

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts ^{ת"סב}

April 21 - 22, 2023 - 1 Iyar 5783 - Parshas Tazria/Metzora/Rosh Chodesh
Light Candles by 7:33 - Havdalah 8:35

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored by **Janette & Jerry Rapp** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of Jerry's mother, Molly Rapp, Malka Bas Pinchos, A"Y, on 1 Iyar, and by **Debbie Rogal** in honor of **Jay Rogal** on the 75th anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah.

Mazal Tov

- **Lyn & Tad Downing** and **Leah & Alex Kott** on the birth of a grandson born to their children, Aviva & Avery Downing of Seattle, Washington.
- **Avi & Shoshana Rudack** on the engagement of their daughter, Devorah Sarah, to Eli Abramowitz of Chicago.
- **Rabbi Sanford H. Shudnow** on being honored as an alumnus of the Hebrew Theological College, Skokie, Illinois, as part of the HTC Centennial.
- **Rabbi Sanford H. Shudnow** on his artwork being selected by the Bender JCC of Greater Washington to be included in their forthcoming exhibit, "A Lifetime of Perspective: Art by Older Adults," May 21 - June 11.

Condolences

- **Steve Friedman** on the passing of his mother, Sandra (Sandi) Friedman.
- **Helene Zeltser** on the passing of her brother, Neil Olshan. Shiva is being observed in New York through Sunday morning. Helene may be reached during Shiva at 240-678-6115.

YISE Programs and Listings

Pre-9:15 Minyan Chabura - A weekly Chabura on the Parsha. 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 Postelnek.
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.
Shabbos Afternoon Shiur - Rabbi Rosenbaum gives a text-based Parsha shiur 45 minutes before the last Mincha in the Belonofsky Sanctuary.
Yom HaShoah v' Hagvurah Program - Featuring Rachel (Rae) Goldfarb. Recording available at: <https://wp.yise.org/yom-hashoah-2023>
Dr. Itzhak Brook will speak on Sunday, April 23 at 11:00 AM in the Social Hall to commemorate Yom Hazikaron and Yom Haatzmaut. *See flyer for details.*
Come Join Rabbi Koss's Monthly Jewish History class on Zoom! Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and the YISE Chesed Committee. Rabbi Koss will be speaking on a topic in Jewish history, Monday, May 1 from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM on **Zoom A**. For more information, contact Miriam Friedman at mfriedman2@yahoo.com
Seeing the Hand of Hashem in History: How Rashi Saved the Torah and Other Historical Wonders with Rabbi Brahm Weinberg on Sunday, May 7, 11:00 AM at YISE in the Belonofsky Sanctuary and on **Zoom A**, followed by refreshments in the Social Hall. Part of the Meaningful Tefilah Project at YISE, co-sponsored by KMS. *See flyer for details.*
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

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 7:33, and not before 6:26
- Mincha: 6:10 (Plag, S), 6:35 (B), 7:35 (B), 7:15 (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), 7:15 (B), 7:10 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 8:35

Divrei Torah/Shiurim:

- 8:45 Main Minyan Rabbi Rosenbaum
- 9:15 Minyan Rabbi Postelnek
- Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman
- Pre-9:15 Minyan Chabura Rabbi Postelnek
- Shiur before Mincha Rabbi Rosenbaum

Kiddush/Shalosh Seudos Sponsors:

- The Hashkamah Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by the **Hashkamah Minyan Group**.
- The Shul Kiddush is sponsored by **Julie & Jerry Brookler** in honor of Jerry's 80th birthday.
- The Sephardic Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by **Tamar & Bitsu Balay** to commemorate the Shloshim of Tamar's father, Avraham Abuhai Ben Yeshimevet.
- The Shalosh Seudos is sponsored in memory of Rav Anemer, ZT"Y, on his 13th Yahrzeit. Thank you to all of the sponsors.

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, April 22, 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

Shabbos Group for 5th and 6th 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.

Boys Shiur - Rabbi Rosenbaum will resume his Shabbos afternoon shiur for 5th and 6th grade boys at 5:30 PM in the Social Hall, beginning this Shabbos, April 22. Bring your best questions! *See flyer for details.*

Chametz After Pesach Update

The Vaad HaRabanim of Greater Washington recently became aware that Giant, Safeway, and Target in this area are no longer being supplied by a distributor who previously raised concerns of Chametz ownership by a Jew over Pesach.

While we have still been unable to ascertain if the stores in our area are using the new supplier, we feel there is sufficient information to permit the purchase of Chametz from Giant, Safeway, and Target immediately after Pesach in the Greater Washington area.

Thank you to the Shiurim Sponsors for this Past Week:

Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur

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

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.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Tehillim/Parsha/Halacha Shiur

- **Judy & David Marwick** in honor of **Jay Rogal's** birthday.

8:45 AM Shabbos Drasha

- **Susan & Bob Levi** to commemorate the 8th Yahrzeit of Bob's mother, Lorraine Levi, Leah Bas Mordechai, Z"l, on the 7th of Iyar.

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.

4. Yom Tov Drashas are available for sponsorship of \$72 each.

Please email office@yise.org to sponsor. Thank you for your support.

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: 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.

YISE Programs and Listings

Shalosh Seudos - To sponsor, contact Simi Franco at 301-593-4465, ext. 103, or office@yise.org. Volunteers are needed to set up and clean up.

Contact Ethan Cohen at ecohen@yise.org to be part of the rotation.

Helping Hands Across Kemp Mill, a part of YISE's Chesed Committee, provides assistance to families undergoing medical crises. If you do not have a Helping Hands account, or if you have any questions, please contact: Melanie Karlin, 301-681-4740, mkarlin@gmail.com or Miriam Friedman, 301-754-1517, 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's** Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), Sundays at 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday, 6:30 PM, **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-minute Shiur on the Parsha. Monday through Friday, 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum'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**.
 - **GWCK presents CLAS (Community Learning at Shomrai)** - 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM. For more info., contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps, 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> New Semester begins Tuesday, May 2. *See flyer for details.*
 - **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, 8:30 PM - 9:30 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 Parshas 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 the 7th Perek of Maseches Bava Metzia. Wednesday evenings at 8:20 PM (*note new time*) 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

A Time for Unity - Special speaker series, Shabbos afternoons, 6:15 PM at Chabad of Silver Spring, 519 Lambertson Drive. This Shabbos, April 22, Rabbi Ahron Lopiansky, Yeshiva of Greater Washington.

The Capital Closet will be open to this community this Sunday, April 23, from 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM. Come peruse our beautiful, curated selection of clothing for women, men, and children, as well as Torah School uniforms! Our new address is 9601 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901. The Closet entrance is in the back of the building up a full flight of stairs. There is no charge for items in The Capital Closet, but financial donations to Yad Yehuda are always appreciated. We are unable to accept clothing donations at this time; thank you for your understanding. Please feel to reach out with any questions or for more information to: ncarmel@yadyehuda.org

Torah Tournament for Women Join fellow women from across Kemp Mill on Sunday, June 11, for a one-night, all-out Torah Tournament featuring friendly competition, engaging challenges, prizes, and fun for all! Sunday, April 23, is the LAST CALL to form a team to learn assigned Torah text and compete against other teams for the title of Tournament Champion! Non-competitors are encouraged to join the Tournament as live audience. Go to: <https://forms.gle/L1HokQjN14VzWR3V8> to sign up.

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 at the home of Mrs. Aviva Werner, 815 Lambertson Drive. For more information, email channahandjeff@gmail.com or call 773-219-5397.

Pirkei Avos: Ethics for Everyday Living - presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps on Zoom. Wednesdays, 12:15 PM - 1:00 PM, beginning Wednesday, April 26. For Zoom info and registration go to <https://linksgw.org/classes>

Please help our community complete these Siyumim:

- Mishnayos for the 1st Yahrzeit of **Natalie Gabai**, Nechama Naomi Bat Leib, December 21, 9 Tevet - <https://www.lzechemishmas.com/signup.php?id=11044>
- Mishnayos for the 1st Yahrzeit of **Jerry Snyder**, Yehoshua Ben Binyamin, December 21, 9 Tevet - <https://hadranalach.com/2612>
- Tanach for the 1st Yahrzeit of **Marion Baras**, Miriam Bas Menachem, January 1, 20 Tevet - <http://hadranalach.com/2626>
- Mishnayos for the Shloshim of **Sandi Friedman**, Sarah Bas Zalman, May 7, 16 Iyar - <http://hadranalach.com/2760>

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, April 26, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM, in person in the YISE Small Social Hall. See what Toastmasters is all about and find out how you can become a more confident communicator. Contact Manasseh Katz at president@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info.

