Zoom H: ID: 713 7408 5130, password 045079  
Zoom I: ID: 269 840 3648, password online Pearls, phone 621690

## YISE Programs and Listings

**Registration for Shomrai Preschool 2021-2022 is now open!** We are excited to be offering a Torah-rich, child-centered program for children entering 2 year-old Nursery - 4 year-old Pre-K. School day runs from 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM. Extended care options available from 7:30 AM -8:30 AM and 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM. Register early for maximum savings! Visit our website for tuition rates and online registration at <https://preschool.yise.org/registration> For more information about the program email Sarah Dollman at [director@yise.org](mailto:director@yise.org)

**Grocery Drive for Holy Cross Hospital** - YISE is happy to join with the other Shuls in the area in providing much-needed food for Holy Cross Hospital employees in need, and will be making its contributions in the month of January. See the attached flyer or go to <https://wp.yise.org/grocery> for details on donating through PayPal, or directly with non-perishable items. It is important that we support those hospital employees in their time of need, when they are the ones who often provide for us in our times of need.

**UPDATE: Learning to live with COVID-19** - Motzei Shabbos, January 23, 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM on Zoom - Meeting ID: 878 2795 1873, password 699427. Organized by Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and YISE. *See flyer for details.*

**“Challenges and Opportunities of Raising a Jewish Child in Our Times”** with Rabbi Rosenbaum. Presented by YISE Youth on Sunday January 24, at 8:00 PM on Zoom A. For parents of preschool and early elementary school children.

**Ask The Rabbi!** Come join our virtual, interactive monthly program featuring different Halachos of Shabbos! This month’s topic: Borer (selecting) on Shabbos and Yom Tov. How am I supposed to separate the food I want from other foods on Shabbos? Is it really true that borer applies to cleaning up a board game? Tuesday, January 26, 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM on Zoom A. The first 45 minutes are for Shailos submitted in advance and the last 15 minutes are for Q & A. Send in your questions related to Borer to: [AskTheRabbi@yise.org](mailto:AskTheRabbi@yise.org) by Sunday, January 24. For more information or to submit questions by phone, contact Miriam Friedman, 301-754-1517 or [mfriedman2@yahoo.com](mailto:mfriedman2@yahoo.com) To sponsor the Shiur, contact [office@yise.org](mailto:office@yise.org) *See flyer for details.*

**Come Join Rabbi Koss’s Monthly Jewish History class - now on Zoom!** Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and the YISE Chesed Committee: Rabbi Koss will be speaking on a topic in Jewish history, Monday, February 1, from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM on Zoom A. For more information, contact Miriam Friedman at [mfriedman2@yahoo.com](mailto:mfriedman2@yahoo.com)

**Purim Shpiel** - Sunday, February 21, 8:30 PM. Contact Howie Schulman at [drhowies@gmail.com](mailto:drhowies@gmail.com) or 301-213-2429. *See flyer for details.*

## 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.

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

- **Douglas & Michelle Shelling** in memory of Michelle’s beloved father, Morris Weiner, Moshe ben Reuven, Z”L.
- **Rebbetzin Dr. Miriam & Rabbi Binyamin Marwick** in honor of Rabbi Marwick’s parents, Judy & Dr. David Marwick.

### Rabbi Rosenbaum’s Women’s Mussar Shiur

- **Douglas & Michelle Shelling** in memory of Michelle’s beloved father, Morris Weiner, Moshe ben Reuven, Z”L.

### Rabbi Hyatt’s Gemara Shiur

- **David Jaray** for a Refuah Sheleimah for Rabbi Hyatt and in honor of Rabbi Grauman and all those who attend the Shiur.

### Rabbi Rosenbaum’s Friday morning Gemara Shiur

- **Debi & Max Rudmann** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of Max’s dad, Ezra ben Menachem Hanina, Z”L.

### Rabbi Rosenbaum’s Erev Shabbos Parsha Drasha

- **Alan and Fran Broder** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of Fran’s father, Bernard Creeger, Baruch Mordechai ben Shmuel Moshe, A”H on the 8<sup>th</sup> of Shevat.
- **Rebbetzin Dr. Miriam & Rabbi Binyamin Marwick** in honor of Rabbi Marwick’s parents, Judy & Dr. David Marwick.
- **Bev Morris & Art Boyars** in memory of their beloved cousin, Mikey Butler, A”H, on his 17<sup>th</sup> Yahrzeit, Gimel Shevat. An amazing young man who was always Lev Sameach Vitov Panim. “Baruch Hashem Yom Yom” always on his lips. He lived his life Day By Glorious Day.

## YISE Youth Announcements

**Game Night** - Motzei Shabbos, January 16, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM on Zoom A. For ages 7 - 18. Advance registration required. Questions? Contact [bkugler@yise.org](mailto:bkugler@yise.org) See flyer for details.

**Dor L'Dor** - Motzei Shabbos, January 30, 7:30 PM. Parsha, pizza, prizes and more - but this year virtual! Register by Friday, January 29, at [www.yise.org/doridor](http://www.yise.org/doridor) If you have any questions or would like to sponsor, please contact Michael Shimoff at [mshimoff@yise.org](mailto:mshimoff@yise.org) See flyer for details.

## YISE Programs and Listings (continued)

**Go Social!** Want to reconnect with Shul friends you lost touch with these past COVID-19 months? We're missing our Shul buddies as well! YISE's Social Committee wants your energy to help lead new (Zoom interactive, of course) programs. Sahra Ginsburg [sahra@ginsburg.cc](mailto:sahra@ginsburg.cc) Sharon Shimoff [sharonshimoff@gmail.com](mailto:sharonshimoff@gmail.com) and Max Rudmann [max.rudmann1@gmail.com](mailto:max.rudmann1@gmail.com) are waiting to hear from you.

**Helping Hands Across Kemp Mill** is a part of YISE's Chesed 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, [mkskarlin@gmail.com](mailto:mkskarlin@gmail.com) or Miriam Friedman, 301-754-1517, [mfriedman2@yahoo.com](mailto: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

**The Yad Yehuda Clothing Exchange** will be open to all members of the community this Sunday, January 17, 10:00 AM - 12 Noon. We have a lot of coats for all sizes! This is your opportunity to shop, at no cost, for beautiful, modest clothing in our well-equipped showroom. Shoppers must be in good health, not have been in contact with someone who tested positive for Covid, wear masks and maintain social distancing. Please schedule an appointment at [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fhBnGaalLgwaEUT4rDFUwVKGz1\\_U9CeOYD-f\\_A10iY/edit](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fhBnGaalLgwaEUT4rDFUwVKGz1_U9CeOYD-f_A10iY/edit) For questions or to schedule an appointment on another day: [ncarmel@yadyehuda.org](mailto:ncarmel@yadyehuda.org)

**Federal Holiday Learning Program** - What Bracha do I say on a piece of cake? The answer may surprise you! Monday, January 18, 9:30 AM on Zoom, meeting ID 829 4265 3732, passcode 1216613. Shiur by Rabbi Eli Reingold, Rosh Kollel, Kollel Zichron Amram. For more information, contact Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blate at [mblate@yeshiva.edu](mailto:mblate@yeshiva.edu)

**Kemp Mill Toastmasters** - Wednesday, January 20, 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 [vppr@kempmilltoastmasters.com](mailto:vppr@kempmilltoastmasters.com) for more info. Zoom meeting ID: 986 546 841, password: 3671

**International Holocaust Remembrance Day** - Sunday, January 24, 12 Noon, on Zoom, featuring people who knew the Sanz-Klausenberg Rebbe, Z"l, who lost his wife and all 11 children during the Shoah. Nevertheless, he rebuilt his life and community, brought his followers to Israel and founded the Laniado Hospital in Netanya. To register, go to <https://forms.gle/gJUfkD7hJ7AkqWCu7>

**Yad Yehuda** - Unfortunately, many individuals and families across the Greater Washington Jewish community are facing the twin challenges of financial and food insecurity. The scope of this need has grown exponentially during the current COVID-19 crisis. We receive new requests for assistance each week. With the help of Hashem, Yad Yehuda answers these requests through our Emergency Financial Assistance and Tomchei Shabbos Programs and through The Capital Kosher Pantry. Please consider making a contribution by visiting [www.yadyehuda.org/donate](http://www.yadyehuda.org/donate)

**Penetrating Thoughts and Practical Perspectives** - Thoughts on life, Torah and Middos. Based on Michtav M'Eliyahu, from Rav Eliyahu Dessler, Z"l. Mondays, 9:00 PM - 9:30 PM, with Rabbi Yitzchak Scher. Zoom - Meeting ID: 736 4190 7086, Passcode: torah. Presented by YGW Kollel Zichron Amram. For more information, contact Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blate at 404-273-3392.

**What Happened at Sinai: An Exploration of the Sinai Revelation and the Ten Commandments** - Wednesdays, 8:00 PM on Zoom. Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps. Join any time! No cost. Zoom info and registration at [linksgw.org/classes](http://linksgw.org/classes)

**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](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@sllaw.com](mailto:lifschitz@sllaw.com) to be added to the invite list. Sunday 8:30 AM, Monday - Thursday 9:00 PM.

**Daily Halacha Program from Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold** - Receive one every day in your inbox. Visit [dvarhalacha.com](http://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](http://kempmillvillage.org) for more information.

