

YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH

SHABBOS SHORTS

Candle Lighting 5:20 | Havdalah 6:21

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored by **Melanie & Sandy Karlin** in honor of the birth of their new granddaughter, Shira Emunah, daughter of Shayna & Raphael Karlin and sister of Tova Kayla & Simcha Lev.



Mission to Israel



YISE members are coordinating a mission to Israel and we encourage your participation. If you are not able to join us in Israel, please consider contributing to support supply distributions, including but not limited to clothing, meals, and other much-needed resources. Please donate at <https://www.yise.org/donate>; additional information on next page. [see flyer](#)

Mazal Tov

Chana & Paul Berner on the marriage of their granddaughter, Chaya Esther, daughter of Yaelle & Rabbi Pesach Levi of Lakewood, NJ, to Moshe Florans of Monsey, NY.

Arleeta & Rabbi Dr. Ivan Lerner on the birth of twin great-grandchildren, a boy and a girl, born to their grandchildren, Shoshana (Miller) & Shlomo Zalman Kaplan. Mazal Tov to grandparents, D'vorah & Rabbi Shmuel Miller, Beth Kaplan & Chaim Kaplan and great-grandmother Ilene Miller.

Judy & Mitch Taragin on the engagement of their son, Yitz, to Ariella Merrill of Ramat Beit Shemesh, daughter of Malkie & Michael Merrill. Mazal Tov to grandparents, **Elaine Taragin** and Gail & Barry Mahler, and to siblings, Shayna and Joey.

Kiddush Sponsors

Hashkamah Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by the **Hashkamah Minyan Kiddush Group** and by **Howard Wasserman** to commemorate the 50th anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah Parasha, Mishpatim.

Shul Kiddush is sponsored by **Judy & Zevi Mehlman and family** for the Yahrzeit of Muriel Alexander, Miriam Kayla bas Ber, on 7 Adar 1, beloved mother of Judy, and grandmother of Chani, Devorah and Moshe.

Sephardic Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by Ben Shelkowsky in honor of Adam Barzilay's birthday and by Allie & Lidor Hayun in honor of their daughter, Gila Chen.

Shabbos and Weekday Shiurim Sponsors

Hashkamah Minyan Shiur is sponsored by **David Jaray** in appreciation of Rabbi Grossman and all those who attend his shiur, and in memory of all those who have lost their lives in Israel

Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur is sponsored by **David Jaray** in appreciation of Rabbi Grauman and all those who attend his shiur, and in memory of Rabbi Hyatt, A"H and to all of those who have lost their lives in Israel. May their Neshamas have an Aliyah. Refuah Shlema to all those that are wounded and ill, and to all of those that have been traumatized in Israel during these times.

8:45 Minyan Shabbos Drasha is sponsored by **Rochelle Dimont** in memory of her father-in-law, grandfather, great-grandfather, HaRav Samuel Elchanan Ben HaRav Binyomin A"H, 2 Adar.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Sunday Morning Mussar Shiur is sponsored by **Hannah & Robert Klein** in memory of Gilda Haber, to commemorate her shloshim.

Ask the Rabbi was sponsored by **Delia Weiss, Miriam, Steve, Matan, Edan, and Merav Friedman** in memory of Dr. George Weiss, Gedalya Chaim ben Avraham Moshe A"H on his 7th Yahrzeit.

The Lower Lobby coffee station is sponsored **Sandie Thurman** and by **Roast Masters Hannah & Robert Klein** and **Adi Haramati**.

Shabbos Schedule

Minyan Locations:

B - Belonofsky Sanctuary, **S** - Social Hall,
LBM - Large Beis Medrash,
SBM - Small Beis Medrash, **H** - The House

FRIDAY NIGHT:

Mincha/Maariv:

5:20 (B) 5:15 (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), 5:15 (B), 5:15 (Sephardi, LBM)

Maariv: 6:20 (B)

DIVREI TORAH:

8:45 Main Minyan - Rabbi Rosenbaum

9:15 Minyan - Rabbi Postelnek

SHIURIM:

Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur (SBM)

Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman

Ohr HaChaim Chabura: 8:55 (S)

Rabbi Postelnek

Shiur between Mincha/Maariv (B)

Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman

Youth Announcements

Teen Minyan - Led by Rabbi Moshe Holzer, 9:15 AM in The House, followed by Kiddush

Shabbos Groups - 10AM until shul ends

- Toddler Group, under 2 with parent, Toddler Room
- Kinder Group, 2-5, upstairs behind the balcony
- Boys 6-9 & Girls 6-9 and 5th-6th Grade Girls, meet in lower lobby and walk to YGW

For more information, contact Sharon Shimoff at sshimoff@yise.org

Dor L'Dor - sponsored by **Debbie & Stuart Goldman**. February 10 at 7:45 PM in the Social Hall.

Purim Costume Gemach - Monday, February 12 from 7PM - 10 PM. More dates in March.

High School Girls Pizza & Paint Night - March 2 at 8 PM at The House.

Middle School Girls Topsy-Turvy Dinner - March 3 from 5 PM - 7 PM at The House. [see youth flyers](#)

WANT TO SPONSOR A SHABBOS OR WEEKDAY SHIUR? PLEASE EMAIL OFFICE@YISE.ORG

YISE Supports Israel

Mission to Israel Several members of YISE are coordinating a mission to Israel, Tuesday - Thursday, February 20-22. For additional information, please contact Yehuda Shinensky (shinensky@gmail.com) or Jeremy Goodman (jeremyhgoodman@gmail.com). If you are unable to attend in person, please consider contributing to help sponsor events and supplies, including, but not limited to, meals, clothing, and other supplies for evacuated communities and IDF personnel. Examples include mezuzot for damaged communities, toys for children, coffee and other hot kits for deployed units. *YISE invites members with family on active IDF duty to share their profiles at announce@yise.org. YISE maintains a community-wide Tehillim WhatsApp group. To join, visit chat.whatsapp.com/GdkM5n3uJx44h8x8FbwBE10. To submit names of soldiers serving in the IDF for tefilot, please send the soldier's Hebrew name and his/her mother's Hebrew name to csimon@YISE.org.*

We pray that our soldiers will return soon to their peacetime roles, and in the interim ask our members to daven and undertake other zechuyos on behalf of these and other IDF personnel defending Israel and our people.

Tefilah We gather in the Belonofsky Sanctuary on Sunday evenings after Mincha/Maariv for 15 minutes of communal Tehillim. Additionally, Tehillim are recited at each daily and Shabbos minyan. Rabbi Rosenbaum leads a daily 15-minute Zoom of Tehillim recital and study of the Sefer Mesilas Yesharim Sunday through Friday at 12:30 PM on **Zoom A**.

Tzedaka A list of charitable organizations is available at: <http://www.yise.org/israel-2023-10-11-small.pdf>

Political Action information can be accessed via AIPAC <http://www.aipac.org/act> and the OU <https://advocacy.ou.org>
As we engage our efforts through tefilah, tzedakah and political action, let us also beseech Hashem daily to bring safety to the citizens of Israel, success to its military, and clarity to its leadership.

Upcoming YISE Events

Heroes of Zaka - Come show your support and gratitude for our brave & courageous volunteers. February 13, 8 PM. [see flyer](#)

Lunch and Learn - Wednesday, February 14, 11:45 AM at YISE with Rabbi Brahm Weinberg. Musical presentation by Dr. Stuart Goldman. RSVP by Sunday, February 11 to director@goldennetwork.org or 301-732-1773. Donations appreciated. [see flyer](#)

Likras Shabbos: A Deeper Understanding of Kabbalas Shabbos: Learn and appreciate the inner meaning and depth of Kabbalas Shabbos. Given by Rabbi Postelnek. Next Shiur this Thursday, February 15, 8:50 PM -9:30 PM at the Zagelbaum home, 1111 University Blvd. W, Apt. 106. link to past recordings: <https://wp.yise.org/likras-shabbos>. [see flyer](#)

Shabbos Sefer Soiree - Rabbi Postelnek will speak on "The Nesivos Shalom: A Contemporary Gateway to Profound Torah Insights" on Friday, February 16 at 8:30 PM in the Social Hall, followed by light refreshments. [see flyer](#)

YISE Annual Trivia Event - Join us for a night of trivia fun! Pizza, drinks, coffee bar, beer, and prizes! For ages 21+ only. Come with a team of 5-8 people, or join a team that night! February 17 at 8 PM in the YISE Social Hall. RSVP at [YISE.org/trivia](https://www.yise.org/trivia). \$18 at the door, or get the early bird discount of \$12 (members) or \$15 (not-yet-members) if you RSVP by February 11. [see flyer](#)

Hearing from a Chayal - Come to the YISE Social Hall Sunday, February 18 at 6:30 PM to hear about the wartime experiences of Jake Greenberg, a chayal in IDF raised in our community. [see flyer](#)

The Ruach Minyan is back on Friday, February 23, with Kabbalos Shabbos in the large social hall with Eli Hochberg as the Baal Tefila, following Mincha, which is in the Belonofsky Sanctuary at 4:35 PM. Children's program during Maariv with Mrs. Koss. It's going to be Gevaldic! For more info, contact adambashein@gmail.com

Scholar-In-Residence - Hadassah (Michelle) Margolis - Friday, February 23 "Jews and Their Books: The Last 1,000 Years," Shabbos, February 24 "Women and the Jewish Book," and Sunday, February 25 "Megillat Esther Across the Ages". [see flyer](#)

GWCK Shabbos of Inspiration at YISE with guest baal tefillah and singer, Mordechai Levovitz! Shabbos Parshas Ki Sisa - March 1-2. To reserve for the Shabbaton dinner, visit [yise.org/gwckshabbaton](https://www.yise.org/gwckshabbaton). [see flyer](#)

Seeing Tachanun Through New Eyes - On Sunday, March 3 at 10:30 AM, Rabbi Rosenbaum will address some of the powerful themes of Tachanun that can speak meaningfully to us, particularly in these difficult times. Event will be in the Belonofsky Sanctuary, followed by light refreshments in the Social Hall and on **Zoom A**. Presented by the Meaningful Tefilah Project. To sponsor, please contact the shul office. [see flyer](#)

Scholar-In-Residence - Rabbi Edward Reichman, MD - Friday, March 8 "Ancestry DNA in Halakha: What is Your Sitting Image?," Shabbos, March 9 "Medical Halakha Update 5784" and "Monarchs, Minyanim and Mitochondrial DNA: Jews, Medicine and History". [see flyer](#)

Save the Date: Scholar-In-Residence - Rabbi Avishai David at YISE - May 18 [see flyer](#)

Zoom Connection details in the SHMA and at <https://wp.yise.org/zoom>. Flyers are available at <https://wp.yise.org/flyers>.