Sulam Gala - Save the date! Sulam is celebrating 25 years of inclusion honoring Denny and Debra Berman and Sharon Freundel. Monday, May 22 at the Rockville Hilton.

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

Zoom Shiur 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 11th 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

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

Daf Yomi Shiur currently meets online weekdays via a WebEx video conference. Anyone interested may email Judd Lifschitz at lifschitz@srlslaw.com to be added to the invite list. Sunday 8:30 AM, Monday - Thursday 9:00 PM. Shabbos in-person, 1-1/2 hours before the latest YISE Mincha in the Yeshiva.

Daily Halacha Program from Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold - Receive one every day in your inbox. Visit dvarhalacha.com and click "Sign Up."

Silver Spring Gemachim - For a complete list: www.gemachexchange.com

The Week Ahead		Sunday April 23	Monday April 24	Tuesday, April 25 Yom HaZikaron	Wednesday, April 26 Yom Ha'atzmaut	Thursday April 27	Friday April 28
Shacharis	Ashkenazi (S, B, B)	6:30, 7:30, 8:45	6:15, 6:45, 8:45	6:15, 6:55, 8:45	6:15, 6:25 *, 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)	7:40	7:40	7:40	7:40	7:40	See Shabbos schedule
	Sephardi (LBM)	7:35	7:35	7:35	7:35	7:35	
Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 4:54 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 5:25 AM, Latest Netz: 6:21 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:39 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:41 PM, Earliest Shkia: 7:53 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim 8:42 PM							
* Yom Ha'atzmaut - Wednesday, April 26, Shacharis Davening starting at 6:25 AM in the Belonofsky Sanctuary with expanded Davening and Tefilos in honor of Yom Ha'atzmaut. The other Shacharis Minyanim will meet at their regular times, without special additions.							

Next Shabbos

April 28 - 29, 2023 - 8 Iyar 5783
Parshas Acharei Mos/Kedoshim

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 7:39, and not before 6:32
- Mincha: 6:15 (Plag, S), 6:40 (B), 7:40 (B), 7:15 (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), 7:35 (B), 7:30 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 8:42

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, April 26, at 12 Noon

Submit items for the Shabbos Shorts to: announce@yise.org

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

Eruv line: 301-593-5561 Email: office@yise.org

Website: 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

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

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



Sunday, May 7 at 11 a.m.
"Seeing the Hand of Hashem in
History: How Rashi Saved the Torah
and Other Historical Wonders"
Rabbi Brahm Weinberg, Kemp Mill Synagogue

Live presentation at Belonofsky Sanctuary, Young Israel
followed by refreshments in the social hall.
You may also watch this presentation virtually:
Zoom ID: 416-963-9000
Password: 492019

All lectures on *Seeing the Hand of Hashem in Nature and
History* are now available at wp.yise.org/hand-of-hashem
This presentation will also be available shortly after the event.



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



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Young Israel Shomrai Emunah



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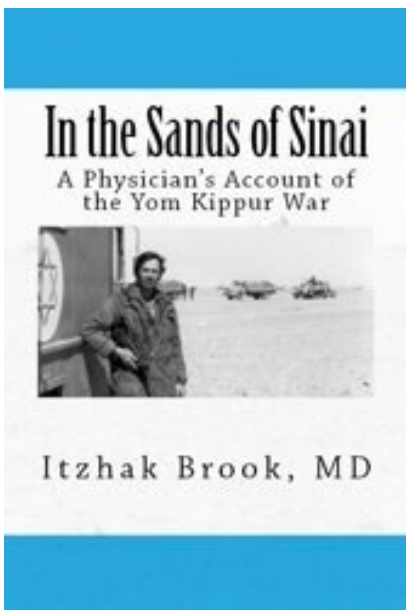
Dr. Itzhak Brook



Speaker for the Israeli Embassy
Professor of Pediatrics at Georgetown University School of Medicine
Israeli Army Medic during the Six Day War
Battalion Physician during Yom Kippur War
Medical Corps, U.S. Navy

Sunday, April 23 - 11:00 AM

YISE Social Hall



Dr. Itzhak Brook will address the long-term impact that wars, most notably the Yom Kippur War, have had on Israeli Society, as well as his own experiences as a combat medic and battalion physician. Dr. Brook will also talk about the experiences of Israeli soldiers, specifically the physical and psychological and religious impact that the wars have had on them.



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Topic of this Zman:

Halachos of Seuda, including Netilas Yadayim,
Shinui Makom, Hatov V'ameitiv on wine and more!



Rabbi Hillel Shaps

TUESDAYS @ 8:45PM

at YISE, 1132 Arcola Ave.

Register at:
thegreaterwashingtoncommunitykollel.com/scp

MEN'S PROGRAMMING

For more information, please contact: Rabbi Hillel Shaps,
hshaps@gwckollel.org



Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah
via the Internet

Shabbat Shalom

Volume 29, Issue 26

Shabbat Parashat Tazria - Metzora

5783 - B"H

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

The Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron saying, "When you come into the Land of Canaan which I give to you as an inheritance and I shall give you the plague of leprosy in the houses of the land of your inheritance."

The disease known as leprosy has engendered dread in the hearts of people, especially in times gone by when it was apparently more widespread and exceedingly contagious. In biblical times, the priests (kohanim) would determine whether a skin discoloration or scab was indeed leprosy – and, if so, the hapless leper would be rendered ritually impure and exiled from society. From the biblical religious perspective, this tzara'at emanated from a serious moral deficiency, generally identified as slander.

An especially problematic aspect of these laws of tzara'at is the fact that not only individuals but even walls of houses could become infected by this ritually impure discoloration. Do walls have minds, souls, consciences or moral choices which allow for punishment? And stranger still, the Bible describes the phenomenon of "leprosy of houses" in almost positive, gift-of-God terms:

"The Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron saying, "when you come into the Land of Canaan which I give to you as an inheritance and I shall give you the plague of leprosy in the houses of the land of your inheritance."

How are we to understand this biblical reference to the "divine gift" of the leprosy walls? And third, for individuals, the tzara'at malady is expressed as a white discoloration, whereas for walls, white spots are not at all problematic, the only thing they attest to is mold! Green and red are the dangerous colors for walls. Why the difference?

Nahmanides, the twelfth-century commentary who is an especial champion of the unique importance of the Land of Israel for the people of Israel, sees the phenomenon of the leprosy walls as an expression of the intensely concentrated moral sensitivity of our holy land: the sanctity of Israel, home of the Divine Presence (Shekhina), cannot abide within its boundaries a home in which slander is spoken. Hence the walls of such a house in Israel will naturally show the effects of words of gossip which can destroy lives.

Maimonides sees another benefit to the "leprosy of the homes" – an explicit warning to cease and desist from speaking slander: "This is a sign and a wonder to warn people against indulging in malicious speech (lashon hara). If they do recount slanderous tales, the walls of their homes will change; and if the inhabitants maintain their wickedness, the garments upon them will change".

Rashi suggests a practical application for the "gift of the leprosy walls": "It was a happy tiding for them when the plague (of leprosy) came upon (their homes). This is because the Amorite Canaanites had hidden treasures of gold in the walls of their homes during the forty years when Israel was in the desert, and because of the leprosy plagues the walls were taken apart and [the treasures] were found".

I would suggest that Rashi's commentary may be given a figurative rather than a literal spin. The walls of a house represent a family, the family which inhabits that house; and every family has its own individual culture and climate, scents and sensitivities, tales and traditions. A house may also represent many generations of families who lived

there; the values, faith commitments and lifestyles which animated those families and constituted their continuity. The sounds, smells and songs, the character, culture and commitments which are absorbed – and expressed – by the walls of a house, are indeed a treasure which is worthy of discovery and exploration. The walls of a home impart powerful lessons; hidden in those walls is a significant treasure-trove of memories and messages for the present and future generations. Perhaps it is for this reason that the nation of Israel is called the house of Israel throughout the Bible.

From this perspective we can now understand the biblical introduction to "house-leprosy." This hidden power of the walls is a present as well as a plague, a gift as well as a curse. Do the walls emit the fragrance of Shabbat halla baking in the oven or the smells of cheap liquor? Are the sounds which seep through the crevices sounds of Torah study, prayer and words of affection or are they experiences of tale-bearing, porn and anger? The good news inherent in the leprosy of the walls is the potency of family: the very same home environment which can be so injurious can also be exceedingly beneficial. It all depends upon the "culture of the table" which the family creates and which the walls absorb – and sometimes emit.