**Silver Spring Gemachim** - For a complete list: [www.gemachexchange.com](http://www.gemachexchange.com)

| <b>The Week Ahead</b>   | <b>Sunday<br/>January 17</b> | <b>Monday, January 18<br/>MLK Jr. Day</b> | <b>Tuesday<br/>January 19</b> | <b>Wednesday, January 20<br/>Inauguration Day</b> | <b>Thursday<br/>January 21</b> | <b>Friday<br/>January 22</b> |
|---|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Limited Minyanim will take place at YISE next week, <b>advance registration and confirmation required</b> . 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;<br>Monday through Friday 6:30 AM/7:00 AM/8:45 AM. Mincha/Maariv: Sunday - Thursday: 5:05 PM. |                              |   |                               |   |                                |                              |
| <b>Halachic Times:</b> Latest Alos Hashachar 6:00 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 6:29 AM, Latest Netz: 7:25 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:50 AM, Earliest Mincha: 12:51 PM, Earliest Shkia: 5:12 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim: 6:02 PM   |                              |   |                               |   |                                |                              |

### Next Shabbos

January 22 - 23, 2021 - 10 Shevat 5781

Parshas Bo

Light Candles: 5:00

Havdalah: 6:02

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, January 20 at 12:00 Noon

Submit items for the Shabbos Shorts to: [announce@yise.org](mailto:announce@yise.org)

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

Eruv line: 301-593-5561 E-Mail: [office@yise.org](mailto:office@yise.org) Website: [www.yise.org](http://www.yise.org)

Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Friday - 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum

Yale Ginsburg - President

Simi Franco - Office Manager

## A Quick Thought on the Parsha from Rabbi Rosenbaum

### Vaera 5781: Adjusting Expectations

The following is kindly transcribed by a congregant from the video at <https://wp.yise.org/shabbos>

Last week's parsha ends with Moshe רבינו feeling terrible frustration regarding his mission. He and Aharon had gone into פרעה and פרעה had said that obviously the Jewish people are not working hard enough, and because Moshe and Aharon went in, פרעה increases the work upon the Jews and the Jews express their frustration to Moshe רבינו. In the beginning of this week's Parsha, Hashem responds to Moshe's frustration and gives Moshe possibly words of rebuke and certainly words of encouragement.

It says that Moshe goes back to the Jewish people and speaks to them and relays the word of G-d. It says explicitly ולא שמעו אל משה, they didn't listen to him, they did not have the spirit to listen to him at the time, and they had been through too much. Hashem then tells Moshe, okay, go to פרעה and speak to him. Moshe's says the very poignant פסוק, הן בני ישראל לא שמעו אלי, the Jewish people didn't listen to me, why should פרעה listen to me, and then he adds the poignant point, ואני ערל שפתים, I don't speak well. And then, it says that Hashem spoke to Moshe and Aharon - up until now in this parsha it was just Hashem speaking to Moshe - Hashem now spoke to both Moshe and Aharon and he commanded them. What did he command them? Rashi says one thing but the Ramban says that Hashem said to Moshe and Aharon, "I want you both to go together to פרעה" and the message of now bringing in Aharon is that Aharon will now be the main speaker. The Ramban says that Hashem's intent at the beginning of this week's parsha, when he first tells Moshe to go back in to פרעה, is that Moshe should go alone and speak to פרעה, and now as a response to Moshe's great frustration, Moshe says to Hashem, I tried to speak alone to the Jewish people and it didn't work. I know why it didn't work, I don't speak well.

The Ramban says that Hashem adjusted his instructions and adjusted his expectations, and because of Moshe's response Hashem essentially says, fine you will go but Aharon will accompany you and Aharon will be the spokesperson. It is a remarkable thing to think about. מלך מלכי המלכים, הקדוש ברוך הוא, Master of the Universe, adjusted his expectations in recognition of Moshe's frustration of the moment. It is hard to know how to apply lessons in our lives, and we certainly always have to be demanding of ourselves. We will never accomplish if we are not demanding of ourselves, and sometimes we even need to be demanding of other people as it is sometimes how we help them grow. It is amazing to think about that in some sense of course Hashem knew what would happen, so it is difficult to understand, but in some sense, Hashem had "plan A" for Moshe רבינו and because of his frustrations, Hashem adjusted his expectations.

We so frequently get disappointed in other people. We have an idea of what is right and what is wrong and if they don't meet up to our expectations they're out, forget it, we are angry. הקדוש ברוך הוא adjusted his expectations of Moshe. It is something for each and every one of us to think about in all of our relationships. Have a wonderful Shabbos.

# YISE YOUTH PRESENTS



**Who:** All children 7-18 years of age (groups will be broken up by age (and by gender for middle and high school)).

**What:** A fun night of online games

**Where:** Go to Zoom.us

**Meeting ID:** 416 963 9000

**Passcode:** 492019

**When:** Motzei Shabbos, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 7-8:30pm

**Platform:** <https://en.boardgamearena.com/>

**To register,** email [bkugler@yise.org](mailto:bkugler@yise.org) by no later than January 12<sup>th</sup>.

# **UPDATE: Learning to live with COVID-19**

We will be treating COVID-19 for some time as we continue to fight this pandemic during the implementation of vaccines. Data and experience gained since the outbreak of the disease are improving measures taken to prevent, diagnose, and treat it at different stages. A panel of experts will discuss

- **The main signs of COVID-19 and the various tests used to identify and treat it**
- **Changes in treatments over the past 10 months and what lays ahead**
- **How children are affected by the virus and how they spread it**
- **What researchers are discovering about early markers of COVID-19 and its after-effects**

## **Speakers:**

- Ronald Reisler, MD/MPH, *infectious diseases, clinical research, Davis Defense Group*
- Yosefta Hefter, MD, *pediatrician, Pediatric Infectious Diseases Fellow at Children's National Hospital*
- Evan Fisher, MD, *internist/nephrologist, Wright-Patterson AFB*

**Saturday, January 23, 2021**

**8:15 to 9:15 p.m.**

**Zoom ID: 878 2795 1873**

**Password: 699427**

**Dial-in-number: +1 301 715 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.





# **YISE GROCERY DRIVE**

**to benefit Holy Cross Hospital  
employees in need**

**Donate to YISE via PayPal at**

**<https://wp.yise.org/grocery>**

**and/or**

**Drop off shelf-stable food donations (no glass  
containers) at the Ginsburg home (11700 Fulham Street)  
by Sunday, January 24.**

**All food appreciated, but the most-needed items include:**

**Pasta \* Pasta sauce \* Rice \* Beans \* Canned soups \* Cereal**

**Questions? Email [social@yise.org](mailto:social@yise.org)**





**B"H**

**THE YISE YOUTH COMMITTEE AND SHOMRAI PRESCHOOL  
PRESENT**

# **Challenges and Opportunities of Raising a Young Jewish Child in our Times**

**RABBI DOVID ROSENBAUM**

Appropriate for parents of children ages 2-8

Sunday, January 24, 2021

8:00 PM

Zoom information ID: 416 963 9000 PW: 492019

If you would like to submit specific questions, please send them to Leora Kor at [LKor@yise.org](mailto:LKor@yise.org) by January 20th.



# ASK the RABBI

Come join our new virtual, interactive monthly program featuring different Halachos of Shabbos!

The first 45 minutes are for Shailos submitted in advance and the last 15 minutes are for Q & A

## Topic this month: Borer (selecting) on Shabbos and Yom Tov

- How am I supposed to separate the food I want from other foods on Shabbos?
- Is it really true that borer applies to cleaning up a board game?

Send in your questions about Borer to:  
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by Sunday, January 24



For more information or to submit questions by phone,  
contact Miriam Friedman,  
301-754-1517

When: Tuesday, January 26, 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Where: Zoom - Meeting ID: 416 963 9000  
passcode 492019



# YISE YOUTH Upcoming Events

Parenting Lecture with  
Rabbi Rosenbaum  
"Challenges and Opportunities of  
Raising a Jewish Child in our Times"  
For parents of children ages 2-8.  
Zoom ID: 416-963-9000 PSWD: 492019

Jan 24  
7:00 PM

Jan 30  
and  
Feb 6th  
7:30 PM

Dor L' Dor

Family Chavrusa Style Learning.  
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Virtual Challah Braiding

Join Debbie Weinstein for challah  
braiding tips and tricks. Ages 8-18.  
Zoom ID: 416-963-9000 PSWD: 492019

Feb 7  
3:30 PM

Feb 20  
7:45 PM

Dor L' Dor

Family Chavrusa Style Learning.  
Register in advance at [yise.org/dorldor](http://yise.org/dorldor)

Purim Puppet Show

Young children are invited for a Purim  
Puppet show by Morah Debby Greengart.  
Zoom ID: 416-963-9000 PSWD: 492019

Feb 21  
4:30 PM

Feb 21

PURIM COSTUME PARADE  
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# PURIM IS COMING!

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One Love! One Heart!  
Let's get together and feel all right.  
Hear the children cryin' (One Love!);  
Hear the children cryin' (One Heart!),  
Sayin': give thanks and praise to the L-rd and I will feel all right;  
Sayin': let's get together and feel all right.