The Week Ahead		Sunday Feb 11 2 Adar I	Monday Feb 12 3 Adar I	Tuesday Feb 13 4 Adar I	Wednesday Feb 14 5 Adar I	Thursday Feb 15 6 Adar I	Friday Feb 16 7 Adar I	<u>Next Shabbos</u> February 16-17, 2024 8 Adar I 5784 Parashas Terumah Candle lighting 5:28 Havdalah 6:28 Friday Night: Mincha/Maariv: 5:30 (B) 5:25 (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), 5:10 (B), 5:25 (Sephardi, LBM) Maariv: 6:28	
Shacharis	Ashkenazi (S,B,B)	6:30	6:15	6:15	6:15	6:15	6:15		
		7:30	6:45	6:55	6:55	6:45	6:55		
		8:45	8:45	8:45	8:45	8:45	8:45		
	Sephardi (LBM)	8:00	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30		
Mincha/ Maariv	Ashkenazi (B)	5:30	5:30	5:30	5:30	5:30			
	Sephardi (LBM)	5:20	5:20	5:20	5:20	5:20			
Maariv	Ashkenazi (B)		7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30			
Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 5:44 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 6:12 AM, Latest Netz: 7:05 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:40 AM, Earliest Mincha: 12:53 PM, Earliest Shkia: 5:40 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim 6:28 PM									

RABBI DOVID ROSENBAUM
RABBI YOSEF POSTELNEK - ASST RABBI
JOSH SEIDEMANN - PRESIDENT

NEXT SHABBOS SHORTS DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, NOON
SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE SHABBOS SHORTS TO: ANNOUNCE@YISE.ORG
WWW.YISE.ORG | 301-593-4465 | OFFICE@YISE.ORG



FEBRUARY 2024 | 22 SHEVAT - 20 ADAR I 5784

בס"ד

SHMA

YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH
SHOMRAI MONTHLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Shul Announcements

Tehillim Insights WhatsApp Group - Deepen your connection to Tehillim with short, meaningful messages from Rabbi Rosenbaum and Rabbi Postelnek. One Perek a day! Recordings and signup link at: <https://wp.yise.org/tehillim> *see flyer*

Welcoming Committee! If you would like to welcome a new person or family to your Shabbos table and the YISE community, email welcome@yise.org with the subject "happy to welcome" and we will contact you for details.

Mazal Tov on the Birth of Your Son or Daughter! YISE can help organize meals. Contact Miriam Levson at 901-481-7133 or miriamlevson@gmail.com or Rose Blynn at 410-522-8624 or rab411@gmail.com Send details to announce@yise.org.

Happy birthday! Happy anniversary! Want to celebrate a Birthday or Anniversary? Email office@yise.org 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

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, mskarlin@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>.

Upcoming Community Programs & Listings

February 2024 Yad Yehuda Donation Contest - Make a donation in one of the Capital Kasher Pantry's DipJar donation devices (located in Ben Yehuda Pizza, Shalom Kosher and KMS) and you'll automatically be entered into a drawing for a \$100 Ben Yehuda Pizza gift card. Look for more information on our Facebook page, community listservs and on the DipJar donation machines.

Mental Health Practical and Emotional Resources - When it comes to mental health resources, navigating this landscape can be confusing and overwhelming. Come learn what Amudim and BCGW have to offer. Emma Lash, a local therapist, and Leah Scheinenger, founder of Ben's Wellness, will discuss the importance of getting the help you need and how to access this help. Sunday, February 4 from 10 AM to 11:30 AM on Zoom. Register at <https://us02web.zoom.us/joining/register/tZwtfuyhrjwrGdbYMSheq0z8mx2bXh9zCLA>. For more information, contact asiegel@bikurcholimgw.org.

Advanced Planning: Integrating Jewish Values with End of Life Planning - Advance Directive Workshop with Rabbi Dr. Shlomo Brody. Sunday, February 25, 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM. Register at <https://us02web.zoom.us/joining/register/tZEudOyppz8vH9RG18MN2ZplxS8WP42baAH>. For more information, contact asiegel@bikurcholimgw.org.

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday nights, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM. February 7, 21 (International Speech Contest) in person in YISE Social Hall. February 14, 28 on Zoom, Meeting ID: 986 546 841, Passcode: 3671. See what Toastmasters is all about and find out how you can become a more confident communicator. Contact Manasseh Katz at vpe@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info.

Ko-Ach Boys Baseball (grades K-6th) starts in March! Use promo code "SWING" for early bird \$30 off through February 29 (\$25 off for Kindergarten T-Ball). Games take place on Sundays at White Oak Middle School March 31-June 9. Register: <https://hoopeducation.com/ko-ach/>

Recurring Community Programs and Listings

Friday Night Learning - As a Zechus for Acheinu Kol Beis Yisroel, there will be a 30 minute learning Seder in the Yeshiva following Maariv on Leil Shabbos, Friday nights. All the Bnei HaYeshiva and men of the community are encouraged to attend. No matter where you daven, come to the Yeshiva Beis Medrash after Maariv and increase the merits of Klal Yisroel.

Join the Buddy Network - Do you live alone and want a buddy? Do you want to volunteer to be a buddy? Have a buddy check in during extreme weather or power outages. Make sure you have the basic necessities when you can't get out. Register at <https://goldennetwork.org/buddynetwork> For more info. call 301-732-1773 or email director@goldennetwork.org

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 9:30am at the home of Michelle Penn 816 Lamberton Dr.. For more information, email channahandjeff@gmail.com or call 773-219-5397.

Zoom Shiurim with Rabbi Levy - Monday through Friday on Zoom, Meeting ID: 636 563 5989. Alshich - 9:20 AM - 10:30 AM. Gemara Ribit 10:30 AM - 11:45 AM. Hilchot Lashon Hara 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM. Sunday Alshich 11:45 AM - 12:45 PM.

TGN Program: Siddur Class - In-Depth Analysis of the Siddur with Mrs. Esther Dziadek, Wednesday mornings, 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM, on Zoom B. For more information, call 301-732-1773 or email director@goldennetwork.org

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 mblate@yeshiva.edu

Dirshu - Join Kollel Dirshu of Silver Spring, now studying Maseches Bava Basra, at YGW. Daily morning shiur by Rabbi Eli Reingold at 5:45 AM and evening shiur by Ranon Cortell and Pinchas Werner at 9:00 PM. Chavrusas also available during these times. For more info. and to join our program, contact Hirsh Komarow 301-633-6262 or komarow@gmail.com

Women's Weekly Unity Gathering. Tehillim, divrei chizuk, and learning at the KMS Beit Midrash, Sundays, 8:00-9:15 PM Women all around the Silver Spring community (and beyond) are called together to unite in Torah learning and tefillah. Every week, we will recite Tehillim and then a fabulous community leader will give us words of chizuk. Afterwards, everyone is invited to learn on their own or in a group. Open to girls and women of all ages. Contact Rachel Tor at rachelctor@gmail.com for more information.

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 at the YGW Boys' Campus. Weekdays also online via a WebEx video conference. Sunday 8:30 AM, Monday - Thursday 8:45 PM. Shabbos, 7:30 AM. Contact Judd Lifschitz at lifschitz@slslaw.com for more info.

Daily Halacha Program from Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold Receive one every day in your inbox. Sign up at dvarhalacha.com.

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

RABBI DOVID ROSENBAUM
RABBI YOSEF POSTELNEK - ASST RABBI
JOSH SEIDEMANN - PRESIDENT

MARCH DEADLINE: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, NOON
SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE SHMA TO: ANNOUNCE@YISE.ORG
WWW.YISE.ORG | 301-593-4465 | OFFICE@YISE.ORG

Sundays

7:35 AM - 8:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
9:30 AM - GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch & Learn Four great Shiurim to choose from, in the **Social Hall**
9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), on **Zoom A**
10:00 AM - Rabbi Tuvia Grauman - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, on **Zoom C**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**

Mondays

6:35 AM - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
8:45 AM - The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's Shiur for men & women studying Parashas Hashavua, on **Zoom B**
9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
8:00 - 9:00 PM Chavrusa Learning, in the **Social Hall**. For more info contact Rabbi Levy at 240-423-8810

Tuesdays

5:55 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Gemara Shiur for Men, on **Zoom A**
6:35 AM - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
1:30 PM - Rabbi Yitzchak Scher's Shiur for Men and Women "Profits from the Prophets", in-person, in the **Small Beis Medrash** and on **Zoom G**
8:15 PM - 9:15 PM - CLAS Mrs. Sara Malka Winter "Visions of the Prophets, Lessons & Insights from the Weekly Haftorah" for Women, on **Zoom D**
8:45 PM SCP (Semichas Chaver Program) for more information contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps: hshaps@gwckollel.org.

