

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

July 23 - 24, 2021 - 15 Av 5781 - Vaeschanan/Shabbos Nachamu

Light Candles by 8:09 - Havdalah 9:13

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week by the children and grandchildren of Bev Morris and Art Boyars, in honor of Shabbos Nachamu, and by Rochelle Dimont, Michele Dimont & family and the Ginsburg & Neuman families on the Shloshim of son/husband/father/brother, Chayim ben Harav Avraham Mordechai Z"l.

## Mazal Tov

- **Sandy and Rabbi Hal Axelrod** on the birth of a granddaughter on July 16<sup>th</sup>, Basya Miriam. Mazal Tov also to Basya Miriam's parents, Eve & Yecheil Davis, and siblings Nechama Leah, Ovadyah Boruch, and Yosef Chaim of Far Rockaway, NY. Mazal Tov also to grandparents Chava & Shlomo Davis of Brooklyn, NY, and to all of the extended family members.
- **Eli Hochberg** on his Bar Mitzvah. Mazal Tov to his parents, **Aviva & Zev**, his grandparents, Bella Hochberg and Brenda & Arthur Symes, and to all of the family.
- **Arleeta & Rabbi Dr. Ivan Lerner** on the birth of a great-grandson to their grandchildren, Rivki & Yaakov Lichter of Baltimore. Mazal Tov to grandparents Alison & Rabbi Dr. Daniel Lerner, Miriam & Bernie Lichter and great-grandmother Joan Pincus.
- **Sara Silver** on the upcoming marriage of her son, Max Kates, to Yael Dina Aufrichtig of Los Angeles. Mazal Tov also to grandmother Vivian Silver.
- **Marla & Marty Teichman** on the marriage of their granddaughter, Hinda Meth, to Yitzchak Isaac Kinzer. Mazal Tov to the parents, Debra & Reuven Meth and Ruthie & Rabbi Shlomo Kinzer.
- **Marla & Marty Teichman** on the birth of a great-grandson. Mazal Tov to the parents, Puah & Yehoshua Goldberger, and to the grandparents, Randee & Rabbi Manny Goldberger.
- **Kitty Wertheimer** on the engagement of her grandson, Ari Wertheimer, son of Irene & Barry Wertheimer of Potomac, to Mollie Markowitz, daughter of Suri & David Markowitz of Florida. Mazal Tov to their grandparents and siblings.

## Shabbos Schedule

Minyan locations are listed as B = Belonofsky Sanctuary, S = Social Hall. All Sephardi Minyanim take place in the Beit Medrash.

### Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 8:09, and not before 6:57
- Mincha: 7:00 (B), 8:10 (B), 7:15 (Sephardi)

### Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi)
- Mincha: 2:30 (B), 5:00 (B), 8:05 (B), 8:00 (Sephardi)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 9:13

### Divrei Torah:

- 8:45 Main Minyan Rabbi Rosenbaum
- 9:15 Rabbi Rosenbaum
- Shiur after Mincha Rabbi Rosenbaum

### Kiddush Sponsors:

- 8:45 and 9:15 Kiddush in a Bag is sponsored by Aviva Symes & Zev Hochberg in honor of their son Eli's Bar Mitzvah.

## YISE Youth Announcements

**Shabbos Groups** will take place this week from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM, indoors. Masks required indoors for age 3+. Age 18-35 months will be located in the toddler room off the Lower Lobby. Ages 3-5 years will meet in the room behind the balcony. This week only: Ages 6-9 year old girls will be inside Shomrai next door to the 3-5 year olds. Boys will be in Shomrai side yard facing Arcola under the tent. For more information, contact Michal Merkin, YISE Youth groups coordinator, at [mmerkin@yise.org](mailto:mmerkin@yise.org) *See flyer for details.*

## Weekday Shiurim

Options for remote learning are listed below. For the latest list and 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 take place on Sunday.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday 7:00 PM - **Zoom A**, will not take place on Thursday.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), Sundays at 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**, will resume on Sunday, August 1.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Gemara Shiur for Men, Tuesdays and Fridays, 6:00 AM, in the room behind the balcony, will not take place on Friday.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Nach Shiur, Wednesdays at 11:00 AM, now learning Megillas Eichah, **Zoom A**.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Women's Navi Shiur, now studying Sefer Yehoshua, Wednesdays at 8:00 PM, **Zoom A**.
  - **GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch and Learn for Men and Women** - Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM, on break for the summer.
  - **Rabbi Tuvia Grauman** - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, Sundays at 10:00 AM, **Zoom C**.
  - **GWCK presents CLAS (Community Learning at Shomrai)** - 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM. For more info, contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps, [hshaps@gwckollel.org](mailto:hshaps@gwckollel.org) 347-869-9361.
    - Thursdays: Rabbi Grossman - Parshas Hashavua, 9:00 PM, **Zoom D**.
    - All other classes are on break for the summer.
  - **Semichat Chaver Program**, Tuesdays at 9:00 PM with Rabbi Hillel Shaps, now taking place in person in the Social Hall. For more information, please contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps: [hshaps@gwckollel.org](mailto:hshaps@gwckollel.org) Registration required at [gwckollel.org/scp](http://gwckollel.org/scp)
  - **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiur on Daily Halachos for men & women, Tuesdays 9:15 AM, **Zoom B**.
  - **Rabbi Yitzchak Scher's** Shiur for Men and Women, Tuesdays, 1:30 PM, "A Second Look - Stories in the Torah from a Deeper Perspective", will resume in the fall.
  - **Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's** Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning Maseches Kiddushin on Wednesday evenings, 7:00 PM, will resume in August.
- 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: 970 1398 4837, password 613  
Zoom C: ID: 978 8156 7874, password RabbiHyatt  
Zoom D: ID: 746 455 2195, password Learn

## COVID-19 Updates

- Masks are required for unvaccinated people in the YISE building, with the exception of children under the age of 3.
- There are no more social distancing requirements in the YISE building. There are no in-person Kiddushes at this time.
- 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.

## YISE Programs and Listings

**Minyan Moves** - All three Ashkenazi Minyanim on Sunday morning, 6:30 AM, 7:30 AM and 8:45 AM, will now take place in the Belonofsky Sanctuary.

**Ask the Rabbi** - Come join our virtual, interactive monthly program featuring Halachos of Shabbos and holidays! This month's topic: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkos. Tuesday, August 24, 8:30 PM - 9:30 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 about Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkos to: [AskTheRabbi@yise.org](mailto:AskTheRabbi@yise.org) by Sunday, August 22. For more information or to submit questions anonymously, 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.

**High Holiday Seats** - The High Holiday seat form and information letter were mailed this week. The deadline for holiday seats is later than usual this year. Please see the letter for information on all the dates and reply ASAP to let the shul staff and volunteers the necessary time to process your request. Also included in the mailing was information on the Yizkor Guide and the Hashomer greetings. Please also look at those letters for their deadline dates.

**Yizkor Guide** - The Yizkor Guide is used in all Minyanim for four Yizkor services during the year (Yom Kippur, Shemini Atzeres, Pesach and Shavuot). Since Yizkor may be said without a minyan, we are prepared to home deliver some copies of the Yizkor Guide to our Shul members who regularly say Yizkor and feel more comfortable davening at home. If you would like a home-delivered copy, please contact the Shul office at 301-593-4465 x403 or email [office@yise.org](mailto:office@yise.org) As before, an unlimited number of name listings are available in the new guide for a Yizkor Guide sponsorship of \$180. Alternatively, individual name listings can be purchased for \$18 each. The deadline for Yizkor Guide sponsorships or individual listings is August 9. To sign up online, go to [www.yise.org/yizkor](http://www.yise.org/yizkor) If you have questions, please contact Marc Katz at [mkatz@yise.org](mailto:mkatz@yise.org)

**Kiddush in a Bag!** While we are not yet back to regular in-Shul Kiddushes, we are happy to now offer Kiddush in a Bag for the 8:45 and 9:15 Minyanim. To sponsor the Kiddush in a Bag, contact Simi Franco at [simi@yise.org](mailto:simi@yise.org)

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

## Happy Birthday! Happy Anniversary!

Looking for a way to celebrate someone's upcoming birthday or anniversary? For an \$18 donation, you can include the name (birthday) or names (anniversary) in this section of the Shabbos Shorts. Please send the following information to [office@yise.org](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.

Sponsoring a Shiur or other Torah learning is a meaningful way to commemorate a Yahrzeit or honor a loved one. Sponsorships are also a great way to celebrate a Simcha or any other milestone, while helping YISE at a time when many of the Shul's other sources of revenue are not available.

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

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

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

3. The Shabbos Drasha 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 Hvatt's Gemara Shiur

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

### Rabbi Rosenbaum's Nach Shiur

- The **Dimont, Ginsburg & Neuman families** on the Shloshim of son/brother Chayim ben Harav Avraham Mordechai, Z"L.

