

YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH

SHABBOS SHORTS



Candle Lighting 7:31, not before 6:26 | Havdalah 8:33

Sponsored by **Debi & Max Rudmann** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of Bubby Irma Charles on Chai Nissan and by **Rabbi Sanford H. Shudnow & Family** in memory of Rabbi Shudnow's beloved father, Mr. Phillip S. Shudnow, Shraga Feivel bar Reb Haim, A"H and grandfather, Hyman S. Shudnow, Haim bar Reb Shneur Zalman, A"H both on Erev Pesach, 14 Nissan.

Mazal Tov

Mrs. Feigy & Rabbi Tuvia Grauman on the engagement of their grandson, Zavy Lesnoy to Shayna Kahane of Memphis, TN. Mazal Tov to parents David & Shulamith Lesnoy and siblings Charne, Deena, Yaakov and Ariella and all of the aunts, uncles and cousins. Mazal Tov also to Shayna's parents, Elana & Josh, her siblings and the extended Kahane family.

Debra Sapper on the birth of a granddaughter to her son Mordechai Sapper & Rose Weinstein of White Plains, NY. Mazal Tov to big brothers Natan and Gideon and to grandparents Tamar Solnik & Rabbi Avi Weinstein of Kemp Mill.

Miri & Yoni Schick on the birth of a grandson, Moshe, to Gitty & Nachi Schick of Manchester. Mazal Tov to great-grandparents Miriam & Allen Schick of Woodside.

Dolores & Len Schwartz on the birth of a great-granddaughter born to their grandchildren Arianne & Avi Eisenstein of Chicago. Mazal Tov to the grandparents Karen & Wayne Schwartz of Potomac and to great aunt and uncle **Melanie & Sandy Karlin**.

Condolences

Yocheved Arzouan on the passing of her husband, **Rabbi Haim Arzouan**. Condolences to Aviva Aghbashoff, **Rabbi Moshe Arzouan**, and Shoshana Suchoff on the passing of their father.

Stephanie Savir-Perlman on the passing of her mother, Carol Backman. Shiva is being observed at 11203 Healy Street until 12:30 Monday afternoon. Visitors are requested 10:00 am - 12:30 pm, 2:00 pm - 5:30 pm and 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm.

Miriam Zuckerman on the passing of her father, Joseph Sternberg. Shiva is being observed at 226 Beach 11th Street, Far Rockaway, NY 11691. Miriam may be reached during Shiva at 301-928-8023.

Kiddush Sponsors

Hashkamah Kiddush is sponsored by the **Hashkamah Minyan Kiddush Group**. **Shul Kiddush** is sponsored by the **Shul Kiddush Group**. **Sephardic Minyan Kiddush** is in honor of **Moshe Nissan**.

Pesach Resources

Mechiras Chametz - Rabbi Rosenbaum will be available this week at the following times to arrange the sale of Chametz, no forms needed in advance:

- Sunday, April 21, after 7:30 & 8:45 Shacharis, approx. 8:10 & 9:30 (B)
- Monday, April 22, after each of the Siyumim at the Ashkenazi Minyanim

If these times are not convenient for you, please feel free to contact Rabbi Rosenbaum at 301-593-4465 ext. 105 to make other arrangements.

YISE Maos Chittim - Rabbi Rosenbaum will be collecting to help those in financial need meet their Pesach expenses. Checks can be made out to **YISE Charity Fund**. Donations can be dropped off at the office or given to Rabbi Rosenbaum at Mechiras Chametz.

Yad Yehuda Maos Chittim - Donate now: www.yadyehuda.org or mail checks to: Yad Yehuda Ma'ot Chittim, 9601 Colesville Road Silver Spring, MD 20901.

Franco Foundation Maos Chittim - Mail: 613 Bromley Street, Silver Spring, MD 20902 or Paypal: https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=VY3ZRL7PBKUBS or Zelle: 202-422-1021 or thefrancofoundation@gmail.com

Pesach Hospitality - The YISE Hospitality Committee is still coordinating meals for Pesach. We are looking for some hosts for meals during Shabbos Chol HaMoed and the last days of Pesach. If you are able to host, or if you are looking for a meal, please email hospitality@yise.org.

Pesach Q&A WhatsApp Group - Join our WhatsApp Q&A group with Rabbi Rosenbaum and Rabbi Postelnek. Get all your Pesach Halacha questions answered as well as access guides and information in preparation for Pesach. To join: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/Fx77v4uS08J1agMMU5WKQ>.

Chametz Burning - Monday, April 22, 9 - 11 AM at KMS. [see flyer](#)



YISE Supports Israel

Our thoughts and prayers are focused on Israel. Please see the back of this sheet for various things you can do to support Israel.

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:

6:10 (Plag, 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), 7:05 (B),
7:00 (Sephardi, LBM)

Shabbos Hagadol Drasha: 7:30 (B)

Maariv: 8:33 (B)

SHIURIM:

Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur: (SBM)
Rabbi Rosenbaum

Ohr HaChaim Chabura: 8:55 (S)
Rabbi Postelnek

Shabbos Hagadol Drasha:
Rabbi Rosenbaum

Youth Announcements

Teen Minyan - 9:15 AM in The House, followed by Kiddush

Shabbos Groups - 10 AM 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

Post-Pesach Pizza - Support YISE Youth and get a chance to eat the 1st & 2nd pizzas from Ben Yehuda Pizza after Pesach. 2 pies, 2 winners! \$10 for 1 chance to win, \$ 18 for 2 chances to win. To participate, go to <https://wp.yise.org/donate> and put "Pizza" in the description. Deadline Sunday, April 21, 8:00 PM. [see flyer](#)

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. May Hashem bless Israel with complete and speedy victory and Brachos for the Israeli soldiers, hostages, students, and all of Israel.

Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur was 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.

Erev Pesach Siyumim are sponsored by **Devorah Shechter and Family** in commemoration of the 12th Yahrzeit of her father, Emanuel Yitzchak ben Chaim HaLevi, A"H on 14 Nissan. May his Neshama merit an aliyah.

Shabbos HaGadol Drasha is sponsored by **Marilyn & Judah Lifschitz** and by **Simi & Sammy Franco** in memory of Simi's father, Menachem Mendel Ben Tzvi Yehuda whose Yahrzeit was this week and the upcoming Yahrzeit of Dottie Franco, Devora Rut Bat Sara.

Seventh Day of Pesach Drasha sponsored by **Dina Zolotusky & Mark Livingston** in memory of their beloved son, Yosef Ezra Livingston (Yosef Ezra ben Me'ir Aharon), on the occasion of his Yahrzeit on shvi'i shel Pesach, in memory of Mark's grandfather Nathan Segal (Natan ben Meir ha-Levi), on the occasion of his Yahrzeit on acharon shel Pesach, Dina's grandfather Stanislav Braginsky (Shmuel ben Yosef) on the occasion of his Yahrzeit on 18 Nissan, and Mark's grandmother Vivienne Livingston (Freida bat Shmuel ha-Cohen) on 12 Nissan.

YISE Supports Israel

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/GdkM5n3uJx44h8xFbwBE10. 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.

Knesset Member Dan Illouz - spoke at YISE on Monday, April 8. Recording at <https://wp.yise.org/q-a-with-mk-dan-illouz/>.

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>

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

Yom HaShoah v'Hagvurah - Sunday, May 5 at 7:30 PM at KMS, featuring **Lew Sosnowik**, Dvar Torah by Rabbi Weinberg. *see flyer*

Rabbi Koss's Monthly Jewish History Class - Rabbi Koss will be speaking on a topic in Jewish history, Monday, May 6 from 2 PM - 3 PM on **Zoom A**. Sponsored by Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and the YISE Chesed Committee.

Women's Unity Challah Bake - An Evening of Inspiration and Unity featuring Giti Fredman. Thursday, May 9 at 7:30 PM at YISE sponsored by The Robin Niman Mikvah Education Fund of The Mikvah Emunah Society of Greater Washington. RSVP at www.mikvahemunah.com. *see flyer*

Yahrzeit of Rabbi Anemer, ZT"L - Please join us on **Zoom A** to mark the Rav's 14th Yahrzeit, Thursday, May 9 at 12:30. *see flyer*

Save the Date: Important Security Briefing - Wednesday, May 15 at 8:45 PM. Join us over Zoom for a one-hour session with our new security trainers, CSS (Community Security Service). No prior security background or knowledge is required; this is for everyone. Among other things, you'll learn how to recognize suspicious activity and how to reduce and respond to threats. It's more important now than ever, so be sure to mark your calendar. For more information, contact stuartrosenthal@yise.org.

Save the Date: Scholar-In-Residence - Rabbi Avishai David at YISE - May 18. *see flyer*

Annual Election Meeting - Tuesday, May 21 at 7:30 PM in the Social Hall. Please submit nomination by April 22 to Stuart Rosenthal at stuartrosenthal@yise.org at 301-980-9557. Details at <https://www.yise.org/election-2024-letter-1.pdf>

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 April 21 13 Nissan	Wednesday May 1 23 Nissan	Thursday May 2 24 Nissan	Friday May 3 25 Nissan	Shabbos after Pesach May 3-4, 2024 26 Nissan 5784 Parashas Acharei Mos Candle lighting 7:45 not before 6:36 Havdalah 8:49 Friday Night: Mincha/Maariv: 6:20 (Plag, B), 7:00 (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), 7:40 (B), 7:35 (Sephardi, LBM) Maariv: 8:49
Shacharis	Ashkenazi (S,B,B)	6:30 7:30 8:45	6:15 6:55 8:45	6:15 6:45 8:45	6:15 6:55 8:45	
	Sephardi (LBM)	8:00	7:30	7:30	7:30	
Mincha/ Maariv	Ashkenazi (B)	7:40	7:50	7:50		
	Sephardi (LBM)	7:25	7:40	7:40		

Week of April 21 - April 27

Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 4:56 AM,
Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 5:27 AM, Latest Netz: 6:23 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:40 AM,
Earliest Mincha: 1:41 PM, Earliest Shkia: 7:51 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim 8:41 PM

Week of April 28 - May 4

Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 4:44 AM,
Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 5:16 AM, Latest Netz: 6:14 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:35 AM,
Earliest Mincha: 1:41 PM, Earliest Shkia: 7:58 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim 8:49 PM

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

NEXT SHABBOS SHORTS DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, NOON
SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE SHABBOS SHORTS TO: ANNOUNCE@YISE.ORG
WWW.YISE.ORG | 301-593-4465 | OFFICE@YISE.ORG

YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH

PESACH SCHEDULE



Erev Pesach - Monday - April 22

Shacharis:

6:15 AM (S), 6:30 AM (B), 8:45 AM (B), 7:30 (Sephardi, LBM)

Each minyan will be followed by a Siyum.

Finish eating chometz by: 10:22 AM

Recite Kol Chamira by: 11:44 AM

Light Candles: 7:34 PM

Mincha/Maariv: 7:35 PM (B), 7:25 PM (Sephardi, LBM)

Seder starts after: 8:36 PM

Yom Tov - Tuesday - April 23

Shacharis:

7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:30 (Sephardi, LBM)

Divrei Torah:

8:45 Main Minyan - Rabbi Yonatan Gorin

9:15 Minyan - Rabbi Postelnek

Sephardi - Rabbi Rosenbaum

Mincha/Maariv: 7:35 (B), 7:25 (Sephardi, LBM)

Light Candles after 8:37

On the second night of Yom Tov, items may not be brought from home somewhere else, nor may any other acts of preparations be made for the second night before the posted candle lighting time.

Yom Tov - Wednesday - April 24

Shacharis:

7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:30 (Sephardi, LBM)

Divrei Torah/Shiurim:

8:45 Main Minyan - Rabbi Yehuda Shinensky

9:15 Minyan - Rabbi Rosenbaum

Sephardi - Rabbi Postelnek

Shiur between Mincha/Maariv - Rabbi Dov Fink

Mincha: 7:40 (B), 7:25 (Sephardi, LBM)

Havdalah/Maariv: 8:38

Chol Hamoed - Thursday - April 25

Shacharis:

6:00 (S), 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 7:30 (Sephardi, LBM)

Mincha/Maariv: 7:45 (B), 7:35 (Sephardi, LBM)

Chol Hamoed/Erev Shabbos - Friday - April 26

Shacharis:

6:00 (S), 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 7:30 (Sephardi, LBM)

Light Candles: 7:38 not before 6:31

Mincha/Maariv: 6:15 (B), 7:40 (B), 7:30 (Sephardi, LBM)

Shabbos Chol Hamoed - April 27

Shacharis:

6:45 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi, LBM)

Divrei Torah/Shiurim:

Hashkamah Shiur - Rabbi Yosef Kalinsky

Ohr Hachaim - Rabbi Postelnek

Shiur between Mincha/Maariv - Rabbi Postelnek

Mincha: 2:30 (B), 5:00 (B), 7:35 (B), 7:30 (Sephardi, LBM)

Havdalah/Maariv: 8:41

Chol Hamoed - Sunday - April 28

Shacharis:

6:00 (S), 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 8:00 (Sephardi, LBM)

Light Candles: 7:40 not before 6:32

Mincha/Maariv: 6:15 (B), 7:40 (B), 7:30 (Sephardi, LBM)

Yom Tov - Monday - April 29

Shacharis:

7:00 AM (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 AM (Sephardi, LBM)

Divrei Torah/Shiurim:

8:45 Main Minyan - Rabbi Postelnek

9:15 Minyan - Rabbi Hillel Shaps

Sephardi - Rabbi Rosenbaum

Hashkamah Minyan Shiur - Rabbi Yosef Kalinsky

Mincha/Maariv: 7:40 (B), 7:30 (Sephardi, LBM)

Light Candles after 8:43

On the second night of Yom Tov, items may not be brought from home somewhere else, nor may any other acts of preparations be made for the second night before the posted candle lighting time.

