

# Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts ת"ש

January 20 - 21, 2023 - 28 Teves 5783 - Parshas Vaera/Mevorchim Hachodesh  
Light Candles by 4:57 - Havdalah 5:59

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored by **Joey Franco** -Mortgage Banker - 301-529-5387.

## Mazal Tov

- **Sarah & Matthew Karlin** on the birth of a son. Mazal Tov to the big brothers, Yakov Gedaliah, Akiva, Meir, Betzalel and Eliezer, the grandparents, **Melanie & Sandy Karlin** and Marjorie & Leo Sushner, the great-grandparents, **Dolores & Len Schwartz** and Merv Levin and to all of the aunts, uncles and cousins.

## Condolences

- The family of **Noah Roitman** on his passing. Shiva is being observed at 1007 South Belgrade Road until Monday morning. Visitors are welcome outdoors on Sunday from 10:00 AM to 12 Noon. A Siyum Mishnayos has been organized for the Shloshim, February 14, 23 Shevat. Sign up at: <https://www.lzechernishmas.com/signup.php?id=11081>

## Shabbos Schedule

*Minyan locations are B = Belonofsky Sanctuary, S = Social Hall, LBM = Large Beis Medrash, SBM = Small Beis Medrash, H = The House*

### Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 4:57
- Mincha: 5:00 (B), 4:55 (Sephardi, LBM)

### Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi, LBM, 9:15 (Teen, H)
- Mincha: 2:30 (B), 4:55 (B), 4:50 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends: 5:59

### Divrei Torah/Shiurim:

- |                                 |                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| • 8:45 Main Minyan              | Rabbi Postelnek        |
| • 9:15 Minyan                   | Rabbi Yehuda Shinsky   |
| • Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur | Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman |
| • Pre-9:15 Minyan Chabura       | Rabbi Yudi Benamou     |
| • Shiur after Mincha            | Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman |

### Kiddush Sponsors:

- The Hashkamah Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by the Hashkamah Minyan Group.
- The Shul Kiddush is sponsored by the Shul Kiddush Group.

## YISE Youth Announcements

**Teen Minyan** - The Teen Minyan, led by Rabbi Moshe Holzer, meets at 9:15 AM every Shabbos in The House next to the Shul. Kiddush is served after Davening.

**Shabbos Groups** this Shabbos, January 21, 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 to the Yeshiva. For more information, contact Debbie Katz at [dkatz@yise.org](mailto:dkatz@yise.org)

**Shabbos Group for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls** will meet inside The House promptly at 10:00 AM.

**Junior Congregation** for boys in grades 4 - 6 with Jay Marcus. Meet in the Lower Lobby at 9:55 and walk to the Yeshiva at 10:00.

**Dor L'Dor** - The Family Chevrusah-style Learning in a fun environment! The next session will take place Motzei Shabbos, January 28, 7:30 PM in the Social Hall. Please email [mshimoff@yise.org](mailto:mshimoff@yise.org) if you would like to sponsor. *See flyer for details.*

## Health Policy

- People experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or other transmissible illnesses should not attend prayer, learning, social or other events at the Shul.
- If you have tested positive for COVID-19, please follow CDC guidelines before returning to Shul.

## YISE Programs and Listings

**Ruach Minyan** - This Friday, January 20. Mincha at 5:00 PM in the Belonofsky Sanctuary, followed by Kabbalas Shabbos and Maariv in the Social Hall. IY"Y the Baal Tefila will be Jay Marcus! During part of Maariv there will be a special story-telling program for children, led by Mrs. Koss. Bring your family and invite your friends. It's going to be Gevaldie! For questions, contact Adam Bashein at 301-943-4370 or [adambashein@gmail.com](mailto:adambashein@gmail.com)

**Pre-9:15 Minyan Chabura** - A weekly Chabura on the Parsha, now learning the Kedushas Levi. Delve into the deeper dimensions of the Parsha and Holidays by learning the Kedushas Levi's weekly insights. Begins at 8:55 AM Shabbos morning. This week's Shiur will be led by Rabbi Yudi Benamou.

**Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur** - Following the Hashkamah Minyan, learning Maseches Sanhedrin, in the Small Beis Medrash. This week's Shiur will be led by Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman.

**Tackling Temptation & Pursuing Holiness:** A two-part series for men given by Rabbi Postelnek. Monday nights, January 23 and 30, at 8:30 PM, at the home of Lucas & Malya Druskin, 117 Claybrook Drive. *See flyer for details.*

**An Evening of Pizza and Friends:** Join YISE Young Professionals to make your own pizza at Ben Yehuda Pizza on Sunday, January 29, 8:00 PM. \$17 person/\$30 couple. For more information go to [www.yise.org/pizza](http://www.yise.org/pizza) *See flyer for details.*

**Infant & Child CPR, AED, and Choking Class** - Sunday, January 29, at 12 Noon at YISE. This is a 2-hour, NON-certification class, and will be administered by a trainer from Tikkun Health Education. It will be Infant & Child CPR only, with no adult CPR component. The cost is \$10 per person. Pay in advance by PayPal to [leah@cypess.com](mailto:leah@cypess.com) or at the class in cash. Sign up in advance by emailing [LCypess@gmail.com](mailto:LCypess@gmail.com) Please note that space is limited.

**Save the Date! GWCK Shabbos of Inspiration** at YISE, Shabbos Parshas Yisro, February 10 - 11. Inspiring Tefillos and Zemirots by special guest Simcha Leiner. Delicious Friday night dinner followed by a Ruach-filled Oneg Shabbos. Divrei Torah and lectures presented by GWCK scholars. To be a sponsor or for more info, please contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps, [hshaps@gwckollel.org](mailto:hshaps@gwckollel.org) *See flyer for details.*

**Save the Date for the 2023 YISE Gala Banquet** - Sunday, February 26. Honoring Stuart & Judy Rosenthal, Josh & Sara Katz, and the 2023 high school graduating seniors who have served our congregation's youth. RSVP at [www.yise.org/banquet](http://www.yise.org/banquet) *See flyer for details.*

**Ask the Rabbi** - Come join our virtual, interactive monthly program featuring different Halachic topics! This month's topic: Tovelung and Kashering utensils, will take place on Tuesday, January 31, 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM on **Zoom A**. The first 45 minutes is for Shailos submitted in advance and the last 15 minutes is for Q&A. Send in your questions to: [AskTheRabbi@yise.org](mailto:AskTheRabbi@yise.org) by Sunday, January 29. For more info. 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, contact the YISE office. *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 and in memory of parents, Avraham Ben Tzvi HaLevi & Ada Bas Menachem Aryeh, Z"l, and Rabbi Hillel & Mrs. Myrna Klavan, Z"l.

### Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur

- **David Jaray** in honor of Rabbi Grossman and all those who attend his Shiur.

## 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

YISE continues to offer a number of different in-person and virtual 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.

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
  - Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur, Shabbos 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.

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

## YISE Programs and Listings (continued)

### **Come Join Rabbi Koss's Monthly Jewish History class on Zoom!**

Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and the YISE Cheshed Committee. Rabbi Koss will be speaking on a topic in Jewish history, Monday, February 6 from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM on **Zoom A**. For more information, contact Miriam Friedman at [mfriedman2@yahoo.com](mailto:mfriedman2@yahoo.com)

**Kiddush Volunteers Needed** from ALL Minyanim to help set up and clean up for Kiddushes on Shabbos morning. Times vary. Let us know when you are available. Contact Barbara Price at 301-332-8181.

**Monthly Shalosh Seudos** - First Shabbos of each month. To sponsor, contact Simi Franco at 301-593-4465, ext. 103, or [office@yise.org](mailto:office@yise.org)  
Volunteers are needed to set up and clean up. Contact Ethan Cohen at [ecohen@yise.org](mailto:ecohen@yise.org) to be part of the rotation.

**Online YISE Cholim List** - Go to <https://wp.yise.org/cholim> to add a name to the list. The list is used at the 8:45 Minyan on Monday, Thursday, and Shabbos. For questions about Mi Sheberach guidelines, contact Rabbi Rosenbaum. For other questions, contact Seth Katz at [sethkatz@yise.org](mailto:sethkatz@yise.org)  
**Helping Hands Across Kemp Mill**, a part of YISE's Cheshed Committee, provides assistance to families undergoing medical crises. For information, please contact: Melanie Karlin, 301-681-4740, [mkarlin@gmail.com](mailto:mkarlin@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 <https://audio.yise.org>

## Weekday Shiurim

Options for in-person and 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**, *will not meet on Tuesday, January 24.*
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday, 7:30 PM, **Zoom A**, *will resume on Monday, January 23.*
  - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), Sundays at 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**, *will resume on Sunday, January 29.*
  - **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:
    - 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**, *will resume on Sunday, February 5.*
  - **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.
      - Wednesdays: Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman - Reading Responsa - **Zoom E**.
      - Thursdays: Rabbi Avraham Sussman - Yesodei Hatorah Gemara Skills Building - **Zoom F**.
    - For Women:
      - Mondays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Parsha Journeys - **Zoom D**.
  - **SCP (Semichas Chaver Program)** - Tuesdays at 8:45 PM at YISE. Join the fastest growing Halacha learning program in the world! Register online at <https://thegreaterwashingtoncommunitykollel.com/scp>
  - **Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's** Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, Sunday through Friday, 6:35 AM - 7:22 AM, in the Franco Beit Midrash.
  - **Chavrusa Learning** - Monday nights in the Social Hall, 9:00 PM - 10:00 PM. For more information, contact Rabbi Levy at 240-423-8810.
  - **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiurim for men & women, Mondays at 8:45 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", in-person in the Small Beis Medrash and on **Zoom G**.
  - **Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's** Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning Maseches Bava Metzia, Daf 3a. Wednesday evenings at 8:00 PM on **Zoom H**.
- Connection Details:** Go to <https://zoom.us/join/> and enter the meeting ID, or call 301-715-8592 or 929-205-6099 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: 833 3477 1595, password RabbiHyatt  
Zoom D: ID: 601 853 4021, passcode Winter (phone 667362)  
Zoom E: ID: 746 455 2195, password Learn  
Zoom F: ID: 803 356 4156, password Learn  
Zoom G: ID: 713 7408 5130, password 045079  
Zoom H: ID: 849 3898 4989, passcode 161699

## Community Programs & Listings

**Condolences** to Ronnie Baras on the passing of his mother, former member **Marion Baras**. Shiva is being observed at 506 Hillsboro Drive through Sunday morning. Shacharis Sunday at 8:00 AM. The family requests that all visitors wear masks. A Siyum Tanach has been organized for the first Yahrzeit, January 1, 2024, Tevet 20, 5784. Sign up at: <http://hadranalach.com/2626>

**Kidney Donation Needed** - Mr. Gerry Segelman, father of Micah Segelman, is in need of a kidney transplant. If you would consider being a kidney donor, please contact Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz at Renewal for more information at [csteinmetz@renewal.org](mailto:csteinmetz@renewal.org) or 718-431-9831 ext 209.