## YISE Programs and Listings (continued)

**Update: Being Social** - In the past few months, YISE's Social Committee has organized a range of programs to bring us together virtually, including: Jews (in our community) discussing their service in the US military, Trivia Nights, Painting with Talya, Purim Shpiel, Chagim goody bags ... We have also expressed our thanks to the Holy Cross Hospital health workers, and treated the Wheaton Rescue Squad to a special dinner. As we come together again, we would like your ideas and help in organizing fun, interactive, and safe activities. Please contact [social@yise.org](mailto:social@yise.org)

**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) See flyer for details.

**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, [mskarlin@gmail.com](mailto:mskarlin@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 Unveiling for Louis A. Joseph, Z"L**, will take place at 11:00 AM. Sunday, August 1, at Mt. Lebanon Cemetery.

**The Unveiling for Dr. Allen Gaisin, Elyahu ben Menachem Mendel HaKohen, Z"L**, will take place at 2:00 PM. Sunday, August 1, at the Garden of Remembrance Cemetery, 14321 Comus Road, Clarksburg, MD, Section 58.

**Kemp Mill Toastmasters** - Wednesday, July 28, 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 [secretary@kempmilltoastmasters.com](mailto:secretary@kempmilltoastmasters.com) for more info. Zoom meeting ID: 986 546 841, password: 3671

**The Golden Network Lunch and Learn: "Elul - A Journey to Love"** with Rabbi Shmuel Leigh. Tuesday, August 10, 12 Noon - 1:00 PM at YISE.

Boxed lunch from The Kosher Pastry Oven. RSVP required by August 5 to 301-732-1773 or [director@goldennetwork.org](mailto:director@goldennetwork.org)

**Help our Senior Neighbors** - What if you had to give up your car keys and depend on someone else to get you where you needed to go? This is happening to more and more of our senior neighbors. Consider volunteering with the Senior Connection to drive seniors to medical appointments, shopping, etc. Training and liability coverage are provided, and you can set your own volunteering schedule. COVID-19 precautions are followed for the health of drivers and riders. Contact [volunteer@seniorconnectionmc.org](mailto:volunteer@seniorconnectionmc.org), call 301-962-0820 or visit [www.seniorconnectionmc.org](http://www.seniorconnectionmc.org) for more information.

**Capital Kosher Pantry Summer Collection** - Please donate non-perishable items. Specially needed: canned pineapple, graham cracker crusts, olives, olive oil, Wacky Mac, yeast. Always needed: paper napkins, paper towels, tissues & toilet paper. You can buy items at your local store & place them in a Capital Kosher Pantry donation bin at Shalom, Moti's and area Shuls, or buy online & ship directly to us! Go to: [www.yadvehuda.org/kosher-pantry](http://www.yadvehuda.org/kosher-pantry) for more information.

**Yad Yehuda Donation Policy Update** - Many unsolicited items are being dropped off at Yad Yehuda's office. We incur costs to dispose of those items. Please do not drop off: clothing/shoes/coats, household and baby items, electronics, books, Judaica/Sheimos. Donations of non-perishable food for the Capital Kosher Pantry are welcomed and appreciated.

**Newly married? Growing family? Just need a budget check-up?** Izun is a community resource that provides free and confidential coaching to help you examine your budget and achieve financial stability. Email us at [barbara@getizun.org](mailto:barbara@getizun.org)

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

**Daily Halacha Program from Rabbi Elyahu 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)

The Week Ahead		Sunday July 25	Monday July 26	Tuesday July 27	Wednesday July 28	Thursday July 29	Friday July 30
Shacharis	Ashkenazi	6:30, 7:30, 8:45	6:15, 6:45, 8:45	6:15, 6:55, 8:45	6:15, 6:55, 8:45	6:15, 6:45, 8:45	6:15, 6:55, 8:45
	Sephardi	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30
Mincha / Maariv	Ashkenazi	8:10	8:10	8:10	8:10	8:10	See Shabbos schedule
	Sephardi	8:10	8:10	8:10	8:10	8:10	
<b>Halachic Times:</b> Latest Alos Hashachar 4:34 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 5:09 AM, Latest Netz: 6:09 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:38 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:51 PM, Earliest Shkia: 8:20 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim: 9:12 PM							

### Next Shabbos

July 30 - 31, 2021 - 22 Av 5781

Parshas Eikev

Light Candles: 8:03

Havdalah: 9:06

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, July 28 at 12 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 - Thursday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM;

Friday 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum

Yale Ginsburg - President

Simi Franco - Office Manager

# A Quick Thought on the Parsha from Rabbi Rosenbaum

## Vaeschanan 5781:

### Like Nothing In This World

The following is kindly transcribed by a congregant from the video at

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

The *Parsha* begins with *Moshe* praying to *Hashem*, asking him one last time to give him the opportunity to go into the land of Israel. And the word used for *Moshe's* prayer, the verb used, is וְאֶתְהַנֵּן. *Rashi* on the *Pasuk* comments that וְאֶתְהַנֵּן is related to the word הִינֵם. That he says that this is the language of prayer particularly in the context of the righteous to speak to G-d in the mode that what they are asking G-d to give them is something that they don't deserve. Essentially asking that G-d give them something for free. That's the mode how a *Tzaddik davens*, a righteous person *davens* to *Hashem*.

I think frequently when we see this idea we say to ourselves, oh *Tzaddik* he's a humble person, she's a humble person, they're so humble they don't think they deserve much from G-d and it's just another aspect of their great piety. That is a very common understanding of this idea.

*Rav Shimshon Pincus* has another perspective. He explains that if we compare our asking G-d for anything to how we ask people for things we're making a fundamental error. Think about when you ask people for things. Normally when we ask someone for something, we're giving them something in return. Maybe we're asking someone to provide a service for us in which we'll pay for it. Sometimes we ask people to do things הִינֵם, we ask people to do things for free, but really what we're asking is they should do us a kindness and the implication is one of these days we'll do them a kindness in return. So it's really not הִינֵם, it's really not without any sense of barter. It's I'll do for you today and you'll do for me tomorrow. Now there are times of course in our society when people ask for something that there is nothing that they are giving in return, which is charity. A person goes to someone else and asks for charity but *Rav Pincus* says even that, if you think about our belief system, is really not asking the donor for something that they're giving you and you can't do anything in return. *Rav Pincus* explains that our belief system is that if someone is affluent, part of why they have that affluence is because G-d expects them to share their success with others. So essentially, we might not speak that way if we ask someone for a donation, but essentially what we're saying is G-d wants you to be donating money to people or causes whatever it is, please have me in mind. So we're appreciative if a person gives but it's not a feeling they're giving me something and I'm not giving them anything in return. Are you kidding? They're giving something they have to give to somebody. If they believe in G-d they have to be giving it to somebody. Which means that the whole mode of prayer, G-d doesn't have to give us anything. And we're so far from perfect, we're so flawed. Who out there thinks that when they *daven* for something, when they pray for something, G-d must say yes, that they're utterly justified in their request. The whole mode of prayer is fundamentally different than any other human interaction in which we make a request.

*Rav Pincus* says that's why, that's what we mean that this language of prayer is giving something, where we're asking G-d to give us something when we are not giving him anything in return. It's a whole different perspective on prayer. It's really imploring G-d and I know there is no logical reason why he should answer my prayers. Maybe I deserve it, maybe I don't. But why, because I'm asking for it, should he give it to me. It just strengthens this feeling that I'm just begging G-d to have mercy on me. I think this is a different way of looking at prayer than we're normally inclined to think. Normally it's easier to compare it to talking to people because that makes it feel more real. That might be so, but *Rav Pincus's* point is that we have to understand that every request we make of G-d is fundamentally unlike anything we would ask of another person. Something to think about.

Have a good *Shabbos!*



- 4 Groups:**
- 1. Ages 18-36 months**
  - 2. Ages 3-5**
  - 3. Ages 6-9 Boys**
  - 4. Ages 6-9 Girls**



**July  
24th!  
10:00-  
11:00am**

**Indoors**

**Masks required if  
unvaccinated (3+)**

**Snacks to go**



# ASK the RABBI

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

Topic: **Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkos**



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

- How many shofar blasts do I need to hear to fulfill the mitzvah?
- How do I drive to shul for Kol Nidrei if I need to light the candles first?
- What do I need to eat and drink in the sukkah?

Send in your questions about Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkos to: [AskTheRabbi@yise.org](mailto:AskTheRabbi@yise.org) by Sunday, August 22.

**When:** Tuesday, August 24, 8:30 PM – 9:30 PM

**Where:** Zoom – Meeting ID: 416-963-9000, Passcode: 492019

For more information and to submit questions by phone or anonymously, contact:

Miriam Friedman at 301-754-1517 or [mfriedman2@yahoo.com](mailto:mfriedman2@yahoo.com)

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# Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah  
via the Internet

Volume 27, Issue 40

Shabbat Parashat Vaetchanan

5781 - B"H

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

**The Fewest of All Peoples** - Buried inconspicuously in this week's parsha is a short sentence with explosive potential, causing us to think again about both the nature of Jewish history and the Jewish task in the present.