**So my friends, we want to celebrate together in laughter with a Zoom Purim Shpiel—  
a celebration of joy, life and appreciation of Hashem's gifts to each of us.**

**Put on your thinking caps, tickle your funny bones and step up to make this happen.  
Skits, sketches, grammen, monologues, etc. are needed to make this a reality.**

**The target audience can be the whole community or a specific segment (Sefhardim,  
9:15'ers, Black Hatters, Kippah S'rugot'ers, oldsters, youngsters, etc'ers).**

**Material needs to be G-rated, and while we hope to poke fun we don't want to hurt or  
offend anyone—there has been too much pain inflicted in the past weeks & months.**

**We need: Writers, Performers, Idea People**

**If you are willing to help with this, please send an e-mail to:**

**Howie Schulman at [drhowies@gmail.com](mailto:drhowies@gmail.com) or call him at 301-213-2429**

**Date of the Shpiel: Sunday, February 21 at 8:30 pm**

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December 19 — 7:00 pm

January 9 — 7:15 pm

January 30 — 7:30 pm

February 6 — 7:30 pm

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# Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah  
via the Internet

Volume 27, Issue 14

Shabbat Parashat Vaera

5781 - B"H

## Covenant & Conversation: R. Jonathan Sacks, z"l

**Overcoming Setbacks** - At first, Moses' mission seemed to be successful. He had feared that the people would not believe in him, but God had given him signs to perform, and his brother Aaron to speak on his behalf. Moses "performed the signs before the people, and they believed. And when they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped."

But then things start to go wrong, and continue going wrong. Moses' first appearance before Pharaoh is disastrous. Pharaoh refuses to recognise God and he rejects Moses' request to let the people travel into the wilderness. Then he makes life worse for the Israelites. They must still make the same quota of bricks, but now they must also gather their own straw. The people turn against Moses and Aaron: "May the Lord look on you and judge you! You have made us obnoxious to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us." Moses and Aaron return to Pharaoh to renew their request. They perform a miraculous act – they turn a staff into a snake – but Pharaoh is unimpressed. His own magicians can do likewise. Next they bring the first of the 10 Plagues, but again Pharaoh is unmoved. He will not let the Israelites go. And so it goes on, nine times. Moses does everything in his power to make Pharaoh relent and finds that nothing makes a difference. The Israelites are still slaves.

We sense the pressure Moses is under. After his first setback at the end of last week's parsha, he had turned to God and bitterly asked: "Why, Lord, why have You brought trouble on this people? Is this why You sent me? Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has brought trouble on this people, and You have not rescued Your people at all."

In this week's parsha of Vaera, even when God reassures him that he will eventually succeed, he replies, "If the Israelites will not listen to me, why would Pharaoh listen to me, since I speak with faltering lips?"

There is an enduring message here. Leadership, even of the very highest order, is often marked by failure. The first Impressionists had to arrange their own art exhibition because their work was rejected by the established Paris salons. The first performance of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* caused a riot, with the audience booing throughout. Van Gogh sold only one painting in his lifetime despite the fact that his brother, Theo, was an art dealer.

So it is with leaders. Lincoln faced countless setbacks during the Civil War. He was a deeply divisive figure, hated by many in his lifetime. Gandhi failed in his dream of uniting Muslims and Hindus together in a single nation. Nelson Mandela spent twenty-seven years in prison, accused of treason and regarded as a violent agitator. Winston Churchill was regarded as a spent force in politics by the 1930s, and even after his heroic leadership during the Second World War he was voted out of office at the first General Election once the war was over. Only in retrospect do heroes seem heroic and the many setbacks they faced reveal themselves as stepping-stones on the road to victory.

In our discussion of parshat Vayetse, we saw that in every field – high or low, sacred or secular – leaders are tested not by their successes but by their failures. It can sometimes be easy to succeed. The conditions

may be favourable. The economic, political or personal climate is good. When there is an economic boom, most businesses flourish. In the first months after a general election, the successful leader carries with him or her the charisma of victory. In the first year, most marriages are happy. It takes no special skill to succeed in good times.

But then the climate changes. Eventually it always does. That is when many businesses, and politicians, and marriages fail. There are times when even the greatest people stumble. At such moments, character is tested. The great human beings are not those who never fail. They are those who survive failure, who keep on going, who refuse to be defeated, who never give up or give in. They keep trying. They learn from every mistake. They treat failure as a learning experience. And from every refusal to be defeated, they become stronger, wiser and more determined. That is the story of Moses' life in both parshat Shemot and parshat Vaera.

Jim Collins, one of the great writers on leadership, puts it well: The signature of the truly great versus the merely successful is not the absence of difficulty, but the ability to come back from setbacks, even cataclysmic catastrophes, stronger than before ... The path out of darkness begins with those exasperatingly persistent individuals who are constitutionally incapable of capitulation. It's one thing to suffer a staggering defeat...and entirely another to give up on the values and aspirations that make the protracted struggle worthwhile. Failure is not so much a physical state as a state of mind; success is falling down, and getting up one more time, without end.

Rabbi Yitzhak Hutner once wrote a powerful letter to a disciple who had become discouraged by his repeated failure to master Talmudic learning: A failing many of us suffer is that when we focus on the high attainments of great people, we discuss how they are complete in this or that area, while omitting mention of the inner struggles that had previously raged within them. A listener would get the impression that these individuals sprang from the hand of their creator in a state of perfection... The result of this feeling is that when an ambitious young man of spirit and enthusiasm meets obstacles, falls and slumps, he imagines himself as unworthy of being "planted in the house of God"... Know, however, my dear friend, that your soul is rooted not in the tranquillity of the good inclination, but in the battle of the good inclination... The English expression, "Lose a battle and win the war," applies. Certainly you have stumbled and will stumble again, and in many battles you will fall lame. I promise you, though, that after those losing campaigns you will emerge from the war with laurels of victory on your head... The wisest of men said, "A righteous man falls seven times, but rises again." Fools believe the intent of the verse is to teach us that the righteous man falls seven times and, despite this, he rises. But the knowledgeable are aware that the essence of the righteous man's rising again is because of his seven falls.

Rabbi Hutner's point is that greatness cannot be achieved without failure. There are heights you cannot climb without first having fallen.

For many years, I kept on my desk a quote from Calvin Coolidge, sent by a friend who knew how easy it is to be discouraged. It said: "Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will

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not: nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not: the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent."

I would only add, "And *seyata diShmaya*, the help of Heaven." God never loses faith in us, even if we sometimes lose faith in ourselves.

The supreme role model is Moses who, despite all the setbacks chronicled in last week's parsha and this week's, eventually became the man of whom it was said that he was "a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were undimmed and his energy unabated."

Defeats, delays and disappointments hurt. They hurt even for Moses. So if there are times when we, too, feel discouraged and demoralised, it is important to remember that even the greatest people failed.

What made them great is that they kept going. The road to success passes through many valleys of failure. There is no other way.

## Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh" One of the more difficult theological problems raised in the book of Exodus is precisely this verse, in which the Bible declares that it was God who hardened Pharaoh's heart to be impervious to the cries of his forced laborers.

To be sure, during the first five plagues, it was Pharaoh himself who was responsible for his stubborn cruelty, who hardened his own heart. Now that we have come to the sixth plague of boils, how can we blame the Egyptian monarch if it was God who prevented him from freeing his Hebrew slaves?!

Such conduct on the part of the Creator of the Universe goes against those very axiomatic standards by which the world and humanity first came into being. "And God said, Let us make a human being in our image and like our likeness...", to which Seforno comments that only the human being has untrammelled and independent freedom of moral choice: the "angels" act with knowledge and recognition, but are totally functional and devoid of volition, whereas God is volitional—He cannot, by definition, choose evil, as God is consummate goodness.

This Biblical commentary is therefore saying that the human being is created with the capacity to choose to do even that which God would not have wanted him to do—as we certainly see in the unfolding stories of the book of Genesis again and again.

So how can it be that God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, preventing him from hearkening to God, Moses and the Hebrews, preventing him from repentance? Our Biblical text iterates and reiterates God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart, not only once but four more times, with reference to the plague of hail, the plague of locusts, the plague of darkness, and the plague of the death of the first-born. How can God hold Pharaoh responsible for a heinous and ongoing crime when it was He, God, who prevented Pharaoh from repenting?

Seforno, in a most creative interpretation, does not believe that God prevented Pharaoh from repenting:

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"Had Pharaoh wished to submit himself to the Divine Will, may He be blessed, and to return to Him in complete repentance, there would have been nothing to serve as a deterrent. Behold, when God may He be blessed, says, I shall harden the heart of Pharaoh, it merely means that (Pharaoh) will be strengthened by the suffering of the plagues, and not release the Hebrews because of his fear of the plagues...."

Seforno is almost turning the verse on its head by insisting that, in hardening Pharaoh's heart from "running scared" and freeing the Hebrews, He was only enhancing Pharaoh's freedom to make moral decisions; God was removing the malaise and mayhem being wrought upon Egyptian society by the plagues from becoming the cardinal reason for his sending the Hebrews out, which would have made the decision not at all a matter of morality but rather an issue of political expediency.

On the basis of this commentary, the entire logic of the plagues becomes much clearer. During the second plague of frogs, Moses explains that the reason for the horrific discomfiture, the turn-around of the Nile from being a life-giving god of Egypt into becoming a macabre and ridiculous repository of blood and frogs is "in order that you may know that there is none like the Lord (YKVK) our God"; and the fourth plague of swarms of insects is "in order that you know that I am the Lord (YKVK) in the midst of the land".