Wednesdays

6:35 AM - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
9:00 AM - The Golden Network Presents: Mrs. Esther Dziadek's Siddur Class, on **Zoom B**
9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
11:00 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Nach Shiur, now learning Sefer Iyov, on **Zoom A**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
8:00 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Women's Navi Shiur, now learning Sefer Shmuel, on **Zoom A**
8:15 PM - 9:15 PM - CLAS Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman - Reading Responsa for Men, on **Zoom E**
8:30 PM - Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning the third Perek of Maseches Bava Basrah, in the **Social Hall** and on **Zoom H**

Thursdays

6:35 AM - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
8:15 PM - 9:15 PM - CLAS Rabbi Avraham Sussman Yesodei Hatorah Gemara Skills Building for Men, on **Zoom F**
8:15 PM - 9:15 PM - CLAS Rabbi Hillel Shaps On the Same Page Gemara for Men, in the **Social Hall**

Fridays

5:55 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Gemara Shiur for Men, on **Zoom A**
6:35 AM - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**

*Class times and locations as of February 1.
 Please check <https://wp.yise.org/about/classes/>
 for updated info.*

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, password 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, password 161699



So Much To Do At YISE!

2/10: Dor L'Dor - Family Chevrusah-style learning

2/12, 3/3, 3/6, 3/10: Purim Costume Gemach

2/13: Heroes of ZAKA

2/14: Golden Network Lunch and Learn

2/15: Likras Shabbos Shiur with Rabbi Postelnek

2/16: Shabbos Sefer Soiree

2/17: Annual Trivia Night - 21+

2/18: An Evening with IDF Chayal Jake Greenberg

2/20-2/22: Mission to Israel

2/23: Ruach Minyan - Kabbalas Shabbos

2/23- 2/25: Scholar-in-Residence Hadassah (Michelle) Margolis

2/24: Dor L'Dor - Family Chevrusah-style learning

3/1-3/2: Greater Washington Community Kollel Shabbaton - Shabbos of Inspiration

3/2: Painting and Pizza for High School Girls

3/3: Topsy Turvy Dinner and Chesed Activity for Middle School Girls

3/3: Seeing Tachanun Through New Eyes with Rabbi Rosenbaum

3/8: Scholar-in-Residence Rabbi Dr. Edward Reichman

3/9: Dor L'Dor - Family Chevrusah-style learning

3/17: YISE and KMS Pre-Purim Carnival

For more info about any of these events visit wp.yise.org/flyers



DOR L'DOR

At Young Israel Shomrai Emunah!

*A Family Chevrusah-style Learning in a fun environment
Delicious Pizza! Interactive Discussions! Weekly Raffles!*

5784 Motzei Shabbos Times:

- November 11 — 7:00 pm
- November 25 — 7:00 pm
- December 16 — 7:00 pm
- December 30 — 7:00 pm
- January 13 — 7:00 pm
- January 27 — 7:30 pm
- February 10 — 7:45 pm
- February 24 — 7:55 pm
- March 9 — 8:00 pm

For program questions, contact Michael Shimoff at mshimoff@yise.org

YISE Arcola Social Hall

Sponsor opportunities:

Pillar \$500 | Sponsor \$360 | Supporter \$250 |

Chaver \$180| Friend \$50

To sponsor this program, please contact the YISE office at office@yise.org







YISE Youth Presents

PURIM COSTUME GEMACH AT YISE

Come browse an extensive collection of costumes that will engage your child's imagination & add "Freilich" to their Purim

Monday, February 12th 7pm-10pm
Sunday, March 3rd 11am-4pm
Wednesday, March 6th 7pm-10pm
Sunday, March 10th 11am-4pm

At the YISE House
1128 Arcola Ave
(Parking at Shul)

**Purim Art Competition
for Children on 3/3 & 3/10**



For more information:
Email sshimoff@yise.org or
brachaorlansky@gmail.com

Costume donations also welcome



YISE Youth Presents

PURIM COSTUME GEMACH AT YISE

Come browse an extensive collection of costumes that will engage your child's imagination & add "Freilich" to their Purim

Monday, February 12th 7pm-10pm
Sunday, March 3rd 11am-4pm
Wednesday, March 6th 7pm-10pm
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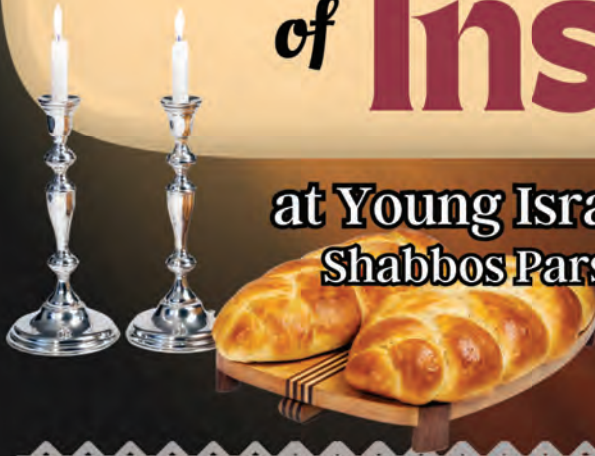


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Volume 30, Issue 18

Shabbat Parashat Mishpatim

5784 - B"H

Covenant and Conversation

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, z"l

Doing and Hearing - One of the most famous phrases in the Torah makes its appearance in this week's parsha. It has often been used to characterise Jewish faith as a whole. It consists of just two words: na'aseh venishma, literally, "we will do and we will hear". What does this mean and why does it matter?

There are two famous interpretations, one ancient, the other modern. The first appears in the Babylonian Talmud, where it is taken to describe the enthusiasm and whole-heartedness with which the Israelites accepted the covenant with God at Mount Sinai. When they said to Moses, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will hear," they were saying, in effect: Whatever God asks of us, we will do – and they said this before they had heard any of the commandments. The words, "We will hear," imply that they had not yet heard – neither the Ten Commandments, nor the detailed laws that followed as set out in our parsha. So keen were they to signal their assent to God that they agreed to His demands before knowing what they were.

This reading, adopted also by Rashi in his commentary to the Torah, is difficult because it depends on reading the narrative out of chronological sequence (using the principle that "there is no before and after in the Torah"). The events of chapter 24, according to this interpretation, happened before chapter 20, the account of the revelation at Mount Sinai and the Ten Commandments. Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, and Nachmanides all disagree and read the chapters in chronological sequence. For them, the words na'aseh venishma mean not, "we will do and we will hear," but simply, "we will do and we will obey."

The second interpretation – not the plain sense of the text but important nonetheless – has been given often in modern Jewish thought. On this view na'aseh venishma means, "We will do and we will understand." From this they derive the conclusion that we can only understand Judaism by doing it, by performing the commands and living a Jewish life. In the beginning is the deed. Only then comes the grasp, the insight, the comprehension.

This is a signal and substantive point. The modern Western mind tends to put things in the opposite order. We seek to understand what we are committing ourselves to before making the commitment. That is fine when what is at stake is signing a contract, buying a new mobile phone, or purchasing a subscription, but not when making a deep existential commitment. The only way to understand leadership is to lead. The only way to understand marriage is to get married. The only way to understand whether a certain career path is right for you is to actually try it for an extended period. Those who hover on the edge of a commitment, reluctant to make a decision until all the facts are in, will eventually find that life has passed them by. The only way to understand a way of life is to take the risk of living it. So: Na'aseh venishma, "We will do and eventually, through extended practice and long exposure, we will understand."

In my Introduction to this year's Covenant and Conversation series, I suggested a quite different, third interpretation, based on the fact that the Israelites are described by the Torah as ratifying the covenant three times: once before they heard the

commandments and twice afterward. There is a fascinating difference between the way the Torah describes the first two of these responses and the third:

The people all responded together, "We will do [na'aseh] everything the Lord has said."

When Moses went and told the people all the Lord's words and laws, they responded with one voice, "Everything the Lord has said we will do [na'aseh]."

Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, "We will do and hear [na'aseh venishma] everything the Lord has said."

The first two responses, which refer only to action (na'aseh), are given unanimously. The people respond "together." They do so "with one voice." The third, which refers not only to doing but also to hearing (nishma), involves no unanimity. "Hearing" here means many things: listening, paying attention, understanding, absorbing, internalising, responding, and obeying. It refers, in other words, to the spiritual, inward dimension of Judaism.

From this, an important consequence follows. Judaism is a community of doing rather than of "hearing." There is an authoritative code of Jewish law. When it comes to halachah, the way of Jewish doing, we seek consensus.

By contrast, though there are undoubtedly principles of Jewish faith, when it comes to spirituality there is no single normative Jewish approach. Judaism has had its priests and prophets, its rationalists and mystics, its philosophers and poets. Tanach, the Hebrew Bible, speaks in a multiplicity of voices. Isaiah was not Ezekiel. The book of Proverbs comes from a different mindset than the books of Amos and Hosea. The Torah contains law and narrative, history and mystic vision, ritual and prayer. There are norms about how to act as Jews. But there are few about how to think and feel as Jews.

We experience God in different ways. Some find Him in nature, in what Wordsworth called "a sense sublime / Of something far more deeply interfused, / Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns, / And the round ocean and the living air." Others find Him in interpersonal emotion, in the experience of loving and being loved – what Rabbi Akiva meant when he said that in a true marriage, "the Divine Presence is between" husband and wife.

Some find God in the prophetic call: "Let justice roll down like a river, and righteousness like a never-failing stream". Others find Him in study, "rejoicing in the words of Your Torah...for they are our life and the length of our days; on them we will meditate day and night." Yet others find Him in prayer, discovering that God is close to all who call on Him in truth.

There are those who find God in joy, dancing and singing as did King David when he brought the Holy Ark into Jerusalem. Others – or the same people at different points in their life – find Him in the depths, in tears and remorse, and a broken heart. Einstein found God in the "fearful symmetry" and ordered complexity of the universe. Rav Kook found Him in the harmony of diversity. Rav Soloveitchik found Him in the loneliness of being as it reaches out to the soul of Being itself.