Moses had been reminding the new generation, the children of those who left Egypt, of the extraordinary story of which they are the heirs: Has anything so great as this ever happened, or has anything like it ever been heard of? Has any other people heard the voice of God speaking out of fire, as you have, and lived? Has any god ever tried to take for himself one nation out of another nation, by testings, by signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, or by great and awesome deeds, like all the things the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?

The Israelites have not yet crossed the Jordan. They have not yet begun their life as a sovereign nation in their own land. Yet Moses is sure, with a certainty that could only be prophetic, that they were a people like no other. What has happened to them is unique. They were and are a nation summoned to greatness.

Moses reminds them of the great Revelation at Mount Sinai. He recalls the Ten Commandments. He delivers the most famous of all summaries of Jewish faith: "Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one." He issues the most majestic of all commands: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." Twice he tells the people to teach these things to their children. He gives them their eternal mission statement as a nation: "You are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be His people, His treasured possession."

Then he says this: The Lord did not set His affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you are the fewest of all peoples.

The fewest of all peoples? What has happened to all the promises of Bereishit, that Abraham's children would be numerous, uncountable, as many as the stars of the sky, the dust of the earth, and the grains of sand on a seashore? What of Moses' own statement at the beginning of Devarim? "The Lord your God has increased your numbers so that today you are as numerous as the stars in the sky"

The simple answer is this. The Israelites were indeed numerous compared to what they once were. Moses himself puts it this way in next week's parsha: "Your ancestors who went down into Egypt were seventy in all, and now the Lord your God has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky". They were once a single family, Abraham, Sarah and their descendants, and now they have become a nation of twelve tribes.

But – and this is Moses' point here – compared to other nations, they were still small. "When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you ...". In other words, not only were the Israelites smaller than the great empires of the ancient world. They were smaller even than the other nations in the region. Compared to their origins they had grown exponentially but compared to their neighbours they remained tiny.

Moses then tells them what this means: You may say to yourselves, "These nations are stronger than we are. How can we drive them out?" But do not be afraid of them; remember well what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt.

Israel would be the smallest of the nations for a reason that goes to the very heart of its existence as a nation. They will show the world that a people does not have to be large in order to be great. It does not have to be numerous to defeat its enemies. Israel's unique history will show that, in the words of the Prophet Zechariah, "Not by might nor by power, but by My spirit," says the Lord Almighty."

In itself, Israel would be witness to something greater than itself. As former Marxist philosopher Nicolai Berdyaev put it: I remember how the materialist interpretation of history, when I attempted in my youth to verify it by applying it to the destinies of peoples, broke down in the case of the Jews, where destiny seemed absolutely inexplicable from the materialistic standpoint . . . Its survival is a mysterious and wonderful phenomenon demonstrating that the life of this people is governed by a special predetermination, transcending the processes of adaptation expounded by the materialistic interpretation of history. The survival of the Jews, their resistance to destruction, their endurance under absolutely peculiar conditions and the fateful role played by them in history: all these point to the particular and mysterious foundations of their destiny.

Moses' statement has immense implications for Jewish identity. The proposition implicit throughout this year's Covenant & Conversation is that Jews have had an influence out of all proportion to their numbers because we are all called on to be leaders, to take responsibility, to contribute, to make a difference to the lives of others, to bring the Divine Presence into the world. Precisely because we are small, we are each summoned to greatness.

Y. Agnon, the great Hebrew writer, composed a prayer to accompany the Mourner's Kaddish. He noted that the children of Israel have always been few in number compared to other nations. He then said that when a monarch rules over a large population, they do not notice when an individual dies, for there are others to take their place. "But our King, the King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He . . . chose us, and not because we are a large nation, for we are one of the smallest of nations. We are few, and owing to the love with which He loves us, each one of us is, for Him, an entire legion. He does not have many replacements for us. If one of us is missing, Heaven forfend, then the King's forces are diminished, with the consequence that His kingdom is weakened, as it were. One of His legions is gone and His greatness is lessened. For this reason it is our custom to recite the Kaddish when a Jew dies."

Margaret Mead once said: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Gandhi said: "A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history." That must be our faith as Jews.

We may be the fewest of all peoples but when we heed God's call, we have the ability, proven many times in our past, to mend and transform the world.

Shabbat Shalom

## Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"Comfort you comfort you my nation, says the Lord your God." This Shabbat takes its name from our prophetic reading (Shabbat Nachamu, the Sabbath of comfort.) Indeed, the entire month is known as Menachem Av, the comforting month of Av. And in the prophetic reading of Isaiah, the prophet adjures us to speak to the heart of Jerusalem, to do penance for our sins, to make a pathway for our Lord, to straighten out our crooked roads. In his magnificent lyric style, he is telling us to repent, for in repentance, we will find our comfort and our redemption.

The list of curses and punishments which came in the wake of the destruction of our Second Temple is catalogued in chapter 28 of the Book of Deuteronomy, and followed by the call to repentance in chapter 30. But repentance and return to what? First of all, to the Land of Israel. The nation has done that of its own volition since the rise of the modern Zionist movement in the 19th century, when we stopped waiting for the Messiah and beat our own path to our historic homeland.

But this certainly also includes return to God's Torah. Which commandments should we concentrate on? Should it be the ritual, should it be the ethical, and if both, then with which must we begin our repentance? Furthermore, since we are hopeful that this time our redemption will be not only national, but universal, what is to be our message to the world?

If we could only isolate the reason why we lost our Temples, we would then understand how to become worthy of the third and final Temple (remember that the Bible only speaks of two destructions and of two exiles, the first in Leviticus 26 and the second in Deuteronomy 28). And if we could discover why God elected Abraham in the first place, it would certainly be salutary to check our actions against God's design; then at least we could ascertain where we stand in God's eyes.

At the dawn of our history, the Almighty explains that "Abraham will become a great and mighty nation, that through him shall be blessed all the families of the earth, and that God has chosen, loved, and elected him because he has commanded his children and his household after him to guard the way of the Lord, to do compassionate righteousness and moral justice (tzedakah u' mishpat) What does tzedakah mean? The Bible itself explains this when it commands us not to oppress the stranger, not to afflict the widow or the orphan, because God hears their cries and will punish us by making our wives widows and our children orphans. God in fact describes Himself as One who is gracious, who gives and loves even without cause and never expecting anything in return.

Moreover, God repeats that when we make a loan to the poor and receive a pledge in return, we must return the pledge to the borrower if he needs it – even though the creditor actually owns the pledge until the borrower pays up his debt. The return of the pledge beyond the requirement of the law is called by the Bible an act of tzedakah: righteousness together with compassion.

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In the first chapter of the Prophet Isaiah (the prophetic reading for the portion of Devarim, which always falls out towards the beginning of the Three Weeks of mourning), the prophet cries out that God is sated with our sacrificial animals, that He hates our monthly celebrations and festivals; it is God's will for us to rather judge the orphan and plead the cause of the widow. "Zion shall be redeemed through justice and we will return to her by means of our tzedakah, our acts of compassionate righteousness." Hence you see the straight line from Abraham's election to Isaiah's warning regarding the Temple: our worthiness depends not on our ritual piety, but rather upon our compassionate righteousness and moral justice.

After the destruction, the Prophet Jeremiah makes a ringing declaration which we read on Tisha B'Av itself: "So says God, let the wise not be praised for their wisdom, let the strong not be praised for their strength, let the wealthy not be praised for their wealth. Only for this is one to be praised: understand and know Me because I am the Lord who does loving kindness, moral justice and compassionate righteousness on earth. It is these things that I wish".

How do we match up to these ideals? Let me tell you a true incident which for me is a metaphor of our times. A young man attended a yeshiva in Tzfat. The first morning he arrived a bit late for breakfast and there was no milk left for his coffee. He went to the grocery, purchased a container of milk and placed the container in the Yeshiva refrigerator with a sign "private property". The next morning, the container was gone. He bought another container, on which he added to the previous sign "do not steal". The next morning, that container too was missing. He purchased a new container, adding to the sign "questionable gentile milk" (halav akum). This time no one took his container; he left the Yeshiva.

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

**How can we successfully pass on our Judaism through to the generations to come?** In Parashat Ve'etchanan, the Torah presents us with the first paragraph of the Shema. In it we have the crucially important mitzvah 'ושנתנתם לבניך' – teach these words of Torah to your children'. I would have expected the Torah to tell us how to educate our children immediately afterwards. Instead, having discussed our children it moves on to discuss us. After 'ושנתנתם לבניך' – educate your children, It says 'ודברתם בם בביתך' – when you're at home, and 'ובלכתך בדרך' – and while you're on your way, and 'ובקומך בשכבך' – In the evening time, and in the morning time.

So the Torah wants us to know that the finest way for us to raise our children to be proud Jews is through personal example. 'ושנתנתם לבניך' how best can we educate them? It is through 'ודברתם בם'. If we speak words of Torah every day, in addition to talking about sport, the weather, politics and so on, let's speak Torah. Let's express our pride in our tradition, let's give our family the thrill of recitation of brachot and performance of mitzvot. And this should not only be 'ובלכתך בביתך' – when we are at home it should also be 'ובלכתך בדרך' – while we're in the workplace, while we're abroad, while we're on vacation. Our Judaism is equally important to us outside of our home as it is within our homes.