With this understanding, it is instructive to note the specific colorations – or discolorations – which render the walls ritually unclean: "And he (the kohen – priest) shall examine the leprosy plague penetratingly embedded in the walls of the house, whether they are bright green or bright red...". Can it be that green is identified with money and materialism (yerukim in modern Hebrew, an apt description of American dollars) and red identified with blood and violence? A home which imparts materialistic goals as the ideal and/or insensitivity to the shedding of blood – remember that our sages compared slander or character assassination to the shedding of blood – is certainly deserving of the badge of impurity!... [Excerpted]

The Person in the Parsha: R. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

A Time for Silence, a Time for Speech - He did most of his writing and public speaking almost exactly one hundred years ago. He had no secular education, and it is doubtful that he even read the newspapers of his day. Nevertheless, he had insights into the problems of his era that were astounding, even prophetic.

His diagnosis of the ills of the early 20th century holds true even now, a century later. He understood the power of words. He knew how written and spoken language could be used as weapons to destroy humanity. How incredibly relevant his words are in our age, when words can be communicated electronically!

He based his teachings and preaching upon the verse in Psalms which reads: "Who is the man who is eager for life, Who desires years of good fortune? Guard your tongue from evil, Your lips from deceitful speech."

He took this biblical advice seriously and urged all who would listen to guard their tongues and speak no malice and no falsehood.

His name was Israel Meir HaCohen, and he named his first major work "Chafetz Chaim", "Eager for Life", after the above verse in Psalms. He is now part of Jewish history and forever known as the Chafetz Chaim.

His teachings have a special connection to this week's Torah portion, Metzora, and to its Haftarah. Note that there is no explicit reference in the text of our parsha to the theme of the negative powers of language, nor is there any such reference in the Haftarah.

Our text this week deals, rather, with the detailed laws of the metzora, usually translated as "leper", and the selection from II Kings tells the story of the four lepers who dwelled outside the gates of Jerusalem, who were the first to discover the abandoned camp of the Aramean army that had laid siege to the city.

Rabbinic tradition, however, looks to understand why the metzora has been afflicted with his disease. The Talmud in the tractate Arachin understands the word metzora as a contraction of the phrase "motzi shem ra, one who spreads a 'bad name'" about his fellow. And so, the metzora has come to symbolize the person who is guilty of malicious gossip (lashon hora), or other abuse of words – deception, profanity, verbal assassination.

Interestingly, another early 20th century rabbinic sage, Rabbi Baruch Epstein, author of Torah Temima, points out that the Talmudic rabbis had the license to thus interpret the word metzora. This is because the usual term for the leper is "tzarua", not "metzora." The use of the unusual term suggests another, in this case, homiletic, meaning—he who speaks evil.

When the Chafetz Chaim urged us all to "guard our tongues" and "speak no evil", was he suggesting that we adopt silence as a guide to our behavior, avoiding speech and self-expression entirely?

The answer to this is a resounding "no", and this is illustrated in a fascinating story about Rabbi Israel Meir and his son-in-law, Rabbi Hershel Levinson. I found this story in a Yiddish language biography of the Chafetz Chaim, written by Moshe Mayer Yashar. An excerpted edition of this book is available in English, but without some of the more interesting and personal anecdotes.

Rabbi Hershel, the son-in-law, was a very pious man who spent his days in the study hall who seldom spoke at all. Many believed that he was even more saintly than his revered father-in-law. After all, his father-in-law spoke all over the place and taught and preached, and even joked, at every opportunity.

However, the Chafetz Chaim did not entirely approve of his son-in-law's avoidance of speech and devotion to almost complete silence about worldly matters. Rather, he insisted that one must use his gifts of speech, and use them widely and frequently, yet wisely and carefully.

Silence, for the Chafetz Chaim, was not the preferred way of life. Speech that carefully avoided gossip, insults, and profanity was the preferred behavior.

Today, there are groups of very well-intentioned individuals who emphasize the evils of lashon hora. Sometimes, I am afraid, they do so by avoiding to speak negatively when such speech is necessary. They sometimes refrain from protesting criminal behavior out of fear that, in doing so, they are maliciously gossiping about a criminal.

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This was not the Chafetz Chaim's way. In the book mentioned above, by the title of which he is known to the ages, he emphasizes that there are opportunities when one must use speech to warn against sinful or dangerous individuals, or to protest breaches of Torah or of universal moral law. When negative talk has a beneficial objective, it is no longer to be considered negative, but actually becomes a mitzvah.

The four lepers who are described in the narrative contained in this week's Haftarah were stationed outside the gates of Jerusalem because such was what the Torah required of lepers. They were to have no contact with the residents of the city, perhaps because of the fear that their condition was contagious.

They were thus doomed, in a sense, to silence. They could not communicate with their friends and family within the city's gates. And so it is no wonder, then, that when they found that the Aramean besieging Jerusalem had been abandoned overnight, their first inclination was to keep that secret to themselves. But then, in II Kings 7:9, they came to their senses, and their sound consciences prevailed: "Then they said to one another, 'We are not doing right. This is a day of good news, and we are keeping silent! If we wait until the light of morning, we shall incur guilt. Come, let us go and inform the king's palace.' They went and called out to the gate keepers of the city and told them..."

Words can harm, but they can also heal. This was the teaching of Rabbi Israel Meir HaCohen. It is perhaps best encapsulated in the words of Kohelet: "There is a time for all things... A time for silence and a time for speaking"

Rabbi Dr. Nachum Amsel
Encyclopedia of Jewish Values

Meaning of Brit Milah [Excerpt]

If someone were to read only our Torah Portion of Tazria-Metzora, he or she would never know by reading the text that the Mitzvah of Brit Milah-circumcision was more important than any of the 613 Mitzvot-Commandments. The Torah merely says, in five short words, that Jewish males should be circumcised on the eighth day of life, and then goes on to enumerate other Jewish laws. Only if we go back to the narrative of the first circumcision by Abraham, do we see that this is a crucial and eternal Jewish covenant. Of all the commandments in the Torah, the Brit Milah (circumcision) seems to be the most barbaric. It also seems to be devoid of any meaning for the Jew of the twenty-first century. This ancient ceremony causes unnecessary pain to the infant boy and psychological pain to many parents who watch the procedure. Why did God create a commandment that is so painful? What is the true meaning of a Brit Milah? Can it still have significance for the Jew of today?

When non-Jewish oppressors wanted to destroy Judaism, they selected the Brit Milah (along with Shabbat and Torah learning) to be prohibited through decree. They realized that this Mitzvah is so basic and significant to Judaism that successfully eliminating its practice would threaten the very survival of Judaism. Brit Milah is also the Mitzvah (along with Shabbat and Torah learning) for which Jews were willing to die rather than abstain. Therefore, all these demonstrate how special and vital to Judaism this commandment is. The Torah implies that God promises Abraham and the Jews that as long as the Jews believe in God, the Almighty will never destroy the Jewish people.

But why is this commandment so special? The name of the commandments itself -- Brit -- means a covenant. This covenant or agreement with God is symbolized through circumcision. This ritual act is the first that God asked of Abraham and continues to

ask of all Jewish males. What is the nature of this covenant?

Radak explains that the mark of the Brit Milah must specifically be made upon the organ of procreation to symbolize that each Jew must overcome his animalistic, physical desires. Rabbi Isaac Arama explains the symbolism of circumcision a bit differently and stresses the national symbol. He says that this commandment binds all Jews together. By putting a physical demarcation upon each Jew, separating the Jew from the non-Jew, all Jewish males feel a special kinship, causing more harmony among Jews. Of all the possible rituals, it is the Brit Milah that a non-Jewish convert must perform (along with ritual immersion) to enter Judaism and become part of the Jewish people. Maimonides explains that because the rite is so painful, that an adult would only perform it if he truly believed in God. Thus, the pain associated with this Mitzvah is intentional, to show how much a Jew is willing to sacrifice for God, even at the earliest age. The parents, who also suffer pain watching their infant being "wounded" during the Brit ceremony, also demonstrate, in their willingness to nevertheless go through with the ritual, how strong their commitment is to God and Judaism. This same act has been repeated tens of millions of times over the ages, showing that it is precisely the same symbol and same covenant between God and each Jew in all generations. Others have explained the use of the organ of procreation to symbolize the future of the Jewish people. Thus, the physical sign upon this organ of creation binds together all Jews of all generations and associates the future of Judaism with God.