Yom Tov - Tuesday - April 30

Shacharis:

7:00 AM (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 AM (Sephardi, LBM)

Yizkor no earlier than 10:30

Divrei Torah/Shiurim:

8:45 Main Minyan - Rabbi Rosenbaum

9:15 Minyan - Rabbi Postelnek

Sephardi - Rabbi Yitzchok Brandriss

Hashkamah Minyan Shiur - Rabbi Yosef Kalinsky

Mincha: 7:25 (B), 7:30 (Sephardi, LBM)

Havdalah/Maariv: 8:44 PM

The Neilas Hachag is sponsored by Rachelli & Craig Simon

Join us between Mincha and Maariv on Tuesday, April 30, in the Social Hall for Divrei Torah, singing, and shmoozing with friends as we experience the closing moments of Pesach.

Chometz which was sold for Pesach may be used after 9:45 PM.



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

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday nights, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM. April 3, 17 in person in the YISE Social Hall. April 10 on Zoom, Meeting ID: 986 546 841, Passcode: 3671. No meetings April 17 or 24. 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.

An evening to benefit Bonei Olam of Greater Washington - Thursday, April 4 at 7:30 PM at Chabad of Silver Spring. Each year, Bonei Olam provides millions of dollars in financial assistance to cover the prohibitive costs of fertility treatment and medical procedures. This is a rare opportunity to learn about the organization from 3 unique perspectives. For more information, go to <http://boneiolam.org/greaterwashington>.

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 before Mincha 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 before Mincha 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 Lambertson 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 komarowh@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. Email us at barbara@getizun.org or leave a phone message at 240-433-3944.

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@srlaw.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

***April updates for Rabbi Rosenbaum's shiurim:**

Sunday: 12:30 PM Tehillim and Mesilas Yesharim shiur will not meet Sunday, April 7.

Monday: Parsha class will not meet Monday, April 8.

Wednesday: 11 AM Nach class will resume May 8 and 8 PM Women's Navi shiur will not meet April 10, April 24, and May 1.

Sundays

7:05 AM - 7:50 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 Mesilas Yesharim 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 Mesilas Yesharim 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

8:45 PM SCP (Semichas Chaver Program) for more information contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps: hshaps@gwckollel.org

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 Mesilas Yesharim as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**

1:30 PM - Rabbi Yitzchak Scher's Shiur for Men and Women "Profits from the Prophets" now studying Sefer Yehoshua, 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**

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 - will resume May 8

12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Mesilas Yesharim as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**

***8:00 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Women's Navi Shiur, now learning Sefer Melachim, 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 Masechet Bava Basrah, in the **Social Hall** and on **Zoom H - will resume after Pesach**

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 Mesilas Yesharim 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**

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Lew Sosnowik was born in 1933 in a small town in Northeastern Poland. Shortly after the Germans invaded the area in June 1941, the Jews of his town were rounded up and taken to a ghetto in nearby Szarkowiczna. When the ghetto was liquidated several months later, Lew and his parents escaped and hid in the Polish forest. They survived there until they were liberated by the Russians in the Fall of 1944. Lew and his parents came to America in 1950, after 5 hard years in Italy. Lew became a pharmacist and then married in 1955. Today, he has 9 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren.



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via the Internet

Shabbat Shalom

Volume 30, Issue 28

Shabbat HaGadol Parashat Metzora

5783 - B"H

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

The Power of Shame - On 20 December 2013, a young woman named Justine Sacco was waiting in Heathrow airport before boarding a flight to Africa. To while away the time, she sent a tweet in questionable taste about the hazards of catching AIDS. There was no immediate response, and she boarded the plane unaware of the storm that was about to break. Eleven hours later, upon landing, she discovered that she had become an international cause célèbre. Her tweet, and responses to it, had gone viral. Over the next 11 days she would be googled more than a million times. She was branded a racist and dismissed from her job. Overnight she had become a pariah.

The new social media have brought about a return to an ancient phenomenon, public shaming. Two recent books – Jon Ronson's *So You've Been Publicly Shamed* and Jennifer Jacquet's *Is Shame Necessary?* – have discussed it. Jacquet believes it is a good thing. It can be a way of getting public corporations to behave more responsibly, for example. Ronson highlights the dangers. It is one thing to be shamed by the community of which you are a part, quite another by a global network of strangers who know nothing about you or the context in which your act took place. That is more like a lynch mob than the pursuit of justice.

Either way, this gives us a way of understanding the otherwise bewildering phenomenon of *tsara'at*, the condition dealt with at length in last week's parsha and this one. *Tsara'at* has been variously translated as leprosy, skin disease, and scaly infection. Yet there are formidable problems in identifying it with any known disease. First, its symptoms do not correspond to Hansen's Disease, otherwise known as leprosy. Second, the *tsara'at* described in the Torah affects not only human beings but also the walls of houses, furniture, and clothes. There is no known medical condition that has this property.

Besides, the Torah is a book about holiness and correct conduct. It is not a medical text. Even if it were, as David Zvi Hoffman points out in his commentary, the procedures to be carried out do not correspond to those that would be done if *tsara'at* were a contagious disease. Finally, *tsara'at* as described in the Torah is a condition that brings not sickness but rather impurity, *tumah*. Health and purity are different things altogether.

The Sages decoded the mystery by relating our parsha to the instances in the Torah in which someone was actually afflicted by *tsara'at*. It happened to Miriam when she spoke against her brother Moses. Another example referred to was Moses who, at the Burning Bush, said to God that the Israelites would not believe in him. His hand briefly turned "as leprous as snow". The Sages regarded *tsara'at* as a punishment for *lashon hara*, evil speech, speaking negatively about or denigrating another person.

This helped them explain why the symptoms of *tsara'at* – mould, discolouration – could affect walls, furniture, clothes, and human skin. These were a sequence of warnings or punishments. First God warned the offender by sending a sign of decay to the walls of his house. If the offender repented the condition stopped there. If he failed to do so his furniture was affected, then his clothes, and finally his skin.

How are we to understand this? Why was "evil speech" regarded as so serious an offence that it took these strange phenomena to point to its existence? And why was it punished this way and not another?

It was the anthropologist Ruth Benedict and her book about Japanese culture, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, that popularised a distinction between two kinds of society: guilt cultures and shame cultures. Ancient Greece, like Japan, was a shame culture. Judaism and the religions influenced by it (most obviously, Calvinism) were guilt cultures. The differences between them are substantial.

In shame cultures, what matters is the judgment of others. Acting morally means conforming to public roles, rules, and expectations. You do what other people expect you to do. You follow society's conventions. If you fail to do so, society punishes you by subjecting you to shame, ridicule, disapproval, humiliation, and ostracism. In guilt cultures what matters is not what other people think but what the voice of conscience tells you. Living morally means acting in accordance with internalised moral imperatives: "You shall" and "You shall not." What matters is what you know to be right and wrong.

People in shame cultures are other-directed. They care about how they appear in the eyes of others, or as we would say today, they care about their "image." People in guilt cultures are inner-directed. They care about what they know about themselves in moments of absolute honesty. Even if your public image is undamaged, if you know you have done wrong it will make you feel uneasy. You will wake up at night, troubled. "O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!" says Shakespeare's Richard III. "My conscience hath a thousand several tongues / And every tongue brings in a several tale / And every tale condemns me for a villain." Shame is public humiliation. Guilt is inner torment.

The emergence of a guilt culture in Judaism flowed from its understanding of the relationship between God and humankind. In Judaism we are not actors on a stage with society as the audience and the judge. We can fool society; we cannot fool God. All pretence and pride, every mask and persona, the cosmetic cultivation of public image are irrelevant: "The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" Shame cultures are collective and conformist. By contrast Judaism, the archetypal guilt culture, emphasises the individual and their relationship with God. What matters is not whether we conform to the culture of the age but whether we do what is good, just, and right.

This makes the law of *tsara'at* fascinating, because according to the Sages' interpretation, it constitutes one of the rare instances in the Torah of punishment by shame rather than guilt. The appearance of mould or discolouration on the walls of a house was a public signal of private wrongdoing. It was a way of saying to everyone who lived or visited there, "Bad things have been said in this place." Little by little the signals came ever closer to the culprit, appearing next on their bed or chair, then on their clothes, then on their skin, until eventually they found themselves diagnosed as defiled:

And a blighted person, one bearing the disease – their clothing shall be torn, and the hair of their head disarrayed. And they shall cover their upper lips as

they cry out, 'Impure! Impure!' They shall be in a state of impurity for as long as they have the disease; they are impure. They shall live apart; outside the camp shall be their dwelling.

These are quintessential expressions of shame. First is the stigma: the public marks of disgrace or dishonour (the torn clothes, unkempt hair). Then comes the ostracism: temporary exclusion from the normal affairs of society. These have nothing to do with illness and everything to do with social disapproval. This is what makes the law of *tsara'at* so hard to understand at first: it is one of the rare appearances of public shaming in a non-shame, guilt-based culture. It happened, though, not because society had expressed its disapproval but because God was signalling that it should do so.

Why specifically in the case of *lashon hara*, "evil speech"? Because speech is what holds society together. Anthropologists have argued that language evolved among humans precisely in order to strengthen the bonds between them so that they could co-operate in larger groupings than any other animal. What sustains co-operation is trust. This allows and encourages me to make sacrifices for the group, knowing that others can be relied on to do likewise. This is precisely why *lashon hara* is so destructive. It undermines trust. It makes people suspicious about one another. It weakens the bonds that hold the group together. If unchecked, *lashon hara* will destroy any group it attacks: a family, a team, a community, even a nation. Hence its uniquely malicious character: It uses the power of language to weaken the very thing language was brought into being to create, namely, the trust that sustains the social bond.

That is why the punishment for *lashon hara* was to be temporarily excluded from society by public exposure (the signs that appear on walls, furniture, clothes, and skin), stigmatisation and shame (the torn clothes, etc.) and ostracism (being forced to live outside the camp). It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to punish the malicious gossiper using the normal conventions of law, courts, and the establishment of guilt. This can be done in the case of *motsi shem ra*, libel or slander, because these are all cases of making a false statement. *Lashon hara* is more subtle. It is done not by falsehood but by insinuation. There are many ways of harming a person's reputation without actually telling a lie. Someone accused of *lashon hara* can easily say, "I didn't say it, I didn't mean it, and even if I did, I did not say anything that was untrue." The best way of dealing with people who poison relationships without actually uttering falsehoods is by naming, shaming, and shunning them.

That, according to the Sages, is what *tsara'at* miraculously did in ancient times. It no longer exists in the form described in the Torah. But the use of the Internet and social media as instruments of public shaming illustrates both the power and the danger of a culture of shame. Only rarely does the Torah invoke it, and in the case of the *metzora* only by an act of God, not society. Yet the moral of the *metzora* remains. Malicious gossip, *lashon hara*, undermines relationships, erodes the social bond, and damages trust. It deserves to be exposed and shamed.

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Never speak ill of others, and stay far from those who do.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

While we are looking forward to the Passover Seder, allow me to suggest an important lesson that we are likely to overlook. Fascinatingly, alongside Moshe who is not really mentioned by the Haggadah, there is another great Biblical personality who plays a major role in the Haggadah, but who is likewise overlooked. This personality is Joseph, firstborn of Rachel, favored son of Jacob-Israel and Grand Vizier of Egypt.

Let us start at the very beginning of the Seder. After we raise the first cup of wine and recite Kiddush, we wash our hands without a blessing before eating a vegetable, usually parsley, and we make the blessing to God, "Creator of the fruit of the earth". The usual explanation for this is that karpas is the Greek word for vegetation, and Greco-Roman meals would generally begin with the vegetable hors-d'oeuvre together with a 'dip'. The Seder is a reclining meal reminiscent of a Graeco-Roman feast and so we begin the Seder evening with this vegetable hors-d'oeuvre/dip.

For us, the vegetable is also a symbol of spring. Passover is called the Festival of the Spring – and the dip is generally salt-water, reminiscent of the tears of the Hebrew slaves.

There is, however, an entirely different interpretation of the karpas suggested by Rashi in his commentary on the verse, which mentions the coat of many colors (k'tonet passim). Rashi links this source to the verse in the Scroll of Esther which describes the rich embroidery of the palace of King Achashverosh: "There were hangings of white fine linen (karpas, thereby identifying with the Persian word karpas which describes an expensive material or garment; the second syllable pas means stripe in Hebrew and evidently refers to an expensive material with stripes of many colors. The karpas would therefore refer to Joseph's coat of many colors, the gift he received from his father elevating him over his siblings and singling him out as the bechor (firstborn).