ובשכבך ובקומך – at all times of day, evening and morning and if we are men, we must put on Tefilin 'לטטפת ביניעניך' – upon our arms and between our eyes. Let our children see us observing these mitzvot with pride and davening to Hashem with devotion.

על מזוזות ביתך – let them see the 'mezuzot on the doorstep of our homes' so that they will be fully immersed within a happy, joyous and meaningful Jewish way of life.

Now, of course, we perform the mitzvah of 'ושנתנתם לבניך' through The formal education of our children and sometimes we delegate that task to others, such as when we send our children to school. But let us never forget that when it comes to the success or failure of our tradition, and the passing on of our Jewish heritage through to the generations to come, Judaism is not taught. It is caught.

#### **OTS Dvar Torah [Excerpt]**

#### **The Ten Commandments as a model for a healthy relationship - Rabbanit Renana Birnbaum**

The Ten Commandments are the Jewish people's binding "internal code". They can be seen as a social model for the relationship between G-d and man, in the general sense, but I'd like to suggest a different perspective: let's try to ascertain the meaning of each commandment in how it relates to maintaining a proper relationship, the relationship we ought to strive for, between husband and wife.

1 – "I am the Lord your G-d" - Why is it so crucial, right at the climax of a dramatic event like the chuppah and kiddushin, to declare the husband's presence and acknowledge him? If there were any one moment in a couple's relationship without an inkling of a doubt, wouldn't this be that moment?

Even so, both the husband and the wife must etch the existence of their spouse into their consciousness, without leaving any room for doubt. The declaration of "I am your husband" and "I am your wife" at the moment of marriage forges a proper consciousness of the marital relationship. It reminds us that the marital connection is based on something lofty and absolute, and that it isn't merely the product of a relationship and the spouses' interactions in the practical domain. There is an element of profound love between the husband and wife which should never be conditioned on anything. It must be part of the couple's life experience, just like the marriage between Hashem and the Jewish people at Mount Sinai. This absolute Divine "element" must be present in the couple's hearts, starting from the moment they enter the chuppah.

2 – "You shall not have any other gods before Me" When we begin comparing one of the spouses to "others", we leave room for doubt. In his controversial book, *Les Particules Élémentaires*, French author Michel Houellebecq claimed that the principles of capitalism and the free market had made their way into the Westerners' emotional domain and had poisoned and destroyed their emotional domain. He claims that the reason that the consistent tendency of modern people to compare their current relationships to other "products" on the "shelf of the free market" has deprived them of the ability to commit and to truly love. I believe that we must be very cautious of bringing "others" into the emotional space between ourselves and our spouses.

3 – "You shall not take the name of the Lord, your G-d, in vain" - Just as we are prohibited from swearing in the name of Hashem in vain, so, too, are we prohibited from jesting at the expense of our spouse and trampling our spouse's good name in vain. This type of behavior might seem legitimate and unrelated in a humoristic conversation. It might seem like it doesn't have any effect on the relationship, but the truth is that joking around leaves a permanent mark on our souls and can lead to serious side-effects. Rather than uplifting the relationship, it causes it to sink.

4 – "Remember the Sabbath day to make it holy" Shabbat is when we have our encounter with the Creator of the Universe. It is also a time where we could take our spouse on a "date". Engulfed in our hectic routines and the demanding tasks awaiting us in the week ahead, we remember to take some time off, to bask in peace and tranquility, to listen, to preserve and nurture our marital relationship, and to

## **Likutei Divrei Torah**

remember! Just as we begin our Shabbat preparations early, we ought to begin preparing for our "weekly date" with our spouse well in advance, in anticipation, and devote some emotional and practical attention to this encounter.

5 – "Honor your father and mother"

Everyone knows that when we marry someone, we are also marrying that person's parents. This is a very complex challenge requiring a great deal of thought, sensitivity and effort. It is no coincidence that so many jokes have been spun about our complicated relationships with our parents-in-law, and it's no accident that the laws about honoring our mothers and fathers include a fair number of directives that educate and guide us on how to operate in this family "minefield" – namely, how to honor our spouse's family and parents, while preserving our marriage. We mustn't forget that this complicated, and, at times, challenging pursuit of a good relationship with our spouse's parents has a divine element to it as well.

6 – "You shall not murder - In any relationship, the greater the mutual proximity, the more each side in the relationship becomes exposed to the other side, along with the good and the bad sides of his or her personality. The masks come off, and the walls come down. Along with close proximity comes the potential for great joy and profound love, but it also comes at the risk of this knowledge being improperly exploited at times of crisis. When nothing stands between us, we can harm, trample, or even assassinate our spouse's character. In a good relationship, when one partner recognizes the other partner's weaknesses, he or she accepts and tolerates them, and even wishes and strives to support the spouse by helping him or her overcome those weaknesses when the going gets rough.

8 – "You shall not steal" - Many of us have a tendency to dominate our spouse, to a greater or lesser degree, depriving our spouse of his or her independence and character. Yes – love can be suffocating! When one spouse becomes overinvolved in the other spouse's life, this can demoralize the other spouse and rob them of their selfhood. We must respect our spouses and their inner autonomy. We mustn't unwittingly rob our spouse of his or her soul. True love lets our spouse grow and maintain his or her spiritual liberty.

9 – "You shall not bear false witness against your fellow man" - How do we define false testimony? It doesn't mean that someone is telling a lie. It means that the testimony itself is false. When are we likely to bear false testimony against our spouse, whom we love? This might happen when we talk about our spouse with someone else, and unwittingly tarnish our spouse's reputation, either inadvertently or in an attempt to glorify ourselves. Sometimes, at times of crisis and rage, we are in danger of undermining the faith our spouse put in us and injuring our spouse's dignity. In these situations, the harmony between the spouses begins to shatter, and we develop the tendency to "recruit" supporters in our family and social circles, unwittingly causing harm to our spouse in the process. This is a mutual breach of trust, and our discretion has been compromised. A husband or wife must be careful not to speak ill of his or her spouse and avoid maligning their soulmate.

The Ten Commandments are about people, not about the Creator of the Universe. They infuse our relationships with meaning and provide the infrastructure for building a better home. People need to take responsibility for their own lives, lives in which the divine ideal embodied in the Ten Commandments remain ever-present, looking down at them from Heaven.

We read in this week's *Parashah* (4:6), "You shall safeguard and perform them, for it is your wisdom and discernment in the eyes of the nations, who shall hear all these decrees and who shall say, 'Surely a wise and discerning people is this great nation!'" The *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 75a) teaches that the wisdom and discernment referred to here are those involved in calculating the Jewish calendar.

What is so wise and discerning about the Jewish calendar? R' Ben Zion Neshet *shlita* (one of the senior rabbis in Tel Aviv, Israel) explains:

Most of the world uses a calendar that is based on the sun (*e.g.*, the Gregorian calendar) or the moon (*e.g.*, the Muslim and Chinese calendars). This is symbolic of the belief held by much of mankind that man is subjugated to, and even controlled by, the forces of nature. The Jewish calendar, in contrast, combines elements of both the solar and lunar calendars, and we further adjust it to our needs by inserting an extra day in certain months and an extra month in certain years. By doing this, we demonstrate our belief that we are not subject to the laws of nature; rather, there is a Higher Authority.

This, writes R' Neshet, is why sanctifying the new moon and calculating the calendar was the first *Mitzvah* given to *Bnei Yisrael*, shortly before the Exodus (see *Shmot* 12:2). As the long-awaited day of salvation neared, it was necessary to wean the Jewish People from the Egyptian spiritual environment. The *Mitzvah* of sanctifying the moon and creating a Jewish calendar was the first step in that process. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Shir Tziyon* p.59)

## Tefilah

This year, we will *iy"H* devote this space to discussing various aspects of our prayers. This week, we continue discussing the thirteen types of prayer identified by the *Midrash Rabbah* and *Midrash Yalkut Shimoni*.

Last week, we discussed "*Pegi'ah*," which R' Shimshon Dovid Pincus *z"l* (rabbi of Ofakim, Israel; died 2001) defines as stubbornly praying again and again, with single-minded focus, for something that one needs badly.

R' Pincus continues: Extreme caution is needed when praying in this manner. Proof of this is the *Gemara* (*Ta'anit* 23a), which relates that after the sage Choni *Ha'me'agel* drew a circle on the ground and declared that he would not step out of it until *Hashem* answered his prayer for rain (which *Hashem* did), the sage Shimon ben Shetach told him, "If you were anyone but Choni, I would excommunicate you." Apparently, what he had done borders on impropriety.

Why is praying in this manner disfavored? First, explains R' Pincus, we must realize that we are very far from knowing what is best for us. Therefore, it is not in one's best interests to stubbornly dwell on a single request--be it for wealth or, even, for wisdom. If we are honest with ourselves, we will acknowledge that there are things we have prayed for that turned out not to be good for us.