**The Capital Closet** will be open to this community this Sunday, January 22, from 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM for the final time in its current location. We will be reopening in February in our new location. Come peruse our beautiful, curated selection of clothing for women, men, and children, as well as Torah School uniforms! Our address is 1910 University Blvd, West in Silver Spring. We're in the brick house at the back of the parking lot. There is no charge for items in The Capital Closet, but donations to Yad Yehuda are always appreciated. We are unable to accept clothing donations at this time. For more information contact: [ncarmel@yadyehuda.org](mailto:ncarmel@yadyehuda.org)

**Support Yad Yehuda** - The need for assistance is great right now and Yad Yehuda needs your help to meet its commitments to our friends and neighbors in need. Please count the money in your Tzedakah box and donate that amount, or any amount, online at [www.yadyehuda.org/donate](http://www.yadyehuda.org/donate) or by check: Yad Yehuda, 812 Hyde Court, Silver Spring, MD 20902. Your tax-deductible contribution is deeply appreciated.

**Rays of Wisdom - Life Lessons From Pirkei Avos** - Greater Washington Community Kollel invites women of the community to a weekday morning text-based Chaburah led by Mrs. Channah Cohen. Mondays at 9:30 AM in Kemp Mill. First Chaburah on January 23 at the home of Mrs. Aviva Werner, 815 Lambertson Drive. To be added to a list for information and weekly location, email [channahandjeff@gmail.com](mailto:channahandjeff@gmail.com) or call 773-219-5397.

**Siyum in Memory of Art Sapper** - Go to <https://hadranalach.com/2568> to join a Siyum Mishnayos planned for the first Yahrzeit of Art Sapper on November 27, Kislev 14, 5784.

**Kemp Mill Toastmasters** - Wednesday, January 25, 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 [president@kempmilltoastmasters.com](mailto:president@kempmilltoastmasters.com) for more info. Zoom meeting ID: 986 546 841, password: 3671

**Alshich on the Parsha with Rabbi Levy** - Shabbat afternoon between Mincha and Maariv in the Franco Beit Midrash.

**Zoom Shiurim with Rabbi Levy** - Monday through Friday on Zoom, Meeting ID: 636 563 5989. Alshich - 9:20 AM - 10:15 AM. Gemara Ribit 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM. Hilchot Lashon Hara 12:45 PM - 1:45 PM.

**In G-d We Trust** - Exploring the relationship and balance between Relying on G-d/Bitachon & Human Endeavor/Hishtadlus, based on the teachings of 11<sup>th</sup> century scholar, Rabbeinu Bachya's Treatise on Trust - Shaar Habitachon. Wednesdays, 12:15 PM - 1:00 PM on Zoom, Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps. To register, visit <https://linksgw.org/classes>

**YGW Kollel Zichron Amram Machshava** - Probing Jewish Thought Through the Works of Rav Yitzchak Hutner, ZT"L, with Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold, Rosh Kollel, Sundays at 8:00 PM on Zoom, Meeting ID: 825 0731 6850, Passcode: 1216613. For more information, contact Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blate at 404-273-3392.

**Dirshu** - Please join Dirshu, currently learning Bava Metzia. Shiur options at YGW: Monday - Friday, 5:45 AM (R. Reingold) or Monday - Thursday, 9:00 PM - 10:00 PM (R. Cortell/R. Werner), about 2.5 Daf covered each week.

**TGN Program: Siddur Class - In-Depth Analysis of the Siddur** with Mrs. Esther Dziadek, Wednesday mornings, 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM, on **Zoom B**. For more information call 301-732-1773 or email [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 info.

**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. Go to <https://getizun.org> or email us at [barbara@getizun.org](mailto:barbara@getizun.org)

**Daf Yomi Shiur** currently meets online weekdays 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. Shabbos in-person, 7:30 AM in the YISE Social Hall.

**Daily Halacha Program from Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold** - Receive one every day in your inbox. Visit [dvarhalacha.com](http://dvarhalacha.com) and click "Sign Up."

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

The Week Ahead		Sunday January 22	Monday, January 23 Rosh Chodesh	Tuesday January 24	Wednesday January 25	Thursday January 26	Friday January 27
Shacharis	Ashkenazi (S, B, B)	6:30, 7:30, 8:45	6:15, 6:35, 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 (LBM)	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30
Mincha / Maariv	Ashkenazi (B)	5:05	5:05 / 7:30	5:05 / 7:30	5:05 / 7:30	5:05 / 7:30	See Shabbos schedule
	Sephardi (LBM)	5:00	5:00	5:00	5:00	5:00	
<b>Halachic Times:</b> Latest Alos Hashachar 5:59 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 6:27 AM, Latest Netz: 7:23 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:49 AM, Earliest Mincha: 12:52 PM, Earliest Shkia: 5:17 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim 6:07 PM							

### Next Shabbos

January 27 - 28, 2023 - 6 Shevat 5783

Parshas Bo

#### Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 5:05
- Mincha: 5:05 (B), 5:00 (Sephardi, LBM)

#### Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi, LBM), 9:15 (Teen, H)
- Mincha: 2:30 (B), 5:00 (B), 4:55 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 6:07

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, January 25, 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 Email: [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 - 1:00 PM

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum

Yale Ginsburg - President

Rabbi Yosef Postelnek - Asst. Rabbi

Simi Franco - Office Manager



# New Tackling Temptation & Pursuing Holiness Series

BY RABBI POSTELNEK

**FOR MEN**

AT THE HOME OF  
LUCAS AND MALYA DRUSKIN  
117 CLAYBROOK DRIVE

MONDAY NIGHT  
**JAN. 23**  
8:30 PM

MONDAY NIGHT  
**JAN. 30**  
8:30 PM

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PRACTICAL  
LESSONS & ADVICE  
LEARNED FROM  
YOSEF HATZADIK  
DURING THE WEEKS  
OF SHOAVIM

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**Finding Enjoyment  
in Avodas Hashem**

**Facing Challenges  
& Creating Healthy  
Perspectives**

Join YISE Young Professionals for

an evening of

# Pizza

and friends

Location: Ben Yehuda Pizza

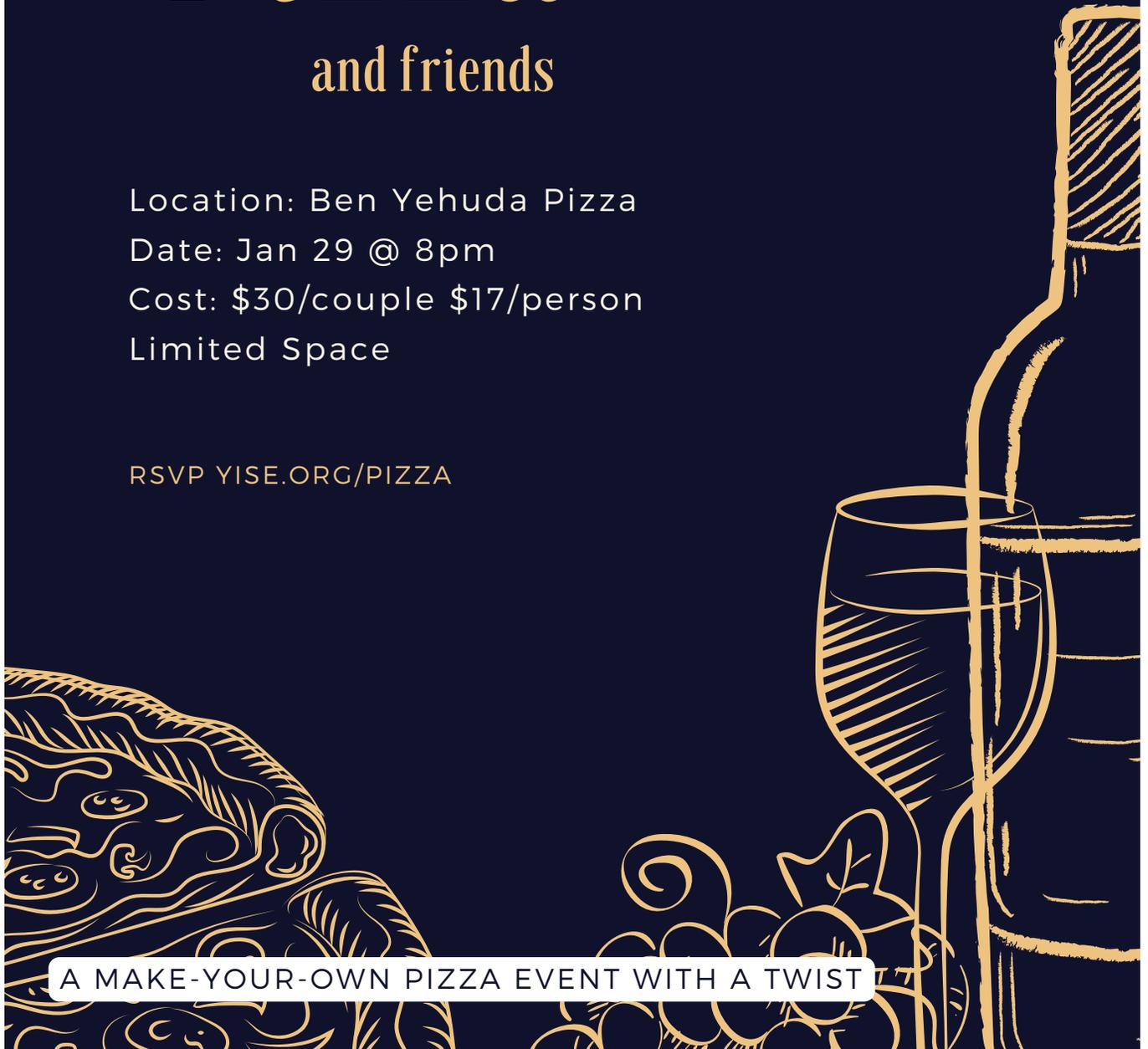
Date: Jan 29 @ 8pm

Cost: \$30/couple \$17/person

Limited Space

RSVP [YISE.ORG/PIZZA](http://YISE.ORG/PIZZA)