Interestingly enough, there is a custom in many Yemenite communities to dip the karpas vegetable into the charoset, a mixture of wine, nuts and sometimes dates, which the Jerusalem Talmud says is reminiscent of blood. Hence, just as the brothers dipped Joseph's cloak of many colors into the blood of the goat claiming to their father that Joseph had been torn apart by a wild beast; we dip our karpas into the charoset.

What does this have to do with Passover? The Babylonian Talmud teaches in the name of Rav: "One should never favor one child over the other children in a family. It was because of an expensive garment bought for two sela'im that Jacob gave to Joseph – more expensive than anything he had given to any of his other children – he was envied by his brothers, and the issue 'snowballed' until our forefathers were enslaved in Egypt." Hence, the Seder begins by warning every leader of the family to learn from the Joseph story the importance of showing equal affection and treatment to all of one's children so as not to engender causeless hatred and strife.

The Seder's theme of the Joseph story continues with the cups of wine. Although the Babylonian Talmud links the four cups with the four (or five) expressions of redemption in the Book of Exodus, the Jerusalem Talmud connects the cups of wine to the four or five times the word kos – cup – appears in the butler's dream in the book of Genesis (. And of course Joseph's interpretation of the butler's dream is that he would be freed from his prison enslavement and would be able to once again serve his master. Since this source deals with freedom

from slavery in Egypt and actually uses the word kos, it is certainly legitimate to see it as a source for the cups of wine that we drink in remembrance of our exodus from Egypt.

Rabbi Elijah of Vilna, (known as the Vilna Gaon, 1720-1797) identifies a reference to Joseph at the very end of the Seder as well, with the Had Gadya song. He masterfully interprets the little goat bought for two zuzim as the goat whose blood was used to soil Joseph's coat of many colors: Jacob 'acquired' the shock that he received upon seeing the bloodied cloak by virtue of the two sela'im he had spent on the expensive cloak, which engendered the causeless hatred of the other brothers – a hatred unto death.

In a fascinating and parallel symbolic manner, the Jewish people are also the blameless goat whom our Father in Heaven bought unto Himself with the Two Tablets of Stone, the Decalogue He gave them at Sinai. Because of that gift, and the status of the Jewish people as the chosen people, we have been hated throughout the generations and persecuted unto death by cruel tyrant after cruel tyrant. And despite the causeless hatred against us, each of our attackers will be destroyed in turn until eventually even the angel of death will be destroyed by our Father in Heaven. At that time, Israel and the world will be redeemed and death will be destroyed forever. May it be speedily and in our days!

The Person in the Parsha: R. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

Miserly Marner - I no longer remember the name of my ninth-grade teacher of English literature. But I do remember well one of his important lessons. He taught us that there are many great works of literature that are misunderstood. These are books which are commonly thought to be concerned with one specific theme but are really about something else entirely.

To illustrate his point, he included George Eliot's famous novel, *Silas Marner*, in our list of assigned readings. He pointed out to us that even well-educated individuals assume that this work is all about a pathological miser and is essentially a psychological study of miserly behavior. He thus demonstrated to us that one of the common clues in the highbrow New York Times crossword puzzle is "miserly Marner," for which the correct response is "Silas." The creator of the crossword puzzle is confident that he can safely assume that even his sophisticated audience will readily associate "miserly" with the hero of Eliot's novel.

Yet, after the class had completed the assignment and read the great novel, we all knew well that miserliness was only a secondary, and quite incidental, theme in this work. On the contrary, the book was a study of several significant issues, ranging from religion to industrialization to community.

Many years later, it occurred to me that my freshman teacher of English literature was on to something that applied not only to classic English literature, but that also could be applied to the weekly Torah portions. Many, even ardent students of the weekly parsha fail to identify important themes, and very substantial lessons, in the Torah portion.

This week's parsha is a case in point. We will be reading Metzora. Most of us assume that the content of this Torah reading is limited to its title, Metzora, usually translated as a "leper." On the surface, this assumption is true. It is all about symptoms of a once common and fairly widespread disease, usually identified with leprosy. As such, this Torah portion heads the list of those passages in the Torah which seem irrelevant to contemporary life and which have little to teach us about human conduct.

But the rabbis thought otherwise. Famously, they saw the connection between the Hebrew word metzora, leper, and the Hebrew phrase motzi ra, "he

Likutei Divrei Torah

who expresses malice." They go further and maintain that the disease is a punishment for the egregious sin of spreading malicious gossip, and countless rabbinic sermons have used this week's Torah portion as a springboard for a lecture about the evils of maligning others and of the abuse of the gift of speech.

But there is another, lesser-known, hidden theme in this week's Torah portion which the rabbis of the Talmud have identified. For metzora, besides being a contraction of the two words motzi ra, can also be decoded as a contraction of the two words tzar ayin, "narrow eyes," a Hebrew euphemism for miserly behavior. A stingy person is referred to in Hebrew as a tzar ayin, a narrow-eyed individual, one who selfishly sees only himself and does not see the needs of another.

The source of this approach is to be found in the Talmud which includes tzarut ayin, stinginess, as one of the sins for which "leprosy" is a punishment. The Talmud finds a basis for this contention in the phrase to be found in chapter 14 verse 35, which describes the procedure to be followed when an Miserly Marner individual discovers a "leprous blemish" in "his" house. The school of Rabbi Ishmael taught that such bizarre blemishes were the consequences of the sinful attitude of one who thinks that his "house" is his and his alone, and who selfishly does not share his possessions with others.

Representatives of the nineteenth-century Mussar movement, which emphasized the central importance of ethical behavior in Jewish religious practice, used this week's Torah portion to severely criticize miserliness and undue emphasis upon the retention of one's possessions. Thus, one of the leaders of this movement, Rabbi Simcha Zissel Ziv, known as "the Alter (Old Man)" of Kelm" writes at length about the "shameful behavior of kamtzanut (stinginess)."

Rabbi Ziv, whom I'll refer to from hereon as "the Alter," delves into medieval rabbinic literature and finds a treasure trove of quotations condemning miserliness, and which find miserly behavior widespread in the communities in which they lived. One example is this quotation from the work known as *Sefer HaYashar*, "The Book of the Upright," which is attributed to one of the outstanding leaders of French Jewry in the twelfth century, Rabbenu Tam: "An individual's miserliness is not limited to just one aspect of his overall behavior. Rather, the stingy person will fail to perform even basic mitzvot, good deeds, because he sees no benefit to be gained from performing them. If performing such good deeds will cost him even a minute monetary loss, he will find all sorts of excuses to avoid performing those good deeds. His stinginess will make it impossible for him to be a truly pious person."

Interestingly, and almost paradoxically, the Alter finds that the character trait of miserliness is not always a negative one. It is sometimes praiseworthy, particularly when it is utilized as an antidote to a very different negative trait, namely undue extravagance. The Alter recognizes that whereas many individuals in the communities with which he was familiar were overly stingy, there were many who were given to excessive spending, often falling into irreversible debt in the process. He has no difficulty in finding earlier rabbinic authorities who condemn excessive spending as well as miserly selfishness....

As always, Maimonides said it best when he advocated what has come to be called the "golden mean," and advised us to carefully contemplate the downsides of extreme behaviors and adopt moderation in all of our endeavors. [Excerpted]

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Chag Kasher V'Sameach!

Volume 30

Pesach Issue

5784 - B"H

Short Thoughts for Pesach

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, z"l

Pesach is the oldest and most transformative story of hope ever told. It tells of how an otherwise undistinguished group of slaves found their way to freedom from the greatest and longest-lived empire of their time, indeed of any time. It tells the revolutionary story of how the supreme Power intervened in history to liberate the supremely powerless. It is a story of the defeat of probability by the force of possibility. It defines what it is to be a Jew: a living symbol of hope.

For many years I was puzzled by the first words we say on Pesach: 'This is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate in Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat it with us.' What kind of hospitality is it to offer the hungry the bread of affliction? Finally, though, I think I understood. The unleavened bread represents two things. It was the food eaten by slaves. But it was also the food eaten by the Israelites as they left Egypt in too much of a hurry to let the dough rise. It is the bread of affliction, but it is also the bread of freedom.

Once a year, every year, every Jew is commanded to relive the experience of Egypt as a constant reminder of the bread of oppression and the bitter herbs of slavery – to know that the battle for freedom is never finally won but must be fought in every generation.

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"You must surely instruct your colleague, so that you not bear the brunt of his sin" Judaism teaches us that "every Israelite is responsible for the other." Except for the State of Israel, where the Jewish population continues to grow, Jews in the rest of the world suffer from internal "hemorrhaging."

How do we "inspire" our Jewish siblings so that they remain within – or return to – our Jewish peoplehood? We recently celebrated the festival of Passover, and we are now "counting" each day towards the festival of Shavuot. The Hebrew term for the counting is sefira, a word pregnant with meaning. Its root noun is the Hebrew sappir, which is the dazzling blue—as the Bible records immediately following the Revelation at Sinai: "Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and the seventy elders of Israel then went up. And they saw the God of Israel, beneath whose 'feet' was something akin to the creation of a sapphire stone, like the essence of the heavens as to its purity".

From this perspective, the days of our counting are a period of spiritual growth and development, of a connection between Passover and Shavuot. But when and how does this spiritual journey begin?

It begins with Passover, God's encounter with His nation Israel at its conception. And the Hebrew sefira (counting/ sapphire) is also based on the Hebrew noun sippur, a tale, a story, a recounting – the very essence of the Passover Seder evening experience: "And you shall tell (haggada, telling a story) your child on that day saying..."

The Israelites came into Egypt as a family, the 70 descendants of Jacob. Hence the recounting of the story of our enslavement and eventual redemption is the recounting of family history. A nation is a family writ large: in a family, there are familial memories of origins; in a family there is a sense of commonality and community togetherness; in a family there are special foods and customs, special holidays and

celebrations; in a family there are mandated values and ideals, that which is acceptable and that which is unacceptable "in our family"; and in a family there is a heightened sense of a shared fate and shared destiny.

Eda is the biblical word for community (literally "witness"), and every community attempts to recreate a familial collegiality. The relationship within the family is largely horizontal (towards each other) rather than vertical (connected to a transcendent God). And familial rites of togetherness are largely governed by family customs rather than by a Divinely ordained legal code.

Most importantly in families – as well as communities – every individual counts (once again, sefira).

Passover is our family-centered, communal festival, at the beginning of our calendar, at the very outset of our history, at the early steps towards our sefira march. On that first Passover we had not yet received our Torah from God, and we had not yet entered our Promised Land.

The Passover Sacrifice emphasizes our willingness to sacrifice for our freedom from slavery—our sacrifice of the lamb which was a defiant act of rebellion against the idolatrous Egyptian slave-society – and it attests to our uncompromising belief in human freedom and redemption even before we became a faith ordained at Mount Sinai. In order for every person/community to really count, large communities must be subdivided into smaller – and more manageable – familial and extra-familial units, "a lamb for each household" or several households together.

Special foods, special stories and special songs define and punctuate the close-knit nature of the event.

The ticket of admission is that you consider yourself a member of the family and wish to be counted as such; this entitles you to an unconditional embrace of love and acceptance, to inclusion in the family of Israel.

The rasha (wicked child) of the Haggadah is the one who seems to exclude himself from the family – and even s/he is to be invited and included! How do we engage our unaffiliated Jews so that they do not defect and fall away from us? We must embrace them as part of our family, love them because we are part of them and they are part of us, regale them with the stories, songs and special foods which are expressed in our biblical and national literature that emerged from our challenging fate and our unique destiny, share with them our vision and dreams of human freedom and peace, and accept them wholeheartedly no matter what.

From the Writings of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Hakohen Kook By Rabbi Chanan Morrison

Who is Free? - The major theme of the Passover holiday is, undoubtedly, freedom. But we must understand what this freedom is all about. Does it refer simply to the end of Egyptian slavery? Is it only political independence - a gift which has eluded the Jewish people for most of their 4,000-year existence?

The difference between a slave and a free person is not merely a matter of social position. We may find an enlightened slave whose spirit is free, and a free man with the mindset of a slave.

True freedom is that proud and indomitable spirit by which the individual - as well as the nation as a whole - is determined to remain faithful to his inner essence, to the spiritual dimension of the Divine image within. It is this quality that gives meaning and purpose to life.

Individuals with slave mentality live their lives and expresses views that are based, not on their own essential spiritual nature, but on that which is attractive and good in the eyes of others. In this way they are ruled by others, whether physically or by social convention, in body or in spirit.

Vanquished and exiled, the Jewish people were oppressed over the centuries by cruel masters. But our inner soul always remained imbued with the spirit of freedom. Were it not for the wondrous gift of the Torah, bestowed upon us when we left Egypt for eternal freedom, the long and bitter exile would have crushed our spirits and reduced us to a slave mentality. But on Passover, the festival of freedom, we openly demonstrate that we are free in our very essence, and our yearnings for that which is good and holy are a genuine reflection of our inner nature. Aiming for Greatness - Ware charged to sing out in joy – God answered our prayers and rescued us from the bondage of Egyptian slavery:

I am the Eternal your God Who raises you up from the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.

