

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

May 6 - 7, 2022 - 6 Iyar 5782 - Parshas Kedoshim  
Light Candles by 7:47 - Havdalah 8:52

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week by Joey Franco - Mortgage Banker - 301-529-5387

## Mazal Tov

- **David Abrams** on the birth of a great-grandson, born to Aviva & Mi'chael Apfel of Ma'ale Adumim.
- **Tenise & Joel Becker** on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, Tzvi Hirsh, son of Miriam & Dov Becker of Baltimore. Mazal Tov to his sisters, aunts & uncles, and cousins.
- **Arleeta & Rabbi Ivan Lerner** on the birth of a great-granddaughter to their grandchildren, Shayna & Gavi Sragow of Baltimore. Mazal Tov to grandparents Shoshana & Ari Lerner and Linda & Murray Sragow and to great-grandparents Carole & Morty Pancer.

## Condolences

- **Leah Scheininger** on the passing of her brother. The funeral took place in Denver. Shiva details will be sent by email when available.

## Shabbos Schedule

*Minyan locations are listed as B = Belonofsky Sanctuary,  
S = Social Hall. LBM = Large Beis Medrash, SBM = Small Beis Medrash*

### Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 7:47, and not before 6:38
- Mincha: 6:20 (Plag, S), 6:50 (B), 7:50 (B), 7:15 (Sephardi, LBM)

### Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi, LBM), 9:15 (Teen Minyan, SBM)
- Mincha: 2:30 (B), 5:00 (B), 7:45 (B), 7:40 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 8:52

### Divrei Torah:

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

### Kiddush Sponsors:

- Hashkama Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by the **Hashkama Minyan Group**.
- 8:45/9:15/Sephardic Minyan/Teen Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by **Friends of Shaine Spolter and the Community of Silver Spring**.

## YISE Youth Announcements

**Shabbos Groups** this Shabbos, April 30, from 10:00 AM until Shul ends. Age 18-36 months (Mommy & me) in the toddler room off the Lower Lobby. Ages 2-5 years (drop off) in the room behind the balcony. Ages 6-9 years will meet at Shomrai and walk over to the Yeshiva. For more information, contact Debbie Katz at [dkatz@yise.org](mailto:dkatz@yise.org)  
**Bat Mitzvah Program** - Create a seed mosaic picture. Discuss Ruth and Naomi and their impact on Jewish history. **Note new date:** Sunday, May 15, 1:30 PM - 3:00 pm in the Social Hall. RSVP by 4/25 to [batmitzvahprogram@yise.org](mailto:batmitzvahprogram@yise.org) Cost: \$10 or free if already paid \$36. *See flyer for details.*

## Thank you to the Shiurim

### Sponsors for this Past Week:

#### Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur

- **David Jaray** in memory of Rabbi Hyatt, Z"l, and in honor of Rabbi Grauman and all those who attend his Shiur.

#### Rabbi Rosenbaum's Tehillim/Parsha/Halacha Shiur

- **Nancy Karkowsky** in honor of Yom Hazikaron and Yom Haatzmaut
- **8:45 Minyan Drasha**
- In Honor of Sandy Karlin's Birthday by his children - **Sarah & Matthew, Shayna & Raphael, Dalya & Benj**
- **Susan & Bob Levi** to commemorate the 7<sup>th</sup> Yahrzeit of Bob's mother, Leah bas Mordechai, on Zayin Iyar.

## YISE Programs and Listings

**Pre-9:15 Minyan Chabura** - A weekly Chabura in the Nesivos Shalom on the Parsha. Delve into the deeper dimensions of the Parsha and Holidays by learning the Nesivos Shalom's weekly insights. Begins at 8:55 AM Shabbos mornings in the Social Hall. This Shiur will be given by Rabbi Postelnek

**Seeing the Hand of Hashem...In Nature** - A lecture series presented by the YISE Meaningful Tefilah Project. Third lecture, "In Biochemistry and Genetics," with John Golin will be on Sunday, May 8, 10:30 AM (NOTE MORNING TIME) on **Zoom A**. Previous lectures are posted on [wp.yise.org/hand-of-hashem](http://wp.yise.org/hand-of-hashem) See flyer for details.

**Pesach Sheini Tisch** - Join Rabbi Postelnek for an evening of Niggunim and learning, reflecting on Pesach Sheini. Sunday, May 15, following Mincha/Maariv, approximately 8:30 PM, in the Social Hall. Refreshments will be served. To sponsor, contact [office@yise.org](mailto:office@yise.org)

**12<sup>th</sup> Yahrzeit of Rav Anemer, ZT"l** - Recording of Rabbi Rosenbaum's Mishnayos and remarks at <https://wp.yise.org/rav-anemer-yahrzeit-12>

**Celebrate Service to Our Country** - Why do Jews decide to serve? A virtual panel of present and past service members explain why they joined, how their lives changed, and how their lives as Jews were tested and strengthened. Monday, May 30, 6:30 PM on **Zoom A**. Organized by the YISE Social Committee. See flyer for details.

**Ask the Rabbi** - Come join our virtual, interactive monthly program featuring different Halachic topics! This month's topic: Travel. The first 45 minutes is for Shailos submitted in advance and the last 15 minutes is for Q & A. Send in your questions about Travel to: [AskTheRabbi@yise.org](mailto:AskTheRabbi@yise.org) by Sunday, May 29. The program will take place on Tuesday, May 31, 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM on **Zoom A**. 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) To sponsor the program, please contact the YISE office. See flyer for details.

**Kashrus in the Kitchen** - Learn the background and practical laws of Kashrus. Tuesdays, 8:15 PM - 9:00 PM, at the home of David & Tamara Goodman: 11611 Kemp Mill Road. Given by Rabbi Postelnek. For questions or to join the WhatsApp group, contact Rabbi Postelnek at 571-340-0227 or [rypostelnek@yise.org](mailto:rypostelnek@yise.org) Recordings available at <https://wp.yise.org/kashrus-kitchen>

**Volunteers Are Needed Weekly** to help with Kiddushes. If you can help, please contact Simi Franco at [office@yise.org](mailto:office@yise.org) or 301-593-4465 x103

## YISE Programs and Listings (continued)

**Helping Hands Across Kemp Mill** is a part of YISE's Chessed Committee. The program helps members undergoing serious medical crises. We are always looking for volunteers to help. To be a part of this program by helping with meals, visitation, shopping, childcare, etc., contact: Melanie Karlin, 301-681-4740, [mskarlin@gmail.com](mailto:mskarlin@gmail.com) or Miriam Friedman, 301-754-1517, [mfriedman2@yahoo.com](mailto:mfriedman2@yahoo.com)  
**Shiurim from Rabbi Gedaliah Anemer, ZT"l**, are available at <http://audio.yise.org>

### COVID-19 Updates

- The YISE Board has mandated that everyone 16 and older who is medically eligible for an FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccine must be **fully vaccinated for COVID-19 in order to enter the Shul building**.
  - Masks are now optional for adults and children.
  - There are no social distancing requirements in the YISE building.
  - The Shul office is still open, but hours may vary.
- Let us Daven to Hashem to keep all of us in good health and to return our lives to normal as soon as possible. In protecting each other as we navigate this unfolding situation, may we grow stronger as individuals and as a community.

### Happy Birthday! Happy Anniversary!

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

### Dvar Torah Dedications/Sponsor a Shiur

During this difficult time, we pray to Hashem that the day that we can all come together again in Tefillah and Torah study in good health arrives speedily. Until that point, YISE continues to offer a number of different remote learning options. These options are now available for sponsorship on an individual Shiur or a daily basis.

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 (Monday 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 8:45 and 9:15 Shabbos Drashas are both available for sponsorship at \$54 each.
4. Yom Tov Drasha Sponsorships are \$72 each.

Please email [office@yise.org](mailto:office@yise.org) to sponsor. Thank you for your support.

### 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. Monday through Friday, 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday, 7:00 PM, **Zoom A**.
  - **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, now learning Mishlei, **Zoom A**.
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Women's Navi Shiur, now learning Sefer Shmuel, Wednesdays at 8:00 PM, **Zoom A**.
  - **GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch and Learn for Men** - Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM breakfast, 9:45 AM Shiurim. Sunday, May 15, grand breakfast buffet kickoff! *See flyer for details.*
    - Illuminating Inquiries in Halacha - Rabbi Yitzchak Mandel
    - Judaism 102: Fundamentals for the Experienced Jew - Rabbi Hillel Shaps
    - Navigating Navi: Sefer Yehoshua - Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman
    - Parsha Perspectives: An Exploration of Engaging Parsha Topics - Rabbi Menachem Winter
  - **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.
    - For Men:
      - Mondays: Rabbi Hillel Shaps - On the Same Page Gemara - in person in the Social Hall.
      - Wednesdays: Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman - Reading Responsa - **Zoom D**.
      - Thursdays: Rabbi Avraham Sussman - Yesodei Hatorah Gemara Skills Building - **Zoom H**.
    - For Women - **Zoom I**
      - Mondays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Parsha Journeys.
      - Tuesdays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Sefer Bereishis.
  - **SCP (Semichat Chaver Program)** - Tuesdays at 8:45 PM. Join the fastest growing Halacha learning program in the world! Now back in person at YISE. Register at [gwckollel.org/scp](http://gwckollel.org/scp) *New semester started on Tuesday, May 3. See flyer for details.*
  - **Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's** Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, Sunday through Friday, 6:35 AM - 7:20 AM, in the Franco Beit Midrash.
  - **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiurim for men & women, Mondays at 9:00 AM, studying Parashas Hashavua, **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", **Zoom E**.
  - **Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's** Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning Maseches Bava Kama 9<sup>th</sup> perek Merubah. Wednesday evenings, 8:30 PM on **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: 970 1398 4837, password 613  
Zoom C: ID: 978 8156 7874, password RabbiHyatt  
Zoom D: ID: 746 455 2195, password Learn  
Zoom E: ID: 713 7408 5130, password 045079  
Zoom F: ID: 349 754 2180, password Learn  
Zoom G: ID: 539 496 3506, password ygwartz  
Zoom H: ID: 803 356 4156, password Learn  
Zoom I: ID: 601 853 4021, password Winter