In the beginning of our Biblical portion of Va'Era, God's opening words are: "I am the Lord YKVK; I appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as Kel Shakkai, powerful God of omnipotence, but with My Name YKVK I did not make Myself known to them. Therefore say to the Israelites: I am YKVK; I shall take you out from under the burdens of Egypt..."

What is in a Name? It is the most understandable partial definition of a being whose very essence insists that "he" will ultimately remain incomprehensible to mortal humans. The Hebrew letters of YKVK, in accordance with their vocalization, spell out the very "He will effectuate"; given the content, it means that He (God) will bring about redemption—freedom for the Israelites and ultimately freedom and redemption for all humanity. It is in the future tense because God acts in history ("I will be who I will be") and it is open-ended, because the God of history acts in concert with Israel and the nations, and is thereby "limited" by their actions or lack thereof. Most important of all, the root noun HVH, as in ahavah, means love, as our Talmudic Sages understood when they defined this particular ineffable Name of God (the Tetragrammaton) as referring to the God of love and compassion (Hebrew-midat ha'rahamim). And therefore the God who loves humanity will turn His back, as it were, upon those who exploit, enslave and murder innocent human beings.

This is the lesson that God wanted to teach Pharaoh, totalitarian ruler of the most powerful nation at that time. God, YKVK, the unique creator and owner of all of creation who loves His creation, will act in history and in the world to free all slaves and redeem all who are oppressed. Hence, it was crucial that God harden Pharaoh's heart to free him from succumbing to pressure from the plagues; Pharaoh had to free the Israelites only because he recognized the ultimate authority of the one God whose universal laws of freedom must govern the world if there is to remain a world.

**The Person in the Parsha: R. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb**  
**"Work and Will"** - There was a time in my life when I was fascinated by the works of the great psychoanalytic thinkers. Chief among them, of course, was Sigmund Freud, whose attitude towards his Jewish origins piqued my curiosity.

Although Freud's work has now fallen out of fashion, he unquestionably had some profound things to say about humanity. There is one remark of his that has remained with me over the years. He said, "Love and work are the cornerstones of our humanness." He considered the ability to love and the ability to work the two criteria of mental health.

There was a lesser-known psychoanalyst, a disciple of Freud, whose writings also fascinated me. His name was Otto Rank, and he disagreed with his mentor in many ways. He left "love" out of the formula for the healthy personality. Instead, he inserted his concept of "the will." For him, our ability to work productively and to express our will creatively were the cornerstones of our humanness.

Rank wrote entire volumes about the nature of man's will, and of its importance. In simplified terms, the will is the directive intention by which we get things done in life. In his words, "It is a positive guiding organization of the self which utilizes creativity" to accomplish one's objectives.

In a much more recent time in my life, I have come to ponder the nature of spirituality. I have become convinced that ability to engage in meaningful work and the capacity to exercise one's will creatively are two essential components of spirituality.

In this week's Torah portion, Parshat Va'era, we read about the first stages of the redemption of the Children of Israel from bondage in Egypt. We learn that freedom from slavery does not come easily. A measure of spiritual preparedness must first be achieved.

Were the Jewish people spiritually ready for redemption? When we read last week's parsha we were inclined to believe that they may very well have been ready. "Aaron repeated all the words that the Lord had spoken to Moses...and the people were convinced...they bowed low in homage".

This week, however, we learn that that level of spiritual readiness was short lived. "But when Moses told this to the Israelites, they would not listen to Moses, because their spirits were crushed [literally, 'out of shortness of breath'] and their bondage cruel [literally, 'out of difficult labor']".

Two factors stood in their way. "Their spirits were crushed." In Otto Rank's terms, their "will" was crippled. They could not dream, they could not plan, and they could not utilize their creativity. In no way could they "get things done" in their lives. A person without will is a person paralyzed. Such a person cannot transition from slavery to freedom.

Their "bondage was cruel." Freud was correct that productive work was one of the "cornerstones of humanness". Meaningful work nourishes the soul. But the work that the Jews were forced to do in Egypt was far from meaningful. Besides being physically tortuous, it was purposeless. Our Sages teach us that the labor that Egypt forced the Jews to do was not only unbearably strenuous; it was belittling and demeaning. Such work is poison for the soul, and a poisoned soul is not ready for redemption.

Pharaoh knew all too well how to thwart the initiative of his slaves, how to assure that they would take no effective steps to attain their freedom. "Let heavier work be laid upon the men; let them keep at it and not pay attention to deceitful promises".

Denied the access to their creative will and deprived of the rewards of meaningful work, the Jews were spiritually handicapped. They could not hear the words spoken to them by Moses—not because their hearing was impaired, but because they were spiritually deaf. Moses had his work cut out for him, and only with Divine assistance could he hope to advance his people to the point where they would be ready to hear the clarion call of incipient redemption.

## Likutei Divrei Torah

There is a lesson here for all of us. We too are deaf to God's redemptive messages. Our spiritual condition is woefully inadequate to prepare us to hear higher callings.

Rabbi Moses Chaim Luzzatto puts it so well in the second chapter of his Mesillat Yesharim: "This is, in fact, one of the cunning artifices of the evil inclination, who always imposes upon men such strenuous tasks that they have no time left to note whether they are drifting. He knows that, if they were to pay the least attention to their conduct, they would at once reconsider what they were doing... This ingenuity is somewhat like that of Pharaoh... for Pharaoh's purpose was not only to prevent the Israelites from having any leisure to make plans or take counsel against him, but to deprive them also of the very opportunity to reflect."

Nowadays, it is as if each of us has an "inner Pharaoh" whose malicious intent it is to entrap us into a lifestyle where we not only overwork, but where our work is unfulfilling and, therefore, spiritually unrewarding. This "inner Pharaoh" is also shrewd enough to know how to stunt that creative human will that is such an essential component of spirituality.

Mankind's struggle against "crushed spirits" and "cruel burdens" is a historical struggle, one that is certainly relevant in our times. There are obstacles to finding and defining a work-life that is meaningful. There are impediments to our ability to exercise our creative wills. But we must use whatever tools are at our disposal to lift those cruel burdens and free our crushed spirits. Those tools include introspective reflection, contemplation of pertinent religious texts, conversation with like-minded friends, and dialogue with experienced spiritual mentors.

There are many practical lessons to be garnered from the story of the Exodus. Passover is, of course, the occasion on the calendar for reflecting upon that story. But at this wintry time of year, with the springtime Passover festival still long months away, a careful reading of the weekly Torah portion will serve to motivate us to strive to learn those lessons.

### OU Dvar Torah [Excerpt]

#### **The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart** **Rabbi Immanuel Bernstein**

"I shall harden Pharaoh's heart... Pharaoh will not listen to you..." One of the major questions pertaining to our redemption and Exodus from Egypt relates to the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. As our verses state, Hashem removed Pharaoh's capacity to agree to let the Jewish people go, in response to which he was visited with Hashem's retribution in the form of the ten plagues. This presents us with a problem: If Pharaoh was rendered unable to say "yes", how could he be punished for saying "no"?

The Maaseh Hashem explains this idea in a natural way. Often, people are in situations where they may say that they 'have no choice' but to pursue a certain course of action, when in reality what they mean is that the personality traits that govern them leave them no choice. Someone who has been insulted may feel that he is 'forced' to leave the room. Of course he can choose to stay if he wants, but his pride will not allow him to do so. Similarly, someone who subscribes to the notion that he is all-knowing or all-powerful may feel 'compelled' to cover up a mistake or a weakness. In truth, he is fully capable of admitting his error, but the way in which he wishes to see – or project - himself effectively bars this option from him. It was in this sense that Hashem hardened Pharaoh's heart. At every point he was essentially capable of choosing the right path, but his corrupt character traits prevented him from doing so. With the fundamental capacity to say yes intact, Pharaoh was thus held accountable and culpable for each of the times he said no.

At the end of last week's *Parashah*, after Pharaoh refused to release *Bnei Yisrael* and instead intensified their oppression, Moshe asked *Hashem*, "Why have You sent me?" *Hashem* answered: "Now you will see what I shall do to Pharaoh, for through a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them from his land." At the beginning of this week's *Parashah*, *Hashem* continues: "I am *Hashem*. I appeared to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Yaakov as *Kel Shakkai* . . ." What was Moshe's question, and how did *Hashem* answer it?

R' Zelig Reuven Bengis z"l (1864-1953; rabbi in Lithuania; later rabbi of Yerushalayim's *Eidah Ha'chareidis*) explains: Usually, when *Hashem* performs a miracle, He does so within nature. For example, some of the *Avot* and *Imahot* / Patriarchs and Matriarchs were unable to have children. *Hashem* did not just give them children; He cured them, and they had children naturally. Likewise, before *Hashem* punishes a nation for its sins, He destroys its guardian angel; then the nation collapses "naturally."