What is the connection between our redemption from Egypt and opening our mouths wide" to receive God's blessings? - A careful reading of this verse will note two peculiarities about the word ha-maalcha, "Who raises you up First of all, it does not say that God "took you out" of Egypt, but that He "raises you up. It was not merely the act of leaving Egypt that made its eternal impact on the destiny of the Jewish nation and through it, all of humanity. The Exodus was an act of elevation, lifting up the souls of Israel. Additionally, the verse is not in the past tense but in the present -"Who raises you up." Is it not referring to a historical event? We may understand this in light of the Midrash concerning the creation of the universe. The Midrash states that when God commanded the formation of the rakiya, the expanse between the upper and lower waters, the divide between the heavens and the earth began to expand. This expansion would have continued indefinitely had the Creator not halted it by commanding, "Enough!" In other words, unless they are meant only for a specific hour, Divine acts are eternal, continuing forever. So too, the spiritual ascent of "raising you up from Egypt" is a perpetual act of God, influencing and uplifting the Jewish people throughout the generations.

There is no limit to this elevation, no end to our spiritual aspirations. The only limitations come from us, if we choose to restrict our wishes and dreams. But once we know the secret of ba-maalcha and internalize the message of a Divine process that began in Egypt and continues to elevate us, we can aim for ever-higher spiritual goals.

It is instructive to note the contrast between the Hebrew word for "Egypt" - Mitzrayim, literally,

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"limitations" - and the expression, "open up wide." God continually frees us from the conining restraints of Mitzrayim, enabling us to strive for the highest, most expansive aspirations.

Now we may understand why the verse concludes with the charge, "Open your mouth wide." We should not restrict ourselves. We need to above all self imposed limitations and transcend all mundane goals and petty objectives. If we can "open our mouths wide" and recognize our true potential for spiritual greatness, then "I will fill it -God will help us attain ever-higher levels of holiness.

Destroy Chametz, Gain Freedom

By the first day (of Passover) you must clear out your homes of all leaven.

WHY CLEAR OUT CHAMETZ? - Why does the Torah command us to destroy all chametz (leaven) found in our homes during Passover? It is logical to eat matzah; this fast-baked food has a historical connection to the Exodus, recalling our hurried escape from Egyptian slavery. But how does clearing out leaven from our homes relate to the Passover theme of freedom and independence?

FREEDOM OF SPIRIT - There are two aspects to attaining true freedom. First, one needs to be physically independent of all foreign subjugation. But complete freedom also requires freedom of the spirit. The soul is not free if it is subjected to external demands that prevent it from following the path of its inner truth.

The difference between a slave and a free person is not just a matter of social standing. One may find an educated slave whose spirit is free, and a free person with the mindset of a slave. What makes us truly free? When we are able to be faithful to our inner self, to the truth of our Divine goals. One whose spirit is servile, on the other hand, will never experience this sense of self-fulfillment. His happiness will always depend upon the approval of others who dominate over him, whether this control is de iure or de facto.

THE FOREIGN INFLUENCE OF LEAVEN - What is chametz? Leaven is a foreign substance added to the dough. The leavening agent makes the dough rise; it changes its natural shape and characteristics. Destruction of all leaven in the house symbolizes the removal of all foreign influences and constraints that prevent us from realizing our spiritual aspirations.

These two levels of independence, physical and spiritual, exist on both the individual and the national level. An independent people must be free not only from external rule, but also from foreign domination in the cultural and spiritual spheres.

For the Israelites in Egypt, it was precisely at the hour of imminent redemption that the dangers of these foreign "leavening" forces were the greatest. At that time of great upheaval, true permanent emancipation was not a given. Would the Israelites succeed in freeing themselves, not only from Egyptian bondage, but also from the idolatrous culture in which they had lived for hundreds of years? To commemorate their complete liberation from Egypt, the Passover holiday of freedom requires the removal of all foreign leavening agents.

CLEANSING OURSELVES OF FOREIGN INFLUENCES - In our days too, an analogous era of imminent redemption, we need to purge the impure influences of alien cultures and attitudes that have entered our national spirit during our long exile among the nations.

Freedom is the fulfillment of our inner essence. We need to aspire to the lofty freedom of those who left Egypt. To the Israelites of that generation, God revealed Himself and brought them into His service. This is truly the highest form of freedom, as the Sages taught in Avot: Instead of "engraved (charut) on the tablets", read it as "freedom" (cheirut). Only one who studies Torah is truly free.

Dvar Torah: Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

Do we have the right blessing? At our seder tables, we will be taking maror and we will dip it in charoset. However, the blessing that we will be reciting will be 'al achilat maror' – on the eating of maror, with no reference to charoset.

Similarly during Succot, the Torah commands us to take the Arbah Minim, the Four Kinds, the lulav, the etrog, the hadass and the aravah, but what is the blessing that we recite? 'Al netilat lulav' – on the taking of the lulav. We don't mention the other three.

The reason behind this is that in our halachot, our laws, relating to brachot, we differentiate between 'ikar' and 'tafel' – that which is important and that which is only of secondary significance – and the blessing is always over the most important part of that which we are blessing.

This, I believe, conveys to us a message of general importance within our lives. We should never lose the capacity to identify the ikar, what's really important in our lives, and as a result, we shouldn't waste our time with the tafel, that which is of only trivial significance.

Sometimes, however, it is challenging to identify what's ikar and what's tafel, for example:

A hardware superstore was once suffering from employee theft. The owners decided that they would position security personnel at the entrance to the store at the end of every working day. On the first day of this procedure one of the workers arrived with a wheelbarrow full of boxes. It took five or six minutes for the security workers to go through all the boxes, but eventually they discovered that they were empty, and they waved the fellow through.

On the second day, the same thing happened again, and on the third day, again. People had to wait in a queue so that this fellow could take his boxes home! After two weeks the owner came to this worker, and he said, "I know you're up to something. Please tell me what it is and I'll let you off." The worker said, "You promise you'll let me off?" and the owner promised. "Well," said the worker, "I'm stealing wheelbarrows."

You see sometimes the ikar, what really matters, is right there under our noses but all we notice is the tafel. It's the empty boxes of life.

Now that the pandemic, thank God, is behind us, I have noticed that it has become common, as is human nature, for people to prefer to try to forget our traumatic experiences during Covid. I think that's not a bad thing, but there's one thing which we should never forget and that's the lessons of Covid. And it was during Covid that all of us gained that capacity to differentiate between ikar and tafel – from the pandemic we learned that what's important in life is home, it's family, it's community, it's faith, it's our spirituality,

At the seder table during the festival of Passover, we will dip maror – bitter herbs – into charoset. The blessing we'll recite will be al achilat maror, we only mention the maror because that's what counts, not the charoset. Therefore this year at our seder tables, let's dip and while doing so remember not just about maror but about everything in life which is really important. And let's not waste our lives, our precious time, with empty boxes.

Rabbi Dr. Nachum Amsel Making Seder of the Seder

לחמא ענייא This is the Bread of Affliction

There are a number of glaring questions both about the form and content of this paragraph, as well as its purpose in the Haggadah.

1) This is the only paragraph in the entire Haggadah that is written in the Aramaic language. If this was the vernacular at the time the Haggadah was written, then why isn't the entire Haggadah in Aramaic instead of Hebrew? And, if not, then what is unique to this particular paragraph that the Rabbis chose to

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write only it in Aramaic and not Hebrew like the rest of the Haggadah?

2) After raising the "Matzah of Poverty," We invite anyone and everyone who needs a Seder to join us at our table. But this seems like a very hollow invitation and a gesture devoid of meaning and sincerity. Who hears this invitation? Only the people already gathered at the table! If this invitation is indeed sincere, it would be made directly to people in need, days before the Seder. Alternatively, the Rabbis should have instituted this invitation publicly in the Synagogue after the Maariv-Evening service on Pesach night, in case anyone in attendance has no place to celebrate the Seder (if this were a yearly public custom, then people without a Seder would intentionally gather in the Synagogue waiting for such an invitation, and the offer would certainly have some actual takers). Even if this invitation is only supposed to be a symbolic gesture, then the Rabbis still should have placed it at the very beginning of the Seder before the Kiddush. Why is it placed specifically here, in the middle of the proceedings, when an invitation seems to make no sense?

3) The words כל דצריך ייתי ויפסח - "He who is in need, let him let him come and partake of the Pesach." Why is the Paschal sacrifice referred to in this particular paragraph, when today we do not offer this sacrifice after the destruction of the Holy Temple?

4) After we invite the people to join us, we state in this paragraph that this year we are in the Diaspora, but next year we hope to be in the Land of Israel (implying after the Coming of the Messiah, rebuilding of the Third Temple and offering the Paschal Sacrifice by the Holy Temple). While this is a noble aspiration and (should be) the desire of all Jews every day of their lives, why is it mentioned specifically here? What is the connection to inviting people to the Seder? We can understand this expression and sentiment AFTER the Seder is complete, and it is then that we traditionally do say "Next Year in Jerusalem." But why now? Why here?

5) We end this strange paragraph by saying that this year we are slaves, but we hope that by next year we will be free. Isn't the entire point of the Seder to feel free tonight, and NOT next year (see Introductory discussion of Seder-order)? And are we really slaves now, today, in the 21st century? And what is the connection between the slave-freedom statement and the previous sentiments and statements in this paragraph?

All five of these strong questions can be answered by understanding this לחמא ענייא paragraph according to the NETZI"V (Rabbi Naftali Tzvi Yehudah Berlin, 1817-1893). According to his approach, this particular paragraph of לחמא ענייא was added after the text of the Haggadah had been established many years before. While the original Haggadah text was in Hebrew, this later addition was placed in the Haggadah after the Destruction of the Temple, and was intentionally written in the vernacular Aramaic, precisely to show that it was a later addition. But why was it specifically added at all? And why added here?

The breaking of the Middle Matzah is the first introduction of Matzah at the Seder. Before the Temple's destruction Matzah represented only Matzah, and was eaten along with the Paschal Sacrifice and the Maror-Bitter Herbs. But AFTER the Temple was destroyed, the Matzah now ALSO symbolized and represented the Paschal sacrifice itself, which is forbidden to be brought subsequent to the Temple's destruction. That is why many have a custom not to eat any roasted meat at all on Seder night, so that no one may wrongly think that our meat in any way represents the Paschal sacrifice which had to be roasted. Therefore, it is the Matzah of the Afikoman that takes the place of the Paschal

sacrifice, which also had to be eaten at the end of the meal for dessert, after the entire meal was served, and also had to be completed before midnight. The reason this Matzah is now called "Poor Man's Bread" is because now, without the Temple, we are reduced to having this Matzah represent the Paschal Sacrifice.

But any symbol of something connected to the Holy Temple had to, by definition, be different from the original item or action in the Temple. Therefore, today's synagogue (Mikdash Me-at-Miniature Temple) may not at all resemble the structure of the Holy Temple at all. The Menorah inside the synagogue may not be of 7 branches like the original Menorah in the Holy Temple. In a similar manner, this Matzah that symbolizes the Paschal sacrifice, may not take on all of the Halachot-Jewish laws of the original Paschal Sacrifice. One example of this involves who may eat the Paschal Sacrifice. If the real sacrifice had been brought tonight, then the invitation for an outsider to be included in the eating of the roasted meat would have had to come much earlier. Every person who could eat from this sacrifice had to be designated or "invited" before it was brought or sacrificed, much earlier in the day. Inviting someone now, at the Seder, to eat from the meat of the Paschal sacrifice, would violate Jewish law and render it invalid. Thus, in order to clearly differentiate this Matzah before us from the Paschal sacrifice it represents, we specifically invite people now, at the first introduction of Matzah at the Seder, in order to demonstrate that this Matzah is indeed different from the Holy Temple's Paschal sacrifice, where such an invitation would be forbidden.

Now we can readily understand the context and connection of the כֹּל rest of the words in this paragraph. We intentionally say the words He who is in need, let him let him come and partake of the - דַּרְשׁוּ פֶּסַח. "We DO invite the person to partake of the Paschal sacrifice – in the symbolic sense – as we introduce its symbolic substitute, the Matzah. Today we are indeed situated "here" in the Diaspora (or at best in an Israel devoid of the Temple). Hence, as we recall the Paschal Sacrifice that once was, we long for next year in a Jerusalem where we can sacrifice the real animal and not substitute the Matzah. Thus, these words are indeed appropriate here. Similarly, we are indeed still psychological slaves in some sense, as long as there is no Temple. The ultimate freedom will be felt "next year" when we will, please G-d, be in the Temple in Jerusalem and offer the original Paschal Sacrifice.

Therefore, we highlight our lack of a Temple by pronouncing these words in Aramaic, the post-destruction vernacular, and realize that while we have to be satisfied now with the Matzah that only symbolizes the Paschal sacrifice, next year we hope to be in Jerusalem and offer up the actual sacrifice in the Holy Temple, where we will truly feel spiritually free in all senses of the word.