There is a normative way of performing the holy deed, but there are many ways of hearing the holy

voice, encountering the sacred presence, feeling at one and the same time how small we are yet how great the universe we inhabit, how insignificant we must seem when set against the vastness of space and the myriads of stars, yet how momentarily significant we are, knowing that God has set His image and likeness upon us and placed us here, in this place, at this time, with these gifts, in these circumstances, with a task to perform if we are able to discern it. We can find God on the heights and in the depths, in loneliness and togetherness, in love and fear, in gratitude and need, in dazzling light and in the midst of deep darkness. We can find God by seeking Him, but sometimes He finds us when we least expect it.

That is the difference between na'aseh and nishma. We do the Godly deed "together." We respond to His commands "with one voice." But we hear God's presence in many ways, for though God is one, we are all different, and we encounter Him each in our own way.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

What Constitutes a Jewish Court? - "These are the statutes which you must place before them." If two religiously observant Jews are engaged in a disagreement which has financial ramifications, are they permitted to go to a secular court to arbitrate their dispute or must they go to a religious court or bet din? Is the law different in Israel, which has a religious as well as a secular court system, but where even the secular court judges are Jewish? And if indeed Jews are religiously ordained to go to religious courts exclusively, why is this the case? After all, secular courts in America are certainly fair and equitable!

The Torah portion of Mishpatim provides interesting responses to all three questions. It opens with the command: "These are the statutes which you [the Israelites] shall place before them [the religious judges]". Rashi immediately cites the Talmudic limitation: "Before the religious judges and not before gentile judges. And even if you know that regarding a particular case, they [the gentile judges] would rule in the exact same way as the religious judges, you dare not bring a judgment before the secular courts. Israelites who appear before gentile judges desecrate the name of God and cause idols to be honored and praised."

According to this passage, it would seem that the primary prohibition is to appear before gentile judges who are likely to dedicate their legal decision to a specific idol or god; it is the religion of the judge rather than the content of the judgment which is paramount. From this perspective, one might legitimately conclude that Israeli secular courts – where the judges are all Jewish – would not be prohibited.

Moreover, secular courts in America – where there is a clear separation between religion and state in the judiciary – may very well likewise be permitted.

However, the great legalist and philosopher Maimonides would seem to support another opinion. Although he begins his ruling, "Anyone who brings a judgment before gentile judges and their judicial

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systems... is a wicked individual" – emphasizing the religious or national status of the judge rather than the character of the judgment – he then concludes, "...and it is as though he cursed and blasphemed [God], and lifted his hand against the laws of Moses."

Apparently, Maimonides takes umbrage at a Jew going outside the system of Torah law, thereby disparaging the unique assumptions and directions of the just and righteous laws of God.

In order for us to understand exactly what is unique about the Jewish legal system, permit me to give an example of the distinctive axioms of Torah law from another passage in this Torah portion, the prohibition against charging or accepting interest on a loan.

"If you will lend money to my nation, to the poor person with you, you may not be to him as a creditor, you may not place upon him an interest rate [neshekh]; and if you accept from him your friend's cloak as security for the loan you must return the cloak to him before sunset. Because, after all, it may be his only cloak and [without it], with what [cover] will he lie down? And if he cries out to Me, I shall hear because I am gracious."

In addition to noting the touching poignancy of the latter portion of the passage, I would like to ask four questions, one on each of the four earlier phrases of the commandment. First of all, the prohibition against interest begins, "If you will lend money to my nation." Although Rashi cites the teaching of Rabbi Yishmael that this is one of the three biblical instances where the usage of the Hebrew 'im' is not to be understood as being volitional – if – but is rather to be taken as an imperative – "When you lend money to my nation," as you should do – nevertheless, one might legitimately query why the Bible chooses to use such an ambiguous term for an act of lending, when it is clearly God's desire that we perform this act!

Second, the Bible seems repetitious: "...to my nation, to the poor person with you." One or the other of these two phrases would have been sufficient to teach the point!

Third, "You may not be to him as a creditor," says the Torah. This is interpreted by our sages to mean that not only is it forbidden for the creditor to remind the debtor of the loan, but the creditor must go out of his way not to cause the debtor embarrassment; if the creditor sees the debtor walking towards him it is incumbent upon the creditor to change direction. Why? After all, the debtor took money from the creditor, didn't he? Why not remind the debtor that the loan must be repaid?

Fourth and finally, the specific prohibition against interest itself seems problematic. The Hebrew word used in the Bible for interest – "neshekh" – also means the bite of a snake, which our sages compare to interest since the serpent initially injects his venom painlessly but it ultimately consumes the entire individual and takes his very life! Maimonides goes so far as to codify:

"Anyone who writes a contract with an interest charge is writing and causing witnesses to testify that he denies the Lord God of Israel... and is denying the exodus from Egypt."

What is the logical reason for the prohibition against interest – and why the hyperbolic comparisons? After all, there is no prohibition against charging rent for the use of my house! Why should there be a prohibition against charging rent for the use of my excess funds?

Rabbi Haim ibn Attar, in a most brilliant illumination, beautifully explains this passage in his commentary Ohr Hachayim. In an ideal world, he maintains, there ought to be no rich and no poor, no lenders and no borrowers; everyone should receive from the Almighty exactly what they require to live. But, in His infinite wisdom, this is not the manner in which the Lord created the world. He provides

certain individuals with excess funds, expecting them to help those who have insufficient funds, appointing them His "cashiers" or "ATMs." Hence you must read the verse as "If you have [excess] money to lend to my nation, [understand] that what ought to have gone to the poor individual is with you." You were merely given the poor person's money in trust; your extra funds actually belong to him!

If you understand this fundamental axiom – that the rich person is actually holding the poor person's money in trust as an agent of the divine – then everything becomes clear. Of course, the lender may not act as a creditor, because she is only giving the poor man what is in actuality his. And of course one dare not charge interest, because the money you lent out was never yours in the first place.

This is the message of the exodus from Egypt, the seminal historic event which formed and hopefully still informs us as a nation: no individual ought ever be owned by or even indebted to another individual. We are all owned by and must be indebted only to God. This fundamental truth is the foundation of our traditional legal system which is uniquely just and equitable: it is especially considerate of the needs of the downtrodden and enslaved, the poor and the infirm, the orphan and the widow, the stranger and the convert, the "chained wife" and the indigent forced to sell their land. From this perspective, not only must we submit to Jewish law, but it is crucial that our judges be certain that Jewish law remains true to its ethical foundations.

Rabbi Dr. Norman J. Lamm's Derashot Ledorot Keep Thyself Far From An Inoperative Statement

The whole Torah, said the Kotzker Rebbe, is a commentary on the verse, שקר תרחק, "keep thyself far from a false statement." Judaism teaches not that "God is love," or that "God is pity." Pity and love are attributes, not definitions of God. There is only one definition of God in Judaism, and that was formulated by the prophet Jeremiah and introduced into our daily prayers: ה' אלקינו אמת, "the Lord your God is Truth."

A careful reading of our key text will reveal two interesting peculiarities in this three-word verse תרחק שקר דבר means "keep thyself far." Generally, it is the Rabbis who make a סגל לתורה, a "fence around the Torah." So, when the Torah itself forbids, for instance, mowing the lawn, the Rabbis go a step further and forbid moving the lawn mower, lest one use it unthinkingly. They thus move us far away from a prohibited act. There is only one place in which the Torah itself establishes a סגל, or a "zone of safety," and that is in the case of falsehood: שקר דבר שקר, "keep thyself far from falsehood." There is only one way to say the truth; if one wishes to be philosophical, he can allow that there are a number of ways speaking the truth. But there is an infinite number of ways to tell a lie! Hence, תרחק, keep far away.

It is instructive, and a beautiful example of Jewish law and ethics, to see how the Talmud scrupulously applied the principle of תרחק. The Sages understood the verse as directed primarily (although not exclusively) at judges. Thus, the Talmud derives the following rules which together constitute part of the Jewish code of judicial conduct. A judge must not be defensive; if he makes a mistake, he must admit it and not rationalize—thus not only not lying, but keeping as far away from untruth as possible. A judge must not permit an ignorant student to assist him; he must keep him at arm's length. A judge must refuse to sit on the bench together with another judge whom he knows is dishonest; תרחק! A judge who knows that a witness is lying, but the witness is protected by legal technicalities, that judge must not ease his conscience that he is applying the law with technical exactitude, but must attempt to disqualify

Likutei Divrei Torah

him. A student of the law who sees his teacher-judge err, must not keep silent. Perhaps most illuminating, a judge who has two litigants come before him in his courtroom, one dressed shabbily and the other elegantly, must turn to the one who is well dressed and offer him the following option: either buy a suit of fine clothes for your adversary, or you yourself must dress in rags. Otherwise, there is some chance that a subliminal impression in your favor will be made upon the judge, and the judge must keep himself "far away from a false statement." The second word of interest in the verse is דבר, keep far from a "word" of falsehood. Would it not have been simpler to say משקר תרחק, "keep thyself far from falsehood?"

I suggest that the Torah is telling us to acknowledge a lie as a lie, and not disguise it in pretty masks. Keep thyself far from a דבר שקר, from a dishonest euphemism, from a substitute word for a lie which would make the שקר more acceptable. If you recognize something as false, call it false! Do not misname it as, for instance: an "inaccuracy"; an "exaggeration"; a "hyperbolic extravagance"; or, a term that was popular during my college years, "a terminological inexactitude." In Washington of the Watergate era, a new term has been invented for a lie. It was first propagated by the Press Secretary of the President when, instead of saying that he had earlier lied, said, interestingly, that his previous statement was "inoperative." One can imagine a new English translation of the Torah, according to the Authorized Version of Ron Ziegler: "keep thyself far from an inoperative statement."

But דבר שקר, the semantic excuse for falsehood, is barred by the Torah. A lie is a lie – is the truth. For, as the Hebrew writer יוחנן טברסקי once said: חצי אמת הוא שקר גמור (a half truth is a whole lie)!