A MAKE-YOUR-OWN PIZZA EVENT WITH A TWIST



YISE YOUTH PRESENTS

# Door L'Dor

**FAMILY  
LEARNING  
2022-23**

**SATURDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2022  
7:00 PM**

**SATURDAY 3 DECEMBER 2022  
7:00 PM**

**SATURDAY 10 DECEMBER 2022  
7:00 PM**

**SATURDAY 31 DECEMBER 2022  
7:00 PM**

**SATURDAY 14 JANUARY 2023  
7:15 PM**

**SATURDAY 28 JANUARY 2023  
7:30 PM**

**SATURDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2023  
7:45 PM**

**SATURDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2023  
8:00 PM**

**SATURDAY 11 MARCH 2023  
8:00 PM**



Please email [mshimoff@yise.org](mailto:mshimoff@yise.org)  
if you would like to sponsor

**SAVE  
THE  
DATE!**

**GREATER WASHINGTON COMMUNITY KOLLEL**



# Shabbos of Inspiration

at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah  
Shabbos Parshas Yisro, Feb. 10-11



*Sponsorship  
Opportunities  
Available*

\$5,000.....Platinum  
\$1,000..Shabbaton  
\$500.....Tefillah  
\$180....Seudah  
\$100.....Gold

**Inspiring tefillos (Friday  
Night & Shabbos Day)  
and zemiros by special guest  
baal tefillah and singer**

**SIMCHA  
LEINER**



**Delicious  
and elegant  
FRIDAY NIGHT  
FAMILY DINNER  
followed by a  
RUACH-FILLED  
ONEG SHABBOS**

**Dinner reservations  
opening soon.**

**Throughout  
Shabbos:**

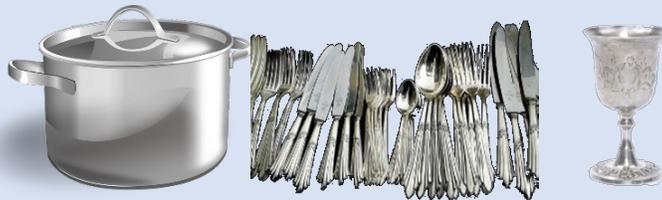
**Inspiring and thought provoking  
DIVREI TORAH and LECTURES presented by  
GREATER WASHINGTON COMMUNITY KOLLEL SCHOLARS**

For more information, please contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps, [hshaps@gwckollel.org](mailto:hshaps@gwckollel.org), 347-869-9361

# ASK the RABBI

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

## Topic: *Toveling and Kashering / Immersing and Purging Utensils*



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

- |  |
|--|
| ▪ Can I Tovel dishes for someone else?                               |
| ▪ How should I handle an electric appliance with regard to Toveling? |
| ▪ Can I Kasher a china plate that hasn't been used in 10 years?      |
| ▪ How do I Kasher a very large pot?                                  |

*Send in your questions about Chanukah to Toveling and Kashering / Immersing and Purging Utensils to: [AskTheRabbi@yise.org](mailto:AskTheRabbi@yise.org) by Sunday, January 29.*

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# Likutei Divrei Torah

## Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah via the Internet

Sponsored by Naomi Baum and Saul Newman  
in commemoration of the yahrzeits of Saul's parents,  
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Volume 29, Issue 14

Shabbat Parashat Vaera

5783 - B"H

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

**The Weighing of the Heart:** In this week's parsha, before even the first plague has struck Egypt, God tells Moses: "I will harden Pharaoh's heart and multiply My miraculous signs and wonders in Egypt." The hardening of Pharaoh's heart is referred to no less than twenty times in the course of the story of the Exodus. Sometimes it is Pharaoh who is said to harden his heart. At other times, God is said to have done so. The Torah uses three different verbs in this context: ch-z-k, to strengthen, k-sh-h, to harden, and k-b-d, to make heavy.

Throughout the ages, the commentators have been concerned with one problem. If God hardened Pharaoh's heart, how could he have been to blame for not letting the Israelites go? He had no choice in the matter. It was God's doing, not his. That he and his people should be punished seems to flout the fundamental principle of justice, that we are guilty only for what we have freely chosen to do.

However, the commentators noted that for the first five plagues, Pharaoh is said to harden his own heart. The obstinacy, the refusal, the intransigence are his. Only with the sixth plague is God said to have done so. This led to several explanations.

Rashi says that the hardening of Pharaoh's heart in the last five plagues was a punishment for the first five, when it was Pharaoh's own obstinacy that led him to refuse to let the people go. Maimonides interprets God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart as meaning that "repentance was withheld from him, and the liberty to turn from his wickedness was not accorded to him." Albo and Sforno offer the opposite interpretation. God hardened Pharaoh's heart precisely to restore his free will. After the succession of plagues that had devastated the land, Pharaoh was under overwhelming pressure to let the Israelites go. Had he done so, it would not have been out of free choice, but rather under force majeure. God therefore strengthened Pharaoh's heart so that even after the first five plagues he was genuinely free to say Yes or No.

It may be that all three are right and are simply responding to the different verbs. K-sh-h, "hardening," supports Rashi's reading. Pharaoh was hard on the Israelites, so God was hard on him. K-b-d, "making heavy," supports Maimonides. Pharaoh lacked the energy, the strength, to repent. Ch-z-k, "to strengthen," supports Albo and Sforno. The text allows for all three possibilities.

However, part of the truth may lie in a completely different direction. The Egyptians – Pharaohs especially – were preoccupied by death. Their funerary practices were astonishingly elaborate and were meant to prepare the person for life after death. The tombs of the Pharaohs were among their most lavish creations. Tutankhamun's, discovered in 1922, is a dazzling example. One of the greatest literary works of ancient Egypt was *The Book of the Dead*.

The Torah notes the attention the Egyptians gave to death. At the end of Bereishit, we read of how the Egyptians accompanied Joseph and his family in the funeral procession to bury Jacob. The Canaanites witnessed this and said, "The Egyptians are holding a solemn ceremony of mourning." They named the place, Abel Mizraim. Note: they called it "the place of Egyptian mourning," not Israelite mourning, despite the fact that it was for Jacob, a non-Egyptian.

Then we read of how Joseph himself was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt. In the Torah, only Joseph, and Jacob at Joseph's request, are embalmed. So we have already been forewarned about the significance of death to the Egyptian mind.

However, there is one specific aspect of Egyptian belief that opens up an entirely new perspective on the references to Pharaoh's heart. According to Egyptian myth, the deceased underwent a trial to establish their worthiness or otherwise to enjoy life after death in Aaru, the Field of Reeds, where souls live on in pleasure for eternity. They believed that the soul resides in the heart, and the trial consisted of the ceremony of *The Weighing of the Heart*. Other organs were removed after death, but the heart was left because it was needed for the trial.

On one side of the scales was a feather. On the other, was placed the heart. If the heart was as light as the feather, the dead could continue to Aaru, but if it was heavier, it was devoured by the goddess Ammit (a combination of lion, hippopotamus and crocodile), and its owner was condemned to live in Duat, the underworld. An illustration, on papyrus, in *The Book of the Dead* shows the ceremony, undertaken in the Hall of Two Truths, overseen by Anubis, the Egyptian God of the dead.

It follows that the root k-v-d, "to make heavy," would have had a highly specific meaning for the Egyptians of that time. It would imply that Pharaoh's heart had become heavier than a feather. He would fail the heart weighing ceremony and therefore be denied what was most important to him – the prospect of joining the gods in the afterlife.

No one would have been in any doubt as to why this was so. The feather represented Ma'at, the central Egyptian value that included the concepts of truth, balance, order, harmony, justice, morality, and law. Not only was this fundamental to Egyptian culture. It was the task of the Pharaoh to ensure that it prevailed. This had been an Egyptian principle since a thousand years before the Exodus, found in Pyramid texts dating from the third millennium BCE. Ma'at meant cosmic order. Its absence invited chaos. A Pharaoh whose heart had become heavier than the Ma'at feather was not only endangering his own afterlife, but threatening the entire people over whom he ruled with turmoil and disarray.

One of the things the deceased were supposed to do as part of the trial was to make a series of negative confessions, 42 in all, declaring themselves innocent of the kind of sin that would exclude them from paradise. These are some of them: I have not done injury to men. I have not oppressed those beneath me. I have not murdered. I have not commanded murder. I have not caused suffering to men.

If the "heavying" of Pharaoh's heart is an allusion to the *Weighing of the Heart* ceremony, it allows us to read the story in a completely new way.

First, it suggests that it is directed to Egyptians as well as Israelites; to humanity as a whole. The Torah tells us three times that the purpose of the signs and wonders was "so that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord". This is the core of monotheism. It is not that the Israelites have their God, and the Egyptians their pantheon, but rather that there is one sovereign power in the universe.

That is the point of at least three of the plagues: the first, directed against Hapfi, the god of the Nile; the

second, frogs, directed against Heqet, the Egyptian goddess of fertility and childbirth, represented in the form of a frog; and the ninth, the plague of darkness, directed against Ra, the sun god. The message of these plagues would have been clear to the Egyptians: there is a power greater than those they have worshipped until now. The God of Israel is the God of the world and of all humanity.