Mizrachi Dvar Torah

Rav Doron Perez: The Value of History

One of the remarkable books about the Jewish contribution to the course of humanity was written by an American-Irish historian Thomas Cahill in his book "The Gifts of the Jews." In this book he recalls so many remarkable contributions that the Jewish people have made to the destiny and course of human history.

First and foremost, he says, is the understanding of the idea and concept of history. Before the Jews, no one looked back at the past with any moral or spiritual value. After all, the past has passed!

Cahill says the Jewish people taught the world that the past has infinite value. Both in terms of learning from the past, and in terms of our identity and destiny. After all, as Santayana famously said, those who do not learn from history will be condemned to

repeat it. Not looking back at the past means you don't look at your own actions, and if you don't learn from them, you will repeat them, teaching us about how to behave.

But it is deeper than that. Rabbi Benjamin Blech in his Haggadah develops this idea – that for the Jewish people it is far deeper – our past is part of our identity. More than any other part of Judaism, the mitzvah of the Haggadah is looking back and re-learning and re-teaching what it means to be a part of the Jewish story. That the past has so much to tell us about the future.

As Rabbi Berel Wein says, if you don't look in the rear-view mirror, it is very hard to know where you are going if you don't see where you came from, because where you came from informs who you are and where you ought to be going.

May we all, as we come together with our families at the Seder and recount and reexamine what it means to be part of the Jewish story, may our glorious past and the gift of history inform us of who we are and where we come from, so that we know better where we are heading.

Ohr Torah Stone Dvar Torah

"Who am I?" Humility vs. Evasion

Rabbi Eliyahu Gateno

At the heart of the Exodus from Egypt, which we commemorate on the festival of Pesach, lies the shlichut of Moshe Rabeinu. Moshe was sent on a mission by God Himself to save the People of Israel after the cry of their great agony – induced by the heavy bondage – had reached Heaven. This notion has led many to ask why the name of Moshe is not mentioned at all in the Haggadah, and many a reason has been offered. However, we sometimes forget the fact that at the outset of the story, Moshe Rabeinu stands before God and refuses to take on this mission.

A closer examination of the verses will reveal that Moshe refuses to accept God's unique and historical request/instruction no less than five times, offering a variety of excuses and reasons. In fact, according to our Sages, these "negotiations" between God and Moshe lasted seven whole days.

The first time God reveals Himself to Moshe in the Burning Bush, He says: "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt".

Moshe then responds: "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?". According to Rashi, Moshe puts forth two claims: (a) Who am I that I can speak to kings?[1] (b) Why have the People of Israel merited that such a great miracle be done unto them and that I should take them out of Egypt?[2]

Moshe not only doubts his own worthiness to carry out this mission, but also has doubts about the mission's success. According to Rashi, God responds to Moshe's two claim thus: "Certainly I shall be with thee" (Shemot 3:12), which ultimately means: "As to your claiming that you are not worthy to come before Pharaoh, it is from me and not from you, and I shall be with you." And when God says: "When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain" (ibid) this comes to say: "When you asked which merits the People of Israel have to be deserving to be taken out of Egypt, there is great merit for this exodus, for they will get the Torah upon this mountain."

Later on, Moshe Rabeinu tries to evade the mission by claiming: "What is His name?" [Who is this God that is sending me?], and when God answers, Moshe goes on to argue: "But they shall not believe me", to which God answers in kind and gives Moshe's numerous signs to show the People.

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This is how the Ramban puts it: "At this time Moshe did not utter worthy words... Immediately God responded and gave him the signs as answer to all his [Moshe's] words."

Moshe's fourth attempt to reject the mission is expressed through his fifth argument: "I am not a man of words, to which God replies: "I shall be with your mouth." But then comes Moshe's fifth rejection: "Send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send", followed by "and the anger of God was kindled against Moshe."

According to Rashi, Moshe's words comprise two separate arguments: (a) He did not wish to accept a position of leadership which would make him greater than his brother Aharon, who was older than he, and for this reason he said to God – "send in the hands of the one You are used to sending" namely – Aharon, and (b) Send somebody else, for I will not merit to bring them into the Land nor be their savior in the future.

Let us not err to think that this point of the dialogue marks the end of the negotiations. Rather, it is our obligation to try and understand why God's anger bursts forth following this particular point, and not in reaction to the other arguments presented by Moshe earlier.

Furthermore, the verses do not seem to present an answer to Moshe's second argument. As to Moshe's first argument, although there seems to be an answer in the verses – "Is there not Aharon thy brother the Levite? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee; and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart" – this hardly suffices as an answer, since Moshe did not refuse because he was afraid of Aharon's reaction, but because he did not want take on a role that would make him greater than his brother. If so, this latter argument still goes unanswered.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe (Likutei Sichot, Vol. 31, Parshat Shemot, Discourse III) explains that the answer to Moshe's claims can be found a few verses later, in the description of Moshe's going down to Egypt: "And Moshe took his wife and his sons, and set them upon a donkey". Our Sages, in their reference to the translation of the seventy scholars who translated the Torah [into Greek] for King Talmi, discuss the translation of the said "donkey" in the verse above. Instead of using the word "donkey", the Septuagint chose to use "carrier of people" lest King Talmi question Moshe's usage of a lowly animal rather than a more worthy one. Still and all, we do not find in the words of our Sages a sufficient clarification as to why Moshe should choose to ride a donkey in particular.

Rashi alludes to a fascinating Midrash that refers to this donkey: "This donkey was a designated one. It was the same donkey that Avraham saddled on his way to the Akeida, the Binding of Yitzhak, and it is one and the same upon which will ride the Messiah when he should reveal himself." A deeper reading of the words of our Sages will reveal that they incorporate an answer to Moshe's last two arguments.

Moshe's first argument, whether we interpret it as a complete evasion like the Ramban – "Send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send, for there is no one in the whole world who is less worthy than I am for this mission" – or whether we interpret it like Rashi who says that Moshe did not wish to take upon himself more greatness than Aharon his brother, ultimately Moshe still expresses doubt in God's instruction, as if saying to Him that He had not considered the matter thoroughly enough before turning to Moshe. Until this point, Moshe's arguments were reasonable: Who am I? Why are Israel deserving of salvation? Which name of God do I give them? How will they believe me? But at this point, Moshe seems to suggest that God did not put enough thought into His request – either because

all others are more worthy than he is, or else because such a request of Moshe is inappropriate seeing that he is the youngest brother, unfit to have greatness beyond that of his elder brother. To this God responds by instructing Moshe to take the donkey that had belonged to Avraham Avinu. What is the significance of this? God wishes Moshe to put before his eyes, as it were, Avraham's devotion when the latter was commanded to take his son and offer him as a sacrifice. Avraham had not hesitated for a moment and went to fulfill God's commandment without delay and without putting forth a single argument.

As to the second argument, God wishes to hint to Moshe that the exodus from Egypt is the beginning of a long process, which begins with Moshe and culminates in the coming of the Messiah, and that Moshe cannot evade the mission by claiming that he will not be the one who brings the mission to its completion.

The above story of Moshe and his shlichut must serve as an important example to us, as shlichim, and the message it conveys must be constantly reiterated. Although we have not merited Divine revelation, nor has God conveyed to us directly what precise shlichut we must fulfill, one who looks wisely upon his/her own life reality and circumstances will not fail to notice that there is always a crucial calling that must be undertaken. However, sometimes the people most worthy of undertaking the mission try evading it by making arguments similar to those presented by Moshe. When that happens, we must stand firm and respond to their arguments by giving them God's answers to Moshe.

If one does not wish to undertake a shlichut by saying "Who am I?" we must answer such a one that the mission is not a personal matter, as God said to Moshe – "It is from me and not from you, and I shall be with you." And if one rejects a mission by saying that another is more worthy than he, we must put before his eyes the image of Avraham Avinu saddling his donkey and setting out swiftly to sacrifice his son without any hesitation on his part, only complete joy. And if one claims not to have the ability or competence to complete the task at hand, for it is too great, then let us say to him: "It is not upon you to finish the work" (Pirkei Avot 2, 15), but you must begin it nonetheless, even if another completes it. And remember that this does not detract from your part in it, just like Moshe's role in the Exodus is no less great even though the ultimate redemption will only come to pass when the Messiah completes it.

[1] As is phrased by the Ramban: "I am the lowliest of men, a mere shepherd, while he is a great king." And in the words of the Ibn Ezra: "Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh? Even if it is only to present him with an offering and a gift, I am still not worthy of entering the court of the king for I am a stranger."

[2] According to Rashi, Moshe seems to be doubtful of the People of Israel's right to salvation. However, the Ramban renders a different explanation: "Who am I that I should take the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt – for You told me to take them to the Land of Canaan, and since they are a wise and clever People, surely they will not want to follow me to a land filled with nations greater and mightier than them." The Ibn Ezra, too, takes a different approach and explains thus: "Even if I were worthy of presenting myself before Pharaoh... is Pharaoh such a fool to listen to me and send away a multitude of slaves from his country and set them free?"

Yeshivat Har Etzion: Virtual Bet Midrash

In a Manner Expressive of Freedom: *Ma'aseh* (Action) and *Kiyum* (Fulfillment) in the *Mitzvot* of Pesach - Rav Ezra Bick [Excerpts] "A Man Must Present Himself"

If we return to the Rambam in *Hilkhot Chametz u-Matza*, we see that the explanation for this is quite simple: the special requirement of internalizing the content, beyond the ordinary requirement of performing the "act of the mitzva," stems from the mitzva of relating the story of the exodus from Egypt. Anyone who does not mention these three matters on the night of the fifteenth has not fulfilled his obligation. They are: the Paschal sacrifice, *matza*, and *maror*... These statements are all referred to as the Haggada.

The mitzva of relating the story of the exodus does not only include speech; it also has a practical expression – acting "in a manner expressive of freedom" while drinking the four cups of wine and while reclining: Therefore, when a person feasts on this night, he must eat and drink while he is reclining in the manner of free men...

That is to say, drinking wine and reclining express the same "manner of freedom" that is obligated by the mitzva of relating the story of the exodus – the Haggada. It also stands to reason that this is why special importance is attached to the experiences of the night, as expressed by "the taste of the *maror*" and "the taste of the *matza*" that we saw above.

The Rambam mentions another requirement in the framework of the mitzva of relating the story of the exodus: In each and every generation, a person must present himself as if he, himself, has now left the slavery of Egypt....

The question, of course, is: What does this requirement entail? The answer seems to be simple: The Rambam's ruling that "a person must present [*le-har'ot*] himself" indicates that the mitzva is not only to remember the exodus, but to live it. On this night, each person goes out from slavery to freedom.

In contrast to the Rambam's halakhic ruling that one must mention "the Paschal sacrifice, *matza*, and *maror*," the text of the Rambam's Haggada includes an addition at the beginning of this statement, following the Mishna in *Pesachim*: Rabban Gamliel said: Anyone who does not mention these three matters on Pesach has not fulfilled his obligation: the Paschal sacrifice, *matza*, and *maror*.

In the Haggada, we cite not only the *halakha* that one must mention "the Paschal sacrifice, *matza*, and *maror*," but also the introduction to it, namely, the words: "Rabban Gamliel used to say." Why?

The reason is that the mitzva is to live the exodus from Egypt. On this night, the Jew goes out from slavery to freedom. The mitzva to relate the story of the exodus goes beyond knowledge of the dry history, and includes a renewed experience of the exodus. This experience is not created through the reading of history books, but by way of a story: "Ask your father, and he will declare to you; your elders, and they will tell you". A person must know from where he comes and to where he is going. It is therefore important to emphasize that Rabban Gamliel said this: We act by virtue of the earlier generations and continue them. This is the central idea of the night of the *seder*.

The Renewed Experience on the Night of the *Seder* "A Remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt" ... we can understand the difference between the telling of the story of the exodus from Egypt on Pesach, on the one hand, and on the other hand – the mitzva of remembering the exodus from Egypt every day, and in general, the rest of the *mitzvot* that serve as "a remembrance of the exodus from Egypt. Unlike the latter category, the night of the *seder* is not exclusively about remembrance.

Likutei Divrei Torah

Throughout the year, there is an obligation to remember our history – as on the festival of Sukkot, which mentions the exodus from Egypt: "That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt". But regarding the mitzva of the Haggada and relating the story, we are not only remembering history; we are also engaged in a renewed experience of the exodus from the slavery of Egypt, as the Rambam rules: "In each and every generation, a person must *present himself* as if he, himself, has *now* left the slavery of Egypt". That is to say, we are dealing with an internalization of the exodus from Egypt – *now*.

This is the "fulfillment" of all the various reasons for *mitzvot* that we saw: the four cups, the taste of *maror*, the taste of *matza*, the Haggada – these are all "fulfillments" of the obligation to retell the story of the exodus from Egypt. The speech and the actions are meant to cause us to internalize the idea that the exodus is not something that happened a long time ago, but something that is happening right now: *We* were there, and therefore *our* lives were embittered, *we* were redeemed, and thus *we* went out to freedom.

Therefore, the various acts of eating are accompanied by taste: One should really feel that "they embittered their lives", which in essence are our lives. This is true also of the experience of redemption that occurs when we eat the *matza* and taste it. Of course, for the same reason, there is a special requirement of mentioning "the Paschal sacrifice, *matza*, and *maror*" – as part of the retelling of the story of the Haggada.