Yet, it is really so difficult to attain the truth, to keep far from שקר. It is told of the Rabbi Shneur Zalman, the founder of the HaBaD Hasidism, that he worked 21 years on truth: seven years to know the truth; seven years to drive away falsehood; and seven years to bring the truth within himself.

But, alas, the world is not made up of Shneur Zalman's! Alexander Solzhenitsyn, in his most recent addition to the latest revised version of his epoch-making Gulag Archipelago made this comment about Soviet Russia: "There is simply a Wall. And its bricks are laid in a mortar of lies."

Long ago, the Zohar taught the same about all life, all of society, all of our mundane existence: it is an עולמה דשקרא, a world of falsehood. And even earlier, a Midrash ascribed to R. Akiva taught that, the truth has feet. "אמת יש לה רגלים." This gave rise to a number of charming folk interpretations. For example, Jews conclude that since the truth has feet, hence it flees from us; but falsehood is legless, so it always remains with us!

The same Midrash is undoubtedly the source of the famous Yiddish saying with truth you can travel through the whole world." And the Besht, in an uncharacteristically sardonic comment, explained that דעם אמת שטופט מען ארום בין איין ארט צום צווייטן "because truth is pushed around from one place to another." Indeed, a mere glance at the daily papers or radio or television is enough to lead one to discover that אמת is being pushed around. Truth is running away, while שקר is close. Falsehood is much too close for comfort...

Elijah and the Messiah will come not so much for political or national reasons, as for the great moral reason: to dissipate and disperse the power of falsehood, to rob it of its strength and its attractiveness; and to bring close אמת, to make it reign supreme in the life of mankind. A sublime goal, worth waiting for and working for. [Excerpt] [Please excuse any errors in the Hebrew/Yiddish text - it was very hard to sort out. SG]

This week, the *Shabbat* preceding *Rosh Chodesh Adar*, we will read *Parashat Shekalim* in addition to the weekly *Parashah*, commemorating the bringing of the annual half-*Shekel* tax that funded the public *Korbanot* in the *Bet Hamikdash*. Since the Temple's fiscal year began on the first of *Nissan*, the collection of the half-*Shekel* would begin a month earlier.

Parashat Shekalim begins (*Shmot* 30:12-13), "When you take a census of (literally, 'When you uplift') *Bnei Yisrael* . . . This shall they give--everyone who passes through the census-- a half *Shekel* of the sacred *Shekel*." In connection with this verse, the *Midrash Tanchuma* relates that Moshe said to *Hashem*, "When I die, I will be forgotten." *Hashem* replied, "Just as you are here now teaching *Parashat Shekalim* and uplifting *Bnei Yisrael*, so every year, when they read *Parashat Shekalim*, it will be as if you are standing before Me and uplifting them." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

What was Moshe's concern, and what was *Hashem*'s answer? R' Shlomo Yehuda Tabak z"l (1832-1907; *Av Bet Din* of Sighet, Hungary, and a prominent *Halachic* authority) explains:

Earlier works say that once the Jewish People have angered *Hashem* completely, a *Tzaddik* cannot save them from harm unless he is in danger as well. This is why, at the time of the Golden Calf, *Hashem* told Moshe (32:7), "Go, descend, for your People that you brought up from Egypt has become corrupt." Moshe had to be among the Jewish People in order to pray for them. Thus, he was concerned that he would lose the ability to pray for the Jewish People--he would be "forgotten"--when he died. No, said *Hashem*, because the *Mitzvah* of giving a half-*Shekel* will "uplift" them, so they will be on a higher level and you can pray for them from afar, i.e., even after your death. (*Likkutei Erech Shai*)

Shabbat

We saw in a prior issue that there is a *Mitzvah* of "Oneg Shabbat" / making the *Shabbat* a "delight," and that that *Mitzvah* is fulfilled specifically through physical pleasures, such as eating and drinking. Why is this so?

The *Midrash Tanna D'vei Eliyahu* (ch.26) states: If one makes the *Shabbat* an "Oneg," it is as if he honors G-d, as it is written (*Yeshayah* 58:13), "If you proclaim the *Shabbat* 'Oneg,' the Holy One, *Hashem*, 'Honored One' . . ." This teaches that "If you proclaim the *Shabbat* 'Oneg,'" then you are proclaiming "the Holy One, *Hashem*, 'Honored One'." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

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*) asks: By sitting and eating, we honor *Hashem*?!

He explains: Though they seem to be two separate *Mitzvot*, the *Mitzvah* of *Oneg Shabbat* and the *Mitzvah* of *Kavod* / honor of *Shabbat* serve the same purpose--to highlight that *Shabbat* is different from all other days. In particular, having special *Shabbat* delicacies is meant to raise the stature of *Shabbat* in our eyes. (*Sha'arei Ha'zemanim: Shabbat Kodesh* ch.3)

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"I shall not drive them away from you in a single year, lest the Land become desolate and the wildlife of the field multiply against you. Little by little shall I drive them away from you, until you become fruitful and make the Land your heritage." (23:29-30)

Midrash Tanchuma mentions our verse when it describes the reward *Hashem* promised Avraham Avinu for hosting the three angels. Specifically, commenting on Avraham's words (*Bereishit* 18:4), "Let a little water be taken," the *Midrash* relates that *Hashem* said to Avraham: "Because you said, 'Let [there] be taken,' I will give your descendants the *Mitzvah* of *Korban Pesach*, about which it says (*Shmot* 12:3), 'They shall take for themselves -- each man -- a lamb or kid...' Because you said, 'A little,' I will drive out your descendants' enemies little-by-little [so that *Bnei Yisrael* can settle the Land as they conquer it and wild animals will not take it over, as promised in our verse]. Because you said, 'Water,' I will give your descendants water in the desert." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

Why is Avraham rewarded for saying that he will bring "a little" water? R' Uri Weisblum *shlita* (*Mashiach Ruchani* of Yeshivat Nachalat Ha'levi'im in Haifa, Israel) explains:

The *Gemara* (*Bava Metzia* 87a) derives from Avraham's interactions with the angels that "The righteous say little and do a lot." Avraham offered the angels bread, but he brought them an entire meal. In contrast, "The wicked say a lot and do not do even a little"--like Efron, who first offered to give away the *Me'arat Ha'machpelah* for free, and then demanded an exorbitant price for it. R' Weisblum writes: The above *Midrash* is teaching us that "*Tzadikim* say little" does not mean only that they say few words; it also means that they downplay their own words. He explains: If Avraham had said, "Let water be taken" (without "a little"), it would have meant "unlimited water." And, certainly, Avraham would have given his guests as much water as they wanted. However, by saying "a little" water, Avraham was modestly downplaying his kindness. For that proper use of speech, he certainly deserved a reward! (*He'arat Ha'derech* p.319)

- Continued from facing page -

The *Vizhnitzer Rebbe* continues: R' Yeshayah Halevi Horowitz z"l (the *Shelah Hakadosh*; Prague and Yerushalayim; died 1630) writes that the ox is forbidden because any object that was a source of harm should be despised and we should be prohibited to benefit from it. Indeed, the *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 149b) teaches that if Person A was punished because of Person B, Person B is not admitted to *Hashem's* "inner sanctum." (This is a reason to promptly forgive those who wrong us.) The lesson for us, concludes the *Vizhnitzer Rebbe*, is that one should take extreme care never to be the source of harm to another. (*Torat Mordechai*)

"And these are the civil laws that you shall place before them." (21:1)

R' Yehoshua Heschel (Harry) Kaufman *shlita* (rabbi in Washington, D.C., and Montreal) asks: Why doesn't our *Parashah* open with, "And *Hashem* spoke to Moshe, to say," as do most legal sections of the Torah?

He answers: The *Gemara* (*Sanhedrin* 6b) records a three-way dispute whether a *Bet Din* / rabbinical court should set aside the letter of the law and make a *Pesharah* / mutually agreeable settlement between the parties. One Sage says that *Pesharah* is prohibited, a second says that it is permitted, and a third says that it is a *Mitzvah*. The *Shulchan Aruch* rules in accordance with the third opinion, i.e., that *Pesharah* is a *Mitzvah*. In this vein, R' Yaakov ben Asher z"l (the "*Ba'al Ha'turim*"; Germany and Spain; 1269-1343) notes that the Hebrew word "*Ha'mishpatim*" / "the civil laws" is an acronym of a Hebrew sentence that means: "A judge is obligated to make a *Pesharah* before he judges in accordance with the letter of the law" (*"הַדִּיין מְצוּהָ שִׁיעֵשָׁה פְּשָׁרָה טָרָם יַעֲשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט"*).

Therefore, concludes Rabbi Kaufman, the Torah did not open our *Parashah*, which presents the laws of monetary dealings between individuals, with, "And *Hashem* spoke to Moshe, to say." Had the Torah done so, one might have thought, incorrectly, that these laws are absolute commands, leaving no room for judges to reach compromises or promote settlements. (*Ohr Yehoshua*)

"If an ox shall gore a man or woman and he shall die, the ox shall surely be stoned; its flesh may not be eaten..." (21:28)

Rashi explains: Of course the ox may not be eaten after it was stoned, as it was not *Schechted* / slaughtered properly! The verse is teaching that even if one did slaughter the animal according to *Halachah* after the sentence of stoning had been pronounced, but before it was carried out, the meat may not be eaten. [Until here paraphrased from *Rashi*.]

R' Mordechai Hager z"l (1922-2018; *Vizhnitz-Monsey Rebbe*) explains: One could ask, "Why should an ox be stoned for goring a person? Oxen do not have free will!" In fact, even when one human harms another person or his property, one could argue that the aggressor should not be liable, because he could not have done harm if it had not been G-d's will. Nevertheless, one who does harm does deserve to be punished, because he chose with his free will to do harm or, at least, to be careless. Also, there is a principle: "*Megalgin chovah al yedei chayav*"--if *Hashem* chooses someone to be His agent to carry out a decree against someone else, it is a sign that the agent is himself lacking in some way, so he must repent. But, this reasoning does not apply to oxen, which have no free will!