The religion of Israel is not intended to be the religion of all humanity. Nowhere in the narrative does God imply that He wants the Egyptians to adopt Israelite religious practices. The point is quite different. Religion is particular. Morality is universal. If the story of the "heavying" of Pharaoh's heart does allude to the *Book of the Dead*, then the story of the Exodus is not simply a partisan account from an Israelite point of view. It is telling us that certain things are wrong, whoever does them and whoever they are done against. They are wrong by Egyptian standards too. That was true of Pharaoh's decision to kill all male Israelite children. That was an unforgivable sin against Ma'at.

Justice is universal. That is the point made plainly by the Torah's three stories of Moses' early life. He sees an Egyptian hitting an Israelite and intervenes. He sees Israelites hitting one another and intervenes. He sees Gentile shepherds behaving roughly to Jethro's daughters and intervenes. The first was a case of non-Israelite against Israelite, the second was Israelite against Israelite, the third was non-Israelite against non-Israelite. This is the simplest way of telling us that Moses' sense of justice was impartial and universal.

Finally, and most deeply, the Torah is hinting at a self-contradiction at the heart of the Egyptian concept of Ma'at. The most generous interpretation of Pharaoh's refusal to let the people go is that he was charged with maintaining order in the Empire. A successful minority like the Israelites could be seen as a threat to such order. If they stayed and thrived, they might take over the country as the Hyksos had done several centuries earlier. If they were allowed to leave, other enslaved groups might be tempted to do likewise. Emigration is a bad sign when the place people are trying to leave is a superpower. That is why, for many years, the Soviet Union forbade Jews to leave the country.

Pharaoh, in his repeated refusal to let the people go, doubtless justified his decision in each case on the grounds that he was securing Ma'at, order. Meanwhile however, with each plague the country was reduced to ever greater chaos. That is because oppressing people, which is what Pharaoh was doing, was a fundamental offence against Ma'at.

On this reading, the whole issue of Pharaoh hardening his heart was not so much psychological as political. In his position as semi-divine head of state of an empire that practised forced labour on a massive scale, Pharaoh could not let the Israelites go free without creating the risk that other groups would also challenge the Corvée, the unpaid, conscripted semi-slave labour that was part of Egyptian society from the building of the pyramids and abolished only in 1882.

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For the first five plagues, Pharaoh could tell himself that he was enduring minor inconvenience to protect a major principle. But as the plagues became more serious, reducing Egypt to chaos, Pharaoh's room for manoeuvre grew ever less. Having five times said "No" to the Israelites, he could not now back down without making himself look ridiculous, forfeiting his authority and damaging his standing. Pharaoh was a prisoner of his own system, held captive by his own decisions.

Seeking to protect order, he created chaos. That is because the order he was seeking to protect was built on a foundation of injustice: the enslavement of the many for the benefit of the few. The more he tried to defend it, the heavier his heart grew.

I believe that justice is universal. The Exodus story of how the supreme Power entered history to liberate the supremely powerless, is not just for Jews. It is the world's greatest metanarrative of hope.

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

"And I will bring you into the land that I promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you as a morasha [heritage]: I am the LORD."

It is only natural for parents to desire to leave their children and grandchildren with a legacy. For those fortunate enough to be able to do so, this wish expresses itself in the form of an inheritance. But for most people, this is simply not realistic. How might they transmit a legacy to the next generation? I believe that the answer can be found in an important distinction in the Torah between the words *yerusha* (inheritance) and *morasha* (heritage).

We are all more familiar with the concept of *yerusha*, used throughout the Torah to describe the passing down of material possessions from parents to children. Far less common is the concept of *morasha*, mentioned in the Torah in reference to only two things: Torah ["Moses prescribed the Torah to us, an eternal heritage (*morasha*) for the congregation of Jacob"] and Land of Israel (the verse cited above at the outset).

The different contexts in which these words appear is quite revealing about the different kinds of relationships between parents and children, and different priorities handed down from generation to generation, that these bequests engender. I would like to explore three different examples in which the differences between *yerusha* and *morasha* will clarify the significance of each.

The first point of distinction is in the realm of effort. The Jerusalem Talmud speaks of *yerusha* as something that comes easily. When a person dies, leaving a *yerusha*, the heir need not do anything other than receive the gift. *Morasha*, however, requires much more.

The added letter *mem* in *morasha*, suggests the Jerusalem Talmud, is a grammatical sign of intensity, the *pi'el* form in Hebrew grammar. In order for an individual to come into possession of a *morasha*, they must work for it.

While an inheritance is what you receive from the previous generation—without your particular input—a heritage requires your active involvement and participation. A *yerusha* is a check your father left you; a *morasha* is a business that your parents may have started, but into which you must put much sweat, blood and tears.

This certainly explains why *morasha* is used only with regard to Torah and the Land of Israel. Our sages remark that there are three gifts that God gave the Jewish people that can be acquired only through commitment and suffering: "Torah, the Land of Israel and the World to Come." And we understand very well that neither Torah nor the Land of Israel can be easily acquired.

Pirkei Avot 2:10 specifically teaches, "Prepare yourself to study Torah, for it is not an inheritance for you." All achievement in Torah depends on an

individual's own efforts. A student of Torah must be willing to suffer privation.

Similarly, the Land of Israel cannot be acquired without sacrifice and suffering. One of the tests in the life of Abraham—and the source of the Jewish claim to Jerusalem—is the binding of Isaac on Mount Moriah. The message conveyed by the Torah is that we can only acquire our Holy Land if we are willing to place the lives of our children on the line. Every parent in Israel who sends his/her child to the army understands this message very well. A heritage comes hard, not easily, and our national heritage is Torah and Israel.

The second distinction between the terms is not how the gift is acquired, but rather how it may be dispersed. Even the largest amount of money inherited (*yerusha*) can be squandered or legitimately lost. In contrast, a *morasha* must be given over intact to the next generation. *Morasha* literally means "to hand over to someone else." Silver is an inheritance, and can be used in whatever way the heir desires; silver Shabbat candlesticks are a heritage, meant to be passed down from parent to child and used from generation to generation.

Finally, in the case of an inheritance, one must have the object of *yerusha* in one's possession. This need not be the case with regard to a *morasha*. Jewish parents bequeathed the ideals of Torah and the Land of Israel to their children for countless generations, even while living in exile far from the Promised Land, and even when poverty and oppression made it near impossible for them to become Torah scholars. Values can be passed down regardless of one's physical or material station in life.

For this reason, an inheritance, regardless of its size, pales in comparison to a heritage. We all want to be able to bequeath a *yerusha* to our children and grandchildren, and we should do what we can to make that possible. Nevertheless, the most important legacy that we can leave them is a *morasha*, the eternal heritage, of Torah and the Land of Israel.

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

**Hopeless:** I remember the conversation. It was a discussion among a group of assorted friends. One or two were scholars. The others were not scholars but were familiar with those Jewish texts frequently read in the synagogue. The discussion revolved around the question, "What is the saddest verse in the entire Bible?" The opening candidate for the saddest verse was the passage in the weekly portion of *Vayetzei*, which reads, "The Lord saw that Leah was unloved." But that phrase was soon rejected in favor of the second half of that same verse, "but Rachel was barren." No question about it. Both the lack of love and infertility are very sad human conditions.

Others quoted various verses from the curses in the weekly portions of *Bechukotai* and *Ki Tavo*. There is no paucity of horribly sad verses in those two parshiyot. Here are just a few: "I will set my face against you... your foes shall dominate you;" "I will heap your carcasses upon your lifeless fetishes;" "You shall eat your own issue, the flesh of your sons and daughters." For these phrases, the adjectives "frightening" or "terrible" seem more appropriate than "sad."

For most of the discussion, I remained silent. I had long before concluded which Torah verse was the saddest for me. The verse appears in *Parshat Vaera*. "But they would not listen to Moses because of their crushed spirit and difficult toil." Let's understand the context of this verse. In last week's parsha, we read of the first time Moses delivered the message that the redemption was near. The "people were convinced." They believed. They trusted Moses. They "bowed low in homage." They had hope.

*Vaera* begins after the Jews knew bitter disappointment. Moses had intervened with Pharaoh, but his intervention backfired. Pharaoh reacted by

#### **Likutei Divrei Torah**

increasing the burden he placed upon the Jews. He said, "Let heavier work be laid upon the men; let them not pay attention to deceitful promises." After such disillusionment, the eloquent promises with which this week's parsha begins evoked a very different reaction. Moses' words were met with disbelief, with a despair that is the result of *kotzer ruach*, a crushed spirit, and *avodah kashah*, painfully difficult toil.

For me, hopelessness is the saddest of human emotions, especially when it follows upon the excitement of hopefulness. The moment when hopes are dashed and dreams abandoned is, for me, the saddest moment of all.

Ironically, this saddest of all verses gives us the opportunity to learn important lessons about hope and its opposite, despair. To learn these lessons we must scrutinize these two phrases, *kotzer ruach* and *avodah kashah*, which I have thus far translated as "crushed spirit" and "difficult toil". Our commentators give these phrases different "spins".

Rashi understands *kotzer ruach* to mean "shortness of breath", the result of strenuous physical labor. Can a man who is gasping for air be expected to hope? Of course not. He is so panicked that hope for a better future is totally beyond his capacity.

Whereas Rashi translates *ruach* as "breath," Rabbi Obadiah Sforno, the great Jewish commentator who lived in Italy during its Renaissance, prefers to translate it as "spirit." For him, it is not "shortness of breath" that deprives a person of hope. Rather, it is the "shortness of spirit," the absence of a "spirit of faith," which makes hope so difficult. The Jews lost faith in Moses. He had let them down by failing to provide them with an instant solution to their plight. Thereby they lost their faith in the God of Moses. Without faith, argues Sforno, hope is impossible.

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto understands our verse differently. For him, Pharaoh was the expert par excellence about the processes of despair and discouragement. He knew how to squash hope. He knew why genuine hope is so rare. To keep man from hope, Pharaoh knew, you must keep him so busy with all sorts of tasks and chores that he is too distracted to take the few moments necessary to begin to think of hopeful possibilities.