Why not Create Man Already Circumcised? - If it is, indeed, so crucial for the Jew to be circumcised, why did God instruct man to perform this ritual? God could have created man already circumcised, already "perfect," rather than creating an "imperfect" man who circumcises himself. Why make man do what God could have done through Creation? The wicked Turnus Rufus already asked this question of Rabbi Akiva. Rabbi Akiva responded to this question by asking Turnus Rufus, in effect, why God did not create any bread trees in the world. Every society eats and needs some sort of bread product as its staple in the nation's diet. Yet the process to get this staple as an edible food is unusually long and painstaking: plowing, seeding, watering, cutting, winnowing, threshing, sifting, kneading, and, finally, baking. Since all cultures have bread, would not it have been simpler for God to create a bread tree, with the bread all prepared, ready to be picked off the tree the same as a fruit?

Rabbi Akiva answers that all the effort needed is indeed part of the Divine plan. God purposely did not create bread trees, because He wanted man to go through all the painful steps to eat bread. God purposely created the world incomplete so that man could now make the world more complete. God only creates the wheat (with man's help) so that man can then take that wheat and process it and make it into bread. There is no other being on earth who takes God's creation and processes it and develops it as man does. No animal cooks its food or improves on raw material to make it better. This is man's goal in the world in partnership with God. God created an incomplete world so that man could continue with the creative process and complete it. Similarly, God purposely created man incomplete without a Brit Milah so that man could "complete the job" by performing circumcision.

This idea is expressed in the Aleinu prayer (the concluding prayer of each prayer service) in the phrase "Litakain Olam Bemalchut Shadai -- to perfect the universe through the Almighty's sovereignty." It is man's role to perfect the Creation begun by the Almighty. Man, thus, creates, imitating

Likutei Divrei Torah

God the Creator. This concept is also alluded to in the final word of the creation story (. On the seventh day God rested. The verse says that God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because He rested from all creative activity that He had created. Then, inexplicably, the verse adds the verb "Laasot-to do" at the end of the verse. This word is extraneous from the verse and makes no apparent sense. To make sense of the verse, it can be understood that the word "to do" does not apply to God, but to man. God created the world so that after God completes His creation, man can then do for himself in the world to continue the process. Man has a responsibility to continue and improve God's creation. This is symbolized, according to Rabbi Akiva, by the Brit Milah.

The Midrash supports this idea with a discussion between a philosopher and a Rabbi. When a philosopher specifically asked Rabbi Hoshaya why man wasn't born circumcised, he answered, like Rabbi Akiva, that everything created requires development. Plants must be sweetened; grain must be milled, and man also needs to be perfected. This concept also explains a Talmudic statement that Abraham was not complete until he circumcised himself. The act of circumcision completes the creation of God. Thus, rather than mutilation, which is often how circumcision is perceived in the secular world, Judaism views circumcision as an act of completion...

A Jewish Brit is a New Creation - The Hebrew word for covenant, Brit, is derived from the Hebrew word Bria, creation (Kuzari 1:97). What does this mean and what is its significance? A new creation today is formed when two separate entities combine to form something else. This is the essence of every covenant, Brit. The very first mention of Brit in the Torah is the rainbow following the flood that destroyed the world and saved Noah. The symbol of this Brit is incomplete, a rainbow of half of a circle. Why only half? Because each part of a Brit by itself is incomplete, such as the half circle of the rainbow symbolizing God's half of the covenant. It is only in combination with a new object, when a new creation is forged, along with man's part/half, that both parties contribute, and then the Brit become complete.

It is also interesting to note that in a Jewish covenant, Brit, the verb Lichrot, to cut off is used to describe the forging of a Brit (Nehemiah 9:8 is but one of many examples of this.). To forge a special covenant with Abraham (in addition to the Brit Milah), God commanded Abraham to cut the pieces of three animals in half. What is the significance of cutting off in forming a Brit? Only when each party "cuts off" something of himself and gives up a part of his own identity, can this new unit, a new creation, emerge. Thus, as part of this new creation of Brit, Abraham takes on a new name, as he becomes a new person, a new creation.

All of these symbols converge in a Brit Milah. A new creation, a new (complete) human being emerges after a Brit Milah. The covenant, Brit, is between the child and God, as the child is not complete without the spiritual component added by the Brit Milah, just as God is "incomplete" without this covenant with His people. And the Brit is forged by cutting off, removing a part of oneself to become unity with the other party (God). It is at that moment, therefore, that a Jewish boy receives his name, as he becomes a new entity, a new creation.

Thus, Brit Milah has significance for the Jew both on the individual level as well as the symbolic level. It demonstrates the Jew's commitment to God and his willingness to sacrifice to keep the relationship with God. Finally, it symbolizes the continuity of Judaism from the first Jew, Abraham, to today's Jew, uniting them through this commandment.

The two *Parashot* read this week--*Tazria* and *Metzora*--are devoted primarily to the laws of *Tzara'at*. R' Nossen Yehuda Leib (Leibel) Mintzberg z"l (1943-2018; rabbi and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Yerushalayim and Bet Shemesh, Israel) makes several observations about the order in which the various laws of *Tzara'at* are presented in our *Parashot*.

The Torah's presentation begins with the laws of *Tzara'at* that afflicts a person, then the laws of *Tzara'at* that afflicts a person's clothes, and finally the laws of *Tzara'at* that afflicts a person's house. However, in between the laws relating to clothing and the laws relating to houses, the Torah discusses the purification process and sacrificial offerings of a *Metzora* (person with *Tzara'at*). Perhaps, R' Mintzberg writes, this division is explained by the fact that the laws of *Tzara'at* on people and clothing applied even before *Eretz Yisrael* was conquered and settled, whereas the laws of *Tzara'at* on houses applied only afterwards.

He continues: *Tzara'at* on a person is described first because, although miraculous, it has a parallel in the natural world. In contrast, *Tzara'at* on clothing and houses does not parallel any natural occurrence, so it is listed later.

Also, *Midrash Rabbah* teaches that G-d, in His Mercy, strikes a person's home before his clothing, and his clothing before his person--the reverse of the order in which the three types of *Tzara'at* appear in the Torah. However, in order to highlight that *Tzara'at* is a punishment, the three types are listed in the order that hits "closest to home": first a person's body, then his clothes, then his house. (*Ben Melech Al Ha'Torah*)

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 . . .*" (*Yeshayah 58:13-14*)

R' Yaakov Kranz z"l (1741-1804; *Dubno Maggid*) explains these verse with a parable:

A well-off man had three sons--call them: Reuven, Shimon, and Levi. Reuven was extremely wealthy, while Shimon lived in abject poverty. Reuven and Shimon both lived in a town some distance from their father and their much younger brother, Levi.

When it came time for Levi to marry, the father wrote to his sons Reuven and Shimon, inviting them to the wedding. "All expenses you incur for my honor will be reimbursed," he wrote.

Immediately, Reuven outfitted himself and his wife and children with new suits, shoes, and jewelry and loaded them all into his gilded carriage. Just as he was about to set out for the wedding, he sent for his brother, Shimon: "Quickly, bring your family and ride with me." And, so, Reuven and Shimon arrived at their father's home together--one in his new finery and the other in rags.

After several weeks at his father's home, Reuven announced that it was time for him to return to his business, and he presented his father with a bill for the clothing and jewelry his family had worn to the wedding. His father, however, said, "What do you want from me?"

"You promised to reimburse me!" Reuven said, but his father denied it. Reuven then pulled out his father's letter and argued, "You said right here that you would reimburse me!"

- Continued in box inside -

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Pirkei Avot

“Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai had five students . . . He told them: ‘Go out and discern which is the proper path to which a person should attach himself.’ . . . Rabbi Yehoshua replied, ‘A good friend.’ Rabbi Yose replied, ‘A good neighbor.’ . . .” (Ch.2)

R’ Yechezkel Sarna z”l (1890–1969; *Rosh Yeshiva* of the Chevron Yeshiva) asks: Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai’s students were pious and holy men! Why did they need good friends and good neighbors; could they not cling to G-d through meditating in seclusion upon His greatness?

We see, answers R’ Sarna, that having a good friend and a good neighbor is not merely an aid to strengthening oneself spiritually. Rather, it is an integral part of serving *Hashem*, and anyone who thinks he can navigate Torah study and *Yir’at Hashem* / reverence of G-d completely on his own is sadly mistaken. (Daliot Yechezkel II p.281)

– Continued from back page –

“Please read the letter carefully,” replied the father. “It says: ‘All expenses you incur for my honor will be reimbursed.’ Had you incurred all of those expenses for my honor, you would have outfitted your poor brother and his family as well. But you thought only of making a good impression yourself--for your honor, not mine.”