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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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NETANYAHU: "SURRENDERING TO DELUSIONAL DEMANDS WILL INVITE ANOTHER MASSACRE" (i24NEWS 2/7/24)

Prime Minister Netanyahu delivered a resolute message during a press conference on Wednesday night in Jerusalem, outlining Israel's determination to achieve victory in the ongoing conflict with Hamas.

Netanyahu affirmed, "Achieving the goals of the war is a matter of months and there is no going back from victory."

Netanyahu emphasized that the only viable solution to the crisis is a decisive victory, asserting, "There is no solution other than a decisive victory and for Hamas not to remain in Gaza again."

Netanyahu reiterated his commitment to ensuring the safety and security of Israel's citizens, warning against capitulating to Hamas's demands. He declared, "Surrendering to the delusional demands of Hamas will invite another massacre."

Netanyahu underscored the importance of planning for the aftermath of the conflict, emphasizing the need to prevent Hamas from regaining control in Gaza. He asserted, "The 'day after' in Gaza is the 'day after' Hamas."

Netanyahu conveyed to U.S. Secretary of State Blinken Israel's intentions regarding Gaza's future, stating, "I told Blinken that after we topple Hamas, we will guarantee that Gaza will be demilitarized forever."

With a firm stance on achieving victory and ensuring long-term stability in the region, Netanyahu expressed confidence in Israel's path, affirming, "We are on the way to complete victory. He is on target - and is a few months away."

ISRAEL DEFEATS HAMAS IN KHAN YUNIS, OVER 10,000 GAZAN TERRORISTS KILLED (JPost 2/1/24)

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant announced on Thursday night that after additional gains by the IDF in Khan Yunis, 10,000 Hamas fighters have been killed and 10,000 wounded, up from around 9,000 killed and around 8,000 wounded around a week and a half ago.

If true, along with the close to 2,500 Hamas terrorists who have been arrested, the percentage of Hamas forces out of commission would now be up to between 56-75%, up from 48-64% around 10 days ago, presuming Hamas' forces pre-war were between 30,000-40,000.

Gallant's statement that the IDF has completed taking apart Hamas's remaining battalions in Khan Yunis, including in the western part of the terror group's southern Gaza capital, would also seem to be a week or a couple of weeks ahead of IDF statements.

Earlier this week, the IDF said it was on the verge of taking apart Hamas's final Khan Yunis battalion in the western section but appeared to suggest that it could still be some weeks before the process was complete.

The IDF itself still has not announced full operational control in Khan Yunis as it did in northern Gaza in late December and early January.

The defense minister also vowed to rout Hamas in Rafah, where to date, the military has avoided using ground troops so as not to alienate Egypt.

However, an increasing number of top officials have suggested to the Jerusalem Post that Hamas's top leaders and many hostages may have moved from Khan Yunis to Rafah.

IDF FINDS MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TRANSFERRED TO HAMAS, SINWAR FROM IRAN (YNet 2/6/24)

IDF Spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari on Tuesday revealed intelligence on how Iran was financing Hamas and Yahya Sinwar.

"We found official Hamas documents from 2020 with detailed accounts of funds transferred between 2014 and 2020 to the terror group and to Sinwar,"

Hagari said. There was more than 150 million dollars transferred. This is another example of how Hamas exports terror all over the Middle East.

The military spokesperson said troops found a safe with bills and bags containing more than 20 million shekel in cash addressed clearly. For personal use by senior Hamas members. "This phenomena is repeated. Large amounts of cash kept in underground locations for the personal use of the leaders in Hamas. They invested the money in their personal survival, and that of their families, underground."

The IDF showed video taken inside a tunnel where a large amount of cash was found, documents of the transfer of money from Iran to Hamas as well as pictures of envelopes with money labeled "special - Yahya Siwar."

The terror Iran exports and creates in the Middle East is a world wide problem," Hagari said. The intelligence we are uncovering is shared with our partners around the world so that they can verify it. Thanks to the intelligence we are finding underground, we continue to launch operations and to destroy Hamas terror infrastructure."

This was not the first time that large amounts of money were found in Gaza. In December, troops found two suitcases containing five million shekels in the living room of a senior Hamas official in Jabalia. His identity was not revealed but the amount of cash equaled the total funds found in the first month of the war and included American, Jordanian and Iraqi bills as well as Israeli shekels.

GIANT TUNNEL UNDER UNRWA HEADQUARTERS DISCOVERED, PM TELLS BLINKEN IN MEETING (Israel Hayom 2/7/24)

During the expanded meeting between US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Prime Minister Netanyahu on Wednesday, the senior American diplomat

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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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was shown photos of a giant tunnel that was exposed in recent days underneath the central headquarters of UNRWA in the Gaza Strip.

The Israeli leader showed the US diplomat proof of the misuse of the UNRWA headquarters' underground premises for apparent terrorist tunneling purposes. The tunnel that was revealed in the meeting was found in the Rimal neighborhood of Gaza. According to the IDF, it is believed to be one of Hamas' strategic tunnels.

This comes amid the ongoing revelations that staff of the UN relief agency for the Palestinians were actively involved in the Oct. 7 attack against Israel and were also disseminating incitement against Israel through various platforms, including as teachers.

ARGENTINIAN PRESIDENT PLEDGES TO MOVE EMBASSY TO JERUSALEM (Israel Hayom 2/7/24)

Newly-elected Argentinian President Javier Milei has declared his intention to relocate his country's embassy in Israel to the capital city of Jerusalem. President Milei made the decision immediately upon landing in Israel, marking his first official visit to the state.

This decision aligns with President Milei's longstanding promise, articulated following his election, to prioritize relations with Israel.

Greeted at Ben-Gurion Airport by Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz, President Milei's itinerary includes meetings with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Isaac Herzog, symbolizing the depth of diplomatic engagement between Argentina and Israel.

Additionally, President Milei will tour Kibbutz Nir Oz, one of the communities targeted by Hamas terrorists on October 7, reaffirming his solidarity with Israel in the face of security threats.

President Milei also paid homage to the victims of the Holocaust by visiting the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Center in Jerusalem. Accompanied by Yad Vashem Chairman Dani Dayan, President Milei toured the Holocaust History Museum, participated in a memorial ceremony in the Hall of Remembrance, and signed the Yad Vashem guestbook.

WHILE HAMAS LEADER IS DECIDING ON HOSTAGE DEAL, HIS NIECE GAVE BIRTH IN ISRAELI HOSPITAL (YNet 2/6/24)

While the head of the political bureau of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh, is still examining the proposal for a hostage deal formulated at the Paris summit, Israel's News 13 reported that members of his family are receiving life-saving medical treatment at Soroka Hospital in Be'er Sheva.

Several of Haniyeh's sisters are Israeli citizens through marriage to Bedouins and live in Tel Sheva in the Negev. In recent days, one of Haniyeh's nieces gave birth to a baby in Soroka hospital. The baby was born prematurely and has since been hospitalized in the neonatal intensive care unit. The medical staff at the hospital have been working to save his life.

For the members of the medical team, this is not an easy situation at all due to the closeness of the family to Haniyeh, and the understanding that the leader of the terrorist organization responsible for the massacre and holding the hostages is a family member of that baby, but they understand that it is their duty to take care of him since he is ultimately an Israeli citizen. Therefore, despite the difficulties, the staff are treating the case professionally.

Haniyeh's relatives who do not live in Israel or hold Israeli citizenship have also received urgent medical treatment in Israeli hospitals in the past. In October 2014, shortly after the end of Operation Protective Edge, one of Haniyeh's daughters, then in her 20s, received emergency medical treatment at Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv. She was transferred to Israel through the Erez crossing, and after treatment was released back to the Gaza Strip.

In November 2013, Amal, Haniyeh's young granddaughter, was hospitalized in critical condition in Israel. She was evacuated from the Gaza Strip to Schneider Children's Hospital in Petah Tikva through the Erez Crossing due to a serious illness in her digestive tract. Her passage was approved in Israel due to humanitarian needs, but when the doctors realized that her condition was critical, she was returned to Gaza. She died shortly after.

Abd Salam Haniyeh, Amal's father and Haniyeh's son, did not hide the medical treatment in Israel from the public in Gaza, after the doctors in the Gaza Strip had despaired of saving her. Haniyeh's son wrote on his Facebook page that Amal was moving to Israeli territory and added: "I ask God to give her health." Before her transfer to Israel, Ismail Haniyeh visited her, and a photo of him standing at her bedside was published in the media.

In 2012, Haniyeh's sister, Suhila Abdel Salam, entered Israel together with her sick husband, who received treatment at Beilinson Hospital in Petah Tikva. In March of that year, he suffered a serious heart attack, which could not be treated in the hospitals in Gaza. The couple submitted a request to cross into Israel in order to receive urgent medical treatment and the husband was taken in a Palestinian ambulance to the Erez crossing, where he was transferred to an Israeli Magen David Adom vehicle.

He was taken to the hospital together with his wife, who accompanied him throughout the process. The couple stayed in the hospital for about a week, during which Haniyeh's brother-in-law was hospitalized and treated to stabilize his condition. At the end of the hospitalization, the couple returned to the Gaza Strip.

ISRAELI MEDIA ADVISER QUESTIONED BY POLICE AS BEN-GVIR'S GRIP ON LAW ENFORCEMENT TIGHTENS (Ha'aretz 2/7/24)

Israeli media consultant Itzik Elrov was summoned for questioning by the police after he posted an AI image in which Transportation Minister Miri Regev is seen wearing a dress fashioned from popcorn coated in blood.

Elrov posted the photo to his X account under the caption, "Popcorn dipped in the blood of the fallen."