The Redemption that Takes Place Every Year

Understanding what happened in the exodus from Egypt is only the beginning, because slavery and freedom are experiences that everyone has all the time. Jean-Jacques Rousseau argued that "man is born free but everywhere is in chains", and thus he ignited the modern freedom movement that assumes that man is fundamentally born free and yet is shackled. Judaism, however, says the opposite: We were created enslaved, and only with a mighty hand and outstretched arm did God break the iron rods and redeem us from Egypt. In other words, a Jew's natural condition is slavery; were it not for God, the Torah, and miracles, he would not be free – and therefore, he needs to be newly liberated every year.

This is the uniqueness of Pesach as compared to the other festivals: Every year before Pesach, each and every one of us is a slave, just as our ancestors were slaves, and on the festival he is liberated anew, just as they were liberated. One must strongly internalize that we really came out of Egypt, and thus re-experience the redemption every year.

The renewed liberation begins with the statement that had we not been redeemed, we would still be slaves in Egypt; it intensifies with the eating of the *maror*, which has the taste of the bitterness of Egypt, and with the eating of the *matza*, which has the taste of God's redemption. A Jew eats both the bitterness of Egypt and the redemption so that the experience should be real, so that he will be truly free. The requirement that "the taste of the *matza* and the Paschal sacrifice be in his mouth" stems from the fact that the desired fulfillment is not merely eating and chewing, but being free. This is achieved through the taste and through leaving it in one's mouth even after the meal.

Rabbi Yosef Soloveitchik used to say that the Haggada includes a retelling of the story of the exodus from Egypt by way of speech, and here, in the words of Rabban Gamliel, begins the retelling of the story of the exodus by way of actions. This is the additional and deeper level that we experience on the night of the *seder*, and this is the special nature of the experience of the Haggada of Pesach – to be redeemed every year anew.

This week's *Parashah* continues to discuss *Tzara'at*, including *Tzara'at* that strikes the walls of a person's house. *Rashi z"l* quotes a *Midrash*: This is good news, for when the stones that show signs of *Tzara'at* are removed from the wall of the house, the owner finds treasures that the Canaanites hid within the walls. [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Mordechai Greenberg *shlita* (*Rosh Yeshiva* Emeritus of Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavne in Israel) asks: Our Sages teach that *Tzara'at* is a punishment for serious sins, including speaking *Lashon Ha'ra*. How can it also enrich the person whose home is stricken? Also, asks R' Greenberg: we read (*Vayikra* 14:34), "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." In contrast, when the Torah speaks of *Tzara'at* on a person and on clothing, it does not say, "I will place"; rather, it says (*Vayikra* 13:2, 9 & 47), "If there will be . . ." Why the different wording?

R' Greenberg explains: We find that the *Tochachah* / rebuke and curses in *Parashat Bechukotai* ends with words of consolation (*Vayikra* 26:45), while the *Tochachah* in *Parashat Ki Tavo* does not. Why? R' Meir Zvi Bergman *shlita* (Bnei Brak, Israel) explains that the *Tochachah* itself should console us, for it shows us that *Hashem* is paying attention to our deeds and reacting to them. That is true of the *Tochachah* in *Ki Tavo*. However, the Torah tells us repeatedly that the *Tochachah* in *Bechukotai* will continually worsen because we will attribute it to chance. When we do not recognize that *Hashem* is behind events and is reacting to our sins, we cannot find consolation in a *Tochachah*, so express words of consolation are needed.

- Continued in box inside -

Pesach

R' Yitzchak Aryeh Wormser z"l (1768-1847; Germany; known as the "*Ba'al Shem* of Michelstadt") bemoans--in poetic language that cannot adequately be rendered into English--that there are those who mock the recitation of *Chad Gadya*. Accordingly, he offers the following explanation for the poem that appears at the end of the *Haggadah*:

"*Gadya*" (גדיא) alludes to the uniqueness of the Jewish People, as its letters allude to the three (ג) Patriarchs, four (ד) Matriarchs, Ten (י) Commandments, and One (א) G-d. In addition, it is the acronym of the Hebrew phrase: "The fourth exile will be long." It also alludes to the verse (*Divrei Ha'yamim I* 17:21), "Who is like Your people *Yisrael*, a unique nation on earth" ("ישראל לוי אחרד").

The "*two Zuz*" allude to the two *Luchot* with which *Hashem* acquired us. The word "*Zuz*" in Aramaic means "pair," alluding to the fact that there were two pairs of *Luchot*.

"*Shunra*" (the cat that ate the goat) has the same *Gematria* as "*Nevuchadnezar Melech Bavel*," the Babylonian king who destroyed the first *Bet Hamikdash* and exiled the Jewish People.

"*Kalba*" (the dog that bit the cat) is the Persian Empire that conquered the Babylonian Empire, because it is the acronym of the Hebrew phrase meaning, "Koresh (Cyrus) fought with Belshatzar (the Babylonian king)," as well as the Hebrew phrase meaning, "Koresh captured Bavel." Also, a *Kelev* (dog) recognizes its master more so than any other animal does. Likewise, Cyrus was a righteous king who recognized G-d.

"*Chutra*" (the stick that hit the dog) is Alexander the Great, who defeated Persia and conquered *Eretz Yisrael*. The "stick" alludes to the force with which he ruled over the entire civilized world. Also, "*Chutra*" is an acronym for several Hebrew phrases relating to the Macedonian Greek emperor and Greece in general, including: - **Continued in box inside** -

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– *Continued from back page* –

- “Alexander toiled and exerted energy most his life” on–
- “wisdom and philosophy of nature from his teacher Aristotle,”
- “but all of his toil and philosophical musings were for nothing.”

“**Nura**” (the fire that burned the stick) is Yehuda Ha’maccabee who defeated the heirs of the Macedonian Greeks, saved the Jewish People, and killed the evil Greek king.

“**Maya**” (the water that extinguished the fire) is King Herod, who murdered every last member of the Hasmonean dynasty. “*Maya*” (מַיָּא) is an acronym of several Hebrew phrases relating to Herod and his successors, including:

- “He was the son of Antipater”;
- “His mother was from *Yisrael*”; and
- “Agrippas, king of the *Yehudim* [from the Herodian dynasty].”

It also is an acronym of the Hebrew phrases:

- “It will destroy our *Mikdash*”;
- “Who will redeem us?”
- “Eliyahu and *Mashiach* together”; and
- “When will *Mashiach* come?”

[The *Ba'al Shem* does not explain why Rome and *Mashiach* should be alluded to at this point; perhaps because it was the Herodian kings who invited the Roman Empire to become involved in *Eretz Yisrael*, thus ushering in our current, final exile.]

“**Tora**” (the ox that drank the water) refers to the Roman Empire. The *Gematria* of “*Ha'shor*” (הַשׁוֹר), the Hebrew translation of “*Tora*” (Aramaic for: “the ox”) equals the *Gematria* of the Hebrew phrase: “This was Vespasian and his son Titus,” the two Roman generals (later Emperors) who conquered *Eretz Yisrael* and displaced the Herodian kings.

“**Ha'shochet**” (the one who slaughtered the ox) alludes to the Moslem Empire that eventually replaced the Roman Empire as the ruler of *Eretz Yisrael* and continues to be the cause of our current exile. “*Shochet*” (שׁוֹחֵט) is an acronym of the four “*Mitzvot*” that Moslems observe (though not as we do): *Shechitah*, *U'milah*, *Chazir*, *Tevilah*.

“**Mal'ach Ha'ma'vet**” (the angel of death that killed the *Shochet*) is “*Gog U'magog*,” about whom Yechezkel prophesied. The *Gematria* of “*Mal'ach Ha'ma'vet*” equals the *Gematria* of the Hebrew phrase: “The great king Gog from the land of Magog.”

Finally, “**Ha'kadosh Baruch Hu**” will destroy Gog and his hordes and return the Jewish People to our land. *Amen, Kein yehi ratzon!*

(*Ba'al Shem Mi'Michelstadt* p.226)

“Remember the *Torah* / teaching of Moshe, My servant, which I commanded him at *Chorev* for all *Yisrael*, decrees and ordinances. Behold! I send you *Elijah* the prophet, before the great and awesome day of *Hashem*.” (*Malachi* 3:22-23--*Haftarah* for *Shabbat Ha'gadol*)

R' Yitzchak Arieli z"l (1896-1974; *Mashgiach* of Yeshivat Mercaz Harav; author of *Enayim La'mishpat*) writes: The end of the book of *Malachi*, where these verses appear, is also the end of the era of prophecy. Until *Eliyahu Ha'navi* returns to herald the ultimate redemption, there will be no more prophets and prophecy. Where then are we to find guidance? *Malachi* tells us: By delving into the depths of the *Torah* that *Hashem* taught us through Moshe, we can find the answer to every mystery and conundrum that the future will present.

R' Arieli comments further: One of the names of Mount Sinai, where the *Torah* was given, is “*Chorev*,” from the same root as “*Churban*” / “destruction.” This alludes to the fact that the *Torah* was given in a desolate wilderness. Why? To teach us that our role is to “build” the *Torah*. How? Through the give-and-take of the Oral Law--starting, of course, from the premises that *Hashem* gave Moshe and Moshe placed “in the ears of Yehoshua” (*Shmot* 17:14), an allusion to the Oral Law, which is heard and not read. [Later, the foundation of the Oral Law, the *Mishnah* and *Gemara*, were committed to writing, but that is not the ideal.]

R' Arieli adds: Our verse teaches that the *Torah* was given “for all *Yisrael*,” meaning that no Jew can claim exemption from studying and understanding it. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Shirat Ha'geulah* p.21)

– *Continued from front page* –

R' Greenberg continues: R' Moshe ben Maimon z"l (*Rambam*; 1135-1204; Spain and Egypt) teaches that the three types of *Tzara'at* come in a progression: first on one's house; then, if he does not repent, on his clothing; and finally, if he still does not repent, on his body. Therefore, R' Greenberg writes, *Hashem* says “I will place” *Tzara'at* on a person's house to indicate that the person should recognize that *Hashem* placed it there deliberately to send him a message. If one fails to recognize that, if he attributes the *Tzara'at* to chance (“There will be . . .”) and he continues speaking *Lashon Ha'ra*, the *Tzara'at* will progress to his clothing and eventually to his body. Like the person who attributes the *Tochachah* to chance, he will need to be struck again and again, G-d forbid.

On the other hand, if the person gets the message as soon as the *Tzara'at* strikes his house and he repents, he deserves to be rewarded with finding a buried treasure. (*B'darchei Ha'parashah*)

ISRAEL REPORT

To provide greater exposure to primary Israeli news sources and opinions in order to become better informed on the issues, and to gain a better understanding of the wide range of perspectives that exist in Israeli society and politics.

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ISRAEL ABORTED 2 STRIKES AGAINST IRAN (Israel Hayom 4/18/24)

Israel prepared for potential retaliatory strikes against Iran on at least two occasions this past week but ultimately decided not to carry them out, ABC News reported Thursday based on three Israeli sources.

The development comes after Tehran launched an attack on Israel involving over 300 drones and missiles on Saturday night into Sunday morning.

Since then, Jerusalem has been evaluating how and when to respond, with the War Cabinet holding meetings on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday.

The War Cabinet, consisting of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Minister Benny Gantz, and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, has considered a range of potential responses, from attacking Iranian proxies in the region (but not on Iranian soil) to a possible cyberattack.

On Wednesday, Netanyahu stated that while appreciating advice from allies, Israel will make its own decisions and take necessary actions to defend itself. A senior US official also told ABC News that Israel was unlikely to carry out a strike on Iran until after Passover which begins on April 22.

PM SHELVED PRE-APPROVED PLANS FOR IMMEDIATE IRAN REPRISAL AFTER BIDEN CALL (Times of Israel 4/18/24)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu shelved pre-prepared plans for retaliation against Iran's weekend barrage after speaking with US President Joe Biden immediately following the attack, Israeli television reported Wednesday.

According to the Kan public broadcaster, the cabinet had already approved a series of possible responses depending on the scope of the Iranian attack, which were slated to be carried out immediately following the Iranian fusillade early Sunday.

"The response won't be what was planned any longer, diplomatic sensitivities won out," a senior source was quoted telling the broadcaster. "There will be a response, but it seems it will be different from what was planned."

The report noted the comments likely pointed to a weaker response than what had been approved.

Kan also quoted unnamed Western diplomats saying that "the understanding is that Israel will respond."

A separate report Wednesday by the Axios news site said the war cabinet also considered green-lighting a strike on Iran during a meeting Monday, but later decided not to "for operational reasons." According to the report, which cited Israeli and US officials, Israel informed the Biden administration after the meeting that it decided to hold off on a response.

"We are not sure why and how close it was to an actual attack," a US official was quoted as saying.

The reports came ahead of expected meetings Thursday of the war cabinet and high-level security cabinet. The Ynet news site said deliberations would likely focus on a possible response to the Iranian attack, moribund talks with Hamas for a hostage deal and Gaza truce, and fighting with Hezbollah in the north.