Here, *Hashem* acted differently: He planned to destroy the Egyptian nation without destroying its guardian angel in order to demonstrate His mastery over all beings and forces. Pharaoh hardened his heart precisely because he saw that Egypt's guardian angel had not been vanquished. And Moshe, who did not know *Hashem's* plan, asked why *Hashem* sent him to Pharaoh prematurely. *Hashem* answered: My plan is to demonstrate My "strong hand." True, I appeared to the *Avot* as "*Kel Shakkai*," a Divine Name that denotes acting through nature, but My plan now is different. Why? Because I do in fact want to take *Bnei Yisrael* out of Egypt prematurely, before the 400 years are up, so the Name "*Hashem*," denoting My attribute of mercy, is called for. (*Li'flagot Reuven: Haggadah Shel Pesach* p. 75)

## Tefilah

This year, we will *iy"H* devote this space to discussing various aspects of our prayers. This week, we continue to examine the structure of our daily prayers.

R' Moshe ben Maimon z"l (*Rambam*; 1135-1204; Spain and Egypt) writes: The Sages established that the number of prayers would parallel the number of [public] sacrifices [offered in the Temple each day]. Two prayers every day parallel the two *Temidin* (plural of "*Tamid*") / daily offerings. For a day when there is a *Mussaf* offering, the Sages instituted a third prayer to parallel that offering. The prayer that parallels the morning *Tamid* is called "*Tefilat Ha'shachar*," the prayer that parallels the afternoon *Tamid* is called "*Tefilat Mincha*," and the prayer that parallels the *Mussaf* offerings is called "*Tefilat Ha'mussafin*."

Likewise, the Sages instituted that a person should pray one prayer at night, because the limbs of the afternoon *Tamid* were consumed [by the fire on the altar] all night long. . . [This prayer] *Arvit* [also known as "*Ma'ariv*"] is not an obligation like *Shacharit* and *Mincha*; nevertheless, it is the custom of all of the Jewish People wherever they live to pray *Arvit*, and they have accepted it upon themselves as an obligation.

They also established a prayer after *Mincha*, close to sunset, on fast days only, in order to add pleading and beseeching due to the fast day. This prayer is called *Ne'ilah*, that is to say, "The gates of the heavens *Nin'alu* / have closed around the sun. . ." [We recite this only on *Yom Kippur*.]

These prayers are the minimum, but one may add to them. If one wants to pray all day long, he has that right. [Today, we do not do this.] Any prayers that he adds are like voluntary sacrificial offerings that a person brings. Therefore, [in such an additional prayer,] one must add something new in each of the middle blessings [of *Shemoneh Esrei*, *i.e.*, the fourth through sixteenth blessings, which contain our requests]. . . In the first three and last three blessings, one may never add anything [personal], subtract anything, or change a word. (*Hilchot Tefilah* 1:5-7, 9)

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**“The fish-life that is in the water shall die and the River shall become foul. Egypt will grow weary of trying to drink water from the River.’ ... All the water that was in the River changed to blood. The fish-life that was in the River died and the River became foul; Egypt could not drink water from the River, and the blood was throughout the land of Egypt.” (7:18, 20-21)**

R’ Yosef Bechor Shor z”l (France; 12<sup>th</sup> century) writes: It seems to me that the Nile turned to blood for a very short time only. The fish died in the blood, and then the River turned back into water. The proof of this is that the verse does not say that the Egyptians could not drink because the River was blood; rather, they could not drink because the water was foul [from the dead fish]. Moreover, the Torah says that the Egyptian magicians also turned water to blood. Where did they get water with which to do that? It must be that the River turned back into water almost immediately. (*Bechor Shor*)

R’ Shmuel Yaakov Borenstein z”l (1946-2017; *Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshivat Kiryat Melech in Bnei Brak, Israel) elaborates: R’ Bechor Shor must mean that the main Nile turned back into water, but that the downstream branches of the Nile Delta remained blood, for the verse says, “The blood was throughout the land of Egypt.” In this light, we can understand the *Middah-K’negged-Middah* / measure-for-measure nature of this plague. Pharaoh was comfortable denying G-d’s authority because he felt secure that the Nile would provide all of Egypt’s needs. Indeed, the Nile’s dependability emboldened Pharaoh to declare himself divine (see *Yechezkel* 29:3). *Middah-K’negged-Middah*, Hashem turned the Nile into a source of death, carrying blood into all the streams and canals it fed.

(*Haggadah Shel Pesach Zot L’Yaakov* p.142)

**“Behold, the hand of Hashem is on your livestock that are in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the cattle, and on the flock -- a very severe *Devver* / epidemic.” (9:3)**

In the *Haggadah*, we read: “*B’yad Chazakah*’ / ‘with a strong hand’--this refers to the *Devver*,” as the Torah says “the hand of Hashem” in connection with this plague. Alternatively, says the *Haggadah*: “*B’yad Chazakah*’--two.”

R’ Aharon Shmuel Assad z”l (1830-1905; rabbi of Szerdahely, Hungary) explains: In the last *Pasuk* in *Parashat Shmot*, Hashem says, “Through a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them from his land.” This suggests two strong hands, each with separate consequences. Indeed, our Sages teach that *Bnei Yisrael* stopped working as slaves halfway through the ten plagues, *i.e.*, after the plague of *Devver*, the first “strong hand.” Then, after the second “strong hand,” the plague of the firstborn, Pharaoh released *Bnei Yisrael* entirely. This explains, as well, the verse (3:19), “I know that the king of Egypt will not allow you to go, not through a strong hand,” *i.e.*, I know he will not let you go after the first “strong hand.”

(*Haggadah Shel Pesach Eish Dat Yehuda* p.86)

**“Hashem said to Moshe, ‘Say to Aharon: “Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt--over their rivers, over their canals, over their reservoirs, and over all their gatherings of water, and they shall become blood . . .”’” (7:19)**

*Rashi* z”l comments on our verse: Because the river had protected Moshe when he was cast into it [as an infant], he did not strike it, neither at the plague of blood nor at that of frogs; rather, Aharon struck it.

Likewise, *Rashi* comments regarding the plague of lice (*Shmot* 8:12): The dust did not deserve to be struck by Moshe because it had protected him when he slew the Egyptian, whose body he hid in the sand; therefore, it was struck by Aharon. [Until here from *Rashi*]

*Rashi*’s comments, which are themselves based on *Midrashim*, are commonly understood to mean that Moshe felt a debt of gratitude to the water and the sand, so he did not strike them. R’ Yerucham Levovitz z”l (*Mashgiach Ruchani* of the Mir Yeshiva; died 1936) writes: Some ask, “How does the concept of showing gratitude apply here? In any event, the water and the dust would be struck! What difference does it make if it was Moshe or Aharon who did it?”

R’ Levovitz answers: If we understood that man’s *Avodah* / Divine service is to develop “*Kochot*” / “powers” or “traits,” not just to perform actions, we would not ask such questions. Of course a person must perform *Mitzvot* and comply with all *Halachot*, but that is the bare minimum. Hashem is looking for much more.

For instance, our Sages say that Hashem chose Moshe as the leader because of the empathy that Moshe showed when he went out to see the welfare of his brethren (see *Shmot* 2:11). How many times did Moshe do this? Only twice, and no more! Did showing empathy twice really qualify Moshe as a leader? The answer is: Of course not! Rather, what qualified Moshe as a leader was that Hashem saw how deeply that empathy was ingrained in Moshe’s personality. The two occasions when Moshe exhibited that trait were merely examples of what he was capable of; those examples were not themselves what qualified him for leadership, R’ Levovitz writes.

R’ Levovitz continues: King Shlomo teaches (*Mishlei* 6:6) that one should learn industriousness from an ant. But, says a *Midrash*, some ants store more food than they could eat in hundreds of lifetimes. Is that a trait we should emulate? That is lunacy! Nevertheless, explains R’ Levovitz, the trait of industriousness itself is what King Shlomo is glorifying.

Likewise, R’ Levovitz writes, showing gratitude to water and dust may seem like lunacy if one views them as isolated actions. However, if a person has made the trait of feeling and showing gratitude part of his essence, which is what really matters, he necessarily will feel gratitude to inanimate things also, as Moshe did. (*Da’at Torah* Vol. II p.9)

# 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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## FORMER CONSUL GENERAL TO NY DANI DAYAN JOINS NEW HOPE (Arutz-7 1/13/21)

Dani Dayan, who served for four years as Israel's Consul General in New York and was chairman of the Yesha Council, is joining the New Hope party. In his role as Consul General in New York, Dayan received wide praise and appreciation for his accomplishments and conduct, and established close ties with members and institutions across the Jewish community, with senior figures in the two major parties, as well as with a variety of groups in American civil society.

Dayan (65), born in Argentina, Major (Res.), served in the IDF for over seven years, and holds a BA in economics and computer science from Bar-Ilan University, and an MA in finance from Tel Aviv University. He founded and headed a large company in the field of information systems.

Dayan served as chairman of the Yesha Council, and welcomed a wide range of leaders from Israel and abroad to tour Judea and Samaria during his time in the role. He established the international arm of the Yesha Council, and maintained regular and frequent contacts with the US Administration, providing a clear voice promoting the Jewish communities of Judea and Samaria, and speaking out clearly against extremism.

Dayan is the head of the Nefesh B'Nefesh council on a voluntary basis.

Dani Dayan commented, "I am joining New Hope at a crucial moment in the country's history, out of a deep sense of the need to change the government, and with the commitment to see the formation of a new government led by Gideon Saar - the only one who can lead the necessary change for Israel and its citizens today."