# A Quick Thought on the Parsha from Rabbi Rosenbaum

## Kedoshim 5782:

### A Higher Standard

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

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

As the Torah tells us in this week's Parsha to have honest measures, there is a very interesting introductory verse. The Pasuk says *לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ עוֹל בַּמִּשְׁפָּט*, do not do falsehood in judgement, *בְּמִדָּה* *בְּמִשְׁקָל* *וּבְמִשׁוֹרָה*, in all these different languages of measurement. So the first phrase of the Pasuk sounds like we are talking to judges, people who sit on a Beis Din, that they can't act in a dishonest way. The second part of the Pasuk sounds like we are talking to a business man and of course as we proceed in the Pasuk it's all about honesty in business. So we understand why the Pasuk says we should not act in falsehood, but why does the Torah prohibit falsehood in judgement in this context? Rashi brings down that a person has to realize that if they are being dishonest in business, it's the equivalent of being dishonest when given the responsibility of judgement. It's an important idea to think about.

The Meshech Chochma says a very novel concept. The Meshech Chochma says imagine the following scenario. Let's say you are a business man and one of the other businesses, one of your customers, was dishonest with you and they ripped you off for a certain amount of money and now you are selling them something. Now you are an honest person, you are a good person, and heaven forbid you would ever be dishonest when you sell something. But maybe it's not really dishonesty here, because actually if you were dishonest with the person you'd be righting a wrong. You would be *בְּמִשְׁפָּט*, with justice. Maybe they ripped you off \$500, maybe you'll misrepresent things to gain back that \$500. So says the Meshech Chochma, the Torah is telling me even if what I am doing in the big picture seems fair, I still can't be a person of dishonesty. I have to live to a higher standard. And I think this is an idea that is a very interesting thing to think about. We all have our own challenges, we all have our struggles and sometimes we have areas that we are actually pretty good at, we are pretty strong at and they are not struggles for us, but it bothers us. It bothers us if someone wronged us in some way and our sense of fairness and justice almost compels us to go down to their level. And this message of the Torah, according to the Meshech Chochma, whether it be in a business context or whether it be in very different settings, is really a very broad lesson and a very broad message that we always have to live to the highest standard, and if there is something that we know to be correct, heaven forbid to lower our standards to go down to the level of people around us. It's a worthwhile thing to reflect on.

Have a Wonderful Shabbos!

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**Presented by**



**Rabbi Hillel Shaps**

**TUESDAYS @ 8:45PM** Register at:  
**at YISE, 1132 Arcola Ave. [thegreaterwashingtoncommunitykollel.com/scp](http://thegreaterwashingtoncommunitykollel.com/scp)**



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COMMUNITY KOLLEL &  
YOUNG ISRAEL  
SHOMRAI EMUNAH**



**Semichas Chaver Program: Founded by Rav Elyada Goldwicht**

**MEN'S PROGRAMMING**

For more information,  
please contact:  
**Rabbi Hillel Shaps,**  
[hshaps@gwckollel.org](mailto:hshaps@gwckollel.org)

# Seeing the Hand of Hashem... In Nature In History In Our Own Lives

A lecture series presented by the Meaningful Tefilah Project  
at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah.  
Co-sponsored by Kemp Mill Synagogue

## In Nature

Third lecture:



**Sunday, May 8, 10:30 a.m.:**

### In Biochemistry and Genetics

“*Ma Rabu Maasecha*’ at the Submicroscopic Level: How Enzymes Work”

John Golin, Ph.D. (YU and CUA)

With introductory remarks by Rabbi Brahm Weinberg

**Prior two nature lectures available online at:**

[wp.yise.org/hand-of-hashem](http://wp.yise.org/hand-of-hashem)

“*Mesader es hakoachavim*: Bringing Order Out of Chaos in the Heavens”

Jeremy Schnittman, Ph.D. (NASA)

“The Science Behind *Asher Yatzar*, the Most Frequently Recited *Bracha*”

Aaron M. Cypess, M.D., Ph.D., M.M.Sc. (NIH)

## In History



**COMING: Sunday, June 12 at 10:30 a.m.,**

“Seeing the Hand of Hashem in History”

Rabbi Yitzchak Breitowitz, Rav of Kehillat Ohr Somayach,

Senior Lecturer, Yeshivat Ohr Somayach

**Go to [zoom.com](https://zoom.us) and enter Zoom ID: 416-963-9000  
password: 492019**



To register and receive reminders,  
send your email address to [stuartrosenthal@yise.org](mailto:stuartrosenthal@yise.org)



To support this year-long series as a sponsor, send your check (\$36, \$72, \$180) made out to YISE  
(memo: Meaningful Tefilah) to: YISE, 1132 Arcola Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20902



Greater Washington  
Community Kollel  
in conjunction with  
Young Israel  
Shomrai Emunah

# SUNDAY

# BRUNCH & LEARN

## GRAND BREAKFAST BUFFET KICKOFF!!

Bagels - Pancakes - Eggs - Coffee & more!

**Sunday, May 15 - 9:30am**

at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah, 1132 Arcola Ave.

**Men's programming - Free of charge**

**FOUR NEW LEARNING OPTIONS  
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For more info please contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps: [hshaps@gwckollel.org](mailto:hshaps@gwckollel.org) or 347-869-9361



YISE YOUTH PRESENTS

# Bat Mitzvah Program

CREATE A SEED MOSAIC PICTURE

Discuss Ruth and Naomi and their impact  
on Jewish History.

**NEW DATE: May 15, 2022**

1:30 - 3:00 pm | YISE Social Hall

RSVP by 5/10 to [batmitzvahprogram@yise.org](mailto:batmitzvahprogram@yise.org)

Cost: \$10 or free if already paid \$36

DELICIOUS REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED



"SECOND CHANCES"



JOIN RABBI POSTELNEK  
FOR AN EVENING OF

**niggunim & LEARNING**

REFLECTING ON PESACH SHEINI

MAY 15

FOLLOWING MINCHA/MAARIV  
APPROXIMATELY 8:30PM

YISE SOCIAL HALL  
REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED

TO SPONSOR, CONTACT [OFFICE@YISE.ORG](mailto:OFFICE@YISE.ORG)



# **CELEBRATE SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY**

## **WHY DO JEWS DECIDE TO SERVE?**

*Listen to military personnel, whose services have spanned several decades and multiple foreign countries, explain why they joined, how their lives changed, and how their lives as Jews were tested and strengthened*

**MONDAY, MAY 30 - 6:30PM**

**ZOOM ID: 416 963 9000 - PW: 492019**

(To join by phone, dial 301-715-8592 then enter ID and password)

*Featuring:*

Captain Matthew Burke (USPHS, ret)

Captain Stephen I. Deutsch, MD, Ph.D (USNR, ret)

Lt. Col. Sheldon A. Goldberg, Ph.D (USAF, ret)

Major Yoni Goldstein (USAF)

Senior Master Sgt Scott B. Schlesinger (USAF, ret)

**Young Israel Shomrai Emunah Social Committee**

# ASK the RABBI

Come join our virtual, monthly interactive program featuring different Halachic topics!

Topic: **Travel**



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

- |   |
|---|
| ▪ If I am going on a road trip for several days, how many times do I need to say Tefillas Haderech? |
| ▪ How do Davening times work on international flights?  |
| ▪ May I buy a drink from McDonald's on the road?  |

*Send in your questions about Travel to: [AskTheRabbi@yise.org](mailto:AskTheRabbi@yise.org) by Sunday, May 29.*

**When:** Tuesday, May 31, 7:00 PM – 8:00 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)*

*To sponsor the program, please contact the YISE office.*



# Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah via the Internet

Shabbat Shalom

Volume 28, Issue 30

Shabbat Parashat Kedoshim

5782 - B"H

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

From Priest to People - Something fundamental happens at the beginning of this parsha and the story is one of the greatest, if rarely acknowledged, contributions of Judaism to the world.

Until now Vayikra has been largely about sacrifices, purity, the Sanctuary, and the Priesthood. It has been, in short, about a holy place, holy offerings, and the elite and holy people – Aaron and his descendants – who minister there. Suddenly, in chapter 19, the text opens up to embrace the whole of the people and the whole of life: The Lord said to Moses: “Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them, ‘Be holy because I, the Lord, your God, am holy.’”