Instead, R' Pincus writes, a person is better off praying generally for whatever *Hashem* knows is best for him or her. For example, when praying for a *Shidduch*, do not pray for a specific match. Rather, pray for the right match at the right time, and that one's own sins not interfere.

Second, R' Pincus adds, even when praying for things that our Sages told us are inherently good--for example, the ultimate Redemption--it needs to be done in a way that is respectful to *Hashem*. As the *Gemara* (*Berachot* 34a, in a different context) says, "Is *Hashem* your 'colleague'?" This applies, as well, when we praise *Hashem* and thank Him. *Hashem* is not our "friend." Rather, He is lofty beyond description, and it is only His humility that permits us to speak to Him at all. (*She'arim B'tefilah* p.72)

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Chayim ben Ha'rav Avraham Mordechai a"h

**“Hashem will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where Hashem will lead you. There you will serve gods, the handiwork of man, of wood and stone, which do not see, and do not hear, and do not eat, and do not smell. From there you will seek Hashem, your Elokim, and you will find Him, if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul.” (4:27-29)**

R' Yitzchak Arieli z"l (1896-1974; *Mashgiach* of Yeshivat Merkaz Harav; author of *Enayim La'mishpat*) writes: The verse states that the false gods *Yisrael* will serve in the lands of its exile “do not see, and do not hear, and do not eat, and do not smell.” It does not say that they do not speak!

R' Arieli continues: R' Eliyahu z"l (1720-1797; the *Vilna Gaon*) explains that the verse is alluding to the statute made by the Babylonian king Nevuchadnezar. *Midrash Shir Ha'shirim* relates that Nevuchadnezar inserted the *Tzitz* / headband of the *Kohen Gadol* into the idol's mouth, and then it did indeed speak. This, says the *Vilna Gaon*, is what the next verse refers to when it says, “From there you will seek Hashem . . . and you will find,” *i.e.*, you will find that an idol can speak with the help of Hashem's Name that is engraved on the *Tzitz*.

R' Arieli adds: *Midrash Tehilim* states that, in the future, Hashem will enable idols to speak to those who worship them, and to say, “How did you abandon eternal life, the Creator of heavens and earth, and bow down to something about which it is written (*Tehilim* 115:5), “They have mouths, but they do not speak?” About this, says R' Arieli, our verse says, “From there you will seek Hashem . . . and you will find.” The very idols that you worshiped will rebuke you and tell you to “find Him.”

R' Arieli concludes: Even when the idols themselves rebuke *Yisrael*, there will be those who will not take heed. It will still be necessary to “seek Hashem” and to “find Him,” like something that is not out in the open.

(*Haggadah Shel Pesach Shirat Ha'geulah* p.85)



**“Or has any god ever miraculously come to take for himself a nation from amidst a nation. . .” (4:34)**

Our Sages comment on the words “a nation from amidst a nation”--“As a shepherd births a sheep.” R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach z"l (1910-1995) observes:

We read in the *Pesach Haggadah* that the Exodus was brought about by G-d Himself, not by an angel. Why does that matter? Isn't the important thing that we were freed?

In fact, R' Auerbach explains, the Exodus was not about freedom, but about rebirth, a completely new beginning. That is something only G-d can bring about.

(Quoted in *Minchat Avot* p.118)

**“Let me now cross and see the good Land that is on the other side of the Jordan, this good mountain and the Lebanon.” (3:25)**

The *Gemara* (*Sotah* 14a) relates that the sage Rabbi Simlai expounded: Why did Moshe Rabbeinu a"h yearn to enter the Land? Did he need to eat its fruits or satiate himself with its goodness? Rather, Moshe said as follows, “*Yisrael* was given many *Mitzvot*, and they can be performed only in *Eretz Yisrael*. Let me go into the Land so that they can be done by me.”

Hashem said to him, “You are only seeking their reward? I consider it as if you performed them.” [Until here from the *Gemara*]

R' Chaim of Volozhin z"l (Belarus; 1749-1821) asks: This is wondrous! Surely Moshe desired the *Mitzvot*, not their reward! Does not *Pirkei Avot* (1:3) teach: “Do not be like a servant who serves his master in order to receive reward”?

R' Chaim explains: There are two different levels of seeking reward. Some people think, “I will perform the *Mitzvot* so that I will enjoy their benefits.” That is what *Pirkei Avot* is teaching us not to do. However, if a person can genuinely say, “I want to receive the reward for *Mitzvot* because rewarding me will bring pleasure to Hashem,” that is a very lofty level. That is the level that the *Gemara* is attributing to Moshe Rabbeinu.

(*Ruach Chaim* 1:3)



**“Ascend the mountain, and look at the Land which I have given to the people of Yisrael.” (3:26)**

For what purpose was Moshe commanded to “look” at *Eretz Yisrael*?

R' Mordechai Rhine *shlita* (rabbi of Southeast Hebrew Congregation-Knesset Yehoshua in Silver Spring, MD) explains based on a story that is told about R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach z"l (1910-1995; Yerushalayim):

A man who worked in R' Auerbach's *yeshiva* told R' Auerbach that he would soon be moving to a new apartment. In reply, R' Auerbach asked the man to tell him once the move was finalized, but before the family moved in. The man was surprised by the request, but he complied, whereupon R' Auerbach asked that they go together to see the apartment.

When they arrived at the apartment, R' Auerbach requested a tour. As they entered each room, R' Auerbach smiled enthusiastically, and in each room he added a pleasant comment: “So this is where the children will play. . . This is where your wife will cook such nurturing meals. . . This is where you will have your *Shabbat* meals,” etc. The man enjoyed the attention and the enthusiasm, but he was confused all the same. Why had R' Auerbach taken the time for a tour of the apartment.

Sensing the man's confusion, R' Auerbach explained: “I know that the last few years have been difficult for you. You've had health problems, and some financial issues. The apartment you were in was too small for your family, and this too was causing much stress. Therefore, I wanted to bestow an '*ayin tovah*' (literally, ‘a good eye’), an atmosphere of blessing on your new home.”

Similarly, by looking at the Land where *Bnei Yisrael* were destined to settle, Moshe Rabbeinu was able to bestow an *ayin tovah* on it.

(*A Parsha Message: Pinchas* 5774)

# 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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## PRIVATE ISRAELI MALWARE USED TO SPY ON JOURNALISTS, ACTIVISTS (YNet 7/19/21)

Activists, journalists and politicians around the world have been spied on using cellphone malware developed by a private Israeli firm, reports said Sunday, igniting fears of widespread privacy and rights abuses.

The use of the software, called Pegasus and developed by Israel's NSO group, was reported on by the Washington Post, the Guardian, Le Monde and other news outlets who collaborated on an investigation into a data leak. The leak was of a list of up to 50,000 phone numbers believed to have been identified as people of interest by clients of NSO since 2016, the reports said. Not all of those numbers were subsequently hacked, and the news outlets with access to the leak said more details about those who were compromised would be released in coming days.

Among the numbers on the list are those of journalists for media organizations around the world including The Wall Street Journal, CNN, The New York Times, Al Jazeera, France 24, Radio Free Europe, the Associated Press, Le Monde, Bloomberg, the Economist, Reuters and Voice of America, the Guardian said.

The use of the software to hack the phones of Al-Jazeera reporters and a Moroccan journalist has been reported previously by Citizen Lab, a research center at the University of Toronto, and Amnesty International.

Among the numbers found on the list were two belonging to women close to journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who was murdered by a Saudi hit squad in 2018. The Washington Post said numbers on the list also belonged to heads of state and prime ministers, members of Arab royal families, diplomats and politicians, as well as activists and business executives.

Amnesty International and Forbidden Stories, a Paris-based media non-profit organization, initially had access to the leak, which they then shared with media organizations.

NSO, a leader in the growing and largely unregulated private spyware industry, has previously pledged to police for abuses of its software.

It called the allegations exaggerated and baseless, according to The Washington Post, and would not confirm its clients' identities.

Citizen Lab reported in December that dozens of journalists at Qatar's Al-Jazeera network had their mobile communications intercepted by sophisticated electronic surveillance.

Amnesty International reported in June of last year that Moroccan authorities used NSO's Pegasus software to insert spyware onto the cellphone of Omar Radi, a journalist convicted over a social media post.

## RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS MINISTER ANNOUNCES 'KASHRUT REVOLUTION' (Arutz-7 7/20/21)

Religious Affairs Minister Matan Kahana announced Tuesday the 'kashrut revolution' which will open the kashrut market in Israel to competition.

Under the new reforms, the Chief Rabbinate will serve as a regulator for a number of independent kashrut organizations which will provide certification to restaurants and products.

The rabbinate will set the national standards for kashrut and head an oversight body which will determine the compliance with those standards of the various kashrut organizations.

A kosher corporation that wishes can choose to meet a more basic standard than that set by the rabbinate if the standard is approved by three municipal rabbis.