The war cabinet has already met several times since the Iran to discuss a response, amid international pressure for restraint.

Meanwhile, Brig. Gen. Doron Gavish, the former commander of Israel's air defense who is now serving in reserves, said Wednesday that the air force was preparing for future attacks from Iran, with Tehran threatening an immediate response should Israel retaliate.

He said the Israeli Air Force has been reviewing its successful defense against Iran's attack over the weekend as it makes adjustments for potential additional fighting.

"We are preparing ourselves for the next time, debriefing the mission and seeing how could we prepare ourselves for the next attack," Gavish said from a military base in southern Israel.

US AGREED TO ISRAEL'S PLAN FOR RAFAH IN RETURN FOR NOT CARRYING OUT LARGE IRAN STRIKE (Times of Israel 4/18/24)

Egyptian officials tell a Qatari outlet that the US has accepted Israel's plan for an operation in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, in return for not carrying out a large strike in Iran in response to Tehran's unprecedented missile and drone attack.

"The American administration showed acceptance of the plan previously presented by the occupation government regarding the military operation in Rafah, in exchange for not carrying out a large-scale attack against Iran," an unnamed official tells Al-Araby Al-Jadeed.

The Egyptian officials tell the outlet that preparations are underway so that Egypt can deal with any possible impact of the planned operation.

Four Hamas battalions are believed to be stationed in Rafah along with over a million civilians sheltering there after fleeing fighting in other parts of the Strip. Rafah is also thought to be where Hamas leaders are hidden, possibly along with Israeli hostages.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has several times claimed to have approved plans for a Rafah operation and more recently said that a date has been decided for the launch.

BEN GVR CALLS FOR WAR CABINET TO BE DISBANDED: VICTORY IS GETTING FURTHER AWAY (Arutz-7 4/18/24)

National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir on Wednesday evening called for

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East Denver Orthodox Synagogue, CO	Young Israel of New Hyde Park, NY
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the War Cabinet to be disbanded.

"In Gaza - pictures of thousands bathing on the beach. In the north - Hezbollah saw that the concept cabinet was not responding to the attack of hundreds of missiles from Iran into Israeli territory, so it raised its head and took another step in the aggression against us that today cost us wounded soldiers."

"It's time to dismantle the concept cabinet, stop the policy of containment and **proportionality and show our enemies who's in charge. As long as the current policy of the concept cabinet continues, unfortunately - absolute victory is getting farther and farther away,**" said Ben Gvir.

The Yediot Aharonot newspaper reported earlier on Wednesday that Shas chairman Aryeh Deri led the moderate line against an attack on Iran in both the War Cabinet and in the expanded cabinet, contrary to the position of Ben Gvir, who together with other ministers demanded a significant and painful attack.

EU LEADERS BACK NEW IRAN SANCTIONS AFTER ATTACK ON ISRAEL (YNet 4/18/24)

European Union leaders decided on Wednesday to step up sanctions against Iran after Tehran's missile and drone attack on Israel left world powers scrambling to prevent a wider conflict in the Middle East.

The summit in Brussels is the first meeting of the EU's 27 national leaders since Saturday's attack, more than six months into the war between Israel and the Iran-backed Palestinian terrorist group Hamas.

"We feel it's very important to do everything to isolate Iran," said summit chairman Charles Michel, adding the new sanctions against the Islamic Republic would target companies involved in the production of drones and missiles.

Italy spoke separately ahead of G7 talks in favor of sanctions against arms suppliers linked to the attack against Israel, as well as those behind attacks on ships in the Red Sea.

EU foreign ministers are due to continue the sanctions work on Monday as the United States and its Western allies hope new steps against Iran will help limit any Israeli retaliation.

The EU already has multiple programs that target Iran for human rights abuses, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and Tehran's support for Russia's war in Ukraine.

Germany, France and several EU states are looking at expanding a scheme that seeks to curb the supply of Iranian drones to Russia to include the provision of missiles and cover deliveries to Iranian proxies in the Middle East.

Belgium backed introducing sanctions against Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps but Germany's Olaf Scholz said that required further legal checks. The bloc's top diplomat has said that could only happen if a national authority in the EU found that the group had been involved in terrorist activity.

Analysts say Iran is unlikely to face more severe economic punishment because of worries about boosting oil prices and angering top buyer China.

MOST MEANINGFUL FLIGHT OF MY CAREER (JPost 4/16/24)

"This past Saturday, I flew on the most meaningful flight I have ever made," Maj. N, an Israel Air Force (IAF) pilot in Squadron 122 who has been on reserve duty since October 7, told The Jerusalem Post on Monday.

He was referring, of course, to Israel's broad defense operation amid the multifaceted airstrikes launched by the Islamic Regime, titled Iron Shield.

While N was faced with disappointment on Friday when he told his wife that he would not be coming home that night – or that entire weekend, for that matter – **he was filled with both "excitement" and "focus," once he was briefed on the historic operation he would be partaking in.**

The IDF – and, indeed, the world – understood quite early on that an Iranian **attack was imminent. Israel's defense systems needed only to be prepared.**

At approximately 10 p.m. on Saturday night, N and his fellow pilots were alerted that it was time to take to the skies.

"I've been a pilot for over 20 years, and I have participated in many operations, both in and out of Israel. This was the most meaningful flight [yet]," he said. "Since October 7, we, like all of the air force, moved to the highest alertness level, whether it be relating to Gaza or further threats."

That night, Israel deployed Eitam, Shavit, and Oron aircraft to detect, report, and ultimately help remove airborne threats.

Eitams are Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) surveillance planes outfitted with more than \$100 million worth of radar and command-and-control systems.

Shavits are intelligence-gathering planes with high altitudes, long flight ranges, and advanced system capabilities. They can detect the operation of electronic systems hundreds of kilometers away and in remote areas.

Orons are high-performance, low-maintenance aircraft equipped with advanced radar and intelligence systems that create real-time, comprehensive intelligence images. This was the type of aircraft N flew on Saturday night.

"We worked to recognize the threats and let the [Operations Division] and the fighter pilots know what the biggest threats were," N explained. "The controllers in the back speak with the fighter pilots.

"We were in a very strategic location in the middle of the sky. We were the first to recognize and see what was coming. It was like a computer game.

"I told them, 'This target is on its way. We need to down this,'" he continued. "You suddenly realize, 'My god, what am I doing? I cannot mess this up.'

Luckily, our team of controllers are such professionals. We passed **messages on to them. It was excellent cooperation."**

According to him, without the work his squadron did, "some of the threats would have reached Israel, God forbid."

Indeed, IDF Spokesperson R.-Adm. Daniel Hagari revealed, following the operation, that 99% of the aerial threats were shot down, and none of the 200 drones and 30 cruise missiles dispatched got through to Israeli territory at all.

The intel gathered by N and his teammates was ultimately the information that **allowed aircraft, David's Sling, or the Arrow missile systems to down the looming airborne threats. The Iron Dome, which defends well against Hamas and Hezbollah's simple rockets, is less relevant for drones and fancier long-range missiles.**

N, when asked how he felt after the operation, said that he was not able to sleep for days after.

"Only now, three days later, do I understand what I experienced there," he said. "I experienced what it was like to participate in something far bigger than myself. I needed to protect the country in the most pure place physically. I feel that this was very meaningful and that I physically safeguarded Israel from the 60 tons of weapons."

After they all landed safely, the pilots and controllers, along with their commanders, met for a debriefing, as the Air Force does regularly.

"A truly honest debriefing is central to us," N said. "We are always looking to improve. We are ready for any threat. We are always practicing, always sharpening our knives.

"Not for a single moment do we forget the hostages," N concluded tearfully.

"Our main goal is to return them. I wish only for freedom for our hostages, that they return healthy and well, and that all the soldiers, reservists or not, come back home, amen."

Squadron 122 was, as N described it, an **"irreplaceable and crucial part of this operation."**

TIRED BUT PROUD, IAF TRAFFIC CONTROLLER DESCRIBES UNPRECEDENTED IRANIAN DRONE STRIKE (JPost 4/14/24)

Israel Air Force Maj. "A," whose name cannot be revealed due to censorship, has been in reserves in the Southern Command's Air Traffic Control (ATC) Division since October 7 and is married to another major in the Nahal Brigade, who has also been in reserves since October 7. The couple have three children, aged eight, six, and four.

"Grandma and Grandpa were drafted for the mission," A. said, explaining that the kids lived at the grandparents' house for several months.

"This is the complexity of life here in our land, our routine versus our operations, and this also characterizes the ATC," A. said.

According to A., the ATC takes part in all different missions related to the IAF, but the most important is the defense of Israeli airspace, including building a picture of what is going on, identifying each threat, directing relevant forces, and operating firepower.

She compared the unit's work to that of the game Rush Hour, where players need to move vehicle pieces around on a grid to free a specific red car with the minimum number of moves.

The ATC has several possibilities and moves, and they need to apply them simultaneously to many moving parts, including ground forces, aerial forces, and others, all to strike down the threat with the minimum possible moves.

On Saturday night, this was the unit that managed the war zone, and there was no airborne force that did not go through the ATC center, A. said.

"Last night was very focused," but throughout the war, the unit has been involved in aerial attacks, intelligence collection, and evacuations, as well as coordinating training flights and civilian flights.

Dozens of dots began to appear on the units' screens during the night, and the unit began to work based on the protocol in what became an unprecedented event, as it worked throughout the night to identify the threats and coordinate the response to each one of them.

"The feeling was one of very high tension and very high professionalism... but we finished the night with a feeling of pride but also modesty," A. said.

She explained that the unit is always in high tension, as during routine times there are still aerial threats that need to be dealt with that do not make it into Israeli press, but that Saturday night was exceptional.

"We were tired but proud," A. said. "Now we continue at full strength... this is one night among many, we are cocked and ready 24/7," she said.

"I wish a speedy recovery to all of our injured soldiers, for the speedy return of the hostages, and days of quiet. Together we will win," A. concluded.

IAEA CHIEF: CONCERNED ISRAEL WILL ATTACK IRAN'S NUCLEAR FACILITIES (Arutz-7 4/16/24)

Rafael Grossi, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said on Monday he is concerned about Israel possibly targeting Iranian nuclear facilities, Reuters reported.

Grossi said Iran closed its nuclear facilities on Sunday over "security considerations" and that while they reopened on Monday, he kept IAEA inspectors away "until we see that the situation is completely calm."

"We are going to resume tomorrow," Grossi told reporters in New York. "This has not had an impact on our inspection activity."

Asked about the possibility of an Israel strike on Iranian nuclear facilities, Grossi replied, "We are always concerned about this possibility." He urged "extreme restraint."

The IAEA regularly inspects Iran's main nuclear facilities like its enrichment plants at Natanz that are at the heart of the country's nuclear program.

Grossi's comments came amid speculation that Israel will retaliate for Iran's drone and missile attack on Saturday night.

IDF Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi visited the Nevatim Airbase on Monday, two days after the base was damaged in the Iranian missile and drone attack, and said that the Iranian attack will be met with a response.

Meanwhile, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister, Ali Bagheri Kani, warned Israel against retaliating, saying a response to an Israeli retaliation "will not be measured in days and hours, but in seconds."

GLOBAL CLIENTS FLOCK TO ISRAELI DEFENSE FIRMS FOLLOWING IRAN ATTACK (YNet 4/14/24)

The successful interception of swarms of missiles and drones fired from Iran toward Israel by the Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)-produced Arrow system, among others, has sparked significant global interest.

"It's a day of pride for many of our employees, who work day and night and

in the end, everything converges to one event," IAI CEO Boaz Levy told Ynet in an interview, adding that the company has received numerous supportive phone calls from customers worldwide before and after the attack, expressing their appreciation for the performance of the system.

Levy highlighted the unprecedented nature of the attack, noting, "Yesterday was an attack the world had not known like it: the number of simultaneous threats, even in the Ukraine-Russia war, there were no attacks in such numbers and not in such a complex scenario of a number of threats of different types." He commended the phenomenal 99% success rate of air defenses.

Former financial advisor to the IDF chief of staff Brig. Gen. Reem Aminoach pegged the total cost of the interception operation at "4-5 billion shekels" (\$1 million-1.3 million).

"We provide a sophisticated and innovative system, it does not cost a million dollars but it is not cheap," Levy says. "The price is not the issue here. Anyone who wants to defend themselves needs to look at the potential damage versus the benefit. That's the right calculation.

"I don't know how much the activity cost that night and I don't think anyone in such a short period of time knows how to estimate the price. At times like this, you don't look at the direct cost, but what would have happened and the damage that would have been if they had hit population centers or sensitive facilities. A country like Israel that needs to defend itself must have defensive weapons."

"Yesterday's attack comprised three types of threats: drones carrying relatively small warheads, cruise missiles and ballistic missiles. The Arrow system, which we have developed, is designed specifically to counter ballistic missiles. These pose the primary threat and carry the highest level of risk due to their high speed, quick arrival time - within 12 minutes from Iran, and the potential for large-scale damage due to the hundreds of kilograms of warheads they carry.