The popcorn is a reference to an incident that occurred last month during a security cabinet meeting, where Regev has reportedly taken out a bag of popcorn as a disagreement broke out between Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir. According to the public broadcaster Kan, Regev has allegedly said "The show has begun" as the argument ensued.

Regev vigorously denied talking about the incident, calling the reports "fake news" and "evil slander" although her office later admitted she was, in fact, eating the popcorn "because of a diet."

The incident caused a firestorm both online and in the media, with many condemning Regev for "wasting time with nonsense" while Israeli soldiers are being killed in Gaza and over 100 hostages are still held by Hamas. Others have called the incident a publicity stunt, intended to distract from the ICJ's interim ruling over South Africa's genocide case against Israel, which was announced almost at the exact same time.

Following the police investigation, Elrov made an appearance on Israel's Channel 12's evening news to discuss the incident. In reference to the recent squabbling between ministers that prompted him to post the image, Elrov called them "a group of backyard clowns" who are "drunk with power" and "acting irresponsibly."

"If you ask me, they are the ones who need to be investigated," Elrov added. When asked why he was questioned, Elrov said that he was not sure. "I share your question," he told Channel 12's Oded Ben Ami. "I was told there was someone who commented on the post with a threat to minister Regev to which I say, please, be respectful and investigate that person."

Elrov's claim was corroborated by Israeli Police's official statement which read, in part, "Israel Police opened an investigation upon receiving a complaint regarding perceived threats published underneath the image [of minister Regev], including, 'Just wait. We will settle our accounts with you. We will continue to pursue you until your dying day.'"

In a phone interview, Elrov said, "It is completely clear that this is coming from pressure from the top. Even during the investigation itself, I understood, reading between the lines, that the case had been ordered from the top."

"There's no incitement here and no violence," the media consultant continued. "It was intended merely as a way to deter and exert pressure."

After his police investigation was completed, Elrov tweeted a message of thanks to his social media followers. "Thank you for all of the support and

phone calls," he posted to his X account.

"I am completely fine. The policeman did his job well, in a respectful manner. But the evil spirit of this government has penetrated rule of law institutions, and this should worry every democracy-seeking citizen, on the left and on the right," he added.

While Elrov did not name anyone specifically, the entire incident comes as National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir ramps up attempts to exert his power over police and security forces.

Since coming into power in 2022, as part of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition government that includes Ben-Gvir's far-right party, Otzma Yehudit, Ben-Gvir has essentially strong-armed the prime minister, threatening to leave the government if he does not get what he wants.

Since being named national security minister he has pushed through a bill that widely expanded his authority over the police, proposed another that would grant him the power to detain Israelis without trial, and tried to establish a national guard under his authority in exchange for his support of Netanyahu's decision to freeze his judicial overhaul.

But after the war broke out in Gaza, Ben-Gvir has focused his efforts on controlling police and security forces, capitalizing on growing support from far-right Israeli voters who support his calls for population transfer of the Palestinians and Jewish resettlement in Gaza.

Shortly after the war began, Ben-Gvir pushed through legislation easing restrictions on obtaining a fire-arm license and granted his own confidants and girls who had completed only one year of national service the power to approve the license applications.

In November, he tried to prevent a demonstration hosted by the left-wing Jewish Arab party Hadash in Tel Aviv, posting on X that according to his instructions, "Israel Police have so far prevented demonstrations of solidarity with the Nazis from Hamas. Unfortunately, the State Prosecutor's Office forced the police to permit the demonstration."

Ben-Gvir made another show of his political reach in December when he informed the Prison Service commissioner, Katy Perry, that he would not be extending her term due to her "failures," his lack of trust in her and her failure to carry out his policies, despite his not having the authority to make such a decision.

Not all of Ben-Gvir's power plays are punitive. He has made several attempts to bypass the IDF's authority to punish soldiers, as in the case of the soldiers who broadcast themselves reciting the Shema Yisrael prayer through the speakers of a mosque in the Jenin refugee camp, last December. Ben Gvir has also slammed IDF Chief of Staff, Herzl HaLevy's decision to suspend the soldiers and insisted it was up to the security cabinet to decide the reservists' fate.

In a similar incident, after Israeli Border Police officers were filmed violently attacking Arab photojournalist Mustafa Al-Haruf and sentenced to a nine-day suspension, Ben-Gvir expressed his support for the officers and ordered they be allowed to return to their duties.

Josh Breiner, political commentator and Haaretz journalist, alluded to this "gang ethos," whereby Ben-Gvir wields his support to those he deems loyal to him and attempts to punish those who are not.

Breiner called the Elrov incident "police-sponsored silencing" on his X account. Alongside a repost of Elrov's original AI image, Breiner wrote, "Someone in the police has completely lost it and will do anything to please the regime."

ISRAEL SEES 14 STRAIGHT DAYS OF RAINFALL FOR FIRST TIME IN OVER 30 YEARS (Times of Israel 2/4/24)

Israel has seen 14 straight days of rainfall in the north and south for the first time since February 1992, according to statistics from the Israel Meteorological Service published Sunday.

The service called this kind of precipitation a "rain of blessing" because the steady, persistent downpour allows rainwater to seep into the ground, enriching natural water sources without the damaging side effects of flooding.

The service said that the rainfall raised the water level of the Sea of Galilee by 26 centimeters (10.2 inches), with more increases expected.

Israel's largest freshwater lake, though no longer used as the main source of drinking water, is still a popular gauge of seasonal rainfall.

A slight rise in temperatures is expected on Tuesday, but the rainy weather will likely continue until Wednesday.

With water a scarce resource in the country, the record rainfall is considered good news.

Apart from the length, the current period of rain, due to end Tuesday, had no irregular features, Dr. Amos Porat, director of Climate Services at the IMS, told the Times of Israel.

"Usually, these weather systems stay for two to four days and then move on," he said.

Parts of the center and north of the country have already equaled or even exceeded their annual average rain, which is measured from August.

But south of Jerusalem, where the landscape slowly turns to desert, the only place to exceed its annual average rainfall was Sodom, at the southwestern end of the Dead Sea, which received 119% of its annual average. Porat said **sometimes there were "local events" where rain fell in one area and nowhere else nearby.**

Hazeva, in the Arava desert in Israel's far south, has had just 13% of its annual average, while Ein Gedi, in the Judean Desert, has seen just 15%.

THE TORAH SCROLL THAT SURVIVED THE BATTLES IN GAZA (Arutz-7 2/7/24)

Battalion 7421's Torah scroll departed the Gaza Strip together with the battalion after it accompanied it through its battles.

"Have a good look, we are writing our history, what's boarding my bus? A Torah scroll," said Luba, the driver of the that which transported the troops.

One of the battalion's soldiers expounded on the scroll's history: "This Torah scroll was with us in Khan Yunis and moved a few synagogues, every time we moved to another location, the scroll moved with us. On Thursday, the scroll went in again with the platoon when we established a synagogue and now it's going out with us as we have completed our activity. We started this war on (the holiday of) Simchat Torah and now we are completing it during the time of the acceptance of the Torah. That is our tradition, we are always with the Torah, it always follows us and will be with us forever, Am Israel Chai!"

An additional soldier told Arutz Sheva-Israel National News about the Torah scroll's journey: "We fought with the Paratroopers Brigade Battle Team, and at every location that we moved to we established a synagogue and called it by a name. We wrote down the service times and the forces in the area came. Shabbats were the pinnacle. During the week there were services between the operations. Our goal was to lift the troops' spirits and plant buds of Jewish settlement at those locations."

The soldier added: "The first synagogue which was established in Shuja'iyya was called "Ka Ribon" after the song written by Rabbi Israel Najara, the Rabbi of Gaza. Later we moved to other locations and so seven synagogues were established which expressed the troops' fighting spirit."

RAINSTORM IN ISRAEL REVEALS ANCIENT ASSYRIAN SCARAB (Ha'aretz 2/7/24)

Go for a walk in the Galilee, find an ancient Assyrian scarab seal featuring a griffin. Or Pegasus – some sort of flying horse-type animal. Or it may have been Babylonian. In any case, it's beautiful and rare, and quite the find for Erez Abrahamov, 45, who lives in the town of Peduel but had been called up for reserve duty.

The weather was sunny after weeks of rain. On a break from military duty, Abrahamov was hiking the hills of the Tavor stream nature reserve when he noticed a reddish glint in the dirt.

"At first I thought it was a bead or some orange stone," he told the Israel Antiquities Authority, which announced his find on Wednesday. "I picked it up

and realized it was engraved." Being a good citizen, he immediately contacted the antiquities authority.

Nir Distelfeld, head of the authority's theft-thwarting division, fielded the call and counseled the hiker to look closely at the artifact. "I heard him yell with excitement over the phone," Distelfeld said. "He had seen an image of something."

The scarab seal was carved out of the semi-precious stone carnelian, according to Prof. emeritus Othmar Keel, a historian and expert on ancient scarabs from Switzerland's University of Fribourg. On the one side it seems to show a griffin or maybe a winged quadruped à la Pegasus, the legendary aviating horse.

But who made it? Its provenance may be telling. Found just lying there by Tell Reches in the Lower Galilee, dating the scarab is challenging – but it looks most like ones from the eighth century B.C.E., Keel says.

"The scarab was discovered at the foot of Tell Reches. It may have been associated with the period of Assyrian rule and may attest to the presence of Assyrian administration at Tell Reches at the time," Paz says. Ancient administrators needed seals, and this orange scarab served as a seal.

Or maybe it was Babylonian, he adds.

The image itself tells us little. Griffins were a common motif in the ancient Middle East and Mediterranean, and appear on seals dating to the Iron Age all over the region, Paz explains. The image of the chimeric monster is thought to have originated in the southern Levant and to have spread from there.