In a statement to reporters, Kahana said that the private kashrut organizations will be able to grant a kashrut certificate to restaurants that are

open on Shabbat, if they receive permission from three municipal rabbis.

Kahana also said that "the same kashrut overseer of the rabbinate is also the overseer of the Badatz. Why are we obliging the business owner to bear a double expense when it is obvious and known to everyone that the overseer is the same overseer and he provides supervision services to both the local rabbinate and the Badatz."

The plan is expected to reduce the burden placed on both local food producers and businesses that provide catering services - hotels, restaurants and cafes in Israel. According to the Finance Ministry, this step will lead to a direct reduction in the volume of spending by consumers of services and kosher products in Israel, both for home consumption and eating out, by tens of millions of shekels a year.

The Chief Rabbinical Council issued a scathing response rejecting the government's plans to open the Kashrut market in Israel to competition.

"The Chief Rabbinate of Israel completely rejects this dangerous initiative of the Ministry of Religious Affairs to destroy the concept of Kashrut. The plan presented today will allow any businessman to buy and sell Kashrut on an open market according to personal or corporate interests, with the end result being the end of proper Kashrut supervision. This is part of an ongoing trend of moves against the religious identity of the State of Israel. The Chief Rabbinate, as well as all the Rabbis of Israel, will stand together and take firm action to put a stop to these moves," the Rabbinate stated.

"The bulk of the nation puts full faith in the Rabbinate's Kashrut, and so will 'vote with their feet' to patronize only businesses with proper and traditional supervision. All of these new plans are to be summarily rejected."

## RABBIS WARN COUPLES: PRENUPS INCREASE CHANCES OF DIVORCE (Israel Hayom 7/20/21)

Ahead of the Tu B'Av (the "Jewish Day of Love" celebrated on the 15th day of Av), several prominent national-religious rabbis issued a stern rebuke of prenuptial agreements, saying such an arrangement only undermines

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East Hill Synagogue, Englewood, NJ	Young Israel of New Hyde Park, NY
Flatbush Park Jewish Center, Mill Basin, NY	Young Israel of North Woodmere, NY
Harvard University Library	Young Israel of New Rochelle, NY
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marriage and could lead to its unraveling.

The warning was issued in response to the position taken by Tzohar Rabbinical Organization – which encourages more modern approaches to Jewish traditions.

Safed Chief Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu said that "when one reads these prenuptial agreements, one understands that they push a couple to divorce. It's true that there are cases when a man refuses to grant his wife a divorce, but these are isolated incidents. We are in favor of the ketubah [religious marriage contract] that has been used for thousands of years and successfully so, not in favor of modern contracts that no one knows what they could lead to."

Rabbi Eliezer Igra, a judge on the Supreme Rabbinical Court in Israel, also spoke out against prenups.

This subject "holds a much more central place in public discourse than it should," he said in a recording obtained by Israel Hayom.

"About 33,000 couples get married every year, and about a third, 11,000 get divorced. Only in very few cases does the husband withhold a get [religious divorce document] from his wife. The media makes it seem that many women do not receive a get."

In response, the Yad La'isha organization, which advocates on behalf of women whose husbands refuse to grant them divorce papers, said that "the purpose of the agreements is to prevent a situation in which one spouse will hold the other one captive in a marriage that has clearly died."

The organization added that it is "not about encouraging divorce, but about saving families who have become entangled in divorce proceedings," explaining that it was "all too common that gets are used to abuse the spouse by cynically exploiting Jewish law."

#### **IDF STRIKES LEBANON IN RESPONSE TO ROCKET ATTACK ON NORTHERN ISRAEL (YNet 7/20/21)**

The Israeli military on Tuesday fired artillery shells into Lebanon after two rockets had been fired into northern Israel earlier.

Two rockets were launched into Western Galilee overnight on Tuesday setting off sirens in northern cities and towns but causing no damage or injuries. One of the rockets was shot down by missile defenses and the other landed in an open area, the military said.

The military said it believes that "Palestinian elements" in Lebanon are responsible for the overnight rocket launch.

"Two rockets were fired from Lebanon toward northern Israel. One of the rockets was intercepted by the Iron Dome Aerial Defense System & the second rocket fell in an open area inside Israel," the IDF said in a tweet.

The attack occurred just hours before Prime Minister Naftali Bennett was due to visit the city of Ma'alot-Tarshiha in the Galilee.

Visiting the town, Bennett said that "anyone who tries to harm us will pay a painful price in return."

Defense Minister Benny Gantz said in a statement that Lebanon was responsible for the overnight rocket fire and that "Israel will act against any threat to its sovereignty and its citizens."

"We will not allow the social, political and economic crisis in Lebanon to turn into a security threat to Israel," Gantz said. Lebanon has struggled with an unprecedented crisis, including an economic meltdown that has raised concerns of a surge in militancy there.

UNIFIL said it was in contact with military officials in Lebanon and Israel to "urge maximum restraint" to avoid further escalation. Both the peacekeepers and the Lebanese army increased security in the area and launched an investigation, the mission said.

The last time rockets were fired from Lebanon into Israel was in May, during an 11-day conflict fought between Israel and Palestinian terror groups in the Gaza Strip.

Israel fought a 2006 war against Hezbollah terrorists, who have sway in southern Lebanon and advanced rockets. The border has been mostly quiet since then.

#### **BEN & JERRY'S ISRAEL SALES JUMP 21% (Arutz-7 7/20/21)**

Sales of Ben & Jerry's ice cream in Israel jumped 21% Tuesday, a day after the global company announced it would boycott Judea and Samaria.

Ben & Jerry's Israel, which is licensed to produce the ice cream in Israel, has rejected the global corporation's calls to pull its products from Jewish communities over the 'green line.'

"Since the morning hours there has been a significant increase in sales of our ice cream - over 21% over sales on a normal day," Ben & Jerry's Israel said in a statement.

"Don't stop! - We must put pressure on the Unilever Corporation, the owners of the global Ben and Jerrys, to turn" their decision around, the statement continued.

"We call on everyone to stand firm with us and with the hundreds of Israeli workers who could be affected by the global BDS pressures. As it was yesterday, so it is today - we will continue to sell in all of Israel and to all Israelis."

Ben & Jerry's Israel, which operates out of Be'er Tuvia, will continue to hold the license to produce the ice cream in Israel until the end of 2022. Until then, Israelis living in Judea and Samaria will continue to find the sweet dessert in their stores.

#### **ISRAEL FEARS MORE COMPANIES WILL FOLLOW BEN & JERRY'S BOYCOTT (Ha'aretz 7/20/21)**

Ben & Jerry's announcement on Monday that it will stop selling its ice cream in the Israeli settlements in the West Bank has raised concerns that other multinational corporations could start shunning the settlements as well.

It remained unclear whether the decision was final, and whether Unilever, the conglomerate that owns Ben & Jerry's, agreed to it. An Israeli political source told Haaretz on Monday night that "Ben & Jerry's isn't the only company in BDS' sights." It's hard to know whether the ice cream maker's move will influence other companies, the source added.

Ben & Jerry's announcement was followed by sharp rebukes from Israeli leaders, including Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, who accused the Jewish-founded company of antisemitism, and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, who threatened to appeal to American states to apply their anti-boycott laws to punish the Vermont company.

Bennett also called the CEO of Unilever, which owns Ben & Jerry's, to tell him that that Israel "will act aggressively against any type of boycott against its citizens."

Behind the scenes, sources described the move as a strategic maneuver to extricate the company from the barrage of criticism by pro-Palestinian activists. An Israeli source called the boycott decision "disorganized" and devoid of economic and business sense. "It was designed to relieve the pressure on the company in recent months. The announcement talks of ceasing activity in a year and a half. What will happen then? Nobody actually knows," the source said.

The ice cream maker's announcement followed a decade of pressure by pro-Palestinian groups supporting the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israel. Over the years, representatives of Ben & Jerry's visited Israel to study the conflict first-hand. A representative of Israel's Foreign Ministry even visited Ben & Jerry's plant in Vermont. Sources in Israel said that BDS activists put pressure not only on Ben & Jerry's, but on American NGOs collaborating with the company in its social initiatives. Lately the pro-boycott pressure mounted, mainly after the fighting between Israel and the Gaza Strip in May. Amid online backlash, Ben & Jerry's stopped posting entirely on social networks during May.

Ben & Jerry's is not the first company to declare its intention to operate strictly within the Green Line, the demarcation line before the 1967 Six-Day War that separates Israel and the West Bank. In recent years, several companies, investment funds, and institutions said they would boycott the settlements, though some reversed course.

In 2018, Airbnb announced it would remove listings in West Bank settlements. After a few months, following pressure, the company reneged

on that decision. In 2014 the Dutch pension giant PGGM divested its holdings in all five major Israeli banks because they have branches in the West Bank and finance settlement construction. In 2013, the McDonald's franchise in Israel refused to open branches in the West Bank. And until 30 years ago, a long list of international companies had refused to operate in Israel at all because of the Arab boycott.