Similarly, says the *Dubno Maggid*, how can we test whether the delicacies we consume on *Shabbat* are a fulfillment of the *Mitzvah* of *Oneg Shabbat* or merely pursuits of personal pleasure? One indication is whether we share our *Shabbat* table with those in need.

The *Gemara* (*Beitzah* 15b) teaches that expenditures made for *Shabbat* do not count against a person’s annual income decreed on *Rosh Hashanah*. Rather, *Hashem* says, “Borrow on My account and I will repay you.” However says the *Dubno Maggid*, one can count on that repayment only when his expenditures are in honor of *Shabbat*, which he demonstrates by including the needy at his meals; not when the expenditures are for his own gratification. As *Mishlei* (19:17) says, “One who is gracious to the poor has made a loan to *Hashem*, and He will pay him his reward.”

The *Dubno Maggid* adds: The above verses in *Yeshayah* provide another way of testing whether one is enjoying *Shabbat* for the sake of the *Mitzvah* or for his personal pleasure. If one is as careful in observing the *Shabbat* prohibitions listed in those verses--refraining from accomplishing one’s own needs on the holy day and honoring it by not engaging in one’s own ways and not seeking one’s needs or discussing the forbidden--as he is careful to enjoy delicacies, that is a sign that he is acting for the sake of the *Mitzvah*. (Ohel Yaakov: Behar)

“On the eighth day, the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.” (12:3)

The *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 132a) teaches: “On the eighth day”--even on *Shabbat*. [Until here from the *Gemara*]

R’ Avi Ezri Zelig Margalios z”l (17th century rabbinical judge and *Darshan* / preacher in several European cities) writes: Near the end of last week’s *Parashah* (11:45), we read, “For I am *Hashem* Who elevates you from the land of Egypt to be an *Elokim* to you; you shall be holy, for I am holy.” Why is the commandment to circumcise a boy on the eighth day even if it is *Shabbat* placed near that verse?

R’ Margalios answers: We read about Egypt on the night of the Exodus (*Shmot* 12:30), “There was not a house where there was no corpse.” If so, commentaries ask, how could *Hashem*, so-to-speak, enter Egypt to take *Bnei Yisrael* out? If a *Kohen* may not enter a place where there are corpses, certainly *Hashem*, who is figuratively called a “*Kohen*” and who is infinitely holier than a human *Kohen*, should not be allowed to enter such a place!

The answer is that even a *Kohen* may enter a place of impurity in order to save a life, and *Hashem* was saving *Bnei Yisrael*’s lives, both physically and spiritually. Therefore, He could enter Egypt. But, how do we know that saving lives supersedes nearly all of the *Mitzvot*? The *Gemara* learns it from our verse: If surgery on one limb--*i.e.*, circumcision--supersedes *Shabbat*, certainly saving a whole body supersedes *Shabbat* (and other *Mitzvot*).

(Kessef Nivchar)

“When you arrive in the land of Canaan that I give you as a possession, and I will place a *Tzara’at* affliction upon a house in the land of your possession.” (14:34)

Rashi z”l writes: This informed *Bnei Yisrael* that *Tzara’at* would come upon them because the Emorites concealed treasures in the walls of their homes during the whole 40 years *Bnei Yisrael* were the wilderness in order that *Bnei Yisrael* would not find them when they conquered the Land. But because of the *Tzara’at*, the Jewish People would pull down their homes and discover the treasures. [Until here from *Rashi*]

R’ Yehoshua Heschel (Harry) Kaufman *shlita* (rabbi in Washington, D.C., and Montreal) asks: Does *Hashem* have no better way to give *Bnei Yisrael* the Emorite treasures than to force *Bnei Yisrael* to tear down their own homes?

He answers: There is a great lesson here. It seems to a person that it is a great tragedy to need to tear down his house because of *Tzara’at*. Yet, amidst the rubble, he may discover buried treasure. This teaches us the proper outlook on all of life’s tribulations: somewhere in the trouble hides a silver lining. (Ohr Yehoshua)

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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POLL: NATIONAL UNITY SURPASSES LIKUD AS THE LARGEST PARTY (Arutz-7 4/16/23)

Former Defense Minister Benny Gantz's National Unity list, an alliance of the center-left Blue and White party and the center-right New Hope party, would become the Knesset's largest faction if new elections were held today a new poll found, surpassing the Likud.

According to a new poll, conducted by Midgam and released by Channel 12 Sunday night, if new elections were held today, National Unity party would more than double its electoral strength, rising from the 12 seats it won in November to 28 seats.

That marks a five-seat rise over the last Midgam poll, released on March 27th.

The Likud, by contrast, continues to decline, falling from 32 seats in the current Knesset and 25 seats in the previous poll to 24 seats.

Former Prime Minister Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid also fell, sinking to 20 seats, down from 24 in the current Knesset and 22 in the previous poll.

The Religious Zionist Party alliance with Noam and Otzma Yehudit also fell, receiving just 11 seats, compared to 14 in the current Knesset and 12 in the previous poll.

Shas and United Torah Judaism remained unchanged since the previous poll, with 10 and 7 seats respectively.

Yisrael Beytenu, Meretz, United Arab List (Ra'am) and Hadash-Ta'al each received five seats, while Labor and the Arab nationalist Balad party failed to cross the threshold, with 2.6% and 2.8% respectively, below the 3.25% minimum.

The parties which make up the coalition government received a total of just 52 seats in the poll, down from 64 in the current Knesset, while the Opposition parties rose from 56 seats to 68.

ISRAEL STANDS STILL AS SIRENS BLARE FOR HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY (Israel Hayom 4/18/23)

At exactly 10:00 am on Holocaust Remembrance Day, the country of Israel stood still to observe the memory of the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis during World War II.

No matter where people are, where they were driving, or what they were doing, everyone was united in a moment of silence.

Almost everyone stopped what they were doing, including motorists, who stopped their cars in the middle of the road, stood beside their vehicles, and joined in the reflection.

In that exact moment, and for the following two minutes, an air raid siren sounded throughout the country, with almost every Israeli observing the two minutes of solemn reflection.

In Tel Aviv, the thriving Israeli metropolis where the hustle and bustle never stops, people stood still on the beach, in the streets, in high rise office buildings, and even on their bus commutes.

The siren heard across the country marks the beginning of the main daytime ceremonies for Holocaust Remembrance Day, also known as Yom HaShoah, that began the night before with the official opening event at the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum in Jerusalem.

Ceremonies across the country, including in schools, public institutions, army bases, and business will occur throughout the day.

An hour after the siren, at 11 a.m. local time, the "Unto Every Person There is a Name" ceremony at the Knesset begins featuring lawmakers reading out the names of Holocaust victims.

Holocaust Remembrance Day is the start of a week with three Israeli holidays, progressing from commemoration to celebration: Yom HaShoah, Yom HaZikaron, a memorial day for soldiers killed in Israel's wars, and Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day.

ISRAEL REMEMBRANCE DAY: POLITICIANS TO ATTEND SERVICES – GALLANT (JPost 4/18/23)

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant insisted that ministers and MKs speak at official Remembrance Day services next week, despite a group of bereaved parents' request that politicians refrain from speaking due to the social upheaval over the proposed judicial reform.

Gallant met on Tuesday with the Public Council for Commemorating Soldiers, whose members expressed their concern that politicians' speeches will be disrupted. Government and Knesset representatives usually speak at ceremonies at military cemeteries throughout the country on Remembrance Day. The defense minister insisted that they speak this year as well, arguing that elected officials were a symbol of the state and that the demand to remove them was equivalent to a demand to remove the flag.

Politics must be separated from the issue of bereavement, Gallant said, adding that "we must not as a society lose one of our central social assets that serve as a bridge of unity, the IDF and security agencies, in general, and the bereaved families, in particular."

"We must not as a society lose one of our central social assets that serve as a bridge of unity, the IDF and security agencies in general and the bereaved families in particular."