Without this opportunity—with *kotzer ruach*, "shortness of time to reflect"—hopefulness is out of the question. One would be too busy to hope.

Another insight into the possible meaning of *kotzer ruach* is found in a most unusual source. Rabbi Kalonymos Kalman Shapira recorded these homilies, delivered in the early years of the Warsaw Ghetto, in a little notebook which miraculously survived.

He writes that under conditions of *avodah kashah*, of very difficult toil, one loses the "spirit of life." Rabbi Shapira knew all too well the meaning of difficult toil, enslaved as he and his "congregation" were in that horrible ghetto. And he knew how he and they struggled to do God's will despite their dire straits. He witnessed their attempts to help each other, to maintain faith in God, and to perform whatever ritual *mitzvot* they could. But furthermore, he observed that their tortured souls could not muster the "spirit of life" necessary for religious action. *Kotzer ruach* for him meant the absence of a "spirit of vitality." For him, religious actions performed without enthusiasm were defective.

Like the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto, the Jews of ancient Egypt suffered from *kotzer ruach*. They could not respond to Moses with a "spirit of vitality." No vitality, no life, no hope.

But some of these factors are common today. They relate to our busy lifestyles. There may be little that slaves can do to free themselves for the possibility of hope. But there is much that we can do to at least limit the *avodah kashah* that leads to *kotzer ruach*. Reflect upon it. Where there is time for reflection, there are opportunities for hope. [Excerpted]

R' Azariah Figo z"l (1579-1647; Italy) writes: When we study the incidents of oppression that the Jewish People have been subjected to throughout our history, we find that they fall into four categories: (1) economic; (2) physical; (3) psychological; and (4) religious. In Egypt, they experienced all of these. We read (*Shmot* 1:11), "So they appointed tax collectors over [*Bnei Yisrael*] in order to afflict [them] with their burdens." This indicates that the Egyptians did not need our taxes, nor did they need the cities of Pitom and Ramses that were built as a result. Rather, their sole purpose was to oppress *Bnei Yisrael* economically. Likewise, the Egyptians oppressed *Bnei Yisrael* physically--by enslaving them, psychologically--by lowering them to the status of slaves, and religiously--by turning *Bnei Yisrael* into idolators, as our Sages record.

Corresponding to these four types of oppression, *Hashem* spoke to Moshe of four types of salvation (in our *Parashah*, *Shmot* 6:6-7): "I shall take you out from under the burdens of Egypt; I shall rescue you from their service; I shall redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments; I shall take you to Me for a people . . ." Paralleling these four expressions, we drink four cups of wine at the *Seder*, each one relating to one of the forms of oppression, as follows:

The first cup accompanies *Kiddush*, where we acknowledge that G-d has sanctified us through His *Mitzvot*--the opposite of religious oppression. – *Continued in box inside* –

## Shabbat

"If you restrain your feet because of the *Shabbat*; refrain from accomplishing your own needs on My holy day; if you proclaim the *Shabbat 'Oneg'* / 'A delight,' the holy one, *Hashem*, 'Honored One,' and you honor it by not engaging in your own ways, from seeking your needs or discussing the forbidden--then you shall be granted pleasure with *Hashem*, and I shall mount you astride the heights of the world. I will provide you the heritage of your forefather Yaakov--for the mouth of *Hashem* has spoken." (*Yeshayah* 58:13-14)

R' Eliyahu E. Dessler *shlita* (*Mashgiach Ruchani* of the Ponovezh Yeshiva in Bnei Brak; not to be confused with his cousin and namesake, the *Michtav M'Eliyahu*) writes: The prophet Yeshayah is informing us what our *Shabbat* should "look" like. Of course, one must refrain from performing prohibited *Melachot* / labors on *Shabbat*. However, even if one did no *Melachah* on *Shabbat*, taking care to observe *Halachah*--both Torah laws and Rabbinic laws--to the most minute degree, and even if he made sure to begin *Shabbat* early and end it late, he still has missed one of the main points, says the prophet. Complete *Shabbat* observance requires that one proclaim the *Shabbat 'Oneg'* / "A delight." In other words, it is not enough to refrain from performing *Melachah*. One must also make the *Shabbat* pleasurable.

R' Dessler continues: Surprisingly, perhaps, the pleasure referred to here is physical pleasure--in particular, food and drink. This is stated unambiguously by the commentators on our verse, such as R' David Kimchi z"l ("*Radak*"; 1160-1235; Narbonne, France), and by *Halachic* works, such as the *Mishnah Berurah* (242:1). Surely, writes R' Dessler, *Radak* would have derived greater pleasure from several consecutive hours of Torah study than from food, but that is not what the requirement of *Oneg Shabbat* demands. [To be continued . . .]

(*Sha'arei Ha'zemanim: Shabbat Kodesh* ch.1)

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**“Moshe and Aharon left Pharaoh’s presence. Moshe cried out to Hashem concerning the frogs that He had inflicted upon Pharaoh.” (8:8)**

We know that the subject is “the frogs that He had inflicted upon Pharaoh.” What, then, is the last part of the verse teaching?

R’ Yitzchak Ze’ev Yadler z”l (1843-1917; Yerushalayim) explains: Moshe did not pray for all of the frogs to disappear. Indeed, we read (verse 10), “They piled them up into heaps and heaps, and the land stank.” Moshe merely prayed that the frogs would cease their unusual behavior that was tormenting the Egyptians (see 7:28-29), *i.e.*, he prayed regarding that unusual aspect of the frogs that *Hashem* had inflicted upon Pharaoh.”

(*Tiferet Zion*)

**“And as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear Hashem Elokim.” (9:30)**

R’ Shlomo Eliasof z”l (1841-1926; leading early 20<sup>th</sup> century kabbalist; grandfather of R’ Yosef Shalom Elyashiv z”l) writes: Moshe Rabbeinu’s use of two Names of G-d (“*Hashem Elokim*”) can be explained based on the teaching of the *Arizal* (R’ Yitzchak Luria z”l; Tzefat, *Eretz Yisrael*; 1534-1572) that Pharaoh believed in “*Elokim*,” but denied “*Hashem*” (*i.e.*, Y-K-V-K). Pharaoh recognized the deity of *Bnei Yisrael* as “a” power, but not as “the” sole power, the Creator and Operator of everything. We see this from that fact that, long before our verse, Yosef had said to Pharaoh (*Bereishit* 41:16), “It is *Elokim* Who will respond with Pharaoh’s welfare,” and Pharaoh responded (*ibid* verse 39), “Since *Elokim* has informed you of all this . . .” The pharaohs knew “*Elokim*.” In contrast, when Moshe first came to Pharaoh, the latter said (*Shmot* 5:2), “Who is *Hashem* that I should heed His voice to send out *Yisrael*? I do not know *Hashem*, nor will I send out *Yisrael*!”

R’ Eliasof continues: Whether or not the world recognizes that “*Hashem*” and “*Elokim*” are one and the same--not only “a” power, but “the” power--it is, of course, so. We are commanded to know this, as we read (*Devarim* 4:39), “You shall know this day and take to your heart that *Hashem*, He is the *Elokim*--in the heaven above and on the earth below--there is none other.” We read likewise (*Devarim* 4:35), “You have been shown in order to know that *Hashem*, He is the *Elokim*! There is none beside Him.” That the world ultimately will recognize that *Hashem* and *Elokim* are One is what we refer to when we say (*Zechariah* 14:9, and many times in our daily prayers), “*Hashem* will be King over all the world--on that day *Hashem* will be One and His Name will be One.”

(Quoted in *Niglot Leshem Shevo V’achlamah*)

**“Hashem said to Moshe, ‘Say to Aharon, “Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt . . .”’ (7:19)**

*Rashi* z”l writes: Because the river had protected Moshe when he was cast into it, it was not smitten by him, neither at the plague of blood nor at that of frogs; rather, it was smitten by Aharon.” [Until here from *Rashi*]

The *Gemara* (*Bava Kamma* 92b) teaches: “If you drink from a well, do not throw a stone into it.” R’ Bezalel Ashkenazi z”l (1520-1594; Chief Rabbi of Egypt) quotes R’ Menachem Ha’meiri z”l (“the *Meiri*”; Provence; 1249-1306), who writes: This *Gemara* is meant to be a clever metaphor. It is teaching that, though one should take care not to treat any person in a degrading way, one should not even think of denigrating someone who acted kindly towards him. One who does so demonstrates extremely lowly *Middot* / character traits, the *Meiri* writes.

R’ Ashkenazi adds, in the name of R’ Yosef ibn Migash z”l (Spain; 1077-1141), that the *Gemara*’s lesson is demonstrated by the fact that Moshe Rabbeinu was not the one to strike the water, which had protected him as an infant.

(*Shitah Mekubetzet*)

R’ Nosson Zvi Finkel z”l (1849-1927; the *Alter* of Slabodka) elaborates: The *Gemara* is teaching the degree to which a person must feel and practice the *Middah* / trait of gratitude. Not only does a person who does good deserve gratitude, even inanimate objects from which we once benefitted deserve our gratitude. The purpose of the plagues was to reveal *Hashem*’s greatness and power, and, ultimately, to teach the Egyptians to believe in Him. Even for such an important purpose, Moshe Rabbeinu could not ignore the gratitude he owed to the inanimate waters of the Nile.

(*Ohr Ha’tzafun* I p.190)

Of course, inanimate objects do not need, and are not aware of, our gratitude. Rather, explains R’ Daniel Haymann *shlita* (Tel Zion, Israel), the reason for the obligation discussed here is to imbue us with good character traits. If we do not feel gratitude to everything that provides us with some benefit, we soon will not be grateful to the people who do good for us.

(*Hakarat Ha’tov Ke’halachah* p.18)

**- Continued from front page -**

The second cup accompanies the reading of the *Haggadah*, which speaks of our salvation from physical slavery.

The third cup accompanies *Birkat Ha’mazon*, where we acknowledge the bounty on our tables--the opposite of economic oppression.