Aside from boycotting business in the settlements, some international investors have also engaged in secondary boycotts of foreign companies to them to desist from operating in the West Bank settlements. In 2014, the Presbyterian Church divested holdings in Motorola, HP and Caterpillar because of their involvement in the settlements.

Not only businesses call for boycotts of the territories. The European Union itself made Israel's access to the Creative Europe program, which grants hundreds of millions of euros in support to cultural and arts projects, conditional on Israel agreeing not to use funding on projects beyond the Green Line.

### **ISRAELI PARATROOPERS PARACHUTE INTO SLOVENIA TO HONOR PRE-STATE HEROES** (JPost 7/20/21)

Some 100 Israeli paratroopers participated in an international parachute drop into the Slovenian countryside on Tuesday morning, as part of the 'Lightning of the Heavens' delegation, a mission dedicated to commemorating the Jewish pre-state paratroopers who were dropped into Nazi-controlled areas during World War II to fight on behalf of the allied forces and rescue Hungarian Jews.

The IDF's Spokesperson's Unit announced on Tuesday that the parachute drop was held on the 100th anniversary of the birth of Hannah Szenes, the first female pre-state parachutist. The jump was held in the Cerklje Air Base in Slovenia, and included Hungarian, Slovenian, Croatian and British paratroopers.

The event included two jumps. On Monday, eight Israeli paratroopers jumped at 12,000 ft, along with their European counterparts. Then, on Tuesday, some 100 delegation members parachuted from 1,000 ft. Included among the delegation members were OC Depth Corps Maj.-Gen. Itai Virov, OC Paratrooper Brigade Col. Yuval Gez, and Brig.-Gen. Ofer Winter, commander of the 98th Paratroopers Division, a.k.a. the Fire Formation., as well as commandos and current and reserve paratroopers.

After landing, the paratroopers made their way through forests that were, during the war, home to partisan fighters, and then continued to the nearby town of Semič, following the path that the original paratroopers took.

They then held a ceremony, during which they received a unique military pin with a bolt of lightning on a backdrop of the traditional paratrooper's wings. The lightning symbol, which is also the inspiration for the delegation's name, is a reference to the iconic poem "A Walk to Caesarea" written by Szenes, which includes the phrase "Barak ha'Shamayim", which translates to 'lightning of the heavens'.

The members of the delegation were divided into four teams of 27 participants, each including a commander with a rank of Lt.-Col. and above, as well as an expert guide in the Holocaust, who accompanied the troops throughout the journey. One of the guides was Lt.-Col. (ret.) Simcha Goldin, the father of Lt. Hadar Goldin, whose remains currently are being held by Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Goldin joined previous IDF delegations to Europe, including one in 2017, when he participated alongside his wife, Leah, and former IDF chief of staff Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Gadi Eisenkot in the March of the Living.

The mission's goal is to bring the participants to Europe, so they can feel the history and understand the importance of what Szenes and her fellow paratroopers did during the Holocaust.

In addition, Col. Gez said that the mission will strengthen ties with the other countries in the delegation. He added: "The main goal of this journey is to strengthen the sense of mission and the memory of heroism," concluding that "we understand how historic this mission is."

A number of other events commemorating Szenes took place both in Israel and Europe.

Paratroopers, past and present, held a commemoration ceremony at the pre-state paratroopers' burial plot in the Mount Herzl Military Cemetery. In addition, a memorial service for Hannah Szenes and an educational seminar were held at the Hannah Szenes museum in Sdot Yam kibbutz near Caesarea, which included President Isaac Herzog.

On Wednesday a monument commemorating the pre-state paratroopers will be erected in the Croatian city Čakovec, where Szenes was arrested and imprisoned.

Szenes was one of 250 Jewish men and women from Mandatory Palestine who volunteered for operations run by British organizations MI9 and the Special Operations Executive (SOE) beginning in 1943, of which 37 were selected to carry out the mission.

Their goal was to organize resistance to the Germans, aid in the rescue of Allied personnel and carry out assignments set by the Jewish Agency of Palestine recruits.

On March 14, 1944, Szenes and two fellow colleagues were parachuted into former Yugoslavia and were arrested by Hungarian police when they tried to cross into Hungary. She refused to reveal anything except her name, despite being tortured in prison, and in October 1944 she was tried for treason. She was then executed by a firing squad on November 7, 1944.

Szenes was also a poet and playwright, and kept a detailed personal diary. Her unique personality and bravery made her an Israeli hero.

### **ISRAEL WINS MISS UNIVERSE HOSTING BID IN HISTORIC FIRST** (Israel Hayom 7/20/21)

The annual Miss Universe beauty pageant will take place in Israel for the first time this December, organizers announced Tuesday.

The Miss Universe Organization said that the contest will be held this December in the southern resort city of Eilat. The Israeli bid to hold the event goes back two years and has been complicated by the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, which slowed negotiations.

Steve Harvey will once again host the three-hour event, which will be broadcast in 180 countries. It will end with the current Miss Universe, Mexico's Andrea Meza, crowning her successor.

Meza, a former software engineer, has advocated for women's rights and is also encouraging people to get vaccinated for COVID-19. Soon after she was named Miss Universe, Meza invited the media to cover her first vaccination shot in New York.

In a statement released by the Miss Universe Organization, Meza said she hopes "as many people as possible" get vaccinated so they can participate in the 70th Miss Universe contest.

Tourism Minister Yoel Razvozov welcomed the announcement.

"The Miss Universe pageant is undoubtedly an important and significant event, and it will be held in Israel in accordance with all the coronavirus safety guidelines required," he said.

### **A PRESIDENTIAL BLESSING AHEAD OF 2020 TOKYO OLYMPICS** (JPost 7/20/21)

What a joy to meet people who are not politicians," exclaimed a radiant President Reuven Rivlin, as he looked out at the overflowing crowd of athletes in the main hall of the President's Residence.

Then he remembered that there was one politician in the room – Culture and Sport Minister Chili Tropper.

Among the dignitaries who came to the President's Residence were Ilana Romano and Anki Spitzer, the widows of Yossef Romano and Andre Spitzer, members of the Israel Olympic team who were murdered by Black September terrorists in the Munich Massacre at the 1972 Olympics; and Japanese Ambassador Koichi Mizushima, who has been hop-scotching from one Olympics-related event to another.

All the speakers praised the athletes for their dedication, their constant aspiration to do better and their ability to train and improve during the worst

period of the pandemic.

"You worked so hard to get to this point," said Rivlin, who conceded that his favorite sport is a ball game – "not tennis" he clarified.

Then, resorting to the vernacular, he said: "The ball is in your court."

He reminded the members of the teams that they had been chosen because they are the best of the best, "the very few who have managed to get so high, to be the emissaries of our country at the greatest, oldest and most important of international sporting competitions" which began in ancient Greece.

Aware of the strain and tension experienced by every competitive athlete, Rivlin had particularly warm words for the Paralympic athletes, for whom competition is more difficult, he said, because they are also challenged by their particular disability.

### **NSO DEBACLE IS A BLACK MARK ON ISRAEL** (Ben-Dror Yemini, YNet 7/19/21)

It is not for nothing that Israel has been dubbed the "Startup Nation." High-tech is Israel's pride and joy and the economy relies heavily on homegrown technological advancements.

But while Israeli technology does a lot of good both at home and in the rest of the world, it stands to reason there is also a less reputable side.

Proof of this was recently provided courtesy of Israeli firm NSO Group, whose Pegasus spyware was recently the subject of a Washington Post expose, which gave the world a glimpse into the less savory side of Israeli high-tech.

According to the Post, Pegasus was routinely used to hack the phones of reporters and activists around the world, including in countries such as Mexico, India, and Saudi Arabia, the latter of which reportedly used the spyware to track Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi before his assassination in Turkey in 2018.

The global fight against terrorism means taking the gloves off. There is no over-reliance on human rights nor protection of privacy.

And or as long as spyware is used to expose those involved in terrorism, companies such as NSO who develop these programs deserve praise.

The issue lies in the fact that when a government purchases such powerful software, it can easily make any dissident into a target.

According to the Post, Pegasus was used by a long list of countries to reach tens of thousands of people who have nothing to do with terrorism or have any criminal record.

Tens of thousands of journalists and activists were apparently all under surveillance.

It does not take spying on tens of thousands of people to raise questions about NSO's conduct. Because even a solitary journalist under surveillance is one too many.

Pegasus is NSO's primary product, which has been and is used for spying. Due to its characteristics, Pegasus is viewed as nothing short of a weapon.

This means that any country wishing to purchase the spyware must first receive the approval of Israel's Defense Ministry and Foreign Ministry.

Therefore, assuming Pegasus was used to spy on journalists and activists as claimed, the responsibility also lies with Israel, whose oversight mechanisms have failed.

And while Sunday's report does not blame Israel directly, global coverage of the expose have already started mentioning Israel in reports.

This is not the first time that NSO has been linked to hacking the phones of reporters and activists.

The Facebook-owned WhatsApp application filed a lawsuit against the Israeli company in 2019 in the state of California, claiming that it helped breach dozens of accounts. This lawsuit was followed by a multitude of additional accusations against NSO over the years.