The group of bereaved families that demanded that politicians avoid the cemeteries is called "With Their Death They Commanded," short for the phrase "with their death they commanded us life," but also short for the

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Cong. Anshe Sholom, New Rochelle, NY	Kemp Mill Synagogue, Silver Spring, MD
Cong. Beth Aaron, Teaneck, NJ	Mizrachi Shul, Johannesburg, SA
Cong. Beth Shalom, Monroe Twp, NJ	North Shore Hebrew Academy HS, NY
Cong. BIAV, Overland Park, KS	Suburban Orthodox, Baltimore, MD
Cong. Bnai Yeshurun, Teaneck, NJ	Suburban Torah Center, Livingston, NJ
Cong. Brothers of Israel, Allentown, PA	Temple Emanuel of Pascack Valley, NJ
Cong. Etz Ahaim, Highland Park, NJ	The Learning Shul, Columbia, SC
Cong. Ohav Emeth, Highland Park, NJ	Woodsburgh, NY Minyan
Cong. Ohr Torah, Edison, NJ	Young Israel Bet Tefilah of Aberdeen, NJ
Cong. Rinat Yisrael, Teaneck, NJ	Young Israel of Brookline, MA
Cong. Shomrei Torah, Fair Lawn, NJ	Young Israel of East Brunswick, NJ
Cong. Sons of Israel, Allentown, PA	Young Israel of Fort Lee, NJ
Cong. Zichron Mordechai, Teaneck, NJ	Young Israel of Hancock Park, CA
Cong. Zichron R. M. Feinstein, Brooklyn, NY	Young Israel of Holliswood, NY
Delray Orthodox Synagogue, Delray Beach, FL	Young Israel of Houston, TX
East Denver Orthodox Synagogue, CO	Young Israel of New Hyde Park, NY
East Hill Synagogue, Englewood, NJ	Young Israel of North Woodmere, NY
Flatbush Park Jewish Center, Mill Basin, NY	Young Israel of New Rochelle, NY
Harvard University Library	Young Israel of Sharon, MA
Hebrew Academy of Long Beach, NY	YI Shomrai Emunah, Silver Spring, MD

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altered slogan "with their death they commanded us democracy," which members of the group displayed at protests against the government's judicial reform.

The group put out a statement criticizing Gallant's comments.

"[Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu, wake up! The defense minister does not understand the reality, and we expect Prime Minister Netanyahu to intervene in order to solve the issue," it said.

"The decision to offend the bereaved families, to broaden the schism within bereaved families and to cause a desecration of Remembrance Day, all in the name of fake unity, is irresponsible, immoral and dangerous. Whoever wants to remove politics from Remembrance Day must send IDF officers to speak instead of insisting on politics and politicians entering the cemeteries.

"Ignoring the emotional turmoil in Israeli society and among thousands of bereaved families forces many families to make a vicious choice: Shout, avoid [the ceremony] or be a 'captive audience' for politicians, some of whom did not serve in the army and who routinely spread hate, incitement and divisiveness," the group said, adding that it would continue fighting the decision, which "drives a wedge" between bereaved families.

The group sent a letter last week to Eli Ben-Shem, CEO of Yad Labanim, an organization that commemorates the memory of the fallen soldiers and cares for their families, warning that politicians' presence at memorial ceremonies this year could lead to commotions and that for both the politicians' and families' sake, it was best that they stay away. More than 400 bereaved families signed the letter, but the group said it spoke in the name of thousands more.

LAPID WILL BOYCOTT OFFICIAL INDEPENDENCE DAY CEREMONY, CITING SOCIAL RIFTS (Ha'aretz 4/19/23)

Opposition leader Yair Lapid announced on Wednesday that he will not be attending the official torch-lighting ceremony for Israel's Independence Day over the country's current political climate.

In a Tweet addressing Likud lawmaker and Transportation Minister Miri Regev who is overseeing the ceremony, the former prime minister wrote that "in three months, you have torn apart Israeli society, and no fake fireworks show can cover that up." He added, "If national unity were so important to you guys, you would not have taken our democracy apart, and you would have gone to work on behalf of the citizens of Israel."

In response, Culture and Sports Minister Miki Zohar wrote that "Lapid's decision deepens the rift among our people and causes more unnecessary brotherly hatred." The Likud member added that "In these complicated times for us as a nation, anyone who sees himself as a leader must work toward unity and ending hatred."

The annual torch-lighting ceremony at Jerusalem's Mount Herzl is a fixture of Israel's Independence Day celebrations. It marks the transition from Memorial Day into the eve of Independence Day. During the ceremony, which is broadcast live to the nation, members of Israel's military and police perform drills and march in formations, the military orchestra plays and musical guests perform. Twelve torches are lit by figures chosen by a committee, considered a high honor.

On Tuesday, Regev instructed its organizers to cut the live broadcast and air a pre-taped dress rehearsal in the event of "provocations" during the ceremony related to the right-wing government's judicial overhaul plan. She did so after a discussion that included security officials such as Police Commissioner Kobi Shabtai, in order to prepare for protests at the event over the right-wing government's judicial overhaul plan. Regev clarified on Wednesday that this would only happen if there were "extreme issues."

The effectiveness of Regev's move would be limited, since footage of any protest via audience members' cell phones is expected to reach social media and news networks. The organizers of the ceremony will take additional steps to prevent a protest at the event, including further verification of the identity of invitees and preparing for the possibility that demonstrators will block the roads leading to Mount Herzl.

The leaders of the protest movement against the judicial overhaul called on the public to attend a mass Independence Day demonstration in Tel Aviv next week, promising **"the largest independence [day] event in the history of Israel."** The protest is scheduled for Tuesday evening, at the same time that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is slated to attend the official national ceremony at Jerusalem's Mount Herzl.

Some government officials have also had their invitations to Memorial Day services around the country cancelled as the two back-to-back national holidays become imbricated in the country's political climate. Earlier this week, Israel's Kibbutz Movement announced that it has rescinded Defense Minister Yoav Gallant's invitation for the group's memorial service next week at the direct request of bereaved families, who said they could not accept "inviting a government representative to a memorial ceremony at a time like this." The bereaved families' request was put forth by a branch of Yad LaBanim, Israel's sole organization tasked with upholding the memory of fallen soldiers and assisting grieving families.

The decision to cancel Gallant's invitation is the latest in a wave of government ministers being asked not to attend Memorial Day services. Last week, families in Be'er Sheva appealed to the city's mayor and Yad LaBanim to cancel National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir's invitation to attend the service at the city's cemetery.

Bereaved families have taken an active part in the demonstrations against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government's judicial overhaul plan, holding pictures of their fallen family members at protests and organizing small vigils at some rallies. Last months, hundreds of bereaved families called on the government to put a halt to the judicial overhaul legislation making its way through the Knesset, and asked members of the government not to attend Memorial Day ceremonies at military cemeteries.

MOODY'S DOWNGRADES ISRAEL'S CREDIT OUTLOOK TO STABLE OVER JUDICIAL REFORM CONCERNS (Israel Hayom 4/15/23)

Moody's, the global credit rating giant, announced a downgrade of Israel's outlook from "positive" to "stable" on Friday night, citing "deterioration of Israel's governance."

Nationwide protests broke out across the country after the proposed changes to the judiciary were announced some three months ago. They have persisted on a weekly basis, often causing major disruptions to the economy and according to some high-tech companies, the draft legislation has had an adverse effect on their ability to draw investors.

The outlook could mean that Israel will have to pay higher rates to potential borrowers and some funds could be dropped from the nation's sovereign bonds.

In the explanation of the decision late Friday, Moody's wrote: "The change of outlook to stable from positive reflects a deterioration of Israel's governance, as illustrated by the recent events around the government's proposal for overhauling the country's judiciary."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suspended the legislative process for the reform in late March amid widespread protests, but the measures are likely to come up to a vote when the Knesset comes back from recess later this month. Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich told Israel Hayom several weeks ago that the reforms will go ahead even if the talks with the Opposition on possible compromise reach a dead end. He also said Israel's economy was one of the strongest and most stable.

Opponents claim the judicial reform bills would grant the ruling party unbridled power by effectively having the ability to override the Supreme Court by a simple majority since governments usually have a majority coalition in Knesset.

Supporters of the measures say they will balance the power of the judiciary, executive, and legislative branches, bringing Israel more in line with other democratic nations.

The reforms also propose limiting the authority of the High Court to intervene in government appointments and policies, transferring control over the

judicial selection committee to the government, and curtailing the authority of government legal advisers.

Some 65% of respondents in recent polling have said they're against the changes.

ISRAEL FOILS PLOT TO ENLIST PALESTINIANS IN THE SERVICE OF IRAN (YNet 4/17/23)

The Shin Bet said on Monday that it had uncovered attempts by the Lebanon-based Hezbollah group and Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, Quds Force to enlist Palestinians residing in the West Bank to carry out terror attacks.

The months-long investigation ended with the arrest of two Palestinians - Yusef and Marsil Mansour - by the Shin Bet who told investigators that they had been approached online by two men, Huda Mahna and Haj Mohamad Raduan, also known as Mohamed Bashir, both identifying as Hezbollah operatives.

The Palestinian suspects agreed to smuggle weapons into the West Bank for the purposes of trade and with the help of Israeli criminals. Yusef agreed to carry out surveillance of IDF troop movement in the West Bank and elsewhere in Israel and tap others to join their terror plot and was transferred money on a number of occasions with Marsil's help.