This is the first and only time in Leviticus that so inclusive an address is commanded. The Sages say that it means that the contents of the chapter were proclaimed by Moses to a formal gathering of the entire nation (hak'hel). It is the people as a whole who are commanded to “be holy,” not just an elite, the Priests. It is life itself that is to be sanctified, as the chapter goes on to make clear. Holiness is to be made manifest in the way the nation makes its clothes and plants its fields, in the way justice is administered, workers are paid, and business conducted. The vulnerable – the deaf, the blind, the elderly, and the stranger – are to be afforded special protection. The whole society is to be governed by love, without resentments or revenge.

What we witness here, in other words, is the radical democratisation of holiness. All ancient societies had Priests. We have encountered four instances in the Torah thus far of non-Israelite Priests: Malkizedek, Abraham's contemporary, described as a Priest of God Most High; Potiphar, Joseph's father-in-law; the Egyptian Priests as a whole, whose land Joseph did not nationalise; and Yitro, Moses' father-in-law, a Midianite Priest. The Priesthood was not unique to Israel, and everywhere it was an elite. Here for the first time, we find a code of holiness directed to the people as a whole. We are all called on to be holy.

In a strange way, though, this comes as no surprise. The idea, if not the details, had already been hinted at. The most explicit instance comes in the prelude to the great covenant-making ceremony at Mount Sinai when God tells Moses to say to the people, “Now if you obey Me fully and keep My covenant, then out of all nations you will be My treasured possession. Although the whole earth is Mine, you will be for Me a kingdom of Priests and a holy nation”, that is, a kingdom all of whose members are to be in some sense Priests, and a nation that is in its entirety holy.

The first intimation is much earlier still, in the first chapter of Genesis, with its monumental assertion, “Let Us make mankind in Our image, in Our likeness”.... So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them”. What is revolutionary in this declaration is not that a human being could be in the image of God. That is precisely how kings of Mesopotamian city states and pharaohs of Egypt were regarded. They were seen as the representatives, the living images, of the gods. That is how they derived their authority. The Torah's revolution is the statement that not some, but all, humans share this dignity. Regardless of class, colour, culture, or creed, we are all in the image and likeness of God.

Thus was born the cluster of ideas that, though they took many millennia to be realised, led to the

distinctive culture of the West: the non-negotiable dignity of the human person, the idea of human rights, and eventually, the political and economic expressions of these ideas: liberal democracy on the one hand, and the free market on the other.

The point is not that these ideas were fully formed in the minds of human beings during the period of biblical history. Manifestly, this is not so. The concept of human rights is a product of the seventeenth century. Democracy was not fully implemented until the twentieth. But already in Genesis 1 the seed was planted. That is what Jefferson meant in his famous words, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,” and what John F. Kennedy alluded to in his Inaugural Address when he spoke of the “revolutionary belief” that “the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state, but from the hand of God.”

The irony is that these three texts, Genesis 1, Exodus 19:6, and Leviticus 19, are all spoken in the Priestly voice Judaism calls *Torat Kohanim*. On the face of it, Priests were not egalitarian. They all came from a single tribe, the Levites, and from a single family, that of Aaron, within the tribe. To be sure, the Torah tells us that this was not God's original intention. Initially, it was to have been the firstborn – those who were saved from the last of the plagues – who were charged with special holiness as the ministers of God. It was only after the sin of the Golden Calf, in which the tribe of Levi did not participate, that the change was made. Even so, the Priesthood would have been an elite, a role reserved specifically for firstborn males. So deep is the concept of equality written into monotheism that it emerges precisely from the Priestly voice, from which we would least expect it.

The reason is this: religion in the ancient world was, not accidentally but essentially, a defence of hierarchy. With the development, first of agriculture, then of cities, what emerged were highly stratified societies with a ruler on top, surrounded by a royal court, beneath which was an administrative elite, and at the bottom, an illiterate mass that was conscripted from time to time either as an army or as a *corvée*, a labour force used in the construction of monumental buildings.

What kept the structure in place was an elaborate doctrine of a heavenly hierarchy whose origins were told in myth, whose most familiar natural symbol was the sun, and whose architectural representation was the pyramid or ziggurat, a massive building broad at the base and narrow at the top. The gods had fought and established an order of dominance and submission. To rebel against the earthly hierarchy was to challenge reality itself. This belief was universal in the ancient world. Aristotle thought that some were born to rule, others to be ruled. Plato constructed a myth in his *The Republic*, in which class divisions existed because the gods had made some people with gold, some with silver, and others with bronze. This was the “noble lie” that had to be told if a society was to protect itself against dissent from within.

Monotheism removes the entire mythological basis of hierarchy. There is no order among the gods because there are no gods, there is only the One God, Creator of all. Some form of hierarchy will always exist: armies need commanders, films need directors, and orchestras, conductors. But these are functional, not ontological. They are not a matter of birth. So it

is all the more impressive to find the most egalitarian sentiments coming from the world of the Priest, whose religious role was a matter of birth.

The concept of equality we find in the Torah specifically and Judaism generally is not an equality of wealth: Judaism is not communism. Nor is it an equality of power: Judaism is not anarchy. It is fundamentally an equality of dignity. We are all equal citizens in the nation whose sovereign is God. Hence the elaborate political and economic structure set out in Leviticus, organised around the number seven, the sign of the holy. Every seventh day is free time. Every seventh year, the produce of the field belongs to all, Israelite slaves are to be liberated, and debts released. Every fiftieth year, ancestral land was to return to its original owners. Thus the inequalities that are the inevitable result of freedom are mitigated. The logic of all these provisions is the Priestly insight that God, creator of all, is the ultimate owner of all: “The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is Mine and you reside in My land as strangers and temporary residents”. God therefore has the right, not just the power, to set limits to inequality. No one should be robbed of dignity by total poverty, endless servitude, or unrelieved indebtedness.

What is truly remarkable, however, is what happened after the biblical era and the destruction of the Second Temple. Faced with the loss of the entire infrastructure of the holy, the Temple, its Priests, and sacrifices, Judaism translated the entire system of *avoda*, divine service, into the everyday life of ordinary Jews. In prayer, every Jew became a Priest offering a sacrifice. In repentance, he became a High Priest, atoning for his sins and those of his people. Every synagogue, in Israel or elsewhere, became a fragment of the Temple in Jerusalem. Every table became an altar, every act of charity or hospitality, a kind of sacrifice.

Torah study, once the speciality of the Priesthood, became the right and obligation of everyone. Not everyone could wear the crown of Priesthood, but everyone could wear the crown of Torah. A *mamzer talmid chacham*, a Torah scholar of illegitimate birth, say the Sages, is greater than an *am ha'aretz* Kohen Gadol, an ignorant High Priest. Out of the devastating tragedy of the loss of the Temple, the Sages created a religious and social order that came closer to the ideal of the people as “a kingdom of Priests and a holy nation” than had ever previously been realised. The seed had been planted long before, in the opening of Leviticus 19: “Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them, ‘Be holy because I the Lord your God am holy.’”

Holiness belongs to all of us when we turn our lives into the service of God, and society into a home for the Divine Presence.

### **Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin**

Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. Holiness is certainly a “religious” word expressing a worthy ideal, if not the worthiest of all. But upon encountering this idea in the opening verses of this portion, we must admit that the concept seems rather vague and difficult to define. What does it really mean to be “holy”?

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Examining some of the commentators on this issue of holiness, the remarks of Rashi and Nahmanides are thought-provoking, not only because of their differences, but also because of their similarities. Rashi explains the phrase “you shall be holy...” as follows: You shall separate yourselves. Abstain from forbidden sexual relationships and from sin, because wherever you find a warning to guard against sexual immorality, you find the mention of holiness.

Since the sexual drive is probably the strongest of our physiological needs and urges – and the most likely to get us into trouble (an old Yiddish proverb has it that most men dig their graves with their sexual organ) – it makes sense that Rashi will use this activity as a paradigm for all others. Who is a holy individual? The one who can control his sexual temptations, and arrange his life in a way in which he/she will not end up trapped in forces which often overtake and destroy all too many families. Nahmanides, after initially quoting Rashi’s understanding of holiness, goes a step further by pointing out that the rabbinic interpretation of the phrase (as cited in the Midrash Torat Kohanim) doesn’t limit the holiness of self-restraint exclusively to sexual behavior, but rather applies it to all elements of human nature: The commandment is ordering disciplined conduct in every aspect of life.

Nahmanides goes on to explain that a Jew may punctiliously observe all the details of the laws and still act “repulsively, within the parameters of the Torah” (naval b’reshut ha’Torah). In effect, argues Nahmanides, the commandments must be seen as the floor of the building and not as the ceiling: everyone must keep all the laws as a minimum requirement, and then add to them as his/her personality or conscience desires or dictates, as well as in accordance with the nature of the situation which arises.

Since life is so complex, we require necessary guideposts or clearly enunciated goals to help us make the proper decisions regarding our daily conduct – especially in those areas where a black and white halakhic directive does not exist. Therefore, “you shall be holy” is the guidepost or meta-halakhic principle which must determine our relationship to the Creator. It reminds us that although drinking and eating kosher foods to excess, for example, may be technically permitted, an individual who strives for holiness dare not spend the majority of his time in pursuit of delectable dishes and outstanding wines. And in Judaism, as Nahmanides would see it, holiness refers to a God-like personality, a person who strives to dedicate him/herself to lofty goals of compassionate and moral conduct. Self-restraint and proper balance between extremes are necessary prerequisites for a worthy human-divine relationship.