It seems then, that the writing was very much on the wall.

Someone at the Defense Ministry or Foreign Ministry supervisory and licensing systems should have caught wind of what was happening with the

Israeli company, whose name has been linked to a multitude of cyber attacks that have absolutely nothing to do with counter-terrorism.

NSO for its part denies the claims of enabling surveillance of members of the press, and also claims that it has means to shut down improper surveillance operated by any state.

And while it is possible that the furor over the recent expose will die down within a few days, as is the way with such revelations, the Washington Post report itself and the company's response must both be examined carefully, for the freedom of the press is on the line.

What has happened in some countries - and is perhaps still happening - may creep into other nations as well, perhaps even Israel.

To prevent such a situation, we must remain constantly vigilant.

### **A REFLECTION OF JEWISH DISSENT IN THE MONTH OF AV** (Barry Lynn, JPost 7/22/21)

The Passover Haggadah tells us that in every generation someone rises up to destroy us. In fact, it seems like it's not just every generation, but every year – if not month or even day. The ninth of Av has just passed us by, but the lead up to and the day itself seems to hit me harder every year. I worry about us. The modern State of Israel was founded in 1948, and one can count 73 birthdays since then. Yet, from the embarrassing and demeaning behavior of our politicians and so-called religious leaders, to the efforts of, for example, Ben & Jerry's board member BDSers, I feel the weight of history closing in. The Second Temple stood for almost 600 years. So, is our present relatively short sojourn in the Land of Israel really a cause for confidence?

The Talmud states that the Temple was destroyed because of hatred of one Jew for another. In this regard, has the behavior of those we should hold up as paragons of virtue our religious leadership been reassuring? I would argue otherwise. Numerous times, the haredi (ultra-Orthodox) leadership sought to invalidate the conversions of national-religious rabbis, despite the Torah admonition to welcome the convert. The Western Wall agreement with non-Orthodox groups was suspended (canceled), closing a link to our overseas brethren. A "Reform rabbi" is shunned; those who disagree with the religious leadership are insulted; a bar mitzvah is interrupted. Among our political leadership, insults fly and parties vote against their positions out of spite.

This Tisha Be'Av I watched Schindler's List. It is both a very disturbing yet uplifting story. Hopelessness and death permeate most of the movie. Someone said to me: did Jews behave any differently to each other back then than they do now? Are we not testing God's patience? Uplifting because one comes to see what one man, a non-Jew, sacrificed to save many. Schindler, himself apparently not a paragon of virtue, chose to do change for the better. He took it upon himself to save more than 1,000 people from the Nazi death camps, whose thousands of descendants live now. Near the end of the movie, the recently freed inmates inquire as to where they should go. The Soviet officer says don't go east, you're not wanted there, and don't go west either. I saw that movie almost 30 years ago, and some 20 years prior I moved to Israel. I didn't grow up with the desire to live here, but came to realize that it is only in Israel that a Jewish person can feel – well Jewish. It's a place where Jewish life can and has flourished, despite the hardships and efforts of our enemies.

Soon, Tu Be'Av will be upon us. This day is supposedly a time of miracles, e.g., the end of the plague that accompanied the Jews in the desert for 40 years. It is also a day when traditionally the "maidens" of Jerusalem would go out and dance, hoping to catch the eye of a young suitor. A greater miracle is when both sides learn that love requires more than care and consideration, but also that words of criticism need to become words of respect for our differences.

The hope this holiday instills in us helps to ensure that the future of our country moves past those who wish our destruction. And, so it is, when the world has me down, I find nothing more uplifting than encountering a young couple with a new life on the way, or one already rolling along – past this generation into the next.



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

### The Tefillah of Reb Levi Yitzhak

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

**"Bind them as a sign upon your arm and ornaments between your eyes" (6:8)**

This verse, part of the first paragraph of the Shema, is also one of the sources for the commandment to place Tefillin on one's arm and head. Tefillin is a precious Mitzvah that Jews, since time immemorial, have gone great lengths to perform. There are countless stories from the holocaust of Jews who managed to smuggle a pair a Tefillin into the concentration camp or were willing to trade their meager bread rations just to fulfill the Mitzvah.

Rav Pam related that the great Chassidic master, Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, once observed a simple Jew taking off his Tefillin one morning. The man accidentally dropped the tefillin and they fell to the ground. The man paled with fright and quickly picked them up, kissed them, and lovingly wiped off the dirt.

Taking in the scene, Reb Levi Yitzchak raised his eyes heavenward and declared, "Master of the universe! Look at how a simple Jew expresses his deep love for his Tefillin, which have fallen to the ground. You, as well, our heavenly Father, also have Tefillin (see Berachos 6a) that extol the uniqueness of the Jewish nation. How can You let Your tefillin, the Jewish people, lie on the ground in the dirt. It has been 2,000 years since Your people were sent into exile. Please pick us up, clean us and kiss us as that simple man did."

Parshas Va'eschanan is always read on the Shabbos following Tish'a B'av, the day we commemorate the destruction of the temple and the beginning of our exile. We hope and pray to Hashem that He should accept that prayer of Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, and raise us up and send us the final redemption.

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**"It is too much for you! Do not continue to speak to Me further about this matter. Ascend to the top of the cliff and raise your eyes... and see with your eyes..." (3, 27)**

You requested of Me, "and let me see the good land," I am showing it to you. (Rashi)

Rebbi Elazar taught, "Great is the power of prayer... we see from Moshe, when he was only answered through prayer, as the verse juxtaposes Moshe's prayer with Hashem's answer, "Ascend to the cliff..." (Berochos 32b)

Rebbi Simloai expounded, "Why did Moshe desire to enter the Land of Israel? Did he wish to eat its fruit? Or to benefit from its bounty?... No, Moshe wished to enter Eretz Yisroel in order to be able to fulfill the mitzvos that can only be fulfilled in Eretz Yisroel." (Sotah 14a)

If Moshe's intention to enter Eretz Yisroel was to fulfill the mitzvos that can only be fulfilled in Eretz Yisroel, how was his seeing the land from afar an answer to his prayer and desire?

### Parsha Riddle

**What is the source for the obligation to recite 100 berachos daily?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

**Who was compared to a bee? Why?**

**Answer: The nation of Emor. Just as a bee dies after it stings a victim, so too the Emorim would die if they started making trouble for Bnei Yisrael.**

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

*Parashas Va'Eschanan* contains the second version of the Ten Commandments, the fifth of which is "Honor your father and your mother" (*kibud av va'aim*). The Talmud (*Yevamos* 5b-6a) teaches that this *mitzvah* does not override other *mitzvos*, due to the hermeneutically derived principle that "all of you, both parent and child, are obligated in My [G-d's] honor." As noted previously, this is one of several arguments advanced by *Shut. Maharik* (#166) against a son being bound by his father's objection to his choice of wife: since the Torah commands one to marry only a woman whom he desires and who finds favor in his eyes, a father's order to desist from marrying one's heart's desire is tantamount to an order to violate the Torah.

*Halachic* authorities have invoked this rule that obedience to G-d trumps obedience to one's parents in a variety of other contexts as well; a couple of notable ones follow.

- A son wished to travel to a certain country to study Torah under a certain rabbi, due to his conviction that he will be successful in his studies there. His father strenuously objected, declaring that this step would cause him great pain, since he would constantly worry about the son's safety in that location, which he considered a very dangerous one. The *Terumas ha-Deshen* (#40) rules that the son is not required to respect his father's wishes, despite the fact that it is possible for the son to study locally as well, since "it is not from anyone that one merits to study."
- Maharam of Rottenberg (*Sha'arei Teshuvos* 2:79) rules that the *mitzvah* of making *aliyah* overrides one's filial duties, since "the honor of G-d takes precedence," and this is also the position of *Shut. Mabit* (1:139). Accordingly, R. Yitzhak Nissim (*Yayin ha-Tov* 2:YD:7) rules that youth movements in the diaspora are permitted to inculcate in children a desire to make *aliyah* even against their parents' wishes. R. Eliezer Yehudah Waldenberg (*Shut. Tzitz Eliezer* 14:72), however, argues that there are dissenting opinions to that of Maharam and Mabit as well, and he therefore concludes that the matter is "not that clear" and that careful consideration must be given to the possible violation of the stringent *mitzvah* of *kibud av va'eim*.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I ?

1. Six.
2. Forty-two.
3. I am for accidents.
4. Follow the signs.

#### #2 WHO AM I ?

1. I am not for a minyan.
2. I am listed twice.
3. I am split in two.
4. Utterances or commandments?

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 The word "Eichah"** (I was for Moshe, I was for Yirmiyahu, I was for Yeshayahu, How?)

**#2 Sitting low to the ground** (I am for the Megilla, I am for the mourning, I am for the morning, Stay down.)

## KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

**Regular Kollel classes are now on summer break and will resume, be"Jf, on August 22.**

**Stay tuned for exciting new classes and programs coming soon!**

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