Finally, the fourth cup parallels *Hallel*, beginning with “*Shefoch chamat’cha*,” a prayer that *Hashem* take vengeance on the nations “that devoured Yaakov”--alluding to the extra cruelty of humiliating us in our exile. (*Binah L’ittim: Drush L’yom Rishon Shel Pesach*)

# 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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## ISRAEL'S TOP COURT DISQUALIFIES SHAS CHIEF DERI FROM SERVING AS MINISTER IN BOMBHELL RULING (YNet 1/18/23)

The High Court of Justice on Wednesday nixed Shas leader Arye Deri's appointment as minister in the new government in a dramatic ruling, citing "extreme unreasonableness" as the reason for his disqualification.

With ten judges supporting the decision and one dissenting, the justices wrote in the majority opinion that the ultra-Orthodox lawmaker was ineligible to hold the roles of health and interior minister due to his conviction past criminal convictions, namely his conviction on tax evasion charges from last year. The panel ruled that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu must remove Deri from his post.

"Due to his past criminal convictions... and the position Deri presented to the Magistrate's Court, according to which he was retiring from political life, and his conduct thereafter," they wrote.

Deri was convicted last year on charges of tax evasion. He escaped punishment after signing a plea deal that saw him resign as a member of the Knesset. Although the move seemed to signal the end of Deri's political career, he nonetheless helmed his ultra-Orthodox party in the most recent November election, in which his party secured 11 Knesset seats.

In the minority opinion, sole dissenter Justice Yosef Elron wrote that he believed that the appointment should stand, but Deri must first appeal to the chairman of the Central Election Committee to have him determine the matter.

Earlier this week, Deri made it clear that even if the High Court disqualifies him, he will not resign from his post, saying in closed conversations, "the onus is on Netanyahu, he has to solve this problem."

However, Netanyahu's ruling Likud party struggles to find creative solutions that would keep Deri in the government legally, and the party even estimates that he will only be able to remain a member of the coalition without serving as a minister.

One idea floated by Likud lawmakers is to abolish the reasonableness principle used by the court to determine whether administrative decisions are "reasonable" and have been made with the proper consideration of all relevant factors.

Likud sources have told Ynet and its sister publication Yedioth Ahronoth that such legislation cannot be rushed through and might take weeks or even months to pass.

According to Likud lawmakers, since Prime Minister Netanyahu does not intend to violate the High Court's ruling, the Shas chairman and the premier's closest ally might find himself out of the government for a long time, a scenario that could spark a major coalition crisis.

Deri's Shas party, which caters mainly to a constituency of impoverished and working-class Sephardic Jews, slammed the High Court's ruling, which it deemed "extremely unreasonable."

"Today, the High Court, which presents itself as the protector of minorities, threw away the voices and votes of 400,000 voters of the Shas movement, which represents the underprivileged in Israel who went to the polls just two months ago," the party wrote in a statement.

"The court's decision is political and tainted by extreme unreasonableness, the entire Shas movement is shocked by this arbitrary decision."

Opposition leader Yair Lapid called on the government to honor the ruling and warned that it will be going against the law otherwise which might plunge Israel into a constitutional crisis.

"If Arye Deri is not fired, Israel will find itself in an unprecedented constitutional crisis and will no longer be a democracy and will not be a state

of laws," he said.

Justice Minister Yariv Levin, who is pushing a far-reaching reform that is aimed at reining in the power of the judiciary, vowed to do "everything necessary so that this injustice that cries to the heavens and was inflicted upon Rabbi Arye Deri, the Shas movement and Israeli democracy will be fully corrected."

Levin then went on to reprimand the court for "failing to respect the decision of the people, the judgment of the prime minister, and the decision of the Knesset that expressed confidence in the current government."

Meanwhile, the leaders of the coalition parties have issued a joint statement vowing to fight the ruling by all legal means.

"We received the verdict in Deri's case with shock, pain and great sorrow," the statement read. "We will act in any legal way at our disposal and without delay to correct this injustice and the serious harm done to the democratic process."

## SHAS THREATENS TO TOPPLE GOVERNMENT IF DERI FIRED AS MINISTER (Arutz-7 1/18/23)

A senior haredi lawmaker warned Wednesday that if Interior Minister Aryeh Deri (Shas) is forced out of the government as a result of a Supreme Court ruling, it would mark the end of the current coalition government.

Welfare Minister Yaakov Margi (Shas) told Reshet Bet Wednesday morning that his party will likely not support the continuation of the Netanyahu government if Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu fires Deri.

"I will advise the [Shas party's] council of Torah sages that if Aryeh Deri isn't in the government, there is no government."

The comments came shortly after Israel Hayom reported Wednesday morning that Netanyahu will not defy a Supreme Court ruling against his

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Moshe Anapolle, Avi Cohn, Ezra Halpert, Tani Lichtman, Yisrael David Rosenberg, editors

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Woodsburgh, NY Minyan  
Young Israel Bet Tefilah of Aberdeen, NJ  
Young Israel of Brookline, MA  
Young Israel of East Brunswick, NJ  
Young Israel of Fort Lee, NJ  
Young Israel of Hancock Park, CA  
Young Israel of Holliswood, NY  
Young Israel of Houston, TX  
Young Israel of New Hyde Park, NY  
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Interior Minister, and is prepared to fire Deri should the court insist he do so. Deri has reportedly told Shas party members at a faction meeting Monday that he will not step down, even if the Supreme Court rules against his appointment as Interior Minister.

Sources close to Netanyahu told Israel Hayom that if the court rules that Deri cannot serve as a minister and Deri refuses to resign, Netanyahu will fire the Interior Minister, but will also use the issue to build support for his government's judicial reform plan.

"The Prime Minister will express his opposition, but in the end will fire Deri, and will highlight to the public this situation, in which the people elected a person, whom the judges then rejected," one of the sources cited in the report said.

"If the Supreme Court will force Netanyahu to fire Deri, he will adhere to the Supreme Court ruling, but everyone has to understand that the court will be forcing the prime minister against his will to fire one of his ministers."

"We are in the midst of a major struggle, and here is an opportunity to show people who still don't think that we need the Justice Minister's reforms how wrong they are."

### **ABOUT HALF OF JEWISH ISRAELIS BELIEVE JEWS SHOULD HAVE MORE RIGHTS THAN ARABS, STUDY SHOWS** (Ha'aretz 1/15/23)

Around half of Jewish Israelis believe that they should have more rights than their Arab compatriots, a new survey released on Sunday from Israel Democracy Institute found.

Forty-nine percent of respondents believed that Jews should be afforded special rights in Israel, an increase of 12 percent from the previous annual survey.

Among those who identified as right-wing, the statement enjoyed 66 percent support, while only 11 percent of respondents identifying as left-wing supported the notion.

However, 80 percent believed that fateful decisions regarding the country's future should be made by a Jewish majority.

Sixty percent of the Jews who participated in the survey considered relations with Arabs in the country to be bad or very bad, a 33 percent increase since 2018.

The annual index of some 20,000 people also found that 57 percent of Israelis opposed blocking the Supreme Court's authority in halting legislation from the Knesset, as proposed by Israel's new government, if the essence of those laws are anti-democratic.

Among Arab citizens, 87 percent supported protecting the Supreme Court's authority, while only a narrow majority of 51 percent of Jews supported the statement.

Despite the backing for maintaining a stronger judiciary, the survey found that public trust in Israel's government institutions has plummeted from 61 percent a decade ago to 33 percent today.

While 85 percent of the public said that they trusted the army, only 23 percent expressed similar faith in the media, 18 percent in the Knesset and only 9 percent in political parties.

Among the Arab community, 14 percent of Muslims and 25 percent of Christians characterized Israel's status as "very good" or "good" in the last survey. In contrast, 38 percent of Druze defined Israel's status as such.

### **JORDANIAN ENVOY BLOCKED FROM ENTERING AL-AQSA, SPARKING DIPLOMATIC ROW** (YNet 1/17/23)

The Jordanian ambassador to Israel on Tuesday was prevented from entering the al-Aqsa mosque compound on the Temple Mount, sparking a diplomatic tempest between Jerusalem and Amman.

Jordanian television said Israeli security personnel had asked ambassador Rasan al-Majali to leave the premises after demanding he presents a permit. Israel denied the report at first but the Israeli envoy in Jordan was summoned to the foreign ministry in Amman for clarification.

Israel Police said the Jordanian head of the Waqf, the site's Muslim endowment, and the ambassador arrived without advance notice. "An officer

on duty did not recognize the gentlemen and was not aware of any planned visit and informed his commander. While he was waiting for instructions, he held the two men at the entrance to the compound," the police said.

"Contrary to misleading reports, their entrance was not prevented and the ambassador himself decided to leave on his own accord.

Had he waited just a few seconds longer, he would have been allowed in. Coordination in advance would have prevented any delay and we are sorry for the false reporting about the incident."

The police's account of the incident, however, did not assuage the outrage of the Jordanians who were quick to summon the Israel ambassador Eitan Sorkis for clarification.

However, Al-Majali returned to the Jerusalem site about three hours after the incident and prayed there uninterrupted.

### **AZERBAIJAN-ISRAEL TIES CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN AFTER FOREIGN MINISTERS TALK** (JPost 1/17/23)

Relations between Israel and Azerbaijan continue to tighten.

After Foreign Minister Eli Cohen had a conversation last Friday with his colleague, Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhon Biramov and thanked him for Azerbaijan's decision to open an embassy in Israel, the Azerbaijani minister congratulated his Israeli counterpart for becoming foreign minister and expressed his wish of further tightening relations.

The Azerbaijani minister accepted Cohen's invitation to visit Israel and will do so for the opening of the embassy.

Meanwhile, members of the Azerbaijani parliament sent a letter of thanks and congratulations to 30 ministers and MKs from all Knesset factions who signed a letter of support sent to the parliament following the announced opening of an embassy in Israel.

As published in Maariv at the beginning of January, the MKs were astonished that the French legislature's announced move to put an embargo on Azerbaijani gas and oil due to the conflict with Armenia. This gives a boost to Iran, which wants to weaken Azerbaijan.

"We happily thank you for your congratulatory letter regarding the establishment of an Azerbaijani embassy in Israel. The opening of the embassy marks the start of a new phase in our bilateral relations and is proof that our cooperation is rising to a new level," the Azerbaijani letter said.