Nahmanides finds the parallel for the meta-halakhic “you shall be holy” in the human-divine relationship, within the equally meta-halakhic “you shall do what is right and good” in all of our interpersonal human relationships. It is impossible for the Torah to detail every single possible point of contact between two human beings, points which could easily become stressful and litigious. Thus, Nahmanides tells us that doing what is right and good must be the overall rubric under which we are to conduct our affairs.

It turns out that Rashi’s focus regarding the concept of “you shall be holy” concerns matters of sexuality, while Nahmanides focuses on the entire range of our experience, giving us a global view of modesty and restrained human conduct. A formalistic reason for these two different approaches to the interpretation of holiness may derive from the context of the verse in question. Apparently, the placement of the commandment “you shall be holy” which opens chapter nineteen, sends Rashi and Nahmanides in two different directions. Rashi, finding that immediately preceding the mandate to be holy, the

Torah presents all the laws of improper sexual behavior – twenty-three biblical prohibitions, twenty-three forbidden sexual alliances – he is inspired to conclude that holiness must refer first and foremost to the sexual realm.

Nahmanides gazes ahead and sees no less than 51 commandments in Kedoshim with approximately half dealing with ritual and the other half dealing with the ethical – including such famous laws as “love your neighbor as yourself” and “you shall not place a stumbling block before the blind.” Nahmanides therefore prefers to view holiness as applying to the entire range of the human experience.

The two approaches are very similar. Both Rashi and Nahmanides define holiness as disciplined self-control, as the ability to say “no” to one’s most instinctive physical desires. They both understand that the religious key to human conduct requires love and limits, the ability to love others and the self-control to set limits on one’s desires.

Interestingly and surprisingly enough, in the Hollywood, Newscaster and political societies a virtual revolution is now taking place in the area of man-woman relationships. Scores of women have come forward and testified to sexual abuse years and decades ago, including woman who claimed that former Vice-President and currently Presidential aspirant Joe Biden had touched them inappropriately on their shoulders or kissed their hair. These various allegations caused Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the Congressional House of Representatives to strongly suggest that the ethical code of proper conduct between the sexes had to change drastically, that men ought hold women “at arm’s length” unless they received explicit permission to touch or kiss beforehand. And recently an op-Ed appeared in the Jerusalem Post explaining the importance of “shomer negiyah.”

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

**I Get No Respect!** - I love visiting residences for senior citizens. Recently, I was a weekend guest scholar at such a residence. I dispensed with my prepared lectures and instead tried to engage the residents of the facility, not one of whom was less than ninety years old, in a group discussion. This proved to be a very wise move, because I learned a great deal about the experience of getting old. The question that I raised to provoke discussion was this: “What made you first realize that you were getting ‘older?’”

I was taken aback by the reactions of the group, because there were two very different sets of responses. One member of the group responded, “I knew I was getting older when people started to ignore me. I was no more than a piece of furniture to them. Worse, they no longer noticed me at all.”

About the group agreed with this experience. They proceeded to describe experiences that they had in being ignored. Some of those stories were quite poignant and powerful. One woman even described how she was present at the outbreak of a fire in a hotel lobby, and the rescue workers “simply did not see me sitting there. That is, until I started to scream!”

But then some of the others spoke up expressing quite different experiences. One gentleman said it for the rest of this second group: “I knew that I was getting older when passengers on the subway or bus stood up for me and gave me their seat.” That basic gesture of respect conveyed to the members of this group of senior citizens that they had indeed reached the age when they were not ignored, but rather the beneficiaries of acts of deference.

The discussion then entered another phase, as both groups agreed that, while they certainly did not want to be ignored, they also were resentful of these gestures of respect. The group unanimously

#### **Likutei Divrei Torah**

supported the position articulated by the oldest person there, who said: “We don’t want gestures of respect. We want genuine respect.”

It seems that the entire group, although appreciative of those who relinquished seats on the subway for them, wanted something more. They wanted their opinions to be heard, their life experience to be appreciated, and their accumulated wisdom to be acknowledged. Symbolic gestures were insufficient, and sometimes were even experienced as demeaning.

Parshat Kedoshim, contains the biblical commandment regarding treatment of the elderly: “You shall rise before the aged and show deference to the old; you shall fear your God: I am the Lord.” Rashi’s says, paraphrasing the Talmudic Sages: “What is deference? It is refraining from sitting in his place, and not interrupting his words. Whereas one might think to simply close his eyes and pretend not to even see the old person, the verse cautions us to fear your God, for after all, he knows what is in the heart of man...”

Interestingly, not sitting in his seat mean much more than just giving him a seat on the bus. It means recognizes that the elderly person has his own seat, his own well-earned place in society, which you, the younger person, dare not usurp. It is more than just a gesture. It is an acknowledgement of the valued place the elder has in society, a place which is his and his alone. Similarly, not interrupting the older person’s conversation is much more than an act of courtesy. It is awareness that this older person has something valuable to say, a message to which one must listen attentively.

How well our Torah knows the deviousness of which we are all capable. We can easily pretend not to notice the older person. But He who reads our minds and knows what is in our hearts will be the judge of that. We must fear Him, and not resort to self-justification and excuses. We must deal with the older person as a real person, whose presence cannot be ignored, but must be taken into full account in our conversation.

Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin refers to a passage in the Midrash Rabbah which understands the phrase “you shall fear your God” as being the consequence of your showing deference to the elderly. Thus, if you treat the elderly well you will attain the spiritual level of the God-fearing person. But if you refrain from showing the elderly that deference, you can never aspire to the title “God-fearing person” no matter how pious you are in other respects.

There is another entirely different perspective on our verse which provides a practical motive for honoring the elderly. It is to be found in the commentary of Abraham Ibn Ezra, who explains the phrase, “You shall fear your God,” in the following way: “The time will come when you will be old and frail and lonely. You will long for proper treatment at the hands of the young. But if you showed disrespect for the elderly when you were young, and did not “fear God,” God will not reward you with the treatment you desire in your own old age.”

As each of us strives to show genuine respect to our elders we help construct a society in which the elderly have their proper place. That society will hopefully still be there when we become older, and then we will reap the benefits of our own youthful behavior. One of the major components of the holy society is the treatment it accords to every one of its members, especially those who are vulnerable. Treating the elderly with genuine respect, truly listening to them and valuing their contributions, is an essential part of what it mean to be a “holy people.”

In this week's *Parashah*, we are commanded to be "*Kedoshim*." R' Yitzchak of Volozhin z"l (Belarus; died 1849) explains: *Kedushah* means being distinct or separate from something that is on a lower level. He elaborates: In *Parashat Shemini*, the Torah taught us to separate ourselves from prohibited foods; in *Tazria* and *Metzora*, to separate ourselves from *Tum'ah* / ritual impurity; in *Acharei Mot*, to separate ourselves from prohibited relationships. In *Kedoshim*, the Torah teaches ourselves to separate ourselves from excessive pleasures, even those which are permitted by the letter of the law, for those, too, are beneath us. A person could spend all of his time eating and engaging in other physical pleasures, and he could rightly defend himself: "What law of the Torah have I transgressed?" However, that is not the ideal that the Torah envisions for us, as R' Moshe ben Nachman z"l (*Ramban*; 1194-1270; Spain and *Eretz Yisrael*) famously writes in his commentary on our *Parashah*.

R' Yitzchak continues: There is no one-size-fits-all standard of *Kedushah*. Every person must evaluate his own nature and temperament to determine what level of physical pleasures he genuinely needs and what pleasures are excessive. That is why our *Parashah* does not provide detailed instructions for becoming *Kadosh*, for our *Parashah* is not addressed to each individual separately; rather, it was taught (19:2) "to the entire assembly of *Bnei Yisrael*."

- Continued in box inside -

## Bitachon

This year--a *Shemittah* year--we will iy"H devote this space to discussing the related subject of *Bitachon* / placing one's trust in Hashem.

As noted last week, *Rabbeinu Bachya ibn Pekudah z"l* (*Saragossa, Spain; early 11<sup>th</sup> century*) defines what it means to "trust" Hashem. He begins as follows:

Trust is the tranquility of the soul of the one who trusts. In his heart, he relies on the one in whom he trusts, sure that the latter will do what is right for him regarding the thing about which he is trusting.