The scarab seal's dung-beetle shape emerged in about the fourth millennium B.C.E., and in that respect it isn't helpful in identification either. Scarabs shaped like the insect were made of a vast range of materials, many talc stone and some coated in blue-green faience. Others, though, were made of semi-precious stones such as amethyst and carnelian.

The manufacture of carnelian is not indicative of origin. Carnelian was also known in Canaanite circles. Just for one example, at Tell Megiddo, archaeologists found a pot within a pot within a pot – inside which were a collection of gold and silver jewels, a gold seal ring and beads made of precious stones including carnelian.

Few artifacts were found in chambers of the Reches fort, Paz says. But if the style of the scarab fits with the late Iron Age, then it was likely Assyrian.

IAA Director Eli Escusido pointed out that when it rains in Israel, antiquities tend to pop out of the soil, and exhorted the public to evince a sense of civic duty, tell the IAA and refrain from stealing the artifacts.

Sometimes, the public has no choice but to refrain. In 2018, for instance, a woman strolling in the ancient Roman-period cemetery of Beit She'an found two large ancient busts that the rain revealed, and in 2022 the rain uncovered a marble pillar from an ancient basilica on the beach in Ashdod. Nobody could just stick that in their pocket and take it home.

ISRAELI SHARON KANTOR WINS GOLD AT WINDSURFING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (Times of Israel 2/3/24)

Israeli windsurfer Sharon Kantor on Saturday won a gold medal at the IQFoil World Championships, punching her ticket to the Paris Olympics this summer.

"Amazing, I worked so hard today," Kantor, 21, said after the race. "I had so much fun at this event. I had ups and downs, so grateful."

Israel's Katy Spychakov, 24, also had a strong showing, finishing third behind Kantor and Britain's Emma Wilson at the competition in Lanzarote.

"I wanted more today, but I guess that's going to be enough for today and we'll see what's next for me," Spychakov said.

No Israelis won medals on the men's side.

Spychakov was the runner-up at last year's tournament, which was won by Israel's Shahar Tibi, 26. The two represented Israel at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, where they respectively placed sixth and eighth overall.

Kantor is relatively new to international competitions. Last year, she took the silver at the European Championships.

WE ALL WERE LIED TO: GAZA WAS A MODERN, DEVELOPED CITY BEFORE OCTOBER 7 (Roi Yanovsky, JPost 2/5/24)

I was recently released from reserve duty in Gaza, after serving 100 days in the IDF. Since the world can't see firsthand the things I saw there, I feel I have to share.

For years, well before October 7th, we've heard about how terrible life is for the poor, oppressed Gazans. How anti-Israel activists and media outlets claim the Gaza Strip can be compared to an open-air prison. This became the standard, accepted narrative about life in Gaza, promulgated by Al Jazeera and international human rights groups. But now, having experienced it myself, I can confidently tell you that we were lied to.

Gaza has been depicted as a backwards, "densely populated" area that's been under Israeli "siege" for years. There's no bigger lie than this. Pre-war Gaza was a modern, beautiful city – with large, furnished houses, wide avenues, public areas, a promenade, and parks. It looked much better than any other Arab city "from the river to the sea." Gaza City reminds me more of Tel Aviv than the awful slums that some people try to make it out to be.

And, of course, Gaza is far from being the "most densely populated area in the world."

If this is how a city looks after two decades of "siege," then I want to be sieged. The houses in Gaza were full of goods and food from across the Middle East, the houses had modern furniture, appliances, and pretty much any up-to-date consumer product and electronics you can imagine.

There are also high-end mansions that could easily have been in Los Angeles or Beverly Hills. There was no lack of wealth in Gaza.

I realize now that the optimistic notion that "if only Gazans had the chance for a better life, they would not be fighting Israel," is irrelevant for Gaza. Many of them had everything a normal person in the West strives for, yet Hamas still executed their October 7th massacre.

The most common thing I saw inside the houses was a map of the State of Israel, with the heading "Map of Palestine." There is no mention of the internationally recognized borders of Israel, or any Israeli city or kibbutz. The goal of eradicating the only Jewish State was not hidden or played down, it was everywhere.

Despite the prosperity we saw in Gaza city, it was hiding something you won't see in any Western city. Every neighborhood we visited had staged and ready-to-operate Hamas combat zones – weapons, tunneling, explosives, rocket launch zones, all inside normal family homes, some already built with openings in the walls to enable moving between buildings.

Gazans knew about Hamas' hidden combat infrastructure and received many warnings from the IDF to leave ahead of our arrival. We saw the IDF's pamphlets that were dropped by the Israeli Air Force everywhere we went. Those who decided to stay in the fighting zones are either Hamas terrorists, or people who knowingly decided to stay in areas that are used by Hamas for battle.

We also saw that Hamas terrorists rarely moved around armed or in uniform. They are terrorists but even they believe the IDF is a moral army. They know IDF soldiers will not shoot them if they walk around as "civilians." They butchered Israeli civilians on October 7, but we came into Gaza looking only for terrorists and they take advantage of it. They prepare their weapons in advance, typically near building entries, and pick them up just before attacking. This is one reason why fighting in Gaza is significantly more complex than other arenas. This is why, when they say civilians die, you'll never know if they were Hamas members attempting to kill soldiers before they died.

Like any terror group Hamas' strategic weapons are lies and propaganda. That's how they were able to promote their lie about a "siege" in the world's leading media outlets. That's how the Gaza Ministry of Health, controlled by Hamas, is able to publish ridiculous, unverified numbers of casualties every day, which are used by Western governments.

The Gaza I saw was different than the lies we've been fed by Hamas. As they cling to their control of Gaza, we shouldn't fall for the other lies they propagate. Like any other terror group, they must be dismantled.



The Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

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From Heaven to Earth... and Back Again

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

As we transition from the end of Parshas Yisro into Parshas Mishpatim, we are struck by the stark contrast between the two. In Parshas Yisro, we experience the steady build up towards the momentous event of the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai. There, Hashem speaks to the Jewish people and presents them with His commandments. We segue from such a grand event directly into Parshas Mishpatim, which discusses the nitty gritty details of what happens when one's ox gores another's ox, what to do upon finding a lost object, etc. The juxtaposition is jarring, to say the least.

One approach to understanding this transition is that as truly historic as the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai was, its purpose was to direct how we live our day-to-day lives. If the amazing event on Mount Sinai is relegated to inspiring speeches and philosophical musings, then we have missed the point. That momentous event was meant to be an everlasting guide for us in our business dealings, in our relationships, indeed, in every aspect of our lives. Far from sending us spiraling back down to Earth, the Torah in Parshas Mishpatim is teaching us that we are meant to use the Torah to elevate every aspect of our existence.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

If she (the Jewish maidservant) is displeasing in the eyes of her master, who should have designated her for himself, he shall assist in her pidyon/redemption... (21:8)

If he (the Jewish male slave) has not been geulah/redeemed by these means... (Behar 25:54)

Why does the Torah refer to the redemption of the maidservant as *pidyon*, while the redemption of the male slave is called *geulah*?

Parsha Riddle

What area of Torah should one learn if one wants to become wise?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

For which mitzvos does the Torah explicitly tell us the reward for their fulfillment?

Answer: The Torah tells us that for the performance of kibud av v'a'im (honoring parents) and for shiluach hakain (sending away the mother bird) one is rewarded with longevity in the world.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Mishpatim contains much of the Torah's civil law (as well as some criminal law), including the bulk of tort law in particular. The *parashah* mentions four out of the five causes of action for an assault committed by one person that injures another person (*adam ha-mazik adam*): temporary loss of income while recuperating from the assault (*sheves*), medical expenses (*ripui* – 21:18-19), permanent loss of economic value (*nezek* – verses 23-24), and pain (verse 25). (The fifth, humiliation, is mentioned in *Devarim* 25:11-12.) The *parashah* also sets forth the liability that an individual has for personal injury or property damage caused by his property (*mammon ha-mazik*), such as damage caused by one's ox goring another's ox (21:35-36). As opposed to *adam ha-mazik*, *mammon ha-mazik* engenders liability only for *nezek*, and not for the other four claims (*Bava Kama* 8:2).

Contemporary authorities discuss the question of whether someone who infects someone else with a contagious disease is liable for any damage that he causes, under the rubric of either *adam ha-mazik* or *mammon ha-mazik* (assuming, *arguendo*, that the first person has been definitively established as the source of the second person's infection). R. Yitzchok Zilberstein discusses someone who was diagnosed with measles and informed of its highly contagious nature and ordered to quarantine himself but flagrantly disregarded the warning, frequented public places, and infected many people, who were consequently forced to themselves quarantine and miss work. He inclines to the view that the one who recklessly infected the others is considered *adam ha-mazik* and thus liable for all five causes of action, including *sheves*, although he is not quite certain of this (*Chashukei Chemed Bava Kama* pp. 326-27).

R. Yaakov Epstein, however, considers the infection of others a form of indirect causation (*grama*), for which there is no enforceable liability, although it is certainly prohibited for the carrier of a contagious disease to enter someone's home and infect him (*Chevel Nachalaso* 21:64). (It should also be noted that although there is no enforceable liability for *grama*, there is still an ethical obligation to compensate the victim – *Bava Kama* 55b-56a.)

R. Asher Weiss discusses someone who was infected with COVID-19 and passed the infection to someone else, who died from the disease. He prescribes a course of fasting and prayer as penance to atone for the sin of manslaughter, even if there was no negligence involved, and a stricter course if there was (*Minchas Asher (Corona)* 3rd edition pp. 26-32).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I work for you.
2. I am your master.
3. I came for theft.
4. If I stay too long I may become holey.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. Angelic secret.
2. My utterance saved the world.
3. Impulsive?
4. First act.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Matan Torah/Revelation at Har Sinai (See what is heard, Hear what is seen, Under the mountain, Death and Reviving.)

#2 Yisro (I was a priest, My name is extra, I advised Pharaoh, I advised Moshe.)

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