New Hope chair and candidate for prime minister Gideon Saar welcomed Dayan and said, "Dani Dayan is an asset to the Israeli public. Dani clearly and distinctly expresses the national-liberal ideals and deeply understands the importance of unity in Israel, and of the unity of the Jewish people all over the world - as a value and as a strength for Israel. Dani Dayan's knowledge of American society and the political system is especially valuable."

## DOZENS REPORTED DEAD IN SYRIA AIRSTRIKE ATTRIBUTED TO ISRAEL (YNet 1/13/21)

Dozens were reported dead and wounded in an attack attributed to Israel in northeast Syria late on Tuesday, according to Iranian media outlets who said ambulances were rushed to the scene.

The strike was the fourth time Iranian backed targets in Syria have come under attack in the past three weeks.

A senior U.S. intelligence official with knowledge of the attack told The Associated Press that the airstrikes were carried out with intelligence provided by the United States -- a rare incidence of publicized cooperation between the two countries over choosing targets in Syria. The official said the strikes targeted a series of warehouses in Syria that were being used in a pipeline to store and stage Iranian weapons.

The U.S. official, who requested anonymity to speak about sensitive national security matters, said Secretary of State Mike Pompeo discussed Tuesday's airstrike with Mossad chief Yossi Cohen, at a public meeting in popular Washington restaurant Cafe Milano on Monday.

The official said the warehouses also served as a pipeline for components that support Iran's nuclear program.

The Syrian news agency SANA reported that there was a late-night raid near the border with Iraq, in the al-Bukamal desert in the province of Deir Ez-Zor, but did not report any injuries.

The area is considered the land corridor for Iranian personnel and weaponry

transported via Iraq to militias and proxies in Syria and Lebanon.

According to the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, the targets were 18 sites controlled by Iranian-backed militias and that of the 4 Syrian soldiers and militiamen were dead.

Last week a strike attributed to Israel was reported in southern Syria, with unofficial reports claiming at least three people were killed near Damascus as missiles struck the city, as well as targets on the Syrian Golan Heights.

A week before that, after another attack that the Syrian news agency said was carried out by Israel in the area of Masyaf in the north of the country, an Israeli civilian airliner on route to Tel Aviv was instructed to veer off course to avoid any retaliation from Syrian air defenses.

The El Al flight had to cross westward to Cyprus in order to remain clear of the Syrian and Lebanese coast, The plane landed safely at Ben Gurion International Airport shortly thereafter.

## TOURISM MINISTER: 'TOURISTS ARE THE ONES WHO CAN TRULY MAKE PEACE' (JPost 1/13/21)

The Abraham Accords are creating a new reality where tourism can help bridge boundaries between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, Tourism Minister Orit Farkash-Hacohen said at the UAE-Israel Peace and Prosperity Roundtable discussion on Wednesday. "Governments can sign contracts of normalization, but it takes people to truly make peace," she said.

"We have been hearing about tremendous interest from the UAE side," she said. "We expect to see 100,000 tourists from the Emirates soon."

Farkash-Hacohen noted that with Israel leading the world in coronavirus vaccinations, it is looking forward to welcoming tourists.

"The prime minister has said that most adults in Israel will be vaccinated by the end of March," she said. "We hope we will have a date that we can set as the target for opening everything up. Maybe April, definitely by May."

Israel is a place that offers everything, including history, business and the birthplace of the three major religions, Farkash-Hacohen said. Tel Aviv is a

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tech capital of the Middle East, and looks forward to hosting tourists looking for opportunities in renewable energy and other tech sectors, she added.

Emirati tourists who want to visit al-Aqsa Mosque will be safe, despite perceptions to the contrary, Farkash-Hacohen said.

"Visitors of all religions visit al-Aqsa every day, and everyone is very safe," she said. "There is nothing new about tourists visiting. We welcome everyone, naturally and respectfully."

Meanwhile, in a panel discussion on tourism, Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Fleur Hassan-Nahoum said she is preparing the capital for Emirati tourism.

"We are working on developing a perfect product for tourists from the Gulf," she said, noting that 40% of Jerusalem's residents speak Arabic.

In addition, Hassan-Nahoum noted, normalization will open Dubai not only to tourists from Israel, but also Jewish travelers from North America and elsewhere. There may even be a time when a Gulf visit becomes a standard part of Jewish group trips, the way a visit to Eastern Europe is now, she said. Hassan-Nahoum founded the UAE-Israel Business Council several months before the UAE-Israel normalization deal was announced in August.

"I could feel something was coming, but I didn't know how soon," she said. "We are here to connect people, and then let the free market do its work."

The council now has more than 3,000 members, she noted.

Adel Ahmad al-Redha, chief operating officer of Emirates Airlines, said that the opening of travel between the two countries will provide an opportunity to connect Tel Aviv with 140 cities that Emirates Airlines flies to, opening up Dubai Airport as a point of connection for Israelis with the East.

Avishesha Bhojani, founder of the BPG Group, noted that normalization provides the opportunity for each side to learn from each other. "Dubai is an exceptional destination for every type of tourism, but it is a world leader in luxury tourism," and Israel will learn how to improve in that niche, he said.

#### **FIFTH ROCK OF ISRAEL FLIGHT LANDS IN ISRAEL** (JPost 1/14/21)

The fifth flight of Operation Rock of Israel landed at Ben-Gurion Airport early Thursday morning. On it were 162 immigrants to Israel from Ethiopia who made aliyah as part of the operation, including 35 children and 13 infants.

The immigrants will enter coronavirus quarantine for two weeks and then be reunited with family members who are waiting for them in Israel.

Aliyah Minister Pnina Tamano-Shata has spearheaded efforts to bring the remaining Falash Mura members from Ethiopia to Israel and spent time there last month together with members of her ministry and Jewish Agency officials to coordinate the arrival of the 2,000 immigrants who were authorized to make aliyah two months ago.

"We have begun righting the wrong that has gone on for many years," said Tamano-Shata. "Once a week, on average, a plane lands in Israel with hundreds of children of parents waiting for them."

A 2015 government decision said that all the members of the community should be brought to Israel by the end of this year, but political opposition have facilitated the arrival of only part of the community.

#### **MERETZ MK: HAREDIM FLOUTING CORONA RULES SHOULD BE DENIED MEDICAL CARE** (Israel Hayom 1/12/21)

Meretz MK Yair Golan sparked controversy Sunday for suggesting in a tweet that Haredim who flout coronavirus directives should be deprived of medical care. Backlash was immediate and Golan removed the tweet moments after it was posted.

Following the harsh criticism, Golan tweeted a clarification, saying, "Let's be clear: I don't propose denying treatment to any Israeli, but the situation in which there are those who obey only the laws they wish or go against the state and its institutions is intolerable."

#### **ISRAEL SEES EARLY SIGNS THAT VACCINATION DRIVE IS SLOWING SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS** (Ha'aretz 1/14/21)

The infection rate among Israelis who received the first of two coronavirus vaccine doses dropped dramatically two weeks after they were first inoculated, initial Health Ministry data released on Tuesday shows.

According to the figures, 4,484 people were diagnosed with the coronavirus within one to seven days of having been vaccinated, as compared to 3,186 people within eight to 14 days of their respective jab date. Most significantly, between 15 and 22 days from the first vaccine dose date, the figure dropped to 353 people.

Given that Israel's vaccination campaign began in late December, for most of those who have received the first dose, 15 to 22 days have not yet passed.

Overall, since the campaign began, 375 of those who received the first jab were later diagnosed with coronavirus and hospitalized.

Of these, 244 of them were diagnosed one to seven days after vaccination, compared to 124 people between eight and 14 days following the jab. Only seven people were diagnosed and hospitalized after 15 or more days had lapsed following vaccination.

The Health Ministry has also published preliminary data on side effects experienced by people who received the first dose. Among the 1.7 million people who received the first dose, 1,127 reported having experienced side effects. The most common side effects are general (such as headache, fever, nausea, muscle aches, etc.), followed by local side effects (such as pain and redness at the injection site, swelling and restriction of movement).

92 people experienced neurological effects (such as paresis, tingling, and numbness, 14 cases of facial nerve paralysis, five cases of convulsions and more), and allergic symptoms.

#### **67-YR-OLD WOMAN ACCIDENTALLY GIVEN FIVE CORONAVIRUS VACCINE DOSES** (JPost 1/14/21)

A 67-year-old woman from Jerusalem received five doses of the Pfizer coronavirus vaccine at once, The Jerusalem Post confirmed.

Instead of receiving one dose during the inoculation process, she was accidentally given an entire vial.

She showed no side effects or symptoms, but was still evacuated to the emergency room at Shaare Zedek Medical Center for observation. A spokesperson for the hospital said that she was doing well.

The woman received the vaccination at a Maccabi Healthcare Services Jerusalem vaccination center in the center of town.

Tests conducted by Pfizer, the maker of the vaccine, indicate there are no negative consequences of receiving up to five doses, except for side effects at the site of the injection, Maccabi said.

#### **LEADERS BID FAREWELL TO JEWISH PHILANTHROPIST SHELDON ADELSON** (YNet 1/12/21)

Israeli leaders expressed their condolences on Tuesday after the passing of American Jewish businessman and political donor, Sheldon Adelson who has passed away at the age of 87.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the casino mogul "one of the biggest philanthropists in Jewish history" and sent his condolences to Adlestein's wife, Miriam.