(*Chovot Ha'levavot: Sha'ar Ha'bitachon*, ch.1)

R' Shlomo Moshe Amar *shlita* (former *Sefardi* Chief Rabbi of Israel, now *Sefardi* Chief Rabbi of Yerushalayim) elaborates: Sometimes, it is decreed that a person must suffer, and he does not understand why. He is not willing to accept suffering! We must know, however, that we are servants of *Hashem*. We are not under our own control; rather, He is in charge. One should never ask, or even think, "Why is this happening to me?" Everything happens according to a plan. We usually will not know the reason, but *Hashem* has reasons. Regarding the death of the two sons of Aharon Ha'kohen, we read (*Vayikra* 10:3), "Aharon was silent." Even Moshe Rabbeinu was rebuffed when he requested (*Shmot* 33:13), "Make Your way known to me, so I may comprehend You." Moshe was not asking out of curiosity. He wanted this information so he could help *Bnei Yisrael* get out of trouble after making the Golden Calf. Nevertheless, *Hashem* responded (*Ibid* verse 21), "Behold! there is a place with Me," *i.e.*, to understand Me, you would have to be "with Me." Why? Because if we understood all of *Hashem's* ways, we would have no trials, and we would earn no reward. How, then, can we get through difficult times? The main tool that we have for getting through trials, writes R' Amar, is *Tefilah*/ prayer, which is an expression of our *Bitachon*.  
(*Be'chasdecha Vatachti* p. 87)

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## *Pirkei Avot*

**“Be careful with a ‘light’ *Mitzvah* as with a ‘heavy’ one, for you do know not the reward for the fulfillment of the *Mitzvot*.” (2:1)**

R’ Moshe Yitzchak Ashkenazi z”l (1821-1898; Trieste, Italy) asks: Rabbi Yehuda Ha’nassi (traditionally known simply as “*Rabbi*”) says that we should not neglect “light” *Mitzvot*, for we do not know how great is the reward for any particular *Mitzvah*. By saying this, *Rabbi* seems to be encouraging us to perform *Mitzvot* because of their reward. What of the teaching of Antignos of Socho (*Avot* 1:3), “Do not be like servants who serve their master with the expectation of receiving a reward”?

R’ Ashkenazi answers: *Rabbi* is not encouraging us to perform *Mitzvot* for the sake of their reward. Rather, he is addressing the fact that a properly performed *Mitzvah* benefits a person’s soul and his body. It benefits his soul by uplifting him spiritually, and it benefits his body because the soul’s pleasure upon being spiritually uplifted causes the body to feel a sense of tranquility. However, *Rabbi* is observing, “light” *Mitzvot* often do not have this effect--not because they are not important enough; in fact, the reward for even the smallest *Mitzvah* is beyond our imagination. Rather, “light” *Mitzvot* seem not to impact our souls or our bodies because we tend to perform them out of habit, without feeling. *Mitzvot* performed without feelings may fulfill one’s technical obligation, but they have a limited spiritual impact. When *Rabbi* says, “You do not know the reward of *Mitzvot*,” he means that you do not sense the reward immediately, as you do when you perform a “big” *Mitzvah*. Thus, *Rabbi* warns us to perform every *Mitzvah* with the same feeling, whether we can immediately sense its positive effects or we cannot.

R’ Ashkenazi adds: We read (*Shmot* 18:20), “*Ve’hizhartah* / You shall caution them regarding the decrees and the teachings, and you shall make known to them the path in which they should go and the deeds that they should do.” The word “*Ve’hizhartah*,” in addition to meaning “You shall caution,” may be read as being related to the word “*Zohar*,” meaning “light.” Read this way, the verse is an instruction to not only teach *Bnei Yisrael* about their technical obligations, but also to ensure that they see the “light” in every *Mitzvah*.  
(*Simchat Ha’regel* ch.2)

The *Gemara* teaches: The Torah reveals the reward for two *Mitzvot*: the easiest of the easy--sending away a mother bird before taking its eggs or its young--and the hardest of the hard--honoring one’s parents. For both, the Torah states that the reward is long life. Why? So that a person does not pick and choose among the *Mitzvot*, but, rather, performs all of them.

(*Chullin* 142a)

**“Speak to the entire assembly of *Bnei Yisrael* and say to them, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy, *Hashem*, your *Elokim*’.” (19:2)**

R’ Meir Halevi Rotenberg z”l (1760-1831; rabbi and *Chassidic Rebbe* in Opatów, Poland) writes: Our verse commands us to emulate G-d’s holiness. By His nature, *Hashem* is completely removed from the physical world; yet, His Presence fills, and He influences, every corner of this world. So, too, though a person wants to ascend to the highest spiritual levels, it is not *Hashem*’s Will that we detach ourselves entirely from this world. Rather, our goal should be to draw spiritual influences into our physical world.

(*Ohr La’shamayim*)

R’ Yehuda Aryeh Leib Alter z”l (1847-1905; second *Gerrer Rebbe*) writes: The Torah is proving to us that it is possible to be holy despite being in the physical world. After all, *Hashem* created the world and He continues to give life to everything in it, yet He is distinct from the physical world and is holy.

(*Sfat Emet: Likkutim*)

*Midrash Rabbah* comments on our verse: Thus it is written (*Tehilim* 20:3), “May He dispatch your help from the *Kodesh* / Sanctuary and support you from Zion.” [Until here from the *Midrash*]

How are the two verses connected? R’ Eliezer Dovid Gruenwald z”l (1867-1928; rabbi and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Oyber Visheve, Hungary) explains: The *Gemara* (*Sukkah* 52a) teaches that it is impossible to defeat the *Yetzer Ha’ra* without Divine assistance. Our job is only to begin to serve *Hashem*; then *Hashem* completes the task for us. In truth, however, even the first step is not accomplished by our efforts alone. For that, too, we need Divine assistance. This, writes R’ Gruenwald, may be the purpose for which the entire Torah is taught to a fetus in the womb, only to have him forget it at the time of birth. Perhaps this is the initial assistance needed to help one serve *Hashem*.

(*Keren Le’Dovid He’chadash*)

### – Continued from front page –

Why does the Torah want us to refrain from pleasures that are, strictly speaking, permitted? R’ Yitzchak explains: The *Yetzer Ha’ra* does not come to a person “out of the blue” and tell him or her to sin. [For example, the *Yetzer Ha’ra* does not try to persuade a typical observant Jew to eat pork, because such an effort is guaranteed to fail.] Rather, the *Yetzer Ha’ra* tries to get a person immersed in worldly pleasures of the permitted kind, until, little-by-little, the person’s sensitivity to spirituality has decreased and his desire for physical pleasures has increased to the point that he may let his guard down when presented with a sinful pleasure.

On the other hand, writes R’ Yitzchak, a person who tries to sanctify himself is assured of Divine assistance.

(*Mili D’avot* 3:1)

# 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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## INDEPENDENCE DAY 2022: ISRAEL'S POPULATION NUMBERS 9.5 MILLION (Israel Hayom 5/5/22)

Central Bureau of Statistics on Monday released its annual pre-Independence Day population data, showing that as it turns 74, the population of the Jewish state stands at 9,506,000.

At just over 7 million, Jews make up 73.9% of Israel's population. Arabs account for 21.1% of the country's population, and 5% are members of other religious groups.

Since Independence Day 2021, 191,000 babies were born, 55,000 people died, and 38,000 people immigrated to Israel – a 20-year record.

Overall, Israel's population increased by 1.9% or 176,000 people.

At Israel's inception in 1948, the Jewish state numbered 806,000 people.

Israel's population is also young: 28% of the population is aged 0-14, and only 12% is aged 65 and over.

According to the data, about 45% of the total Jewish population in the world lives in Israel and about 79% of Israelis were born here.

## 24,068 FALLEN SOLDIERS AND TERRORISM VICTIMS (Arutz-7 4/29/22)

Ahead of before Memorial Day, which begins on Tuesday night, the Ministry of Defense publishes the number of fallen IDF soldiers and victims of terrorism from 1860 to the present day: 24,068.

From Memorial Day last year and until today, 56 people have been added to the tally, as well as another 84 handicapped people, who died as a result of their disability and were recognized during the year as IDF casualties.

The Department of Families and Commemoration at the Ministry of Defense, which is responsible for the Memorial Day events, has completed the preparation of the 52 military cemeteries, the Memorial Monument to the Bedouin Warriors at Hamovil junction, hundreds of military burial plots and thousands of graves scattered in various localities from Kiryat Shmona to Eilat. The works included renovation, accessibility, maintenance, cleaning, landscaping as well as polishing and replacing damaged or old tombstones. In recent weeks, the department's employees have initiated calls to the bereaved families in preparation for Memorial Day, in order to provide any assistance they may need.

Along with the memorial events in Israel and as part of strengthening the connection with the bereaved families living abroad, the Commemoration and Heritage Division of the Ministry of Defense and the World Zionist Organization produced an online Memorial Day ceremony this year. The ceremony, intended for Israeli communities around the world, is divided into two parts: A ceremony filmed at the National Memorial Hall on Mount Herzl which will be available on the Ministry of Defense's YouTube page, as well as contents for a community memorial service which will be posted on the website of the Family, Commemoration and Heritage Department. The content will be distributed to thousands of Jewish communities around the world, and the memorial service will be translated into several languages: Hebrew, English, Spanish, French and Russian.

The names of all the victims will be broadcast consecutively on Channel 26, Cellcom TV, Idan Plus and the Izkor website. The names will appear in the order in which they fell, from the eve of Memorial Day on Tuesday at 8:45 p.m., until the conclusion of Memorial Day on Wednesday evening.

## ISRAEL WELCOMES INDEPENDENCE DAY WITH TRADITIONAL FLYOVER AND BARBECUES (YNet 5/5/22)

After two years of pandemic-induced restrictions, President Isaac Herzog welcomed Israel's Independence Day on Thursday with the traditional

banquet at his official residence in Jerusalem.

The event kicked off with the iconic Air Force flyover as a host of aircraft soared over most of the country.

The president addressed the pilots over the radio and said: "To all Air Force pilots and soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces in the air at sea and on land, on the 74th anniversary of Israel's independence, I wish you a happy Independence Day!"