"Israel was one of the first countries to recognize Azerbaijan's independence. Azerbaijan and Israel share similar positions on developing their regions and on a global scale and show mutual support for solving the problems our countries face. The Azerbaijani people appreciate and will never forget Israel's consistent support for Azerbaijan's justified position during the 44-day patriotic war," the latter a reference to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Armenia.

In reference to Azerbaijan's Iran issue, the parliamentarians wrote that "Unfortunately, not everyone is satisfied with Azerbaijan's victory, which increased its political, military and economic capacity in the region and helped consolidate its international position.

"The recent harsh anti-Azerbaijani rhetoric of Iran and its military exercises along our border are a clear manifestation of this and they show Iran's true goals."

"The recent harsh anti-Azerbaijani rhetoric of Iran and its military exercises along our border are a clear manifestation of this and they show Iran's true goals. Azerbaijan has never been afraid of the threats it faces and it can respond to them appropriately.

"In light of the increasing provocations and threats against Azerbaijan, we are pleased and inspired to receive your [Israel's] message of support. And for that, we express our gratitude."

In a separate message to all MKs, the Azerbaijani lawmakers wrote: "We will take advantage of this opportunity to invite you to visit Azerbaijan and are confident this will be a significant impetus for growing our inter-parliamentary ties, deepening Azerbaijan-Israel relations and the strategic partnership built on mutual trust and support." The letter was signed referencing Azerbaijan's ancient local Jewish community.

"The Jewish community lives in an atmosphere of peace, friendship and brotherhood in Azerbaijan, where tolerance, multicultural values and religious equality are considered a way of life. Azerbaijan's Jewish citizens actively take part in cultural and sociopolitical life and contribute to Azerbaijan's development."

### **U.S. USING STOCKPILE IN ISRAEL TO SUPPLY WEAPONS TO UKRAINE** (Ha'aretz 1/18/23)

The U.S. is using a vast stockpile of American ammunition in Israel to supply Ukraine with artillery shells in its war with Russia, the New York Times reported on Wednesday citing Israeli sources.

Despite consistently declining to arm Ukraine against Russian forces, Israel is currently serving as a staging area for American military support for Kyiv, which has been fighting a defensive war against the Russian Federation since last February.

Hard-pressed to keep up a steady supply of artillery shells for the beleaguered Eastern European nation, the United States turned to Jerusalem last year to request that Israel allow the Pentagon to begin shipping ammunition from its local strategic reserves, The New York Times said.

The reserves, established after the 1973 Yom Kippur War, are meant to supply U.S. forces in the Middle East as well as to provide emergency military resupply to Israel in times of conflict.

According to an Israeli official who spoke to The Times, the plan was proposed to then-Defense Minister Benny Gantz by U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III and was subsequently approved by former Prime Minister Yair Lapid after receiving the endorsement of defense officials wary of alienating their country's closest strategic partner.

Despite its acquiescence to the American request, which saw Israel join fellow U.S. ally Korea in allowing the U.S. to dip into locally cached military supplies, Israel's largely hands-off approach to the conflict had not changed, an IDF spokesman told The Times.

"Based on a U.S. request, certain equipment was transferred to the U.S. D.O.D. from its stockpiles," the IDF stated.

Asked about the report, a Ukrainian military source told Haaretz that "this morning is the first time I've heard about it, but the New York Times is a very reliable source."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said that his country will become a "big Israel" with its own face" – indicating that his country intends to emulate the Israeli security state in the wake of Russia's invasion – and has repeatedly called on Jerusalem to supply his forces with weapons, especially missile defense systems.

Israel has consistently declined such requests, citing its concern that alienating Moscow could endanger Israel's freedom of action in Syria –where Russian forces have stood aside and allowed repeated strikes against Iranian targets – as well as the risk to Russia's large Jewish community.

Dmitry Medvedev, a former Russian President now serving as Deputy Chairman of the country's Security Council, has warned Israel that supplying military equipment to Ukraine would "destroy the political relations between the two countries."

In the wake of Medvedev's threat, a poll conducted by national broadcaster Kan found that 41 percent of Israelis opposed arming Ukraine while 21 percent supported such a move and 38 percent were unsure.

While Israel has not yet agreed to support Ukraine's military, it is reportedly financing "strategic materials" worth millions of U.S. dollars to contribute to the Ukrainian war effort – and last also announced that it would supply Kyiv with 20 generators, Kan reported at the time. It has also provided a field hospital, body armor for first responders and plane-loads of humanitarian supplies.

Earlier this month, newly appointed Foreign Minister Eli Cohen, at a handover ceremony with former Prime Minister Yair Lapid at the Foreign Ministry, refused to comment on the Ukrainian demand for defensive weapons from Israel.

While he noted that "significant humanitarian assistance" to Ukraine will continue, he said that "on the Russia-Ukraine issue, we will do one thing for certain – speak less publicly."

### **60% OF NEW IMMIGRANTS TO ISRAEL ARE NOT JEWISH** (Arutz-7 1/15/23)

A majority of new immigrants to Israel are non-Jews, according to a new report, cutting into the country's Jewish majority.

The report was produced by the Center for Immigration Policy, and draws on data collected by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS).

Based on the CBS statistics, the report found that in 2022, a total of 77,000 people immigrated to Israel, including 71,000 people who made Aliyah, entering the country and receiving citizenship under the Law of Return.

Passed in 1950, the Law of Return offers a Right of Return and automatic citizenship to any member of a recognized Diaspora Jewish community.

In 1970, the law was expanded with the so-called "grandchild clause," enabling the children of Jews, grandchildren of Jews, and spouses of Jews to also claim citizenship under the Law of Return.

While the law was considered a key to Israel's demographic future during the 1950s and 1960s – and again in the 1990s following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 – the "grandchild clause" has resulted in an expansion of non-Jewish immigration.

According to the CIP report, Israel's Jewish majority fell in 2022 by 0.3 points as a result of non-Jewish immigration, from 73.9% a year earlier to 73.6%.

Israel's Jewish majority has declined by roughly 10% over the past 30 years, the report claimed, falling by an average of one-third of a point per year.

Much of that decline is due to rising rates of non-Jewish immigration, CIP said, noting that in 2022, an absolute majority of new immigrants to Israel were non-Jews.

Of the 77,000 total immigrants who gained legal status in Israel last year, nearly 60% were not Jewish. Among the 71,000 who made Aliyah, receiving citizenship under the Law of Return, 55% of new immigrants were non-Jews, compared to just 32,000, or 45% of new immigrants who were Jews.

The authors of the report noted that plans currently under consideration in the new government to nullify the 1970 amendment could reduce non-Jewish immigration by 85%.

"It is unbelievable that the rise in new Olim leads such a decline in the Jewish majority," said Attorney Dr. Yona Cherki, from the Israeli Immigration Policy Center.

"This is a demographic deficit that will harm the Jewish identity and status of the country. The upshot of the CBS data is that the amendment to the section 'Rights of family members' (known as the 'grandson clause') in the Law of Return may reduce non-Jewish immigration to Israel by 85%."

### **HALF OF NEW IMMIGRANTS SKIP HEBREW STUDIES DUE TO FINANCIAL HARDSHIP** (Israel Hayom 1/18/23)

The head of the Knesset's Aliyah and Integration Committee has called for a reform to Israel's Hebrew learning system for new immigrants after a survey revealed that most are forced to either skip studies or combine them with a part-time job to make ends meet.

"It is clear that the olim must work during their studies, which is why the time has come to update the framework for the 21st century by combining in-class and online learning with digital means, with a minimum of face-to-face lessons," Oded Forer said.

The survey, which included 375 participants, showed that almost half (43%) chose not to attend Hebrew-learning school – known as ulpan – at all in order to begin working straight away. A third (31.7%) said they planned to find a job soon due to financial difficulties and only 28.8% said they only planned to join the workforce after finishing their Hebrew-language studies.

Many stressed they preferred online studies to offline education (through a conferencing platform or an app) or a combination of the two. The immigrants moved to Israel between March and October 2022, with most (90%) having arrived from Russia, and some from Ukraine (8%) and other countries (2%).

Another challenge, as previously reported by Israel Hayom, is the dire shortage of teachers that has led to a six-month waiting list of 3,600 olim. And yet, despite the difficulties, when asked whether they planned to stay in Israel long-term, 48% of new immigrants answered "yes" and 44.8% said it depended on how they integrated into Israeli society.

### **WHY ISRAEL'S RIGHT-WING JUDGES VOTED AGAINST ARYE DERI** (Yonah Jeremy Bob, JPost 1/18/23)

It was not surprising that the High Court of Justice's activist wing nixed Shas leader Arye Deri from remaining a minister within the government following his two convictions.

What was surprising was that moderate conservatives Yitzhak Amit and Yael Wilner and hardcore conservatives Alex Stein and David Mintz ruled against Deri and that even conservative Yosef Elron left the door open to the Election Commission to nix Deri.

In particular, Stein's words to Deri were devastating, "his words were empty words." Put differently, Stein, who has repeatedly found reasons to rule in favor of the policies of the government of Benjamin Netanyahu based on ideology, tossed ideology out the window.

He told Deri: you are a liar, end of the story.

Stein, Mintz, Wilner and Amit were livid that Deri promised in detail to stay out of a public service role, committing to only being involved indirectly from the Shas party.

For them, Deri's attempts to use mental gymnastics to parse his words so that his promise was only limited to the former Knesset and not future Knessets, was too much to swallow for a thinking person.

According to most of these justices, the High Court of Justice probably has no right to veto the new Basic Law passed to save Deri from being disqualified by the prior basic law preventing a person sentenced to jail time (including a suspended sentence.)

Being ideologically right-wing, they also would be against disqualifying Deri using the "reasonableness test." These justices, certainly Stein, Mintz and Elron, are card-carrying conservatives who do not believe the court should supplant the reasonableness of the government.

They just could not accept Deri lying directly to the court to get a lenient plea deal.

This response and one-sided vote caught the coalition off guard who expected a far more split vote than 10-1 (with even Elron being open to the Elections Commission disqualifying Deri instead of the court.)