It was also revealed that in the covert communications with Mohamed Bashir, Yusef used an inscription program for mail addressed to a specific address. After their interrogations, the two were charged with serious security offenses.

Shin Bet said their intelligence found that Mohamed Bashir and Huda Mahna were both members of the IRGC's Quds force responsible for assisting Palestinian terror in the West Bank and that their investigation exposed the methods used by both Hezbollah and Iran.

"We view efforts by Iran and its proxies to establish a terror infrastructure in Israel, with gravity," Shin Bet said. "Security forces will continue to work to identify and disrupt any attempts to attack Israel and threaten its security," they said.

MK DANNY DANON: THE US ADMINISTRATION IS NOT PREPARING TO NEUTRALIZE IRAN (Arutz-7 4/19/23)

MK Danny Danon (Likud) spoke to Newsmax during Holocaust Remembrance Day in Israel, saying the day is a reminder to "never allow a radical regime to threaten the Jewish people again."

He noted that Israel faces such a threat in Iran, which is trying to build an arsenal of nuclear weapons, adding that the Biden administration is not doing an effective job in neutralizing Tehran's ambitions.

"It shouldn't be the responsibility of only Israelis to deal with a nuclear Iran, God forbid," Danon said. "We expect that the US, the EU, the moderate Arab countries to join us in the efforts to neutralize that threat."

"Unfortunately," he continued, "we feel that the US administration is not preparing to neutralize Iran. That's why we're preparing all options for the day that we would have to actually neutralize that threat."

Commenting on the recent wave of terror in Israel, Danon said all of it can be traced back to Iran.

"We see unrest on a few fronts," he told Newsmax. "But then, when you look at what is the reason for the unrest, it all comes from Iran. They promote instability and division, whether it attacks from Lebanon, those rockets are being promoted by Hezbollah, a proxy of Iran, whether it's rockets coming from Gaza, it's been permitted by the Iranians, as well."

"They're trying to create instability in the region, and we are there, so we have to deal with the threats coming from Iran and we are collaborating with moderate Arab countries. They're also worried about the hostility coming from Tehran," added Danon.

PRESIDENT HERZOG LANDS IN POLAND TO MARK 80 YEARS SINCE THE WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING (JPost 4/18/23)

President Isaac Herzog arrived in Poland on Wednesday morning ahead of

official state ceremonies marking the 80th anniversary of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

The main event will take place in the square by the 1948 Rapoport memorial to the heroes of the revolt, built on the site of the former ghetto from where Polish Jews were transported to the gas chambers.

The annual ceremony dates back 75 years and commemorates the Jewish armed resistance against the Nazis that began on April 19 and lasted almost a full month until the ghetto was burned to the ground on May 16. The Nazis dramatically symbolized their victory by blowing up **Warsaw's Great Synagogue**.

This year, the event has been significantly expanded to include the presidents of Israel, Poland and Germany.

Herzog, along with his German and Polish counterparts, Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Andrzej Duda, respectively, will deliver speeches. Herzog will also hold bilateral meetings with Steinmeier and Duda.

The three leaders will then participate in a second ceremony at the Nozyk Synagogue, which was completed in 1902 and is the only synagogue in Warsaw to have survived World War II.

They **will unveil a plaque to honor the president's grandfather Yitzhak HaLevi Herzog**, who was chief rabbi of Ireland, Mandatory Palestine and then the first chief rabbi of the State of Israel. He visited the Nozyk Synagogue in 1946, just one year after the war's end.

A second ceremony will also be held at the synagogue.

The trip is Herzog's first visit to Poland since he became president in 2021. It follows a visit by Foreign Minister Eli Cohen last month. During that visit, Cohen ended a dispute about Israeli high school trips to concentration camps, which had been so severe that Israel recalled its ambassador and told the Polish envoy, who had been out of the country, not to return. Israel has since sent an ambassador back to Warsaw. Poland has promised to once again post an envoy in Israel but has yet to do so.

Relations have also been tense in past years over a Polish law criminalizing talk of Polish complicity in the Holocaust, and another law that placed a statute of limitations on property-restitution claims.

NETANYAHU OFFERS POST OF ISRAEL'S CONSUL GENERAL IN NEW YORK TO 'PROUD RACIST' MAY GOLAN (Ha'aretz 4/20/23)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has offered the soon-to-be vacant position of Israeli consul general in New York to controversial Likud lawmaker May Golan.

Golan, who is considered one of the most ardent supporters of Justice Minister Yariv Levin and his planned judicial coup, would take over from Asaf Zamir, who resigned last month after warning U.S. Jewish donors against the **government's attempts to overhaul the judiciary**. If Golan accepts the offer, she will have to resign from the Knesset, which would be seen as a **possible setback for Levin's camp and would come at a very sensitive time** – with the prime minister supposed to decide on the future of the reform and perhaps even compromise over some of its elements.

Sources in Likud confirmed details of the proposal, which was first published by Channel 12 News on Wednesday evening. A subsequent statement **issued by Likud, however, claimed that "the offer was made to Golan because of her excellent public diplomacy skills in English. Contrary to some claims, the offer has nothing to do with Justice Minister Levin, whom the prime minister values and counts on more than anyone else."**

Given Golan's known hatred for refugees, her resentment toward leftists and her hostility toward feminists – in 2017 she called described "radical feminism as a hate movement" – she would likely be given a very frosty reception by the liberal Jewish community in New York. During her activist days, when she **spearheaded rallies against African "infiltrators" in Tel Aviv**, May proclaimed that, **"If I'm racist in order to preserve my life, then I'm proud to be racist."**

Golan was originally appointed minister in the Prime Minister's Office and the cabinet recently approved her appointment as the head of a new ministry dedicated to advancing the status of women. The new position for Golan, who is currently in the United States, was due to be ratified by the Knesset

on Wednesday, but the vote was postponed.

Zamir resigned immediately after Netanyahu fired Defense Minister Yoav Gallant. A week early, he came out against the judicial coup while addressing **the Jewish Museum's annual fundraising gala, which gathers more than 900 significant donors from New York's corporate, social and cultural communities.**

"I'm deeply concerned about the direction the country is going in right now. If you want to have the national home and to be everyone's home, it really must be democratic," Zamir said to applause.

ISRAEL ABANDONS JEWISH PROPERTY IN POLAND – AGAIN (Aron Mor, JPost 4/18/23)

Foreign Minister Eli Cohen recently signed an agreement with the Polish government on the resumption of youth trips from Israel to Poland. At the time of writing these lines, the agreement is not yet open for public review until it is approved by the government but the sources who reviewed it and spoke with us strongly criticized it.

The agreement gives further justification to the nationalist historical politics of the Law and Justice government in Warsaw, according to which Poles were persecuted and suffered during the years of Nazi occupation no less than the Jews and even completely ignores the detentions and murders of Jews by Poles during the Holocaust.

In this way, the agreement causes long-term damage to the memory of the Holocaust. On a practical level, it allows the placement of a Polish supervisor for every Israeli youth group at every site they visit, while transferring security of the groups to Polish officials, contrary to the practice that had existed in the past.

The government – let alone the Knesset – must not approve this agreement. Regulating full diplomatic relations with Poland is not worth the historical **prices that Israel is required to pay for them. Anyone who examines Poland's positions in international forums will find that in recent years, in most cases, Poland has not supported Israel and has even joined condemnation votes against us.**

As we mark Holocaust Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Day, the proposed agreement is nothing less than a spit in the face of Polish Jewry in Israel and around the world, including the survivors and their heirs. It seems that Foreign Minister Cohen wants to present his political achievements at any cost before he gives his place next December to MK Israel Katz in a rotation agreed upon in advance between them.

The discussions with the Polish government have another important aspect: in them, Israel misses, once again, the demand for a fair settlement of the looted Jewish property that remained in Poland after World War II and was transferred to Polish hands without compensation. The previous omission occurred in 2021 when then-foreign minister Yair Lapid strongly opposed Polish legislation that effectively prevented Holocaust survivors among Polish Jews from filing claims for the restitution of their property (nationalized by the communist government after World War II).

ALTHOUGH HE froze diplomatic relations with Poland, Lapid achieved nothing beyond a temporary postponement of the implementation of the discriminatory legislation. Now Foreign Minister Eli Cohen has also missed the opportunity, perhaps the last, to reach an agreement on this charged issue, which has a lot of weight and will continue to cast a heavy shadow on the relations between the two countries.