"Independence Day is one of the most exciting days of the year... you are the ones who have turned this year into a real journey, a journey through Israeli society," Herzog said.

"A journey in which I get to meet all of you who turn the State of Israel into the wonder it is. We are facing great challenges, ahead of us are great opportunities, and we will conquer all of them if we stay united. I wish all of us that we will be privileged to reach next year - the 75th year of the State of Israel, with achievements, with unity, with love, and with lots and lots of pride."

Meanwhile, the Israeli people have poured into nature reserves and parks, gathering with loved ones and lighting barbecues.

## BENNETT ON INDEPENDENCE DAY: WHEN ISRAEL IS UNITED, WE ARE UNBEATABLE (JPost 5/4/22)

"74 years of statehood has taught us that when the people of Israel are united - no one can beat us," said Prime Minister Naftali Bennett at the state ceremony marking the 74th Independence Day.

"Dear citizens of Israel, Independence Day is a day of great pride for all of us," said Bennett. "National pride in what we've gone through together, and in what we have achieved here together."

The prime minister pointed to the hi-tech industry, the healthcare system and

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Cong. Rinat Yisrael, Teaneck, NJ	Young Israel of Brookline, MA
Cong. Shomrei Torah, Fair Lawn, NJ	Young Israel of East Brunswick, NJ
Cong. Sons of Israel, Allentown, PA	Young Israel of Fort Lee, NJ
Cong. Zichron Mordechai, Teaneck, NJ	Young Israel of Hancock Park, CA
Cong. Zichron R. M. Feinstein, Brooklyn, NY	Young Israel of Holliswood, NY
Delray Orthodox Synagogue, Delray Beach, FL	Young Israel of Houston, TX
East Denver Orthodox Synagogue, CO	Young Israel of New Hyde Park, NY
East Hill Synagogue, Englewood, NJ	Young Israel of North Woodmere, NY
Flatbush Park Jewish Center, Mill Basin, NY	Young Israel of New Rochelle, NY
Harvard University Library	Young Israel of Sharon, MA
Hebrew Academy of Long Beach, NY	YI Shomrai Emunah, Silver Spring, MD

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the opportunities provided to the periphery, saying "thank God, Israel can provide a livelihood for anyone who is looking for one."

Concerning the security situation, Bennett stressed that "even though our enemies do not rest for a moment from trying to harm us, the State of Israel is stronger than ever."

"The IDF, the Shin Bet and the Mossad are intensifying at an unprecedented rate: with lasers, missiles, cyber and above all - by investing in our bold and good soldiers," said Bennett.

"As the one who bears the ultimate responsibility for Israel's security, I can tell you clearly: Israel will overcome any threat from outside, near or far. We have built here a very thick iron wall in front of our enemies," said the prime minister.

Bennett reiterated the message he stated on Remembrance Day, stressing that sectarianism destroyed the Jewish state in the Second Temple Period and that "a sovereign and united Jewish state has never survived here for more than 80 years."

"Here we are in the eighth decade of the State of Israel," said Bennett. "The decade we have never succeeded [in getting through]. This time we have another chance, a third chance for the Jewish people. This time we must, simply must succeed."

"We must not allow hatred to capture us, to control us. We need to see each other with a good eye, to believe that the other also wants the good for the state, even if his opinion is completely different. We should all always place the good of the state above our sector, above our self-interest," said the prime minister.

#### **SHOULD JEWS BE ALLOWED TO PRAY ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT? MANY ISRAELIS THINK SO, POLL SHOWS (Ha'aretz 5/3/22)**

Half of Jewish Israelis support Jewish prayer on Jerusalem's Temple Mount according to a report released on Tuesday by the Israel Democracy Institute.

The two main reasons given by those in support are because it provides "proof of Israel's sovereignty over the Temple Mount" (38 percent), and because it is a religious commandment (12 percent).

In contrast, 40 percent of Jewish Israelis oppose Jewish prayer at the site with 23 percent saying it might "invoke a severe negative reaction from the Muslim world." An additional 17 percent said that they believe doing so is forbidden by halakha, or Jewish religious law.

Religious Israelis have shown increasing levels of interest in visiting the Temple Mount, which, as the location of the first and second temples in antiquity, is the holiest site in Judaism.

But while the holiness of the site is undisputed by orthodox Jews, the propriety of visiting very much is, with the issue of how to approach the sanctity of the site a matter of fierce debate between ultra-Orthodox and religious-Zionist Jews.

This divide among the religious community was clear in the IDI's numbers showing that 86.5 percent of ultra-Orthodox Jews opposed prayer for reasons of halakha, while national religious (51 percent), traditional religious (54.5 percent) and traditional non-religious respondents (49 percent) supported worship on the mount for nationalist reasons.

Many rabbis, and almost all ultra-Orthodox ones, prohibit their followers from ascending the Temple Mount due to concerns over ritual purity. Meanwhile, a growing number of modern Orthodox rabbis encourage pilgrimages so long as visitors go with a guide who know which parts of the site are permitted.

Prayer on the Temple Mount has long been a contentious issue, with conflicts over the site repeatedly sparking violent clashes between Israelis and Palestinians, but a growing number of Israeli Jews now appear to support public worship at what many see as the most volatile religious flash point in Jerusalem – and in the entire Middle East.

Since 2019, the Israeli police have grown increasingly tolerant of Jewish prayer, which, while technically legal, has long been barred due to law enforcement officials' concern that allowing such religious expression could lead to violence.

Violent clashes between Palestinians and police erupted last Friday at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, in what had become a weekly occurrence ahead of midday prayers for the entire month of Ramadan.

Muslims see the mount, which is home to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, as their third-holiest site after Mecca and Medina and Palestinians have long complained of Jewish worshippers "storming" the site.

Last summer, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett was forced to backtrack after promising that Israel would preserve freedom of worship for Jews on the Temple Mount, releasing a statement in which he reassured the public that "there is no change in the status quo."

Last May, Hamas launched a wave of rockets against Israeli cities following their ultimatum calling on Jerusalem to withdraw its security forces from Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque compound and the city's Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood.

Rabbi Yehuda Levi, a member of The Temple Mount Yeshiva, a group which ascends the mount twice a day for Torah lectures, told Haaretz last year that as long as the Temple Mount is open to non-Muslims, there should be a significant Jewish presence too, including prayer and Torah study and "everything that's important to Judaism in terms of the Temple Mount and the eventual [third] Temple."

"We're not stupid. We realize that it might take many years to effectuate our long term goal to have a yeshiva and a Jewish presence with a Temple, or even [just] a yeshiva or regular synagogue. It should be like the Western Wall. But we start with what we're able to do."

#### **TURKEY'S ERDOGAN SPEAKS WITH HERZOG, SENDS GREETING CARD FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY (YNet 5/2/22)**

President Isaac Herzog on Monday spoke with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and wished him a happy Eid al-Fitr, a holiday marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

At the start of their conversation, Herzog wished Erdoğan and the people of Turkey a Happy Eid al-Fitr and thanked the Turkish President for his congratulatory letter on the occasion of the State of Israel's 74th Independence Day.

Erdoğan expressed his hopes that the Eid al-Fitr holiday will bring joy, peace, and affinity throughout the region. The two leaders discussed the importance of open and ongoing dialogue for the maintenance of calm and stability in the whole region, especially in present times.

The letter said: "On the occasion of the National Day of the State of Israel, I extend congratulation to Your Excellency and the people of Israel on behalf of my nation and myself. In the new period in our relations, heralded by your Excellency's visit to our country in March, I sincerely believe that the cooperation between our countries will develop in a way that serves our mutual national interests, as well as regional peace and stability."

"Taking this opportunity, I extend my best wishes for the health and happiness of Your Excellency, and for the well-being and prosperity of the people of Israel."

President Herzog thanked President Erdoğan for his greetings and noted that they must keep working in cooperation with each other for the benefit of both nations.

The letter was published by Herzog's office at the end of the second phone call held by both leaders within two weeks.

The last time the two spoke was on April 19, following the riots on Jerusalem's Temple Mount and Erdoğan's condemnation of Israeli intervention at the holy site.

After that call, Herzog's office said the two discussed "the need to calm the spirits". It was also argued that Erdoğan "was happy" about the statements made by senior Israeli officials about maintaining the status quo on the Temple Mount. But he himself issued a more acute announcement - saying he told Herzog that the recent events, in what he called the "Palestinian territories," were a result of "some radical Israeli groups and security forces."

## **IMAGINATIVE NEW INTERACTIVE VIDEO PUTS YOU IN BEN GURION'S OFFICE IN 1948** (Arutz-7 4/5/22)

Content creator Shlomo Blass came up with the idea of developing a new interactive video about David Ben Gurion after realizing many young students don't know enough about Israel, and that an interactive video about Ben Gurion and Israel's history could be very useful for emissaries doing hasbara.

That was how the David Ben Gurion Escape Rooms was born.

The video tells the story of the founding of Israel through its main character, David Ben Gurion.

"Imagine it's the 14th of May, 1948 and David Ben Gurion is about to come out with a very important statement and he sends you to his office to pick up the proclamation of independence. But you were locked in the room and there are nine locks on the door and the only way to get out is by watching animations and solving quizzes with each one at its turn opening another lock."

He adds: "This is the experience in the room. You go around and you're looking for clues and you're watching things and you're answering all these fun puzzles and drag and drop games and blind maps."