A 7-4 or 6-5 vote would have given the coalition a much greater basis in public opinion to override the High Court, arguing that the court still is not balanced enough and needs more conservatives.

But the one-sided vote crossed all ideological boundaries.

One of the last few such major decisions which was one-sided, paradoxically, was the 11-0 High Court vote permitting Netanyahu to run and form a new government despite being indicted.

In different times where the right and left were not in an all-out verbal war and where Netanyahu himself was not in the cross-hairs for a potential future conviction, the right-wing justices joining against Deri might be enough to swing public opinion among the country's right-wing rank-and-file.

The lopsided vote of an 11-justice bench seems to meet even the new standard that the government wishes to set for the court to veto government policies and show a rare falling in line for unity by the often passionately split justices.

But these are not normal times and the government is already all but dead set on revolutionizing the powers of the judiciary and the legal establishment. Much of the right-wing public may not care that right-wing justices view Deri as a liar, and may simply look at the result: the court seeming to ignore the will of the voters.

In that sense, the Deri ruling, including the surprising move by the right-wing justices, may be almost irrelevant, mainly just happening to serve as the inevitable final break between the coalition and its voters and the legal establishment, which was headed into a constitutional crisis no matter what.

### **CAN ISRAEL HAVE A CONSTITUTION? YES, IF IT VOTES ON IT** (Hillel de Almeida, Israel Hayom 1/16/23)

As we all know, Israel, as a young country, does not have a formal written constitution. Instead, it has a set of fundamental Basic Laws that serve as the foundation for its legal system and government and were enacted in the absence of a constitution. Considering Israel's current and ongoing political crisis and social tensions, it may be essential for the country to adopt a formal constitution. For instance, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance says, "A constitution is a nation's fundamental identifier. It defines the values, principles, and institutions that make up a country."

As a sovereign nation, Israel would benefit from adopting a constitution based on the separation of powers and checks and balances. The separation of powers and the system of checks and balances ensure that no one branch of government becomes too powerful. We could, for instance, take a cue from successful nations like Germany, France, or the United States.

A constitution would also help to ease Israel's political and social tensions. It would provide a framework for acceptable political violence and the addressing of the needs and concerns of all national groups and communities. Professor Ruth Gavison, a former president of the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, was one of the foremost authorities on the need for a constitution in Israel. She argued that a constitution would provide a structure for democratic government and safeguard the rights and interests of citizens. It would also increase the influence of citizens over politics by holding politicians accountable to them.

Besides, it would provide a clear sense of identity and purpose for the nation and its citizens, grant citizens greater control over politics, and express and remind them that political power remains in the hands of Israel's citizens. This potential constitution would not only aid in clarifying the roles of institutions such as the Knesset, the Government, and the Supreme Court, which has become a recent point of contention between all sides. However, it would also establish the powers of each component, their delimitation within the framework, and more important on behalf of Israeli citizens.

For example, it would specify the Court's powers and responsibilities and ensure that it operates in accordance with democratic principles chosen by the citizens of this country. And we should keep in mind that possibilities are unlimited: The constitution could specify that the Supreme Court should not be a constitutional court and create a new institution with an independent selection process for its judges to serve in that capacity.

In another sense, the adoption of the constitution will revert back to the citizens more political power than just the right to vote. It is essential to note that the process of adopting a constitution should be democratic. And the only democratic process known to date is a vote, not a vote to a representative who will discuss the issue, but a proper referendum in which every citizen should participate and have their voice heard. It should be organized by the Knesset in order to determine the public's view of the country and to ensure its participation and fairness under Israel's president's supervision.

This will give citizens, and Israel more importantly, the opportunity to express their opinions and have a say in shaping the nation. By discussing the constitution together, citizens from the far left to the far right would have a symposium to express their opinions. This exercise will lead us, for the first time in Israel's history, to be united and equal with all our differences and similarities, our different political views, our different faiths, and our different habits. It will give us the opportunity to commune as citizens of the Promised Land and determine our shared destiny, above all political stories, revenge, and drama. It is crucial not only for the current political crisis, but also for Israel's future as a living nation, as a vibrant democracy, and the refuge of Jews from around the world. Being the "light unto the nations" was never a gift, but rather a duty, and it's time to prove that we are worthy of this responsibility.



# The Greater Washington Community Kollel

# SHABBOS DELIGHTS

## TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

### Responsible Logic

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

**Moshe spoke thus to the children of Israel, but they did not listen to Moshe because of shortness of breath and hard labor... Moshe spoke before G-d, saying, "Behold, the children of Israel did not listen to me. How then will Pharaoh listen to me, seeing that I am of closed lips?" (6:9,12)**

At the beginning of this week's Parsha, G-d instructs Moshe to inform the Jewish people of their impending salvation. G-d will take them out from under the burden of Egypt, appoint them as His nation, and bring them to the land that had been promised to their forefathers. Unfortunately, the people are not attentive to Moshe's tidings "because of their shortness of breath and their hard labor." The Ramban explains that they were suffering so greatly and were so overburdened that they simply couldn't pay any heed to Moshe's words. Shortly thereafter, G-d sends Moshe to Pharaoh with a similar message: it is time to let the Jews go. Moshe, however, maintains that it is not sensible for him to go. If the Jewish people didn't listen to him, he argues, certainly Pharaoh won't listen to him, particularly because Moshe is of "closed lips" i.e. he has a speech impediment.

Rashi comments that this is an example of a *kal vachomer* (*a fortiori* logic). If the Jewish people didn't listen to me, then certainly Pharaoh won't either. The difficulty that many commentaries raise, however, is that the logic here seems flawed. The Torah tells us why the Jewish people didn't listen. It was due to their suffering and labor. This reason is not applicable to Pharaoh. A further difficulty is that Moshe seems to imply that the people didn't listen due to his "closed lips" when the text makes it clear that it was due to their inability to listen in light of all their suffering.

Perhaps these discrepancies can actually lead us to an important lesson in leadership and responsibility. Although the Torah testifies that the people didn't listen due to "shortness of breath" and "hard labor," Moshe in his great humility was not focused on why *they* didn't listen, but rather on why *he* couldn't get his message across. When a leader fails to inspire or motivate, if he or she focuses only on what was wrong with those in his or her charge, that leader will never be able to adjust their approach to engineer success. When Moshe failed to get his message across, he took responsibility – thought only of his own shortcomings and therefore believed that his speech impediment was the cause of them not listening. If the Jewish people did not listen because of that, then surely Pharaoh wouldn't either.

When a relationship, organization or project faces challenges, it is rarely only one person's fault. Instead of focusing on what others should be doing different, a person with humility and true leadership qualities will look inwards and ask, where have I fallen short and what can I do to better the situation?

**Wishing you a Good Shabbos!**

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## TABLE TALK

### Point to Ponder

**Hashem spoke to Moshe and said to him, "I am Hashem. I appeared to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Yaakov..." (6:2-3)**

**I appeared to the forefathers (Rashi).**

We know that Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov are our forefathers. Why does Rashi feel compelled to inform us of that and what is he telling us by adding the word "forefathers?"

### Parsha Riddle

**What is the similarity between the first three of the ten plagues, and the first two of the Ten Commandments?**

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

*"Shall I go summon a Jewish wet nurse?" (2:7)*

*The baby refused to nurse from an Egyptian woman, because Hashem said, "Shall the mouth that will converse with the Divine Presence drink impure milk?" (Rashi) What halacha is derived from this?*

*Answer: A Jewish child should not nurse from a non-Jewish woman. (Y.D. 81:7)*

## HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

### HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Vaeira* (9:29), Moshe Rabbeinu told Pharaoh that he would beseech Hashem "when I leave the city" for the cessation of the thunder and hail (of the seventh of the Ten Plagues). Rashi cites the *midrash* that "he did not pray within the city because it was full of idols."

Based in part on this midrash, the *Terumas ha-Deshen* (1:6) rules that ideally, a traveler should not pray in a city of idolaters, since in such a city "there are many idols and houses of impurity, and there is virtually no lodging place belonging to a non-Jew in which you will not find many idols drawn or engraved upon the walls, and sometimes abominations and graven images." If there is no alternative, however, then it is permitted to pray in such a city, since today anyway "all our prayers are in cities that are filled with abominations and idols." The implication is that prayer in the vicinity of idols, although not ideal, is not strictly forbidden, and some authorities note that this is implied by the language of the midrash itself, which states merely that "Moshe did not desire to pray in Egypt" (*Shut. Lev Avraham* 30).

Accordingly, various contemporary authorities permit bedridden hospital patients to pray in rooms containing "idols" (presumably crucifixes), particularly if they close their eyes (*Lev Avraham*, and see *She'arim Metzuyanim ba-Halachah* vol. 1 p. 114).

If there are idols hanging on the east wall of the room in which one is praying, then one should face in a different direction, despite the fact that (in Europe and the United States) one normally faces east during prayer. It is certainly prohibited to bow in the direction of the idols (*Chayei Adam* 23:5; *Mishneh Berurah* 94:30).

The *Avnei Nezer* (OC 32) draws another *halachic* inference from Moshe's reluctance to pray in Egypt, that it is prohibited to establish a place of prayer underneath the residence of a non-Jew, since "every non-Jew has an idol on his table." It is unclear if this objection is limited to the establishment of a permanent place of prayer, or extends even to any ad hoc prayer underneath a non-Jewish residence. (cf. R. Dov Linzer, *Praying With A Cross In the Room*).

PRESENTED BY  
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

## KIDS KORNER

### Who Am I?

#### #1 WHO AM I?

1. I was proof of Hashem.
2. I was from a finger.
3. I am tiny.
4. I came from the sand.

#### #2 WHO AM I?

1. I defied nature.
2. I made them go inside.
3. I was suspended.
4. I am waiting for Gog and Magog.

#### Last Week's Answers

**#1 Nile River** (I saved the savior, I am a god of Egypt, Moshe wouldn't strike me, Sons were thrown to me.)

**#2 Tzaraas/Leprocy** (I was a sign, I am for Lashon Harah, I could remind you of snow, I could get you locked up.)

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