"Israel was targeted with dozens of these long-range ballistic missiles, and the Arrow system addressed this threat - from the detection of the threat by radar to managing the event, and finally launching the missiles. Arrow 2 targets at a relatively low altitude, still outside the atmosphere, and Arrow 3 targets at a very high altitude. The combination of these two systems provides a level of flexibility. For example, if a missile isn't intercepted at a high altitude, it can still be intercepted at a lower altitude."

In light of these achievements, it is expected that our already record-breaking order backlog will continue to grow.

"We are already on an upward trend: in 2023, our order backlog totaled \$18 billion and our sales turnover was \$5.3 billion. Seventy-one percent of our sales turnover is destined for export. It's clear that there are numerous conflicts around the world and numerous defense systems are needed. Our Arrow system is in demand and we have been marketing it to overseas customers for years.

"In my previous role in the IAI, I was the program manager and chief engineer of Arrow, and I know the system intimately. The Arrow project, which began in the late 80s as a feasibility study to determine if it was possible to intercept a missile with another missile, was the first of its kind in the world and was developed in partnership with the U.S. government. This was followed by the development of Arrow 2 and Arrow 3.

"I anticipate that after the war there will be further orders for the Iron Beam system, which includes the radars that detect the missiles and the launchers. The system isn't cheap, but it's essential for those who want to defend themselves (IAI does require American approval for system sales deals)."

GOVERNMENT APPROVES PLAN TO REBUILD GAZA ENVELOPE (Arutz-7 4/17/24)

The government on Wednesday unanimously approved The Tekuma Authority's strategic five-year plan to rebuild the communities in the Western Negev and the plan is now underway.

"Today, the Government has approved the Tekuma Plan to rebuild the communities in the Western Negev. We will invest a very large sum of NIS 19

billion in order to move the communities of the Western Negev forward for generations. We will invest in housing, infrastructure, education, employment, health and more," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated.

The Hamas terrorists sought to uproot us. We will uproot them and deepen our roots. We will build the Land of Israel and safeguard our state," he added.

Tekuma Authority Director Brig.-Gen. (Res.) Moshe Edri stated: "Today is the historic day on which we are starting the strategic five-year plan that will bring rehabilitation, growth, prosperity, and hope for the region and its residents.

"I thank the Prime Minister; the council heads in the region; the communities and residents in the city of Sderot, the communities and the kibbutzim; and the various Government ministries for their joint work; and for the confidence that has been given to us as an authority to formulate a plan that will bring good news to the region, the councils, the communities, the families and the citizens of the entire State of Israel."

Edri explained: "With the approval of the plan, we are starting to implement it and carry it out including its plans and flagship projects. Just as we formulated the plan with the communities and the Government ministries, we will also work with them and in cooperation with the third sector, the business sector, and philanthropists, to implement it and bring the region to a positive, prosperous, and attractive area.

"The plan is spread over the next five years; already in the coming years, we will start to see the rebuilding, the rehabilitation, the growth, and the prosperity we intend."

HOSTAGE MOTHER NAMED ON TIME'S '100 MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE' LIST (i24NEWS 4/17/24)

Rachel Goldberg-Polin, whose son Hersh Goldberg-Polin remains among 133 hostages held by Hamas since October 7th, has been honored as one of TIME magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World for 2024.

This recognition comes as a testament to her unwavering advocacy and efforts to raise global awareness about the ongoing hostage crisis.

Rachel's journey into the spotlight began when her son Hersh, along with 132 others, was taken hostage by Hamas into Gaza. Since then, she, alongside her husband Jon Polin and countless other families affected by the crisis, has tirelessly campaigned for the release of all captives.

The inclusion of Rachel Goldberg-Polin in the TIME100 list acknowledges the significant impact she has had in galvanizing support for the hostages' cause. Her advocacy has resonated not only with millions of people worldwide but also within the halls of power where decisions are made.

Expressing her gratitude for being included in the TIME100 list, Rachel emphasized the urgent need for continued global attention and action to secure the release of the hostages. "I want to thank TIME for my inclusion on the TIME100 and for recognizing the significance and gravity of the hostage crisis," she stated.

Rachel's remarks underscore the profound humanitarian crisis unfolding in Gaza, where innocent lives are caught in the crossfire of geopolitical conflicts. Her plea serves as a poignant reminder of the human toll of such conflicts and the imperative for the international community to address them.

As Rachel Goldberg-Polin assumes her place among TIME's most influential individuals, she vows to use her platform to advocate relentlessly for the release of her son and all other hostages. Her message is clear: the world must not turn a blind eye to the suffering of these individuals, nor to the plight of all innocents affected by the crisis in Gaza.

A SECRET DE FACTO ALLIANCE WORKED WONDERS ON A CRUCIAL NIGHT AGAINST IRAN (Ariel Kahana, Israel Hayom 4/16/24)

The details of the dramatic moments in which Israel halted the largest ballistic missile attack in world history on Saturday night will remain officially undisclosed. There is no doubt that the Israeli Air Force pilots and air control personnel excelled in their performance. However, they could not have done it alone.

Even in the Regional Cooperation Department of the IDF's Strategic Division, they were burning the midnight oil in the late hours on Saturday and early Sunday.

The language used in those hours was Arabic, and the content of the conversations was intelligence updates based on developments before, during, and after the attack. More than one country was on the line with the Israeli officers – and not all have formal ties with Israel. In other words, the coalition that operated against Iran extended beyond the countries that have an official peace agreement with Israel.

According to foreign reports, in addition to Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain, Morocco, and the United Arab Emirates, there was also close contact with Saudi Arabia that night. It is worth noting that the UAE possesses Barak missiles, and that a third of Israel's defense exports in 2022 were directed toward the Abraham Accords countries. These numbers speak for themselves.

Going back to that dramatic night – secrecy does not allow the disclosure of the operational content of the conversations between the Israeli officers and their Arab counterparts. What can be said, according to foreign reports, is that the Israeli Air Force intercepted some of the drones as they were flying in the airspaces of neighboring countries.

For this to happen, the entities in those countries that maintain contact with the IDF were also awake all night. They received intelligence updates from the Israeli side and passed them on to their forces. In parallel, they relayed the picture known to them to their Israeli counterparts.

Cooperation between the IDF and Arab military headquarters had been taking place in an intimate and close manner for several years. Due to the sentiment on the Arab street, the parties have concealed the degree of the connection, but clues have been abundantly provided in recent years.

The sight of Israeli paratroopers jumping shoulder-to-shoulder with counterparts from the UAE and Bahrain sent a strong hint to those with keen observation skills. The sight of Emirati aircraft taking off alongside the blue Star of David, from runways in Europe, was not intended for air games. Mutual defense memoranda between the countries, secret meetings between IDF officers and their counterparts several times a year, the joint agreement initiated and led by the United States, the exercises conducted since the end of the previous decade, the recent enhancement of operational readiness through coordinated interception of previous missiles and drones from Iraq and Yemen, and even the coalition's failure to stop the Iranian attack on the UAE in 2022 – all seemed to prepare the players for the tense hours between Saturday and Sunday.

The glorious operational success – which benefited from no small miracle, with half of the Iranian missiles experiencing failure – is particularly a success for the US Central Command (CENTCOM), which translated the players' interests into practical military-political action. This is the axis around which Iran's regional enemies have united.

Still, it cannot be called an alliance. According to the mutual agreements, each country decides how to act in every situation based on its own considerations. In other words, the content is determined concretely according to the situation. However, the communication channels, common language, staff work, mutual understanding of capabilities, and sensitivities of each side were all prepared in previous years under fundamental American leadership. The cooperation works by having a shared system managed by CENTCOM, into which information is streamed. However, beyond that, bilateral contact takes place between Israel and its regional partners.

The preparations were so thorough that no special regional preparedness was required ahead of the Iranian attack, only the implementation of what had been built in the past. It was no coincidence that the commander of the US Central Command, Michael (Erik) Kurilla, visited Israel and the region intensively in recent years. Much of the credit for the regional and operational success belongs to him.

This is how the cooperation worked, very successfully, sending a clear message to the entire world. A new bloc has hatched from its egg, building wings and muscles: Israel, the West, and Arab countries, together against Iran.



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Talk, Talk, Talk

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

The Midrash Tanchuma at the beginning of Parshas Metzora relates an incident regarding a peddler who was traveling about and calling, "Who would like an elixir of life?" When Rabbi Yannai heard him, he requested to buy the special potion. Instead of producing any elixir, the peddler pulled out a book of Tehillim (Psalms) and showed Rabbi Yannai the verses (34:13-14), "Who is the man who desires life, who loves days of seeing good? Guard your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit." Rabbi Yannai was so excited by the peddler's advice that he paid him six *sela'im*. His students asked him, "Rebbe, did you not already know these verses?" Rabbi Yannai responded that indeed he had known the verses, "but this man came and clarified them."

Rabbi Yannai's response is difficult to comprehend. Seemingly, all the peddler did was read him some verses he already knew. What did he mean that the peddler had come and "clarified them?"

Rabbi Yissocher Frand suggests that what was so striking and novel for Rabbi Yannai was to hear *a peddler* promoting the importance of guarding one's tongue. Peddlers were not only transporters of goods but they also carried news, and usually gossip, from town to town. A peddler would *shmooze* with the townspeople forging relationships with customers. One might have thought that such a person could not possibly be careful about *lashon hara*. The peddler taught Rabbi Yannai that to guard one's tongue from *lashon hara*, it is not necessary to remain silent all day long; one can still *shmooze* and connect with others. What matters is how we direct those conversations.

Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzenski reported that the Chofetz Chaim, who was legendary in his adherence to the laws of *lashon hara*, was not a quiet person, but when someone visited with him, he would immediately steer the conversation to Torah topics, thereby not only fulfilling the *mitzvah* to study Torah, but also ensuring that no *lashon hara* would be spoken.

At our Pesach Seder, both men and women have a special opportunity to fulfill an explicit positive commandment to eat matzah. The Talmud (Pesachim 115b) teaches that one of the reasons that matzah is called *lechem oni* is because it is a bread over which we *onim*/respond many words – a reference to telling the story of the Exodus while the matzah is in front of us. The Shvilei Pinchas expounds on this explaining that using our mouths to perform the *mitzvah* of recounting the story of the Exodus also sanctifies our mouth in preparation for the special *mitzvah* of eating matzah. As we ourselves prepare for the majestic night of the Seder, let us take care to keep our mouths pure by keeping *lashon hara* out and directing our conversations towards other matters and especially words of Torah.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

K'nega (Something like an affliction) has appeared to me in the house... (14:35)

A man or woman in whom there will be nega (an affliction)... (Tazria 13:29)

If there will be tzara'as nega (affliction) on a garment... (Tazria 13:47)

Why does the Torah use the word "like a" in reference to the tzara'as of the house?

Parsha Riddle

What do the Seder and a house with tzara'as have in common?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Why do snakes have spots?

Answer: They were punished with tzaraas for speaking lashon hara against Hashem (Rabeinu Bachya).

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

From our archives

A central theme of the laws of *Tzara'as*, appearing repeatedly throughout the parashiyos of Tazria and Metzora, is the crucial role of the kohein's diagnosis. The halachic status of the afflicted individual (or building or garment) hinges entirely upon the kohein's pronouncements: he becomes *tamei* (ritually impure) when the kohein declares him *tamei*, and *tahor* (ritually pure) when the kohein declares him *tahor*.

The Mishnah (Negaim 2:5) declares that a person may rule on anyone's *nega* (affliction) except his own. The mishnah continues with two more parallel rules: a person may annul anyone's vow (via the procedure of *hataras nedarim*) except his own, and a person may examine any first-born animal (i.e., to ascertain that it has a defect that neutralizes its *kedushah* [status of holiness] and allows it to be treated less restrictively) except his own. This mishnah is usually understood to imply that only in these three cases (which are exceptional for reasons that are not entirely clear) is one barred from ruling for himself, but one may in general issue a halachic ruling even on a matter in which he is directly interested, financially or otherwise (Tosafos Nidah 20b s.v. kol yoma, Shut. Rivash #406, Shut. Re'em #70, but see Rash Negaim ibid. and Meiri Nidah ibid.). This is in stark contradistinction to the judicial context, where we disqualify judges and witnesses who stand to gain from their participation in the case "even in a remote and amazing way" (Rambam Edus 16:4). The reason for this distinction between the ritual and judicial contexts is also not entirely clear (see Emunah U'Bitachon 3:30). It should be noted, however, that in general, the halachah holds those in positions of public trust to judicial standards (Pilpula Charifata Sanhedrin 3:17 [shin], Aruch Ha'Shulchan Choshen Mishpat 9:1).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am big, not really.
2. I precede the spring holiday.
3. Say "Telling".
4. Sheepish celebration

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am a mitzvah of Pesach.
2. I can cause tzara'as.
3. I am the namesake of the Yom Tov.
4. I can also mean to jump over.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Bris Milah (I am mentioned at the Seder, I take precedence over Shabbos, I was first for 99, I was also for 13.)

#2 Nisan (I am the first, I am the seventh, This year I am the eighth, I am for redemption.)

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Greater Washington Community Kollel wishes all of its friends, supporters, participants, and the entire community, a good Yom Tov!