You don't need any prior knowledge of Israel's history. The game teaches you as you go along.

Blass feels that most users are somewhere in the middle in terms of knowing Israel's history. The game is for everyone.

"The reactions [have been] amazing. We had teachers in New York schools using it for third graders, using it with some assistance, and students using it in other places, schools in Australia, emissaries in the UK used it. This year we already have schools that are going to use it."

In the wake of all the antisemitism and anti-Zionism going on, the game is a tool that people can use day-to day to teach about Israel.

## **AIR CAIRO MAKES HISTORY WITH FIRST FLIGHT OPERATED FROM ISRAEL TO EGYPT** (Israel Hayom 5/3/22)

Air Cairo made history Monday by becoming the first Egyptian airline to operate a direct flight from Israel to Egypt, which took off to Sharm el-Sheikh in the morning with over 150 Israelis on board.

The planned route will include three such flights from Ben-Gurion International Airport to the Egyptian resort town weekly, similarly to other existing routes operated by Israel's El Al Airlines, Arkia, and Israir. The cost of a round ticket is approximately \$300.

Tourism Minister Yoel Razvozov, who led the opening ceremony in honor of the occasion at the airport, said, "tourism cooperation builds bridges between countries, and the launch of the [direct] flight between Ben-Gurion Airport and Sharm el-Sheikh is an example of this."

## **THE EBAL AMULET – THE OLDEST ISRAELITE TEXT EVER FOUND** (JPost 5/5/22)

Stunning! Remarkable! Explosive! These words are typical of headlines in the media since March 25. That's the date of the press conference that introduced the world to the text on the lead amulet found recently at Mount Ebal. According to the experts who deciphered the text, it is a curse in ancient Hebrew script dated to the Settlement Period (circa 1200 BCE).

Why is this news so explosive? The most obvious reason is that it's the oldest text in ancient Hebrew ever found in Israel. And we know that record-breaking finds always capture the imagination. Until, and unless, an earlier object containing ancient Israelite writing is found, that record speaks for itself. (Note: isolated words have been found on pottery shards, but we are referring to text containing full phrases and/or sentences.)

Two additional reasons for the excitement about the amulet came up over and over in the tsunami of articles: first, the object attests to literacy among the ancient Israelites many hundreds of years earlier than conventional academic thinking. At the press conference, Prof. Gershon Galil – one of the experts who deciphered the amulet – said this suggests that some biblical texts may have been written as early as 1200 BCE. Also, finding a curse

amulet on the biblical Mountain of the Curse (i.e., Ebal, according to Deuteronomy 27) connects the physical archaeological site of Ebal with the biblical texts about Ebal. This is another record-breaker – it is the first time a site has been discovered that matches a segment of the Torah point-by-point.

The backstory – starting with the decision 40 years ago of Prof. Adam Zertal to excavate at Mt. Ebal – appears in my February 7 article in The Jerusalem Report and on The Jerusalem Post's website. The article touches on the entire 40 years, including the discovery during excavations of the so-called "Joshua's Altar" and the recent discovery of the amulet, which was still in the process of being deciphered when the article was written.

After I participated with Zertal in the excavations, during those next 40 years I developed and ceaselessly researched theories relating to the site. I read and spoke to experts on a variety of issues, among them the nature of oral tradition and written texts in ancient Israel as well as the definition of an Israelite temple. I came to the conclusion that Ebal was a cultic site, an actual temple, that was built at the beginning of the Settlement Period as outlined in the biblical texts. I had scholarly and biblical bases for these theories, and – in a Jerusalem Post op-ed from February 12, 2020 – I actually predicted that writing would be discovered at the site!

It was as if I had been finding, and putting together the pieces of a large, difficult jigsaw puzzle – pieces that came from ancient history, archaeology, geography and biblical textual analysis. And the discovery of Israelite writing at the site was the missing, last piece of the puzzle.... With it, the puzzle has come together, and my theories have been further solidified.

My earlier dating of the Ebal segment of Deuteronomy is contrary to the almost universal academic opinion that these biblical texts were written 600 years later, during the time of King Josiah. The theory has been that the "discovery" of the ancient scroll in the temple circa 620 BCE as described in II Kings 22-23 was a religious fraud. In other words, the scroll was not "discovered" at that time, but actually written at that time and put in the mouth of Moses to give it historical sanctity. The ostensible purpose was to justify centralizing the cult in Jerusalem under Josiah. Further, the assumption has been that the phrase "the place that He will choose" – i.e., the home of God – which appears repeatedly in Deuteronomy, reflects the centralization of the cult by Josiah and referred to Jerusalem.

But, dating the text to the time of Ebal, some 250 years before the Jerusalem temple was built, undermines the identification of "the place that He will choose" as Jerusalem. Let's consider my theory that the original "place that He will choose" referenced in those texts is Ebal. My research shows that Ebal matches all the criteria for an Israelite temple according to scholars who specialize in this issue. Long before the amulet was found, I had reached the conclusion that Ebal must be a temple, i.e., the home of God, and "the place that He will choose."

The discovery/deciphering of the amulet gives additional credibility to that conclusion. Although the existence of objects containing writing is not a necessary requirement for a temple, it is accepted by the experts that formal writing took place exclusively in temples during early Israelite periods... another strong indication that Ebal was a temple. And as for Ebal being the location originally referred to as "the place that He will choose" – it was the "only game in town" in 1200 BCE.

Defining Ebal as a temple and as the original "place that He will choose," undermines fundamental tenets of Western scholarship and religion, especially relating to Jerusalem. My theories about Ebal have been – and will undoubtedly continue to be – met with fierce resistance and opposition. Hopefully, the intensity of the opposition will abate somewhat after publication of the final report for the original excavation and the report about the amulet, both of which are in process.

Possibly the most striking sentence in the Ebal portion of Deuteronomy reads: "This day you have become the Nation of the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 27:9). The late Prof. Adam Zertal adopted this verse in the title of his book about Ebal, A Nation Born. How fitting that this article is

appearing on Independence Day – Yom Ha'atzmaut – a day that commemorates the rebirth of the Nation of Israel in 1948.

### **RUSSIA'S ANTISEMITIC ATTACK ON ISRAEL IS SHOCKING AND DELIBERATE** (Ksenia Svetlova, Ha'aretz 5/4/22)

An experienced diplomat and an educated man, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov knew perfectly well what he was saying when he erupted into a tirade about Jews, antisemites and Hitler in an interview this week on Italian TV. It was neither a slip of the tongue nor a mistake, nor is anyone in the Kremlin asking to correct the record about what he said or apologize for them.

Lavrov's comments were one of Russia's clearest crossings of a revisionist red line since it invaded Ukraine. He declared: "So what if Zelenskyy is Jewish? The fact does not negate the Nazi elements in Ukraine. I believe that Hitler also had Jewish blood. It means absolutely nothing...the most ardent antisemites are usually Jews."

Lavrov sparked immediate outrage in Israel and far beyond, with Israeli officials calling his comments an "unforgivable" falsehood, rooted in historical error and delusional conspiracy theories, that debased the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust and turned victims into perpetrators. But Russia's foreign ministry doubled down: For Moscow, the rebukes "explain[ed] to a large extent why the current Israeli government supports the neo-Nazi regime in Kyiv."

Whoever in Israel once thought that it was OK to keep quiet while Putin and his aides serially compared Volodymyr Zelenskyy, a Jewish president of Ukraine, to a Nazi, and justified a bloody war against Kyiv by using the horrendous, Goebbels-style term "de-nazification," must come to grips with reality. The Kremlin doesn't have any problem slaughtering any holy cow.

When Putin and his loyal servant Lavrov need to justify the crusade against a Ukrainian president who happens to be a Jew, any comparison, metaphor, hyperbole or blood libel is good enough. Nothing – from facts to basic human norms – are sacred: In this Putinverse, Ukrainians are killing fellow Ukrainians in Mariupol, Bucha and Irpin "because they are Nazis," Jews are "the worst antisemites" and in Hitler's veins ran "Jewish blood."

The Israeli establishment was genuinely outraged by these statements, and to many it came as a shock, a sharp departure from what is commonly described here as "Putin's philosemitism." But for Russian speakers in Israel, Ukraine and Russia, there was nothing new.

At one time, the Russian troubadour-poet Vladimir Vysotsky would sing a satirical song about how Jews were everywhere, reflecting what used to be the national sport in the Soviet Union – spotting Jews and marveling at their might and influence. In these days, antisemitism used to be part and parcel of official Soviet policy, and Jews were kept away from prestigious university and work places because they would automatically fail to pass the "security profile."

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, antisemitism in Russia certainly did not disappear, but for a while it was not integrated into an official policy. Russia wanted to maintain close ties with Israel – a close ally of the United States, and Moscow also "needed" the Jews onside, to promote a specific image: That of a victorious nation that liberated the WWII death camps and saved the world from the Nazi bacillus, building an inclusive society while the West was being infected by Nazism all over again.

The Russian state allowed Jewish communities in Russia to flourish, particularly those led by the ultra-Orthodox Chabad movement; it hosted special Hannukah concerts at the Kremlin and marked International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

At the same time, it didn't stop the worst antisemites, who were quite close to the Kremlin, to spread vicious lies– for example about Ukrainian plans to resettle Jews in the Donbas, or that Russia was being forced to intervene before Ukraine built "concentration camps" and started "gassing people."