"My wife and I are heartbroken and send our condolences to Miri Adelson and the entire family for the death of Sheldon Adelson," Netanyahu said.

"Many, many of the Jewish people in Israel and around the world share this grief. Sheldon's great work to strengthen Israel's position in the United States, as well as the country's relation with the Diaspora, will be remembered for generations."

"Alongside his wife, Sheldon was one of the greatest philanthropists to the Jewish people, Zionism, the settlements and the country. We will remember him forever," the prime minister said.

Adelson died late on Monday in Las Vegas after a battle with cancer.

President Reuven Rivlin took to Twitter to mourn Adelson's passing.

"Saddened by the passing of Sheldon Adelson, who loved the Jewish people and Israel, was a great American patriot, and who strengthened the bonds between Israel and America with boundless generosity. Condolences to Miriam and to the whole family. May his memory be a blessing," Rivlin wrote.

U.S. President Donald Trump, who had enjoyed financial support from Adelson since the launch of his 2016 presidential campaign, said Adelson

lived a true American story. "The world has lost a great man. He will be missed," he said.

Former U.S. Ambassador to the UN Nicky Haley said that Adelson's "good deeds and legacy will continue to shape the lives of millions."

Prime Minister Netanyahu's son, Yair, said praised Adelson for dedicating "his life for fighting for Israel and America, and for conservative values" and U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Freidman said Adelson's shoes could not be filled.

Isaac Herzog, a former opposition leader and now the head of the Jewish Agency, an organization that works to fortify links between Israel and the diaspora, called Adelson "one of the leaders of the Jewish people in our generation, one of the pillars of Jewish education in the world."

### **IDF TANKS OPEN FIRE AT HAMAS POSITION AFTER TERRORIST SHOOTING (Arutz-7 1/13/21)**

Terrorists from the Gaza Strip fired at an engineering vehicle operating at noon (Wednesday) at the border near Kissufim. There were no casualties.

In response, an IDF tank attacked a Hamas position.

The engineers were involved in clearing vegetation that was thought to have been used to conceal IEDs.

An IDF spokesman said: "A number of rounds were recently fired at an engineering vehicle during an operation near the Gaza strip. IDF tanks attacked a Hamas position in response."

### **NETANYAHU MOVES UP PLANS TO APPROVE NEW U.S. EMBASSY BUILDING IN JERUSALEM (Ha'aretz 1/14/21)**

Under pressure from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office, Jerusalem's planning commission approved on Wednesday plans to build a permanent U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem, less than a week before Joe Biden is inaugurated.

Jerusalem Mayor Moshe Leon called the decision "a historic and exciting moment, which is happening against the backdrop of the political shift we're witnessing these," referring to Israel's normalization deals with several Arab countries.

President Donald Trump announced in 2017 that the U.S. embassy would move from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, where it opened the following year at the consular office building in the Arnona neighborhood.

Since then, the U.S. has, with the encouragement of local Israeli building authorities, been planning the construction of a new building to serve as a permanent home for the embassy. They have been examining two options: expanding the existing building or building a new one. Both plans have advanced through city hall's planning channels.

On Tuesday, the local planning commission were notified of a change in the schedule for their weekly meeting, which did not initially include any items for discussion of construction plans. But at the request of senior city officials, both U.S. Embassy plans were raised for the commission's approval after the usual agenda on construction permits. The change was first reported by Kan public broadcaster.

Municipality sources said pressure to put those plans on the agenda came from the Prime Minister's Office, with the aim of winning approval before Joe Biden takes office on January 20 for fear that Washington may slow down the project after the administration changeover.

The plan to expand the existing embassy includes vacating and demolishing the nearby Diplomat Hotel, where dozens of elderly immigrants from former Soviet countries live, and to destroy the building. They also include the chopping down of hundreds of trees inside the construction zone. The second plan would establish a number of 10-story buildings in a compound that would be surrounded by a wall three-and-a-half meters high.

### **ISRAELI STARTUP VOICEITT WINS INNOVATION AWARD AT CES 2021 (Israel Hayom 1/12/21)**

Israeli startup Voiceitt has been named a CES 2021 Innovation Awards Honoree, the company announced Monday.

Voiceitt's app provides a simple, accessible way for people with speech and motor impairments to communicate using their own voice.

Voiceitt recently integrated with Amazon Alexa, enabling people with speech impairments to use their own iPhone or iPad app to access and control Alexa.

"We are honored to be selected as a CES Innovation Awards Honoree and to be added to their prestigious ranks of gold standard products," said Voiceitt co-founder and CEO Danny Weissberg.

"For us, this award is not only an acknowledgment of the value of our product, but also a celebration of our ability to increase the independence and quality of life for individuals with speech impairments," Weissberg said.

### **ISRAEL BRACING FOR BLOWS WITH BIDEN ON IRAN (Ron Ben-Yishai, YNet 1/12/21)**

In the past week, it has become clear even to those who are not experts in international and U.S. policy that the Israeli government will have considerable difficulty adapting to the new U.S. administration.

Firstly, the values, foreign policy, and strategy of the mainstream of the Democratic Party and the new White House are polar opposites to those accepted by the Trump administration.

Secondly, the Israeli government is rightly perceived in the United States as being firmly in the Trump camp. Furthermore, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has a history of confrontations with former president Barack Obama, under whom President-elect Joe Biden spent eight years as vice president.

Biden has named some senior Obama-era officials to the most influential positions in his new administration that takes office on January 20.

With the new president having more or less filled out his administration's intended top tier, Defense Minister Benny Gantz has instructed his office and the IDF to map the security and strategic issues that will most likely be controversial for the new administration.

Those making security decision in Israel see a significant difference between the Biden and Trump administrations in their basic approach to the management and implementation of policy and strategy.

Trump made many unilateral, one-off grandiose moves that relied primarily on skills he attributed to himself, rightly or wrongly, and a team of advisers who were afraid to oppose his opinion. He essentially acted as an all-powerful presenter on a reality TV show.

He also often made unilateral decisions based on profit and loss considerations without consulting and coordinating with allies, and even often intentionally pitting himself against their leaders.

Biden and his team, on the other hand, are devout believers in multilateralism - cooperating closely on complex issues with allies and coalitions who share U.S. interests.

And no matter what Israeli leaders think about the (poor) achievements of the Obama administration in the world in general and in the Middle East in particular, the defense establishment believes that the Biden administration is about to take the same path.

As such, senior members of the defense establishment recommend that dialogue with the Biden administration should primarily be carried out between the security officials of each country.

This is not necessarily due to an ideological kinship, but rather because the defense establishments already have several permanent joint bodies for security, intelligence and strategy.

These committees meet at regular intervals, once every few months, to discuss issues of common interest and have over time developed a deep mutual understanding that does not depend on who is sitting in the White House or the prime minister's residence in Jerusalem.

IDF Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi also has close ties with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark Milley, while the designated U.S. Secretary of Defense, Gen. (ret.) Lloyd Austin, a former commander of U.S. forces in Iraq, is a long-standing acquaintance of Gantz from their time in uniform.

The main area of dispute between the Biden government and the current

government in Israel is the intention of Biden and his people to return to the JCPOA, the nuclear agreement that Iran signed with the five world powers and Germany in July 2015.

Trump withdrew from the agreement and re-imposed sanctions on Iran's oil exports and its ability to make use of the international clearing system. Biden and his team have officially announced that if Tehran goes back to abiding by the terms of the nuclear deal, the U.S. will respond in kind.

This means that the biting sanctions that have destroyed Iran's economy will be lifted, and it will be able to return to exporting oil for monetary payment.

In return, Biden intends to enter into negotiations with Iran on amending problematic clauses in the original nuclear deal, restrictions on its ballistic missile program and an end to its regional meddling.

No one knows exactly what the Biden administration wants to achieve from the Iranians, and how it will achieve it. But Israel's defense establishment believes that a return to the original nuclear deal, as it was written, would be a disaster and would significantly advance Iran - in the near future - to obtain nuclear weapons.

This would especially be the case if the sanctions on Tehran are lifted before the Iranians give anything concrete in return.

But the defense establishment also believes that a confrontation with the Biden administration from the very start would not be beneficial and may even harm Israeli interests, as was the case with Obama.

In order to avoid such a confrontation, the Defense Ministry has prepared a detailed series of proposals and suggestions to be handed to the Americans to assist in the negotiations (if and when they begin) with Tehran, with the hope of also influencing their outcome.

One such possible proposal is requiring Iran to commit to not developing or manufacturing ballistic and cruise missiles capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, but to allow the development and production of limited quantities of medium and short-range missiles.

In any case, the Israeli defense establishment wants to conduct this sensitive dialogue with the Biden administration behind closed doors and without media leaks.

The question is whether Jerusalem will cooperate.

### **MINORITIES IN AMERICA AND ISRAEL ARE TURNING NATIONALIST, AND THAT'S GREAT NEWS** (Sruik Einhorn, Ha'aretz 1/14/21)

In recent months, the cynics who live on Israeli social media have found a new target for their arrows: the Likud's attempt to reach out to Arab voters.

To criticize the Likud, they make jokes about Mansour Abbas, the Joint List MK from an Islamist faction who has joined hands with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and about how Israel's right-wing is courting Hamas. The more Netanyahu visits Arab cities, and is welcomed with intense love and support, the more they ridicule him.