In 1938, the property of the Jews in Poland constituted a quarter of all Jewish property in Europe and was estimated at three billion dollars at the time. Today, the value of the property is estimated at \$62 billion (NIS 225.5 b.) to \$208 b. (NIS 756.6 b.), depending on the way of real value calculation; a maximum of 3% of that value was restituted to heirs. The calculations were made by the American economist Sidney Zabudoff, who at the time was employed by the US Treasury, the White House and the CIA.

Even so, Poland is currently demanding \$1.4 trillion (NIS 5.1 t.) from Germany for the damages of the Nazi occupation in World War II, which includes the value of the Jewish property that was destroyed or looted by the

Nazis. Whether Poland will receive these compensations or not, the Polish demand has created a quantitative-financial basis for discussing the share of Polish Jewry in it, something that has not been done until today. This is of particular importance at a time when Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki announced, in 2021, that his government would under no circumstances pay Jews a single zloty, euro or dollar.

The abandonment of the effort to recover the property of Polish Jewish Holocaust survivors and their heirs stands in stark contrast to the state **auditor's harsh audit report, published in March 2022, on the government's failed handling of the issue.**

The State Audit Committee in the Knesset recently discussed this audit report and is monitoring the implementation of its recommendations. It is, therefore, essential that the government re-establish the ministerial committee for the restitution of Jewish property that was established in the past and that the committee supervises the negotiations with Poland and all the ongoing issues and disputes.

ISRAELI BROADCASTERS MUST NOT CENSOR INDEPENDENCE DAY PROTESTS (Editorial, Ha'aretz 4/19/23)

Transportation Minister Miri Regev on Wednesday denied the report on Channel 12 News that she ordered organizers of the torch-lighting ceremony that opens Independence Day festivities to broadcast the dress rehearsal of the event, if there are provocations against the government and the legislative overhaul during the live broadcast. But her denial – **"There's no intention of broadcasting a recording ... except in the event of 'extreme foul-ups'"** – should be understood as a confirmation of the report that yes, **"an extreme foul-up" could, for example, be objections to the legislative coup.**

This is another stage in the chain of offensive procedures that Regev has been introducing during **the preparation of this year's ceremony, including the choice of some torch lighters who are politically identified with her, and the broadcasting of a message on behalf of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as opposed to what was accepted procedure until now.** The decision to conceal from the public expressions of criticism at the national ceremony only proves the justness of the criticism against the judicial coup and the danger it represents.

The torch-lighting ceremony enjoys high status despite Regev's blatant politicization, mainly because it is broadcast live on the TV channels. Therefore the heads of channels 11, 12 and 13 must not cooperate with **Regev's initiative to censor the ceremony. The three channels recently stressed their clear position in favor of freedom of expression and democracy in Israel.**

On Channel 13 this is a genuine change in direction compared to the atmosphere that prevailed there until recently. For Channel 11 freedom of expression and independent coverage have become the flag it has raised **against the government's threat to shutter it. The main news channels are now making sure to claim that for them the truth of the news is a central value, even if the decision about the nature of that truth is in political dispute.**

The commitment to adhere to the truth when covering the attempt at a **judicial coup doesn't end with merely adding a waving flag alongside the channel's icon in the corner of the screen. The commitment begins with covering the situation as it is, before it was edited by the government. Broadcasting a recorded ceremony and reporting to the viewers that this is the "real" ceremony, when an entirely different event is taking place at the "real" ceremony, means broadcasting fake news. If there are expressions of criticism at the torch-lighting ceremony, they will be the news, rather than the dance performance or the pyrotechnics in the background, and certainly not the alternative version, which took place two days earlier.**

The television broadcasters must find a technical way to air the ceremony live and in full, without censorship. If they cannot, they must refuse to aid the ceremony altogether. If the truth is hidden from the viewers, it will undermine **the public's trust in them and aid the attempted governmental coup, something that will most certainly harm the broadcasters' operations in the future.**



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The Parshiyos of Tazria and Metzora deal at length with the laws of *tzaraas*, a leprocy-like blemish with a complex set of regulations for its identification and purification. One of the unique aspects of the *tumah* (ritual impurity) of *tzaraas* is that even though the blemish is already present, its impure status does not take effect until it is declared *tameh* (impure) by a Kohen. Similarly, after the *tzaraas* heals, the blemish is not considered pure until declared so by a Kohen. This is not the case for other sources of *tumah* where no declaration of a Kohen is needed for the *tumah* to take effect. Why is *tzaraas* unique in this manner?

The Talmud (Arachin 15b) teaches that *tzaraas* comes as a consequence of *lashon hara* (evil speech). A person who speaks ill of others does not recognize the power and potency of his or her words. Our words can have a profoundly negative impact on other people when we misuse them. Accordingly, explains the Chofetz Chaim, the Torah placed the authority and control of the status of the *tzaraas* in the hands – or more specifically the mouth – of the Kohen, to teach us how potent our words can be and the impact they can have on others.

But just as the authority to render the *tzaraas tameh* is placed in the hands of the Kohen, so too is the ability to render it *tahor* (pure). It is not only negative speech that can profoundly impact another person, but so too can positive speech. A kind word or sincere compliment can go a long way in lifting another person's spirit or imbuing them with confidence to face the next hurdle in life. A little small talk can make a big impact.

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

When a woman gives birth... (12:2)

Rav Simloai taught, just as man was created after the animals, so too the halachic rules for man are listed after the halachic rules of animals (as the rules of kashrus were listed in Parshas Shmini) (Rashi).

The rules of kashrus may be regarding animals, but they do not pertain to animals. Animals are not obligated to only eat other kosher animals. So what does it mean that the halachic rules for animals are listed before the rules for man? Both last parsha and this parsha are teaching us halachic rules that pertain to man!

Parsha Riddle

When is a Kohen not allowed to tell the metzora that he or she has tzaraas?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

For which two sins were special offerings brought during the inauguration of the Mishkan?

Answer: A calf for the Golden Calf, and a goat for the sale of Yosef, when they dipped his coat in goat's blood.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Much of *parashiyos Tazria* and *Metzora* discuss the laws of *tzara'as*, an affliction of the body, garments, and houses. These laws are not practiced today, although it is unclear why, as Rambam rules:

The purification of a person afflicted by *tzara'as* is carried out in Eretz Yisrael and in the Diaspora, while the Temple is standing and in the era when the Temple is not standing. (*Tumas Tzara'as* 11:6, based on *Tosefta Nega'im* ch. 8)

R. Yisrael Lipschitz records that he had long wondered about this, and that when he was young he had posed the question to R. Akiva Eiger, who replied that he, too, had wondered about this, and that he had no convincing answer (*Mareh Kohein* [introduction to *Maseches Nega'im*] #39).

Various reasons have been suggested for the desuetude of these laws:

- Some note Rambam's assertion that a *metzora* is only considered impure insofar as he or she has been "declared impure by a priest whose lineage is established," (*Terumos* 7:9), and suggest that the absence of such priests in contemporary times forestalls the practice of the laws of *tzara'as* (*Radvaz Terumos ibid.*; *Toldos Adam* (Lvov 5624) p. 35a; *Shut. le-Horos Nasan* 14:155:11-12). (A more complex explanation rooted in this basic idea is proposed by R. Lipschitz himself.)
- R. Yaakov Emden suggests that the laws regarding the impurity of the *metzora* are irrelevant today, since we are all ritually impure regardless (*She'eilas Yaavetz* 1:136).
- Some early sources assert that the laws of *tzara'as* are indeed not practiced subsequent to the destruction of the Temple, although it is difficult to know whether to take this claim at face value in light of the *Tosefta* mentioned above (see *Torah Sheleimah chelek 8 / krach 9* from p. 255).
- R. Menachem Kasher suggests (based on passages in the Sifra and Talmud Yerushalmi) that an actual living tradition, involving personal observation of one's teacher applying these laws, is required in order to apply them oneself. This tradition was broken, and so cannot be restored (*Torah Sheleimah ibid.*)
- Some suggest that we simply lack the necessary expertise (to properly identify the various types of *nega'im*) to practice these laws (see Dr. Sudi Namir, "*Tzara'as*" *be-Zeman ha-Zeh – Basis Hilchati*).

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RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am not just a Jewish music group.
2. I am mentioned at the Seder.
3. I am for a boy.
4. I am after a week

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am for you.
2. I am for your clothes.
3. I am for your house.
4. I could reveal treasures

Last Week's Answers

#1 Kos/Owl (My cheeks look like yours, Don't confuse me with a cup, I am around at night, I do give a hoot.)

#2 Neshet/Eagle (I am for Moshiach's time, My kids go on my back, I am not kosher, I am the forerunner to the airplane.)

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