As a token of the intimidatory power of Putin's philosemitism, it should be noted that no major Jewish organization in Russia has dared to denounce Lavrov's words.

In times of crisis – for instance, when a Russian intelligence plane was downed in Syria (a strike initially blamed on Israel, but later exposed as a mistake by Syrian air defense systems) – or just pique, for instance when Israeli gymnast Linoy Ashram won the gold medal for rhythmic gymnastics at the Tokyo Olympics, ending Russia's 20-year monopoly, the Overton window shifts with appalling speed.

The social networks were suddenly full of antisemitic malice, the term "Jewish state" became an indictment, while Jews once again became "Zhidi," the common Russian slur that had, for a time, become unseemly in the public square. After a horrific 2018 fire in a Kemerovo trade center, various Christian circles argued that the Jews were behind the tragedy, as it coincided with a Jewish holiday. Ultra-nationalist Russian Orthodox circles, which have enjoyed increasing access to the Kremlin, have long propagated antisemitic conspiracy theories.

Interestingly, these days Putin's propaganda often compares the persecution of Russians to that of the Jews, as a form of supercessionism. A pro-Kremlin singer Shnurov even produced a new song called "No Entry: Russians and Dogs," which featured the immortal lines: "A Russian is now like a Jew in Berlin in 1940... Russians are the new Zhids. You want us all to burn in an oven!"

Vladimir Solovyev, the Kremlin's leading propagandist and subject of EU sanctions, argues that the "Europeans" are "prosecuting him for being a Jew." Many pro-Putin figures openly complain that the "original" Jews are obstinately blind to what they call Ukrainian Nazism, and even have the chutzpah to protest against the "special military operation" to "denazify" Ukraine.

The tension between Russia and Israel has been on the rise for the two months since the invasion. Russian TV propaganda condemns the Russian Jews who "left their motherland in a critical hour and are now hiding in Israel," and lists artists and journalists, both in Russia and abroad, critical of the war (or in their Kremainspeak, "inciting hatred against Russians"), explicitly mentioning that all of them have Jewish names.

But Lavrov's statements meant Israel had no choice but to react and they didn't mince their words. So will the Lavrov saga, which was too loud to ignore, actually have a tangible effect on Israel's policy towards Russia and Ukraine?

Given that Israel's key reason for maintaining its balancing act on Russia was national security, specifically regarding Syria, to its north, where Russia controls the airspace and could interfere at will with Israel's operations against Hezbollah and Iran, it's safe to assume that, at least for the time being, there will be no major change in this policy.

While Israel had to address Lavrov's slurs, it's still difficult to imagine that tomorrow Jerusalem will start supplying arms to Ukraine, introduce sanctions against Russian firms or individuals or, despite Zelenskyy's call, to recall its envoy in Moscow. The fear of challenging Russia is still there, and given the always simmering coalition crisis in Israel, opening a new front with Moscow is hardly a high priority for Israel's prime minister.

At the same time, there is no doubt that the tensions between Russia and Israel will mount. Apart from its egregious abuse of the Holocaust and antisemitism, Moscow is playing with Israel on other fronts in parallel, to gain leverage: reaffirming its support for the Palestinian case, rebuking Israeli activity in Syria. With time, there is little doubt that Moscow will impose more demands and restrictions. The St Alexander church, a property Russia eyes in Jerusalem's Old City, might become a new apple of discord.

While Israel was hoping that it could somehow keep on satisfying both Russia and Ukraine, it seems that Moscow expects nothing less than complete obedience, and even then, the Kremlin will continue using the Jewish card any way that fits its needs.

Alla Gerber, the founder and head of the Russian Research and Educational Holocaust Center, once told me that antisemitism in Russia is like a train resting in the sidings: It's not in active service today, but when there's the need to resort to it, the train can accelerate very quickly indeed.



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

### A Great Principle of the Torah

**Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects**

Regarding the verse, "You shall love your fellow like yourself," (19:18) Rabbi Akiva famously commented: "*Zeh Klal Gadol Ba'Torah* – This is a great principle of the Torah." The commentaries wonder what about this mitzvah warrants the title as a "great principle of the Torah" above other mitzvos. Furthermore, Rabbi Akiva appears to contradict himself. In Parshas Behar (Vayikra 25:36) the Torah states, "Your brother shall live with you." From this verse, Rabbi Akiva derives (Bava Metziah 62a) that if two people are in a desert and there is only enough water for one of them to survive, the owner of the water should keep it, rendering, "Your brother shall live *with you* – your life comes before that of your friend's." How can this be reconciled with the commandment to love your fellow like yourself?

The Chasam Sofer suggests that Rabbi Akiva's comment, "*Zeh Klal Gadol Ba'Torah*," actually comes to resolve the apparent contradiction. When it comes to life in this world, one's own life comes first. Therefore, in certain situations, the commandment "You shall love your fellow like yourself" just cannot be realized. When it comes to life in the next world, however, there is no rule that one's own life comes first. When it comes to elevating another's spiritual state and providing a greater experience in the eternal world, one is required to sacrifice their own. "*Zeh Klal Gadol Ba'Torah*" therefore means: "this is a great principle that applies to Torah." Although a person might feel that they can reach greater spiritual heights by investing time for their own Torah study, one is still required to take time to teach others Torah because of the commandment, "You shall love your fellow like yourself."

The Chasam Sofer admonishes us that, in truth, we will not be sacrificing any of our eternal life by adhering to this principle. On the contrary. If we put others above ourselves when it comes to Torah study, we will not be sacrificing anything because the mitzvah of teaching others Torah will be as great a merit as if we had studied on our own.

We often think of the mitzvah to love our fellow only in the physical sense, such as giving charity, visiting the sick, or lending a helping hand. In truth, one of the greatest kindnesses we could do for another is to teach them Torah, thus elevating them spiritually. If one is not able to teach Torah, he or she can still impact others by acting as a role model and showing others the importance of making time to study Torah or by recommending a Torah class. May we each merit to love our fellow like ourselves – the great principle that applies to Torah!

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**Every man, your mother and father you shall revere... (19, 3)**

A person is not permitted to call his parent by their name, not while the parent is alive, nor when the parent has left this world. (Yoreh Deah 240)

Yaakov wanted to reveal to his children what would occur at the end of days, and the Shechina left him. Yaakov said, "Perhaps I have a child that is unworthy, as my father had Esav and my grandfather had Yishmael." So Yaakov's children responded, "Shema Yisrael / Hear Yisrael... (referring to their father – Rashi) just as you only have one G-d in your heart, so too we only have one G-d in our hearts." (Pesachim 56a)

How could the shevatim refer to their father by name, calling him Yisrael?

### Parsha Riddle

**What was Nechemia's other name?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

**Last week's riddle:**

**On which day of the week are people the weakest?**

**Answer: Sunday (Taanis 27b)**

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Kedoshim* (19:18), the Torah commands: "You shall not take revenge and you shall not bear a grudge." *Chazal* explain:

**What is revenge and what is bearing a grudge?** **Revenge** is illustrated by the following example: **One said to his fellow: Lend me your sickle, and he said: No. The next day he, the one who had refused to lend the sickle, said to the other person: Lend me your ax. If he said to him: I will not lend to you, just as you did not lend to me, that is revenge.**

**And what is bearing a grudge? If one said to his fellow: Lend me your ax, and he said: No, and the next day he, the one who had refused to lend the ax, said to the other man: Lend me your robe; if the first one said to him: Here it is, as I am not like you, who would not lend to me, that is bearing a grudge.** (*Yoma* 23a, citing *Toras Kohanim* 4:10)

From these examples, the Talmud infers that the prohibitions of taking revenge and bearing grudges are limited to where the initial offense was monetary, but they do not apply to one who was personally insulted. Many authorities accept this distinction as normative (e.g., *Sha'arei Teshuvah* 3:38), although others seemingly do not, and maintain that the prohibition applies regardless (Rambam and *Sefer ha-Chinuch*, as understood by the Chofetz Chaim in *Hilchos Lashon Hara*, *Pesichah*, *Lavin* 8-9, *Be'er Mayim Chaim*).

Even the stringent view, however, concedes that the Torah does not prohibit retaliation in response to an insult in the heat of the moment. In such a context, while it is certainly a *mitzvah* and a matter of good character traits to refrain from retaliation, this is impossible for ordinary individuals, and only feasible for someone "whom Hashem has blessed with holy character traits." Subsequently, however, when one's anger has cooled, the Torah prohibits taking revenge or even bearing a grudge in one's heart, "but with the passage of a brief period of time after [the offense], one must forget the matter from his heart." (*Be'er Mayim Chaim*)

(The wording "from his heart" alludes to the Chofetz Chaim's earlier ruling that bearing a grudge in one's heart is forbidden even in the absence of any verbal expression.)

PRESENTED BY

**RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH**

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I am for the fruit.
2. I was for Moshe's lips.
3. I am for a baby boy.
4. I am for the heart.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. I am right before Shabbos.
2. I flip from honor.
3. I am a nature switch.
4. Don't sit in their place.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 The two goats for Yom Kippur** (We are double, Totally similar, Our end is different, One would make the red white.)

**#2 Ketores** (I cause wealth, I allow entering, I am for smoke, Breath is good for me.)

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