On the face of it, this might seem a strange, not to say unthinkable partnership: the Likud is a committed right-wing Zionist nationalist party that is unashamed and unrelenting in the pursuit of its goals. By contrast, Israel's Arab citizens are considered a non-Zionist public.

And yet, this partnership is steadily unfolding before our very eyes. The same core challenge to our assumptions about how minorities vote, and "should" vote, was evident in the 2020 elections in America too.

The 2021 elections are going to mark a revolution in Arab-Jewish relations in the State of Israel. After years of Arab parties antagonistic to the state, of Arab political leaders actually cooperating with terror organizations, the 1.8 million-strong Arab public in Israel, 21% of the population, are beginning to choose parties that give them a sense of belonging in return for their vote.

This partnership reflects the tectonic shift in world politics in our times. The media, academics, pollsters and analysts, who were all incapable of foreseeing the rise of Trump, Brexit, and the 36 seats won by Netanyahu in the last elections, now shut their eyes from seeing this movement, too.

They are still captive to the old notions that minorities automatically identify with the Left, that they are umbilically bound to theories of multiculturalism and globalization, and are inherently repelled by the Right and its

commitments to family, community and nation.

However, the world is changing. From Brexit Britain to Trump 2016, the public, which was supposed to thrive on globalization and benefit from the weakening of states and from the opening of borders, turned its back on the intellectual elites pushing those ideological positions and turned towards national identity.

As it turns out, nationalist sentiments are not offensive to minorities either. Quite the contrary! They work for them, too. A strong country is the first precondition for everyone's success, including the minorities and the poor. Only a healthy, successful, and prosperous nation that is effectively managed can enrich its citizens. Weak countries, ruled by detached academic elites, simply cannot succeed.

Received opinion binged on about Trump being a racist anti-Semite who hates Blacks, Mexicans and Latinos. True, U.S. minorities voted for the Democratic Party. But after four years of campaigning, a larger number of them voted for Trump.

In 2016, 6 percent of all Trump voters were Black. That went up to between 8-12 percent this time around. In Florida, voters of Cuban and Venezuelan descent have long trended GOP, but Trump's vote share still increased. In the Miami Dade county, Trump won 46 percent of the vote in 2020, compared to 33 percent in 2016. And there was a shock rise in Trump support among Latinos on the Texas-Mexico border, and among Vietnamese in Los Angeles suburbs.

Those from minorities who voted for Trump didn't believe the GOP-as-party-of-hate story. Because voters themselves have rejected the thesis and changed the story.

The same false, brutal campaigns are being conducted in Israel against Benjamin Netanyahu. He is called a racist, that he hates Arabs, that he fearmongered about their getting out the vote in 2015, when on election day he declared that "The Arabs are flocking to the polls." The truth, as it now clearly transpires, is quite the opposite.

Netanyahu believes in prosperity, in genuine peace, in safety (establishing nine new police stations in Arab communities) and in investing money in the Arab sector – in which he led an investment of 15 billion NIS, an initiative that has not been taken by any preceding Israeli leader. The integration of the Arab sector into the Israeli economy has considerable potential for each person's success as well as the GDP.

In contrast, the Israeli left offers Israeli Arabs despair, resentment, whining, and dependence. The Likud provides hope for real integration rather than a blame game that has so far led Israel's Arab citizens nowhere.

The Left has sanctified the Oslo process and created a fictitious symmetry between the Palestinians and Israeli Arabs. This thinking deadlocked all of us – Israel, the Palestinians, the Israeli Arabs, and the whole region.

Netanyahu offers Israeli Arabs a different vision. Instead of courting Abu Mazen, Netanyahu has built bridges of peace with Arab countries, thus proving once and for all that peace and prosperity can be achieved regardless of the Palestinians' unsubstantiated, dangerous political demands.

The Abraham Accords have established an unconditional peace for the sons of Abraham. A true peace that could only be achieved by a strong Israel, not one that has fallen prey to its enemies by yielding land to Palestinian terror organizations, as has been Israel's past disastrous experience.

The false paradigms that Netanyahu broke in the region have left their mark on Israeli Arabs, too. We will see political changes already in the March elections, and these changes will accumulate, strengthen and accelerate in subsequent elections.

The Joint List is the coalition that claims to represent Israel's Arab citizens. But its discourse on international law, the Palestinians, and the UN is becoming irrelevant. The Likud's narrative of power, prosperity and security is the one that will count.

In Israel, as in other advanced Western states, minorities are starting to emerge from the grip of the left-wing elite that has never really cared for them or their advancement. What we are seeing now is just the beginning.



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

### Seek Truth to See Truth

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

***"And Hashem said to Moshe, come to Pharaoh and say to him...send my nation...for if you refuse...Hashem's Hand will be against your livestock...a very heavy pestilence. And Hashem did this thing the next day and all of the livestock of Egypt died...and Pharaoh sent and behold none had died from the Israelite livestock until one...and he did not send the people." (9:1-7)***

One of the plagues that *Hashem* brought upon the Egyptians was pestilence, through which *Hashem* destroyed Egypt's livestock. The Torah relates that in the aftermath of the plague, Pharaoh sent people to survey the land and determine if any Jewish livestock had died too. The surveyors reported that none of the Jewish livestock had died "until one". The Malbim explains the difficult expression "until one" to mean that there was, in fact, a single animal that died, which belonged to a man born of a Jewish mother and an Egyptian father. Prior to the giving of the Torah, such a person was considered to be an Egyptian. Nevertheless, Pharaoh considered him to be Jewish and used the death of a "Jewish" animal as "proof" that *Hashem* had not truly brought the plague of pestilence upon the Egyptians, but also upon the Jews. According to the Malbim, Pharaoh similarly grabbed at straws throughout all of the plagues, refusing to accept the clear and inescapable truth.

The lesson for us is simple. It is a common human foible to see things as we wish to see them. This allows us to arrive at the conclusions that are convenient for us. It is our job, however, to view matters objectively, arrive at the correct conclusions, and learn the appropriate life lessons. May we all strive to adopt this mindset and, in doing so, truly grow through life's experiences.

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**The river shall swarm with frogs and they shall ascend and come into your house... and into your ovens... (7, 28)**

Where did Chananya, Mishoel and Azarya get the courage to throw themselves into a fiery furnace? They took a lesson from the frogs in Egypt. Even though frogs are not commanded to sanctify Hashem's Name, they jumped into the ovens for His sake. We, who are obligated to sanctify Hashem's Name, all the more so must jump into a fiery furnace to sanctify His Name. (Pesochim 53b)

Terach told Nimrod that Avraham had smashed his idols. Nimrod threw him into a fiery pit. (Rashi Noach 11, 28)

Why did Chananya, Mishoel and Azaryah need to learn the lesson of mesiras nefesh from the frogs? Why didn't they learn from Avraham that one must allow himself to be thrown into a furnace in order to sanctify Hashem's Name?

### Parsha Riddle

**What is the longest word in the Torah?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

**Where do we find that wood ate something?**

**Answer: 147**

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Three times in *parashiyos Shemos* and *Va'eira* (3:18, 5:3, 8:23), the Jewish people's request of Pharaoh to leave Egypt is described as a request for a trip of three days. Most commentaries assume that the Jews did not actually intend to return to Egypt after three days, and they offer various explanations and justifications of the disingenuous request, including the following:

- This was a shrewd way to request permission to leave (i.e., more likely to be granted by Pharaoh than a request to leave outright). (*Rashbam* 3:11)
- It was a devious plot to entice the Egyptians to chase them into the sea and then be drowned there. Had the Egyptians released them unconditionally, they would not have subsequently pursued them to recapture them; they only did so since they believed that the Jews had broken their promise to leave for only three days, and that they were scheming and acting dishonestly on their own initiative, and not following Hashem's instructions. (*Shemos Rabbah* 3:12, *Derashos Haran* #11)
- It was not an outright lie: the Jews merely stated that they intended a three-day trip – but they never explicitly said that they would return afterward! (*Ibn Ezra* 10:10)

R. Yosef Bechor Shor (14:1-4) explains that the Jews did indeed begin to return to Egypt after three days, but Pharaoh then pursued them with intent to attack them, and so they were forced to flee from him and were unable to return. Their failure to return to Egypt was therefore Pharaoh's fault, not their own.

The *halachah* certainly allows disingenuousness in order to forestall oppression. (*Nedarim* 27b-28a) Despite this, R. Yehudah Hachassid prohibits Jews who were seized by an oppressive ruler and released upon their oath not to flee the region from breaching their promise. Even if they annul their oath (via *hataras nedarim*), this will nevertheless result in the desecration of Hashem's name, and furthermore, the ruler will no longer trust Jewish oaths, and will refuse to parole any future captive of his. (*Sefer Chassidim* #423)

R. Yaakov Emden rejects the first argument, arguing that there will be no desecration of Hashem's name since even the non-Jewish ruler will understand that an oath taken under duress is void. (*Migdal Oz, Even Bochein pinah* 1 #114)

PRESENTED BY  
**RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH**

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I was first.
2. I am red.
3. I am not brainless.
4. I caused thirst.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. We got burnt.
2. We got swallowed.
3. We got baked.
4. We got hit.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 Snake** (I pushed, I swallowed, I was copper, I was a sign.)

**#2 Aleph** (I am the first, This week I am quintuple, I am one, I am a thousand.)

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!**

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

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